

Editorials

Should State Close Black Colleges

A June 8 editorial appearing in The News and Observer of Raleigh suggests that the state of North Carolina should establish a broad-based commission to make recommendations on how to reduce or eliminate some or all of the five state-supported predominantly black colleges or regional universities. What follows are the questions suggested by the News in support of their position for establishing the commission and the Post's responses:

News - 1: Should one or more of the five schools become a two-year junior college preparing students for advancement to universities; and or should some such schools become part of the state's community college system?

Post: With the state's community college system already designed to, and offering, two-year university transfer programs, there is no need to establish more such institutions. Furthermore, if the current two-year colleges are not adequately addressing the problem, why should we expect the establishment of one to possibly five more two-year schools to make any difference? Implied too in the News' comments on this point is the idea of establishing predominantly black two-year colleges. This too is not in keeping with the trend of the latter part of the 20th century nor is it very practical.

News - 2: What would this broad issue approach mean with regard to the federal court consent decree between the state of North Carolina and the U.S. Department of Education? Under this agreement, the state has pledged "not only to further the racial integration of the 16 campuses in the UNC system but also to enhance the five predominantly black schools...To enhance the black schools, the General Assembly appropriated \$40 million in 1979...yet, recent evidence...proliferation of remedial courses, exceptionally low SAT scores and higher failure rates on the National Teachers Examination - indicate...some black institutions still do not have adequate admission standards and continue to offer inferior education for state-financed colleges."

Post: While \$40 million is a sizeable bit out of the taxpayers' pockets, it is no big sum of money to divide among five colleges to solve a problem in six or seven years that has roots going back over 100 years. The meager \$8 million per school for this major undertaking is a small sum indeed when

compared to the budgets of the predominantly white schools in the UNC system. The News' further point that to bring these five "black institutions up to acceptable standards may cost North Carolina more than it should reasonably spend on higher education." Furthermore, the News' suggestion that the money saved on higher education in primarily black colleges might be better spent for public school education. The public schools, like the existing community college system, is supposed to be already designed and funded to prepare our youth for successful college study. Are they too a part of the problem? Then, too, if such funds were shifted to the public school, we believe relatively little of it would be used to address the particular question under discussion.

In summary, we have no disagreement with the eminent Dr. Kenneth B. Clark's research and conclusions that predominantly black universities are an anachronism. If North Carolina's black colleges are characteristic of Dr. Clark's conclusions, then we need to ask what specifically is the public school system, the community college system and the university itself doing to adequately address the problem of deficient educational achievement of black college students? The spending of \$40 million in and of itself guarantees nothing unless it was used in some planned coordinated manner with the public schools, community colleges, all 16 member campuses of the UNC system and private colleges and universities.

It is quite easy to get the impression that each branch of the UNC system is out to recruit its quota of academically talented black students with little regard for the overall problem. Likewise, the public high schools take pride in their academic scholarship-bound black graduates and too often "showcase" them with pride on what the particular school has done without concentrating on the broader problem. Likewise, too, there appears to be little hard evidence of a meaningful relationship between the community college and UNC system to aid and encourage black youth to seek a four-year degree. At a minimum, these scatter shot approaches to the problem of black academic achievement need to be evaluated and studied before a consideration for closing existing black colleges.

Len Bias: A Tragic Loss

A week ago Len Bias, a University of Maryland All-American basketball player and a first-round draft pick of the Boston Celtics, "died of cardiorespiratory arrest, which could have been caused by about a dozen different things," said Leland Memorial Hospital of Riverside, Md., representative Lynelle Quinman.

Understandably Bias' family and the world of sports, particularly the Boston Celtics organization were in shock over the sudden death of this potential NBA superstar.

Next to the death itself, it is tragic and unfortunate that so-called unidentified police and hospital sources had said that traces of cocaine had been found in Bias' urine. This represents acts of irresponsibility on the part of the police, hospital, and the news media because it represents character assassination. We think it's unfair and unethical to speculate on the cause of a person's death when an autopsy has not yet been completed. It appears that even in death we are hell-bent on low rating our fellow man.

Miller Says:

Hands Across America: The People's Lobby

**By Sherman N. Miller
Special To The Post**
During a spring visit to Washington, DC, my young daughter and I got a dispiriting lesson on the impact of poverty in America. We came upon a young woman stretched out on a front lawn with her clothes in bags scattered around her. She lay deathly still and the eerie whiteness of her face forced me to start searching for an explanation to give my inquisitive daughter.

In retrospect, I've concluded that America has become so preoccupied with maintaining our "world's richest nation" image that we cannot accept the fact that poverty flourishes in this Great Nation. But my faith was rekindled as I walked along the lines in the Hands Across America demonstration in Delaware.

The Rev. Dr. James K. Baldwin, pastor of Bethel AME Methodist Church and president of the Ministerial Alliance of Wilmington, offered me a message for President Ronald Reagan that highlighted the Hands Across America demonstration was a massive people's lobby against American hunger. "I am glad Mr.



Sherman

Reagan joined us and I am going to say to him and all of his cabinet: 'Hang in there until we eradicate this country of the poverty that we have!'"

Yet I wondered if our political leaders would be responsive to this people's lobby. I queried both Democratic and Republican Delaware leaders to see where they stood on the issue of fighting hunger in America. U.S. Rep. Tom Carper (D) contends that the U.S. House of Representatives will pass a budget that says, "We think it is important to not cut housing money, nor cut the money that we are spend-



Answer To "Black On Black " Crime....Better Team Work!

The Spirit Of America

Sabrina Johnson's column "Scope," will return next week.

By Timothy Jackson
Special To The Post

As millions of Americans join together to celebrate America this July 4 (made special by the 100th birthday of that symbol of freedom, the Statue of Liberty), the self-sung national praise may to some sound hollow. We are supposed to rejoice in our freedom and yet at every turn, it seems, we see injustice, inequality, and suffering. Poverty, poor education, crime, drugs, child abuse, and the disintegrating family seem to be the harsher day-to-day realities.

We are supposed to believe that America is best, the greatest, while at the same time accepting that our average standard of living is well below a number of other countries.

It is easy for blacks to be cynical about our freedoms. Civil rights, even in today's form, were hard won, paid for in part with the life of the great Martin Luther King. And the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, those bastions of America's freedoms, must it seems be constantly defended against erosion. In



Sabrina

recent years even our churches supposedly beyond the legislative powers of Congress (per the Bill of Rights), find themselves embroiled in law courts with increasing regularity.

Yet despite the hypocrisies, few of us would ever entertain the idea of immigrating to another country. We still believe, to some degree, in the freedoms that do exist, however imperfect. We seem to believe that there is still a greatness in America, although most of us would probably be hard pressed to point specifically to where it resides.

I also believe that there is greatness in America, not simply for what we have, but for what we still have the

power to achieve. Martin Luther King spoke out and moved a nation when he said, "I have a dream..." His greatness lay not just in his oratory and his organizational abilities. Far more significantly, he held fast to a dream for change and he led others to share in that dream.

Likewise, the true greatness of America lies in its life, a spirit that continually demonstrates that individually we still have the courage and strength to dream new dreams.

"A culture is only as great as its dreams," says L. Ron Hubbard, author of the near eight million copy best-seller, "Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health," the most successful self-improvement book ever published.

He adds: "Ideas, and not battles mark the forward progress of mankind. Individuals, and not masses, form the culture of the race."

In spite of all the social ills and problems, we do have cause for celebration. The real American dream is not just one particular lifestyle nor just the ownership of bigger and better cars and houses. The real American dream is the simple truth that one can dream, and that in spite of tremendous barriers often in the way, one can work to make those dreams reality.

Issue Grants

Deadline Nears

Local nonprofit and government agencies in North Carolina that wish to sponsor educational seminars on issues affecting women of all ages may apply for a mini-grant of up to \$500 to be awarded by the Council on the Status of Women in the N.C. Department of Administration.

All applications must be received by the council no later than 5 p.m., Friday, August 1.

Seminars must be held between September 1, 1988 and June 30, 1987. Seminar topics eligible for the grants include, but are not limited to, women's legal rights, financial planning, business and career planning, domestic violence, sexual assault, money and time management, job skills, pregnancy, leadership development, pay equity, parenting, elimination of sex-stereotyping in schools and others.

For more information about eligibility and the application requirements, contact Betty Budd, N.C. Council on the Status of Women, 526 N. Wilmington St., Raleigh, NC 27604, or call 919-733-2455.

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Inc. in Winston-Salem donated \$25,000 in grant funds to be made available for the seminars.

The foundation was established in 1936 for the benefit of the people of North Carolina. It has made well over 1,500 grants totaling more than \$127 million for education and health care; advocacy on the local level; cultural activities; handicapped, minority and women's issues and others. In recent years the foundation has become interested in improving the criminal justice system in North Carolina.

ing for nutrition programs, education programs, and some programs for elderly people."

Mayor Dan Frawley (D) of Wilmington argued, "Charity begins at home and I firmly believe that is the case here."

Caleb Boggs (R), former U.S. Senator, said, "I think we have to send a message from this great humanitarian demonstration to the Congress and all government officials at every level that we want to be sure that there is no hunger in this country."

Governor Michael Castle (R) maintains that, "The country is doing better today than it has ever done fighting poverty simply because of jobs and other opportunities."

4th Of July Would Be Safer Without Fireworks

Maybe the Fourth wouldn't be the same without fireworks, but all the evidence suggests it would be a whole lot safer.

Last year, fireworks sent more than 6,000 victims to American emergency rooms, over half of them children under 15. Most of these injuries came from common types of legal fireworks - firecrackers, bottle rockets, and sparklers.

The North Carolina Medical Society urges parents to take extra care with fireworks this year. The following rules are recommended:

I firmly believe that our political leaders know they must do something substantial to fight hunger in America. I only hope that the organizers of the Hands Across America effort have a long-range program to insure that the federal and state governments place hunger high on their budgetary priority lists. If we are serious about fighting hunger in America, then let us stop fooling ourselves by trying to use a \$1 million band-aid to treat a billion dollar wound.

I hope the 1988 U.S. congressional races do not produce a host of political charlatans who merely plan to pay lip service to hunger in America because they view it as merely America's latest fad.

-Do not allow your children to play with fireworks. They are not toys.

-Watch out for sparklers. They burn at dangerously high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing. Last year, a seven-year-old girl suffered second-degree burns when a sparkler set fire to her nightgown.

-Follow instructions on labels before lighting fireworks.

-Keep a bucket of water nearby for emergencies and for dousing fireworks that do not go off.

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