

OPINION

Letter to the Editor:

THE CHRONICLE

ERNEST H. PITT Publisher/Co-Founder
NDUBISI EGEMONYE Co-Founder
ELAINE PITT Business Manager
FANNIE HENDERSON Advertising Manager
JERI YOUNG Managing Editor
STEVEN MOORE Production Manager
KAREN J. OLSON Circulation Manager



NAACP should carry out its objectives

held in New York last week, the NAACP convention announced several priorities, from suing the gun industry and providing computer literacy training to pushing for greater black representation on network television. We agree that gun manufacturers need to be held accountable, that minorities need greater access to the Internet and that the big-four television networks need to produce more shows with black characters. These goals are as noble as they are ambitious. No one can deny that NAACP officials have good intentions. However the proof of the pudding will be in whether the organization actually takes care of business.

A former congressman and talk-show host, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume has a knack for grabbing headlines. During its conventions, the NAACP never fails to live up to its reputation as the nation's oldest and largest civil rights group. When the television cameras have stopped rolling and convention delegates have gone home, the leadership's commitment to hot-button issues often fades.

The challenge will be for Mfume and local NAACP leaders to sustain the momentum between conventions. That will mean mobilizing NAACP members to advance the organization's agenda and carry out its objectives. Otherwise, the convention is no more than a revenue stream and an excuse for a party. And the group's annual pronouncements amount to mere campaign promises.

In the 1930s, Charles Hamilton Houston, a former Howard Law School dean and the NAACP's first legal strategist, announced that the civil rights group would mount a legal offensive to dismantle de jure and de facto segregation. Houston stressed that the national organization would not initiate cases but offer legal assistance in cases brought by local NAACP branches.

City by city, state by state, local branches challenged the status quo. Under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund - then an arm of the NAACP - fought Jim Crow all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. And the NAACP won.

Unfortunately, time has proved that these victories were not final. And nowadays, the enemy is more elusive and the racism more subtle. The conservative agenda threatens to erode the gains of the Civil Rights Movement. Even worse, violent hate groups are on the rise.

These trends compel the NAACP and other civil rights groups to be ever vigilant. The NAACP has a proud past. But NAACP leaders and members can't afford to simply celebrate the organization's historic role in the Civil Rights Movement. There are more obstacles to overcome.

Will the NAACP remain viable in the new millennium? It will be as effective as we make it. We must not only join the organization; we must join the struggle and demand that the NAACP stay on task.

The battle can't be waged at annual conventions or black-tie affairs. The struggle must be fought 24 hours a day, seven days a week, twelve months a year. If we don't do it, no one else will.

East Winston deserves better

We commend the mayor and the city's aldermen for agreeing to do something about the blight in the Cleveland Avenue/21st Street area of town.

That area, along with some others in our community, deserve to benefit from the city's and the county's phenomenal economic growth and prosperity.

East Winston has the dubious distinction of being the only area of the city that, according to the last census count, had negative residential growth. Those who know and understand economic development realize that retail and industrial development follow residential development. Those few houses, along with the other few that have been built in the area, could signal the beginning of a residential stabilization.

Once residential development has been stabilized, growth can occur. It is ironic, though, that the people who do not live in East Winston are the ones who want to "preserve the culture" of East Winston by not tearing down those old homes for newer, more adequate housing.

If you leave it to those people, perhaps shanties would still line Third Street.

We agree with Alderman Nelson Malloy - tear them down and start all over again.

Issue remains at WSSU

To the editor:
 Isn't it amazing how quiet everything has gotten at Winston-Salem State University since Phillip Gilley, who is white, has taken over the finances of the university? This is typical of a plantation-minded black. When black people tried to advise him on issues, he appeared to think our advice was not worth hearing.

President Molly Broad let you know how much she thought of you. She could have helped rather than sending a white man here to tell you what to do.

Do you expect Molly Broad to look bad because of your administration? If you do, you had better think again.

James Funderburk
 Pfafftown

Lawrence Meachem show concern

To the editor:
 With all the negative press coverage lately about the director and staff at the Winston-Salem Housing Authority, let me say a new leaf has been turned over. The good, the bad and the ugly are over, and we must now concentrate on only the good.

Reid Lawrence, the new executive director, and A. Fulton Meachem, his new deputy, are two Christian men with hearts of gold.

Both have a genuine concern for the health and well-being of every individual living in the many facilities in our city.

Mr. Lawrence, one of 11 children, worked and put himself through college, with a bachelor's degree in business.

Mr. (Meachem), who grew up around the project environment, knows and understands the needs of low-income living.

Both have let it be known they are only a phone call away to once again bring honesty and respect back to our community.

I, for one, look forward to working with these two outstanding gentlemen.

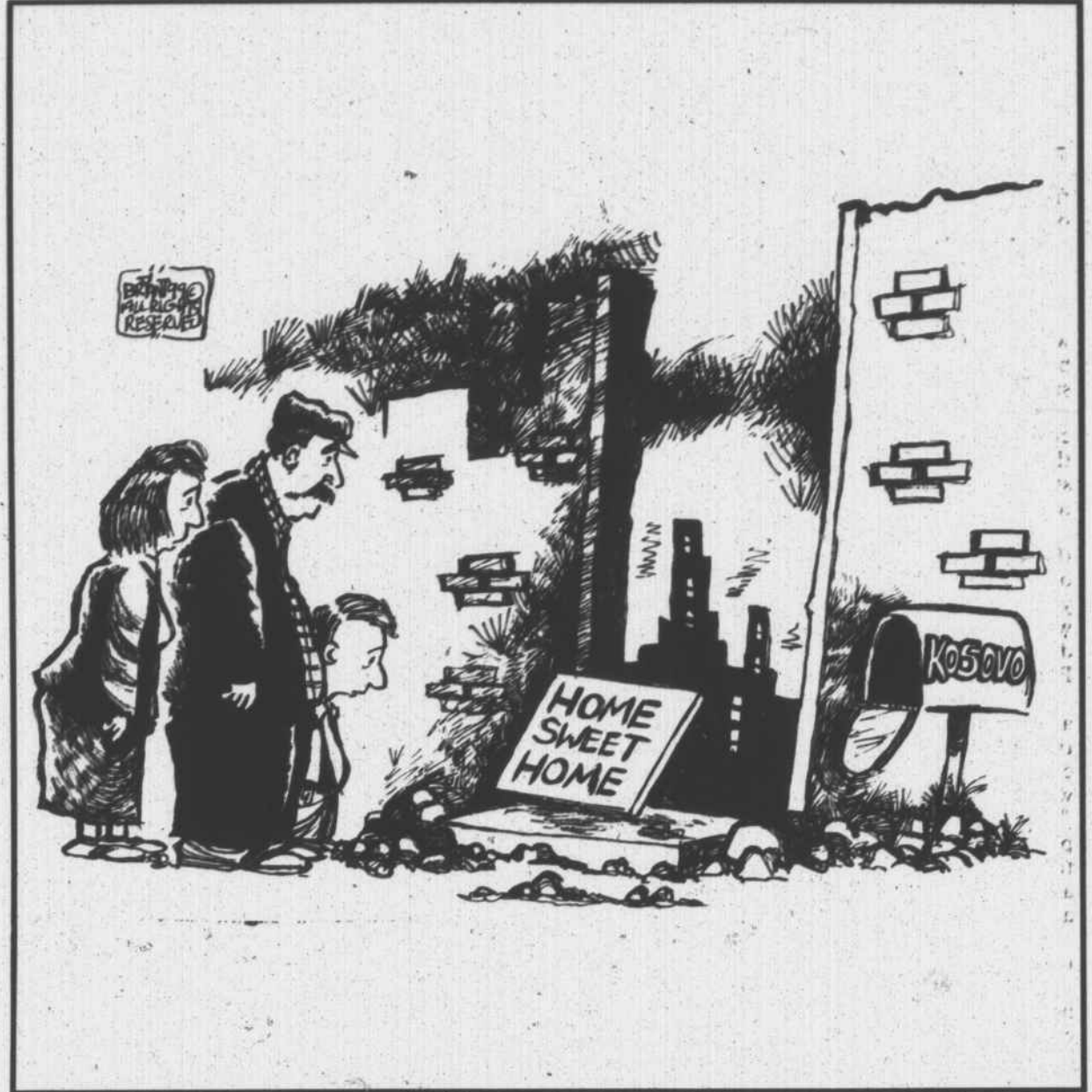
Shirley Holland
 President of Healy Tower residents council

Coverage of Carver unfair

To the editor:
 I am writing this letter hoping to initiate a response in the community of Winston-Salem and to make readers aware of issues that many may be ignorant of.

It is a shame that as an alumnus I'm still affected by the exploitation and degradation of Carver High School by the media...of Winston-Salem.

In reference to the newscast about the four young African American males arrested for drug charges a few days ago, I personally, along with others, feel that the media approach was distasteful and unfit. Several reasons support my position.



affairs that would gain the respect of the community.

Being a former Carver student myself and personally experiencing firsthand the degradation of Carver by the media and the community, it is heartbreaking to come to the reality that no matter how far we try to advance as a people, community and nation, we will forever be faced with this underhanded way that society has for brainwashing its members with stereotypes of anything African American.

Trelya V. Rice

Wellman deserves chance

To the editor:
 The wisest thing the Experiment in Self-Reliance has done in a long time is to select Twana Wellman as their executive director. I know Ms. Wellman to be a gifted, intelligent and dedicated leader. She comes in early, stays late and is focused on the success of ESR. She deserves the respect and the cooperation of the Board of Aldermen. Perhaps if some of the aldermen were willing to work with Ms. Wellman, there might be more hope for our citizens moving from welfare to work.

Dee Ann Smith
 Clemmons

Thanks

To the editor:

We would like to thank you for the wonderful story you did on the Moores' family reunion (in the July 8 issue of The Chronicle). Thank you so much for all of your patience and understanding, and your research that helped us understand better. Your thoughtfulness meant so much to us and the entire Moore family.

Cleveland and Shagail Reed

To the Editor:

The Black Leadership Roundtable of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County would like to thank all individual citizens, elected officials and community organizations for helping to make Her Excellency Rachel Gbenyon-Diggs' visit to Winston-Salem very memorable. With your participation the reception turned out to be a very nice affair, where everyone was cordial and friendly, but most of all, everyone had an enjoyable time.

The ambassador was overjoyed by the overwhelming show of love and appreciation shown to her during her visit with the Roundtable on July 9. Special thanks to the Winston-Salem Urban League, Integon Corp., Otesha Creative Dance and Music Ensemble and Goler Memorial AME Zion Church.

Linda Sutton
 Reception chairperson

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY...

As many of you know, The Chronicle is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. For the last quarter of this century, this newspaper has been an active and vibrant part of this community. We asked some of the people who work to make the paper a reality every Thursday why they think The Chronicle has been successful all these years.



Ericka Asbury
 Accounting Clerk

"Primarily because The Chronicle has its fingers on the pulse of the African American community."



Vickie Warren
 Circulation Clerk

"I think we have lasted so long because of the proud and dedicated employees we have had over the years."



Kitrinka Gordon
 Classifieds Account Executive

"I think because we have had great support from this community and that has made this paper stand out in the Triad."



Steven Moore
 Production Manager

"In the years I have worked with The Chronicle I have seen firsthand the drive behind this newspaper. That drive is focused toward the community and the people who read this paper. In my experience, when you focus on the needs of those who care about what you are offering, you will do well."



Damon E. Ford
 Reporter

"I believe that The Chronicle has been successful for the last 25 years because of the hard work of the employees who have worked here in the different departments and also because of the support the community has given over the years. Anyone can see how the quality of the paper has improved, and that is a reflection of the hard work of the people who have been here and those who have put dollars into the paper."