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Let them eat cereal

Marie Antoinette advised the hungry to eat cake. School board member Mary Margaret Lohr would have them pour milk and cereal.

Mrs. Lohr prescribed that menu in response to recent questions concerning the availability of free school breakfasts in the city-county schools.

When asked whether the schools should provide breakfasts, Mrs. Lohr recently told a local daily newspaper that, as a mother, she can't understand why some of the children are going to school without eating breakfast.

"Most can pour cereal and milk," the *Winston-Salem Journal* quotes Mrs. Lohr as saying.

But can most buy cereal and milk?

Apparently not, according to figures indicating that the majority of the children who receive the breakfasts are from low-income backgrounds and either receive the meals free or for a reduced price. In fact, 30 percent of the students in Forsyth County are eligible for the program.

What Mrs. Lohr and her fellow board members need to realize is that, for whatever reason, children go hungry in our community. She should also realize, despite the veil of middle-class white biases that obviously cloud her thinking, that a child is not nearly as likely to concentrate on the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic when his or her stomach is empty.

Yet, Mrs. Lohr hardly is an evil or uncaring Grinch who stole breakfast. She simply doesn't know any better.

"I think she's sincere but she's sincerely uninformed on that issue," says NAACP Vice President Walter Marshall.

Meanwhile, some principals in the city-county school system, who ought to know better, continue to shun offering the breakfast program in their individual schools -- though federal funds are available to subsidize the meals -- for all the wrong reasons.

It's too time-consuming some say. It requires additional staffing, others add.

But, while those principals deal with "matters of convenience," says Bert Grisard, executive director of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Forsyth County, children still go hungry.

Though the four major housing projects in the city feed into 12 schools, only three schools -- two of them high schools -- serve free breakfasts.

What we appear to have here is a problem of perception. Lacking racial and economic diversity as it does, the city-county school board needs to cross the Cherry-Marshall Expressway and witness where some of the students live.

We can argue until the cows come home about where the school's responsibility begins and parent's responsibility ends. The reality is that children are hungry.

Crosswinds

Reagan as a loser

From The Black Chronicle, Oklahoma City, Okla.

President Ronald Reagan was the clear loser in the first of two presidential debates last Sunday night and, if the momentum from it shall continue for Walter Mondale through Nov. 6, America will be the clear winner.

America can only win on Nov. 6 if the Democratic contender, Mr. Mondale, wins on that day. The debate provides some justifiable hope that, indeed, Mr. Reagan will be retired at that time.

One of the reasons why we have that hope (admittedly, after being nearly without hope to that effect before Sunday night) is that the diametrically opposed futures offered by the two candidates, assumably, would make the choice of that future offered by Mr. Mondale an easy one.

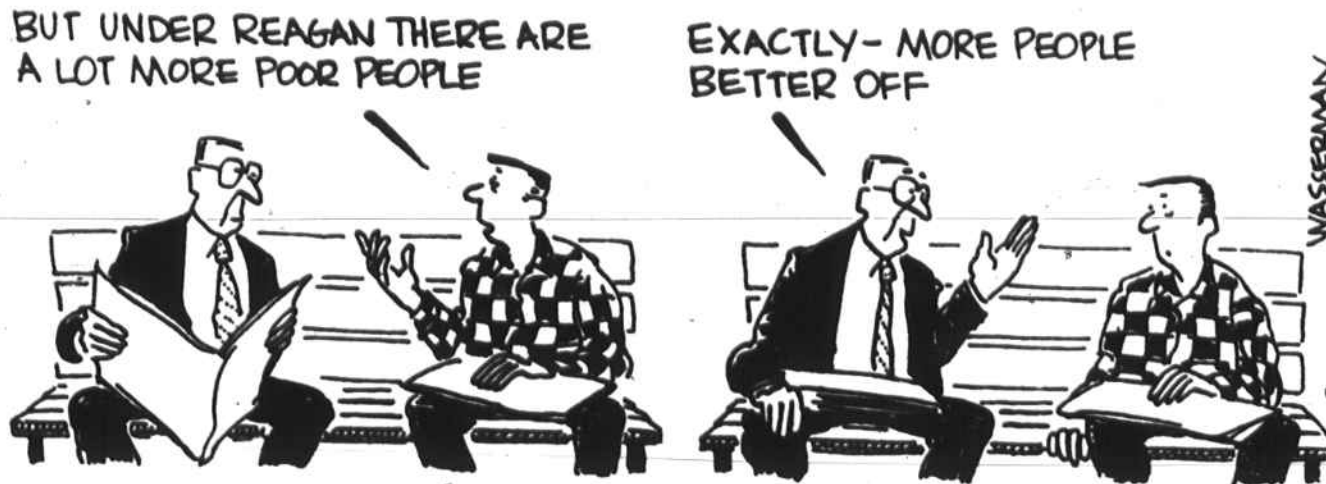
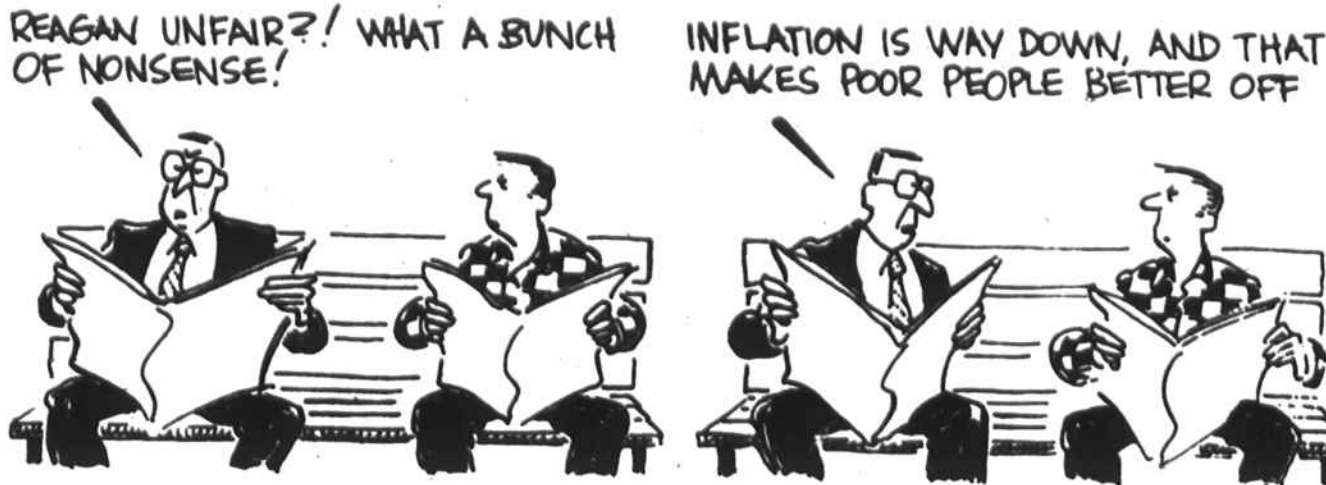
The future which Mr. Reagan proposes is one where Americans would choose to continue fooling themselves into believing that somehow things are better for most Americans than they were before 1980, the year Mr. Reagan assumed the presidency.

The "voodoo economics" (Remember that phrase? It was made by Mr. Reagan's vice president, who was, at the time, a critic of proposals being made by candidate Reagan) which Mr. Reagan and his cohorts have offered the past four years have left the poor poorer, have provided the culture for the bacteria-like regrowth of abject racism in this country and has created a fiscal mess which can only be referred to as a horrendous nightmare.

In order to bring about the temporary, cosmetic "improvement" in the economy, Mr. Reagan has followed policies which made the "growth" he frequently referred to on Sunday a possibility only by making those who could least afford it to suffer.

Mr. Mondale, thank God, was astute enough to make

Please see page A14



Criticize him, but vote Mondale

By MANNING MARABLE  
Special to the Chronicle

The failure of the Rainbow Coalition to extract any significant reforms at the Democratic National Convention this summer has created a strong degree of hostility towards the Mondale-Ferraro ticket among Afro-Americans.

Minister Louis Farrakhan has not urged an election boycott this November, but has stated, "We see nothing in Reagan or Mondale to vote for." Members of the Black United Front in Washington, D.C., recently circulated a pamphlet attacking Jesse's "sell-out of the Democrats" and call for "a clean departure from the political manipulations and false pretenses of the American electoral system."

Still other black activists are saying that we've "survived" four years of Reagan and another four more years won't be all that bad.

Other than Tony Brown, Thomas Sowell and a few black Reaganites, the vast majority of Afro-Americans this November will either vote for the Democrats or will stay home. Some are so disgruntled with Mondale, however, that they may vote for senate, house and local races, but skip the presidential choices.

What decision must we

make in 1984? Surely, there are thousands of reasons not to vote for Mondale. His commitment to raise military spending alone will continue to drain fiscal resources from urban centers and the black community. His cynical manipulation of Andrew Young at the convention was shameful. His opposition to Jackson's minority platform planks alienated most of the Rainbow's constituency. Contemptuous of blacks, Latinos and the poor, Mondale suddenly acquires the political backbone of a wet noodle

when confronted by AFL-CIO bureaucrats. In short, the Minnesota Democrat has all of the charisma of a sleepy clam.

Saying all this, we still cannot permit Ronald Reagan, a man with the morals of the mafia, to run wild for another term. There are critical and measurable differences between a reactionary like Reagan and Mondale.

What have been the actual socioeconomic and political costs to black people because of Reagan? First, a dramatic increase in poverty. As of this August, there were 35 million poor people in the U.S. Reagan's 1982 welfare cuts in-

creased the number of poor by 2.2 million. The administration is currently fighting food stamp legislation which would increase allowances by recipients by only a penny a meal.

In the areas of health care, education and women's rights, the identical situation exists. Reagan cut funding for screening urban children for lead poisoning. He slashed real spending for handicapped children's educational programs and 124,000 fewer college students now receive Pell Grant aid.

Black women's wages have

fallen sharply and AFDC and other social assistance programs have been curtailed. A total of \$120 billion has been cut from programs which directly help people -- Social Security, child care, etc. Workers' real wages have declined \$380 billion since 1981, and the wealthy, large corporations and the banks have received \$750 billion in tax breaks.

In just the last two years, families earning less than \$10,000 annually lost \$23 billion, while households earning over \$80,000 annually -- almost no blacks -- got \$35 billion in tax breaks.

Please see page A5

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Please see page A5

Do song lyrics hurt children?

By MARIAN EDELMAN  
Syndicated Columnist

A group of young school children was asked recently who they would choose for president if they could vote. The candidates, listed by last name only, were Mondale, Jackson and Reagan.

Candidate Jackson won, but only because the children thought they were choosing superstar singer Michael Jackson, not the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

This brought home once again just how much our children idolize musical artists. At the same time, I became worried when I thought about what they are learning from some of the lyrics of many popular singers.

If you turn on your radio and really listen to the words of some of their favorite tunes, you may be shocked. Let me give you a few examples.

Prince is among the most popular singers and musicians

today. I think it's pretty safe to say he is second only to Michael Jackson. On his latest album, "Purple Rain," there is a song called "Darling Nikki," which is played frequently on the radio.

The first stanza of the song is as follows: I knew a girl named Nikki/ I guess you could say she was a sex fiend/ I met her in a hotel lobby masturbating with a magazine/ She said "How'd you like to waste some

"young and fine and oh, so tender." James is a man in his 30s singing about committing statutory rape. What is the purpose of a song like this?

One more example of a song that disturbs me is "Be Good to Me" by the SOS Band. A woman sings: As long as I can be your number one, you still can have your fun/ And if you get bored, I'm going to give it to you just the way you like it."

Does this suggest to young

boys and men that they can be as sexually promiscuous as they want to be and their girlfriends or wives won't care?

Aren't these singers saying that sex is an activity divorced from love or respect and without responsibility or consequences? Is this what we want our children to be hearing daily, even hourly?

James tells of his desire to have an affair with a 17-year-old female fan. He calls her

time?"/ And I could not resist when I saw little Nikki grind.

Not all of Prince's songs have sexual overtones and he has great musical gifts. Nor is he the only singer whose lyrics are sexually explicit. Another adolescent favorite, Rick James, has a song called "Seventeen and Sexy."

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Please see page A5

BILL, WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS NICARAGUA FIASCO?

WELL, IT SEEMS TO BE THE WORK OF AN OVERZEALOUS FREELANCER.

SOMEONE TOTALLY OUT OF TOUCH WITH POLICY, WHO HAS NO GRASP OF THE REGION...

AND IS OBSESSED BY WHAT HE CALLS THE EVIL EMPIRE



Letters

An appeal for Neal

To The Editor:

Having been identified with (the) Fifth District Congressman, the Honorable Steve Neal, in some measure ever since the first time he announced as a candidate for Congress from our Fifth District, I have never regretted this action on my part because Congressman Neal has given the Fifth District the recognition it so richly deserves nationwide.

He brings integrity, a very reasonable approach and argument and an unquestionable scholarship to any conference table. He walks, carries and conducts himself as a true statesman, one individual without seeking the flair and glory of being in the limelight, but the illumination, the awe and the observation of the people is always constant and present.

Congressman Neal, who has always made his congressional duties his very first priority, has continued that pledge during this unusually lengthy session of Congress. He was forced to ignore the very vicious and poisonous and untrue darts that his unlearned opposition has been using to undermine his very prestigious and spectacular and very successful tenure in the United States House of Representatives, as he continued to prove his attendance during the undramatic last 10 days of the 98th Congress, whereby the Republican-controlled Senate killed or delayed many good bills, including the civil rights bill.

The bill on civil rights was not a bill that would do something for our country's black citizens, but this civil rights bill was only trying to do something for all of our women. I do hope that you will let this very important fact dwell constantly on your minds.

Congressman Steve Neal's opposition, in his futile attempt to paint a picture of Congressman Neal as being naive, unproductive, taking jobs away from our people, being for progressive programs like Social Security and Medicare, voting for our Democratic platform at our national convention and publicizing on television a picture of Congressman Neal with a dirty rag stuffed in his mouth. This kind of tactics not only very adequately dramatize our opponent as being vindictive, as well as abusive, but his philosophy, if you would care to study it, is that of a very little boy.

I want to make this open appeal in behalf of our incumbent Democratic congressman, Mr. Steve Neal, to all of our voters in the N.C. Fifth District -- the senior citizens, who have so much hanging in the balance; the middle-aged, the young and those who just turned 18, members of each party, all races and religions -- to cast your most precious vote for Steve Neal on Election Day Nov. 6.

Congressman Neal will be always true and humbly submitted to your needs and anxieties. Please do not allow yourself to be misled by someone desperately saying words like a learned and rehearsed recitation, who very openly has exhibited what to

Please see page A5