

**Racism**

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white Americans," Eversley said. "It is just not that unusual."

He added that although Tracht didn't kill anyone, his words foster the type of environment where racists feel more comfortable.

"It is not true that words never hurt. Words could lead to a murderous frame of mind," Eversley said.

Dolores "D" Smith, executive director of the Urban League of Winston-Salem, developed a popular workshop more than a decade ago that helps blacks, whites and others bridge the racial divide.

Smith said just because Tracht was a "professional" with a well-paying job, who didn't have a shaved head or wear a white sheet and hood, does not mean that he can't be a racist.

"A title does not protect you from feeling the grips of racism," Smith said. "It was professional politicians that passed laws to discriminate against African Americans."

Smith's words couldn't ring more true in the tiny, coastal town of Trenton, N.C. The town made national headlines late last month after its 81-year-old mayor, Joffree Leggett, explained to a local paper why he didn't want Trenton to annex small black communities in the town's hinterlands.

"They (African Americans) are not leaders. A black man would rather work for a white person," Leggett was quoted.

Leggett added that if blacks went into business together, they'd be stealing from each other within a few years. He later refuted the second statement, but stood behind the first.

The town's all-white city council asked Joffree to step down, which he did, and now plans on annexing the communities later this year.

Smith says she doesn't buy the notion that the country has taken a step backwards in race relations as a result of the recent rash of incidents. The Doug Trachts and Joffree Leggetts of the world have been around a long time, Smith says.

"I don't think we are sliding. It (racism) has never gone anywhere," Smith said. "If you go back a few years, there were sports announcers that made (derogatory statements about blacks). These folks just got caught, that's the only difference."

Carl Williams, police superintendent for the state of New Jersey, was fired from his job last week by Gov. Christie Todd Whitman after he was caught in the act of making disparaging statements about blacks and other minorities.

"Today with this drug problem, the drug problem is cocaine or marijuana," Williams told the Newark Star-Ledger. "It is more likely a minority group that's involved with that. They aren't going to ask some Irishman to be part of their (drug gang) because they don't trust them."

Williams went on to imply that drugs were only a problem in Latin American countries, not in Europe.

"Two weeks ago, the president of the United States went to talk to the president of Mexico about drugs. (Clinton) didn't go to Ireland. He didn't go to England."

Tragic tales of trigger happy policemen also continue to arise.

Recently, a crowd of nearly 5,000 people protested on Wall Street the death of an unarmed African immi-

grant at the hands of four New York City police officers. Amadou Diallo was shot more than 40 times by the officers on Feb. 4. Police reportedly mistook Diallo for someone else.

The Pittsburgh Police Department is still under careful scrutiny by civil rights groups and the U.S. Justice Department after the suspicious deaths of several black men including Jonny Gammage, who was beaten and suffocated during a confrontation with police in 1995. Recently, Police Officer John Charmo was charged with homicide in the 1995 death of Jerry Jackson, who Charmo claimed he shot in self defense.

And after years of complaints by minorities, North Carolina and New Jersey are just two states considering a bill that would require highway patrol officers to keep information on the race of people they pull over.

And acts of racial intimidation and violence seem to be on the upsurge.

A 36-year-old black woman in Virginia found her name scrolled across newspaper headlines last week. Carrie Anderson and her family woke up on March 2 to find a dummy hanging from a tree - lynch-style - in their front yard in Palmer Springs.

The incident happened after Anderson's 17-year-old son was charged with burglary and assault of a white convenience store owner. Anderson's son was shot supposedly while fleeing the man's home and hospitalized for a week.

Anderson said the harassment started almost immediately after the incident, culminating with the black-face dummy hanging from the tree.

"Whoever is doing it, if it's gone this far there's no telling what else

they will do," Anderson said.

And last May, one month before the dragging death in Texas, a mob of white men with brass knuckles attacked a black Marine after a party in San Diego. The men reportedly shouted "white power" as they stomped 21-year-old Carlos Colbert's head and broke his neck.

Colbert is now bound to a wheelchair. Last month, five of the men got what many considered a slap on the wrist for the crime. Four of them will serve about a year in jail, while another could face additional jail time under a hate crimes law because he admitted in court that he attacked Colbert because he was black.

Eversley says events like these are sad but don't surprise him at all.

"I'm horrified by it, but I'm not surprised," he said. "You can't know the history of black people in this country and be surprised by things like that."

The head of a local racial dialogue group says such incidents are more public now, but by no means are they new or unique.

"I think it has always happened. I think with the rise in conservatism, it is more blatant," Ann Barefield of Crossing 52 said. "It was very overt at one time then it sort of went underground and for a while it was covert."

Although her group and a handful of others are working hard to foster understanding between the races, Barefield says it is an uphill battle.

"We have about 500 hate groups in this country," Barefield said, referring to a recent report released by the Southern Poverty Law Center. "There are still many problems to solve."

Hate is also booming on the Internet, according to SPLC. The

group says that the number of "hate sites" on the Web have jumped almost 60 percent from last year. Groups like the Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nation and the Council of Conservative Citizens all have many sites on the Internet with links to hundreds of other hate sites.

Although the Council of Conservative Citizens claims that it is not a hate group, SPLC has added the group and its more than 30 chapters - including one in Clemmons - to its list of racist organizations.

Prominent politicians like Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Congressman Bob Burr and Winston-Salem Mayor Jack Cavanagh have all spoken at C of CC events, although Cavanagh later denounced the group.

Eversley, Smith and Barefield all agree that racial issues right here in the Triad are just as disheartening as those hundreds of miles away.

Eversley and Barefield said recent redistricting efforts in both Greensboro and Winston-Salem aren't helping race relations.

Smith pointed to the self-inflicted gun shot wound of Sgt. Brian Barker, a deputy with the county's sheriff's department.

Barker, the son of the sheriff, blamed the shooting on two Hispanic men and a statewide manhunt was staged.

"There is no way we can get around the fact that (law enforcement) felt the freedom to accept (Barker's) story because of racism," Smith said. "This community went on a witch hunt."

Smith believes that for things truly to get better in this country, people must be given new information to offset hundreds of years of negative stereotypes. The solution

must be proactive. Smith said the race task force put together by President Clinton last year is not the answer.

"Racism is as American as apple pie and the flag," she said. "I believe that America is trying to deal with racism, but the matter in which it is trying is not going to work. We need to start with correcting the misinformation that has fertilized for the last 500 years."

Eversley says he believes racial healing needs to start on two different fronts. First, he says, African Americans must organize to "create (their) own reality." A united black community can be much more successful at fighting racism than individual factions, Eversley said.

And whites of "goodwill" must work on other whites to make them less racist and more tolerant of others, he said.

Barefield, who is white, says that if white people simply protested

when a colleague or a relative tells a racist joke, it would send a warning that such behavior is no longer acceptable.

"If you just say 'that really bothers me,' it would make people more aware and more sensitive," she said.

She added that the nation must stop playing ostrich by burying its head in the sand. Crossing 52 holds weekly dialogue sessions to discuss race. During the discussions, Barefield says blacks have told stories about running into discrimination in local department stores and with Triad law enforcement officers.

"We need to be honest about the issue and we need to talk about it," Barefield said. "Every day African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans experience things that we (whites) are not even aware of."

The Associated Press contributed to this story.



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**NCAA**

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"The court was focusing on the lack of a rational basis for selecting that particular score," said Dennis co-counsel, Adefe P. Kimmel, a staff lawyer with Trail Lawyers for Public Justice, a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy group. She described the SAT cutoff figure as arbitrary.

"Our lawsuit never said they couldn't consider SAT scores at all," Kimmel said.

She said NCAA staff researchers had recommended a "sliding scale," in which test scores and grade-point averages in core academic courses would be given equal weight. That practice, she said, would achieve the NCAA's goal of raising graduation rates and would allow more blacks to be academically eligible.

"The NCAA has ignored that, we think, in part because of a public relations problem," Kimmel said. "They can say, 'We're raising standards.'"

She said the NCAA surveyed its member schools last year, and a majority of them decided to reject the NCAA staff's proposed sliding scale and keep the Proposition 16 rule.

In addition to ruling on test scores, the judge decided that the plaintiffs could sue the NCAA under the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964. The U.S. Supreme Court had declined to rule on that question last month, but Buckwalter noted that the plaintiffs' lawyers in this case had presented a lot of information not given to the Supreme Court.

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