

The Yellin' Rebel

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I'd rather see newspapers with no government than government with no newspapers

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Joe Clark to speak at UNLV

by gary mantz

staff writer

At Eastside High in Paterson, N.J., awestruck students privately call him "Crazy Joe." Outgoing U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett approvingly casts him as "Dirty Harry."

And to a host of detractors, Joe Clark, America's only superstar principal, is the embodiment of autocratic rule, ever willing to pitch failing or peccant pupils into the street. Bullhorns and baseball bats, they say, are inappropriate tools of education.

But Clark views himself as a tough-minded disciplinarian with a war on his hands.

"Discipline is the ultimate tenet of education," he told *Time* last winter, when he was the subject of a cover story. "Discipline establishes the format, the environment for academic achievement to occur."

Tonight at 7 o'clock, as Clark delivers his lecture, "From Disgrace to Amazing Grace" in Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall, he will be bringing news from the front as a continuing battle is waged for the future of American public education.

Public schools, especially high schools in decaying urban centers, are generally in a state of permanent siege.

The Feb. 1 story in *Time*, "Getting Tough," dropped a litany of horrific facts and figures:

In Detroit, dropout rate of 41 percent citywide, and 80 percent in the worst areas.

In St. Louis, 1 in 4 girls becomes pregnant before senior year.

In Boston, 55 pupils expelled in 1987 for toting guns on campus.

In Chicago, an open house at a school of 1,000 students attracted five mothers and fathers.

Not mentioned in the article was the battle for Clark County schools, faced with their own share of crime, substance abuse, dropouts and pregnancy.

At Eastside in 1982, Joe Clark took over after 20 years as a teacher and elementary school principal. What he found was a studentbody of 3,200 polluted by the presence of pushers and other varieties of juvenile delinquents. Some students had turned 18 without earning a single academic credit. Property damage was substantial. Teachers were fearful of going to their jobs. Drugs had become a plague.

What Clark commenced to do about it all has amounted to something of a shot heard 'round the public education world.

Armed with a bullhorn and a 36 in. baseball bat,



Greeks recruit on campus - Greek Rush continues this week in and around the Moyer Student Union
photo by steve spatatore

Clark bellowed the halls clear of loiterers and chained school doors tight against the encroachments of dealers. The former Army Reserve sergeant instituted a dress code, and there was latrine duty for class-cutters.

And Clark took his fight to the next abstraction. During his first week as principal, he expelled 300 disruptive students he regarded as "leeches and parasites."

Since then, Clark has purged Eastside of hundreds more. With them have gone over 100 teachers and a number of administrators, willingly or not, after their visions of school policy and his clashed.

"There can be only one star here," he told a

Newsweek reporter, "and that's me."

Last January, reported *Time*, Clark was charged with insubordination by the Paterson School Board and faced possible dismissal after he expelled 66 students he deemed "parasitic" without due process or board approval.

Spates of media exposure later, Joe Clark is still at Eastside, keeping board and delinquency at bay.

As a celebrity, Clark is using the spotlight to espouse his firebrand style of leadership as the way to reclaim America's troubled schools. But critics are vocal too, including at UNLV.

Dr. Anthony Saville, the university's first Dean at the

College of Education, now Professor of Educational Administration and Higher Education, sees no wide applicability of Clark's methods.

"The question," he said last week, "is whether Clark's type of management can work" in most trouble spots.

"In 95 percent of secondary schools, it would not work."

Having read numerous studies of successful schools, Saville believes in a different emphasis.

"If you see the studies of effective schools, they have disciplinarians as principals," he noted, but added that such leaders "decentralize the operations of the

school. They realize teachers are the main component of the educational process."

No doubt Joe Clark enjoys wide public approval. When *Family Circle* magazine invited readers to pass judgment on his approach, more than 8,000 responses were phoned in, reports the Sept. 20 issue, with 75 percent expressing support.

Even President Reagan has lauded Clark, viewing him as representative of the essential toughness needed to turn around urban schools.

Yet critics, acknowledging his restoration of order at Eastside, like to point to academic barometers in questioning Clark's leadership: reading scores that re-

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Legistators react to regents budget request

by john santana

staff writer

In CSUN President Steve Evenson's annual State of the Campus Address, he stated that the Board of Regents is requesting 100 percent funding from the 1989 State Legislature. Evenson also explained that "the Chancellor's Office is praying for 80 percent funding." The total funding UNLV currently receives from the Legislature amounts to 20

percent. According to Evenson, student fees would stay down if the state of Nevada paid their share for higher education.

Since the proposal is a recent one, most legislators have not had a chance to gather much information on the subject. When asked about the proposal, Assemblywoman Myrna Williams of Clark County, District 10, said, "I am not sure how realistic it is. (100 percent funding) We do have

to increase funding until we get to Carson City and see our budget allotment. 80 percent would be a slightly more realistic proposal."

When asked if the Legislature plans to make higher education a top priority during the next session, Legislator Bill Kissam of Clark County District 4, responded by saying, "Yes, definitely." Assemblyman Kissam is a member of the state committee on education. Assemblywoman Jane

Wisdom, of Clark County District 3, said that "I have not seen the proposed budget yet, so I can't comment on the regents proposal right now. Only the Ways and Means committee knows what the budget will be and I am not on that committee. But all education is a top priority on my list." Wisdom went on to say that equal funding for both UNLV and UNR is very difficult because both schools have special programs, like UNR

with the school of mines and UNLV with the Engineering Department and the Film Studies Program.

Assemblyman Terry Tebbs, of Clark County District 42, stated that, "I am behind the funding increase all the way. I think that UNLV has made great progress in its' first thirty years. I feel that in the next decade it will be one of the leading academic institutions in the nation. I am behind Dr. Maxson and all his efforts. I

feel he has done a great job getting the University where it is today. I feel we need to increase professors salaries so we can lure top professors and keep them here. I feel the University plays an important role in improving Nevada's image nationwide. Dr. Maxson has done a great job to lure grants and private funds, now the state needs to help with funding. With the right sum of money, UNLV can be a top university. I see Reaction, page 5