

# Opinion

## Winston-Salem Chronicle

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### Editorials

#### A Sad Farewell

Larry Womble, in our estimation, has served the city of Winston-Salem and his constituents about as well as anyone can. For that reason, we are sad to see him lose his seat on the board of alderman. Mr. Womble during his 12 years as alderman often revealed the ills of this city with hopes that honest dialogue would begin a healing process. Many of his thin-skinned colleagues, however, weren't as visionary and derided him for his painful honesty. Though he was defeated in Tuesday's election by 22-year-old newcomer Robert Nordlander, we hope that Mr. Womble will continue to speak out on concerns of the city in general and the black community in particular.

And while we congratulate Vivian Burke, Nelson Malloy and Joycelyn Johnson — the other three African-Americans who won seats on the board — we hope that they will not be easily hoodwinked and will be as vigilant addressing critical issues as Mr. Womble has been during his tenure.

#### Unequal Justice

On the front page of last week's *Chronicle*, we ran a story that pointed out that African Americans account for nearly 70 percent of the city's arrests. To most of our readers, we are sure it was not shocking news. African Americans have always been targets of law-enforcement officials. In fact, most blacks believe police have an unwritten "profile" of blacks they are supposed to stop and question for suspected illegal activity. Those black "suspicions" are for good reason. Many black young men from the area's public-housing communities have complained about these unfair and racist practices by police. Most of the complaints stem from young blacks being "patted down" by police for no apparent reason. Sometimes these tactics lead to arrests. But more times than that they do not, translating into harassment of innocent young black men. This leads to the mistrust many African-Americans have regarding law-enforcement officials.

Yet another reason why arrest figures are so disproportionate is because District Attorney Tom Keith refuses to investigate many a crime committed by whites. Two weeks ago, *Chronicle* staff writer Mark Moss reported on a speech Mr. Keith delivered to senior citizens at Sunrise Towers. In Mr. Keith's effort to reassure seniors that he is tough on crimes against the elderly, he told them that he has ignored white-collar crimes to go after ones in which seniors were preyed upon. We are not questioning whether Mr. Keith should go after thugs who strong-arm seniors citizens. We are questioning, however, his refusal to go after middle-class criminals who bilk companies out of thousands of dollars and go scot-free. We're talking about equal dispensing of the law.

Says Tony Fisher, associate director of the National Organization of Black Law-Enforcement Executives: "You can't ignore one set of criminal activity and say that (you're going after this set because) the major problem of crime facing a community is crack-cocaine. . . . That is clearly exceedingly racist." Fisher goes on: "It's no secret that the people who are embezzling money are white."

Mr. Keith is wrong to believe that because a company can absorb the loss of an embezzlement that the embezzler should go unpunished. He, instead, goes after criminals that will not put restrictions on his budget, he said. Those include picking up street-corner drug dealers, criminals that are easily detectable.

Fisher makes a further point. "Ninety percent of the people who are involved in illegal drug use is white people in the suburbs," he says. However, the sentence for crack-cocaine (the choice drug for inner-city blacks) is much greater than the equivalent of powder cocaine (the choice drug for white suburbanites).

If the dispensing of justice were equal, we believe the arrest rate also would be. But as long as law-enforcement officials ignore some criminal activity and hone in on the more easily detectable offenses, arrest figures will continue to be lopsided. And young black men will continue to be the ones who suffer.

## Now that the Bond Referendum Has Passed, Now What?

Well now Cleon Thompson, now that the bond referendum has passed, we now shall sit back and see if the students will be happy with what is to come from selling you their souls for a few crumbs from the white man's table. The threat of expulsion from this university forced some students to switch sides, because they do not know how to fight. What do this university hope to gain from this bond. Let me see if I can explain to the students what is going to happen to some of the areas on campus.

When this university receives its thirty pieces of silver. The "Plot", will be torn up. Remember this school does not have frat and sorority houses, you just have the "Plots." This historical piece of land will become a new building of some kind. The historical building will be torn down, not remodeled, but torn down. Why is it that on black college campuses, we lose historical buildings? But on white campuses they remodel? The powers to be are removing all traces of black involvement of this school, so that when it becomes a the white university at Winston-Salem, white people won't need to ask who was that person. They will already know because all traces of black people will no longer exist on this campus.

The buildings will be called the RJR, the Wachovia, and the Spanger building, etc. Isn't that right Cleon? It will cost about the same, or less, to give these old historical buildings a new face. This is part of our heritage, why destroy it for the good of those who wish you harm? The time has come to stop begging the white man for crumbs and stand on our own feet. Because if you look around you will notice that white people are losing power, and if you don't take a stand now to save yourselves, when the white man falls, and he will fall, what will hap-

pen to you?

We are so used to the white man doing everything for us that if the day comes, and it is coming, are we going to fold like babies and be so helpless, because are modern-day slaves who can't make it without your master controlling you, like a puppet. If we look around America, you will see the work of God. In California, around the city of Los Angeles the cities are burning, this summer with all the flooding, the drought out west, these are signs that God is letting white America know that their time is up. And if black people don't start doing for self and their own, you will go down with your modern-day slave masters.

Winston-Salem State University is a black historical university. You, Cleon, cannot sell this school out. Why must people like you be so stupid? Do you love that white man that much you let him take what they did not build? This school, just

them and make decisions about the future of their white students? Does the white man come to us and ask for money to keep their school open? Can you go to their board trustees and administrators and demand that they not allow certain people to speak on their campuses?

I say they will not allow you that kind of control. Then why do you allow them control over you? Why? Because you got rabbit blood running through your veins. You are worst than the cowardly lion in the "Wizard of Oz" Take care Cleon, that you don't reap what you sow.

#### Thanking Voters

To the Editor:

Many thanks to all of you who helped with the campaign. Countless volunteer hours were spent making telephone calls, putting up yard signs, walk door to door to give literature addressing cards and

the history of Winston-Salem has been Mrs. Vivian H. Burke. In this alderman of the Northeast Ward, we have a public official who has emphasized consistently principles above politics, pride above criticism and democracy above race. This "grass-roots person" of unusual political acumen has been a leader of the community, for the community and by the community. Her record speaks for itself: Advisor of the Liberty East Re-development, Inc; Member of the Transportation, Communications and Public Safety Committee; Leader in the establishing a Citizen Drug Task Force and Youth Advisory Council for the Board of Aldermen and District #9 Representative for NC Black Elected Officials. In addition, this public official has been instrumental in the development and naming of the Carl H. Russell Community Center and the Helen Nichols Park; responsible for the Public Safety Center and several fire stations

## CHRONICLE MAILBAG Our Readers Speak Out

like this country was built on the blood, sweat, and tears of black people. Let me ask you a question. How did the white man build this country? Was it their hands that got blisters? Was it their feet that went without shoes in the winter? Was it their backs that ached at night? Was it their stomach that went without food? Did their children go without an education? Was it their children that lacked self-esteem? Was it their children that went to bed hungry? The answer to these and more questions will be no.

Will the white man let you go into their university and take from

letters. Many others attended meetings, worked at the polls, served on committees and gave contributions. I also want to say a very special thank you to those who took the time to vote for me.

As always, I will continue to speak for all the people of the Southeast Ward.

Larry Womble

#### Support for Burke

To the Editor:

One of the finest aldermen in

including the Ebony Hill fire station, Northeast, and instrumental in working with citizens to implement a Citizen Review Board of Winston-Salem. Her honors attest also to the effectiveness and dedication of this public figure. Some of these are: NAACP award for Outstanding Political Award; Black Political Action Leadership Caucus Award for Dedicated Service; Omega Psi Phi Award for Outstanding Citizen; National Association Equal Opportunity and Higher Education Presidential citation; and Black Woman Political Action forum Award for in Civil and Human Rights.

## Job Creation is National Priority

Remember when the Clinton campaign headquarters last fall was hung with hand-lettered signs proclaiming: "It's the economy, stupid."

That simple slogan was there to remind everyone in the campaign that the top priority had to be reviving the economy.

We need that kind of focused national attention on job creation today, because the economy will continue to stagnate unless there's an all-out drive to create more and better jobs.

Sure, health security is a must. So is controlling a runaway budget. So is welfare reform. And a dozen other urgent policy mandates have a rightful claim to be among the top three or four national priorities.

But unless we create more and better jobs, we'll just see poverty and hardship continue to grow, urban decline will accelerate, and there won't be enough tax revenues generated to fund health security and other reforms.

One place to begin educating the public about the job crisis is to stop peddling misleading statistics.

The official unemployment rate is just under seven percent high enough to stimulate concern, but not high enough to spark immediate action on the necessary scale.

But the true jobless rate is closer to double the official rate, since the government counts as employed anyone who worked at all in the previous month, even if that "work" amounted to a couple of hours baby-sitting.

And that seven percent rate doesn't include discouraged workers who have given up the fruitless full-time work.

And don't buy the myth about nearly two million jobs a year being created -- the vast majority are part-time or temporary, low-wage, no-benefit positions.

Meanwhile, layoffs continue. Virtually everyday brings news that another large corporation will trim its payroll and layoff thousands, often tens of thousands, of workers.

According to a Fortune magazine story, every business day since the start of the year, an average of 2,389 American workers learned they would be losing their jobs.

Young people, especially African-Americans and minority youngsters, are especially vulnerable.

A smaller percentage of young people work today than before the onset of the last recession. That's not suppose to happen -- this far into an economic recovery period there should be more, not fewer, working young people.

In this context, it is ridiculous to talk about an economic recovery or even about the many new jobs being generated.

Young people seeking entry-level positions

and adults seeking full-time jobs that pay a living wage are not finding work, while people are losing decent jobs at recession-level rates.

Continued high unemployment and the social breeds are the price we pay for government's refusal to create the job and training programs required to get people working again.

When Congress passed the federal budget it



#### TO BE EQUAL

By JOHN E. JACOB

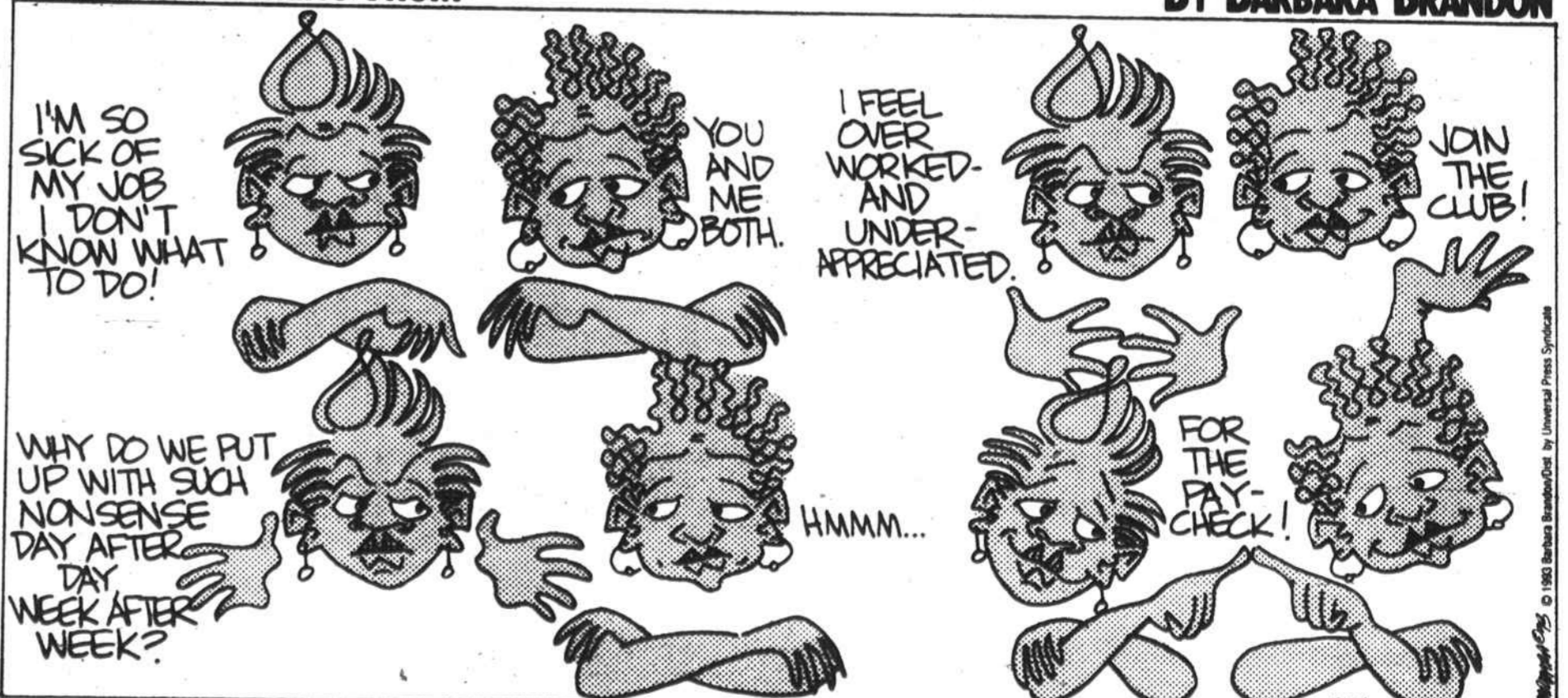
ditched the Administration's economic stimulus package, which at least promised some mild job creation effects.

Failing that, and with the job outlook worsen, Congress and the Administration should be turning to the Urban League's Marshall Plan for America as a blueprint for revitalizing the economy.

The Plan would create jobs through infrastructure programs which would include hiring and training the long-term jobless. And its training and education programs would prepare people for the more demanding skills requirements of today's economy.

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