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The Charlotte Post

"The Voice Of The Black Community"

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Reagan Expected To Fight Minimum Wage Raise

By Chester Higgins Sr.
NNPA News Writer

By a voice vote, the 35-member House Labor and Education Committee passed a bill that will raise the minimum wage from the present \$3.50, in incremental stages, to a maximum of \$5.05 an hour by the year 1991. However, Committee Chairman Augustus Hawkins, a 25-year Hill veteran, declared, "this is no panacea. It won't get the 15 million -- one million Blacks -- out of poverty. It will merely keep them from starving to death."

He predicted full House passage of the bill after a Mid-April session. He also predicted Senate passage of a similar measure and that the two branches of Congress will iron out differences in a joint conference and send the bill to President Ronald Reagan for passage.

Reagan, however, has threatened to veto the measure and Cong. Hawkins during a lengthy interview with the NNPA in his Capitol Hill offices in the Rayburn Building, worried that "it is not at all certain that we have the votes to override him."

Congress does have the votes to override Reagan's recent veto of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, he said. This bill was passed overwhelmingly by congress and is designed to undo much of the adverse effects of the Supreme Court's 1984 decision in the Grove City College (Pa.) v. Bell decision. This decision narrowed the scope of the historic civil rights bills so drastically that civil rights leaders have been chafing under the restrictions ever since. (Grove City simply permits divisions within an institution that are not re-

ceiving federal funds to discriminate with impunity).

Hawkins' committee is almost equally divided between Democrats and Republicans-- 23 Democrats; 22 Republicans. "So we have a tight battle on every issue," he said. "We simply cannot afford to lose over three or four Democrats on any issue or it is doomed."

He said a powerful U.S. Chamber of Commerce lobby is opposed to raising minimum wages. "And when you have a

President in the White House who also opposes it, it is difficult to get a lot of Republicans to buck him."

Minimum hourly wages have not been raised since 1981. In the interim, the cost of living has shot up 30 per cent, eroding basic wages by a similar 30 per cent. This has been due to inflation, Hawkins points out.

In another incident, Hawkins assailed a reported statement by Bruce M. Carnes, a deputy undersecretary for planning, budget and evaluation of the

Dept. of Education. Carnes was quoted in the Wall Street Journal criticizing student bodies of Black colleges as perhaps containing "a high level of thieves" in student loan defaults.

Hawkins asserted that Carnes' racist remarks should warrant his dismissal if he refused to resign, adding Carnes should also apologize to all Black students "he has so outrageously offended" and that Carnes' remark "is repulsive to me personally and an affront all to college students in this nation."

Griffin Supports Mid-Point Schools Concept

By Herb White
Post Staff Writer

Arthur Griffin has gone back to the future with proposals for Mecklenburg County schools.

And this time, he feels the public is ready.

Griffin, a candidate for the county school board and an early proponent of mid-point schools between white and black communities, said it's ironic that others are just beginning to embrace the idea today.

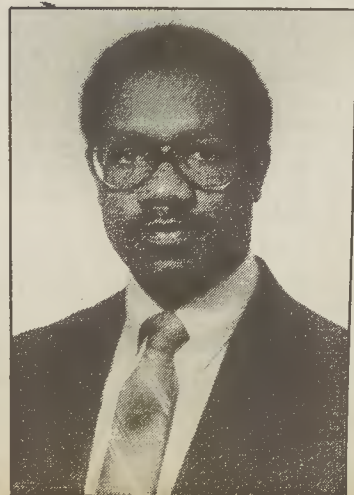
"At the time, no one was interested," he said. "Today, it's a popular word."

Griffin, who spoke at a Friday press conference at McDonald's cafeteria, called for a closer examination of school curriculum and pupil assignment.

He noted that this year's school board election is the most important since 1972. That year, pupil assignment was the hot topic. In 1988, pupil assignment is joined by concerns over what students learn at the end of the bus ride.

"In addition to busing, there will be the issue of quality of education," Griffin said. "For 1988, that will be an equally important issue. Busing isn't the only issue and it's not the most important issue. I think we need to focus on improving the quality of education."

This year's kindergarten class, which will graduate high school in the year 2000, is important to the future of local education, Griffin says. This election will



Griffin

determine the type of education they will receive.

"It's mind-boggling to think that we hold their future in our hands," he said.

Griffin outlined several reforms for the school system, including a comprehensive computer curriculum for K-12 and a competency-based course of study.

Noting that 220 kindergartners were retained last year for unsatisfactory progress, Griffin said a competency-based curriculum could spot students' trouble areas where remedial help could improve their grades.

Griffin's proposal would call for students to be promoted based on their mastery of skills

in basic subjects rather than results of the California Achievement Test.

"It's something that's absolutely necessary," he said. "We had 4,500 students retained last year, but we had no curriculum strategy to help them improve. A

competency-based curriculum will help us get where we want to be in academic excellence."

As for the busing controversy, Griffin again mentioned a past proposal--freezing the number

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Cosby Makes Second Donation To Shaw U.

RALEIGH (AP) ---Entertainer Bill Cosby has made a second financial commitment to Shaw University and the money will be used for construction, the university's president says.

"He made a commitment to me," said Talbert Shaw, who became president in November during troubled economic times at the school. "In two years something very dramatic will take place at Shaw University, and the city will be very proud of it."

Shaw would not give details Thursday of the new donation from Cosby, who gave the school \$325,000 in December.

In an interview with The News & Observer of Raleigh, Shaw said he met with Cosby in Manhattan last week and that the two had agreed to meet again before revealing details of the entertainer's gift, possibly in about a month.

In a speech to the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Shaw said the donation was evidence of the school's mounting



Cosby

stability and credibility 18 months after a financial crisis threatened to close the doors of the nation's oldest predominantly black university.

Today the university is in a seven-year, \$40-million fund drive, and is debt-free except for normal bond obligations for dormitories, Shaw said.

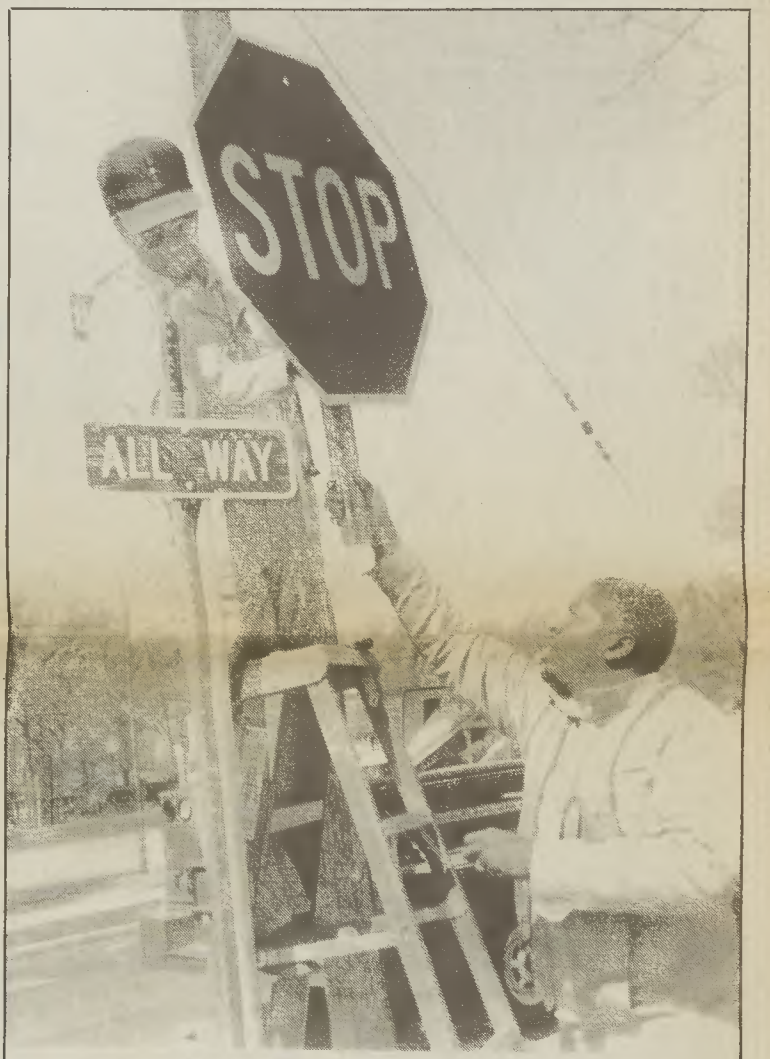


Photo By Calvin Ferguson Jr.

The corner of Baxter and Baldwin streets in the Cherry community recently received directions on how to avoid an accident thanks to the work of Bill Simpson and Maurice Grant, employees of the Transportation Department of the City of Charlotte.

UNC-CH Doubles Efforts To Find Black Faculty

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) --- The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill appears ready to enroll more black students this fall, but the university must redouble its efforts to attract black faculty, Chancellor Christopher Fordham said Friday.

Fordham cited statistics that showed the number of black faculty had dropped from 50 professors in 1984 to 48 in 1987. He said UNC-Chapel Hill still compared well with other schools in its number of black faculty.

"But we don't have as many as we ought to have," he said during an address at a regular meeting of the UNC-Chapel Hill Faculty Council. He urged search committees looking for new professors to consider more black candidates.

Fordham said after the meeting that he had discussed these matters Thursday with a black student leader who had said earlier that UNC-Chapel Hill administrators were not doing enough for black students.

Kenneth M. Perry, president of the Black Student Movement, had said that if UNC-Chapel Hill leaders didn't respond to him by Friday, then he would call a meeting of students to discuss implementing a plan that would show administrators the frustration black students felt.

Perry told reporters Tuesday that he was upset that no administrators had contacted him after he held a news conference March 1. At that time he cited statistics that indicated a smaller percentage of black students are graduating than whites.

Fordham told the News and Observer of Raleigh Friday that he had discussed with Perry the administration's efforts to improve the graduation rate. "I didn't want him to believe no one cared," Fordham said.

Almost all of this year's black freshmen had returned to UNC-Chapel Hill this spring --- an improvement over past years, Fordham said.

Rev. Lee Will Receive Humanitarian Award

Special To The Post

The first annual Lem Long Jr. Humanitarian Awards Banquet will be held Friday, April 8, 7 p.m., at McDonald's Cafeteria, Beatties Ford Rd.

Many of North Carolina's most distinguished citizens gathered last year to honor Dr. Lem Long Jr., one of Charlotte's finest black businessmen with a record of over 30 years of successful entrepreneurship and service to others. Because of the overwhelming support, it was determined that this event would be an annual affair.

Each year someone in the Charlotte community is recognized and receives the Lem Long Jr. Humanitarian Award for his or her contribution and efforts towards improving the quality of life of the citizens of the Charlotte community.

Rev. Dr. William Lee Jr., pastor of Silver Mount Baptist Church, Pineville, NC, is the 1988 honoree. A native of Charlotte, Dr. Lee is known among his colleagues and the community as a "true humanitarian."

His quest for serving others is broad in scope, reaching far beyond the walls of the church into the lives of the homeless, the lives of young ministers, the hopeless and the lives of those who had the desire to further their education but had no financial means to do so.

Dr. Lee's leadership and service to mankind has touched the fabric of the community as well as the state of North Carolina.

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Southeast Is Nation's "Stroke Belt"

BY ERICA JOHNSTON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

RALEIGH (AP) --- Backed by a \$1.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, researchers are interviewing about 2,000 Pitt County black adults in an effort to piece together factors that lead to hypertension and the sicknesses it can trigger.

"There is something about socio-economic status that is very strongly related to risks for hypertension," said Sherman James, a professor of epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "Pitt County is developing at a fairly fast pace. It is a place where we can probably find the socio-



Rev. Lee

Dr. Lee's leadership and service to mankind has touched the fabric of the community as well as the state of North Carolina.

economic diversity among the black population that we need to understand what it is about poverty ... that speaks to the question of hypertension in the black community."

James, who is the project's principal investigator, said the Coastal Plain regions of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia form the "stroke belt," with the highest death rates from stroke in the country.

The study focuses on blacks because they are far more likely than whites to have high blood pressure, said James, who is the project's principal investigator.

Blacks Seek Equitable Iredell Elections

STATESVILLE, N.C. (AP) --- The chairman of the Iredell County Board of Commissioners has agreed to meet with black community leaders to discuss the possibility of changing how county commissioners are elected.

Larry S. Hedrick, the board's chairman, agreed to the meeting Tuesday after repeated requests from Willie M. Williams, a black community activist and a member of the Statesville City Council.

"We want to get this thing moving again," Williams told the Board of Commissioners. "It seems to be moving so slow."

A study for the commissioner last year said that the county could be divided into nine voting districts.

Williams said that a system of voting by districts would be more equitable than the at-large system now used.

No blacks have been elected to

the seven-member board of commissioners under the at-large system.

Hedrick, the only board member who spoke in response to Williams' request, said that a nine-member board would be too large to function well.

However, he said that he is willing to discuss a district system with Williams.

"It's not something that is going to be prolonged or put off," Hedrick said.

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