

Editorials & Comments

Abnormal Times In Public Schools

These are indeed abnormal times in the public school business.

Education, for many children, appears to have fallen by the wayside as fall term 1975 gets under way.

Teacher strikes, parental protests via vicious and ugly violence at crosstown busing to achieve desegregation, job lay-offs and cutbacks, students on the loose-all give communities time to vent their angers and frustrations on other human beings, most of them little black children.

Rebuilding a healthy educational climate out of these ruins must somehow be achieved. It is difficult to inoculate youngsters with a harmonious educational climate when each day begins and ends with violence toward other children and towards persons in authority by the many angry and frustrated adults.

One method might be the development of educational coalitions that would once again put the interests of all children out front instead of the venting of adult hostilities as examples of our adult world at its worst.

In the meantime, black parents would do well to make whatever sacrifices are required to do a better job of watching over the checking the education of their children than has been done in the past. An end must be put to the current cycle in education which is allowing increasing numbers of young people to graduate from high school unable to read and understand what they have read; unable to add, subtract, multiply and divide simple combina-

tions of numbers, let alone being able to figure the percentage of interest they will pay on charge accounts, bank loans, automobile and real estate purchases.

The time is now for black parents to KNOW for themselves what is being taught in the classrooms of their children and how much of it their children are learning-not accept at face value, the second hand reports at PTA Meetings or teacher conferences. "Oh, he's-she's a lovely child" type of report is meaningless in the long run. If it means losing a day's pay from the job once or twice a month, black parents ought to consider it an investment in the future of their offspring to get into the classrooms and observe; to question teachers; to monitor their children daily on what they have learned, how well they have learned and what they need to learn in order to survive in a highly competitive society.

Students of all races need and must have the opportunity to become acquainted with each other and learn to appreciate their various qualities.

With the creation of better relationships, the harmonious education climate can be carried on in employment and the many other activities as citizens work to make better communities.

This may sound like a difficult task, but it can be done and it must be done so that the education system can get on with its principle business.

The time is now and all efforts must be geared towards that need.

Guest Editorial-The Carolina

The Food Stamp Scandal

The Food Stamp Program scandal has been kicked about politically for quite sometime. All we hear is that a revision of the program is underway, but this takes time - for the politicians must have time to make bargains.

It seems that Food Stamp program is out of control - if we believe what we are hearing from the experts in the Department of Agriculture's office of audits and office of investigations.

The word is out that "at least \$1 billion is being ripped off through fraud, ineligibility errors and sheer waste." A billion dollars is a lot of money - especially, if it is being wasted. And keep in mind that this lost billion dollars is only in the non-welfare, non-publicly assisted families areas such as families with dependent children.

The impact of this loss is vividly described by Victor Riesel, columnist, thusly:

"The billion dollars that is lost is only half the story. It's the money calmly ripped from the government through conspiracy or by able-bodied men and women who just won't work, or by students, or by families which have an annual income of up to \$11,000 (and sometimes slightly more). Their bread-winners can own

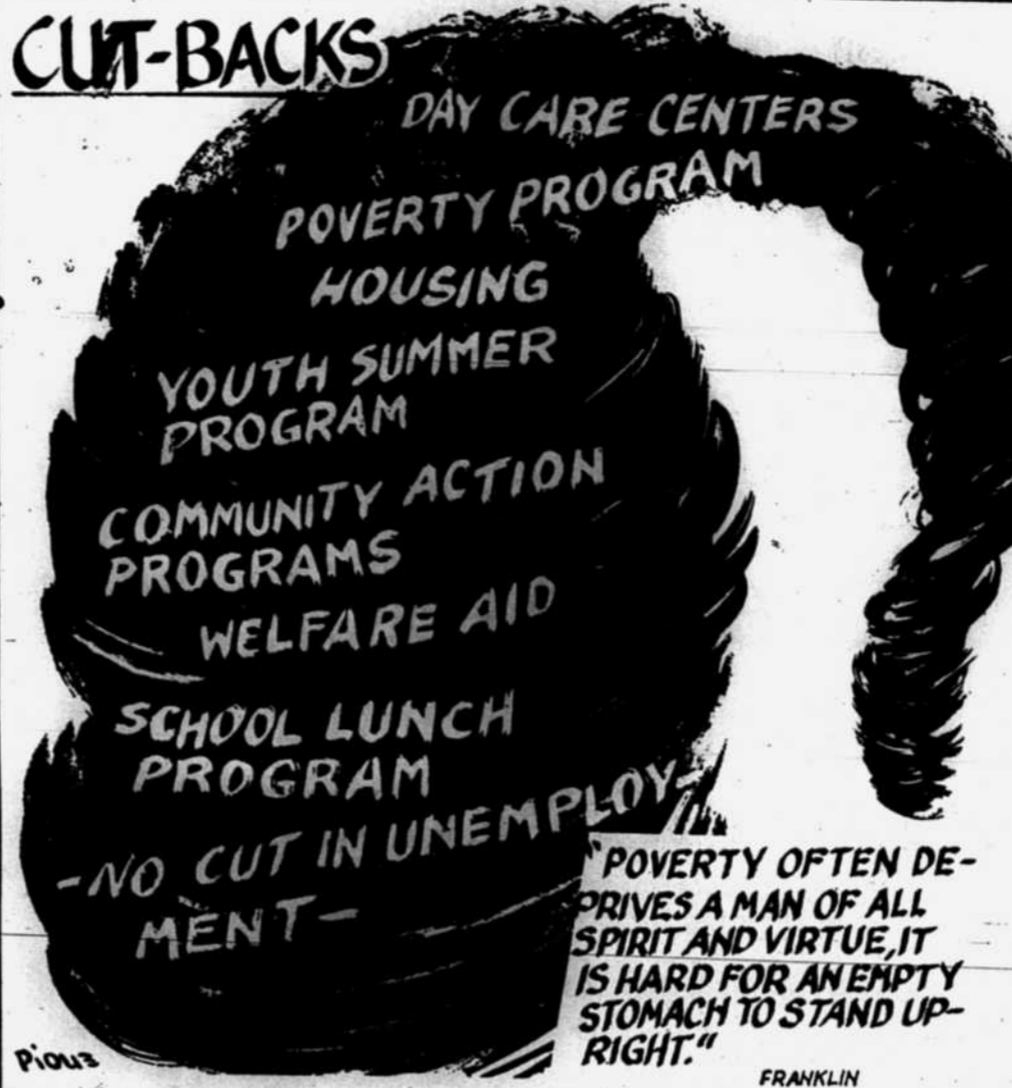
cars, homes, personal property bank accounts, and hold vital jobs. They include teachers, some police skilled craftsmen and white collar workers."

"While this is being done, 17.3 percent of non-poor, non-welfare food stamp recipients are ineligible! And another 26 percent are "over-issued," - meaning overpaid."

Cropping up in the investigations are these conclusions:

1. Heaving outpouring of stamps to non-poor families which go in for crooked accounting;
2. Duplicating of applications by husband and wife;
3. Borrowing of stamps by children;
4. Acceptance of stamps by students who believe that the old tradition of waiting on tables went out with the goldfish swallowing;
5. The threat of food stores which deal in counterfeit and ineligible coupons;
6. Merchants who take food stamps as payment for debts and installments; and
7. Even underground revolutionary cells which supply them to communes, along with false identities.

Guest Editorial-Carolina Times



Take A Firm Stand On Human Rights Mr. President!

REPORT FROM Washington

Bailing Out New York City

By Jim Martin
9th District Congressman

An editorial cartoonist recently portrayed New York City as a huge luxurious ocean liner that was going aground on a rocky coastline. Sitting beside it was another similar ship in the same precarious situation. The message was clear. New York is financially on the rocks. Other cities could follow. The federal government is in the same predicament. Both have been living beyond their ability to pay for expensive spending programs. Both have been living high, and borrowing to pay for it. Both are trying to spend their way out of debt.

New York City needs \$4 billion by June 30, and has made an impassioned plea for help to the President and Congress. Simply stated, New York is asking the taxpayers of the country to pay for years of bad management and lavish spending which have brought the city to the brink of financial disaster. This could set a dangerous precedent that could have other financially troubled cities looking to Washington for increased financial aid. With a \$555 billion federal debt, the country has enough problems. On the other hand, financial collapse by New York City could threaten the ability of other cities to finance even legitimate ventures.

As the debate accelerates on relief for New York, Congress should examine why that city got where it is today and then ponder future spending by the federal government. Congress should consider where the

"free lunch society" proposals will lead us. Consider a couple of examples which led to New York's problems.

It has the best paid city government workers in the country. Fat municipal union contracts have allowed featherbedding to become a way of life in the city. Bus drivers work 8-hours per day and get paid for 11 hours. Subway coin changers are paid \$229 per week, nearly \$12,000 a year, while a bank teller averages \$165 per week.

New York City has a free university system, with additional \$120 per month subsidies for some students. They can't afford it. Why should we?

The city also has the highest welfare benefits in the nation. One out of every 8 New Yorkers receives benefits.

New York officials of both parties have failed or refused to accept the need to reform its lavish spending policies. Even faced with financial chaos, city leaders have been slow to react, dragging their feet on improvements. The city must take drastic steps to put its financial house in order. It could begin by cutting expenditure obligations, both present and future.

What should we do? We should not pay the bills for extravagance. Yet, if City officials will take fiscal control of their ship, pump the waste out of her bilge and put her bow up through sound management - even then some temporary assistance may be needed to help tow her off the rocks.

TO BE EQUAL



VERNON E. JORDAN JR.

Race Major World Problem

Seventy-five years ago, as the world entered the modern age of the Twentieth Century, the great black thinker W. E. B. DuBois warned prophetically:

"The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line, the question as to how far difference of race...are going to be made, hereafter, the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization."

The truth of DuBois' statement has been proved many times in the course of this tortured Century.

As he spoke, European powers were engaged in a frantic scramble to carve up Africa's riches among themselves, a scramble that was a basic reason for the First World War. Nazi Germany's racism sparked the Second World War. The racism of colonialists resulted in the upheavals and revolutions in Asia and Africa in the post-War period.

And here at home, the Twentieth Century became the battleground for the dismantling of the apparatus of American racism, a struggle far from completed.

It is clear that not only was DuBois right in 1900, but his prophecy is still valid today. The dominant issue for the remainder of this Century, however cloaked it may be by other aspects such as economics, is racial.

These thoughts were spurred by a number of recent incidents that demonstrate the worldwide nature of racial issues.

One was the convening of the United Nations to discuss a fairer distribution of the world's wealth. The opposite sides of the debate are usually seen as the developed and the underdeveloped nations. Sometimes, it's discussed in geographical terms - the North and the South.

But these are often obscured by an even more valid description; the industrial, developed, northern nations are almost all predominately white, while the underdeveloped, southern nations are almost all populated by people of color - black, brown and yellow.

Underscoring the racial aspects of the debate over the world's resources is the continued domination in some countries of black majorities by white minorities. South Africa, with its insane apartheid policy is the prime example, but Rhodesia is an even greater thorn in the world's side. Its outlaw government recently broke off attempted negotiations with representatives of its black majority, negotiations that, it was hoped, would begin to result in democratic government in that country.

A final example of the truth of DuBois' statement was the British government's action proposing, in effect, civil rights laws barring discrimination in Britain. Immigration to England from the West Indies and Asia has been going on for some time now, and soon a majority of non-whites in the British Isles will be native-born Englishmen entitled to the same rights and privileges as white Englishmen.

But they face virulent discrimination in employment, housing, schools and clubs. The government plans legislation barring such discrimination and providing for recourse to the courts to stop it.

Board Of Education Report

School Board's Planning Pays Off

By William E. Poe, Chairman
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board Of Education

(Note: We appreciate the weekly newspapers providing us an opportunity to communicate directly with the people of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. We hope to make this a regular report. If you have suggestions or comments, please send them to the Communications Department of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.)

The opening of school this year was one of the smoothest in many years. Without the summer ritual of drawing and redrawing pupil assignment plans, principals and school personnel were able to make adequate plans for the new school year. The planning paid off in a very orderly opening even though the weather didn't cooperate during the first few days of school.

There are signs that our school system has begun a new page in its history, a page that will tell of



William E. Poe
Board chairman

renewed efforts to insure a quality education for all of our young people.

For the first time since 1969-70, enrollment has increased. Though the increase is due largely to the addition of kindergarten classes, there appears to be a decrease in the loss of students to non-public schools. So far this year the system has had a net loss of nine students to

non-public schools (278 have left and 269 have returned) compared with a net loss of 374 students last year. This would seem to indicate renewed public confidence in our schools.

Along with a trend toward enrollment stability is a feeling in the community that the "atmosphere" in our schools is improving. Everywhere I go, school people, students, parents, and citizens are talking about the positive atmosphere. Atmosphere is hard to discuss because it deals with the attitudes of people, but I believe our community senses a feeling of pride in its schools. There is a feeling that the job of educating our children is being done and being done well.

Public support which has sustained our schools through some difficult years seems to be stronger. The large attendance at our September 23 Board of Education meeting at East Mecklenburg High School is one example. As the Board moves

from one feeder area to another with its monthly meetings, we expect to find continued evidence of this support. We think this is an excellent opportunity for school board mem-

bers to learn more about what our schools are doing and to talk with parents and school people directly. I invite you to attend the meeting in

your area. The next meeting will be at Plaza Road Elementary School in the Garinger feeder area on October 28.

I also encourage you to become more actively involved in our schools, especially in this "Year of the Community." There will be many opportunities for you to visit in the schools, to volunteer your services, or to attend meetings involving other persons from the community. You are the creators of our schools either by your action or by your inaction. The former is much more productive.

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