

Opinion

Winston-Salem Chronicle

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Editorials

An African-American Revolution

There is a quiet revolution going on in the African-American community here and elsewhere. It is simple but powerful. And this past weekend, in Washington and in Winston-Salem, we witnessed the impact of the revolution and caught a glimpse of what is to come.

In Washington, thousands marched in commemoration of the 1963 march which saw the late, great Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. deliver his famous "I Have A Dream" speech. It left an impression on America that survives even to this day.

In Winston-Salem, a hundred or so African Americans met in the Anderson Center at Winston-Salem State University to hammer out the details of an African-American Summit. What happened at WSSU was perhaps more important to this community than the March on Washington because of the immediate impact it will have and, in fact, already has had on this community.

Crucial to the discussions were leadership values. And perhaps the most important of those was honesty. African-American leaders must be committed to an open agenda, sharing information, being dependable and following through. Additionally, the African-American community must hold people accountable but in a loving way. All of these things must take place if we are to address racial and economic injustices.

The African-American Summit planning meeting represents a giant step in the direction of unity and solidarity. The African Americans at the meeting showed a determination to take full control of and responsibility for the community. Those who were present know that this was not simply a meet, eat and greet affair. There was substance to the discussions, and workable solutions to problems were presented.

For example, discussion on education focused on creating groups to interact with individual schools and teachers on behalf of students whose parent or parents are unable to do so themselves — much like the extended concept some time ago, where any adult in the black community felt comfortable chastising a kid who was misbehaving. Later the parent would thank that individual for caring, and the child would likely get further discipline from the parent.

This meeting was revolutionary in the sense that so many people came together on the same accord, disagreed but were not disagreeable, and challenged each other but were not argumentative.

It was revolutionary in the sense that most African Americans now understand the importance of their cultural heritage and are not ashamed of who they are or from where they came — both emotions being vestiges of a racist society that painted everything black as evil.

The opening ceremony of the meeting solidified our connection to the past. The African music, the drums, the chant and the African greeting set the tone for a spiritual awareness that resides in the very soul of every African American in this country. Participants felt that this meeting was right and that the time for loving and caring about each other has arrived. All of these things are merely a return to where we once were. But it is revolutionary because it represents the next phase of a movement that began the minute slave ships arrived in this country some 400 years ago. African Americans are now accepting the responsibility for reviving their community. This group of African Americans is now taking charge of themselves. This current group has the will to make it happen. It is, indeed, a revolution ... a black thing.

Supporting a Clinton Nomination

To the Editor:

On Aug. 6 President Clinton announced the nomination of Jane Alexander to chair the National Endowment for the Arts. Alexander's confirmation hearing is scheduled to take place on Sept. 21 in the Senate Labor & Human Resources Committee with a Senate floor vote expected in the beginning of October. Every citizen or community who values the arts and the opportunities they present should be interested in this nomination.

Jane Alexander is a superb choice to chair the endowment. One of America's finest thespians, she has the tenacity, skill and leadership to make the arts a full partner in our nation's future and will do so by applying the following characteristics:

Alexander has a broad and versatile range of experience in the arts, from acting and recording to producing and writing. She is one of this country's most distinguished, respected and accomplished working artists. Millions of Americans have seen her performances; and she also possesses a sterling record of managing staff, meeting deadlines and overseeing budgets as a successful producer. In addition, her work on the boards of several not-for-profit organizations has prepared her to lead the National Council on the Arts and manage the agency staff.

Her belief in and commitment to the arts is tireless. Throughout her career, she has demonstrated her belief that accessibility and quality are the keystone of making the arts alive to more Americans. A strong advocate for small regional theaters, Alexander has "walked the talk" for many years as a performer in regional theaters, at the Spoleto Festival in South Carolina, and as a teacher of young children at the Oklahoma Summer Institute.

She is an effective advocate. Jane Alexander's career in not-for-profit theaters in our nation's capitol and Cambridge and Boston, Mass. has prepared her to be one of the most articulate and forceful advocates for the arts. In testimony before Congress, she has publicly expressed her appreciation of the government's support of small and regional theaters and has spoken eloquently on the importance of the arts in our children's and nation's

future.

Jane Alexander's career has encompassed television, radio, film, recording, Broadway, Off-Broadway, and small and regional theatres. As an actress, she has first-hand experience of the power of the arts to move audiences. As a producer, she is effective and efficient in the business of the arts and, as an advocate, she knows what it takes to fight for critical priorities.

President Clinton's choice of Jane Alexander marks a new era of leadership at the National Endowment for the Arts. Alexander has the wisdom, knowledge and experience to make her a distinguished and vital leader and spokesperson for the arts and all America. She understands both the concerns of the artists and the needs of the public. This understanding, coupled with her vision, can move the federal agency forward to a new era of excellence and

Winston-Salem needs to delve into its many racial problems.

Please don't hold against him the fact that he is able to articulate what many of us think but just don't bother to say. Larry has always expressed himself well, even as a child. His grandmother was a master at it. He makes mistakes, but what human being doesn't? Many newspapers make mistakes from time to time also.

Larry learned early in his life how to relate to all races and creeds. He got a start in this expertise as he played football and baseball with white boys in a vacant lot near the Dixie Classic fairgrounds.

As a teacher coming to Winston-Salem in the early forties, my salary was only \$92. A white teacher coming to this city on the same bus made four times that much. It wasn't until the late forties in a court fight that teacher's

himself in his efforts to be diverse. He proved to be too trusting of some of those with whom he worked. He found that racism is still alive in Winston-Salem.

Thank you, Larry, for seeking reelection in the Southeast ward. I have worked for you in past campaigns, and I know how the citizens (white and black) in the ward respect you and appreciate all the work you have done for the community. For this reason, I know you can win. Just remember the poem by Maya Angelou: "And Still I Rise."

Bessie Allen

Peaceful Rally

To the Editor:

I would like to commend the efforts of John Moore and Robert Greer, the founders and co-leaders of Black Men and Women Against Crime for the Peace and Unity Rally

CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

fully recognize the place of the artists and the arts in our communities.

If is for these reasons that I urge you to contact Senators Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth and ask them to support the nomination of Jane Alexander as the chair for the National Endowment for the Arts.

David C. Hudson
The Arts Council

Reelection Bid

To the Editor:

Larry Womble's decision to seek reelection for alderman in the Southeast Ward is a very significant way to enhance his continued allegiance to his community. It comes as no surprise to many of us that Larry would seek reelection, for we know of his dedicated efforts to make this city the kind of community we would all like it to be.

He was forthright in stating his belief that we needed to do some house-cleaning before we became an All-American City. Most American cities do. A recent article in the daily paper reaffirms the fact that

salaries were equalized. During the court battle, we were told that we were not qualified, even though we attended colleges and universities throughout America that would accept us. Afterward, we were told we were "over qualified." We passed such experiences on to our students and urged them to seek degrees as high as possible. Our young people who are striving to reach the top are continuously being knocked down. If they dare to give an honest opinion or disagree with the power structure, they are considered insubordinate, and they are unmercifully criticized and unjustly treated.

Larry has always been interested in learning and improving

that they sponsored on Aug. 13. Our community has become very familiar with the vigils that this organization holds to counteract acts of violence perpetrated against our neighbors.

The rally was a tremendous success, and it was especially gratifying to see so many citizens, business leaders, social service agencies and government officials unify their efforts on behalf of peace in our community.

I believe that we should all thank Messrs. Greer and Moore and BMWAC and support their hard work to stop the senseless violence and crime.

Rep. Warren C. Oldham
District 67

About letters...
 The Chronicle welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be as concise as possible and should be typed or legibly printed. The letter must also include the name, address and telephone number of the writer to ensure the authenticity of the letter. Columns may be filled with letters and will be published if they are pertinent to the current issue. The Chronicle will not publish any letters or columns that arrive without this information. We reserve the right to edit letters and columns for clarity, brevity and content.
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A Good Reason to Have African Blood

At last, researchers found something good to say about the blood of Africans — in this case the blood of a hybrid group that I call Americanized-Africans.

This group of Americans has more prostate cancer, more heart disease, more AIDS, more — you name it — than Americans of European or Asian descent.

But last week the Laboratory of Malaria Research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a government agency, reported a link between blood characteristics of black Americans and their ability to resist malaria.

Researchers have know for

decades that Africans and people of African descent over time have grown resistant to malaria, a leading cause of death on that continent.

Africans are dying like flies from not being treated for Malaria and the cases are being reported as AIDS. And instead of the funds going to fight malaria, they go to buy condoms for "AIDS education," many scientists and journalists believe. That's one reason this discovery is so welcome. "This latest research opens up the possibility of a way to block one of the two major types of malaria," said Louis Miller of NIH. Almost all West Africans and perhaps 70 percent of

African Americans are resistant to the vivax strain of malaria, which mainly afflicts people in South America and Asia. The disease is spread when mosquitoes inject the

over and over and then returns to the bloodstream to destroy red blood cells and cause fever and anemia. Now that the scientific world is focused on malaria, we should



TONY BROWN

Syndicated Columnist

malaria parasite into the human bloodstream. The parasite travels to the liver, where it replicates itself

focus attention also on 40 million Africans who will die by Year 2000 from malaria that is called AIDS.

WHERE I'M COMING FROM

ARE YOU COMING WITH US TO THE CLUB TONIGHT, NICOLE?

NO, I'M AFRAID TYRONE WILL BE THERE.

ARE YOU STILL TRIPPING OVER JUDY'S OLD BOYFRIEND?

WHAT IF HE STARTS THAT SWEET TALK AGAIN? I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT MY GIRL, JUDY.

WHAT IF HE STARTS SUGGESTING WHAT HE WAS SUGGESTING BEFORE? I'M JUST AFRAID I MIGHT.

YOU'RE AFRAID YOU MIGHT HAUL OFF AND HIT HIM, HUH?

NO, LIKE I SAID, I'M AFRAID I MIGHT.

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