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Barnett May PAC In Efforts

By Herb White
Post Staff Writer

Facing the possibility of being in violation of N.C. election law, a Charlotte civil rights activist vows that the organization he leads will continue its work to defeat incumbent Mecklenburg County Commissioner Bob Walton.

James Barnett, chairman of People United for Justice, claimed in a report published in the Charlotte Observer that about 10 persons opposed to Walton had gathered "a few hundred dollars" to work against his bid for a sixth term.



Barnett

Walton, the only black and Democrat on the board, is being challenged for the party's nomination by Nasif Majeed and James Baldwin.

A letter written by Dyrrie Osborne, president of Estate Protection Services, wrote a letter to Mecklenburg Elections Supervisor Bill Culp last month to alert the county to a possible violation by Barnett's group, which numbers about 15.

Calls to Osborne's office were not returned as of press time.

Barnett claimed that his organization is not a PAC and doesn't plan to become one. Their purpose, he insists, is to educate District 2 voters.

"We're not coming out against Bob Walton," he said.

Bill Culp, Mecklenburg's election supervisor, sent a letter to Barnett dated Feb. 3 asking for more information on the group's activities outlined in the Observer's report. Culp asked for names of individuals involved and a listing of financial contributions or expenditures.

According to N.C. law, a PAC is defined as an organization whose purpose is to support or oppose political candidates and raises or spends money to do so.

Barnett has not responded to Culp's request but indications are that he may have formed a PAC.

"I haven't heard from Mr. Barnett as of yet," he said. "We would have reason to believe that according to the article in the Observer, he is forming a PAC."

If Barnett's group is found to be a PAC under N.C. law, the late filing could bring a maximum penalty of \$100, Culp said. If Barnett fails to respond with an organizational campaign report, the board of elections would turn the matter over to the district attorney's office.

"We'll have to make a decision at the appropriate time" if Barnett fails to answer, Culp said.

"If they don't respond, I don't have any alternative but to go to the District Attorney's office."

From his standpoint, Barnett said forming a PAC is counter to what his group wants.

"We don't want to do that," he

See Barnett On Page 2A



Bruce Lightner, Jesse Jackson's North Carolina campaign coordinator, center, announces the opening of the Charlotte headquarters Sunday. Phyllis Lynch, a Jackson fundraiser and former 9th Congressional District coordinator, is third from the left. Cathy

Chapman Hughes, a former Mecklenburg Democratic Party official and the new coordinator, is fourth from the left. The headquarters is in Suite 145 in the Independence Plaza at 700 East Stonewall Avenue.

Photo By Calvin Ferguson

Blacks Don't Know S. Africa Apartheid

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa (AP) -- Pat Robertson says black Americans "don't understand what they're dealing with" in South Africa, and that he won't bash that nation to gain votes for his GOP presidential bid.

Government-run television aired an interview with Robertson on Thursday night in which the former television evangelist complained that South Africa has become a campaign issue in the United States.

"The blacks in this country have made this whole matter into an extension of the United States civil right movement and I think they don't understand what they're dealing with really in this South African thing," Robertson said.

"And so it becomes an American political issue to say, if you want support among American blacks for American political office you have to bash South Africa," he continued. "I think that's bad."

Robertson urged the South African government to exercise moderation in dealing with unrest, so as not to play into the hands of its enemies.

"I think if the government would only realize the press reception, they play into this. The communists want to incite riots and then the oppressive, truncheon-wielding police just give their enemies the fodder they need to hurt them. If they would really begin to use some

See Apartheid's On Page 2A

Black Students Focus Of Program

By Jalyne Strong
Post Staff Writer

On Sunday, February 28, the SCLC of Charlotte is sponsoring a first-of-its-kind event on education.

Titled, "The Making of History Through Children," the event will bring together a coalition of interdenominational churches to address the issue of educating black children in Charlotte.



Seth

Dr. Peter Relic, Superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System will be the keynote speaker for the 6-8 p.m. program to be held at Gethsemane AME Zion Church, 531 Campus St.

Participants in the program will be school children in grades K-12. Youth choirs from area

churches will also be featured. There will be oratorical renditions and art exhibits produced by black school children.

"We will present a living illustration to Relic and, in effect, to the School Board members that we must continue to strive to motivate our youth to excel," said Dr. Rudolph Seth, president of the Charlotte SCLC.

"The program will also allow parents and children the opportunity through an informal setting to express themselves to the Superintendent of schools. They will be able to let him know their fears and hopes in regard to education.

"At the same time, Relic will be able to talk to the youth and parents; set forth his aspirations and the direction he wants to move the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system. To talk about the goals he's set as it relates to our experience," said Seth.

"We think the church is a good setting for this type of interaction. It is an environment where

black people, in particular, are very comfortable in.

"This is probably the first time, Relic and the black church has had the opportunity to share in this type of event," said Seth.

"We ask for community support and attendance. It will be a cross-denominational gathering. Free and open to the public, all segments of the Charlotte community are invited to be active participants," Seth adds.

Several of Charlotte's black churches will be represented at the "The Making of History Through Children" program. Additionally, black elected officials, and political candidates will be in attendance.

Such black community citizens as Arthur Griffin, who's currently running for School Board; Bob Davis, principal of Spauld Middle School; Pearl Robinson, president of Earle Village Community; Rev. Tom-



Relic

mie Davis and Rev. George Battle, pastor of Gethsemane AME Zion are expected to attend.

Reassignment Has Flaws, But Works

By Herb White
Post Staff Writer

The plan is hardly perfect, but the proposed pupil assignment plan for Mecklenburg schools is fair, a school administrator says.

Dr. Bruce Irons, Assistant Superintendent for Planning and Research, said the proposed reassignments would move approximately 2000 students to new schools in the 1988-89 school year and about 2,300 in 1989-90.

The changes, if approved by the school board March 8, would affect 29 schools.

The board will hold a public hearing on the plan next Tuesday.

The four proposed changes would give Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools better racial balance in the 106 existing schools as well as for two new units under construction in the mostly white, fast-growing southeast.

About 1,300 students would be moved to the high school under construction on N.C. 51 in the southern part of the county, Irons said in a Tuesday interview.

The school, scheduled for completion in August, will have about 400 black students, or

nearly 34 percent of the total enrollment.

The plan isn't perfect, Irons said, but short of integrating every neighborhood, the proposals are the best way to racially balance the schools.

"I think they chances are pretty good" that the school board will vote for the plan, he said.

Irons said the changes had

See Reassignment On Page 2A

South's 1st Black Woman Mayor Speaks

Special To The Post
By Eileen Hanson

"Building the New South from the Grass Roots Up" is the challenge that the South's first black woman mayor will bring to Charlotte at this year's International Women's Day celebration.

Geraldine Sawyer, former mayor of McMullen, Alabama, will be the keynote speaker at the Woman of the Year Awards Luncheon on March 5th, part of a two-day conference to be held at UNC-Charlotte's Cone Center. Children of the Sun Choir will also appear at the luncheon, which will celebrate the contributions of women working to improve life in our community.

Sponsored by the UNCC Women's Studies Program and International Women's Day Committee, the conference is open to the public and will be interpreted for the hearing impaired. All activities will be held in Cone Center, which is wheelchair accessible. Luncheon reservations must be made by Friday Noon, February 26 by calling 547-4312 (daytime hours).

Mayor Sawyer, a voting rights activist in the Alabama Black Belt for many years, will discuss the role of women in the struggles for political power of the



Sawyer

formerly disenfranchised people of the South. Her remarks will also focus on the importance of "Super Tuesday" (March 8th), when the whole world will be looking at the South.

"It's people at the grass roots who are making real changes, and women are playing a significant role because we carry the load," said Sawyer. "We are fighting for basic things--water, sewers, jobs--we don't have these in the Black Belt. We are fighting for political power."

The annual "Woman of the Year" award will be presented to a woman who has been actively working to improve life in our community, but who has not been previously recognized.

The two-day conference begins Friday evening, March 4, with a play, "Lillian", performed by Nancy Nixon, based on the life and writings of Lillian Hellman, a writer and fighter for civil liberties in the 1950's. The play begins at 7:30 pm and is free to the public.

Saturday's conference begins at 9:00 am at Cone Center and continues through 5:00 pm, with a variety of workshops, films, panels and exhibits. The conference is approved for recertification credits by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and will be of special interest to teachers.

Dr. Margaret Smith and Kathryn Frye will share the opening session on "The Politics of History: Recovering Women from the Past".

Conference participants can choose from among over a dozen workshops on issues of Electoral Politics, Language and Gender, Sexual Assault and Victimization of Woman, Teachers Unions and Organizations, Sup-

er Tuesday and the South, Peace and Feminism, and the Political History of Women in Charlotte.

Several films will be shown, including "Finding a Common History: Women in Charlotte," "Global Assembly Line" and "Mandela" (about South Africa leader Nelson Mandela).

Throughout the conference, participants may browse among information tables by community and women's groups, and view a special art exhibit, "Light Passages", by Jennifer Adams.

A closing reception will honor the day's speakers and a Woman of the Year. Among those nominated for the award are: Lyndall Hare, Mary Wannamaker, Daisy Alexander, Shirley Rodgers, Ruth Dickens Bowen, Sarah Henderson, Mary Oma Carter, Dorothy Cousar, Bernadette Parker, Mildred Taylor, Joyce Waddell, Rita Arundell, Sally Thomas and Ann Newman.

Registration for the conference is \$10 (includes the luncheon) and scholarships are available. Child care is available and must be requested by Feb. 26. For reservations and information, call 547-4312 daytime.

Inside This Week	
Editorials.....	6A
Religion: a non-issue	
In District 2 Race.....	7A
Lifestyles.....	9A
Church News....	10A
Dr. J.B. Humphrey honored for service.....	11A
Entertainment.....	1B
The Charlotte Post & FDY's successful gathering.....	6B
Sports.....	10B
WPCQ welcomes new Sports Director.....	11B
Classifieds....	16B