

# Winston-Salem Chronicle

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## Thank you, black women

IN the face of sometimes overwhelming odds and at considerable cost to themselves, black women have endured and helped maintain the survival of our race. Thank you.

This tribute comes for no particular reason or occurrence that singles out such merit, but rather for the many unsung deeds that you have done over the centuries for no other reason than to help us survive.

Thank you for making the men of our race feel like they were somebody, when white society often made us feel and often told us we were nobody. You endured the rage of our men kept locked away from white eyes because they felt it was useless to fight against the oppressor.

It was you who endured the ravages of racism and sexism, you who took a stand against both evils -- in defense of yourself, your children and your man. It was you who sacrificed your dreams to make a home for your family, you who put off until another time that little snatch of pleasure that made life livable.

You took that job men were sometimes too proud to take. You worked that second or third job while at the same time making sure your children got the attention they needed. And very often, you raised that family alone.

Somehow, in spite of all the obstacles you faced, you not only survived, you prospered. And you passed your knowledge on so that the next generation would have it better. It is their fault some chose not to listen or to learn.

And so here you are, poised to meet the formidable challenges of the next century, knowing that you will most likely have to face those challenges alone. Why? Because so many of your men are addicted to drugs or alcohol, are in jail or dying of AIDS, or have dropped out altogether and eke out an existence as street people, or are dead.

Because you are aware of this grim picture of your race at risk, you have again taken it upon yourself to save those you can. It is you who are starting and maintaining neighborhood groups fighting drug traffic. You are fighting for quality education and job training programs for the young. You are fighting to keep the employment opportunities open. Thank you.

So often in life we pass through having wished we had said what was on our minds but for whatever reason never getting around to it. We chose not to let another opportunity pass without saying what was on our mind.

In our view, what you have done is far too important to go unrecognized.

## The trouble with broccoli

THE trouble with broccoli is that the president of the United States does not like it. And therein lies the rub.

We watched with amazement at how passionate broccoli producers became when President Bush boldly proclaimed: "I hate broccoli. I'm the president and I don't have to eat it if I don't want to." Or something to that effect. So agitated were these producers by the president's pronouncement that they sent him a message -- 10 tons of broccoli. Now take that, Mr. President!

What we want to know is where was all of that passion for the nation's poor and hungry? They would not have cared whether it was broccoli or beans, as long as it was something to eat, whether they liked it or not.

Yes, we understand that the White House kept a few stalks for the first lady and the rest was sent to the nearest soup kitchen. We are sure the poor in the Washington, D.C., area appreciate the benevolent gesture of the most powerful people in the world. But let's be real.

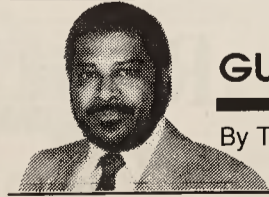
It took a presidential blast for the broccoli producers to send the food that may never have reached the poor otherwise. We wonder what might have happened had the president said, "I hate beef." We may have had cattle grazing on the White House lawn.

The point here is that there is plenty to become passionate about when it comes to the poor and the hungry in this country and around the world. In our view, food producers would be better served making a point to those in need that someone cares about them rather than trying to impress the president when he yells he doesn't like the food they produce.

## Lenten season is time to remember injustice, vow to work for justice

During this season of Lent and Holy Week, churches the world over are commemorating the unjust, cruel and senseless murder and martyrdom of Jesus of Nazareth. It recalls with pain and anguish again how the chief priests, the judges, the Sanhedrin Court, the bribed false witnesses, the Roman police and death squads conspired together to kill an innocent man. To this end, no plotting in dark or smoke-filled conference rooms, no repression, no political maneuvering, no lying, no bribery was too debased to employ against Jesus. They were dedicated with heart and soul to the success of their political murder of Jesus of Nazareth. Their aim was for Jesus to die the most ignominious of deaths so they themselves could come out looking good -- but not necessarily right. They did all of this in the name of justice but their justice turned out to be the agent of death. Even though Pilate knew Jesus was innocent of all charges, he did not matter because he was just another poor, wretched Jew who happened to fall into disfavor with the local authorities. Why should Pilate risk his political career to save a

nobody like Jesus? So, he delivered Jesus to be killed and washed his hands. Pilate could wash the blood stains from his hands, but not from his



### GUEST EDITORIAL

By THE REV. JOHN MENDEZ

conscience and soul. In Winston-Salem, as we observe these Lenten services, and we sing that old Negro spiritual, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" we must answer yes, we were there, because we see Jesus of Nazareth being conspired against and crucified over again in the unjust treatment of Darryl Hunt. Did not Jesus say, "What you have done to the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me?" Just as Jesus' life did not matter to Pontius Pilate, the Sanhedrin Court or the Roman police, Darryl Hunt's life does not matter either. Now Warren Sparrow, Donald

Tisdale, and a few vindictive police officers are more desperate and dedicated to the success of their legal lynching of Darryl Hunt. No repres-

sion, no political maneuvering, no lying, no harassing of witnesses and no bribery is too vile in order to get a conviction to make themselves look good even if they are not right. Issues of justice and truth are no longer objectives in this case; the issue is convicting Darryl.

Already we have observed with moral outrage some political maneuvering by the state and police to get a guilty verdict. The trial has been moved from Winston-Salem to Hickory, where the state feels confident they will get an all-white jury whose mentality is already conditioned for a legal lynching. The judge will be the same

judge Rousseau who presided over the Sammy Mitchell trial and who following a mistrial gave Mitchell 50 years for the murder of Arthur Wilson. Since when does a judge award that much time for black-on-black crime? Yet he is the judge in the Hunt trial.

Certain police officers like Hicks and Weaver who should be out trying to solve the dozens of unsolved murders of blacks in this city are instead mysteriously showing up in court for bond hearings and change of venue hearings with respect to Darryl, unnecessarily. They have also been accused of harassing certain witnesses for the defense, while state witnesses who have committed crimes since Darryl's conviction have had charges dropped by the District Attorney's office. No doubt there are a minority of police officers who feel they must do these unlawful acts to vindicate former detective Dalton who was demoted for his mishandling of the Deborah Sykes case.

However, the bottom line, we believe, behind this whole scenario is Donald Tisdale's hatred and personal vendetta not for Darryl Hunt but

Sammy Mitchell whose case he lost back in 1974. If it meant killing Darryl to get to Sammy, so be it. If Darryl would have cooperated with the state in falsely testifying against Sammy, Darryl would be free today. These are desperate and dangerous men who will go to any extent to bend the law to serve immoral ends. If truth was really on their side, they would not have to be so manipulative.

Yet in the face of these vicious attacks and maneuverings by the state, Darryl, like Jesus, has remained silent, unprovoked and undisturbed, because somehow he knows that "truth crushed to earth will rise again." His silence has unmasked the treachery and the hypocrisy of the state. It's no longer Darryl or Sammy who is on trial, but Sparrow, Tisdale, the police and the state. For they may run Winston's judicial system. But there is a higher court of moral law to which we have appealed with the righteous God presiding who says, "No lie can live forever."

Darryl may appear to be weak and defenseless against such overwhelming odds, but there is a moral

power in the universe that says, "The arch of the universe is wide and it tends towards justice." Darryl will have the money to invest in the way the state does, but through struggle for justice he has the truth and justice on his side. He has faith in a God that says, "Goodness may reign for a day, but it must ultimately give way to the triumph of justice." Darryl and Sammy and thousands of others who have been victimized by this vicious system are not alone, because the God who sets the oppressed free will be their cosmic companion.

The same God who sustained Nelson Mandela for 27 years in prison will sustain Darryl and Sammy. The same God who enabled George Washington to bend England to his will will bend Winston with Darryl. The same God who empowered Martin Luther King with moral authority will also empower Darryl's cause just. The same God who gave prophetic visions to Hamo Heschel, Fannie Lou Hamer

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## Know where your tax dollars go, what officials do

### To The Editor:

As a concerned taxpayer (facing a 40-percent tax increase), I read with much interest the story of Elijah Snipes (March 20), who was lost inside the county jail for six months. I have this old-fashioned belief that a taxpayer deserves to know how his monies are being spent and how his elected officials are performing. Since the article seemed to be made up mostly of comments from the Sheriff's and District Attorney's offices, I was inclined to make some phone calls to try to find out a little more about the problems with our jail and court system. I found out more than I wanted to know.

I called about two dozen people, starting with the Sheriff and District Attorney, along with as many of the people mentioned in the article as would talk to me. From there my research included everyone from the local and federal offices of the NAACP and the ACLU, the State Attorney's office, newspaper reporters, community leaders, county commissioners and one of the candidates for Sheriff in the next election. Here's a synopsis of my six hour phone session.

• Would Mr. Snipes' sentence have been lighter had they not "lost his paperwork"? Probably, with time served (six months), they'll be sending him back to Forsyth County within six weeks to three months.

• Did we, the taxpayers, pay to keep him in our county jail for six months when he really should have been in a state facility? (This turned out to be just the tip of the iceberg.)

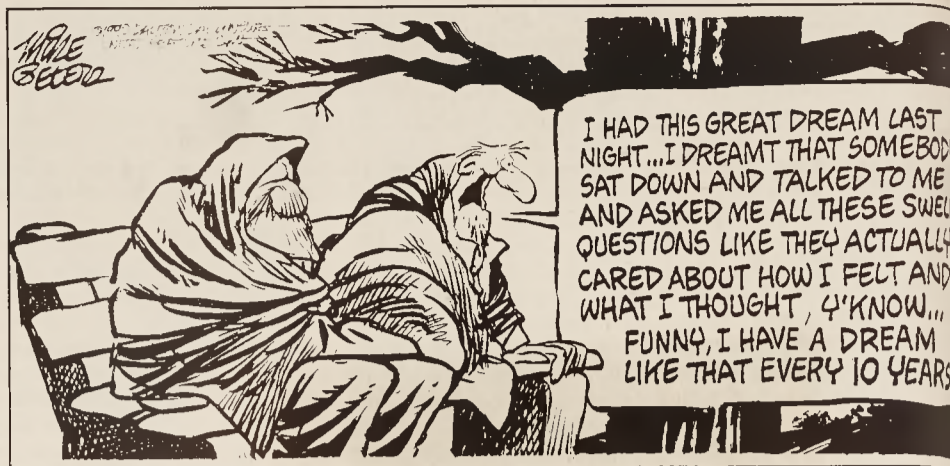
• Mr. Snipes' probation was revoked for not paying restitution (on a rental washer and dryer). What are his chances of paying restitution from a state prison? What are the odds of this young man coming back a bitter and vengeful professionally trained criminal? Will he extract his restitution from us? Does he realize he's being "rehabilitated"? We can't keep him in jail forever -- we can't afford it.

Poor and undereducated people seldom stray far from their home, so this is definitely a problem the community must deal with sooner or later. And don't kid yourself -- it's not an issue of black and white. It's an issue of rich and poor, educated and undereducated. If you don't agree, read on.

The county jail is in danger of being sued over inhumane conditions and overcrowding always. If a suit is won, the money would come from the taxpayers' pockets -- not from the elected officials who have helped to create the situation. We have a right to know why this situation persists.

The Sheriff said that 80 to 90 of the 450 inmates will be processed this week, due to a new indigence screening program. Any prisoners left over 268 constitutes grounds for a lawsuit. If the court system is so clogged, how can we process nearly one-fourth of the jail population in one week? Why wasn't this done sooner? Is the jail being kept overcrowded intentionally to keep up pressure for a new facility?

Are our elected officials playing hard and fast with the taxpayers' money, and at the same time, treating our tried and untried prisoners like sacks of garbage to be thrown on the floor, in hopes of a new landfill soon? Yes, these are serious questions, so I continued my phone campaign for opinions and answers.



How can we process 90 prisoners in one week? First, plea bargains. After sleeping on the floor for 90 days, a man will start to compromise. Second, cases that "can't or shouldn't" be tried. People told me that a public defender and a judge seldom dismiss cases because of lack of evidence. Instead, their cases are continued until the defendant breaks or new evidence is found. No strong evidence is necessary to get a guilty plea -- just weeks (sometimes months) of intimidation and hopelessness.

Another common opinion was that bail is set entirely too high and a person's ability to pay is not considered. This is not a question of guilt or innocence. At a bond hearing you haven't been convicted yet. Remember, the next victim could be your grandson or a valued employee, in jail for 90 days without a trial or a phone call. It happens.

In this same article a man, after 90 days of incarceration without a hearing, had his bail reduced from \$22,000 to \$500. One of these figures is wrong, and my guess is the first one. When oversights like this occur, the as yet unconvicted person loses his job ... goes farther into debt ... his family suffers ... he suffers. And all the while we, the taxpayers, are footing the bill for this untried/unconvicted man's room and board, lost productivity, and sometimes we support his family through food stamps and welfare. If you don't mind paying the taxes necessary to handle the problem this way, you aren't seeing the "big picture."

If we can alleviate the problem of overcrowding by setting more reasonable bails, is the excessive population intentional? Are these 80 to 90 prisoners who are being released this week people who shouldn't have been incarcerated (for so long), or are they criminals who shouldn't be released (so soon)?

I've supported the proposed new jail facility, but those running the present system will have to account for these problems first. If we keep our local prisoners near home and don't cut off communication with the world for 90 to 180 days at a time, we'd have a better chance of reducing the number of repeat offenders.

Elijah Snipes could be living in jail but on work release to help pay restitution. He could be keeping touch with the few people who care about him, instead of getting a state-paid training program on how to steal more and get caught less.

These are questions we must answer, problems we must face, now or later. Write a letter, make a phone call. It's your right to know how your

## CHRONICLE MAILBAG

### Our Readers Speak Out

money is being used or misused, as the case may be. Remember, elected officials work for you, and are paid by you, and come November, can be fired by you.

Mark G. Eyre  
Winston-Salem

### Day care availability

#### To The Editor:

Parents are having a very difficult time finding safe, healthy and reliable day care, especially in a residential setting. The city of Winston-Salem should be helping, but is instead discouraging growth and is rumored to be planning a crackdown in June on all residential day care operators. I cannot comprehend what purpose the city must have in mind for standing in the way of this much-needed and sought-after service.

Almost two years ago, the North Carolina Day Care Commission published regulations to encourage "small home" day care facilities (five to eight children) to grow to "large homes" (12 to 15 children) in a private residence. Such growth would have almost no additional impact on the neighborhood, but could place two to three times the children in the care of two or more adults who could each take over if one were to be injured.

A good idea -- but the city of Winston-Salem has never approved even one such permit. (Such facilities *do* operate here, but they do so illegally.)

The Planning Board fears the impact on residential neighborhoods (the only zoning in which large homes are permitted), but has never seen a large home. Despite urging, they have refused to visit one to see at first hand its minimal impact on the neighborhood. Some members privately confide that they wouldn't want one in their neighborhood, certain that it would look like a commercial day care center.

The Planning Board staff provides the technical reasons for their growth inhibiting rulings. Their staff has maintained that a large home must meet parking requirements for a "Day Care Center," despite wording to the contrary in our Zoning Ordinance, internal disagreement among the staff itself, and non-concurrence by Traffic Engineering. They say they feel that a large home in a private residence needs a commercial-style parking lot with Entrance and Exit signs to protect the children and prevent a traffic hazard.

According to the City Attorney's

office, they have the power to ignore such prejudices in any way they believe is "reasonable."

If a large home operator did receive this requirement for a Conditional Use Permit, they would very likely refuse a Special Use Permit, since they would almost surely violate the requirement to "... be in harmony with the area." Since both permits are required, the Planning Board is able to prevent a large home from ever being in our city.

The parents of our city have a right to choose between residential and institutional day care for their children. We believe that the growth of residential day care is assured by their motive. Residential day care, on the other hand, needs the cooperation and encouragement of state and local government to survive.

Parents who value the option of residential day care should call Martha Wood's office at 727-2039 to express those views, before residential day care is crushed completely by biased bureaucracy.

She's listened to us -- she'll listen to you.

Robert A. Dorinda L. Winston

### Right on!

#### To The Editor:

What an excellent edition today's (March 22) *Chronicle* by seven! Wilson!

The language and filth in our music and television are certainly contributing to rape and degeneration in every way -- blacks, whites, male, female, young, maybe older folks. Thanks.

Richard S. Winston

### Alumni beware

#### To The Editor:

When will we learn that it is important to save our learning institutions than our immediate means of livelihood? We have allowed demented children -- albino Africans -- to destroy our libraries and institutions of learning at least five times: 1. Greeks in Persia, 2. Greeks in Persia, 3. Christians (Holy Roman Empire) in Timbuktu, 4. Europeans in Timbuktu, 5. Aztecs and Mayans in Mexico. Next comes the eve of the 21st century when

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