

# National

## Report: Army Discriminated Against Black Doctor

**MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP)** — The Defense Department has agreed with Army physician Maj. M.P. Ketchens' claim that he and a colleague suffered reprisals after accusing superiors of racial discrimination.

"We are the example of what's really going on," Ketchens said. "They'll tell you that discrimination and racism do not exist. It's a lie. They have told you that the system is built to work for the soldier. It is a lie."

The black military doctor and a Chinese-American colleague, Capt. John T. Lam, received "career-ending" performance evaluations in retaliation for their discrimination complaints, the U.S. Defense Department's inspector general's office concluded after an investigation.

The Army was advised in a June 24 letter to remove the evaluation reports from the personnel files of the two doctors at Fort Rucker's Lyster Army Hospital, he said. Ketchens, 34, who has a light complexion,

said he had been told by superiors he had a promising career as a flight surgeon. But when his dark-skinned fiancée, now his wife, arrived at Fort Rucker in late 1991, he says his superiors were startled to learn he was black.

"From that point on, my treatment changed completely," said Ketchens.

He said he was publicly humiliated by superiors and saw minority physicians passed over for promotions. He said he first complained to his hospital commander in January 1992, then twice more after no action was taken, until he allegedly was threatened with reprisal in early April 1992.

Shortly afterward, Ketchens filed a complaint with the base Equal Opportunity office. He and Lam also contacted the Department of the Army Inspector General.

In May 1992, he was transferred from the far more prestigious flight surgeon post to an outpatient clinic. In June he received a copy of the bad officer evaluation that ended

any hope of continued military advancement. Lam, 29, got his shortly afterward. Both say they'll quit the service when their current commitments expire.

The inspector general's office concluded the transfer was not an act of reprisal, but said the bad evaluations were retaliation. Before Ketchens attained active duty status, Col. Robert J. Kreutzmann, commander of the U.S. Army Aeromedical Center at Fort Rucker, described him in an evaluation dated June 3, 1991 as a "mission-oriented, highly dedicated professional, a conscientious and astute Medical Corps officer."

"I would be proud to see him assigned to the aeromedical center," Kreutzmann wrote. But in the bad evaluation, Kreutzmann wrote that Ketchens had difficulty adjusting to the Army and had repeatedly disregarded the chain of command.

"Maj. Ketchens has the potential to become a good Medical Corps officer, however he lacks in maturity required to advance

beyond his present grade at this time," he wrote. Kreutzmann declined comment.

Ketchens said his wife, Capt. Sheoler Ketchens, 29, an environmental engineer who was assigned to supervise the hospital's linen supply, has also been harassed on the base.

In September 1992, Ketchens and his wife asked the Inspector General's office for protection under the federal Whistleblower's Act. They've written to Congress and defense officials all the way up to Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all without satisfaction.

The fight has kept his telephone ringing, he says. Along with some anonymous threatening calls, he's received many of support or interest from other minorities who allege racism in the military and want his help.

"We are the very individuals who fight for everybody else's freedom," he said, "and we are slaves."



Jones Morgan, 110 years old, the last living Buffalo Soldier, died Aug. 29 in Richmond, Va. He served with the U.S. Army's only black regiment during the Spanish-American War and the Wild West days.

## Black NAACP Attorney Finds No Problem with Representing Klan

**GALVESTON, Texas (AP)** — When Ku Klux Klan leader Michael Lowe entered Anthony Griffin's law office, he had no idea his new attorney was not only a black man, but also an attorney for the NAACP.

"My girlfriend and I were in his waiting room and got kind of bored, so we started snooping around and we looked and saw a NAACP pin," said Lowe, grand dragon of the Knights of the KKK Realm of Texas in Waco. "And we looked some more and saw he had this bookcase of African-American history and we kind of looked at each other said 'No, he can't be black.'"

But Griffin is, and it's his race that has him in hot water, not with the Klan, but with Texas NAACP leaders. So far, Griffin is weathering the storm.

"I don't like the Klan," said Griffin, a 38-year-old University of Houston-trained lawyer. "But if I don't stand up and defend the Klan's right to free speech, my right to free speech will be gone."

Griffin is defending Lowe's right to keep his membership list, financial records and other documents from Texas Attorney General Dan Morales. The state has accused Lowe of using threats and intimidation to thwart the court-ordered desegregation of public housing in East Texas, particularly in Vidor, where the city's only remaining black residents moved away last week, frightened by too many instances of harassment. And Morales' office wants that list.

"If you shut up Billy Graham, you shut up Farrakhan," Griffin said. "That is a hard issue."

Griffin, who has done legal work for the NAACP, was contacted by the Texas Civil Liberties Union to represent Lowe, who did not know Griffin was black. There was no arm-twisting. Griffin took the case almost immediately.

"I said, 'No problem.' Once the facts were explained to me I considered it a honor," said Griffin. "It is any time you have an opportunity to defend the Bill of Rights."

Gary Bledsoe doesn't see it that way. The assistant state attorney and Texas NAACP leader has referred the matter to the national NAACP. There, he's hoping for some guidance on whether Griffin should be removed as a pro-bono attorney on the NAACP rolls.

"We think it's inconsistent that someone has an association with them and with us," said Bledsoe.

Earlier this month, some members of the Texas State Conference of NAACP Branches demanded that Griffin resign as general counsel. But Griffin refused and the state NAACP has asked the national NAACP to advise them whether Griffin should be ousted. Bledsoe said that to represent the two diametrically opposed groups sends a contradictory message. He also said Griffin is wrong

to believe that once the Klan's list is surrendered, the state could ask the same of the NAACP.

"People are constantly looking for contradictions. They say you must be Clarence Thomas reborn. Or, some how you've sold out your civil liberties badge of honor," Griffin said.

"That pisses me off. All of that is designed to avoid the issue. And the issue is the First Amendment. And that document really pisses people off."

As for Lowe, he's pleased with Griffin as his legal counsel. "He seems like a nice fellow. . . . I think he'll do me very well and have full confidence in him," said Lowe.

"He seems like a nice fellow. . . . I think he'll do me very well and have full confidence in him," said Lowe.

**Salem**  
**FRESHSIDE™ SALUTE**  
**A FRESH LOOK A FRESH APPROACH**

Walter Travis  
 Dallas, TX

"We're here to see that the least among us are also served."

For 27 years Walter Travis, executive director of the Washington Street Mission, has been a source of strength and hope for the residents of Roseland Homes, a housing project just north of downtown Dallas. Working with local businesses, social service organizations and individuals, Walter finds the resources to enhance the quality of life for area residents. From finding jobs to providing food, clothing and Christmas gifts, Walter and his staff work long hours to make certain that a wide array of needs are met.

On behalf of Walter Travis and his selfless devotion to the Roseland Homes community, a donation of \$5,000 has been awarded to the Washington Street Mission.



**ESCAPE TO THE FRESHSIDE™**

17 mg. "tar", 1.2 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

**SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.**