

Winston-Salem Chronicle

"The Twin City's Award-Winning Weekly"

Established in 1974

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

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Editorials

Taking charge

The Forsyth Community Development Council (FCDC) last week answered the community's cry for leadership in race relations, simply by deciding not to turn a deaf ear. They, like all groups that plan our city's development, rightfully own the responsibility to act on the many ways that racism affects our daily lives: institutional racism and the more informal versions.

Community planners must forge the path into a new era of race relations.

FCDC is a wide-ranging group of individuals which is responsible for overseeing the implementation of goals in the county's strategic plan, Common Vision. This plan, bound in a two-inch thick report, includes more strategy than specific goals. The FCDC reduced Common Vision to a work plan, and appears to be trying to move the community ahead in many areas, including improving the quality of life for the under-employed and under-valued.

Common Vision doesn't speak to race relations in particular, but its members boldly put race relations on the agenda at a recent meeting: This alone is such a simple, yet critical step. More of us must put race relations on the agenda!

Quit listening to others say, "Something ought to be said, something ought to be done": Say it yourself! Do it yourself!

The FCDC has asked one of its task teams to look at race relations: to see if there are things they ought to do — in the short and long term — that are not being done.

We applaud their interest and hope it develops into a full-fledged effort that will inspire others to action.

EOD dreams

The Winston-Salem Urban League works year-round to initiate meaningful, positive, long-lasting change. Its annual Equal Opportunity Day and dinner is a celebration to focus attention on efforts to insure fair and equal treatment of citizens, regardless of race, creed, color, religion, national origin or sex: it's a long checklist.

We observe Equal Opportunity Day in hopes the dream becomes reality.

The Urban League's programs focus on nurturing and empowering senior citizens who have been cast aside, single parents who have been downtrodden, people with drug and alcohol problems who have given up all hope, and the many individuals who need a strong support network.

Capitalizing on the hidden and overlooked resources in African-Americans, and combining those with the vast and sometimes hard-to-tap resources of the business community is the admirable work of the Urban League.

EOD is a reminder that the greatness of our country rests upon the principle of equal opportunity for all.

About letters . . .

The Winston-Salem Chronicle welcomes letters from its readers, as well as columns.

Letters should be as concise as possible and should be typed for 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 and columns for brevity and grammar.

Submit your letters and columns to:

Chronicle Mailbag
P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102

Pulpit politics . . . is it God's solution?

To the Editor:

The recent trend in the Black community for churches and pastors to focus more on racial and political issues than on the pure message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ seems to be ever increasing. This is not scriptural and, according to God's word, will have tragic consequences. It is time to be honest with ourselves and not look for the proverbial scapegoat.

Yes, we are all certainly aware of the overwhelming and out of control problems within the Black community such as drugs, crime, pregnancies, irresponsible sex, as well as the decline of parenthood, high drop-out rate, alcoholism, sexual diseases and welfare, etc., but these are not due to racism, only contributing factors.

How then must we view these problems? Does God not express in his commandments that we are to condemn these as sin? They are aspects and expressions of immorality. Their solution, according to Scripture, must reside in the spiritual realm.

"And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter." (Isaiah 28:17)

In addition to calling people to repentance, He summons them to faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins through his shed blood. (Acts 2:37, 38)

This work of Christ — putting away sin and breaking its power — is the gospel message. As such, it is evident that the gospel is God's chief instrument for lifting the world, or any group therein, from their horrible condition. Furthermore, it is evident from Scripture that God has committed the gospel to all Christians to be proclaimed by everyone, especially by those who profess to be called to Christian ministry. Indeed, the gospel message rather than political or racial issues, really changes lives. A minister who makes any other message or activity the central focus of his labor — however sincere and well-meaning he may be — is unfaithful to Christ!

I certainly agree that there are many socioeconomic changes that need to be made to help the Black community, but not as a substitute for the priceless message of the gospel. While these political pastors seek economic and social answers (thereby freely encouraging racism), true men of God seek answers to today's problems ultimately in Christ of Calvary. How I wish, for the sake of the brethren, that all pastors who say they are called of God would place their primary emphasis on the true gospel message!

We would then see our fellow Blacks helped, not merely in this world, but also saved for the next. Then, as in the ministry of Jesus, the "other works" would be automatic expressions of compassion — the fruit of our love — not the means to an end!

Craig Levon Conrad

Sample victimized

[This is in response to the article on Charles S. Sample Jr.]

To the Editor:

Charles S. Sample Jr. is a man who, at age 24, has managed to



CHRONICLE MAILBAG

Our Readers Speak Out

move beyond his mental handicap and make a life and living for himself. He saw absolutely nothing wrong with leaving the safety of his apartment in the wee hours of the morning on Tuesday, August 25, to walk the short distance to Kroger's 24-hour grocery store. Chuck needed a tub of butter for his breakfast toast.

His mother had frequently cautioned him about the dangers of waling alone late at night, but Chuck never gave much thought to dark threats like robbers and muggers.

Raised to respect the police, he had only lately come to fear the "people's protectors" because of incidents that have made headlines — Rodney King in Los Angeles, Shelia McKellar here, and other cases of alleged police brutality against blacks. He had been stopped once before with apologies later from ranking members of the police department.

Therefore, a natural instinct for survival and self-protection can be expected when, out of the blue, the blue lights come flashing and a bright, white spotlight cuts out what had been an uneventful walk back home.

Confusion and anger are natural when you are accused of attempting to break into a huge shopping mall because you could not possibly just be taking a short-cut home across the mall parking lot. The Kroger bag with the tub of butter and its receipt must be a ruse to camouflage your true, criminal intent!

So, you're accosted by five officers, handcuffed, taken downtown, fingerprinted, photographed, put into the hideous orange jumpsuit that is standard prison garb, and summarily thrown in jail.

All you wanted to do was exercise your freedom to go where you want to go. You were not trespassing, drunk, or drugged yet you end up charged with disorderly conduct because the police didn't find you cooperative enough or your explanation plausible enough. You lose your freedom and your butter (which has yet to be returned).

Chuck, and subsequently his mother, learned what most young

Black men and their mothers and families lean early on. Black folks, especially young Black men, are disproportionately victimized by America's own apartheid. White folks don't leave home without their American Express card. Black men should not leave home without their ID and night pass, just as their slave ancestors had to do when they traveled from their "Massa's" plantations.

The one refreshing thing that is happening now in Winston-Salem is that more and more of the 40 percent of this city's population are rising up and becoming vocal. People like Chuck's mother are opening their eyes to the fact that 30 years of integration in this city have had the Black community two steps forward and three back. Groups like "Citizens United for Justice" under the Rev. John Mendez are making change happen, aiding in the empowerment of the Black community.

My personal thanks go to Alderman Vivian Burke for her swift response to Chuck Sample's case and to Travis Mitchell, Chronicle staff writer, for his article. On behalf of Phyllis Sample, Chuck's mother, thanks also go to Rev. Mendez, Alderman Larry Womble, Nelson Malloy, and Virginia Newell, as well as Larry Little for their empathetic support.

The struggle continues because the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Patricia Smith-Deering

"Thanks": Tise family

To the Editor:

We would like to express our deep appreciation to all the citizens of this area, those we know personally and those we have not met, who have shown such concern and kindness for us since June 26, 1992, when we lost a loving husband (Lieutenant Aaron Jerome Tise Jr.) and devoted father ("Pop").

Words can never describe what it has meant to us to see the overwhelming expressions of love which have been shown by so many. We especially appreciate those of you, particularly in law enforcement, who came to the

funeral, stood outside the chapel in the hot sun, and then drove in the long procession to the cemetery. The services touched our hearts, and we know Jerome ("Pop") would have been so pleased to see his many friends who came to pay tribute to him.

We wish it were possible for us to write to each of you, or speak to you individually, and tell you how much your kindness has meant to us.

However, for fear that we might overlook someone, we wanted to use this letter to let you know that all the things you have done to show that you care have helped make it possible for us to bear the pain of losing him.

The months ahead of us will be very difficult as we try to adjust to a life without him.

Please continue to remember us in your prayers. May God richly bless each of you for being there when we needed you so desperately.

Tanya M. Tise and son,
Michael A. Tise

North Hills helped

To the Editor:

My experience Friday August 28 and Saturday August 29 in the North Hills Community was marvelous. After introducing myself to the residents of North Hills and informing them I was collecting contributions for residents of Florida and Louisiana, they were willing to give.

They were also glad that someone was coming around for the items because many of the people for many reason were unable to go to the coliseum to take their contributions. I assured them that it would reach the coliseum. Mrs. Powers, a long time resident, as well as other residents gave. This experience gave me opportunity to meet the many wonderful people who makes up the North Hills Community. I was pleased to be of service in the community. We came together as human beings do and with matters of the heart.

Hats off to the North Hills Community. Thank You.

Carolyn Cason

We are politically correct

We talk a good game, but we still get snookered.

One of the favorite refrains among many "politically sophisticated" blacks today is, "You can no longer buy my vote with a fish sandwich."

But maybe we're being duped into selling our vote for a lot less. Maybe we aren't nearly as smart as we think we are.

We are being bought—and sold down the river—by sweet talking, white politicians who make us feel important by befriend us and giving us what we think is exclusive access to their kingdoms.

It is natural to have the urge to feel important, and politicians are experts at that game when it comes to us. They call us by our first name and make us feel special.

What they get in return is our undying loyalty and commitment of our mind, body, and resources to get the politicians elected or to keep

them in office.

We lose our sense of logic, our reasoning becomes fogged, and suddenly we heap praises upon an elected official simply for doing

And whatever magic the politicians hold over us also extends to the clergy. We're not as bad as we once were, but still in some cases today when a white politician

how can we as blacks let smooth-talking white politicians make us believe they are doing us a favor by permitting us to vote for them? We must be smarter than that. We must be.

We must demonstrate a better understanding of the issues and the political process, and examine how we select candidates.

We should demand accountability for our vote. We must set our own agenda and demand that any politician who wants our vote must address the issues that are important to us and be accountable to us.

Watching some of our black "political insiders" at work during the recent primary elections gave no sign of hope for the near future.

Yes, we're right. Our vote is no longer being bought with a fish sandwich. Why should a white politician waste money on fish when all it takes is a few guarded words and vague promises to have us dangling from his line?



AGAINST THE GRAIN

By ROOSEVELT WILSON

what he was elected to do. We become grateful for nothing.

Go back to the first congressman from this state and count every one since, and you're sure to find that each did some good for the state and the district he represented.

The same goes for local politicians. When they run, they promise us the world, yet we bow and scrape to them in gratitude even when they give us a fistful of sand. Amazing,

shows up at a black church—which is only at election time—the minister calls him down front and makes grand presentations.

We as black people must wake up and realize that when we help elect someone to political office, it is they who owe us as voters. They are the ones who should be eternally grateful and try to work in our best interest. That's their obligation.

As powerful as our votes are,