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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DATE: 27 FEB 79

FOR ACTION:

Hold - my comment (non)

INFO ONLY: STU EIZENSTAT

HAMILTON JORDAN

JACK WATSON

SUBJECT: CALIFANO MEMO RE EDITORIAL ON NORTH CAROLINA

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+ RESPONSE DUE TO RICK HUTCHESON STAFF SECRETARY (456-7052) +
+ BY: +
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ACTION REQUESTED:

STAFF RESPONSE: () I CONCUR. () NO COMMENT. () HOLD.

PLEASE NOTE OTHER COMMENTS BELOW:



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20201

February 26, 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

JOE CALIFANO

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joe Califano", is written over the printed name.

Here is the North Carolina editorial I mentioned to you
on the phone today.

The News and Observer



I advise and enjoin those who direct the paper in the tomorrow never to advocate any cause for personal profit or preferment. I would wish it always to be "the tocsin" and devote itself to the policies of equality and justice in the underprivileged. If the paper should at any time be the voice of self-interest or become the spokesman of privilege or selfishness it would be untrue to its history. — JOSEPHUS DANIELS, Editor and Publisher 1894-1948

This newspaper's opinion

New challenge for UNC

The blunt truth often hurts. Federal officials have exposed North Carolina to the depressing truth about the poor condition of its traditionally black universities. The state doesn't look good for having allowed "unequal" education to fester for too long within its university system.

On a three-day tour of state universities last week, officials of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare discovered that black schools suffer from worn-out buildings, inadequate libraries and insufficient laboratory materials. It has taken a highly publicized tour by HEW officials to drive the point home to North Carolinians.

HEW and officials of the University of North Carolina system are still at loggerheads over the terms of a plan for desegregating the 16-campus system and enhancing the five predominantly black institutions. North Carolina doesn't have to accept all the federal demands in the desegregation case to recognize that there's work to be done at its black campuses.

A failure now to commit energy and money to solving some of the problems of the black institutions could indeed damage UNC's cause in the negotiations with HEW. What has now become clear is that North Carolina faces a challenge to improve its black institutions, a challenge that would exist even if there were no desegregation dispute.

Since the formation of a board of governors for all institutions of higher education, UNC administrators indeed have made strides in behalf of these five schools. Also, there may well be some administrative problems on the campuses themselves.

But it is also true that UNC officials and the legislature — and the newspapers — have neglected to pay adequate attention to the plight of the black schools. While the state has

been lavishing some campuses with a new medical school, a veterinary school and sparkling high rises, it has not shown a necessary commitment to improving schools where most of its black college students seek a higher education.

The option of closing or merging some black schools does not appear to be available to UNC administrators at this time. Not only HEW but also a federal district court has said that the "unique importance" of black institutions must be considered and that desegregation "must not place a greater burden on black institutions or black students." Other court cases have established the precedent that the state cannot plead it lacks the funds to remedy past failures.

UNC is right in refusing to concede HEW's assertion that eliminating "duplication" between nearby white and black campuses is required to comply with the civil rights law. Nevertheless, that refusal may be tested in court. UNC also stands on a sound principle that it cannot turn over responsibility for running its campuses to the federal bureaucracy.

North Carolina doesn't have to make black campuses equal to Chapel Hill tomorrow, but it is obvious that the state has failed even to bring many aspects of its black institutions up to minimally acceptable standards. That failure has now been laid bare by HEW. It may be embarrassing but the federal officials may well have done the state a favor by showing the challenge ahead.

Good Morning

What with all the talk about nations losing face in Southeast Asia, what-
ever became of the worry about losing heads?