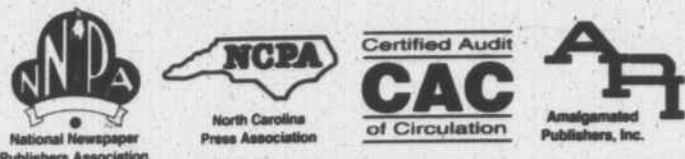


OPINION

THE CHRONICLE

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Where have all the black businesses gone?

Publisher's Note: This is the first in a four-part analysis of competition between black and white businesses and the economic consequences of black consumer behavior. Admittedly, race is not the reason that white businesses target black consumers. Money is the motivation. That begs the question: How can the black community hold on to more money? These editorials aim to empower readers with knowledge and encourage actions that will improve the economic health of our community.

Part I: The High Cost of Integration

"In the period of integration we turned our backs on our institutions and communities and said, 'Gee whiz! Now we can mainstream!'" Michael Lomax observed in a 1988 Ebony interview.

Ask old-timers about the heyday of the African American community and they'll recall streets teeming with commerce. Urban areas across the nation had vibrant black business districts. High Point had Washington Drive, Greensboro had East Market Street, and Winston-Salem had Third Street. Patrons flocked to shops, restaurants and hotels along these strips.

During the segregation era, Jim Crow laws barred African Americans from downtown establishments. Back then, black business districts boasted bakeries, banks, barber shops, beauty salons, clothing stores, dry cleaners, funeral homes, groceries, hotels, insurance agencies, restaurants, shoe repair shops and more. In 1939, there were nearly 30,000 black retail stores and restaurants, employing some 43,000 African Americans and generating \$71 million in sales.

The black business landscape began to change, however, as the Civil Rights Movement gained ground. When courts and legislatures outlawed segregation in public facilities and accommodations, the walls of segregation slowly crumbled. Integration had a downside, however. Black consumers ventured outside their community to patronize the establishments where they had once been unwelcome.

Sales plunged at black community-based businesses. Many closed their doors. At the same time, many black retailers that survived integration fell victim to urban riots or the wrecking balls of urban renewal. What remained in the black community were boarded-up storefronts, a few Korean shops and thousands of jobless people.

Economic growth stagnated. Inner-city economies, which ground to a halt in the 1960s, have yet to recover. In 1997, black businesses represented only 3 percent of all businesses in the United States and generated only 2 percent of receipts.

Though African Americans represent a \$500 billion market, only \$6.6 billion was spent with black businesses in 1998. Claud Anderson, author of "Black Labor, White Wealth," estimates that black consumers and businesses spend 95 percent of their incomes in white communities. A dollar earned by an Asian American circulates in the Asian American community 26 days. A dollar earned by a Jewish American turns over in the Jewish community 19 days. A dollar earned by a white American stays in the white community 17 days. But black dollars leave the black community after only six hours.

"We must begin to spend our money where the black masses live. That's the only way to spur economic growth and job creation. Typically, business owners hire people who look like them. For example, Dudley Products, a black-owned hair care manufacturer, employs 400 people, many of whom are African Americans. The Kernersville-based company, which ranked 82nd on the Black Enterprise 100 list, had revenues of \$30 million in 1998.

Admittedly, it's not always easy to buy black. But it's well worth the extra effort to identify black-manufactured products and locate black-owned businesses. After all, we must be able to afford our own liberation, because no one else will buy it for us.

To the editor:

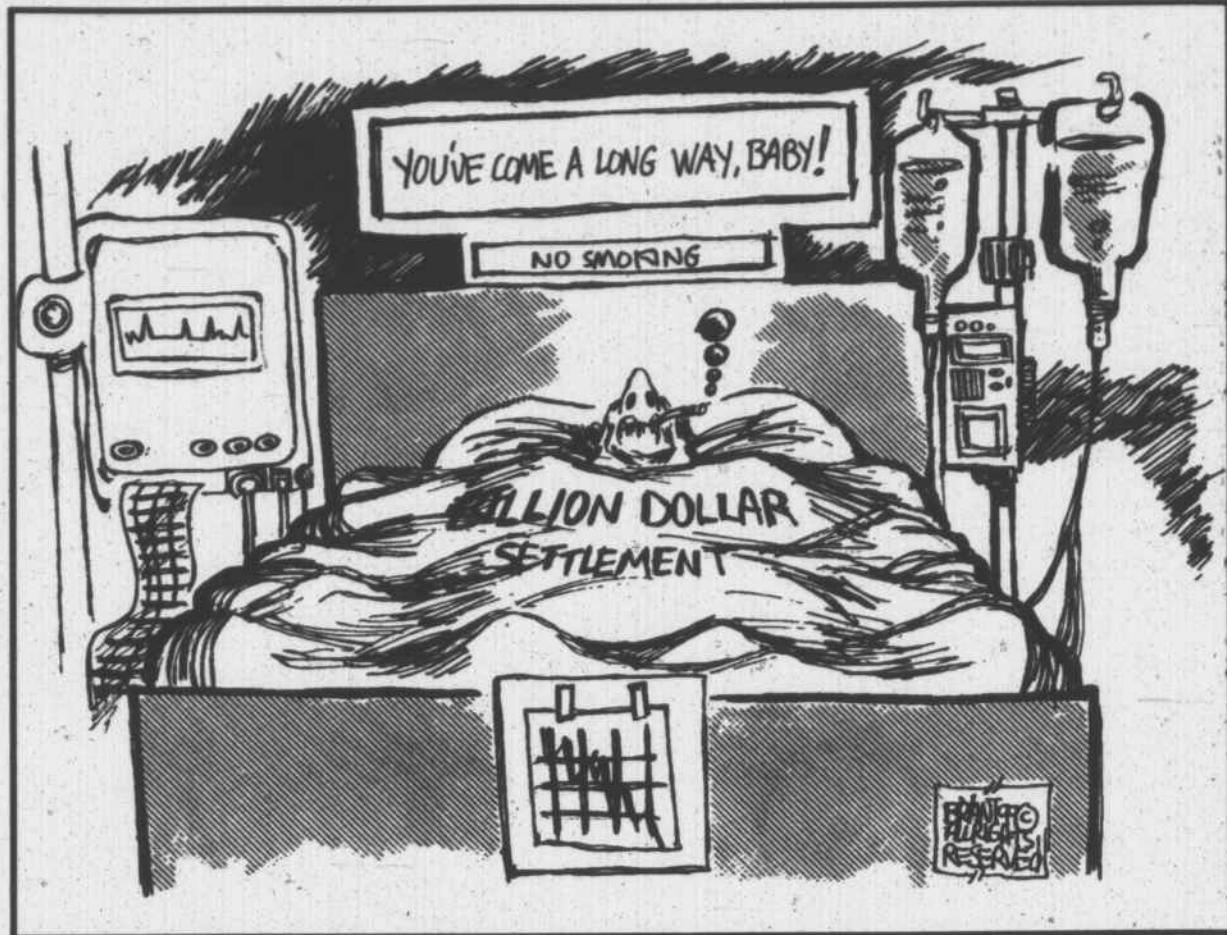
On Aug. 26, The Chronicle printed an article written by T. Kevin Walker, a Chronicle staff member. The article was well written and balanced in explaining both sides of the controversy regarding the administration of Winston-Salem State University and its chancellor, Dr. Alvin Schexnider.

I do not know Dr. Schexnider personally. Therefore I can be objective and my conclusions can be based on information that can be documented. I am comfortable with my conclusion that Dr. Schexnider is a man of honesty and integrity. I am aware that he has made mistakes in administration decisions and public relations. He admits that himself. I believe him when he states that he would do things differently if he had the opportunity. The issues are not about Dr. Schexnider's character but about his methods.



Oliver

I believe that our community would be better served if Dr. Schexnider had the year 2000 to build on the improvements that have already been made. A recent fund drive netted \$100,000. The school has the largest freshman class in a decade. The first master's degree program is slated to begin in a few months. The university was named the second best liberal arts Southern school of its size by



the U.S. News & World Report last year. Dr. Schexnider said, "I am trying to do the right thing"; "There is a lot of work that needs to be done"; "I have nothing but the best intention for Winston-Salem State at heart."

I would ask the religious community, the business community, politicians and everyone to get involved with a positive thrust this next year. Why can't we give Chancellor Schexnider the opportunity

he is asking for, to correct his mistakes and move the university forward? We are talking about what is in the interest of Dr. Schexnider, but even more important, the best interest of the university and our community.

To those who sincerely love the university but oppose the chancellor, I suggest that your constructive criticisms have been heard and have been effective. Would you agree at this time to step back during next year and, as a minimum,

be neutral? To those who support the chancellor, please continue your support and intensify your efforts. To the large majority of us who have been standing on sidelines afraid to get involved, our responsibility is the greatest of all. We should make our views known and position our support to make a great impact on the future progress of Winston-Salem State University.

J. Raymond Oliver

Education Caucus continues on mission



Rev. Carlton Eversley

Guest Columnist

This is the second in a series of columns on the work of the NAACP Education Caucus, which has existed since Jan. 5.

The first column reminded of the five caucus long-term goals: high and equitable expectations of all students; hiring black teachers at the same rate as the student body (nearly 40 percent); equitable discipline; more Afro-centric curriculum and extracurricular activities; and mandatory, annual racial/cultural sensitivity training for everyone who works with children (the training would be monitored and evaluated by administrators who themselves would have taken such training.)

Our two short-term goals were also outlined: to sue the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System for resegregating this county's schools; and, more importantly, to embrace the nearly all-black schools left in our neighborhoods by: helping to raise money, lobbying the system for additional resources, and, most importantly, volunteering in the schools as mentor/tutors.

We also mentioned that the Rev. Juanita B. Tatum, pastor of Mt. Moriah Baptist Church in Pinnacle and moderator of the pastor/religious leaders section of the caucus, led a successful delegation to R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. seeking a one-hour weekly release of employees to tutor for the NAACP. What I failed to mention was that Vivian Love Turner of RJR was the person who took our proposal up the corporate chain of command and secured that approval. This is a public thank-you to Sister Turner for her able assistance and deep concern for children.

Undoubtedly, the most controversial part of our mission is the lawsuit idea. As the spring and summer wore on, we found questioning of it from parts of the black community and outright opposition to it from parts of the white community. The NAACP has always known there is deep ambivalence in the black community about busing for racial balance. There are hundreds and thousands of black people who feel it's absolutely necessary for black and white children to go to school together. There may be an equal number of black folk who feel that's not important at all as long as the black schools have equal resources. We don't believe these

two groups will ever agree, but we believe both groups ought to support our lawsuit.

This is so because if you're in the second "equal resources" group, you must understand that equity of resources has to be negotiated, in good faith, between the black community and the school system. Those of us in the NAACP (especially President Bill Tatum and Carlton Eversley) who've fought to negotiate with the majority of the School Board and Superintendent Donald Martin for the last five years do not believe we can trust them to do so in good faith without a club of coercion we can wield at them such as the lawsuit. These matters have real consequences for the children attending our schools.

Often, we use Atkins Middle School as an example of what happens to our students under the board's and Dr. Martin's redistricting, resegregation scheme. When Atkins was brought into this plan in the last school year, large numbers of "exceptional children" (students with behavioral, educational or emotional difficulties) were dumped into Atkins from several feeder elementary schools. Virtually all of these schools stopped providing any exceptional services (counseling, individual edu-

cation plans, etc.) and simply shifted them to Atkins.

Additionally, when Atkins was a desegregated school, the PTA fund-raiser netted between \$10,000 and \$12,000. Last year as a resegregated school, the money was about a tenth of the previous year's. What did this mean in the lives of Atkins students in the class of 1998-99? Seniors had been taking a beach trip. There was no trip. Graduates had been getting a middle school yearbook. There was no yearbook.

Within the NAACP Education Caucus structure, we've asked St. Paul United Methodist Church to adopt Atkins. Pastor Donald Jenkins and Victor Johnson, a School Board member who's also a St. Paul member, assure us they will be seeing about some of these needs in this school year. In the rest of that neighborhood, the NAACP has asked St. Benedict the Moor Catholic Church to adopt Ashley School, Spencer Memorial (Disciples of Christ) to adopt LIFT Academy, and Dellabrook Presbyterian has adopted East Winston Primary School.

In April, at our regular meeting, several other lawsuit questions came up. Its relevance in light of poor black academic performance, low black standardized

See Eversley on A8

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY...

The shootings last week at a Fort Worth church have brought back the unpleasant memories of other recent shootings for many Americans. We asked locals whether they feel safe when they venture out to public places.



TaShaun Long

"There is nowhere we can go that is safe anymore. You have to watch your back all the time. When I go somewhere I am always with my friends. It is not safe, especially to be alone."



Lakima Brickell

"I am not fearful because if something is going to happen it is going to happen anyway. As long as you have the Lord on your side, I think you're going to be OK."



TaMeika Yearwood

"I am not scared because everyone in this world is not bad or dangerous, and I believe if something is going to happen it's going to happen regardless."



Melissa Reid

"There was a shooting near here, so I can relate because it was really close to where I am. It can happen anywhere so I guess I'm a little scared about something happening out in the community."



Portia Garner

"I am not really afraid of anything happening. I guess because the reality of all that's happened has not hit me. Thankfully, I have not been in that type of situation yet."