

NAACP head initiates P.A.T.H. to aid the homeless street people

By ALBERT NICKERSON
Chronicle Staff Writer

NAACP President Patrick Hairston has started a non-profit organization called People Are Treated Human (P.A.T.H.) to alleviate the problem of increasing numbers of homeless street people in the city.

"There is nothing being done for street people," Hairston said. "America is rich enough to support all of its people."

Hairston acknowledges that the Experiment in Self-Reliance, the NAACP, and the Urban League are trying to provide shelter and food for black street people, while the Salvation Army, the Rescue Mission and several other churches are the principal white organizations helping the street people.

But he said more needs to be done.

"We need to place ourselves in their position and we would realize how critical the problem is," he said.

He said the organization is seeking a federal tax exempt status. As a non-profit agency, it already has a tax exemption from the state. Since April, the

organization has been seeking funding from local corporations, foundations and individuals.

In August, Hairston met with Gov. James Hunt and submitted the proposal for possible state funding.

Ben Ruffin, special assistant to the governor, said he is reviewing which agencies might fund the program.

"I am continuing to seek funding from several sources," said Ruffin. "We are looking at several ways to fund proposal, but the Reagan administration has cut funds that used to be available to fund such a project."

Ruffin said he would contact Hairston whenever he could find a source of funding for the proposal.

The Associate Consultants conducted a survey of the street people problem for P.A.T.H. More than 71 percent of the people interviewed for the survey said that black churches weren't doing enough to help the street people.

The survey defined street people as alcoholic, drug abusers, ex-offenders, and other victims of poverty. It indicated that a major

chaos created for the country's economy by this administration.

But it will come. Cutting out U.S. producers means cutting out jobs, eventually for white as well as black American workers. Prosperity for the poor was over the first time this administration was elected to office.

Prosperity will pass over the middle class if this administration is re-elected. There is only one place the president, if re-elected, can look to mend the broken U.S. budget caused by too much spending on defense -- the "mythical" middle class.

social problem facing cities in the 1980s will be how to provide for the homeless.

"This group of Americans affects the majority of American society like a cancer, eating away with crime, health problems, education, housing and even the future of the country," according to a statement issued by P.A.T.H.

Hairston said Winston-Salem's street people primarily are located in the downtown area immediately northwest of the M.C. Benton Convention Center and the hotel district.

According to the study, there is a trend toward more homeless people in the city because of state and local urban renewal and relocation programs.

Of the city's 150,000 population, there are an estimated 900 street people in the downtown area. About 30 percent of the homeless are black, Hairston said.

Generally, Winston-Salem's street people are from low-income families, have lower education and are more likely to have poor health. According to the study, about 33 percent of the city's black families live in poverty, compared to 10 percent of white families. Another factor is the unemployment rate, about 23 percent for all blacks and about 42 percent for black teen-agers.

The P.A.T.H. study listed the street people populations of

various cities this way: Charlotte, 2,375; Durham, 795; Greensboro, 950; Raleigh, 875; and Winston-Salem, 900.

Hairston said P.A.T.H. will provide free emergency shelter and food seven days a week, 24-hours a day. Beds and sleeping facilities also will be provided -- if the necessary funding is obtained.

"Initially, a majority of the recipients of P.A.T.H.'s program will be street people seeking help themselves," he said. "But referral programs will be established with churches, courts and other civic and social organizations."

What's more, P.A.T.H. will offer other services, including general counseling and counsel-

ing for runaways, ex-offenders, drug abusers, the alcoholic and the chronically unemployed.

And, the group will offer free meals, survival training and family relocation.

Hairston said the organization will renovate the old USA Hotel at 718 N. Trade St. -- with the assistance of some of the homeless people it hopes to help.

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is that lower inflation induced by a fall-off in the demand for goods and services is bad. Inflation should be brought down by an increase in the supply of goods and services produced by workers in the particular country, not by foreign suppliers whose workers are being employed at lower wages at the expense of the U.S. workforce.

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