

Winston-Salem Chronicle

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Gobbledy-gook

When we don't want to say what we mean, we strangle our language with euphemisms and double-talk.

People don't die; they "pass," sort of like kidney stones. Fired employees are "terminated" or "resign" or "given extended leave without pay." Military invasions become "police actions" or "reinforced protective reaction strikes." "Busing" was coined as a code word for desegregation, "liberal" a thinly-veiled label meaning "he or she likes black people."

"When a big company recently announced that it was 'decentralizing its organizational structure into major profit centers' and that 'corporate staff services will be aligned under two senior vice-presidents,'" says William Zinser in his book, "On Writing Well," "it meant that it had a lousy year."

Add to the groundswell of written and spoken gobbledygook the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement" in dealing with racist South Africa.

What "constructive engagement" means in plain English is that the United States intends to do little to discourage the despicable treatment of South Africa's black-majority population.

President Reagan underscored that fact in a meeting last Friday with Bishop Desmond M. Tutu, the black South African winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize.

Though Tutu justifiably terms the Reagan policy toward South Africa as "evil, immoral and totally un-Christian," the president remains steadfast, it appears, in his intention to sit still and look the other way.

"We have made sizable progress (whatever that means) in expressing our repugnance on apartheid," Reagan told reporters following the meeting.

But that's not how South Africa, neither black nor white, sees it. As Tutu has said, if the Reagan policy has done anything to ease the plight of black South Africans, they haven't seen it. And, as white South African newspaper editorials have said, the purveyors of apartheid were pleased that Reagan defeated Walter Mondale, who, they feared, would not have so "constructively engaged" their nation had he assumed the presidency.

In the meantime, protests in Washington and nationwide against apartheid and the Reagan policy continue, and the wave of indignation appears to be rising.

It will have to in order to make a difference. We close with some euphemisms of our own, as well as their English translations:

"Destructive engagement": the Reagan civil rights policy.

"Rosie Grierism": any behavior that is unnaturally ignorant.

"Wayne Corpeningism": the act of inserting one's foot into one's mouth at a large gathering of black people.

"Subscription-cancellation-inducer": a less-than-glowing article about local black clergy in this newspaper.

"Journal-ism": the practice of complaining about the arrogance and racism of another newspaper in this city and subscribing to it anyway.

Crosswinds

No voices for the poor?

From the Jackson (Miss.) Advocate.

Whatever gains the black community in Mississippi made during the '60s have been ephemeral and short-lived.

The reasons are immediately apparent if one looks at the record.

This state's black bourgeoisie, dragged kicking and screaming along with the then-inexorable tide fueled by the energies of the underclass, with unusual pragmatism for that group, survived to turn that tide into a bonanza for themselves.

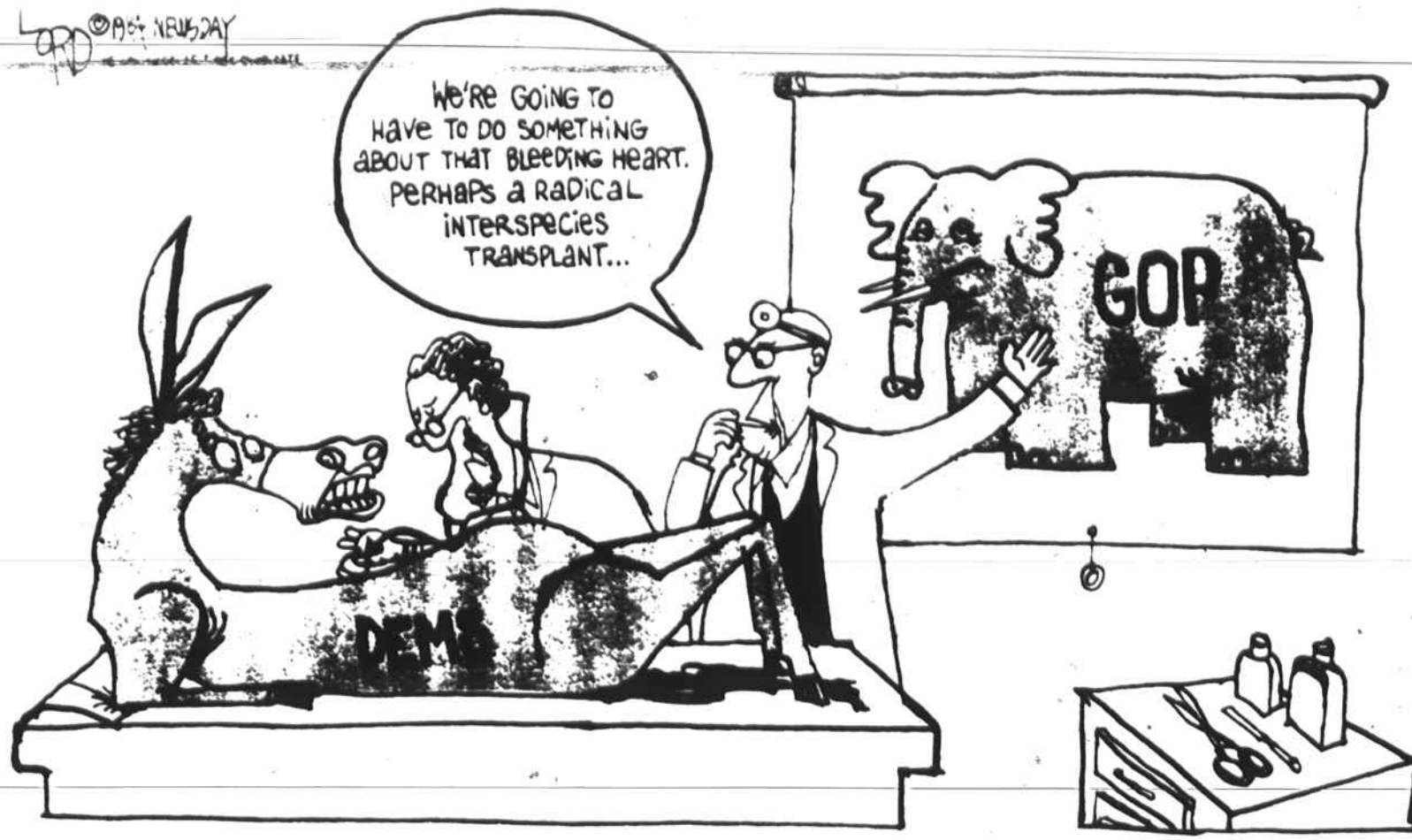
First, with synthetic enthusiasm and *elan*, they pretended that they, themselves, invented the civil rights movement and, indeed, shared common purpose with the underclass.

The black bourgeoisie, therefore, demanded special privileges from frightened and guilt-ridden whites who provided the black elite with window-dressing jobs to set them apart from the black masses that empowered them.

The trickle-down from the black elite never reached the underclass. The black rich got richer, the poor blacks got children, thus becoming saddled to a welfare system designed to pacify, not satisfy.

Now, caught in a circumstance of their own making, the black elite, as represented by Clarence Pendleton and his ilk, spout a conservative rhetoric designed to please the Reaganites and far rightists.

Who speaks for the black poor? Nobody!



Black women need better health care

By MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN
 Syndicated Columnist

You've probably heard the old football cliché that the best defense is a good offense. Now, I don't pretend to be an authority on football, but I have been thinking about that saying and how it applies to health care.

The lack of affordable, regular, adequate health care for black women and children in America is a national disgrace, and the entire consumer movement for better health care seems to have passed right by a lot of black women.

Maybe it is because our lives are so caught up with basic survival that we think we have no time to take care of our health, or maybe it is because we are just plain scared of our bodies.

We hesitate to take the offensive on health care. We don't practice preventive medicine. We wait until conditions become serious before we seek care. We allow ourselves to be passive patients, not health care consumers.

I met a young woman the other day who is a certified nurse-midwife. Unlike the granny midwives of old, this woman is a college-educated registered nurse with special training in maternal and child health care.

In her practice, she sees what happens when black women fail to take the initiative on health, when they neglect their bodies.

She said that many black women ignore their health until they absolutely have to seek help. "I see many pregnant women who have never been to a doctor. Women come in during their third trimester (the last three months of

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Letters

The local war against famine

To the Editor:

Your recent lead article correctly pointed out the need for Winston-Salem's black community to do more in aiding hunger relief throughout Ethiopia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Similarly, we can and should do much more to aid socio-political justice in South Africa. We could only imagine the response if Polish-Americans had to support Poland or Jewish-Americans needed to help Israel.

Before we get too depressed over the lack of specifically black aid, however, we need to remember black folks are a part of the predominantly white organizations that have been active, i.e., Church World Service's CROP walk (in which St. Benedict the Moor's youth group was particularly well-represented), Bread for the World, Oxfam America, the Red Cross, etc.

In addition, there are supportive black congregations in predominantly white denominations that have made some significant response — Catholic, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopalian, etc.

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New militancy against apartheid

By CLIFTON E. GRAVES JR.
 Chronicle Columnist

On Nov. 23 — the day after Thanksgiving — this writer was fortunate enough to be a part of the historic press conference which launched the Free South Africa Movement.

The press conference — convened in Washington by the African American lobby, TransAfrica — was called to highlight the unsuccessful attempt by four African American leaders (Congressman Walter Fauntroy, Civil Rights Commissioner Mary F. Berry, Georgetown Law Center Professor Eleanor Holmes Norton and TransAfrica's Randall Robinson) to negotiate the release of 13 labor leaders imprisoned without charge or trial in South Africa.

Failing to gain the South Africans' release, Fauntroy, Berry and Robinson staged a sit-in in the South African Embassy, resulting in their arrests. (Ms. Norton, acting as counsel for the three, was purposely not involved, so as to be available to provide the public with the truth of this unprecedented action.)

After spending the night of Nov. 21 in various Washington prison facilities — again to attract more attention to the plight of their South



Graves

African brethren — the "Embassy Three" issued the challenge to progressive-minded Americans of all hues to join in and support the Free South African Movement.

The focal points of this latest effort to attack the racist apartheid system of South Africa are as follows:

- to secure the release of the 13 leaders charged under Section 29 of South Africa's Internal Security Act of 1982, an act which requires neither charge nor trial and has already resulted in the deaths of no less than 64 political prisoners;
- to secure the release of the legitimate leaders of the South African people (e.g., Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and others) who have been

linguishing in South African prisons for decades;

- to compel the start of good faith negotiations between these released leaders and the South African government, both on the grievances which prompted the most recent outbreaks of violence, as well as the ongoing denial of power-sharing with the black majority in South Africa;
- to compel the abandonment of the United States' accommodationist policy of "constructive engagement" toward the Republic of South Africa.

According to Robinson — founder and executive director of the United States' only lobby whose primary purpose is to monitor and be an advocate for African and Caribbean affairs — the aforementioned goals will be effectuated through the tried and true tactics of daily demonstrations and sit-ins, not only at the Washington-based South African Embassy, but also at South Africa's consulates in Chicago, Houston, Boston, Los Angeles, Seattle, Pittsburgh and New York.

While these demonstrations will primarily involve grassroots folk (who have historically been the backbone of African American protest), Robinson made it clear that in order to attract the attention

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Blacks face a leadership crisis

By TONY BROWN
 Syndicated Columnist

I have maintained over the years that the crisis in the black community is essentially a crisis of leadership.

When black people are given good direction and motivated towards a goal, they perform well. Unfortunately, they perform well when the goal is illusory, further heightening the effects of the basic problems.

Jesse Jackson, who now regards himself as the premier leader of black America and is considered so by most blacks, is a classic example of what's wrong with black people.

Instead of admitting that his political strategy has failed and backfired in the faces of his rainbow followers, he offers a new solution which compounds the problem of his initial mistake.

This, in turn, creates an uninformed black electorate which is a danger to the nation and to itself. The total dismay among blacks that you are now witnessing is the result of a disastrous inability to read the times and adapt to a new

set of realities.

Jackson's analysis of the electorate's mandate for a new direction away from his ultra-leftist policies suffers from either his intellectual capacity for linear reasoning, an emotional block or a political myopia so partisan that it is divorced from reality.

The election results show

"The total dismay among blacks that you are now witnessing is the result of a disastrous inability to read the times and adapt to a new set of realities."

that, for the first time, as many Americans call themselves Republicans as Democrats and 97 percent of the Republican Party is now white. Even Jackson's own Democratic Party chairman, Charles Manatt, is saying that their party needs to develop a message "that will win back white voters;" both a racial polarization and a party realignment have taken place.

And while white Democrats are suggesting that blacks find a new political home, Jackson says, "We were able to offer

help to progressives (whites) and help save the seats of many allies ... Mondale got about 37 million votes and almost 11 million of them were black. So our influence continues to grow."

Our problems also continue to grow, and that kind of logic does nothing to solve them. You wonder if these lines are

left over from his comic appearance on "Saturday Night Live."

However, both the comedy and the illogic are absent in the programs of two local NAACP presidents: J.B. Pressey Jr. of Fort Wayne, Ind., and John F. Jones of Mansfield, Ohio.

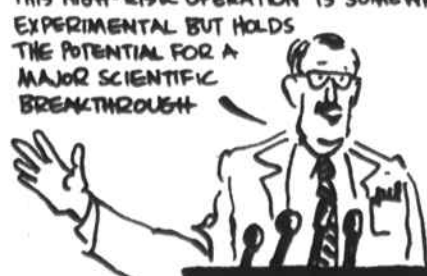
Both branches recently held their annual freedom fund dinners and both events spoke of the philosophy of economic self-help and political realism.

Pressey held his dinner at

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN - I AM ABOUT TO PERFORM A REVOLUTIONARY MEDICAL PROCEDURE



THIS HIGH-RISK OPERATION IS SOMEWHAT EXPERIMENTAL BUT HOLDS THE POTENTIAL FOR A MAJOR SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGH



DOCTOR - WHAT'S THE LIFE-EXPECTANCY?



OF THE PATIENT OR MY FAME?

