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EDITORIALS

The NAACP's initiative

KUDOS TO the city's NAACP for approaching the academic problems of black students with resolve and substance.

Instead of preaching what "they" ought to do about low scores among black county students on standardized tests -- which worsen with each grade level -- the organization has taken a "we" approach, forming an educational task force last April that in turn conceived an after-school tutorial program.

The concept is sound, practical and well-planned. The NAACP proposes to set up "learning centers" in local churches and the Winston Lake Family YMCA. Beginning Sept. 16, volunteer tutors from Winston-Salem State University, Wake Forest University and elsewhere will aid students with their studies on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Sessions will be held at each location from 2:30 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Already 10 churches have consented to participate in the program, and coordinators for each of the learning centers have been named. More should be forthcoming.

In fact, nary a stone seems to have been left unturned in the Community Tutorial Education Program's creation.

For instance, the program is built on community involvement, most noticeably from the black community itself. Ministers and churches play a part in it, as do retired teachers and college students.

More importantly, the program will stress parental involvement, a rare commodity in the city-county schools. Where PTAs and school board meetings have failed to rally significant involvement among black parents, maybe this program, with its grassroots tenor, will.

NAACP President Walter Marshall put it best to a *Chronicle* reporter last week.

"One of the philosophies of the NAACP is, if our children are to be educated, then we need to do it ourselves," Marshall said. "The educational system is not going to do it. We are best equipped to educate our children. All groups, other than blacks, educate their own."

To its credit, the city-county school system, at the NAACP's request, is organizing its own task force to study the problems of local students who fare poorly on standardized tests.

Thus, "we" and "they" potentially could work together to help underachievers find their way.

But there's more. The NAACP also plans a Sept. 6 workshop at Winston-Salem State University's Communications Building that will focus on educational issues and will be aimed primarily at black parents.

The sessions will cover test-taking skills, discipline in the schools, math anxiety, the role of the church in the educational process and political strategies for enhancing the education of black children, among others. Beverly Cole, national chairman of the NAACP's Education Committee, will appear.

Finally, amid all of our optimism, a word of warning: Neither the NAACP's tutorials nor its workshop is a sure-fire success. Although both look good on paper, both also require several key ingredients to work, foremost of which is the student who needs help. The best-organized program in the world won't succeed without the presence of the one who needs the help.

Which brings us back to square one: the parent, whose involvement is no luxury; it's a necessity.

ABOUT LETTERS

The *Chronicle* welcomes letters from its readers, as well as columns. Letters should be as concise as possible and typed or printed legibly. They also should include the name, address and telephone number of the writer.

Columns should follow the same guidelines and will be published if we feel they are of interest to our general readership.

We reserve the right to edit letters for brevity and grammar.

Submit your letters and columns to *Chronicle* Mailbag, P.O. Box 3154, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102.



The New Right: Frightening intolerance

W. LAFAYETTE, Ind. -- The New Right and many religious fundamentalists distinguish themselves from an earlier generation of American conservatives by their zealous advocacy of anti-intellectualism and educational intolerance of cultural and ideological diversity. Right-wing leader Phyllis Schlafly, for instance, has condemned what she terms "descriptive classroom discussions of fornication, homosexuality, contraceptives and abortion as though they were

FROM THE GRASSROOTS

By DR. MANNING MARABLE

wives into the labor force ...," she wrote. "Who is then going to raise the children?"

The Rev. Jerry Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority, extends this traditional sexist logic to embrace a reactionary social policy that looks backward in all educational, economic and political areas. "It is easy for people today who are violating

"theory of evolution," "magic" and other "un-Christian" themes.

One self-proclaimed "born-Again Christian" plaintiff, Vicki Frost, specifically criticized a textbook which discussed Renaissance art. The objectionable sentence in the text was the following: "A central idea of the Renaissance was a belief in the dignity and worth of human beings." Frost claimed that this passage was a form of un-Christian "humanism" which "specifically denies God as the Creator."

Frost then attacked texts for their description of the global nature of air and water as a form of dangerous "internationalism." She condemned a story about a boy who cooked at home as a negative sex role reversal, and termed a simple picture of "Jack and Jill" dancing as a possible depiction of "Satanic rites."

Frost also refused to accept the presentation of non-Christian "religious views" in class textbooks on an "equal (basis) to our own" religion. Finally, she echoed Schlafly and Falwell, in spirit if not in words: "Our

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"In the Moral Majority Report, Schlafly has called for a restoration of the male-dominated workplace: 'It should certainly not be our social policy to move wives into the labor force...,' she wrote. 'Who is then going to raise the children?'"

normal and acceptable practices."

The New Right demands that social history reverse itself -- that any discussion of contemporary social problems and issues should be banned, especially in the public schools -- and that the sterile, white-male-dominated culture of the early 20th century should be firmly restored.

In the *Moral Majority Report*, Schlafly has called for a restoration of the male-dominated workplace: "It should certainly not be our social policy to move

God's law and man's law to ridicule those who oppose them by simply saying, "That fellow's repressive; he is suggesting a return to where America was 50 years ago, morally," Falwell says. "That is exactly what I am proposing, morally."

The logical culmination of this intellectual rigidity and social backwardness was on display several weeks ago in a U.S. District Court in Greenville, Tenn., where seven families sued a local school board for teaching "disrespect" for parents, the

New York is coming -- unless you act

NEW YORK -- "Give Us Back Our City!" the headline in the *New York Post* screamed.

"The people of New York have had it," the story began. This white newspaper is now as alarmed as New York's black papers have been for months.

The black press already has covered citizen marches against drug pushers and "crack," cocaine's newest death form. When Dick Gregory, Ossie Davis and New York's black preachers recaptured a few street corners recently, the general media got the message.

There is another message in this if you don't live in New York: New York's drug problem is on its way to your city. Traditionally, drugs and drug empires get their foothold in New York and move across the country. But this epidemic of killer-cocaine and "skybasing" (PCP and crack) is different.

"New Yorkers are crying out -- in fear, but also anger," the *Post* said. That's the first phase your city will go through.

"To say, 'This is war,' is no exaggeration," the *Post* added. When your local papers admit the drug epidemic, it will be phase two.

Phase three will come when you read on the front page, as the *Post* reported, that your city is "at the threshold of an urban guerrilla war, as honest citizens fight to reclaim their city, block by block, schoolyard by schoolyard, building by building."

That's where most of the American cities are now. That's why its time to "Drop-A-Dime." Since the various government

TONY BROWN

Syndicated Columnist

agencies can't help us, we'd better help ourselves by turning our various communities into a network of informers to root out the pushers.

At the end of each show in my TV series in November, we will ask the viewers to call a local hotline and turn in a pusher or crack den.

I got the idea from a *Newsweek* article on "Drop-A-Dime" in

Suppose we can average 500 tips to local police in 100 cities; that would mean 50,000 tips and close to 20,000 arrests.

Assuming, of course, the police are willing to be police. Wall and Watson had to fight the police in Boston first.

The idea may not work in New York because the judges there, for example, rarely put a drug pusher away. However, if we turn enough dealers in, we may embarrass the system into action.

The ultimate authority in any



Boston. Bruce Wall, a preacher, and Georgette Watson, a community activist, warned a dope dealership to leave. The pushers refused.

Wall and Watson then formed "Drop-A-Dime." The name was copied from a street saying for tattling, born during the era of the 10-cent phone call. That was three years ago.

Now, the phone line records about 500 tips a month. More than a third have led to arrests.

society is the people and we need to begin to exercise that authority.

"Drop-A-Dime" with us in November. Tune in for the local phone number. Remember, New York is coming. Stop it now!

Tony Brown is a syndicated columnist and television host whose series, "Tony Brown's Journal," can be seen Sundays locally at 1:30 p.m. on channels 4 and 26.

CHILDWATCH

The real story on U.S. hunger

By MARIAN W. EDELMAN
Syndicated Columnist

WASHINGTON -- During a nationally televised press conference in June, President Reagan made some statements about hunger in America, about government efforts to combat it. The president's remarks, some of which were partially correct but incomplete or misleading, and some of which were just plain wrong, may have confused you about this problem in our nation.

Fortunately, a knowledgeable source on nutrition issues, the Washington-based Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, provided the following analysis to help us sift truth from fiction in the president's statements.

• *The president:* "I find it difficult to find any cases of starvation and undernourishment."

Fact: There is very little starvation in the United States -- undernutrition is widespread. The medical and research literature abounds with documented cases of undernutrition, especially among children. Most recently, the Massachusetts Nutrition Survey, conducted by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in 1983, found between 10,000 and 17,500 children in Massachusetts to be stunted, due largely to chronic malnutrition. A study at Children's Hospital in Chicago found a 24-percent increase from 1981 to 1983 in the number of young children admitted for conditions often linked to inadequate nutrition. A follow-up study found that 30 percent of young children admitted to the hospital's emergency room had abnormally low growth, and nearly half (47 percent) of the low-growth children had inadequate diets.

• *President Reagan:* "We've spent more on nutrition than has ever been spent before -- more than \$3 billion over what was spent in 1981."

Fact: The president has failed to take into account two key factors -- inflation and the rise in the number of people in poverty. The best way to evaluate the impact that changes in federal spending on food programs are having on hunger is to examine the change in per poor person, after adjustment for inflation. Only such a comparison can determine if purchasing power per poor person, as provided by federal programs, is up or down.

Such an analysis was conducted by the Congressional Research Service and issued by the House Ways and Means Committee in 1984. It found that federal food assistance spending per poor person dropped from 1980 to 1983, after adjustment for inflation.

An updated analysis, comparing fiscal years 1981 and 1985 (the president did) shows that simply adjusting for inflation wipes out all the increase in spending referred to by the president. When an adjustment also is made for the increase in the number of poor people, the result is that there has been a decrease in food assistance spending per poor person, as adjusted for inflation.

• *The president:* "... The federal government is providing I think, 93 million meals a day."

Fact: For the large majority of these meals, the federal government pays only a fraction. The president is counting 60 million meals a day for 20 million food stamp recipients -- but the average food stamp benefit is only 49 cents per person per meal. This does not buy a full meal.

In the school lunch program the president is counting million lunches provided to poor children where the government subsidizes one-sixth to one-seventh the cost of the meal.

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