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The Rev. Ben Chavis with his mother, Elizabeth Chavis of Oxford, and sisters June Davenport (L.), of Charlotte and Helen Othow (R), currently of Chapel Hill. (photo by Eileen Hanson)

With Ben Chavis

An Exclusive Interview

By Eileen Hanson
Special To The Post

First Of A Two-Part Series

After four years in prison and nearly a decade of legal battles, Rev. Ben Chavis returned to Charlotte last week to celebrate the holidays with his family. Chavis was convicted with 9 other young civil rights workers in Wilmington, NC, accused of fire bombing a white-owned grocery during a period of racial turmoil in 1971. The case of the Wilmington 10 became an international human rights issue. Chavis was paroled on Dec. 14.

intelligence agencies had hit lists for harassment of leaders. There was organized repression from the highest levels. There was also fear after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968. No civil rights leader came forward to fill King's shoes. There was a leadership confusion. Also the Vietnam War was at a height. People's concerns moved from civil rights to peace. We formed coalitions with whites for peace. When the war ended and the peace coalitions disbanded, the black community was left with no strong organizations. It was difficult to rebuild in an atmosphere of repression, fear and distrust.

Case, was to turn those setbacks into "come-backs". These cases were initially used to put fear in people, to get them not to organize. But people used these cases to wake people up to the fact it could happen to them. Many people kept their hands to the plow. Rev. James Barnett, Carrie Graves, my sisters June (Davenport) and Helen (Othow), kept their hands to the plow even when the way was rocky and bumpy. We transferred our anger and despair into something positive. Now as we face the 1980's we're in a better position than 20 years ago when we entered the '60's.

POST: After your long stay in prison, what message do you have for the people of Charlotte?

POST: What happened in 1971?

POST: What agenda do you see for the 1980's?

CHAVIS: I am thankful to God and to all the individuals and organizations who struggled so hard and so long to win my release. Coming back to Charlotte is coming back home. I went to school here (UNCC). I worked in the black community here. In 1968 we built the first black independence political organization in North Carolina, the Black Political Organization, and ran an all-black slate for City Council. We saw a need at that time to be independent of the Democratic or Republican parties, which never kept their promises to us. We were demanding a ward system so we could be assured of black representation. We now have that with district representation on City Council.

CHAVIS: 1971 was a critical year. The Wilmington incident happened. The Klan and other white vigilantes decided to reinstitute their violence on the black community. People thought the Klan had changed its tactics after the 1960's, but it hadn't. In 1971 George Jackson was killed. The Republic of New Africa was shot up in Mississippi. Angela Davis was arrested. Police brutality was rampant in the black communities. Jim Grant and I were charged in the Raleigh Two case, and in December, 1971, the Charlotte Three were arrested.

CHAVIS: As we face the new decade we need to 1) unify, 2) establish accountability of black leaders to the community they represent, 3) strengthen the black church, 4) develop more cooperative economics within the black community, and 5) establish an alternative political party.

POST: How would you describe the 1960's in contrast with 1970's?

POST: Was there anything positive that came out of the '70's decade?

POST: Do you mean an all-black political party?

CHAVIS: There is no one single reason. Look at the historical context. Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew were in the White House. J. Edgar Hoover headed the FBI. Those working for social change were identified as dangerous.

CHAVIS: In the 1970's blacks were so caught up in reacting to arrests and trials and defending themselves, we didn't have time to organize. We suffered setbacks. But the Lord moves in mysterious ways. What we did with the Charlotte Three and Wilmington Park cases, and the Joan Little

CHAVIS: It's time now for 30 million blacks in the U.S. to start solving our own problems. We are thirty million people who have been in this country for centuries, who slaved to build this country, who fought wars for this country. Still we don't have first class citizenship. We don't have opportunities to life a good life in peace and joy and warmth, and all that it represents. It's time for us to stop being a race of beggars and start being a race of organizers. We have to start solving our own problems, like black on black crime, like drugs.

POST: The 1960's were years of excitement and progress. What happened in the 1970's?

CHAVIS: There is no one single reason. Look at the historical context. Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew were in the White House. J. Edgar Hoover headed the FBI. Those working for social change were identified as dangerous.

CHAVIS: I think it will be see EXCLUSIVE on Page 9

Community Development Hearing City Council To Hear Residents

From 9 Target Areas January 10

Residents in the nine community development target areas soon will have an opportunity to voice their opinions before City Council at a public hearing. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, second floor, City Hall, 600 East Trade Street. Spokespersons from these nine target areas - West Boulevard, Grier Heights, North Charlotte, Third Ward, West Morehead, First Ward Extension, Southside Park-Brookhill and Five Points - may comment on the Par-

liamentary Development and Housing Plans for 1981-83. Carrie Graves, a community advocate for the West Boulevard area will submit a written statement to City Council. In her letter, Mrs. Graves will stress a need for a survey in the West Boulevard area. A housing survey is needed immediately, Graves said, "to encourage repair work on blighted housing." Traffic on West Boulevard needs one stabilized speed zone instead of several zones, Mrs. Graves continued. "Amay James Park needs completion; the park



Carrie Graves...Community advocate

center for "battered women and extending operating hours for the Amay James Gym." She praised the park, gym, human resources center and Gethsemane Enrichment program among the accomplishments of the Human Development Department. Yet, drawbacks exist. Mrs. Graves emphasized that a project begins with a small amount of money, people's hopes rise and then the resources run out. Walter Phillips, the Community Development Department Assistant Director echoed her sentiments. "There's a need to com-

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In North Carolina \$21 Million Available For Low Rent Housing

Forum Set For King Celebration

Officials of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will participate in the opening ceremony of the week-long 51st Birthday Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. beginning January 10 in Atlanta, Ga. Secretary Moon Landrieu will deliver the keynote address on Thursday at 9:40 a.m. at the World Congress Center, 285 Magnolia Street, N.W.

He will be introduced by Coretta Scott King, President of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Social Change. In announcing HUD's participation in the celebration, Secretary Landrieu said this event is a reminder of the on-going efforts begun more than a decade ago by Dr. King to solve the nation's urban problems.

"HUD," he added, "has been successful in solving many of those problems through its commitment to the principles of the Carter Administration's Urban Policy." "Our continued commitment to that policy through the use of Community Development, Urban Development Action Grant, Neighborhood Self-Help Development and Federal Fair Housing programs will bring even greater results in the next decade."

HUD participants will focus on the theme of this year's event, "The Direction for the Eighties: Creating the Beloved Community," through the Secretary's keynote address, a plenary panel discussion and a series of workshops. Lawrence B. Simons, Assistant Secretary for Housing will moderate the panel discussion entitled, "Housing in the Community of the 80's."

For concurrent policy workshops, to be held from 1:45 to 5:00 p.m., will incorporate opinions from the public, private, national and local sectors.



MISS JOSIE P. HUDLEY
...Bound for fame

Josie Hudley Is Beauty Of Week

By Teresa Burns
Post Staff Writer

With talent, determination and appeal, Ms. Josie P. Hudley is bound for fame in any endeavor. And nothing can stop her now.

As a sophomore at Bennett College, Ms. Hudley's major is Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in radio, television, broadcast, and drama.

After her graduate work, our beauty would like to abolish black stereotypes in the entertainment industry. "As far as drama is concerned, I plan to start my own studio - teaching music, dance, etc. I would like to teach black kids that they can be more than just pimps or prostitutes on the screen. I'll try to get them out of the black stereotypes of the screen today."

"Most shows show the father has left home and the mother is fat. I'd like to give a taste of the real story," Ms. Hudley continued.

Her philosophy of life (from the Bible) proves

this determination will not be in vain. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

This motivation also helps Ms. Hudley personally, in that she has no professional idol. "I don't like idolizing anyone. I don't want to be like anyone. I want to have my own style and let people remember me for the things I've done."

However, she does have a favorite person. "My mother is my favorite person because through her I see determination. She gives me determination and strength because that's what I see in her," our beauty noted.

The parents of our beauty are Rev. and Mrs. Wilson Mitchell of 2529 Pinestream Dr. in Charlotte.

Indeed, our beauty is filled with not only strength, but also the spunk to participate in worthwhile activities.

In addition to her studies at Bennett College Ms. Hudley is also a peer advisor, helping freshmen with schedules and academic problems; counsels in Pfeiffer Dorm; tutors for high school students; sings in the Gospel and Concert Choir of Bennett College; is a member of the dance group of Bennett College; reports for the Bennett Banner; and is treasurer of Bennett College (theatrical) Players.

Her professional accomplishments expand through many theatrical domains. Ten plays are to her credit, including past leading roles as Lutibelle in "Pearlie"; given by Central Piedmont Summer Theatre and Sally Bowles in West Charlotte's production of "Cabaret".

These past experiences, plus the almost impeccable personality have produced this spiritual beauty. And even though fame is predicted in her life, the following seems to be more important to Ms. Hudley. "We need to unify as a people - both Black and White with God as head."

\$9,034,000 Allocated For Metropolitan Areas

Betsy H. Stafford, North Carolina Area Manager of the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Monday announced the allocation of funds available in North Carolina for the Department's Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program and the Low Rent Public Housing Programs.

The Section 8 Program, authorized by Congress in 1974, provides for payments to property owners on behalf of lower-income families. The payments cover the difference between the market rent of the unit and what the family can afford to pay, which may not exceed 25 percent of their gross income. Assistance can be provided to families living in newly-constructed, substantially rehabilitated, or existing housing units.

The Low Rent Public Housing Program, reauthorized by Congress in 1977, provides the funds to amortize the principle and interest payments on units developed by Local Housing Authorities through the sale of bonds or notes. Low income families can occupy these units by paying no more than 25 percent of their gross income for rent, which is used to defray management and maintenance costs of the Project.

During the next several months local Public Housing Agencies, Public Housing Authorities, private owners, and other interested agencies will be invited to submit proposals for participation in the program.

The total allocation of funds received for North Carolina is \$20,876,000, including \$9,034,000 for metropolitan areas and \$11,842,000 for non-metropolitan areas. Although a number of factors must be considered in converting this dollar allocation into the number of families that could benefit, Mrs. Stafford indicated that the funds could result in the provision of housing assistance payments to approximately 5,100 families in North Carolina.

The allocations of funds available by respective program type, together with estimates of the number of families that could be assisted, are presented below. Mrs. Stafford cautioned that the allocations in no way represent a commitment by HUD to approve specific proposals involving these amounts of contract authority. The selection of proposals will be the result of a competitive process by which only proposals of superior quality will be chosen.

The basis for the allocations to individual geographic areas consists of "fair share" factors, mandated by Congress in the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. Among the factors considered were population, poverty, housing condition, overcrowding, housing shortages, and other indicators of housing deficiencies. In addition, this formula fair share has been adjusted to account for the fact that certain areas in the State

have received more than their share of resources during the past four years. As the result of this adjustment, several areas in North Carolina will not receive an allocation of housing funds this year.

Minimum Wage Increases

The minimum wage, which is now \$2.90 an hour, will rise to \$3.10 on January 1, 1980.

Partial exemptions remain essentially unchanged. Workers in the following categories may still be employed at special subminimum wages - generally 85 percent of the minimum - if the employer obtains the necessary authorization from the Wage-Hour Division: apprentices, learners, handicapped workers, messengers, full-time students (an employer may hire as many as six), etc. Part-time students must be paid \$3.10 per hour.

IF YOU have any employees earning less than \$3.10 an hour, ask your personnel people to advise you whether the new minimum will upset existing pay differentials in lower-level jobs. You may have to make some upward adjustments on several steps of the pay ladder in order to maintain the desired pay structure.

Food Stamp Program May Run Out Of Cash

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The food stamp program will run out of money before the end of this fiscal year, if Congress does not take quick action, according to Department of Agriculture officials.

The program needs two billion additional dollars in order to keep up with the inflation in food prices and the growing participation in the program.

Congress appropriated \$6.2 billion for this fiscal year, which will end next Oct. 1. The Department of Agriculture estimates it will need \$8.3 billion to provide benefits at present levels for the full year.

In order to avert cut backs in the program, which serves 19 million persons, Congress would have to remove the present ceiling on appropriations and provide more funds.

If the Congress does not act to increase funding by the middle of February, Agriculture officials say they will tell the states to cut back benefits by April 1.

It is not likely, however, that the program will simply be terminated for the last four months of the fiscal year.

TURTLE-TALK

Those fortunate enough to escape drowning during the swimming season will now run the risk of skating on thin ice.