

William F. Winter

Watkins Ludlam Winter
and Stennis, P.A..

Governor of Mississippi 1980-1984



William F. Winter: A Seasoned Man of Reason

Governor Winter has pursued a lifelong passion to advance education and thereby has demonstrated his commitment to diminish inequities in educational, economic, and racial opportunity. Born in Grenada, Mississippi, William F. Winter received his BA and LLB degrees from the University of Mississippi. He served as an infantry officer in World War II and the Korean War. His public service includes State Representative, State Treasurer, Lieutenant Governor, and finally Governor of the State of Mississippi from 1980-84. It was as Governor that he initiated a grassroots campaign to address the critical need for reform in Mississippi's public education system. His efforts culminated in the 1982 Education Reform Act which established public kindergartens, compulsory attendance, and performance-based accreditation. Significant changes in the goals and direction of the state's legislative leadership also resulted. Winter's contributions have received national recognition, including the 2000 Civic Change Award from the Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, D.C.; the 2000 Mid South Leadership Award by the Foundation for the Mid South in Jackson, MS; and the 2001 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Award by the National Education Association in Los Angeles, California. In 1997 President Clinton appointed him to his Advisory Board on Race. He has held leadership positions in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, the National Commission on the State and Local Public Service, the National Issues Forum Institute, the Stennis Center for Public Service, the Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi, the Foundation for the Mid South, the Southern Regional Education Board, the Southern Growth Policies Board, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Commission on the Future of the South, the Kettering Foundation, and the National Civic League. His vision, leadership, and contributions transcend his state and region; he has established a legacy of national and international proportions.

"HOW INDIVIDUALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PUBLIC POLICY"

**Remarks by Charles L. Overby
On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the historic
Education Reform Act of 1982 in Mississippi
Ramada-Inn Coliseum
Jackson, Mississippi
December 17, 1992**

REMARKS BY CHARLES L. OVERBY
PRESIDENT & CEO
THE FREEDOM FORUM
"HOW INDIVIDUALS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PUBLIC POLICY"
JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
DECEMBER 17, 1992

Thank you, Elise Winter. Your generous introduction brought back many good memories about how much fun it was to be editor of *The Clarion-Ledger*.

All of you have just witnessed with Elise Winter a classic example of how life is not fair. Imagine the incongruity of Elise Winter, the First Lady of Education Reform, being reduced to introducing a newspaper man. Mother Teresa never performed a more humble act.

Elise, we all thank you for your lifetime partnership with William Winter, a marvelous private relationship that has yielded a beautiful family and tremendous public good.

Governor Winter, I thank you for your statesmanship and leadership, but even more important, your example to my generation. It is easy to see and to say at this 10 year retrospective that William Winter is Mississippi's Man of the Decade.

But I want to go a step further. We now are closing in on the 21st Century. I can state without a doubt that William Winter is Mississippi's Man of the Century. His long, tireless and effective public service began in the 1940s and continued positively through the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s and now the 90s -- an extraordinary achievement. William Winter is this century's L.Q.C. Lamar, and 100 years from now, some outstanding public servant will be praised as the William Winter of the 21st Century. Governor Winter we salute you and we thank you.

To Cora Norman of the Mississippi Humanities Council and Tom Wacaster of the Phil Hardin Foundation, thank you for this invitation and your leadership in putting today's events together.

It is a pleasure to be back in Jackson to celebrate with you past achievements and future hopes. This 10th anniversary celebration gives me special and singular joy.

We know, of course, that education is not just high-minded public policy, but revolves around what happens in the classroom and home with students, teachers and parents.

I heard a Mississippi congressman tell a story -- it was either Sonny Montgomery's or Mike Espy's story -- about a youngster who showed his report card to his mother. He had A's in all his subjects, but he had a U in conduct.

His mother said the A's were good but the U was particularly troubling because it reflected on the family and his upbringing.

The next term, the youngster brought his report card home, and his mother asked him how he fared. "I did great," he said. "But Mom you failed again."

In a strange way, that may be where we are today in education: A lot of A's for past achievements but some distracting and disturbing U's that reflect on our political and social upbringing.

Let me tell you a story, a true story, that has a bearing on us today.

About two years ago, a few companions and I had to charter a plane to get somewhere in a hurry. We were flying to a small airport in Rhode Island where neither we nor the pilots had been before. It was a bad day for flying: Heavy clouds, lots of rain and wind.

When we began to descend through the clouds to the airport, we were buffeted from side to side by the storm. The pilots swooped toward the ground in search of the airport, only to find no runway and no airport. We had to go up again and back down a second time -- again being buffeted back and forth as we descended through the clouds. Again, no runway and no airport.

Finally on the third try, the pilots spotted the airport through the clouds, and we landed. When I got out of the little plane, I was quite shaken. My condition must have been obvious to the young man who had come from the private terminal to meet us. He offered a feeble effort to make conversation. He asked me a question that I have since described as the single dumbest question I have ever been asked. He asked: "Was the sun shining above the clouds?" Think about that question. Think about the magnitude of its stupidity. Long before Galileo, people knew the sun shone above the clouds.

For about a year I told friends about that experience as an illustration of the pitfalls of frequent flying. But it dawned on me when I was at a luncheon in Mississippi here last spring for Parents for Public Schools that I was the dumb one. I had been focusing on the question, when I should have focused on the answer.

The answer is startling in its simplicity. The sun is ALWAYS shining above the clouds. No matter how dark the clouds, no matter how heavy the rain or wind, the sun is ALWAYS shining above the clouds.

This story applies to us today on the 10th anniversary of Education reform.

We know that education across America has its share of clouds. It's our job to see beyond the clouds to the sunshine. It's our job to focus on the answers, not the questions.

That is precisely what Governor Winter and the allies of education reform did in 1982. And that is why we are able to celebrate this important event 10 years later.

To help us focus on answers rather than questions, I want to talk about the importance of three things:

- Individual choices.
- The making of history.
- Your role in making history.

In my role as a newsman and now a foundation president, I have seen history being made. I covered the civil rights struggles of the 60s, politics and the presidential campaigns of the 70s and 80s, and I witnessed the upheaval and struggle in Russia and Eastern Europe in the 90s.

Looking back on it, I realize now history was frequently made through individual choices by bold and courageous leaders like Governor Winter but also by the individual choices of little known or unknown people.

I'll cite two events I witnessed, one in Mississippi -- the one we celebrate today -- and one in Moscow -- both historic, both tumultuous, both uncertain in their outcome until individuals made their fateful choices.

As we all recall, in 1982, Governor Winter and his close associates decided they would try one more time to achieve education reform in Mississippi. Many people, probably most people, were pessimistic.

The Governor had tried before and had been rebuffed by the legislature. There was little or no reason to think that this time would be different. Mississippi's economy remained depressed. Mississippians seemingly had grown accustomed to being last in most educational statistics in the country.

But Governor Winter had a dream that he could make a difference. Governor Winter was blessed with key advisers who shared his idealism and his stubbornness. They included Dick Molpus and Ray Mabus and David Crews, John Henegan and Andy Mullins. Certainly, that small group also included Elise Winter. More about her in a minute. And it included a small original group of dedicated but outnumbered legislators.

The Governor and his associates realized that they had to go directly to the people. They had to go over the heads of the legislature if they hoped to change the status quo. They were ahead of their time in many ways. They understood the importance of direct access to citizens long before Bill Clinton and Ross Perot did in this year's Presidential race.

That is lesson #1 for people interested in changing public policy in the 1990s: At a time when complex and conflicting problems tie government into knots, it is important to find creative ways to connect directly with the public.

I believe that education reform or other public policy reforms in the 1990s will not be achieved without direct access campaigns. President-Elect Clinton began that this week with his economic summit in Little Rock.

In 1982, Governor Winter decided to do two things:

- Call a special session of the legislature.
- Convene a series of meetings across the state to show the grassroots support for education.

You heard earlier today how the first meeting in Oxford drew more than three thousand people. Jack Reed, who is with us today, played a crucial and largely uncredited role in helping to mobilize North Mississippi.

Three thousand people made individual decisions to go to one event that, as it turned out, lit the spark for education reform in Mississippi.

Nobody in Oxford knew they were going to contribute to making history that evening, but that's the way it turned out.

At *The Clarion-Ledger*, we decided to put that story across page 1. That magnified the event statewide.

There were many individual efforts that *The Clarion-Ledger* spotlighted prominently to give statewide attention. One notable example was Dr. Joe Tuten's extraordinary and courageous sermon that explained why God cared about education reform in Mississippi.

The next community meeting was scheduled a few nights later in Vicksburg.

Inc̄redibly, again nearly a thousand people turned out. Once again, a thousand people made individual decisions to go to this meeting.

They didn't know they were making history. But they were.

But single events alone are never enough.

On that second evening, *The Clarion-Ledger* didn't cover the story.

Remember now: None of us knew then that history was being made.

At the newspaper, we saw the second meeting as a repeat of the first meeting. Same speakers. Same message. We had told the story once. No point in telling it again. Typical approach to daily newspaper coverage.

Lesson #2: Just because you've told your story once, don't think everybody has heard it. You have to tell it over and over and over, with the persuasive enthusiasm that you told it the first time.

Something very pivotal happened the next day. It is little known and unreported.

After *The Clarion-Ledger* failed to cover the second meeting, Elise Winter, the Governor's wife and the epitome of charm and soft-spoken kindness, called me on the telephone. I thought she was calling to thank me for *The Clarion-Ledger's* support of her husband's education proposals. Was I ever wrong! She was calling to complain. It was totally out of character for her.

She said to me that as supportive as *The Clarion-Ledger* had been, we had made a serious mistake by not covering the second public meeting on education reform. She told me that unless the public and the legislature knew the extent of the public support for education reform, it didn't have a chance. She said she was calling without the knowledge of her husband. She was polite, but direct and quite firm.

That's lesson #3: History is made when individuals are bold enough to make decisions to do things they ordinarily would not do.

Elise Winter made an individual choice. And she helped make history.

After listening to Elise, I realized that this was, in fact, an historic effort and everybody and everything associated with it was big news. I decided then and there that we were going to treat it that way.

Elise, this is the first time I've been able to say this publicly to you: Thank you for opening my eyes and helping all of us to think big.

If *The Clarion-Ledger* contributed anything, it was helping the public and individual lawmakers understand that history was being made, for better or for worse, in late fall of 1982.

Each day, we reported on and editorialized about an epoch war, a clash of powers and ideas, that would have major consequences for years, even decades to come.

Put in that perspective by the press and by the allies of education reform, individuals began to make choices. People who had never gotten involved, got involved. Thousands of individuals, one by one, made decisions that changed history. They made phone calls; they wrote letters; they attended meetings. They woke up!

Even then, nobody gave this reform effort much of a chance. It would require, after all, the largest tax increase in the history of Mississippi - \$1 billion -- to bring about this momentous reform.

At every step of the way, it would have been easy to give up, to congratulate the effort without realizing the results.

I believe the mark of leaders is their response to the uninspired moment.

It's fairly easy to do the right things when events are going well. But in those times when you're alone or discouraged or tired, that is when individual choices are so important.

Lesson #4 : There are many, many uninspired moments in your life. Your response to the uninspired moments will decide whether you succeed or fail.

Fortunately for Mississippians, parents and lawmakers continued to make the right individual choices so that ultimately this historic education reform act passed. It was a stunning, largely unexpected victory. The most sweeping education reform in Mississippi's history. The largest tax increase in state history.

The individual decisions in Mississippi produced an impact across the country. For once, Mississippi was first -- not last -- in recognizing the public dissatisfaction with status quo education.

Across the South and then the rest of the nation, states began to say: If Mississippi can do it, so can we.

That's lesson #5: Your individual choices can have influence far beyond what you see today.

Let's look now at the improbable historical parallels of Mississippi and Moscow.

In August of 1991, I traveled to Moscow with a group from The Freedom Forum to discuss freedom of the press. We were delighted to see the new openness in the Soviet Union as we traveled freely around Moscow.

After two days in Moscow, we awoke on Monday morning to the shocking news that a coup had taken place. I walked outside my hotel and was stunned to see troops and tanks cordoning off Red Square.

For the first time in my life, I felt my personal safety and freedom threatened. Would we be detained? Would we become the 1991 version of the Iran hostages? Would the Soviet people lose all their new-found freedom?

I was in charge of a delegation of 50 people. I decided we would try to follow our schedule and see what happened. We were the last and the only Westerners on that fateful day to get in to the offices of Eduard Shevardnadze. He had predicted these events months ago to his friend Gorbachev. He prepared that morning a statement that he wanted to get to the Soviet people and to the Western world, but he was not sure he could. His message to the Soviet people was bold: Resist the coup. He gave the message to us and asked us to try to get it distributed.

We were witnessing a courageous act of a single individual.

As the day wore on, we realized that others were making similar decisions. By nightfall we were able to work our way to the American Embassy. The Embassy compound is situated on a hill overlooking Boris Yeltsin's offices. We were amazed to see thousands of people ringing his offices to protect him against the tanks and the leaders of the coup.

As we left the embassy in our bus for the hotel, we saw to our horror a crowd of about 600 people surge down the narrow street toward our bus. The bus pulled over and the people surrounded the bus. I thought we were done for.

I was wrong. The people saw the sign on our bus that said Freedom Forum. They wanted our sign. They understood the word **FREEDOM**. We climbed out of our bus and gave them the sign. They marched on toward Yeltsin's office, intent on defying the tanks and the leaders of the coup.

Within a day, they had succeeded.

Lesson #6: It takes courage to stand up for what you believe in, but you are not alone. Others are waiting to join with you. And together you can make a difference.

The real obstacles in Mississippi and Moscow were the status quo. In both instances, individuals made choices to act on their commitment to make things happen.

Ten years after education reform, much has happened:

-- Young children now go to kindergarten.

-- Dick Molpus has expanded his leadership as Secretary of State. His energy and selflessness will help Mississippi for years to come.

-- Robert Clark is president pro-temp of the House.

-- Ray Mabus was elected Governor; David Crews, a distinguished member of the State Board of Education, now has more ideas than ever before; John Henegan is a rich lawyer; Andy Mullins is a Ph.D. doctor and has written a book. Jack Reed is still helping all of us as an unsung hero.

-- And *The Clarion-Ledger* won the Pulitzer Gold Medal prize.

Let me share a word about that experience.

After education reform passed, Governor Winter, Dick Molpus and others did not try to take all the credit. They were bold enough to say nice things about many people, including those of us at *The Clarion-Ledger*.

First, let me acknowledge that we won the Pulitzer Prize not because of special talents, but because we were associated with an historic act that was monumental and far reaching.

After we won the Pulitzer, I wrote a column saying that it wasn't really correct to say *The Clarion-Ledger* won the Pulitzer. It was Mississippi's Pulitzer. I then listed about 40 individuals who deserved to have their names attached to the 1983 Pulitzer Gold Medal prize.

Indeed, I give this speech today on behalf of John Emmerich, Bill Minor, Lloyd Gray and all the Mississippi media who covered this story in a way the public could understand.

Ten years later, I see even more clearly the thousands and thousands of unnamed people who contributed to education reform and to Mississippi's Pulitzer Prize.

That's lesson #7: Success can best be achieved when people don't care who gets the most credit. Governor Winter didn't care who got the credit. Those 3,000 people in Oxford didn't care who got the credit. And history was made.

Let me close by sharing the story of the exhilaration we all felt in the newsroom the day the Pulitzer was announced. It was a high moment -- cheers, tears, champagne and congratulatory telegrams.

I received calls from all over the country -- from friends, from editors, even from the White House. But the one call I especially was looking forward to was the one from Al Neuharth, the chairman of Gannett, the head of the largest newspaper chain in the country.

Neuharth was a hard-driving leader who demanded a lot from people and was not easily satisfied.

Now, at last, I thought, we have done something that even Al Neuharth can accept as satisfactory, perhaps even slightly above average.

Finally, Al's call came. I savored the moment. But to my surprise, he did not greet me with "hello" or "congratulations." Instead, he growled into the phone: "Now what are you going to do?"

Ten years later, that remains the ultimate question.

History is being made all around us. We have to decide if we have had our one fling with history or whether we can and should participate in history as it unfolds before us.

Individual decisions are going to be made -- for better or for worse -- to determine what role, if any, you will have in future history.

Only one question remains: Now, what are you going to do?

#

The *American* *Oxonian*

Fall 1990

Volume LXXVII

Number 4

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCCESS *Steven Muller* 227

CAMPAIGN FOR OXFORD III: Question Time in the
House *Baroness Park of Monmouth* 238

THE MISSISSIPPI MIRACLE *James E. Price, Jr.* 247

POEMS: "Oxford" *William Wooten*
"Wedding Song" *William J. Smith* 255

LETTER FROM OXFORD: The Reading Party *Gerald Cardinale* 258

BOOKS 267

FOR THE RECORD 271

NOTICES 273

CLASS LETTERS: 1916, '21, '22, '23, '24, '26, '27, '30, '33, '36,
'48, '49, '52, '55, '58, '61, '62, '64, '67, '73, '76, '85 275

IN MEMORIAM 338



THE MISSISSIPPI MIRACLE

by JAMES E. PRICE, JR.

(Mississippi and St. John's '50)

DURING THE CLOSING months of 1982 two educational miracles took place in Mississippi. In November the voters approved a constitutional amendment replacing an *ex officio* State Board of Education and an elected State Superintendent of Education with an appointed nine-member lay board, and an appointed superintendent. In December the legislature, in a complete reversal of its prior position, enacted a most sweeping, comprehensive and innovative education reform act. Both events occurred several months before the publication of *A Nation At Risk*, the report which stirred many other states to begin education reform.

Before this change, education in Mississippi was almost completely a matter of local control, largely by default, even though the state provided most of the funding. There was no effective state-wide leadership dedicated to improving education. The State Board, consisting of the State Superintendent, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of State, lacked the time and expertise to establish educational policies. The extent of their educational leadership was a perfunctory monthly meeting to perform those technical acts required by law.

The State Department of Education, under the leadership of an elected state superintendent more attuned to short-term political considerations than long-term educational innovation, was viewed by itself and by local school districts as a purely regulatory agency, whose sole mission was to catch and punish those school districts who deviated from legal or regulatory requirements.

The state legislature, either by design or default, attempted to fill this void in educational leadership by establishing through legislative enactments the legal parameters within which local school districts could act and the myriad minute details of routine day-to-day school operations. This was a task for which the legislature was obviously ill-prepared. Even if their actions had not been motivated by

James Price is a lawyer in private practice in Corinth, Mississippi; he has been a member of the new State Board of Education since its inception.

political, rather than educational, considerations, the legislators lacked the time (in limited annual sessions) and the knowledge (of educational problems, possible solutions, and prospective developments) to be effective. Consequently, the statutory base for educational governance consisted of a patchwork of frequently ambiguous and sometimes conflicting legislative enactments.

The ineffectiveness of the legislature as an educational policy maker was exacerbated by the open conflict between the state legislature and the State Department of Education. Neither trusted the other; both claimed to get erroneous and misleading information from the other; and each worked independently to accomplish its own purposes, regardless of the will or desire of the other.

As a consequence of this inadequate and disorganized educational leadership at the state level, local school districts were left largely on their own devices, especially in the educationally important but politically sensitive area of curriculum and subject matter content. While various accrediting agencies specified the minimum number of Carnegie units and the required courses needed for graduation, each local school district had absolute control over the content of the named courses. It could teach as little or as much as it chose within the designated courses. The inevitable result was a vast disparity in the quality of education provided by the 154 local school districts, ranging from a few truly excellent schools to many producing functionally illiterate graduates. It is not surprising that Mississippi ranked dead last in practically every educational indicator.

Throughout the state many people had recognized the basic problem and the vital need for a massive overhaul of the educational system. Several efforts had been made prior to 1982; but all had consistently failed in the legislature, primarily because the legislators from areas with predominantly black population where white children attended private schools did not want to increase, or even use, taxes for public education.

The credit for the enactment of the new reform act has to go to then Governor William Winter. He was largely responsible for the constitutional amendment being placed on the ballot; and he was the driving force in organizing and channeling the growing pro-education sentiment among the people into a potent political force which

the legislature could no longer ignore. An appointed lay board and a change in public opinion and leadership. When the legislature convened in Winter in December, 1982, the cards, letters, and personal visit caught of educational reform. A clamor, or by the increasing nurturing the altruistic notion that improving (economically and/or morally) was the passage of the Education made basic changes in our education new programs through a sales tax.

This comprehensive legislative trial to performance—of teachers, no longer receive automatic certification courses or grades or degree receivers are given probationary status and the ultimate issuance of a permanent upon favorable results of performance conducted by various school personnel determine how well the teacher is performing.

Similarly, the State Board of Education late or prescribe college courses for education students. Rather, each college and approved or disapproved, graduates who successfully complete receive permanent teaching certification.

A diligent effort has been made based system of accrediting local strides have been taken to accomplish what remains to be done. Before this change in Mississippi, as elsewhere, was determining the number of books in the library, faculty measure as indicators of educational achievement. Nothing about the school's actual mind-set of the army of educators.

considerations, the legislators (sessions) and the knowledge (of tions) and prospective develop-ly, the statutory base for educational work of frequently ambiguous enactments.

lature as an educational policy i conflict between the state legis- f Education. Neither trusted the ous and misleading information independently to accomplish its l or desire of the other.

ate and disorganized educational school districts were left largely the educationally important but lum and subject matter content. i specified the minimum number l courses needed for graduation, ite control over the content of the tt l or as much as it chose within il result was a vast disparity in by the 154 local school districts, schools to many producing func- not surprising that Mississippi ry educational indicator.

le had recognized the basic prob- sive overhaul of the educational ide prior to 1982; but all had con- primarily because the legislators ack population where white chil- not want to increase, or even use,

the new reform act has to go to e was largely responsible for the aced on the ballot; and he was the anneling the growing pro-educat- into a potent political force which

the legislature could no longer ignore. The statewide vote in favor of an appointed lay board and superintendent evidenced a radical change in public opinion and got the attention of the legislature. When the legislature convened in special session called by Governor Winter in December, 1982, the members were inundated with calls, cards, letters, and personal visits from enthusiastic and vocal advocates of educational reform. Whether motivated by this public clamor, or by the increasing number of qualified black voters, or by the altruistic notion that improving education for all was the right thing (economically and/or morally) to do, the legislature's response was the passage of the Education Reform Act of 1982. It not only made basic changes in our educational system, but also funded these new programs through a sales tax increase.

This comprehensive legislation shifted the emphasis from potential to performance—of teachers, school and students. New teachers no longer receive automatic certification based upon their college courses or grades or degree received. Instead newly graduated teachers are given probationary status during the first year of teaching; and the ultimate issuance of a permanent certificate is then dependent upon favorable results of periodic assessments and evaluations conducted by various school personnel during that initial year to determine how well the teacher is imparting knowledge to the students.

Similarly, the State Board of Education no longer attempts to regulate or prescribe college courses or subject matter content for education students. Rather, each college of education is now evaluated, and approved or disapproved, according to the percentage of its graduates who successfully complete the probationary period and receive permanent teaching certificates.

A diligent effort has been made to develop a true performance-based system of accrediting local schools and school districts. Giant strides have been taken to accomplish this goal; but much still remains to be done. Before this change began, accreditation in Mississippi, as elsewhere, was determined by quantitative factors, e.g. number of books in the library, faculty degrees, etc. These were easy to measure as indicators of educational potential, but which revealed nothing about the school's actual performance. Simply changing the mind-set of the army of educators who had never known any other

type of accreditation system required time. But there were other, more practical but equally real, problems which also had to be solved before this new system could be fully implemented.

Since performance-based accreditation is dependent primarily on test results, the State Board of Education had to insure that at least a minimum common body of knowledge was being taught in all the schools. Otherwise, the tests would have been meaningless. Using committees of teachers in the various disciplines, a curriculum was developed for each subject which included core requirements for all districts but which also contained additional material that could be taught in those schools desiring to go beyond the minimum requirements. Accreditation standards were raised to require each high school to actually teach at least 25% Carnegie units in nonvocational subjects each year, including a broad spectrum of required courses.

Statewide tests measuring basic skills and functional literacy have now been in place for several years and appear to be accurate barometers of how well each school is teaching these minimum skills. Norm-referenced tests (such as the Stanford Achievement Tests) are also used in the elementary grades to measure the achievement of students above the minimum skills. Standardized end-of-course tests in all major subject matter areas are almost ready for use in the high schools. These, together with ACT scores, will be excellent indicators of the quality of education being provided at the high school level.

Performance-based accreditation also requires the state department to deal with enormous amounts of statistical information. This can only be done effectively with a sophisticated data processing system; and we are currently in the middle of a five-year plan to develop such a system which eventually will interconnect state department computers with computers in all of the local districts, making relevant information instantly available at both levels.

In order to encourage local schools to exceed the minimum acceptable accreditation, our goal from the beginning has been to have five levels of accreditation—unacceptable, marginal, acceptable, excellent and superior. We have standards in place by which we can identify schools in the first three categories; and we soon will have objective indicators which will identify the excellent and superior schools: those that have low dropout rates, broad curricula, and outstanding

student performance. Then we and superior schools from man imposed by the legislature or tl ment will be able to focus its li tricts which have the greatest n

The one element of the refo support, and which in the past h lative opposition, was public kin local school districts were requ gartens, which rapidly evolved i most part by the state. Much the opment of the kindergarten curri program studied and copied by

Recognizing the importance of dent's ultimate educational succe tant teachers in grades one throu teacher to give more individualiz cial needs.

We have carefully monitored t had the advantage of public kin and the test results are all we an the students in all grades have ge convinced that test scores will r dramatically.

In the final analysis the success movement in Mississippi is depen mitment of the local administrat with the students. Initially, howe hands of the newly created State

Since the seventeen different el terrelated, it was vital that all co niously, and in a manner that wo the education community.

Up to this point almost all of th in transforming these legislative p alities. The board's agenda was le mandated deadlines for implemer

quited time. But there were other problems which also had to be solved fully implemented.

Education is dependent primarily on education had to insure that at least a wedge was being taught in all the would have been meaningless. Using various disciplines, a curriculum was included core requirements for all and additional material that could be to go beyond the minimum requirements were raised to require each high 25% Carnegie units in nonvocational broad spectrum of required courses. Skills and functional literacy have been and appear to be accurate barometers reaching these minimum skills. Norm-ford Achievement Tests) are also to measure the achievement of students. Standardized end-of-course tests in the almost ready for use in the high T scores, will be excellent indicators provided at the high school level. Education also requires the state department of statistical information. This is a sophisticated data processing system in the middle of a five-year plan to develop will interconnect state department of the local districts, making reliable at both levels.

Schools to exceed the minimum acceptable the beginning has been to have five able, marginal, acceptable, excellent in place by which we can identify es; and we soon will have objective he excellent and superior schools: es, broad curricula, and outstanding

student performance. Then we will be able to relieve the excellent and superior schools from many of the restrictive regulations now imposed by the legislature or the state board; and the state department will be able to focus its limited resources on those school districts which have the greatest need of help.

The one element of the reform which received the most public support, and which in the past had been the target of the most legislative opposition, was public kindergartens. Upon passage of the act local school districts were required to provide nine-month kindergartens, which rapidly evolved into full-day sessions, funded for the most part by the state. Much thought and effort went into the development of the kindergarten curriculum, which has become a model program studied and copied by many other states.

Recognizing the importance of early childhood education in a student's ultimate educational success, the legislature also funded assistant teachers in grades one through three, thus enabling the certified teacher to give more individualized instruction to those having special needs.

We have carefully monitored the test scores of students who have had the advantage of public kindergartens and assistant teachers; and the test results are all we anticipated and more. By the time all the students in all grades have gone through these programs, we are convinced that test scores will rise and dropout rates will decline dramatically.

In the final analysis the success or failure of the education reform movement in Mississippi is dependent upon the dedication and commitment of the local administrators and teachers who deal directly with the students. Initially, however, the fate of reform rested in the hands of the newly created State Board of Education.

Since the seventeen different elements of the Reform Act were interrelated, it was vital that all components be implemented harmoniously, and in a manner that would be effective and acceptable to the education community.

Up to this point almost all of the new board's time has been spent in transforming these legislative pronouncements into practical realities. The board's agenda was largely determined by legislatively mandated deadlines for implementing various portions of the Act.

The success of the board in meeting these deadlines, and in securing the respect and support of a vast majority of the educators, stems from the apolitical nature of the board and the total dedication of its members to improving education in our state. Although appointed by politicians—five members by the governor, two by the lieutenant governor, and two by the speaker of the House of Representatives—the board members have been left free to make all decisions solely on the basis of educational considerations.

Coupled with this freedom from political interference, the board's choice for the state's first appointed superintendent also contributed significantly to the successful implementation of the reform and the establishment of the board's credibility. Going outside the state, to the initial consternation and dismay of many, the board chose Dr. Richard A. Boyd, an Ohio school superintendent with a national and international reputation as a leader in education, to fill this sensitive position. During the five-and-one-half years he served in this capacity, he did an outstanding job, leading the board in a diplomatic but forceful way to recognize and understand the available alternatives in establishing policies, securing the enthusiastic support of the state department employees in working cooperatively with local school administrators, developing a rapport with the legislature that enabled the state board and state department to become the principal resource agency in educational matters for the state, and earning the respect of practically everyone involved in elementary and secondary education.

With the invaluable guidance of Dr. Boyd, the board also addressed two concepts that had been omitted from the Reform Act but which were tremendously important to its successful implementation—remediation and equity funding.

The need for remediation was obvious. By raising educational standards and requirements, many marginal students, already experiencing difficulty in meeting existing standards, would be totally lost in trying to meet the higher standards. Unless something was done, the dropout rate, already too high, would soar. As a part of its testing and accreditation standards the board required local school districts to initiate, or continue, remediation programs for under-achieving students. Unfortunately, the legislature has never adequately funded

these programs, and the financial burden largely on the local districts. Perhaps because of the limited funds, they have developed innovative remedies but not totally solved this problem.

The board's drive for equity in education in Mississippi is financed largely by state and federal funds. Local funds from property taxes, rental taxes, and severance taxes on oil, gas and other minerals, amount of money available from district to district, depend on the presence or absence of oil and gas, and many other variables.

State funds are provided to local districts on the basis of sales and income taxes, on the basis of the number of students, the degrees and years of experience of teachers, and the local districts in "Minimum Program" to all districts on an equal basis. Nothing to reduce or eliminate the disparities resulting from the enormous variations in Federal funds, allocated to specific districts, were useful for remedial programs available for general education.

Based upon its conviction that all students should have access to at least minimum quality of education, the board explicitly in accreditation requirements required curriculum content for different levels of education from its very inception. The equity funding system that would require the poorest district to finance such programs would require local districts to pay a large tax effort. After several years of study, a report was heard. In 1989 the legislature passed a program essentially as proposed by

these deadlines, and in securing a majority of the educators, stems from the total dedication of its people to our state. Although appointed by the governor, two by the lieutenant governor, and one by the House of Representatives—the board is to make all decisions solely on the basis of the needs of the state.

Without political interference, the board's superintendent also contributed to the successful implementation of the reform and the stability of the state. Going outside the state, many of the board chose Dr. Boyd as superintendent with a national and international reputation in education. To fill this sensitive position, half the years he served in this capacity, leading the board in a diplomatic manner to understand the available alternatives, and gaining the enthusiastic support of the legislature. Working cooperatively with local school districts, the board supported the legislature that was determined to become the principal department for the state, and earning the respect of the people in elementary and secondary education.

Dr. Boyd, the board also addressed the issues raised from the Reform Act but which were essential for successful implementation—remediation of the state's educational system.

It is obvious. By raising educational standards for marginal students, already experiencing low standards, would be totally lost. Unless something was done, the standards would soar. As a part of its testing program, the board required local school districts to implement remedial programs for under-achieving students. The legislature has never adequately funded

these programs, and the financial responsibility in this area has fallen largely on the local districts and local taxpayers. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the limited finances available, local school districts have developed innovative remediation programs that have alleviated but not totally solved this problem; and the dropout rate is now improving.

The board's drive for equity funding has been more successful. Education in Mississippi is financed by a combination of local, state and federal funds. Local funds come from *ad valorem* taxes on real and personal property, rental income from Sixteenth Section land, severance taxes on oil, gas and timber, and similar local sources. The amount of money available from local sources varies tremendously from district to district, depending upon the size of the tax base, the presence or absence of oil and gas, the location of the Sixteenth Section land, and many other variable factors.

State funds are provided to local districts, primarily from state sales and income taxes, on the basis of teacher units, computed according to the number of students in average daily attendance, and the degrees and years of experience of the teachers employed by the local districts in "Minimum Program" positions. Since state funds go to all districts on an equal basis, these Minimum Program funds did nothing to reduce or eliminate the financial disparity among local districts resulting from the enormous differences in local resources. Federal funds, allocated to specific programs based upon regulated criteria, were useful for remediation but did nothing to equalize funds available for general educational purposes.

Based upon its conviction that every child in Mississippi should have access to at least minimum quality education (as defined implicitly in accreditation requirements for graduation and specified curriculum content for different grades and courses), the State Board of Education from its very inception pushed for the adoption of an equity funding system that would ensure adequate money to even the poorest district to finance such an educational program, and that would require local districts to provide a proportionately equal local tax effort. After several years of being a lone voice, the board's message was heard. In 1989 the legislature adopted an equity funding program essentially as proposed by the board, and in 1990 funds were

appropriated to support this new program. This represents a substantial improvement over our former practice, but there is still more to be done in this area. The board wants the state to reward financially those local districts in which the taxpayers are willing to go beyond the minimum required *ad valorem* tax rate in order to provide quality education to their students. Such a financial incentive will encourage local districts to set their sights far above the minimum required standards.

It would require a book to adequately describe all of the different elements of our reform act. Enough has been said to demonstrate the breadth of the Act, the interrelationship between its various parts, and the resulting fundamental changes in educational practices and evaluations. The reform act provides the legislative foundation on which a much better educational system can be constructed. A dedicated board is continuing to implement and fine tune all of the concepts embodied in this Act. Much has been accomplished. There is much more which must be done. And the task hopefully will never end, for, as we reach our goals, new and higher ones have already been set. Each higher goal is designed to bring a little closer the board's ultimate aim, as expressed in the Introduction to its Five-Year Plan, "to teach students to think cognitively, to recognize and acquire relevant information, to analyze that information and apply it to specific situations, and to form and lucidly express logical conclusions reached as a result of that analytical process." We expect our high school graduates to be able to think, as well as memorize. In a word, we want our students to acquire both knowledge and wisdom. To the extent that we succeed, every aspect of our society will be improved.

Two "miracles" were mentioned earlier, the adoption of the constitutional amendment and the passage of the Education Reform Act of 1982. But there is a third and even greater miracle on which the first two are based. The real miracle is the radical change in the attitude of most Mississippians toward public education, resulting in a genuine commitment to improving education and to paying such taxes as may be necessary to accomplish this improvement. That type of commitment is the real key to educational reform, whether in the state as a whole or in local districts. Quality education can not be forced

on an unwilling populace. But v
people will not tolerate inferior
in Mississippi now. As long as it
is assured.

P O

OXI

by WILLIA

Though he talked about Oxford, his
most certainly wasn't that sort of pla
where students and dons in gowns, c
'the High', which somebody told him
and he always supported the Dark B
in which muscular chaps would row

He knew much better the factory an
and a main street that nobody would
it was more 'the Low', with Saturday
and kids at pub doors and wives in ol
with glasses of brown stout, and tram
the canal, where you never saw prett

His town didn't have even one dreami
and if it had had a river they wouldn't
it had a dingy library but he had no d
for books or learning, only for football

nevertheless in times of national crisis
he liked to hear on the wireless an Oxf

It was the voice of the upper class, you
the voice of authority that would tell h

rogram. This represents a sub-
r practice, but there is still more
wants the state to reward finan-
the taxpayers are willing to go
'orem tax rate in order to provide
Such a financial incentive will
r sights far above the minimum

ately describe all of the different
h has been said to demonstrate
ionship between its various parts,
ges in educational practices and
es the legislative foundation on
stem can be constructed. A dedi-
nent and fine tune all of the con-
has been accomplished. There is
nd the task hopefully will never
w and higher ones have already
gned to bring a little closer the
i e Introduction to its Five-
ink cognitively, to recognize and
alyze that information and apply
and lucidly express logical con-
analytical process." We expect our
think, as well as memorize. In a
ire both knowledge and wisdom.
ery aspect of our society will be

earlier, the adoption of the con-
sage of the Education Reform Act
a greater miracle on which the first
the radical change in the attitude
lic education, resulting in a genu-
nation and to paying such taxes as
s improvement. That type of com-
onal reform, whether in the state
ality education can not be forced

on an unwilling populace. But when the commitment is present, the
people will not tolerate inferior schools. We have that commitment
in Mississippi now. As long as it continues our educational progress
is assured.

POEMS

OXFORD

by WILLIAM WOOTTEN

Though he talked about Oxford, his home town
most certainly wasn't that sort of place
where students and dons in gowns, on foot or on bikes, went up and down
'the High', which somebody told him was the Oxford main street,
and he always supported the Dark Blues in the boat race
in which muscular chaps would row until they were dead beat.

He knew much better the factory and the works outing
and a main street that nobody would have called 'the High',
it was more 'the Low', with Saturday night drunks and clouting
and kids at pub doors and wives in old caps
with glasses of brown stout and trams going by
the canal, where you never saw pretty girls in punts and pole-pushing
chaps.

His town didn't have even one dreaming spire,
and if it had had a river they wouldn't have named it the Isis;
it had a dingy library but he had no desire
for books or learning, only for football and racing results in the reading
room,
nevertheless in times of national crisis
he liked to hear on the wireless an Oxford voice in the gloom.

It was the voice of the upper class, you see,
the voice of authority that would tell him what to do,

Remembering the Past,
Changing the Present,
Creating the Future

2001

Human

put



Civil Rights

Awards
Dinner

35th Anniversary

California Ballroom
The Westin Bonaventure Hotel
Los Angeles, California

Reception: 6:45 pm - 7:15 pm
Dinner: 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm
July 3, 2001

nea

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Presented for leadership and perseverance in applying the nonviolent philosophy and techniques of Martin Luther King, Jr., toward the achievement of human relations and civil rights goals.

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.,
MEMORIAL AWARD**

William Winter

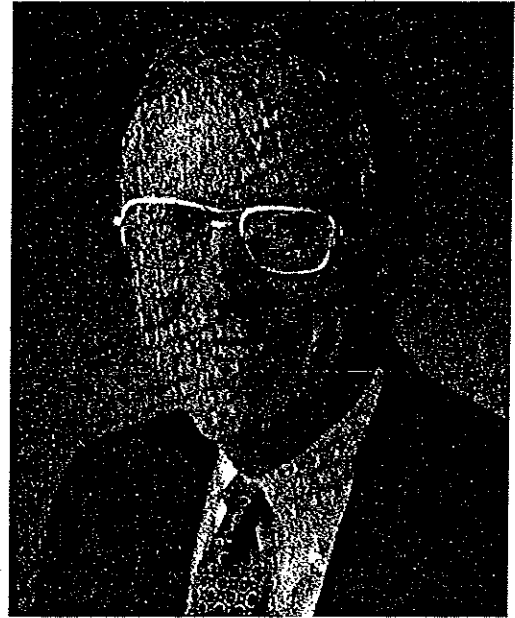
Jackson, Mississippi

Governor William Winter once said, "The line that separates the well-educated from the poorly educated is the harshest fault line of all." And he ought to know. For Governor Winter's life has been marked by some of the most cataclysmic changes and events of the Twentieth Century: the Great Depression, World War II, the changes in race relations and advances in technology, communications, and transportation that have made the world the global village it is today.

As governor of Mississippi, from 1980 to 1984, Governor Winter was an agent for change, leading his state's successful effort to pass the nation's first truly comprehensive education reform act which, among other things, established Mississippi's first public school kindergarten for all children.

But it is within the realm of race relations that Governor Winter truly made his mark. Working to remove all vestiges of Jim Crow from his state's institutions, he extended the olive branch of peace and equality to all of Mississippi's citizens.

Governor Winter was born in the state that gave us the writer William Faulkner, at a time when *Plessy vs. Ferguson* was in bloom, and racial segregationists dominated every aspect of Mississippi life. Living in a house with no electricity, he learned about the outside world from a battery-operated radio and attended a one-room schoolhouse where his mother taught grades one through six.



Although few of his classmates went beyond the basic education of that day, he graduated from the University of Mississippi School of Law. Later, entering politics, he served as a representative in the Mississippi legislature and went on to become state treasurer and lieutenant governor.

Because of his progressive views on race, he was defeated in two bids for the gubernatorial chair. But the citizens of Mississippi finally elected him Governor in 1979. After leaving the Governor's mansion because of Mississippi's lame duck amendment, Governor Winter continued his efforts on behalf of public education, civil rights, and economic opportunity. In 1997, he became a key member of President William Jefferson Clinton's Advisory Board on Race.

William F. Winter
Martin Luther King, Jr. Award

Let me first of all express to the National Education Association my deep gratitude for this recognition. While I cannot possibly justify it, I assure you that I shall not let that keep me from enjoying it.

There can be no greater cause for our country than advancing freedom and justice and equity for every American. That is what Martin Luther King, Jr. lived and died for. That is an obligation that continues to fall on each of us.

Because of Dr. King's work and that of so many others including so many of you in this room today, we have made incredible advances in civil rights since his tragic death. But as we all know, there is still much left to do before we achieve the truly just society that was his dream.

Let me mention one civil right that is too frequently overlooked. I refer to the civil right of every citizen, regardless of race or economic status or physical condition or geographical location, to secure a proper education.

Discrimination is not limited to race. The line that separates the well-educated from the poorly educated is the harshest fault line of all. We must work harder at developing strategies that ensure that nobody gets left out in the pursuit of that right. We must get the message out to every household and especially every poor household that the only road out of poverty runs by the schoolhouse. We must understand that nobody in this great country of ours is free from the ravages of ignorance and neglect until everyone is free. Working to achieve that goal is how we truly honor Dr. King and ensure our nation's future well-being, security and prosperity. I want you to know how much this honor means to me. I shall do my best to live up to it.

Former governor: Realizing need for education, elimination of Jim Crow at heart of Miss. miracle

Editor's Note: Each writer was invited to provide readers with his or her unique perspective on Mississippi's past and its future heading into the new millennium.

William F. Winter is a Jackson attorney and veteran public servant. An infantry officer in both World War II and the Korean War, Winter served Mississippi as a state representative, treasurer and lieutenant governor before his election as governor in 1980. The Grenada native has held numerous public and civic positions, including a number of the Presidential Advisory Board on Race. He is the contributing author of three books.

By William F. Winter
For The Associated Press

It has been my good fortune to be able to spend my life in a time and in a place that surely have been among the most intriguing and challenging in all of recorded history. To have been born in America between the two World Wars, to have participated in the second one, and then to have lived in the period of change since then has made for an incredible journey. That journey for me has been made even more fascinating by virtue of the fact that most of it has taken place in this beguiling land of legend and mystique called Mississippi.

The state that I know as a small boy was just emerging from the 19th Century — in attitude as well as activity. It was a state largely rural and largely poor. It did not place a high premium on education. In the little one-room, six-grade school that I attended, I was the only student ever to finish high school. As late as the 1950s, only one white student in four and one black student in 40 in Mississippi was graduating from high school. Of all of the changes that have taken place in this state during my lifetime one of the two most significant ones has been the increased recognition of the importance of edu-

cation in our lives. The other has been the elimination of Jim Crow. These changes are now at the heart of our state's present economic progress. They are the forces that are moving us out of the backwaters of the past.

This would not have been possible if the people of our state had not accepted the reality that we could never progress with a second-class system of education and a policy of racial segregation. Looking back on the monumental events of the 1950s and 1960s, I find it hard to believe now that would not understand those facts then.

But regardless of how it came about, the elimination of Jim Crow and increased support for education have been the most meaningful developments in the South in this century and have made it possible for this region to emerge now as a center of national political leadership and economic ascendancy.

The historic events of this century that most directly affected my own life were the Great Depression, World War II, the change in race relations and the advances in technology and transportation. No one who was reared on a Mississippi farm in the 1930s as I was can quite comprehend the radical changes that have transformed how we live. With no electricity in our home, I grew up burning about the outside world from a battery radio.

But even then I came to understand that it was this larger world — far removed from the remote rural area in which I lived — that would so greatly affect my life. Awakening on early mornings in the late 1930s to the broadcasts from Berlin of the fanatical ranting of a man named Adolf Hitler, I had a vague foreboding about the future. These concerns were confirmed three years later when on a chill, gray December afternoon southern radio in another place brought the shocking news of Pearl Harbor.

Of all of the public events in my life none has been as unforgettable as the news of that day. I still remember it with an awareness as clear now as it was then that life would never be the same for me or for my country. There has never been a more dra-

matic or memorable address than that of President Franklin Roosevelt the following day when my fellow Ole Miss students and I gathered in a campus-wide assembly to hear his grim but resolute assessment of our country's plight.

World War II was, as Tom Brokaw has recently pointed out in his acclaimed book, *The Greatest Generation*, the defining experience for the millions of us who were engaged in that struggle for the survival of civilization. That is what it was. It is an overstatement to say that all of our democratic and spiritual values were on the line in that war. It proved to be our country's finest hour.

For me as an individual infantry soldier, I found out how divine providence or, as others might say, the sheer luck of the draw played in determining our personal role in that cataclysmic struggle that cost an estimated 50 million lives. When the war ended as a result of President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bomb, I was on the way to join an infantry division that was scheduled to storm the beaches of the Japanese mainland. More than a half century later I can only surmise how that intervention affected and possibly spared my life.

Coming home from the war a few months later and sailing home on the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco Bay, I sensed that I was entering the most exciting era in the history of the world. And that feeling was not without foundation. The United States had become the acknowledged leader of the world, with human and material resources beyond anything that earlier generations could have imagined.

What I came home to was a country generating creative energy that had never really been tapped prior to the war. We who had been rural Mississippi farm boys had returned with a new awareness of the great unrealized potential of our country and our state. Our generation thought it was up to us to harness that potential in the most productive way we could.

The next year 13 of us who thanks to the GI Bill went students in the

Ole Miss Law School ran for the Legislature. Twelve of us were elected. Progressive things began to happen. After more than 20 years of failure the Legislature passed a workers' compensation law, we created a four-year medical school, we established a model oil and gas conservation act, we repealed the archaic blue laws, we set up a state aid road system, we began to merge state and local government, and we initiated the process of upgrading our system of education.

One thing that we did not and could not do was to repeal the poll tax which disenfranchised so many poor black and white citizens. And therein lay the genesis of the battle that was to be waged over the next 20 years and thus delayed for a generation our state's entry into the promised land. President Truman's call in 1947 for an end to racial discrimination set off a desperate rearguard action in the South that almost totally preoccupied the political leadership of the region. Much of the white South succumbed to its fears, aided and abetted by many of its elected leaders. It was not our finest hour.

But with the passage by the Congress of the Public Accommodations Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act the following year, most of the wind went out of the sails of massive resistance. The transition of the Deep South from the fearful, defensive region of the 1950s to the optimistic, confident place that it is becoming today is one of the largely overlooked signs of the century.

While there is much that remains to be done to advance the cause of racial understanding in the South, it is paradoxically a measure of our progress that so few younger Southerners fully appreciate the extent of the change that has taken place. There is also much to be done to diminish the gap that still exists in educational and economic opportunity. The fact that so many people are now committed to eliminating that gap is also a testimonial to the progress that we have made. The will to continue that commitment into the next century may be our greatest legacy from the last.



Winter

Winter deserves education honor

At the same time that we question the political wisdom of Ronnie Musgrove's adversarial approach to the Legislature, almost 20 years ago a former Mississippi governor was successful in going over the heads of lawmakers and taking his message directly to the people.

Facing a Legislature that was largely indifferent to the state of public education in Mississippi, William Winter mounted a successful grassroots campaign that eventually led to the passage of the landmark 1982 Education Reform Act.

That piece of legislation established for the first time in Mississippi public kindergartens, compulsory attendance and performance-based accreditation.

Just as significantly, it marked a turning point in the mind set of the Legislature, bringing to the fore a whole new set of leaders who understood that the economic and social fate of this state was inextricably linked to the education level of its people.

For that achievement and others, the National Education Association has selected Winter for its Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Award. The civil rights honor was presented to Winter at a ceremony Tuesday in Los Angeles.

It is a fitting tribute to Winter. In addition to his strong pro-education stances, Winter has been a leading voice for improving race relations. He served on a task force on race appointed by then-President Bill Clinton. Winter also accepted the thankless job of chairing the commission that recommended the adoption of a new state flag.

Winter has suffered much abuse over the years for taking on controversial but righteous causes. He has always maintained a gentlemanly demeanor. He is a model of courage and integrity.



The Rankin Record

(USPS 016 082)

Tim Beeland
Editor and Publisher

To reach any department call 601-992-4869

e-mail address: news@rankinrecord.com

www.rankinrecord.com

Published weekly on Thursday by Rankin Publishing Co., Inc. Offices at 634 Grants Ferry Road, Brandon, MS 39047. Mailing address is P.O. Box 5507, Brandon, MS 39047-5507. Phone is 601-992-4869. Subscription price in Rankin, Hinds & Madison counties, \$12 per year. Long distance rates vary slightly higher. Single copy price is 50 cents. Issues over a month old are \$1. The Rankin Record accepts no responsibility for unsolicited stories, artwork or photographs. Photos are filed according to the week they appear. Usually those that are not published are not kept on file. If a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed, we will try to return such photos, if possible. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Rankin Record, P.O. Box 5507, Brandon, MS 39047-5507.

Winter continues to lead on a national scale

Former Gov. William F. Winter has received a national award for his contributions to education and racial unity.

Those who know — or know of — the former governor understand how much he deserves it.

The **Pew Partnership's 2000 Civic Change Award** is given to leaders who find innovative solutions to major social problems. Winter certainly fits the bill.

He was governor from 1980 to 1984. With a formidable combination of tenacity, vision and consensus-building, Winter pushed through the Legislature a long list of education improvements, including mandatory kindergarten, compulsory attendance and performance-based school accreditation.

The only downside to Winter's gubernatorial career was that it was too short. Under then state law, a governor could not serve a second, successive term. The law has since been changed. It is Mississippi's loss that it was not changed sooner.

The editorials above represent the views of The Sun Herald editorial board: President-Publisher Roland Weeks Jr., Executive Editor Michael Tonos, Editorial Director Marie Harris, Associate Editor Tony Biffle and Editorial Writer Mark Seghers. Opinion expressed by columnists, cartoonists and letter writers on these pages are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board.

THE SUN HERALD

*A Knight Ridder Newspaper
Serving the Mississippi Gulf Coast since 1884*

Roland Weeks Jr.
President and publisher
896-2420

Michael Tonos
Executive Editor
896-2300

B. Marie Harris
Editorial Director
896-2301

Tony Biffle
Associate Editor
896-2387

Mark Seghers
Editorial Writer
896-2355

Published by Gulf Publishing Co., Inc. • P.O. Box 4567, Biloxi, MS 39535-4567

Birmingham News
June 24, 1990

Must pay for education that prepares

If there is one thing that most of us in this country agree on these days, it is the proposition that the effectiveness of our educational system is the key to the nation's future. That was the clear message contained in the recent statement of goals adopted by the National Governors' Association following the historic "education summit" at Charlottesville, Va., last fall.

Gearing that system to a higher level of performance remains our most pressing unfinished business. And it must be a higher level of performance not just for some people but for everybody.

Make education a priority

That is not going to be easy. It is not going to be easy — not because we lack the resources or the understanding of what ought to be done. It is not going to be easy because too few of us, despite our professions of concern, have fully come to grips with the realities of what we are confronted with. That is particularly true in this section of the country where we do not have a well-defined tradition of putting education at the top of our personal and political agendas.

As long as I can remember, going back to my years as a schoolboy in rural Mississippi, we have been content to get by with adequately educating only a fraction of our people. As late as the early 1950s, at the time of the Brown decision, in my state only one in four white students was finishing high school. For blacks it was one in 40. This wasn't because they couldn't learn. It was because not enough people thought it was important that they learn.

When I ran unsuccessfully for governor of

Mississippi in 1975 on an education platform, I was overwhelmingly defeated. Licking my wounds, I discussed the results with the incumbent governor of another Southern state. "You can't get elected running on that kind of platform," he told me. "Education does not have a political constituency."

Four years later I was elected for reasons largely unrelated to education. I still

remembered what my governor friend had told me, and I resolved to try to do something about it. I believed that there was a constituency — maybe latent and unrecognized — that properly motivated could be a political force. It was that citizen support that we tapped into to pass the first significant school reform legislation in the country in 1982 — before the *Nation at Risk* report was released.

I feel, looking back on it now, that the awakening of citizen interest in educational progress may have been a more significant part of this reform effort in the 1980s than the reforms themselves. It was a historic watershed in American history when the cause of improved education was moved to the top of the political agenda in most states.

In an assessment of the results of education reform in my state, former state schools superintendent Dick Boyd has pointed out one of the most overlooked aspects. Whereas a few years ago, most people

thought their local schools said, now they know it must be improved.

The unfinished business of attention and best efforts, of course, the effectiveness of the commitments of the several things about it

In the first place, we simply be mandated if effective, must have the practical viewpoint of local administrators. That local districts could better results.

Another thing we will respond to a higher performance. Even though been raised substantially has fallen.

A third conclusion is score. By that I mean for education can be a measure of accountability and, by measure of performance

A fourth observation other things, we get a *Halfway Home* report Future of the South provides standards for teachers by a commitment of a prolong our discontent work, and we are not supply of good teachers competitive salaries.

A large gap that has



William Winter

BOARD OF CONTRIBUTORS

CONTACT:

Pew Partnership Honors William F. Winter

Former Mississippi Governor receives the 2000 Civic Change Award for his commitment to education reform and racial reconciliation

WASHINGTON, DC – As the nation struggles to meet the challenges facing communities, such as creating opportunities for children, building stronger neighborhoods, and bridging racial divides, the Pew Partnership annually honors leaders who have fought for innovative solutions to these urgent issues.

This year, the Pew Partnership is presenting its 2000 Civic Change Award to former Mississippi Governor William F. Winter for his pioneering leadership on education reform and his strong voice for racial reconciliation in Mississippi and throughout the nation.

As Governor of Mississippi from 1980-1984, Gov. Winter introduced, and fought for, sweeping legislation to improve the state's beleaguered school system and helped make education a priority for Mississippi voters. His innovative reforms included mandatory kindergarten, compulsory attendance, and performance-based school accreditation and paved the way for other states to address successfully the educational challenges they faced.

"The Civic Change Award honors an outstanding American who has enriched our civic life and whose commitment to service inspires and instructs us all to raise our expectations of what is possible," said Suzanne Morse, executive director of the Pew Partnership. "Through his work and actions, Gov. Winter is a perfect example of an individual who has devoted his life to making his community, and all of our communities, better places to live and raise a family."

"Governor Winter's public service career exemplifies the courage and leadership that help improve the quality of life for all of us," said Rebecca Rimel, president of The Pew Charitable Trusts, which funds the Pew Partnership. "Our society is all the richer for his contributions. I applaud the Pew Partnership in choosing Gov. Winter for this award."

In addition to his bold initiatives on education reform, Gov. Winter is a leading advocate for racial reconciliation. As a member of President Clinton's Presidential Advisory Board on Race, Gov. Winter has fought to create communities of mutual respect and equal opportunity.

"There must come a time in the life of every community when we must recognize that we are all in this together," said Gov. Winter. "We must move past the old divisions of race and recognize our common interests and common humanity."

-more-

The award presentation included a panel discussion on education reform moderated by Jack Nelson, former *Los Angeles Times* Washington bureau chief. Panelists for the symposium included Dick Cooper, senior Washington correspondent, *Los Angeles Times*; Christopher Cross, president, Council for Basic Education; Charles Overby, chairman and CEO, The Freedom Forum; and Wendy Puriefoy, president, Public Education Network.

Past recipients of the Civic Change Award include: John Gardner, former HEW secretary and advisor to six presidents, founder of Common Cause, and co-founder of the Independent Sector; Paul Aicher, president of the Topsfield Foundation and founder of the Study Circles Resource Center; and Mrs. Colin Powell, vice-chair of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and a national voice for volunteerism.

Established in 1992 and funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Pew Partnership is a civic research organization whose mission is to collect and share promising solutions in five areas crucial to strong communities: healthy children and families, thriving neighborhoods, living-wage jobs, viable economies, and collaborative leadership. The Pew Partnership's research explores how innovative partners, citizen participation, and accessible technology catalyzes civic solutions.

The Pew Charitable Trusts support nonprofit activities in the areas of culture, education, the environment, health and human services, public policy, and religion.

#

WILLIAM F. WINTER

Watkins Ludlaim Winter & Stennis, P.A.
Post Office Box 427
Jackson, MS 39205
(601) 949-4800

Born: Grenada, Mississippi

BA & LLB degrees from University of Mississippi; LLD degrees (honorary) from Davidson College, Millsaps College, William Carey College, Troy State University and Mississippi University for Women.

Infantry officer in World War II and Korean War.

Public service includes: State Representative, State Treasurer, and Lieutenant Governor of Mississippi.

Served as Governor of Mississippi 1980-84.

Public and civic positions presently held include:

President of the Board of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History; Chairman of the National Commission on the State and Local Public Service; Chairman of the National Issues Forum Institute; Member of Board of the Stennis Center for Public Service, the Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi, and the Foundation for the Mid South.

Other positions previously held include:

Chairman of Southern Regional Education Board, Chairman of Southern Growth Policies Board, Chairman of Appalachian Regional Commission, Chairman of Commission on the Future of the South, Chairman of the Kettering Foundation, Chairman of the National Civic League, Chairman of the Foundation for the Mid South.

National and Regional Civic and Educational Awards received:

2000 Civic Change Award by the Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, D.C.
2000 Mid South Leadership Award by the Foundation for the Mid South in Jackson, MS
2001 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Award by the National Education Association in Los Angeles, CA

Fellow of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University 1985, and President of Ole Miss Alumni Association 1978.

Eudora Welty Professor of Southern Studies at Millsaps College, spring semester 1989; Jamie Whitten Professor of Law and Government at University of Mississippi School of Law, fall semester 1989.

Contributing author of three books: History of Mississippi, Yesterday's Constitution Today and Mississippi Heroes.

Married to former Elise Varner; three daughters.