

Winston-Salem Chronicle

Founded 1974

ERNEST H. PITT, Publisher

NDUBISI EGEMONYE, Editor

ALLEN JOHNSON, Executive Editor

ELAINE L. PITT, Office Manager

MICHAEL PITT, Circulation Manager

JOHN SLADE, Assistant Editor

Crosswinds

No solution

From the Portland Observer.

President Reagan has come up with a proposal to chop the minimum wage for teen-agers this summer from \$3.35 to \$2.50 per hour. Supposedly, this reduction would encourage employers to hire more of those under 20 and create additional jobs at the same time.

We doubt this will occur.

Black unemployment, as everyone knows, is high and getting higher. Black teen-age unemployment is astronomical; current estimates put it at 45 percent. In March 1984, that figure translated into at least 500,000 black teen-agers looking for either part-time or summer work.

Reagan says lowering the minimum wage will create 400,000 new jobs, yet we fear the incentive for employers will be to "trade in" their minimum-wage adult employees (who are now getting \$3.35 per hour) for those under 20, who could legally be paid less.

Currently, at least 5 million American workers are getting the minimum wage. Adults make up 70 percent of this group and the majority are women. Often, these workers are supporting a family on the minimum-wage pay check. They need the job to survive.

This is not to say teen-agers shouldn't have these jobs because they don't need the income as much. But it doesn't take a mathematician to see that paying \$2.50 per hour is more attractive to most employers than paying \$3.35. Who needs the job the most isn't likely to be an employer's prime consideration.

Reagan's proposal addresses this problem by penalizing employers who fire older workers in order to hire younger, less expensive help, but significant loopholes exist. So much so that the proposal is called the "McDonald's Bill" in government circles.

We suspect that multinational fast-food chains and others would benefit much more from a sub-minimum wage than unemployed teen-agers.

Crosswinds

The baby problem

From The Louisiana Weekly.

As has been pointed out in these pages, and elsewhere, on a number of occasions, probably the most pressing concern of black America is the ever-increasing number of children being born to unmarried black women, about 90 percent of them teen-agers, 25 percent of whom will have another baby within a year's time. So enormous has the problem become that over 55 percent of the black babies born in this country this year will come into the world as part of a single, female-headed household.

These births will exacerbate the fact that some 47 percent of all black households are headed by single females with a median income of only \$7,458. Forty percent of these families are dependent upon state and federal welfare systems for their survival. The cycle of poverty, and what the Rev. Jesse Jackson likes to refer to as the "cycle of pain," is perpetuated by these statistics (which reflect real circumstances). Likewise, the drug addiction, juvenile and adult crime, lack of education and hopelessness have become a persistent fact of life for too much of black America.

Much has been written about this problem, and it has been much talked about by sociologists, civil rights leaders and the clergy. But far too often the efforts to follow up, to attempt to reduce those negative statistics, have been meager, at best, or non-existent -- except for those who continue to falaciously think that the solutions lie in the creation of more federal programs or the infusion of money.

The National Council of Negro Women of Greater New Orleans clearly sees that the epidemic of out-of-wedlock births will not be eradicated by such measures. The council accurately understands that we are faced with a black problem which only the black community itself can adequately and creatively address. The council will take an important first step toward that goal June 16 with a forum at Xavier University for adults and most importantly, teen-agers.

The council rightly understands that the black community must come together as a whole to deal with the problem, that we can no longer "condemn our children to a life of frustration, bitterness and hopelessness," as Dr. Keith Ferdinand, chairman of the council's planning committee, has said. Amen.

FELLOW HEADS OF STATE - PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR FUTURES



THEY SEE HUGE DEBTS, FAILING BANKS AND SKY-HIGH INTEREST RATES



OBVIOUSLY, WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING FAST



I SUGGEST WE ALL ENDORSE EACH OTHER FOR RE-ELECTION



Closing the infant mortality rate

By JOHN JACOB, Syndicated Columnist

A number of civil rights, civic and child welfare organizations have filed a petition to the Department of Health and Human Services asking rules changes that would help close the infant death gap -- the disparity in infant mortality rates between whites and blacks.

Few Americans are aware of the tragic infant mortality rates that afflict our society, most especially poor and minority families. Despite a decline in overall infant mortality rates, the gap between whites and blacks in this crucial area has grown, not lessened.

Back in 1950, the black infant death rate was 61 percent higher than the white rate; by 1982 it had climbed to 95 percent higher. And in some cities, the black infant death rate is now even higher than the white rate was 35 years ago. It is shameful that the most advanced nation in the world has infant mortality rates in some areas that rival those of impoverished developing nations.

A major factor in infant mortality and in mental and physical disabilities among infants that live in low birth weight. Unless steps are taken to prevent low birth weight, it is unlikely

those awful statistics will improve much.

Early comprehensive pre-natal care helps to increase birth weight and decrease infant mortality. That's something every doctor knows. But too many poor women, and especially teen-agers, do not get adequate medical care or diets during their pregnancy.

At greatest risk are black teen-agers. As a group, they are disproportionately poor, subject to poor health, least likely to receive adequate health care, make fewer visits to doctors during pregnancy, and make those visits later in pregnancy than

there has to be a serious informational campaign that gets the message across to teen-agers that motherhood is a very serious business, requiring personal health habits and emotional maturity that allow for success.

The black community has come together in recent months to deal with this problem. Young people need to have the information and the support that enables them to make well-considered choices about their future.

But attempting to bring down the incidence of teen-age pregnancy is only one part of the solution. Pregnant young women should have educational and job-training opportunities

"The numbers tell us if you are young, black and poor, the chances are higher that your child will die for have disabilities."

others.

Race, poverty and socio-economic status all converge to produce those shameful infant mortality figures. The numbers tell us if you are young, black and poor, the chances are higher that your child will die or have disabilities.

The solution to the infant mortality situation, then, is two-fold. First,

so they can have wider options in life and are enabled to escape poverty.

And that suggests the second part of the solution -- federal policies that save lives. By providing food and health care to poor pregnant women and their infants, infant mortality would be cut sharply and children would have a healthy start in life. Please see page A5

The black family in crisis: Part I

By DR. MANNING MARABLE, Guest Columnist

Last month's "Black Family Summit Conference" held in Nashville, sponsored jointly by the NAACP and National Urban League highlighted perhaps the major social controversy discussed within the national-black community. As outlined in their conference announcement, NAACP Executive Director Benjamin Hooks and League president John Jacob noted that the sessions would endeavor to set "priorities and strategies to preserve the strengths of black families."

Behind the conference call was a series of disturbing social statistics on the current plight of black families. Since 1964, the percentage of two-parent families has dropped from 75 percent to 53 percent. The black divorce rate is double that of whites, and about half of all black males over age 18 have never been married, separated, divorced or widowed. More than half of all black children are now born out of wedlock, compared to only 21.6 percent of all black children in 1960. Since 1960, the number of black families headed by women has increased by over 300 percent, and over 60 percent of these families live in poverty. In the past eight years, the number of black families live in poverty. In the past eight years, the number of black

families without fathers has increased by 700,000. Even black middle-class families, once touted as "nearly a 'majority' of all black households, have declined, according to Urban League statistics, to only 16 percent of all black families. The conference generated a number of papers on a variety of themes, from "Patterns of Child Rearing" to "Jobs and Economic Security," but failed largely to resolve the basic contradiction -- what is happening to black families,

Moynihan noted darkly that one-fourth of "Negro births are illegitimate"; one-quarter of all black households were then "headed by women"; and that black youths "consistently perform poorer" on intelligence tests than white children. For Moynihan, the statistics declared that the black family's pathological development since slavery had created a generation of blacks who were "inadequately prepared for life" in capitalist America.

"Since 1960, the number of black families headed by women has increased by over 300 percent, and over 60 percent of these families live in poverty."

and why?

The current debate concerning the black family is curiously a repetition of a two decade-old controversy surrounding the "Moynihan Report" of March 1965. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then assistant secretary of labor (now a Democratic U.S. Senator from New York) drafted a memo, "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," which argued that "at the height of deterioration of the fabric of Negro society is the deterioration of the family. It is the fundamental source of weakness of the Negro community at the present time." In a ream of statistics,

In the past decade, a new generation of liberal and radical sociologists -- Andrew Billingsley, Robert B. Hill, Joyce Ladner, Frank Reissman and many others -- have attempted to correct the myths about black families. Billingsley has observed that the sense of cooperation, the importance of community and a commitment to the common good which were part of early black family life during slavery has continued into the 20th century. The black community itself is an institutional extension of family life.

These internal structures develop for black children "a sense of Please see page A5

THE SUPREME COURT TIGHTENED THE RULES FOR POLITICAL REFUGEES WHO WANT TO STAY IN THE U.S.



A WELL-FOUNDED FEAR OF PERSECUTION IN YOUR COUNTRY IS NOT ENOUGH



WHAT KIND OF EVIDENCE WOULD BE ENOUGH?



A NOTE FROM YOUR DICTATOR



Chronicle Letters

Time to unite for a victory

To The Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity through your very fine newspaper to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to all of the citizens of the county who supported and contributed to the Rufus Edmisten Campaign in any way during the recent runoff election.

A great deal of appreciation goes to you, the citizens, for your hard work, dedication and participation. Perhaps you knocked on doors, made phone calls, addressed letters, worked at the polls, wore a button, made a financial contribution, attended a meeting or rally, displayed a bumper sticker, furnished transportation, etc. It was important and I thank you for it. It is the voting citizen who determines the course our state will take.

Furthermore, I would like to personally encourage and extend a sincere invitation to all supporters of former candidates to join hands and hearts and let's work together in harmony to ensure victory in November for all of us. We want you, we need you. Without you, the task that lies ahead will be an impossible one to accomplish.

I know that with your help and cooperation, North Carolina will be a better place for all of us to live, work, prosper and rear our children.

Larry Womble, Co-chairman Rufus Edmisten for Governor Committee

Good Job

To The Editor

I'm writing to praise you all at the Chronicle for the wonderful job you are doing. The edition that went on the stands May 17 was a very good one.

I thoroughly enjoyed what Clifton Graves had to say in his column titled "The genius of Brother Larry Little." I think Larry Little is a great person, and anyone who comes in contact with him on a political basis should be inspired by his leadership skills, abilities and knowledge of politics. Thank God there are people such as Mr. Graves who appreciate the good works of our good black people.

Other articles profiling people such as Franklin Williams, my 10th-grade art teacher, and Brian Washington, one of my former schoolmates, were also good and interesting.

Last, but not least, I'd like to thank the Chronicle for printing a letter from Mrs. E.H. Harris of Greensboro concerning Eddie Knox. I believe deep down in my heart "once a racist, always a racist." Neither George Wallace nor Eddie Knox can fool me with their all-of-a sudden, "holier-than-thou" attitudes.

I almost forgot to thank James Parker for considering me "Someone You Should Meet." Thank you, Chronicle, for everything! You're beautiful, compatible, informative, interesting, and most of all, you're black, which insures beauty.

Mrs. Veronica Bitting Winston-Salem

Unfair Tax

To The Editor:

North Carolina is one of the finest states in this country and is wonderful place to live and work. We are blessed with good people, good climate and good government. Please see page A5