

Photo by Jamie Jordan



U.S. Congressman Charlie Rose hugs Alexis Edwards, a young member of the ECSU family at the end of the National Education Week Assembly.

ECSU students take letter to C.D. Spangler in support of Jenkins

By Lavenia Dameron and Tarsha White

A group of ECSU students and alumni traveled to Chapel Hill on Nov. 30 to present a petition to C.D. Spangler, President of the UNC-system, in support of Chancellor Jimmy R. Jenkins.

The students and alumni rode in three charter buses, according to SGA President Michael Myrick. The students made the journey in conjunction with a community support group for Jenkins, organized by Cornerstone Baptist Church.

The group met with Spangler for about forty-five minutes. In that meeting Spangler refused to discuss Jenkins' job status, saying it was a personnel matter.

Following the meeting, however, Spangler praised the group for being interested in ECSU. "That's a positive thing," he said. "It shows they care about the universities."

The students' meeting with Spangler came in the wake of a letter a group of 26 area citizens sent to Spangler. In the letter the citizens, all of whom are white, asked that Jenkins be replaced. The letter was accompanied by clippings of local news stories critical of Jenkins' administration.

Jenkins has come under heavy fire in local newspapers recently after a white professor in the math department, Dr. Carol Odell, accused him of directing racist remarks at white faculty members during an August family meeting. In that meeting, Odell said Jenkins informed white faculty members that "if you don't like the way we do things here, you can go somewhere else."

Although many members of the audience later said Odell had misinterpreted the Chancellor's remarks, Odell's charges received wide coverage in local media. A story about the alleged statement appeared in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, a nationally distributed publication about higher education.

The Chancellor publically apologized to Odell, saying his remarks were misinterpreted.

Many ECSU students, faculty and administrators have expressed concern and outrage at the heavy negative media coverage of ECSU, and the petition seeking Jenkins' removal from office.

"Those of us who support Chancellor Jenkins know him to be a man who has gone out of his way to make this one of the most integrated schools, and still acknowledge its historical background," said Myrick. Myrick added that the citizens who petitioned Spangler "are not only after the Chancellor; they're after the

University because this is the second largest industry in Northeastern N.C. and because it's operated by black people."

Lynn Jordan, an ECSU junior English major, is organizing an economic boycott of businesses that advertise in newspapers hostile to ECSU.

Tim Smith, a white sophomore praised Jenkins for his courtesy and warmth in dealing with white students on campus.

"Chancellor Jenkins has been nice as pie to me," said Smith, "He always stops to talk and ask me how I am doing. This group of 'concerned citizens' is all wrong. They are barking up the wrong tree."

In an interview with *The Compass*, Odell, who has been notified she will not be rehired next year, defended the news coverage of ECSU.

"I am not going to drop this because I really believe there are some changes that need to be made here," Odell said.

Odell said that following Jenkins' comments she began to examine the University more critically.

"I began to see what the hiring and firing patterns were in other departments. It was beginning to look to me like there was quite a tendency to bring white people in, keep them for quite some time, then dismiss them. This concerns me. If anybody makes a decision based on the color of your skin, I think that's wrong."

Dr. Jenny McIntosh, a white art professor, denied Odell's charges. "I've been here sixteen years and I've never experienced racial prejudice." McIntosh added that instructors who only stay at ECSU a short time are usually doing it "at their own choice."

Odell also accused her chairperson, Sohindar Sachdev, of discrimination and harassment in the assignment of duties and allocation of equipment. "I am the only tenure track faculty member on campus to get a zero raise this year," she said.

Odell, who says her computer privileges were revoked after she criticized the Chancellor, charged that the University does not allow academic freedom. She has also said the University's math department does not adequately prepare students for careers.

Sachdev, Odell's departmental chairman, has vigorously denied all of Odell's complaints. "Our mathematics program is not as bad as Dr. Odell portrays," Sachdev wrote, in a letter to SGA President Michael Myrick.

Many white instructors have come to Jenkins' defense. The Faculty Senate, representing the majority of teachers at Elizabeth City State University has declared its support for the Chancellor.

Education is necessary for freedom, Rose says

By Tim Edwards

"Our system of government doesn't work unless people are educated," U.S. Congressman Charlie Rose (D. 7th District) told the ECSU family on Nov. 18, in Moore Hall Auditorium.

"If you live in a dictatorship, where you have no freedom, your level of education may be important to you but it doesn't have a lot to do with how the country is run," Rose added. "A democracy like ours demands that people be educated... enough to know their rights and responsibilities. They can then make good judgements about a complex society."

Rose, featured speaker for ECSU's assembly commemorating American Education Week, said those individuals who lack education can become "pawns used in a cynical way in the process of running government." The U.S. system of government depends on educated people to make important decisions, said Rose, like voting for elected leaders.

"The level of freedom we have established in this country—with some exceptions which we are working on—is greater than any other government in the world," said Rose. "Your ancestors, regardless of color, have handed you the opportu-

nity for education."

Rose encouraged his listeners to "go into the profession of teaching," adding, "there's no more noble thing you can do for your country than to teach young minds to be bright, and to lead them to paths of understanding."

Added Rose, "I am proud to be associated with this institution."

The audience laughed after Rose's quip, "When I was asked about prayer in schools, I answered, 'as long as they teach math, there will be prayer in schools.'"

At the beginning of his speech Rose praised U.S. Congresswoman Eva Clayton, (D. 1st District), whose district includes the Albamarle area.

"Many years ago when I went to Congress for the first time, I remember Sam Rayburn, who was speaker of the house at the time, said, 'Send 'em up here and leave 'em here long enough to do some good. I'm sending that thought out to Eva Clayton.'" In introducing Rose, ECSU Chancellor Dr. Jimmy Jenkins called him "A rising star and a mover and shaker in the House. Congressman Rose is a molder of what happens in the House," said Jenkins.

At the end of the program Jenkins presented Rose with an honorary doctorate of law degree from ECSU