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**NC NAACP
Banquet
To Be Held
Saturday**

The North Carolina NAACP will hold its 12th annual Kelly M. Alexander Humanitarian Award Banquet on Saturday, March 16, 7:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel, Research Triangle Park. The Honorable Harvey B. Gantt will be presented the Kelly M. Alexander, Sr. Humanitarian Award. Fred H. Rasheed will present the Charles E. Dean Distinguished Service Award during the banquet.



ELVIRA GREEN, far right, 1962 graduate of NCCU returned recently for a concert. She is a mezzo soprano opera singer. She chats with two of her classmates, Mrs. Carolyn Gill and William Evans. The concert was sponsored by the NCCU Lyceum Program. (NCCU Photo by Lawson)

**Army, NAACP Task
Forces Meet to
Discuss Racism Issue**

By Paul Nowell

CHARLOTTE (AP) - Army and NAACP representatives reached some common ground when they met privately March 8 to discuss their separate investigations into the racial climate at Fort Bragg, the NAACP said.

One area in which they did not agree was a request by the NAACP task force to gain access to Fort Bragg, which is North Carolina's largest military installation.

"We got no promises," said Kelly Alexander Jr., president of the state NAACP and a member of the task force that investigated the issue. "On some points we agreed to disagree." Still, the 2 1/2-hour meeting at a Charlotte hotel was helpful, Alexander said.

"From my perspective, today's meeting was extremely successful," he said. "Someone once said a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step." The NAACP will renew its request to visit the base at a later date, he said.

A task force from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People released an 18-page report that concluded that there were serious race-related problems at all of the state's military bases.

At the time, NAACP officials said the only base where they were not given full access was at Fort Bragg. Army officials said they were conducting their own investigation.

Both investigations began after three Fort Bragg soldiers were charged with killing two black Fayetteville residents last December. Two of the soldiers were described by police as racist skinheads.

While the Army's probe has looked at the entire service branch, the NAACP has focused on North Carolina's military bases. The results of the Army investigation are due sometime this month.

None of the Army's task force members attended Friday's news conference by the NAACP.

On March 6, Army Secretary Togo West Jr. confirmed that the task forces would meet. "The Army is interested in the NAACP's findings and recommendations and will consider their views," he said.

The secretary's comments and the scheduled meeting followed a harsh assessment of military leaders at Fort Bragg by NAACP task force members.

"The NAACP is not on a military bashing expedition," Alexander said. "Let's not let the military become somebody's playground for incubating racism."

**J.C. Smith University
Professor Died Sunday**

CHARLOTTE — Dr. James Roland Law, a professor at Johnson C. Smith University, died Sunday, March 10 in Charlotte. Classes at the university were suspended for three hours Thursday, March 14, in his memory. The funeral was held (Continued On Page 2)

Will Enterprise Zones Work for Blacks?

With the start of a federal enterprise zone program, New York's Harlem has a new optimism about an old problem - a pattern of failures of black businesses in this famed community. Federal officials estimate over a half billion dollars is coming to Harlem: \$300 million over five years for training, social services and loans, plus another \$250 million in tax breaks for businesses. Can Harlem and its black businesses make it this time? Harlem does have its assets: Three subway lines that travel the three miles to midtown Manhattan; some fine townhouses and apartment houses and a rich cultural tradition. But as four buses regularly rumble up to Harlem, its residents often head in the opposite direction. About three-fourths of its residents do most of their shopping outside Harlem. "People here are asleep. They don't want to take chances," says Van Woods, whose family owns the famous Sylvia's soul food restaurant. Woods wants to see the zone's tax breaks to build a food processing plant.

Is America's Legal System Biased?

According to an October 1995 report by the Sentencing Project, a nonprofit Washington group advocating alternatives to incarceration, only one in three black men in their 20s is on probation, on parole or out of jail up from one in four in 1990. The report, culled from federal government statistics, says in terms of drug-related crimes, blacks constitute 13 percent of illegal-drug users but represent 35 percent of arrests for drug possession, 55 percent of convictions and 74 percent of prison sentences. Blacks make up a little more than 12 percent of America's population but hold just under 800 (or about 3.5 percent) of the nation's criminal prosecutor jobs.

Cadillac Can Call For Help

General Motors is introducing the first system for cars that will automatically call for help if a car's air bag is deployed in an accident. It will also include an array of other personal-communication features. The device, called OnStar, offers navigational assistance across the country, unlike other systems that require reprogramming each locale. Other features include the ability to send out an exact location in the event of theft or other emergencies. It works by linking cellular telephones to a communications center through a satellite. It says it will make the first of these systems available as an option on 1997 front-drive Cadillacs.

S. State Department Bias Suit

A decade-long racial bias suit against the State Department by black government service officers is moving toward settlement, with the department offering a predominance of white males in policy-making positions, agreeing to pay \$3.8 million to the 350 current and former officers in the class action suit. The settlement includes promotions, reinstatements for blacks who were passed over and future steps of the evaluation process, diversity training and other aspects of employment. Many of the nation's blacks have concerns about the settlement of the State Department and the potential of racism there. The department makes policy for foreign affairs and many blacks claim that the U.S. gives Israel, with its seven million people, four times as much money than to the whole continent of Africa, that has a population of almost one billion.

Obama's Autobiography Published

Autobiography on Kwesi Mfume. "No Free Ride: From the Streets to the Mainstream in America" (One World/Ballantine) will be on sale in bookstores on July 8. Mfume, who is the CEO and president of the NAACP, says he decided to take the job because he "learned at an early age that life is a short comedy after his mother died when he was 16. I have to do all you can when you can," he says. In the book, Mfume's rise from poverty to political fame is outlined from a young man named Frizzell Gray to become Kwesi Mfume, a congressman from Maryland.

**Group Alleges White
Supremacy, Racial Hatred
Behind Church Fire**

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - Acts of white supremacy and racial hatred are linked to arson fires at predominantly black churches in the South, including one where NFL star Reggie White serves as a pastor, according to a group representing black churches. The charges came hours before NFL star Reggie White, associate pastor of the Inner City Church, appeared at Austin-East High School. White denounced federal authorities for suspecting church

leaders of the Jan. 8 blaze that destroyed their sanctuary and sparked an outcry on racism.

The FBI and U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms denied the allegations by White and the National Council of Churches of Christ, as well as any linkage between the fires.

White and the group complained Wednesday that federal authorities had unfairly targeted church officials and members

**America's Black Press Celebrates
169 Years of Publishing**

As the Black Press of America prepares to celebrate 169 years of existence in this country, it, like the majority of its readers, remains invisible to the general community of America. With over 10 million readers a week and more than 200 newspaper operations in 38 states, the Black Press is the nation's most constant, and ongoing, forum that illustrates of the stark racial divisions that exist in American society.

"Each week two different sets of media messages, go out to the public. There is no greater sense of the reality of the racial differences than what America's general community newspapers and broadcasters report to their audiences and what African-American publications report to their subscribers," says National Newspaper Publishers Association President Dorothy R. Leavell. "Our reports for more than a year regarding the O.J. Simpson trial, and its racial subplots, were vastly different from all general media reports and analysis. And, although it was a surprise to the general community when over a million black men gathered on the Mall in Washington, we had been covering the 'Men Only' meetings and the grass-roots organizers across the country who made this event happen, for more than a year," says Leavell. "Also, if the President or the Congress were to ever stop and ask us, they'd find that, and a very broad cross-section of African Americans, are opposed to the positions being taken on Nigeria. If we and the people we serve were not invisible to the President, Congress and establishment media, they'd know that there is a very close scrutiny being done on them in the Black Press regarding the unequal treatment being given African countries as opposed to European, and other kindred countries. We chronicle the African American experience every week in such a positive and progressive way that we remain the most creditable source of news for African Americans over and above any other media," states Ms. Leavell.

On March 16, 1827, Freedom's Journal was published in New York City by John Russwurm and Samuel Cornish, making it the first Black-oriented publication in the nation. Citing the fact that "For too long others have spoken for us," Freedom's Journal came into existence to fight injustice and seek equal rights for Black people in America. Since the formation of Freedom's Journal, 169 years ago, Black-oriented newspapers have carried on the tradition. The second oldest institution in Black America (the church being the oldest), Black newspapers have been the voice of Black America from before the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement. The NNPA trade association was started in 1940, when segregation was totally in force, by 20 publishers who were heads

of newspapers such as the Chicago Defender, the New York Age, the Afro-American chain and the Pittsburgh Courier. While Black America has for more than 400 years either been vilified, or ignored, by the general media, Black newspapers have heralded this community's good times as well as the bad, the happy moments as well as the sad.

"African-American newspapers are rich with first hand reports of the major events and issues that affect our people," said Leavell, who also publishes the Chicago and Gary Crusader newspapers. "The greatest function of the Black newspaper, and one too often overlooked by advertisers and other media, is its value to the social accounts of our race: The reports of community activities, births, deaths, funerals, weddings, parties and conventions. The pictures and articles only available except in this source have a positive value and place in our society. We now need to show the next generation of our people how the black-oriented newspaper has, and does, embody the very fabric of the African-American experience," Leavell says.

Bill Reed, the NNPA's chief operations officer, points out that there is a difference between the nation's black publishers and African Americans who are reporters, columnists or broadcasters who work for general media. He notes that members of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), the vast majority of which work in general community media outlets, are often counted as spokespersons for black America, and its issues, as opposed to members of the Black Press corps, who have day-to-day interactions with black communities.

"Even though our editors and publishers are rarely interviewed for local or national broadcasts or publications, they are the ones who have their ears closest to the ground for what is actually happening in our communities," said Reed. "This is just one way we are ignored and made invisible. But, when you look at how opinions on issues are formed by African Americans, you'll find Black newspapers more often than not have been the source of such information," Reed states.

During the week of March 11, the NNPA will celebrate the founding of Freedom's Journal and Black Press Week. The organization's members will convene in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, March 14 to host an enshrinement ceremony on the campus of Howard University, inducting an outstanding deceased publisher into the Black Press Hall of Fame. That evening at the National Press Club, the NNPA is sponsoring a dinner event to name the Black Press' "Newsmaker of the Year" for 1995.