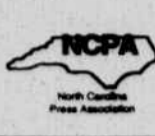


OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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Law Day

In the United States, Justice may wear a blindfold, but it has never been colorblind. For example, it has long been known that murders involving a black suspect and a white victim are the most likely to be prosecuted for the death penalty. Similarly, a disproportionate number of African-American males are entangled in the criminal justice system as suspects, inmates or parolees. In the community, police officers are perhaps the most visible representatives of our justice system. On the front lines, however, they sometimes abuse their authority. The shooting death of Carolyn Sue Boetticher, who was killed by Charlotte police, is but the most recent example of police brutality. A passenger in a stolen car that drove through a police checkpoint, Boetticher, who is African-American was hit in the neck when two officers opened fire on the car. Twenty-two bullets were fired, yet driver Robert Lundy Sr., a white male, escaped injury. Though the Charlotte police department, local prosecutors and the FBI are investigating the shooting, the city has been slow to appoint an independent police review board. This shooting was the second such death at the hands of Charlotte police officers. Last fall, another white officer fatally shot unarmed black motorist James Cooper, 19, when the young man reached into his car, saying, "I have something." Cooper's 4-year-old daughter was inside the car. Internal and criminal investigations cleared the white officer, but an FBI civil rights investigation continues. Both incidents cry out for justice.

African Americans have long been the conscience of America. Throughout our nation's history, African Americans have agitated and advocated for equal justice under the law. From Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall to Johnnie Cochran, black lawyers have led our legal struggle. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, less than 4 percent of all lawyers and judges are African-American. In 1995, there were only 1,152 of the nation's 32,000 judges; and 32,814 of the nation's 894,000 lawyers were black. Though there is an apparent glut of white lawyers, the ratio of black lawyers to black citizens is significantly higher than that of white lawyers to white citizens.

In observance of Law Day, May 1, hear what great black minds have said about law and justice.

"Law and order mean something deeper than the prevention of violence and the control of crime. They mean that every citizen in every neighborhood is safe and secure." — former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley.

"Just like you can buy grades of silk, you can buy grades of justice." — Ray Charles

"You can't legislate integration, but you can certainly legislate desegregation. You can't legislate morality, but you can regulate behavior. You can't make a man love me, but the law can restrain him from lynching me." — Martin Luther King Jr.

"America right now is moving toward the police state." — Malcolm X
 "It is important and right that all privilege of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercise of these privileges." — Booker T. Washington

"Do not be deceived, there is no justice except strength." — Marcus Garvey

"I have firmly believed all along that the law was on our side and would, when we appealed to it, give us justice. I feel shorn of that belief and utterly discouraged, and just now, if it were possible, would gather my race in my arms and fly away with them. O, God, is there no redress, no peace, no justice in the land for us?" — Ida B. Wells Barnett

Sixty-three years after the death of Ms. Barnett, a journalist and anti-lynching crusader, that question still begs for an answer.

Schexnider's Salvos at State

WSSU Chancellor Alvin Schexnider may do well to read the timeless words from a Chinese warlord. In the 2,000-year-old guidebook, "The Art of War," Sun-Tzu wrote, "When you make an enemy of my friend, you make me your enemy also."

In wresting control of the WSSU Foundation, Dr. Schexnider lost the support of some of the most well-known and dedicated pillars in Winston's civic and philanthropic community. In this small and familiar setting — where "everybody knows everybody" — it will not be easy for him to gain the confidence of new Foundation Board members since most of the influential and involved people are in a web of mutual business and personal relationships.

For the sake of WSSU, we wish him the best when he "goes (back) to the well," but, for him, planting and nourishing new seeds of vitally needed support will be a hard row to hoe.

Brain Food

Scientists have long known that the brain develops most rapidly during the first four years of life. Gov. Jim Hunt's Smart Start program is right on target. Now, President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton are pushing similar ideas. At the recent White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning, a report by the New York-based Families and Work Institute revealed that most of the brain's cellular circuitry is formed during the first three years of life. The report also found that mental stimulation during those crucial years helps determine thinking ability and intelligence. It follows that even the best schooling may not compensate for mental malnourishment. That makes it all the more important for us to talk, sing, work, play and read to our children.

If we starve our children for our attention when they are young, they may never get a chance to share in the bounty of opportunities our society offers.

Let the games begin: Public wants lottery

By COURTNEY DANIEL
and BRIDGET EVARTS

Legislators in the General Assembly will decide soon if a lottery referendum will come before the public. Proponents say that the money generated by a lottery would go to schools and cleaning up the environ-

ment. Some opponents argue from a religious standpoint, and say that gambling is sinful and morally degenerative.

Other opponents call the lottery a "regressive tax" and say that those who can least afford it will spend too much money playing. Those who would be affected greatest

would be minorities, they say.

Regardless, North Carolinians are already playing the lottery. They travel to the border and spend more than \$76 million a year on Virginia's lottery games. Much of that is local money, too: most of the border players come from Winston-Salem and

Greensboro.

If a lottery bill makes it through the state house, it would go to a referendum and be decided by North Carolina's voters. The following are people's opinions on having lottery games available in North Carolina.



"I think it's wonderful. It's too far to go to the lottery now and it would be easier for people to have one here to play."
— Melanie Yates



"I think a lottery here would just be more convenient; people wouldn't have to drive all the way to Virginia to play."
— Star Hart



"I haven't really thought about it... except that I'd like to be the first person to win if it does come. I don't think the lottery is going to turn North Carolina into an evil place."
— Beth (no last name given)



"I'm from Atlanta. I believe the concept of the [Georgia] lottery is wonderful, but I have yet to see the benefits on education. So I am reserving my opinion until after we see some results."
— Debbie Wall



"It really doesn't matter to me."
— Jimmy Reed



"I'm with that! You have to drive all the way to Virginia to play the lottery now. If they had one here, I'd play it every weekend."
— Acara Goldsmith



"Yeah! They should do that!"
— Najja Miller

Bowman Gray courts minority students

To the Editor:

The article on the African American Ministers' concern about Reynolds Health Center also included their concern about the number of African-American students enrolled in the medical school.

The Bowman Gray School of Medicine of Wake Forest University has a longstanding commitment to increasing minority student enrollment. In an effort to enhance and coordinate minority recruitment and retention, an Office of Minority Affairs was established in 1975. Through this office Bowman Gray has undertaken a number of major projects designed to facilitate the identification and enrollment of minority students.

Notable among these offerings was the program to introduce academically talented minority high school students to the profession of medicine. During the five years beginning in 1984, 237 high school students participated. Nearly half of those young people have completed or will soon complete the requirements for a medical degree at Bowman Gray and other medical schools. One of the participants, a graduate of Bowman

Gray, was offered a faculty position here this year; however, the young man declined the position for private practice.

The medical school has offered a post baccalaureate program since 1987. The goal of the program is to strengthen the academic skills of minority students so they will qualify for enrollment in medical school. Students in this program have been identified from among minority applicants to Bowman Gray who have been denied admission. Since its beginning, 90 students have enrolled in the Post Bac Program. Fifty-eight of the students successfully completed the program and 10 are currently enrolled. Sixty-two percent of all students who enrolled in the program gained admission to medical school, graduate school or other health professions schools. Seventy one percent of students who enrolled and completed the program matriculated at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. Twenty-one Post Bac students have graduated from medical school and five are expected to graduate in May 1997. Further evidence of Bowman Gray's commitment to providing minority students equal access to a

medical education can be found in the amount of financial aid awarded. Scholarships to African American students total \$729,704 annually. African Americans comprise 10.5 percent of the student population with the overall population of under-represented minorities at 12 percent.

Bowman Gray leads among private medical schools and strongly competes with public medical schools in the facilitation of entry, student support and graduation of African-American and other under-represented minority students. This year, the Bowman Gray School of Medicine of Wake Forest University will confer the Doctor of Medicine degree on 14 African-American men and women at graduation.

Velma Gibson Watts, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and
Director of the Office of Minority Affairs
Bowman Gray School of Medicine of Wake Forest University

Columnist Bill Turner touches home

Dear Mr. Turner:

I am a native of Winston-Salem and currently reside in Brooklyn, N.Y. I subscribe to the Winston-Salem Chronicle to keep up to date with the current events and developments within Winston-Salem and surrounding areas.

I am writing you to let you know that I enjoy reading your column each week. I find your pieces informative and educational. Your latest piece on Tiger Woods was well-written and deserves a high recognition of praise for a job well done. I would also like to note that the piece you wrote on your grandmother was touching and heart-warming, and brought back a lot of cherished memories of my grandmothers. Keep up the good work, and I look forward to your next column. Peace and blessings,

Pyllis D. Jeter
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Gammage: A Case of Justice Delayed

The mystifying decision Tuesday by a judge of the Allegheny Court of Common Pleas to halt the retrial of two suburban Pittsburgh police officers charged with causing the death of a black motorist is a matter of justice being delayed.

It is also further evidence that correcting the serious flaws in the relationship between the police and the criminal justice system and Hispanic-American and African-American citizens is a matter of the greatest national urgency.

Gammage, 31, a Syracuse, N.Y., businessman, was in the Pittsburgh area visiting relatives when a white police officer on lone patrol pulled him over on a seemingly routine traffic stop. The officer later said that Gammage had not been speeding, but had been driving erratically. Within moments a struggle had erupted and, after four other white police officers arrived on the scene, Jonny Gammage lay dead.

According to the sworn testimony of both the county coroner

and a physician hired by the Gammage family to conduct an autopsy, Gammage had died from positional asphyxia due to a compression of the neck and chest. That means that the air was literally squeezed out of him as he lay face down on the street.

A coroner's jury which heard the evidence recommended in late 1995 that five police officers be charged with homicide. However, the county district attorney decided to charge only three of the five officers in connection with the death. One of the police officers he did not charge became a key prosecution witness in the two trials which have already been held concerning the case. The other has played no further role in the controversy.

Ultimately, the three officers were charged with involuntary manslaughter, and their cases were assigned to Common Pleas Court Judge David R. Cashman. Cashman ordered two trials for the three officers before juries picked from two counties outside

Pittsburgh's jurisdiction were brought to the city.

One of the police officers was acquitted of the charges last fall by an all-white jury. The trial of the other two officers ended in a mistrial. Their attorneys then asked the judge to rule that, because the district attorney had not charged all five police officers involved with

ing out that prosecutors have traditionally had very broad discretion in deciding who to charge with crimes and what crimes to charge them with.

The District Attorney, Bob Colville, said he will appeal Judge Cashman's ruling, and Pittsburgh Mayor Tom Murphy immediately urged U.S. Attorney General Janet



To Be Equal

Hugh B. Price

criminal conduct, the two officers were the victims of "selective prosecution." Judge Cashman's ruling yesterday agreed with that assertion.

We make no claim to be experts in the legal theory of selective prosecution. But we do note that legal experts have expressed astonishment at the ruling, point-

Reno to press with greater urgency the federal investigation of whether the officers committed federal civil rights violations against Gammage.

We second the responsible actions of these public officials. And we applaud the work of those citizens and community organiza-