

THE ART OF SOUL SEARCHING.

Senate Panel Enlists Justice Department's Aid In South Carolina

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Justice Department, as instructed by a Senate panel, will study a request by a civil rights leader from South Carolina for a federal probe into whether the FBI selectively targets black public officials.

William Gibson, state president and board chairman of the NAACP, said at the state convention in October he wanted a "complete investigation into allegations of a longstanding FBI policy of harassing and investigating black public officials without probable cause." In particular, he cited the probe of the South Carolina legislature which has led to conviction charges against nine lawmakers and drug charges against a tenth legislator and a state official.

Four of those indicted for selling their vote for cash are black. Three members of the Legislative Black Caucus have been named by Attorney Bart Daniel as "spies" in a scheme to get votes for their votes. The three

have not been charged in "Operation Lost Trust." Also, another black state legislator has been questioned by federal agents but has not been charged or named as a conspirator.

There were 21 black members of the Legislature when the undercover operation began in 1989.

Gibson said Friday he was "disappointed" the Senate Judiciary Committee decided to refer the matter to the Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility rather than conduct its own investigation.

"You don't go to the fox when you're trying to find out who took the chickens out of the henhouse," he said, noting that the Office of Professional Responsibility and the FBI are both within the Justice Department.

On Sept. 27, Gibson wrote committee chairman Joseph Biden, D-Del., asking the panel to investigate whether there is truth to an allegation that the FBI has an

unwritten policy of targeting black officials.

An FBI informant, in court documents filed in a Georgia case, alleged the FBI selectively prosecutes black public officials. He said the policy is called "Fruhmenschen" after the German word meaning "primitive man." Some black leaders have seized upon the allegation to try to show that black politicians have been victims of a racist plot by federal investigators and prosecutors.

Daniel denied that race was a factor in the investigation, which he said crossed racial and political lines.

An FBI spokesman refused to comment on the possible existence of "Fruhmenschen," saying, "We don't make a public debate of this." Judiciary Committee spokesman Joel Feyerherm said Friday the panel had referred Gibson's request to the Office of Professional Responsibility, as it has done with other, similar letters about the "Fruhmenschen" allegation.

Feyerherm said the committee is confident the office will fairly investigate the matter.

"The Office of Professional Responsibility has shown itself to be very independent in the past. We certainly don't take everything to them and refer the matter and forget about it. But they are a pretty reliable source," he said.

But Gibson called the Judiciary Committee's action "definitely inadequate." Gibson said he had no proof that federal agents in the South Carolina sting operation targeted blacks.

But he said the "reality" is that the committee has access to the documents that would prove or disprove his theory.

Gibson accused the committee of "abdication of its responsibility" as an oversight panel.

"I am really a little disappointed in the leadership of that particular committee, because prior to this I had a little more respect for Mr. Biden and the leadership of this committee," he said.

Church Role Sought In Finding Adoptive Parents

ROFOLK (AP) - Workshops at reducing the number of children in foster care drew scores of clergymen and state officials to St. John's A.M.E. Church last weekend.

The involvement of the church is intended to overcome longstanding mistrust that has plagued black families from facing government-run adoption programs, supporters of the church say.

Church officials say they have hope of placing the growing number of black children with black families without a bridge between adoption agencies and those who want to adopt.

Black ministers have always been the key person in getting the children to families," said Helen Shire, coordinator of the workshops. "They are respected, they are great communicators to the black community." About 6,000 black children in Virginia are in foster care, about 800 are legally ready for adoption, and more than half of them are black. Many are disabled and carry emotional scars from

"They're really just getting started," said Clements, whose One Church, One Child program has spread to nearly 40 states.

Nationwide, the program has found homes for 11,500 black children in the past 10 years, he said.

The state program, run by the Rev. Wilbert Talley, a pastor and adoptive parent in King William County, was awarded a \$118,000 grant of federal and state funds on Sept. 30.

The program intends to conduct a publicity campaign to attract potential adoptive parents and to have seminars to train social workers to be more sensitive when interviewing prospective parents.

to increase adoptions of black children are focusing on more black families willing to adopt and reducing the dropout rate to 85 percent among adoptive families.

Families quit the adoption process because the screening process is full of red tape and the process appears callous.

"I say it bluntly," said the Rev. George Clements, a black pastor and clergyman from Chicago. "Social workers are not paid to do a job. With that attitude, they know they are doing it out of altruistic motives."

The program developed the highly successful One Church, One Child program in which churches set a goal of finding one family in the area to adopt a child.

The program was brought to Virginia five years ago, about 400 churches have joined the program but progress has been slow because of limited budgets.

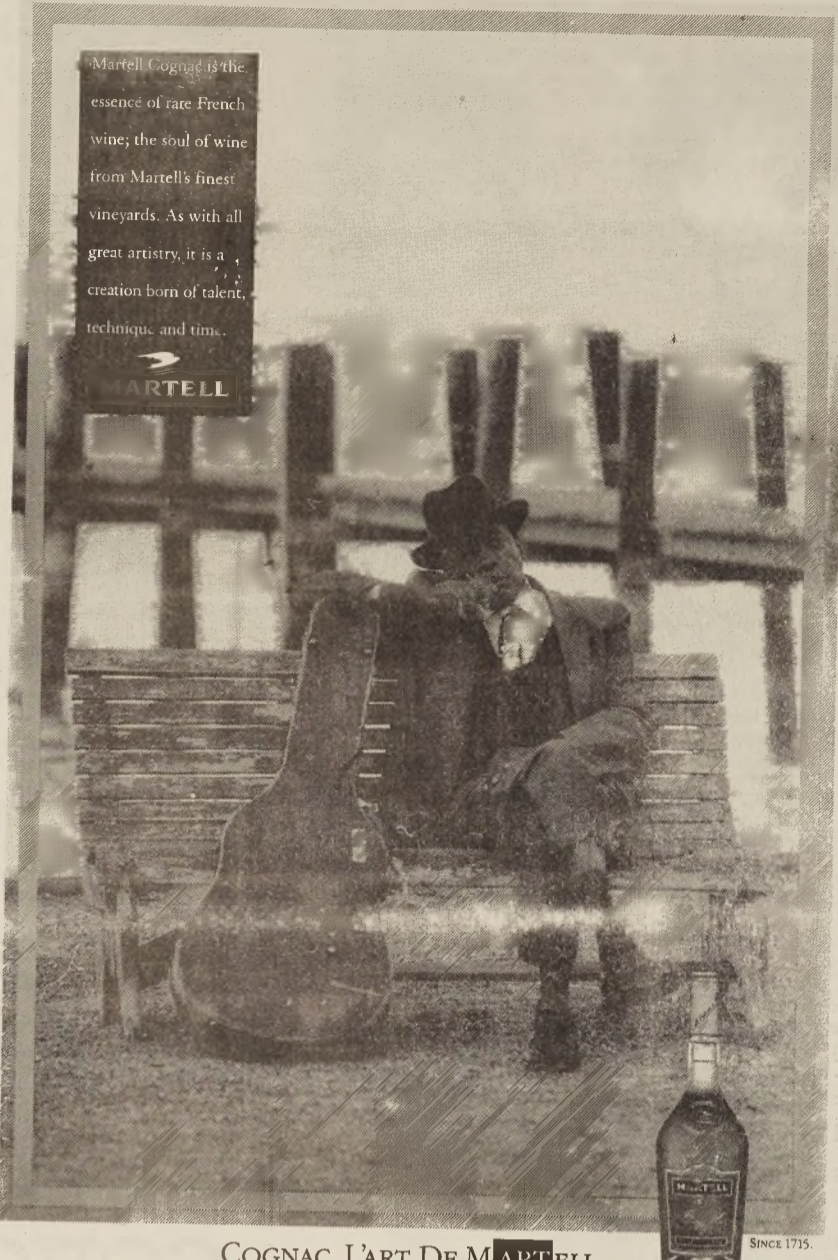
Historians, researchers, free blacks who supported the Confederacy

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) - A university archivist who is writing a book on the role of black soldiers in the Civil War says that slaves and free blacks supported the Confederacy.

Dr. Jordan Jr. of the University of Virginia says he estimates that 25 percent of the black soldiers and as many as 10 percent of its slaves backed the Confederacy in 1860, Virginia had a population of about 1.6 million, including 490,000 slaves and 170,000 blacks.

"This is going to be controversial, but I have the evidence," said Jordan, 36, one of the nation's leading black scholars who is

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