

# Winston-Salem Chronicle

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ERNEST H. PITT, Publisher

NDUBISI EGEMONYE  
Co-Founder

ALLEN H. JOHNSON  
Executive Editor

ELAINE L. PITT  
Office Manager

MICHAEL A. PITT  
Circulation Manager

## EDITORIALS

### Thanks, we needed that

LAST week the National Newspaper Publishers Association, or NNPA, an organization representing more than 150 of the nation's black newspapers, canceled its Mid-Winter Workshops in Phoenix, Ariz., because the governor of Arizona had rescinded an executive order recognizing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

Gov. Evan Mecham used as his official reason the fact that the state's former governor, Bruce Babbitt, had bypassed the state Legislature in making the state holiday, therefore causing it to be illegal. He didn't absolutely have to rescind it, he just did.

His real reasons surfaced just before the opening of the NNPA workshops.

First, the governor said that there was no discrimination in Arizona. Then he said that black people need jobs, not another day off.

He followed those statements up by citing the holiday as a black holiday. He even warned outside black leaders of the terrible backlash local blacks would face if the agitation continued.

Of course, no one is afraid of Gov. Mecham. And even less afraid is America's black press. In fact, the black press has always been in the forefront of the fight against racism, bigotry and injustice whenever and wherever it has occurred.

What the good governor has done is to awaken the NNPA and America to the ugly realization that two separate and distinct societies still exist in America: one white, the other black.

We say to Gov. Mecham: Thanks, we needed that.

Now, perhaps, black men like Clarence Pendleton will see that there still is a need for affirmative action, the NAACP and coalitions of fair-minded whites and blacks.

Perhaps the NNPA will realize that there is something more that needs to be done in America besides begging corporate America for an ad or two.

Perhaps some of us will go back and read up on the many struggles that the black press has dealt with throughout its history and how the rights of African-Americans have been the true call and should be so today.

North Carolina has yet to make Dr. King's birthday a state holiday. There is an effort under way to change that. We hope Gov. James G. Martin will not wait until something ugly happens before he initiates some action toward that end.

We know it will be an uphill battle, but we encourage those who can see beyond the mountain-tops to join in and push for what is right.

### The Challenger revisited

LAST Jan. 28, the public treated the launching of space shuttles as fairly routine -- something akin to a big airplane taking off and flying a little higher and a little longer than Eastern or Piedmont.

The only novelty seemed to be in the milestones the shuttles showcased: the first black American astronaut or woman astronaut, a congressman in space, a schoolteacher in orbit. Reporters competed nationwide to be the first journalist in space, and everyday citizens looked forward to booking a flight to the moon someday soon.

Then something went wrong. The shuttle Challenger went up in a tragic ball of flames, killing its entire seven-man crew. Along with it went much of NASA's credibility and our smug assumption that space travel was something to be taken for granted.

The tragedy also hit close to home, as the second black American in space, Ron McNair, a proud graduate of nearby A&T State University, died with the crew.

Even 12 months later, the Challenger tragedy numbs our senses and saddens our hearts. But maybe we can learn from it.

Certainly NASA is now more fully aware of its shortcomings in ensuring safe flights, as are some aerospace contractors.

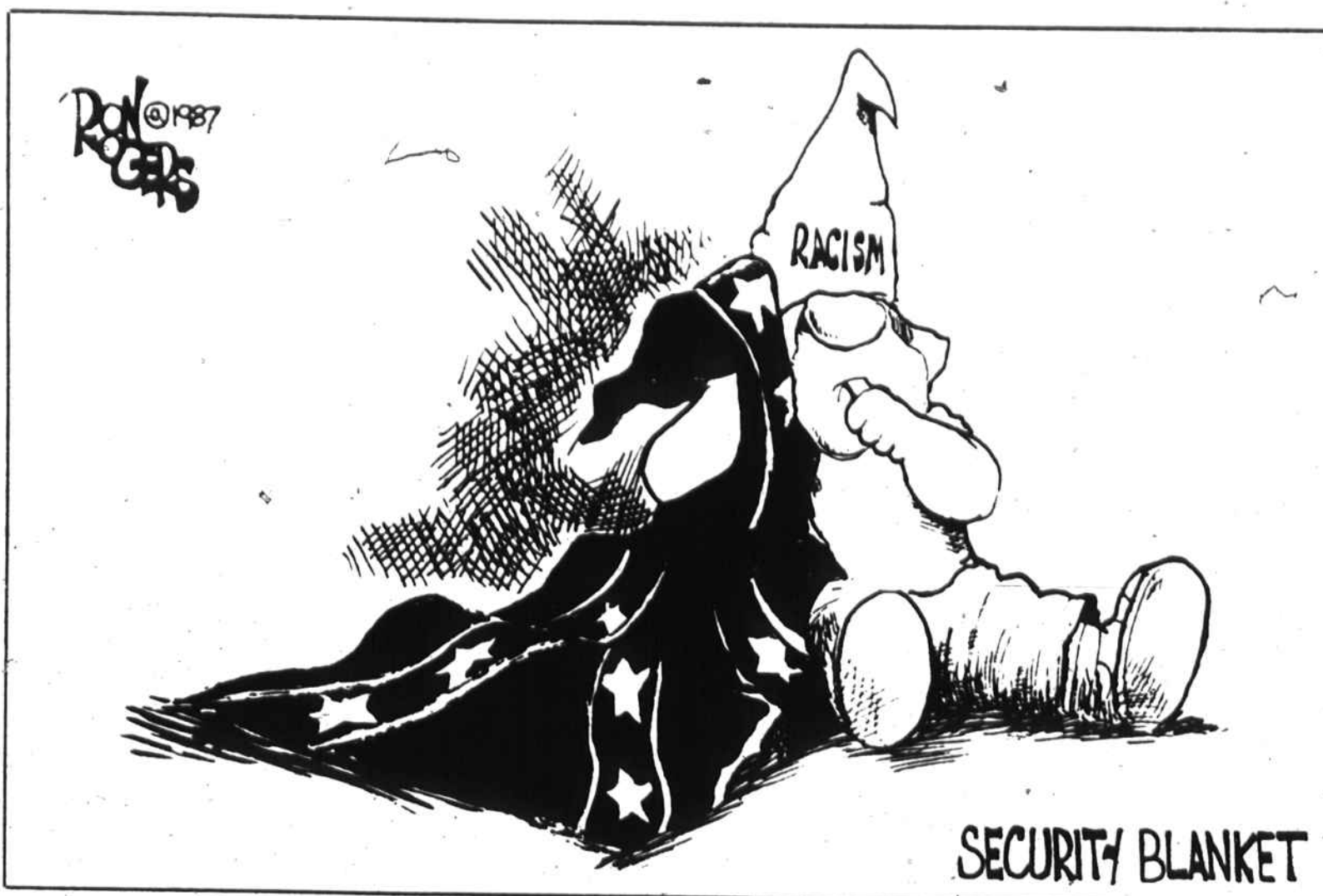
The space agency also has no doubt learned that the public-relations value of putting civilians in space does not outweigh the danger that the flights still present.

The wisdom of sending people rather than unmanned rockets into space has been widely questioned, as well it should be.

And the true heroism of those who man the shuttles is more deeply appreciated.

Ron McNair, for instance, will live forever as a symbol of what vision, intelligence and hard work can accomplish.

Even in death, McNair will inspire other black youngsters to reach for the stars -- and to use the boundless power of their minds and their dreams to someday get there.



### Oprah, Phil dance million-dollar waltz

NEW YORK -- Oprah Winfrey is locked in a death dance with Phil Donahue over the right to waltz across television land with what used to be called the middle-American housewife.

This seems, at first glance, to be an unlikely duo to be battling for studio hugs and handshakes that generate millions of network dollars. The target audience is white females; yet Donahue is a white man, Winfrey a black woman.

In the maturing years of feminism, one may ask why these supertalk hosts are not drawn from the target audience.

The answer lies in the duo's skills at exploiting the subtle needs of their key television audience.

In Donahue, the veteran, and Winfrey, the newly arrived, we have two masters of the con.

In bowing their audience's strings, they make full use of the fact that they are not white women. Both are skilled actors: Each knows when to caress a wrist or touch a shoulder or milk an emotion just so.

For his part, Donahue, attuned to the times, has found acceptance -- and profits -- in surfing the cresting waves of women's consciousness. Early on, he jettisoned the language of the chauvinist and made himself over as a highly merchandiseable, anti-macho man.

LES PAYNE  
Syndicated Columnist

The macho man, at least for now, has been discredited.

His natural successor, the truly non-assertive man, was not up to the rigors of the climb. So into this vacuum has moved the anti-macho man, for whom, in television, Donahue is the prototype.

Such men have, of course, pro-

ing to this mass audience, Donahue has been more successful than most women, especially the activist ones.

In a poll of Milwaukee secretaries a few years ago, Donahue was selected as the person they would most like to have as a boss. He beat runner-up Erma Bombeck and every other female candidate in the poll. Chief among cited reasons was Donahue's ability to speak to the

*"In (Phil) Donahue, the veteran, and (Oprah) Winfrey, the newly arrived, we have two masters of the con."*

liferated elsewhere: Dustin Hoffman played the movie-model in "Kramer vs. Kramer."

In the public arena at least, I submit that this fellow, with all his sensitivity, is a fraud. He fully intends to lead, to dominate. With the feminists snapping at his heels, he seeks ways to run the corporation, to host the show, to hold on to the power.

Donahue, for instance, said in an interview that he would like to "be on '60 Minutes.' I'd like to produce the 'Today Show.' I'd like to be in the U.S. Senate."

These ambitions can be more easily realized in a country where women are the majority by taking their needs into account. In play-

needs of women.

In some ways, Donahue has become one of the leading feminists in the country. He is softer than Bella Abzug. Warmer than Gloria Steinem. Glibber, even, than Betty Friedan. These activists, not coincidentally, helped make over Donahue, who is not burdened with their zeal for authenticity.

Some years ago, I tried to expose Donahue, arguing that his role interrupted women's evolutionary move to empowerment in the television industry. No matter how sensitive a male television host, I argued, it would be healthier for a young girl to

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### '87: Facing the challenges of the future

■ This article is the second in a two-part series.

NEW YORK -- The new year poses serious challenges to the nation and to black citizens.

At the top of the list is the challenge to revitalize our economy to finally move toward full employment, instead of pretending that recession-level jobless rates are acceptable. That's going to take serious action by government and by the private sector.

A real trade policy will have to be implemented. Just talking a good game of fair trade while economic rivals dump their goods and steal jobs from Americans isn't enough.

Corporate America also needs to concentrate on building its long-term, job-producing productive capacity instead of concentrating on short-term financial results -- and on the mergers and acquisitions that lead to heavy debt loads, lost jobs and less competition.

The year will mark the start of political jockeying for the presidential nominations, and that could mean more grandstanding than action from Congress, even though it has a full slate of important measures that need attention.

Failure to act could mean voter dissatisfaction with both parties. The Democrats, however, have more to lose, since they now control both houses of Congress and are in a position to pass long-needed legislation.

The legislative agenda should include such priorities as closing

### TO BE EQUAL

By JOHN JACOB

loopholes in civil rights and fair housing laws, real welfare reform that creates training and job opportunities, and expanded federal aid that helps the public schools bring quality education to disad-

being dormant for so long.

In part, that's because so much poverty and misery can no longer be justified while whiz kids still in their 20s make six-figure salaries on Wall Street. Disgust at speculative excesses calls our era's dominant themes of selfishness and greed into question.



vantaged young people.

Congress also must act to implement the broken full employment promises of the Humphrey-Hawkins Act and to start the rebuilding of our deteriorating infrastructure and cities.

If Congress is determined to help lead the way to more responsible social and fiscal policies, it will have support from growing numbers of Americans.

1987 could be a year in which idealism and belief in principles like equality of opportunity return to the national scene after

Another reason for a turnaround in 1987 lies in the growing heritage of voluntarism. The government's failures have led many individuals to become involved in social problems, and they see that their efforts will come to nothing without national policies that reinforce their activities and commit resources to fill unmet needs.

A final reason for expecting change lies in the failure of past policies.

Government withdrawal has  
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## CHILDWATCH

### 'Puppet power' can help a lot

By MARIAN W. EDELMAN  
Syndicated Columnist

WASHINGTON -- Fifteen-year-old Sharyn has a lot of problems.

"I was up at 4:30 a.m. feeding the baby," she says, "after I changed her at 3." She has to borrow money from her father to pay a babysitter so she can attend school.

"When I got to school, I was late for first period," she says. "The principal screamed at me in front of all my friends."

Sharyn feels cut off from her peer group these days. "A lot of my plans and a lot of my dreams have changed" -- because of the newborn baby, she admits.

Sharyn sounds like any teen mother struggling with the difficult realities of raising a child. But Sharyn is a puppet, one of several characters in "A Table for One," a one-hour puppet drama developed by The Kids on the Block Inc. to help children think and talk about teen pregnancy.

Sharyn, her baby daughter Charlotta, her boyfriend Charles, friend Joanne and the other players in the show are true-to-life puppet characters with whom children can identify.

The drama deals candidly with the pressure teens feel to have sex and the problems of teen motherhood and fatherhood, deflating the myths too many of our children believe.

Best of all, after the show children can ask questions of the various characters -- questions they might not dare to address to an adult or even a friend.

The idea of using puppets to help children come to grips with sensitive subjects was thought up by former teacher Barbara Aiello.

She was seeking a way to help her students become more comfortable with youngsters who have disabilities. When she tried using a puppet to help the students understand the problems of a child with cerebral palsy, she discovered what she calls "the power of puppetry" -- its ability to communicate in a non-threatening way.

From this seed, Ms. Aiello developed a very successful production company, The Kids on the Block, which offers puppet programs on a wide range of subjects, from disabilities and medical problems to social problems like sexual abuse, drug and alcohol abuse and teen-age pregnancy.

Each show is carefully researched -- including testing script ideas with children themselves. The program materials -- scripts, cassette tapes, puppets and so forth -- can be purchased from the company.

In the past 10 years, the shows have become very popular with churches, schools, hospitals and community organizations. There are now 750 programs in use in 49 states and several foreign countries.

If you are interested in the teen pregnancy puppet show or any other programs from The Kids on the Block, call this toll-free number: 1-800-368-KIDS.

Marian Wright Edelman is a National Newspaper Publishers Association columnist who is president of the Children's Defense Fund, a national voice for youth.

## 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.

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