

Winston-Salem Chronicle

"The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly"

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Ernest H. Pitt • Ndubisi Egemonye
Editor/Publisher Co-Founder

Member in good standing with:



Confederate flag

A recognizable symbol of white supremacy

The governor's proclamation of March 4 as Confederate Flag Day for the past three years, and the General Assembly's 1961 resolution authorizing the flying of the Confederate flag on special days are both embarrassing examples of planned ignorance. "There's nothing bad about the Confederate flag: it ain't a problem until we say it's a problem," they seem to declare.

Throughout American history, the non-white perspective has been ignored.

History has been written by those in power: the past viewed through white eyes, our textbooks penned by white hands. When occasionally forced to glance, for an instant, at the non-white perspective, the only excuse offered is: we didn't know that bothered you.

Governor Martin didn't know the Confederate flag is offensive to two million blacks and a good number of whites in the Old North State? Once again, the cloak of ignorance is being pulled over our eyes: our state government wants us to believe that the heritage of the Confederate flag deserves to be celebrated. When faced with serious questioning about the proclamation, the governor's office for citizen's affairs offered these excuses:

"We didn't say anything in the proclamation about flying the flag . . ."

"We're not talking about the Rebel flag, we're talking about the original Confederate flag . . ." [The one nobody recognizes as a Confederate flag, the one most people have never seen. We think we know which one zealous patriots will fly on March 4.]

"We're not talking about the Confederate Battle flag, the one used by the Ku Klux Klan . . ."

"Maybe the Confederate flag symbolizes slavery, but it doesn't symbolize racism . . ." [The planned ignorance form of government.]

In choosing this method of paying tribute to 125,000 North Carolinians who fought in the Civil War, Governor Martin was willing to risk offending the two million African-American citizens of our state.

Governor Martin and his administration are not in a position to tell blacks what is offensive to them, what ought to and ought not to be an insult to their integrity. A burglar can't tell the one he robs not to be offended. A rapist can't tell his victim that there's nothing to be offended about.

There is no denying the symbolism of the Confederate flag — any Confederate flag, which is the point the NAACP makes.

Is it asking too much for Governor Martin to show leadership in the struggle for more sensitivity from the powers-that-be?

We understand that the request for the proclamation of Confederate Flag Day came from the state Department of Cultural Resources. Certainly, we want to acknowledge our past — even our past mistakes. But it is possible to recognize or acknowledge events of the past without glorifying them. Governor Martin's proclamation urges citizens "to reflect upon our state's history during those tragic years and those who served our state under those banners."

An ad-hoc (volunteer) citizens committee composed of articulate, fair-minded African-Americans and whites could certainly provide the governor with more appropriate, and more meaningful ways in which to remember those ancestors.

The central issue of the Civil War was slavery. There wouldn't be a Confederate flag at all if it weren't for slavery. They are inseparable.

The Confederate Flag should not be celebrated.

Our opinion
The Confederate flag should not be celebrated or honored.

Wallschleger should get his figures straight

To the Editor:
I read with great interest the article in the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* concerning the "decline" of Democratic voters. I am concerned that false information has been provided to your readers. Specifically, the figures on the front page which purport to evidence of a "decline" in Democratic voters in 1990 are wholly inaccurate. More importantly, the actual 1990 figures establish that, in Forsyth County, new Democratic registration exceeded new Republican registration by over 1,000 voters.

Charles Wallschleger, Forsyth County Republican chairman, mistakenly states: "In one year . . . we picked up 1790 voters in 1990. The Democrats picked up 250." This figure for 1990 is not just misleading, it widely misses the mark.

On December 29, 1989, there were 78,038 Democrats registered in Forsyth County and 46,278 Republicans. On December 31, 1990, there were 82,782 Democrats and 49,711 Republicans. Accordingly, in 1990 there was a net gain of 4744 new Democratic voters, as compared to 3433 new Republicans. Where Mr. Wallschleger got his numbers for 1990, I have no idea.

If the figures provided for 1990 are actually numbers for 1991, then the previous year (1990) should also be considered to assess whether there is a Democratic decline. Clearly, 1991 — non-election year — cannot be used to evince any trend or dramatic shift.

There is no doubt that, over the last ten years, the percentage of Democrats in the state and county has slowly decreased and that the percentage of Republicans has slowly increased. However, your readers should know that the 1990 figures set forth in the article were wrong, and that the situation is not nearly as extreme as indicated in the erroneous information provided by Mr. Wallschleger.

Furthermore, I believe that voter discontent with Republican policies and leadership will halt any further increases in Republican registration. In my opinion, Republicans are close to reaching their maximum level of support. David Duke could not increase his support beyond approximately 33% of the electorate. I seriously doubt whether the Republicans can ever push their registration much beyond 35% in North Carolina or Forsyth County.

Very truly yours,
Gary W. Jackson

Need more candidates

To the Editor:
I would like to urge more concerned citizens to file to run for office. Every incumbent should have a challenger so that issues can be debated and clarified.



CHRONICLE MAILBAG

Our Readers Speak Out

Every incumbent was once not a public official. At some point each of them decided to run for office and offer to become a part of the system that sets policy and makes laws . . . our government.

I sincerely hope that those of you who want to get involved will step out and do it now. Don't wait to be asked, just do it!

Filing closes at 12 p.m. Monday, March 2.

Ann Esch

Populists respond

To the Editor:
February 19 and 20 found the local news media of radio, T.V., and newspapers, peppered with a story that has no basis in fact. The Populist Party of North Carolina was vilified in a blatant defamation of character, supposedly through the accusation of something calling itself "North Carolina Against Race and Religious Violence." If there were any racially or "religiously" motivated acts of violence committed against anyone in North Carolina, the Populist Party hereby formally denies any participation, or even knowledge of it.

The Populist Party abhors vio-

lence. We stand for Equal Rights for Americans of all races, not excluding the white race. We are for a return to Christian ethics and constitutional government. We are for "America First." Our government must begin to see the needs of the American people before doling out multi-billions each year in aid overseas. We are for a return to government "by the people and for the people" — the American people.

We are a grassroots, working-class movement, trying to achieve these goals through the election of "America First" candidates, and by communicating regularly with our representatives on Capital Hill. As a result, we are drawing fire from those who are currently profiting from Big Government, foreign aid, and racial prejudice. These individuals have profited so much from these unconstitutional injustices, that their enormous wealth yields a lot of power with the Associated Press. But, I am certain, if you would take the time to investigate the charges, you would find them to be nothing more than political cannon fodder.

We have a right to defend ourselves and to demand that our side of the story be told. Please do your

part to give us a fair representation.

A.J. Barker
Chairman
N.C. Populist Party

Investigate Bush

To the Editor:
It's hard to believe, but there's a serious presidential candidate who once headed a vigilante organization that's been linked to assorted civil rights violations, murders, international drug dealing, and all manner of criminals.

I'm not talking about David Duke, I'm talking about his fellow Republican — George Herbert Walker Bush, longtime CIA operative and former director of that vile organization.

More people of color around the world have suffered at the hands of the CIA than have suffered at the hands of all the assorted KKK groups combined.

It's an election year, folks. James Meredith supports Duke. Shouldn't we find out why?

Get the facts, then do your part. This country belongs to all of us. If it goes down, we go down, too.

Anna Wilson

New Jersey: Still no justice, still no peace

In Teaneck, New Jersey, there is a certain hostile gloom in the air concerning race relations. This is the situation in the aftermath of the recent acquittal of a white police officer, Gary Spath, on charges of manslaughter in the killing of an African-American male teenager, Phillip Pannell.

The news that an African-American male teenager had been fatally shot by a white police officer is not, unfortunately, isolated to the state of New Jersey. It is happening all over the nation, in particular these incidents occur in urban areas where the African-American community is concentrated and policed by persons from outside of the community.

This New Jersey case, however, had at one time the potential to send a message to police departments across the nation. That message should have been "Racially motivated police brutality will not be tolerated and officers involved will be prosecuted." But, that is not what eventually happened.

In April of 1990, young Phillip Pannell was shot twice by Officer Spath in Teaneck, New Jersey. Officer Spath claimed that Pannell had made a motion by putting his hand in his pocket that served as a threat to the police officer. Spath says he killed Pannell in self defense. Yet, after investigating this case, the

Attorney General of New Jersey decided to prosecute Officer Spath on charges of manslaughter after witnesses revealed that Pannell was

will be added to the growing list of victims of racially motivated police brutality.

Phillip's mother, Mrs. Thelma



CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

By BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS JR.

actually shot while holding both of his arms up in the air surrendering to Officer Spath.

The city of Teaneck and the state of New Jersey waited to see if justice would be done in this case. On February 11, 1992, an all white jury concluded that Officer Spath was not guilty of the charges although the state presented medical and scientific evidence that Pannell was shot twice while his arms were raised.

We have conducted a survey of similar cases in other parts of the country and we have found that all white juries are very reluctant to convict a white police officer in the killing of an African-American male, no matter what evidence is presented during the trial. White police officers are more than "presumed innocent" in these types of cases, they are usually found innocent. Thus, Phillip Pannell's name

Pannell, cried out in the Hackensack, NJ courtroom where the trial was held. When the jury foreman stated the "Not guilty" verdict, Mrs. Pannell shouted, "No! No! . . . Why, Lord Jesus, why?" The Pannell family, like many other African-American families, now will have to live

with the knowledge that the justice system "usually does not work for us."

African-Americans are about 25% of the approximately 40,000 persons who reside in Teaneck. If racial justice is to be a reality in this community, or in any community in the United States, then acts of wanton racially motivated police violence must be stopped.

There are many religious leaders and other civic leaders in New Jersey who are now trying to secure peace and better race relations in the state after the emotions of many have been disturbed by the Teaneck verdict. We support those efforts for reconciliation, but we know that until there is justice, there will certainly be no peace.

