

# Editorials & Comments

## Economic Racism Or Simply Economics?

by Hoyle H. Martin, Sr.  
Post Editorial Writer

The Congressional Black Caucus demanded, and CBS-TV agreed, to cancel the new television series "Mr. Dugan." The Caucus, reacting after a private viewing of the show one week before it was to have gone on the air, complained, "the impact would be disastrous, showing a (black) congressman who was a silly, incompetent man ruled by his (largely white) staff." The issue of the negative impressions "Mr. Dugan" might have given about blacks in public office was exposed when John Amos of "Roots" fame accepted, then quit the leading role in the show.

While there are some, such as Cleavon Little who was to play the role of "Mr. Dugan," who disagree with the Caucus' position, the issue appears to be merely the tip of an iceberg of what many believe to be blatant racism in television programming. In fact, a recent new U.S. Commission on Civil Rights study reveals that racial stereotyping in television programming is fairly widespread.

The study, "Window Dressing on the Set: An Update," contends that blacks, more so than whites, are portrayed in television as comic characters and younger people are given no identifiable occupations. On the other hand, white men are more often portrayed as highly successful, mature characters with identifiable occupations that reinforce a good image.

The Commission's 1975-77 study notes that in dramatic programming all male minorities are used in comic roles on a 3 to 1 ratio when compared to whites. Furthermore, the study review of employment data for 1977 at 40 major television stations reveal that whites hold 86.2 percent of all management positions

compared to only 9.6 percent for blacks and 4.2 percent for all other minorities. At television network headquarters and new shows, whites, particularly white males, play an even more dominant role.

The irony of all this is that as blacks gain more at the management decision-making level, they may find it necessary to support the same kind of black stereotyping that the Commission has expressed concern about if that stereotyping will retain high program ratings and thus higher network profits and jobs for black entertainers and technicians.

Furthermore, it means also that if there is any racial undercurrent or psychological desire to portray blacks in inferior roles it occurs largely because of the racist mentality of the television viewing audience, the audience that primarily

determines program ratings and therefore network profits. By "racist mentality" we are referring to whites that may enjoy heartily seeing blacks portrayed as dumb and silly because it reinforces their biased beliefs and reduces their presumed fear of the threat of intelligent, talented black people.

The dilemma here is that for blacks to gain economically in the television industry—jobs at all levels—they may have to accept and reinforce black stereotyping in order to help retain the higher ratings and higher corporate profits gained from racially motivated economic forces—the largely white viewing public.

Short of a revolution in the thought process and attitude of most white Americans, blacks face a difficult choice in attempting to balance their sense of self-worth and dignity with jobs and greater economic security.

## L. C. Coleman Park A Good Idea

On Monday the City Council rejected a Public Monuments Committee recommendation and voted to rename Northwest Park in honor of west side community leader L. C. Coleman. The Council's action was based largely upon the fact that previous councils had indicated they would name the park after Mr. Coleman and because he was single-handedly responsible for the establishment of the park.

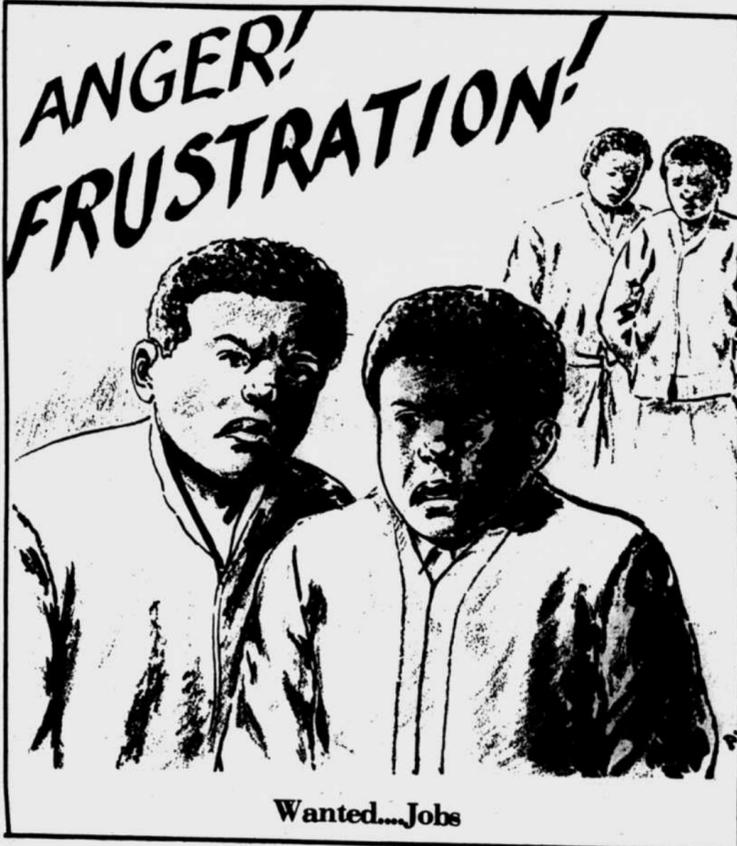
We applaud the Council's action but deem it necessary to note that neither of these reasons fully explains why L. C. Coleman should have a park named in his honor. It has been "L.C.," as he's affectionately called, who, through the years, has successfully championed the causes of the youth and the elderly and has led efforts to clarify and aid citizens' concerns in such projects as the McArthur Avenue widening controversy. Without fanfare, and

often without the support of other community leaders, Coleman has often accomplished what appeared to be impossible. We join others in saluting L. C. Coleman for a job well-done in contributing in his own way to the betterment of all mankind.

### Something On Your Mind?

"Something on your mind" is the name of a column devoted to you—the young at heart readers of this newspaper—as long as it relates in some way to young people, regardless of age.

Remember it's your column. Your article should be at least 250 words, type-written and double spaced preferred. Include your name, age, school, and a clear photo, and send it to the Editor, Charlotte Post Newspaper, Post Office Box 30144, Charlotte, NC 28230.



Wanted...Jobs

## Horse Is Out Of The Stable?

Dr. Maggie Lamb Nicholson

"In Touch," which was on TV Sunday night, was lot of hoop-la. You could read on the superintendent's face as, he stumbled through putting one race up and holding another race down and ignoring all the other great people in this multi-race school system. The chairman of the committee did not seem to get herself together but it at least made people who want to know, try to find out what they were saying. The horse is out of the stable now. The children who failed are going to need more than someone to be looking good on TV. They will have to begin with kindergarten, then continue to the first grade, then put more emphasis on the second grade, so they will be ready for the third grade because that is the determining grade. That's when the child is marked for failure or success.

When this happens, the child feels it and begins to try to stay with the elect or become discouraged and feel that they are not being given a fair shake or grade. Some never catch up while there are others who realize what is about to happen to them and break through the educational competency rules and become what she or he wants to be. One needs a good background before leaving third grade. Sometimes a child has to change schools, and sometimes change counties, or even states, but if this happens, it is worth it rather than let the child stay there and jeopardize his future.

Speaking about the people who signed up for one hour per week—they are getting all the praise. What about those that volunteered one and two days per week for several years? These former volunteers saw what was about to happen and out of the goodness of their hearts pitched in to help with our publicity. What Dr. J. Robinson and Sis are doing is good, but it's not enough. More can be done and it has got to be done or this failing will continue for a long time. One race is not smarter than the other if the learning atmosphere can be put in the schools and the student applies himself or herself. What one child needs to compete in this age of technology, the same is needed for all students; we do not need a dual educational testing. Those who are asking for it are saying that their child does not have the brains or guts to go get it. Is this what the good people of Charlotte-Mecklenburg want for their children?



Dr. Nicholson

At the Democratic Women's luncheon Saturday, one speaker said that ERA is here to stay. Well, I say that there are people who are working just as hard to keep education before the public. Another spoke on rape, assaults, and sexual education. Maybe some of these crimes could be avoided with proper training. Then the speaker who talked about the governor's reading program and the competency testing, its pros and cons, needed to have said more about its beginning. My advice is to become involved. Start with your parents. Learn the democratic process. Know who you are putting in office to represent you. Yes, you do have some good ones, but you need more that will look out for all children. Don't wait to vote to be told who to vote for, but know what the person has stood for and add that to what they say they are going to do for all people. Beware of someone that will pick you out, give you some cookies and juice, drop a few dollars in your hand, pat you on the back, call you a good guy and you don't see him any more until the next election. And you can't question their action because they paid for your vote, yes, you sold yourself cheap. Well that's what Jacob did for this brother. It's an old story, so let it not be you. Know who you are supporting; it's not always the one who spends the most money nor screams the loudest. You still may get the wrong person but you can be happy that you tried. Come on everyone, exercise your God given rights. The Constitution of the United States gives it to you also.

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### Nation Ford

### Road Will Be

### Closed 2 Weeks

RALEIGH—The Division of Highways of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will close Nations Ford Road (Secondary Road 1128) in Mecklenburg County to through traffic for approximately two weeks, according to Division Engineer David B. Roberts.

The road, located about 2.2 miles south of I-77 in Charlotte will be closed from Monday, April 2, to Friday, April 13.

By Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.

## TO BE EQUAL



### Social Security Cut Endangers System

The Administration's budget makers, in search of ways to trim federal spending for the proclaimed "austerity" budget, have planned significant cuts in Social Security benefits. These cuts endanger the integrity of the system, undermine the public's confidence in it, and would deliver serious blows to the poorest among us.

This ill-advised plan has already suffered a setback in the House Ways and Means Committee, but the Administration has vowed to press forward and it will very likely surface again. It ought to be buried and forgotten.

One of the ugliest things about the plan is that it wouldn't save much money at all. The cuts have been called "nickel and dime cuts" and that is an accurate description. They're not nickel and dime cuts though, for the people who depend on their Social Security coverage.

One, perhaps the meanest, would do away with the \$255 lump sum death benefit. Poor people depend on that small payment to ensure a decent burial, perhaps the only thing many people have to look forward to. How in the world does a government that manages a three-trillion dollar economy and spends over \$500 billion itself, explain to a poor widow that it can no longer afford to give her a measly \$255 to bury someone who has been paying into the Social Security system?

Another proposed cut aimed at the poorest people is the elimination of the minimum monthly benefit. Many workers were brought into the Social Security system only in the past several years. Most are in low-paying jobs, often beneath the poverty level. Since their earnings record and payments record would only qualify them for extremely low benefits, Congress, as a matter of equity, instituted a minimum monthly benefit—only \$122 per month.

The official reason given for this cruel plan is that some people retire from federal employment, work for a short time in private industry, and then collect both federal pensions and minimum Social Security pensions. If the government wants to get at this form of "double-dipping" it should do so directly, by targeting measures to end the abuses it wants to stop.

But in the process of going after a handful of people who collect multiple pensions the Administration's plan would take away the rightful benefits of the poorest of the elderly.

In reply, officials say it won't happen, that the needy could apply for supplemental social insurance payments.

That is an indication of the confusion in the minds of policy-makers. The Social Security system is an insurance system that pays retirement benefits as a matter of right. SSI is a means-tested welfare system. To force people off the minimum benefit which is theirs by right and onto the welfare rolls, with the consequent loss of dignity and respect, is a heartless act that cannot be condoned.

Another major cut would axe the benefits now available for dependent children attending post-secondary schools. The rationale is that other education grants would be available. But those grants are means-tested and don't begin to cover all students who need them.

Another planned cut would discontinue mother's benefits when the youngest child reaches 16, instead of 18 as at present.

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### Howard Lee:

## N.C. University System Has Failed Its Black Institutions

by Yvette McCullough  
Staff Writer  
Winston-Salem Chronicle

FAYETTEVILLE—The consolidated University of North Carolina system has not met the goal of strengthening the system's predominately black institution, said Howard Lee, secretary of natural resources and community development, here recently.

Lee, the only black cabinet officer, said proponents of the consolidation in the early 1970's said the move "would make it possible for black institutions to have greater access to resources in North Carolina and make it possible for these institutions to have a greater opportunity for strength."

"This has not happened to the degree to which it was talked about at that time," said Lee to the banquet of the N.C. Alumni and Friends Coalition, a grouping of the alumni associations of the five traditionally black universities.

Lee said that blacks have sat by in silent tone when the statement was made that "we should phase out our black institutions." He said that black colleges need additional resources and that the alumni of the five schools must put forth a greater effort on behalf



HOWARD LEE  
...Natural Resources secretary

of the black institutions. "The struggle we face today is basically no different than the one faced years ago, except it is a lot harder," Lee said. "The struggle we face today is

no different today than the one faced by Mary McLeod Bethune and other great educational leaders who tried to put forth an effort to insure that black youngsters would have a chance to get a viable and acceptable education."

Lee said that in spite of the limited black resources, black colleges have turned out "some mighty fine black minds." He said that instead of facing the failures of the past blacks should accept the challenges of the future.

### SCU Presents Problem To Hospital Officials

Senior Citizens United (SCU), a low-income group of elderly and handicapped from the Charlotte area met this month with hospital officials at Charlotte Memorial to see if anything was being done to alleviate the problems they experience in the clinics and emergency room.

SCU met with hospital officials in January to present their problems, make certain demands and to give officials two months to make plans to settle their grievances.

The meeting earlier this month was labelled a success by the group. Representing Charlotte Memorial was Bland Burkhardt, Assistant

The fate of black colleges in North Carolina, Lee said, lies not in the hands of HEW but in the hands of the alumni of the black institutions.

"We should invest in our predominantly black institutions and strengthen them to the extent that any student would be able to participate within these schools," Lee said. "Let North Carolina seize once again their chance to be first and let us reject reaction and take the reigns of leadership." The Coalition is made up of

alumni, friends and faculty of Elizabeth City State, Fayetteville State, North Carolina A&T, North Carolina Central and Winston-Salem State Universities.

The Coalition was organized in December of 1973 in Greensboro. The Coalition has as one of its goals to assure that changes coming as a result of the HEW mandate and state initiatives to desegregate public higher education do not have an adverse impact on the black community.

Director; Frank Rinker, Deputy Director; and Dr. John Baker, Chief of Emergency Room Operations.

According to Johnnie Evans, spokesperson for SCU, group members and hospital officials agreed that a statistical study would be done by the hospital staff regarding the waiting times in four or five of the clinics which impact heavily on the elderly.

The staff also agreed to find ways to improve communications between patients and hospital staff, which was cited by the group as a problem that needed immediate attention. Doctor-nurse communication with each patient during the

medical examination was also discussed.

Members of the group volunteered to participate in orientation and in-service training of hospital staff as one means of sensitizing staff to the needs of patients.

