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Attorney General Loretta Lynch: Civil Rights Key to Suit Against LGBT Law

By Emery P. Dalesio
FAYETTEVILLE (AP) - Civil rights laws exist for anyone victimized because of a physical characteristic they can't control, and that's why the U.S. Justice Department challenged a North Carolina law that blocks some legal protections for LGBT citizens, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch said May 24.

Lynch's comments came in response to criticism hours earlier by conservative black pastors and civil rights leaders. They blasted the attorney general for comparing House Bill 2 to Jim Crow laws that segregated blacks to inferior education and opportunities for nearly a century. Lynch was visiting her native

state for the first time since the Justice Department and North Carolina's top Republican leaders filed competing lawsuits two weeks ago.

North Carolina's new law excludes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from state anti-discrimination protection and bars local governments from adopting their own anti-bias measures. The Justice Department lawsuit and the law's supporters focused largely on provisions requiring transgender people to use public restrooms and showers corresponding to the gender on their birth certificate.

Defenders of the law have argued that it is needed to protect people from being molested in bathrooms by men posing as transgender women. Lynch said earlier this month supporters of the law invented a problem "as a pretext for discrimination and harassment."

While pushing for equal civil rights in North Carolina has historically meant ending discrimination against black Americans, civil rights laws are meant to cover everyone, Lynch said.

"So certainly I respect the experience of those who have toiled in the vineyards of the civil rights movement," she said, "when you look at the nature and purpose of the movement, the nature and purpose of the message of those who led it, it is about civil rights, human rights and equality for all."

Clarence Henderson was one of those criticizing Lynch. Henderson was involved in the first days of the 1960 sit-in at a Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro that energized the civil rights movement. He said transgender people are acting on their self-expressed sense of gender, not the unchangeable facts of how they were born.

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A.J. Howard Clement, III died May 24. Clement was a long-time City Council member, attorney and civil rights leader. He was 82. Related stories on page 3.



One of the families enjoying food at Union Baptist Church Youth Day. See photos on pages 8 and 9. Mt. Gilead held its Youth Day also on May 14.

Chinese detergent maker sorry for harm done by racist ad

BEIJING (AP) - A Chinese laundry detergent maker apologized for the harm caused by the spread of an ad in which a black man "washed" by its product was transformed into a fair-skinned Asian man.

Shanghai Leishang Cosmetics Ltd. Co. said it strongly shuns and condemns racial discrimination but blamed foreign media for amplifying the ad, which first appeared on Chinese social media in March but was halted after it drew protests this week following media reports.

"We express regret that the ad should have caused a controversy," the statement issued late Saturday (May 28) read. "But we will not shun responsibility for controversial content."

"We express our apology for the harm caused to the African people because of the spread of the ad and the over-amplification by the media," the company said. "We sincerely hope the public and the media will not over-read it."

The ad for Qiaobi laundry detergent drops shows a black man entering a room and attempting to flirt with an Asian woman. He is carrying a pail of paint, wears dirty clothes and has a soiled face. She feeds him a detergent drop and stuffs his body into a top-loading washer. When the cycle completes, a fair-skinned Asian man in a clean white T-shirt emerges to the delight of the woman.

When speaking to the Chinese nationalist newspaper The Global Times, a Mr. Wang of Leishang said the critics were "too sensitive," and the issue of racial discrimination never came up during the production of the video.

The ad's content rekindled discussions on racial discrimination in China, where prejudices against blacks are likely to be dismissed.

Legislators agree to study moving Confederate Relic Room

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) - Legislators aren't spending any money next fiscal year to display the Confederate flag sent to a museum last summer as they await an analysis on moving the entire museum to Charleston.

A legislative panel negotiating a final spending plan for 2016-17 approved a budget clause that requires an analysis of available museum space in Charleston and a cost estimate for moving the state's military history museum there. A report is due Jan. 10.

The law that removed the rebel flag from the Statehouse's front lawn sent it to the Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum in Columbia.

A separate measure directed the museum to recommend plans for a permanent display.

But legislators balked at the \$3.6 million cost of the museum board's proposal for the display and additional exhibit space.

Howard Clement Stood Firm Against Durham, State Republicans For Statements Against Jesse Helms

This Associated Press story published in January 1990, we think, exemplifies the strength of conviction that Mr. A.J. Howard Clement, III was known for. Agree or disagree with him, we think a part of his legacy is that you ALWAYS knew where he stood on issues.

(AP) - A prominent black Republican and Durham City Council member says he "does not intend one whit to retract" statements that U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms is a menace to the party.

Howard Clement said Tuesday (Jan. 23, 1990), he would not apologize even though Durham County GOP leaders are taking him to task for what they say is a verbal assault on Helms.

"I do not intend one whit to retract any statements I made, because what I said was, in my opinion, the truth, he said.

The Durham County Republican Executive Committee has taken the unusual step of summoning Clement to explain on Feb. 20 why he said Helms is an embarrassment to the party during a speech at Martin Luther King Jr. Day events at Duke University last week.

"I do not intend to apologize for what I said, and I would repeat them for emphasis," Clement said. "Jesse Helms is not interested in the wellbeing of North Carolina."

The Helms campaign declined comment Tuesday.

Helms announcement that he would run for re-election coincided the ceremonies in honor of the slain civil rights leader and the inauguration of Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder, the first black elected governor in the country.

Clement has called the timing of three events ironic

since Helms actively opposed making King's birthday a federal holiday, the Greensboro News & Record reported. Tuesday, Clement repeated his views and added that Helms is not addressing issues facing North Carolina, including low scholastic Aptitude Test scores, high infant mortality rates, low manufacturing and teachers' wages.

"This is a free country and I carry in my pocket the constitution, and the constitution says I have the right to free speech," he said. "They may view me as harmful to the party, in my view Jesse Helms is harmful to the party."

"He is an embarrassment, in my opinion, to the Republican Party," Clement said of his fellow Republican. "Jesse Helms represents a divisive, hostile element, and a betrayal, in my opinion, of the American dream."

Durham County GOP leaders say Clement should have not spoken out publicly against the senator.

"The biggest concern we had was that Mr. Clement would publicly attack Jesse Helms," Dan McClary, Durham County GOP chairman said. "To disagree is one thing. To personally Mr. Helms, as he did, we have a problem with that."

Several Durham County GOP activists called state headquarters to complain about Clement's remarks, said Tom Ballus, communications director for the state Republican Party.

But Ballus acknowledged that, except for a reprimand, there is little Republicans can do about Clement's statements.

Clement, an executive with N.C. Mutual Life Insurance, became a Republican in 1984. He was a delegate to the 1988 Republican National Convention in New Orleans.

Presidential race shows deep seated strife toward minorities

By Jesse J. Holland

WASHINGTON (AP) - It started with Mexicans being publicly accused by presidential candidate Donald Trump of being criminals and rapists. It escalated to ejections, to sucker punches, to pepper spray. And now violence and strife seems to be a commonplace occurrence out on the campaign trail.

As the 2016 presidential campaign turns toward the rapidly diversifying West, it has officially buried any thoughts of a post-racial United States, with racial and ethnic groups at the center of the most public strife seen in the political arena since the height of the civil rights movement.

Much of the violence has revolved around the ascendancy of GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump, first toward minorities and now by minorities protesting his policies. On May 24, protesters in New Mexico opposing Trump threw burning T-shirts, plastic bottles and other items at police officers, injuring several, and toppled trash cans and barricades. Police responded by firing pepper spray and smoke grenades into the crowd outside the Albuquerque Convention Center.

Karla Molinar, 21, a University of New Mexico student, participated in a planned disruption of Trump's speech and said she had no choice because Trump is sparking hatred of Mexican immigrants. Trump, among other things, has called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States and declared that he will build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"Trump is causing the hate to get worse," she said. Earlier this year, demonstrators against Trump swarmed outside the hotel near San Francisco airport, forcing the candidate Trump to

crawl under a fence to enter the hotel where he met with local GOP power brokers. Other protesters tangled with authorities and damaged police cars after a Trump rally in Orange County, California.

Earlier, the violence was aimed toward minorities. For example:

- A black woman was surrounded, cursed and shoved by white onlookers at a Trump rally in Louisville, Kentucky in March.

- Latino demonstrators Ariel Rojas was kicked and dragged by a white Trump supporter at a rally in Miami in October.

- A black male protester, Rakeem Jones, was punched from behind by white Trump supporter John McGraw as Jones was being ejected from a rally by police in North Carolina. McGraw was later arrested.

- Video captured Trump supporters physically assaulting Mercutio Southall Jr., an African-American activist, at a rally in Birmingham, Alabama in November. Southall said afterward he was called several expletives by the crowd and later compared them to a "lynch mob."

While political violence is not unknown, like the 1968 violence at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago where 119 police and 100 protesters were injured, rarely has it been targeted so specifically at minorities, said Matt Dallak, a professor of political management in the Graduate School of Political Management at George Washington University.

He also laid much of the responsibility on Trump, who started his political campaign by comparing undocumented immigrants from Mexico to criminals and rapists. The crowds at Trump's rallies are feeding off him "demonizing particular segments of the population, including racial minorities" he said.

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