



Dr. Cobb

## CRJ Executive Director Opposes Sydenham Closing

NEW YORK — Dr. Charles E. Cobb, executive director of the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, has severely criticized the city of New York for its decision to close Harlem's Sydenham Hospital.

"Once again, New York City has demonstrated its insensitivity to the medical needs of the black community. Taking a hard line in its decision to close Sydenham Hospital, the city will be removing health care services from a large portion of the Harlem Community, and has potential plans to close still another — Metropolitan Hospital — also of Harlem. Since the Koch administration took office, three major hospitals which once served the black community have been closed. They include: Francis Delafield, Arthur C. Logan, and Morrisania Hospital (North Bronx Black and Hispanic communities).

"The commission for Racial Justice has been monitoring Harlem health care for the last two and one-half years, and we believe that the closing of

Sydenham will create a severe shortage of badly needed health services.

"The people being served by Sydenham have actually put their lives on the line in order to save their hospital; but the city has responded to the protests with a deaf ear. I don't recall the city pursuing injunctions and restraining orders in Queens or in Brooklyn when community residents attacked a police station. This action by the city will only lead to arrests and further deteriorate relations between the city and the black community.

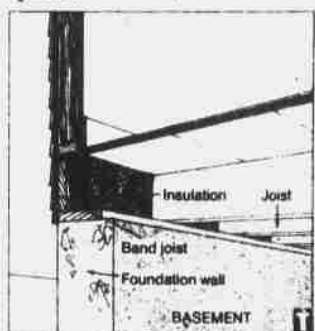
"Mayor Koch has totally mishandled this situation by refusing to negotiate with the local community, creating an atmosphere of deep distrust and dissatisfaction within the Harlem community and other black communities.

"The Commission for Racial Justice, United Church of Christ is committed to the struggle to save Sydenham, and I am calling for every religious denomination within the city to support this community action to save their hospitals."



Tips On Selecting An Energy Efficient Home

Looking for a new home? An energy-efficient feature — and an indication of good general quality of construction — is a carefully insulated band joist. It takes extra labor to cut insulation so that it fits well in all the spaces.



A home's band joists can be an energy saver — and an indication of good general quality of construction.

When you inspect the band joist, look for thick insulation carefully cut to size and installed between each of the floor joists. If floor insulation has been installed, the ends of the insulation runs should be turned up or down so that the band joist is covered. If the band joist isn't visible because a finished ceiling is installed on the lower level, ask the builder if it is insulated. Also ask if the band joist between the first and second stories of a home is insulated.

"The Energy-Wise Home Buyer," a comprehensive guide to home energy efficiency prepared by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in cooperation with the Dept. of Energy, is available for \$2 by writing to: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Dept. 32D, Washington, D.C. 20402. Orders may be charged to your Master Charge or Visa account (include your card number and date of expiration).

### ELECTRIC SAVINGS

Checking the refrigerator door gasket can mean energy savings.

Door gaskets become brittle and lose effectiveness with age. When that happens, they lose their good seal, say NCSU agricultural extension specialists.

White paint is the most durable of all colors. The lighter the color of the paint, the less slowly it will fade. Dark shades fade much more quickly.

Soften up a stiff chamois by soaking it in warm water to which a spoonful of olive oil has been added. The chamois will come out soft and clean.

### IMPORTANT NEWS FOR BACKACHE SUFFERERS!

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Aid For The Struggle

Joseph Carroll (center), vice president of the Woolworth Department Store chain, and Roy Lewis (left), a Woolworth executive, present a check to Southern Christian Leadership Conference president, Joseph E. Lowery to aid in the organization's continuing struggle against racism and injustice.

Photo by Elaine Tomlin

## Court Rules Government May File Class Action Suit In Vets Behalf

WASHINGTON — A federal court in Atlanta has ruled that the federal government may file a class action suit on behalf of a group of veterans who contend that their military service should be counted as work time in computing pension benefits from their civilian jobs.

The ruling by Judge Horace T. Ward of the U.S. District Court for Northern Georgia, Atlanta division, allows the first class action case under the Veteran's Reemployment Rights Act (VRRRA) to proceed.

The case involves Austin K. Letson and 31 other employees of Liberty Mutual Insurance Company who are disputing the company's failure to include their military service in computing the years of work on which their retirement benefits are based. They are being represented by the government under the VRRRA. Liberty Mutual argued that the government could not represent a VRRRA plaintiff in a class action.

Judge Ward ruled that the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Act does not bar class actions. "There is no indication in the Act's legislative history that Congress intended to limit representation of plaintiffs by government attorneys to actions other than those on behalf of a class, and such an interpretation does not arise from a reading of the VRRRA," he said.

The company also argued that the case was not a proper one for handling as a class action even if the government doesn't represent the veterans. The court ruled, however, that the plaintiff and the 31 other veterans constitute a proper class. The class action requirements of "numerosity, commonality, typicality and adequate protection by the representative party of the interests of the class as a whole" are easily satisfied in the present case," Judge Ward said.

The purpose of the veterans' reemployment rights law is to ensure that men and women who serve in their country's military forces do not lose their jobs or other employment benefits because of such service.

The law basically entitles veterans to reinstatement by their pre-service employers with the seniority, status, and rate of pay they would have attained with reasonable certainty if they had not gone into the military.

The veteran's reemployment rights law is administered by the U.S. Labor Department's Labor-Management Services Administration's Office of Veterans' Reemployment Rights. Persons wanting information about the law or assistance with claims under it should contact the nearest LMSA field office or the Office of Veterans' Reemployment Rights, LMSA, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C., 20216.

## S. C. State Announces Schedule Change

ORANGESBURG, SC — A shortage of room accommodations "in" the Daytona Beach area during the running of the Daytona 500 stock car race has forced the South Carolina State College basketball team to reschedule its February Florida trip in which the Bulldogs were to meet Florida A&M and Bethune-Cookman, February 13 and 14, respectively.

Instead, S.C. State will meet Bethune-Cookman January 16 at Daytona Beach and play Florida A&M the following night at Tallahassee.

The games against those two schools originally scheduled for the Bulldogs' Smith-Hammond-Middleton Memorial Center in January will be played at S-H-M on February 13 and 14.

## Record Support Predicted For Nationwide Fast November 20

BOSTON — Organizers at Oxfam America, the Boston-based international relief and development agency, expect unprecedented support for the agency's annual Fast for a World Harvest on November 20.

"Responses to our announcements about the Fast so far indicate that as many as 500,000 individuals throughout the country will participate this year," says this year's Fast Coordinator, Nancy Smith.

The Fast is held each year on the Thursday before Thanksgiving. "Fasting is a symbolic act," explains Oxfam executive director, Joe Short. "It is a statement against the inequities that contribute to the misery of the millions of people around the world who never have enough to eat."

By contributing the dollars they would have spent on food that day, Fast participants also play a major role in supporting Oxfam America's development projects in some of the poorest areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America. "Our projects are aimed not only at meeting the immediate

needs of starving peoples, but at helping people improve their lives, grow more food, and break the cycle of hunger and poverty," Short says. Since the agency's first Fast in 1974, participants have raised nearly \$1.5 million to fund projects in poor countries.

"The Fast is really a grass-roots event," noted Smith. "In addition to individual supports, civic, community, religious and school groups hold fundraising events that range from craft sales to marathons." In 1979, more than 4,500 groups and organizations participated in the Fast. A highlight of last year's Fast was a Congressional Fast organized by New York State Congressman Peter Peyer. The event featured a bipartisan panel of Republicans and Democrats who signified their support by giving up lunch on Capitol Hill that day. More than 1000 congressmen and their staffs participated.

Now in its seventh year, the Fast has become a tradition in thousands of households and communities throughout the country. It has also gained the respect and support of many prominent persons

in business, politics, entertainment, and religious and academic communities. The roster of Fast sponsors includes Ralph Abernathy, Ed Asner, Joan Baez, Harry

Chapin, Alistair Cooke, Valerie Harper, Gloria Steinem and Andrew Young.

Short believes that support for the Fast is growing in part because of increased public awareness about the problem of world hunger. "It is increasingly difficult for those who live in developed countries to close their eyes to the plight of those living in the poor regions of the world."

Short cites the response of agencies, governments and individuals around the globe to the needs of the Cambodian people as evidence that "we are becoming more and more a world community." Oxfam heads a thirty-agency Consortium that continues to provide relief and reconstruction aid to Cambodia. The agency recently announced a major campaign to provide aid to East African refugees.

## TORTURE

(Continued from Front)

responded to AI's earlier expressions of concern with detailed arguments that the country's legal and administrative regulations were adequate to protect prisoners from ill treatment. The U.S. Section said last week that AI was pursuing discussions with the authorities but believed that torture had taken place and remained common in Zaire.

According to AI's information, prison conditions in Zaire are harsh and ordinary criminal prisoners are frequently subjected to beatings, inadequate nourishment amounting to starvation and disease in unsanitary and overcrowded cells. However, political prisoners receive specially harsh treatment, it said.

The torture of prisoners is facilitated by the fact that many are held indefinitely without trial and without being permitted to receive visits from families or lawyers. AI has asked the Zaire government to ensure that prisoners receive speedy and open trials and the right to receive visits and correspondence as a means to protect them from torture.

The U.S. Section last week focused on the recent evidence of torture of political prisoners in the capital, Kinshasa. They included students seized after demonstrations, teachers and workers who went on strike for higher wages and people suspected of belonging to banned parties or whose relatives were suspected of belonging to these parties. Prisoners had been held at military camps, security police headquarters, Makala Central Prison and other prisons and in-

terrogation centers in the capital.

A student told of being held with about forty other people in a cell measuring about seven meters by six meters. Many cells have no sanitary facilities, and illnesses such as dysentery are endemic.

The most frequently reported kinds of ill treatment are beatings and starvation, but other forms of torture are regularly reported, varying among the detention centers. At a villa known as "B2" near the gendarmerie headquarters, prisoners reported being tied to stakes and beaten every day for three or four weeks. Doctors checking ex-prisoners for Amnesty International were able to examine the scars which resulted.

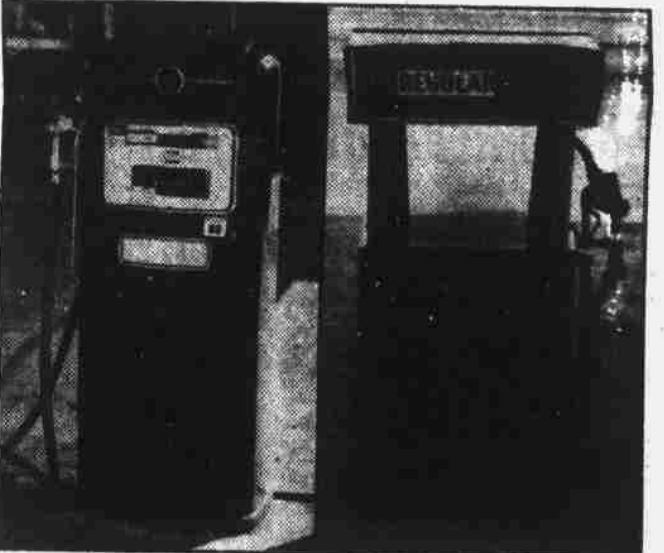
At some interrogation centers, women were reported to have been raped. A male prisoner reported that in order to make him give information, guards brought his wife to the prison and raped her repeatedly in his presence while they held him.

Of six men reported to have been arrested in September 1979 for fomenting a strike in Petrozaine, the national petroleum company, three died within a few weeks after torture, according to fellow prisoners. Of fifteen students arrested at the end of December, 1979, and severely beaten, five were said to have been shot dead.

In spite of such reports, the Zairean government still has not proved its willingness to take measures to protect prisoners from torture and death, the U.S. Section said.



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