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'Everything's cool' after altercation

By John Minter
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Greene, Watson patch differences

All's well now between city council member Malachi Greene and businessman Troy Watson. The two traded public apologies - complete with bear hugs - this week for a confrontation on May 6 which ended with Watson filing criminal assault charges against Greene. "Everything's cool," Greene said Tuesday. Greene made a public apology to Watson during Monday's City Council meeting. Watson, who was present, approached Greene and the two embraced. Watson took the

podium before the council and pronounced the incident over. He said he dropped charges against Greene, which included assault and battery, affray and aggressive physical force. Greene faced up to 30 days in jail and a \$250 fine if convicted. On Tuesday morning, they returned to the scene of the incident, playing out a similar apology during the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club meeting at McDonald's Cafeteria. Accounts differ as to the altercation's origin, but during a discussion about the future of the troubled westside restaurant,

Watson called Greene a liar. Greene says he grabbed Watson from behind, but was restrained by those around them. Watson claims Greene put him in a head lock, dragged him to the floor and punched him several times. "I did not hit Mr. Watson," Greene told reporters last week. "I did not put Mr. Watson in a head lock or a half nelson." Greene and others have worked to prevent McDonald's Restaurant and the adjacent hotel from closing. Founder John McDonald died two years ago and his widow, Eunice, has

operated the restaurant since. Watson has pushed a competing plan. The restaurant faces foreclosure if a suitable, preferably African American, buyer is not found. The community buzzed with talk about what happened and why. Greene and Watson apparently met Monday morning to discuss the incident and a way out of what had become a public joke. Editorialists and talk radio hosts had a field day, as did WPEG radio's Breakfast Brothas, who broadcast a spoof of the incident with background screams and crashing furniture.



Charlotte City Council member Malachi Greene (left) and business leader Troy Watson were all smiles at the Tuesday Morning Breakfast Club's weekly meeting.

Support for fallen leader



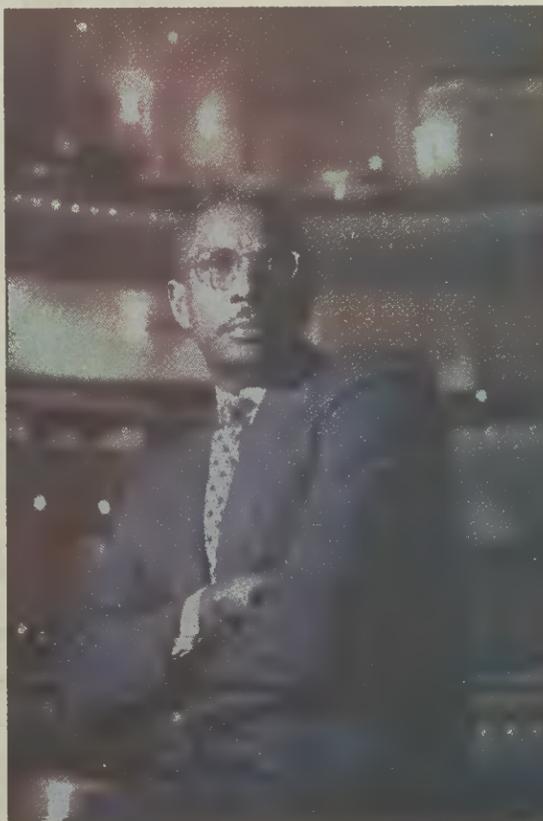
First Union National Bank executive and national NAACP board member Lenny Springs (center) and other African Americans voice support for former Transamerica Reinsurance President Bill Simms at a press conference Tuesday.

Despite lies, friends back former exec Bill Simms

By John Minter
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Until this week, Bill Simms was a shining example of business savvy and community leadership. Now he's a tragic hero - beloved and reviled for an apparent character flaw. The TransAmerica Insurance executive revealed this week that he lied about his education and sports background. Ironically, Simms achieved more than most African Americans in a corporate setting as the highest ranking black person in Charlotte's business world, making him a role model for many. With affirmative action programs under attack as never before, Simms, 52, proved that given the opportunity, some African Americans can perform as well as, or better, than whites. "That's the irony of America," said business consultant Bill McCullough. "We are a country more concerned about titles, and diplomas and degrees and we fail to look at individuals in terms of how they can contribute to society." Simms resigned Monday

from his position with San Francisco-based TransAmerica, where he was set to become president of its insurance products division in Los Angeles. The news sent waves of shock and dismay through the entire community, but nowhere was the revelations felt more deeply than among African Americans. Recriminations were heard from blacks and whites as the news made the rounds of coffee shops and talk radio. But many supported the man who, upon coming to Charlotte five years ago, had become a role model of how business executives could give back to their communities. Simms was everywhere, helping secure an NFL team for the city, leading arts and sports fund raising drives, chairing the local Urban League and working on behalf of young black males and pregnant girls. Simms' name became synonymous with action. He was named The Post's 1995 Man of the Year, in part because of his work with community organizations. But amid the din of anger and pain a few paused to



Former Transamerica Reinsurance executive Bill Simms, photographed at the N.C. Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in 1995, admitted lying about his education and athletic background.

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Tuskegee syphilis apology not enough for some in Alabama

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TUSKEGEE, Ala. - President Clinton's planned apology to the living participants of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study will be accepted but the university would like more. Tuskegee University President Benjamin F. Payton said Tuesday he applauds Clinton's decision to issue a formal apology on Friday to survivors who were denied treatment for syphilis as part of a government study. But Payton also wants the president to announce his support of funding for a Center for Bioethics in Research and Health Care. The proposed center will be located at Tuskegee University and provide assurance that similar studies would never happen again. "The Bioethics Center would also help transform the legacy of the Tuskegee Study into a positive symbol for all Americans by demonstrating the importance of acknowledging past wrongs, rebuilding trust, and helping to generate research in health care fields that is both scientifically solid and morally sound," Payton said.



Clinton

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ANC admits to terrorist activities in commission report

By Alexander Zavis
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAPE TOWN, South Africa - South Africa's governing African National Congress admitted Monday that it committed bombings, murders and torture in its fight against apartheid - sometimes killing innocent civilians. The admissions were made in a detailed, 139-page report to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is offering amnesty to people who confess to political crimes of the apartheid era. Most of the attention so far has focused on allegations against apartheid-era government officials. Apartheid ended in 1994, when ANC leader Nelson Mandela was elected president in the country's first all-race elections. On Monday, Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, Defense Minister Joe Modise and Justice Minister Dullah Omar went before the commission to answer questions about the wrongs committed by opponents of apartheid. In one example, the ANC said it ordered the bombing of air force headquarters in 1983, in retaliation for a cross-border raid into Lesotho by South African security forces that killed 42 ANC supporters.

Nineteen people died in the bombing, including 11 military officers. For the ANC, that episode symbolized its members' belief that they had been at war against apartheid forces - and

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