

Editorials & Comments

Events Worthy Of News Coverage

by Hoyle H. Martin Sr
Post Editorial Writer

Late last year banner headlines were given to a relatively insignificant local news story about a house allegedly used for prostitution. More recently, many major newspapers asked and quoted the views of a young man on Israel, Libya and the price of oil, yet the young man has no background, particular knowledge or ever an interest in these important issues. Furthermore, a front page Associated Press story earlier this week in The Charlotte News dealt with a married couple that forfeited a \$20 bond by failing to appear in court on a disorderly conduct charge. The charge? Disturbing the peace by playing a harmonica in a restaurant after being told to stop.

It appears evident that neither of these events was worthy of any news coverage, and if so, certainly not of front page value. Nevertheless, because of a common denominator name identification—each of these events was viewed by the media as worthy of news-print.

The presumed house of prostitution was given considerable attention by the news media because the property happened to be partly owned by former Charlotte Mayor Stan Brookshire, a point made very clear in the news story. On the other hand, little was said about the fact that a real estate agent was responsible for renting the property and Mr. Brookshire had no knowledge of who the tenants were in the rental units. In a similar situation, comparatively little news coverage was given, presumably because the owner of the latter building is not a noted civic personality.

Klan Has Rights, Too!

During a recent attempt by the Ku Klux Klan to display an exhibit in a Winston-Salem library, a confrontation developed between some blacks supported by some whites against the Klan and its supporters. Because of the near violent nature of the confrontation, the exhibit was closed and the library administration is reportedly reviewing its policy on public exhibits.

This week it was announced that as a part of a rebirth movement of the white supremacy organization, Klan grand wizard David Duke will be visiting Charlotte to recruit new members.

The incident in Winston-Salem and the Klan membership drive in Charlotte have resulted in an outcry from the local branch of the NAACP and the Charlotte Equal Rights Council. Speaking on behalf of CERC, Eileen Hanson reportedly has said, "Our position is that the Klan should be outlawed. The same should go for...any other group whose proclaimed goals are to eliminate certain groups of people." CERC plans to hold a meeting tonite (Thursday)

The young man quoted on international affairs was Billy Carter and the woman involved in the \$20 bond forfeiture was Mrs. Gloria Spann, the brother and sister of the nation's President, Jimmy Carter. To repeat, the activities of these people were allegedly considered to be of news value because of who they were identified with, not because of the events that took place.

Billy Carter is a tragic case in point. "It has been obvious for a long time..." wrote Mike Royko, "that Billy has problems. Among these problems, apparently, is the (whiskey) bottle." Yet, Royko continues, "the press keeps goading Billy into his foolish outbursts." Underlying all of this is the implied assumption that somehow Jimmy Carter is responsible for his brother's actions or that the President is at fault by association.

While we are pointing an accusing finger at the press, the real culprit here is the reading public because of its failure to object to such trite or trivialities.

"Billy Carter is a tragic example of a young man," Royko states further, "sadly competing with an older brother who is far smarter, better disciplined and enormously successful...A man of previously modest means being tempted by big money if he'll just permit himself to be made to look silly."

Surely, if we in America continue to believe in the rights and dignity of the individual, we should demand a better accountability for such values by our free press. To do less is to endanger the existence of the free press and our own rights as individuals. It's your America, lets make it better, not worse.

at the Main Library to organize a protest to the Klan's activities in Charlotte.

this response to the Klan's proposed activities brings to mind the essence of the true meaning of democracy. Furthermore, it should cause us to re-think the words of Thomas

Jefferson who said, "democracy has initiated the seeds of its own defeat." Eric Fromm said it even more clearly, "the right to express our thoughts...means something only if we are able to have thoughts of our own..." which we can freely express.

Therefore, as despicable as many of us may believe the Klan is, to deny that group free expression is to threaten the free expression of us all. Does CERC have any more right to use the public library to express its ideas, no matter how noble or humanitarian, than does the Klan? If we (and who are "we"?) outlaw the Klan today, will we outlaw the NAACP, the Baptist, a free press and your individual liberties tomorrow?

ARE WE GOING TO SIT AND LET BLACK COMMUNITIES CRUMBLE AROUND US? GRASS ROOTS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, MUST EMERGE TO FORGE A UNITED EFFORT AGAINST CRIME, NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING, BLIGHT AND DECAY.



Crime Is A Pressing Problem In The Black Community

Getting Most For Your Food Dollar

WASHINGTON—Are food shoppers doing what they can to save on their food bills?

To find out, the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducted three national surveys of major food shoppers in about 1,400 U.S. households, excluding Alaska and Hawaii, from 1976 to 1978. About 85 percent of the shoppers were female.

"Half or more of the main food shoppers are fighting food price inflation," said department social science analyst Evelyn Kaitz, who studied survey results. "They do it by always or almost always comparing prices, checking food ads and making out a food list before shopping and reading ingredients on labels before purchasing a food product for the first time."

More than 60 percent of major food shoppers said they always or almost always compared prices when shopping. Only about 15 percent did this seldom or never did. Proportionally more females than males admitted to comparing prices. The surveys showed the likelihood increased with household size, Kaitz said, but decreased with higher income. The 1978 survey showed shoppers aged 35-49 were more likely to compare prices than those over 64.

"Significantly, in the 1976 survey, shoppers in the North Central Region were more likely than those from the Northeast or South to say they always or almost always compared food prices. In the 1977 survey, shoppers employed part time compared prices more than fulltime workers did."

About 60 percent of the shoppers responding said they always or almost always made out a food shopping list. Shoppers who were not em-

ployed prepared lists more often than those employed. Female and better educated shoppers used lists most, Kaitz said.

Again, about 60 percent of shoppers responding to the 1977 and 1978 surveys said when food items were lower priced, they bought an extra quantity to store at home, Kaitz said.

"Volume buying increased with family size and was more likely among respondents 35-64 than those 65 or older. According to the 1977 survey the probability increased among female shoppers but decreased among apartment dwellers, perhaps because of lack of storage space."

Southern shoppers were less likely to buy more when the price was lower than those of the North Central and Northeast area, two surveys showed.

Just over half the respondents checked food ads before shopping, the 1976 and 1977 surveys showed, with the number declining between the 1976 and 1978 surveys.

Reading food ads increased with family size and the age of the shopper. In the 1976 and 1978 surveys, food shoppers not employed used food ads more than their business counterparts. Generally, females used food ads more than males. But use of food ads dropped with increased income and education.

"The 1976 and 1977 surveys showed only about half the shoppers always or almost always read the labels for ingredients the first time they purchased a food product but the number increased to almost 60 percent by the 1978 survey. The probability of reading ingredient labels increased with family size, education and income," said

Kaitz. Females read the labels more often than males.

The number of shoppers claiming to read the label for nutrition information the first time they bought a new product increased significantly during the three surveys, from 29 percent in 1976 to more than 40 percent in 1977 and 1978. This likelihood increased with education, family size and children in the family, Kaitz said.

About 30 percent said they planned their menus before shopping and this likelihood decreased with age, smaller household size and lower income.

"About half the shoppers responding generally used one food store to get bargains. Those employed full time shopped around less than those not employed, and the smaller the household, the less bargain hunting they did in more than one store," said Kaitz.

CMPC Cited

For Award Of

Excellence

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission has received an award of excellence from the American Society of Landscape Architects for a presentation called the "Uptown Pedestrian."

The award was presented for design excellence in a printed report and 20-minute slide program prepared by the Planning Commission and staff coordinator Bob Ballou is now associated with planning activities in Highland Park Illinois.

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

TO BE EQUAL



Curbing Cops' Use Of Deadly Force

News reports of deaths and serious injuries inflicted by police officers on suspected felons occur with depressing regularity. Throughout the 1970's an average of almost one person per day was slain by police officers.

This is a festering sore that undermines effective law enforcement, subverts community cooperation with police, and endangers the lives of civilians, especially those in minority groups.

Disproportionate numbers of the victims of police use of deadly force have been minorities—roughly half are Black and Hispanic. And there is evidence that white victims most often have been armed and facing the officer, while minority victims have been unarmed and shot in the back while fleeing.

In almost every case, the officer doing the shooting has been white. An examination of deadly force in New York City reveals that no black officer has ever mistakenly shot a white youth whom the officer thought was armed. The reverse though, has been all too common.

Incidents have been piling up in recent months. In Texas, the Hispanic community has demanded federal investigation of persistent police abuses. Over the past two years, 15 Hispanics have been killed and there have been more than 150 instances of police brutality charged.

In New York, a policeman shot and killed a 15 year old black youth whom he said had pulled a gun on him. Other officers present at the scene testified it was not true—that the youth had not threatened the officer. Until the courts intervened it looked as if the officer would be released from confinement in a mental institution. He was also trying to get a disability pension.

At the very moment you are reading these lines, somewhere in the U.S. a community is being shaken by an incident of police use of deadly force—it is that common an occurrence.

The pattern too, is pretty well established. A killing is followed by an investigation which often clears the officer. If the case is too blatant, to cover up, the officer may be brought to trial, often clears the officer. If the case is too blatantly ends with acquittal or, at best, a very high sentence which is often suspended.

Many police departments are setting strict rules on the use of weapons. But in many cases, the rules are flexible enough to allow continued incidents. Even mild rules are often fought by police officers who charge they are exposed to threats to their own lives if they are not given greater leeway in using their own judgment on the use of firearms.

The police and the public are captivated by the myth that policemen use their guns because their own or other people's lives are threatened, or because they are trying to capture a dangerous armed criminal.

But the facts are otherwise. The Police Foundation studied seven major cities over a two-year period. It found no relation between police shootings and serious crimes. In fact, about two-fifths of the police shootings occurred during routine traffic stops and disturbance-of-the-peace calls.

So self-defense is no explanation for the use of deadly force, nor is the need to capture a dangerous criminal a valid explanation for many shootings.

Leadership In Education

Today, on all sides a great deal is being said about leadership: In politics, industry, science, religion and in every other field of human endeavor. In particular, education has come in for its share of attention lately and most of it has been unfavorable. People are saying that the education establishment is archaic, has lost its purpose and has failed to live up to its promise. This is despite the very present fact that students are mastering more of the knowledge needed to live more technically and efficiently than in the past.

Leadership actually comes in all sizes, ages and colors and trying to define leadership and identify those who are in fact leaders is an amazingly difficult task. A leader today may not be a leader tomorrow. As simply put as possible, a leader is a person with authority and influence. The person can be good or bad in the usual sense of the words and still be a leader.

Where does the authority of the leader come from? It can issue out a position of power that provides for administrative control over people and the jobs that they perform. Because of this, the person holding the position has authority and influence to the extent that salary, promotions, and job tenure are part of the administrative responsibility.

However, leadership abilities do not spring out of the position although the opportunity to develop these personal traits are present.

This brings us to whether leadership is ascribed or conferred. Ascribed leadership resides in the position and assumes that the person who holds that position will display leadership behavior. Conferred leadership comes as the result of people recognizing that a person has the qualities needed to help them realize aspirations, meet immediate needs and approach the satisfaction of needs. A leader manages to always be keenly attuned to the feelings of his publics and must necessarily run the risk of being supplanted by another person because needs do change. Needs may change to demands and this may modify the entire "game plan."

According to James Gregory Burns, leaders emerge during conflict and that the great function of conflict is raising consciousness. Burns goes on to say that conflict involves basic differences of opinion regarding social and political purposes and all that they imply. Leaders are able to use conflict in such a way that basic issues are clarified and controversy is claimed.

Let us take the state of public education in North Carolina. At the present time the school districts are

engaged in a raging controversy over the competency test hoping that it will result finally in improving the educational level of all students. The leaders in this effort, both black and white, are in disagreement over all present plans. We must ask: Are they the kind of people who have the abilities to make an improved TEST program for all children palatable to the consumers of that education—the children and parents?

Notwithstanding this, is the pill too big to swallow? And if not, will the medicine be effective to the extent that an illness of bitter recrimination will not ensue? Usually an educational leader lacks one of the qualifications for being a true leader—a favoring consensus of his public. Lacking this, can the practical demands be purposefully met? Probably not in a situation such as is found in Charlotte where so many different voices are heard. There are some ugly precedents.

On the other hand there is some real hope in the fact that most people have a desire to be morally respectable. And all of us had better believe that the value of competency testing wherever it takes place must be approached soberly, and morally.

There are some blacks and some whites who stand four-square against competency testing although for different reasons.

However, the result is the same. It seems to us that competency test plan is going to be a real opportunity to test educational leadership in this city.

Maybe the major media outlets will examine their souls and come up with some substantial aid and comfort.

New Food Stamp Rules

Continued from page 1
+ Elimination of the purchase requirement (this change became effective January 1; other changes became effective March 1);
+ Reserves, or resources, include all cash, real or personal property, and all other liquid or non-liquid assets. The maximum allowable reserve limit for most households was increased from \$1,500 to \$1,740. The reserve limit for households with an elderly person (age 60 or over) remains \$3,000.
+ Reserve value of automobiles: In the past, the value of one car per household, plus any other car necessary for a household member to go to and from work, was not counted as reserves. Under the new regulations, the value of these cars is counted as reserves if it exceeds \$4,500.

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