

EDITORIALS



Convention Center Referendum On Ballot

Following a public hearing, the Raleigh City Council voted to place the \$95 million convention-center improvements program on the November 3 ballot. This gives the voters the final say on the major capital investment program.

Mayor Avery C. Upchurch said the sustained interest in this initiative and the involvement by the citizens "reflects concern for a primary element of the Raleigh-Wake economy, which is the convention, conference and tourism business."

The Convention Center Improvements Program is the culmination of over five years of study, research, comment, and involvement by civic leaders and citizens. The program includes retaining and upgrading the existing Civic Center and construction of a new convention center, located adjacent to the existing center, directly across the street on the west side of Salisbury Street.

"The plans for refurbishing the existing Civic Center and construction of the Convention

Center offer Raleigh the opportunity to have Class A, top quality convention and tourism facilities, compatible with the quality of this community and its emphasis on education, research and development on the national and international levels," Mayor Upchurch said.

The plan calls for costs of up to \$95 million, based on detailed analysis by architectural consultants. Land acquisition would involve approximately 330,000 square feet of property in the downtown area. Land costs estimates are based on a detailed analysis by an independent expert land appraiser. Acquisition of land for the new facility is pending the outcome of the Nov. 3 vote.

A public information program will be undertaken to further inform the citizens of Raleigh about this program, prior to the Nov. 3 vote.

For more information on the Convention Center Improvements Program, contact the City of Raleigh Public Affairs office at 890-3100.

Back To School

Guest Editorial
BY RUTH HEINER

August brings fair time, hot days and street sidewalk sales for going back to school.

By permission I have excerpts from a talk given at a recent new grade school dedication.

"Students, I fear I have some disturbing and alarming news to bring you this evening. I fear that your school board is cracked! They've gone bonkers! You don't believe me? Then let me inform you of some facts I was doing on my trusty calculator and I reckon that for the price of this building, each one of you could have received almost 25,000 Snicker candy bars instead. That would be enough to hold even the boy who loved to eat 12 bars a day for over 6 years!

"Or each one of you could have received a Nintendo with at least 50 game cartridges, plus a new bike, plus a new motorbike, plus a snowmobile.

"Or consider this: Instead of building this new school building the school board and your parents could have taken each one of you to Disneyland — not only the one in California, but also the one in Florida and in France and even the one in Japan.

"I don't know about you, but it would be my suggestion that come next school board election, each of you strongly advise your parents to vote for the pro-Disneyland candidate.

But alas, it is too late to do anything about it now. The school is already built and we can only dream of Nintendos never to be ours. But have any of you stopped to wonder why the school board and your parents would make

such a blunder? Tonight I want each of you to ask your parents why. Ask them why they built this school instead of buying you all those Snickers and listen to their answer.

I suppose your parents might give one of many different answers, but I want to talk about one they might give. A school is a place when we go to learn from other people. A school is a place we can learn relatively painlessly the wisdom, knowledge and experiences of people from all over the world.

With computers, videos, records and a good library, you can learn from people living in Irkutsk, to Timbuktu. Moreover, you can also learn from people who have lived at different times whether it was yesterday or four thousand years ago. You can learn from King Tut and Caesar as easily as you can from George Bush and Garth Brooks.

Now some of you are probably saying to yourselves why is it so important that I learn from other people, especially dead ones? I am smart and can figure out things for myself and besides, experience is the best teacher.

To enjoy all these things and more we need to learn from other people's experiences. Because we are not immortal, schools are absolutely essential for our living a full and rich existence.

Perhaps your parents built this school because they understood this and they wanted our life to be a happy, exciting and spacious one. Perhaps they built it because they love you.

OPINION

Politics of 'double consciousness'

By Chuck Stone

For the past two weeks, only the most passionate political junkie has preferred the mind-numbing rhetoric of presidential Lilliputians over the exhilarating feats of Olympic Titans.

That's because there is a quintessential difference between applauding the quartet of George Bush, Dan Quayle, Bill Clinton and Al Gore and cheering the quartet of Magic Johnson, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Gail Devers and Mike Conley.

As Olympics-watchers, we cheer in unison as Americans. "The Olympics is the only time I'm patriotic," says my irreverent wife, Louise.

As political animals, we also applaud, but we do so in separate groups.

Today, each of those separate groups commands a dual loyalty — or what a brilliant scholar 80 years ago called our "double consciousness."

When W.E.B. Du Bois wrote these prophetic words, he only had blacks in mind: "It is a peculiar sensation, this double consciousness... this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others. One ever feels his twoness — an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings..."

Eighty-nine years later, that double consciousness has multiplied tenfold to encompass not only blacks, but a majority of women, Latinos, Jews, pro-choicers, pro-lifers, corporate executives, gays, Perotistas and Southern white males (euphemistically known as "Bubbas").

Perjoratively dubbed "special in-

terest groups," these groups sometimes have had to prove they, too, were American. But "double consciousness" is as American as pizza, grits and apple pandowdy.

So are women, especially those aroused by the U.S. Senate's Arlen Specter-led inquisition of Professor Anita F. Hill.

Increasingly, they are resolving their double consciousness by choosing gender conviction over political ideology. Ethnic groups, especially blacks, Latinos and Jews, often have done the same.

Jewish double consciousness has oscillated between historic liberalism and profound concern for Israel.

A former colleague, Jill Porter of the Philadelphia Daily News, analyzed this dilemma in a soul-opening May column:

"For some Jewish liberals, the U.S. Senate contest between (Republican incumbent) Arlen Specter and (Democratic challenger) Lynn Yeakel has become a matter of putting first things first.

"Jewish first? Or liberal first?" Ordinarily, that would not cause a conflict, but "Specter is not only Jewish, but a devout champion of Israel."

Porter concluded the column with Du Boisian honesty. "As a Jew and a feminist — the two most dominant parts of my identity other than mother and journalist — I share the conflict. While my heart is thoroughly with Yeakel, my ethnic instincts, I must admit, give me pause."

A month later, she resolved her double consciousness — or triple consciousness (woman, liberal and Jew)

— with a resolution that "haunts me still, but I'm for Yeakel, a leap of faith, but a leap of faith worth taking."

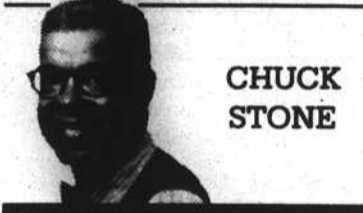
During the Senate hearings on the Supreme Court nomination of a black arch conservative, Clarence Thomas, blacks wrestled futilely with their double consciousness — their loyalty to a brother vs. their historic liberalism. The moment Bush's judicial waterboy declared he was a victim of "a high-tech lynching," blacks closed ranks around him with unthinking ferocity.

Today, young ghetto blacks are murdering each other with escalating rapidity. But many middle-class blacks committed a more sophisticated form of political suicide by supporting Thomas.

Henry Cabot Lodge once lamented the existence of hyphenated Americanism; urging others to deny the pull of ethnic considerations comes easily for WASPs who control the power structure.

But "double consciousness" will continue to thrive as long as the power structure of American society excludes those whose emotional hyphenation is denied the opportunities provided by the Olympics.

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CHUCK STONE

THE CONSERVATIVE ADVOCATE

So-called innocents on death row

By William A. Rusher

By now we have had enough experience with the death penalty under the new Supreme Court rules to recognize the techniques that the American Civil Liberties Union and the criminal bar have developed for combating it. They are as rigidly ritualized as a Japanese tea ceremony.

First and foremost, of course, there's the contention that the defendant didn't do it — it's all a gross miscarriage of justice. There are well over 2,000 people awaiting execution in various states around the country, and it beggars belief that all of them are as innocent as new-born babes, but that is usually the contention whenever one of them gets dangerously close to the death chamber.

Typically, it will be charged that the real killer was the defendant's accomplice, who turned state's evidence in return for a life sentence. Not infrequently some convict in for a long stretch elsewhere will confess to having committed the crime himself, in the hope of a little welcome attention.

Invariably, as the execution date approaches, there will be discoveries of "new evidence" — allegedly providing the prisoner with a cast-iron alibi, or exonerating him by virtue of newly developed blood tests, or demonstrating that the prosecutors suppressed vital facts. Frequently, some member of the jury that convicted him, or even the judge or prosecutor, can be persuaded to announce that, on this or some other basis, the execution

should be blocked.

Equally predictably, it will be argued that all of the defense lawyers involved in the trial and the endless appeals (some going on for 10 or 15 years) were incompetent.

But what if, as often happens, there is simply no doubt that the individual in question committed the crime? What if dozens of people saw him do it, or he managed to make a confession so persuasive as to eliminate all uncertainty? Then we will be told that he has the IQ of a borderline moron, and was clearly incapable of knowing that what he did was wrong, or of assisting in his own defense, or of comprehending the reason for his execution if it occurs.

Finally, there will be the pleas made to the governor at the clemency hearing. This is the point at which we learn that the defendant's mother drank during her pregnancy — thus afflicting him with fetal alcohol syndrome. Invariably, his father was a beast. If by any chance the prisoner served in Vietnam, he will be portrayed as the hapless victim of post-traumatic stress syndrome, even if he never got within earshot of military action.

On execution eve, after these and still other contentions have all been sifted by the state and federal courts and rejected repeatedly, some federal judge appointed in the Carter years can almost always be found who will issue as many stays of execution as necessary, on the basis of "new" contentions however flimsy, to boot the

legal football down the field and launch a whole new round of hearings and appeals.

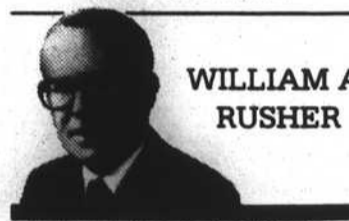
If even this fails, thanks to a vigilant and determined Supreme Court, the liberal media will indulge in one last orgy of exculpation. If the defendant is by any chance personable and articulate, an effort will be made to run him around the Donahue-and-CNN circuit, on the theory that nobody that nice could be guilty. If he is a malevolent hulk without any redeeming qualities whatever, the state will be accused of wanting to fry senseless, inert meat.

The wonder is that anybody, however guilty, ever gets executed at all.

• NOTE: Due to a typographical error, Ed Rollins (Ross Perot's new Republican adviser) was slightly misquoted in one of my recent columns. What he actually said was, "I carried 49 states for Reagan in 1984." That claim deserves to be quoted accurately, in all its manic grandeur.

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THE CONSERVATIVE ADVOCATE



WILLIAM A. RUSHER

Miller Says

BY SHERMAN N. MILLER

A HISTORICAL LOW VOTER TURNOUT

H. Ross Perot's pullout from the 1992 Presidential campaign officially ended the primary season. Independents lost their major candidate without casting a vote for or against him. But why did Perot choose the day that Democratic Presidential Nominee Bill Clinton would make an acceptance speech to announce his withdrawal?

The timeliness of Perot's announcement suggests that he relished upstaging Clinton in the media. This announcement forced a rewriting of presidential election campaign strategies leaving Perot with political leverage in both camps. We ought not let this sort of wheeling and dealing occur without our trying to understand if there is an underhanded political game afoot here.

We must decipher the campaign premises that drive the deal making and gamesmanship. Consider that a President George Bush re-election victory will require a historical low voter turnout. The Republican Party can ill-afford to have African-Americans, Hispanics, the working poor, the down-classed, women groups and so on, motivated enough to vote.

The ballyhoo surrounding former Ku Klux Klan member and Neo-Nazi David Duke's gubernatorial bid suggested the existence of an illusion premise to nullify the African-American vote. The national African-American community felt good when the Louisiana African-American community dealt Duke a smashing defeat in his run against Governor Edwin Edwards. There was no real joy for the African-American community because while they focused on Duke they failed to see the destruction of progressive thinking underway in Mississippi.

Mississippi Governor Kirk Fordice (R) owes the Mississippi African-American leadership a debt of gratitude for his victory. They didn't rally the African-American vote, so they shouldn't be surprised by Fordice regressive policies. The Fordice victory confirmed that the Republican Party can manipulate the African-

American vote into staying home, thereby negating its impact in the general election.

The Democratic Party is also working hard to insure that the African-American community doesn't vote in the general election. They relegated Rev. Jesse Jackson to the second team where his eloquent and liberal speeches will not hamstring Gov. Clinton's election effort. Further Clinton's quasi-Republican Party campaign style carries the taint of assuming minimal need of African-American voter assistance in a victory equation.

The re-election bid of U. S. Senator Bill Bradley (D) in New Jersey offers insight into how one can handle massive voter discontent. Bradley's tough victory showed that incumbents can still win in an anti-incumbent atmosphere. But one can also infer from this campaign that political pundits must devise schemes to manage frustrated voters — keep these people away from the polls venting their anger.

The Bradley inference suggests the incarnation of H. Ross Perot. Perot offered frustrated voters an illusionary champion to carry their banner. It was like the rebirth of the fervor surrounding Third Party candidates John Anderson and George Wallace.

Once Perot's name got on the ballot in many states, he could pull out of the campaign shafting these frustrated voters once again. These battered voters must now either eat their pride and crawl back to the major candidates like the Biblical Prodigal Son or stay home election day. Either way this massive voter block disintegrates before it can cause serious damage.

Thus I ask you, "Did H. Ross Perot spread disinformation to pave the way for a successful George Bush reelection bid? Will the Republican Party campaign make a conscious effort to insure a historical low voter turnout? Has Democratic Presidential Nominee Bill Clinton turned a deaf ear to minorities because he is now more Republican than President George Bush?"