



JCSU's Mary L. Belk
Early Education Center's Exclusive
Teaching For Tots

Lifestyles/ Page 13A

Corbett Claims Olympics Snubbed MEAC

Sports/ Page 8B

It's Almost Hampton JazzTime

Entertainment/ Page 1B

The Charlotte Post

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Black Caucus Splinters, New Black PACs Emerge

Black Citizens Agenda, Ministers Conference No. 2: PACs Formed This Month

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

Mecklenburg County's roster of political action committees grew last week with the formation of two black-controlled PACs.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Ministerial Conference No. 2 and the Black Citizens Agenda, which have endorsed county commissioner Bob Walton in his reelection bid against challenger Nasif Majeed, filed with the Mecklenburg Board of Elections as political action committees.

According to state law, any organization trying to affect the outcome of a political race by raising or spending money is subject to filing as a PAC. Committees or organizations that don't transfer funds but use other methods, such as distributing information are liable as well.

Bill Culp, the elections supervisor, said the organizations filed as protests mounted over the activities of some organizations.

"This has been precipitated by a series of complaints," he said. "We don't go around trying to make people file unless we get complaints."

Majeed supporters have charged that the Black Citizens Agenda is a splinter group of Walton followers who bolted the Black Political Caucus, another PAC, after it endorsed Majeed in the Democratic primary.

The BCA endorsed its own slate of candidates, including Walton, in the primary election and handed out flyers at some polls.

Walton said in an interview Tuesday he has no knowledge of the organization and blasted Majeed for trying to link him to it.

"If there were some citizens passing out papers, Mr. Majeed should have some type of documentation," he said.

Walton said he has no idea



Rev. James Palmer
...President of Ministers' PAC

who the members of BCA are but supports their right to support the candidates of their choice.

"I can't tell you that I know the people who are responsible (for handing out endorsements)," he said. "I don't have any affiliations with that group...I assume that there will be some accountability."

In papers filed May 3, Clara Williams, secretary of BCA, filed organizational papers with the elections board establishing the organization as a political committee.

The written purpose of the committee, the report stated, is to "support black candidates in elections."

"I was really quite concerned that candidates were not being endorsed," Williams said during a brief interview Tuesday. She declined to discuss the PAC further, citing the threat of a thunderstorm that made it difficult for her to go on.

"I'd love to talk to you, but I don't like to talk during a storm," she said. "Let me have your number and I'll call you tomorrow."

The call was not returned. The Rev. James Palmer, pastor

of University Park Baptist Church, filed a report May 5 as president of the ministerial conference and listed Wilch Caldwell of Faith Memorial Baptist Church as treasurer.

Neither were available for comment before press time.

Culp said there have been other black-oriented PACs before, notably the Black United Forum and the Black Political Caucus.

BUF is on file with the state elections board in Raleigh as a political committee, Culp said, but the Black Political Caucus is delinquent in filing with Mecklenburg.

"They came down (May 2) to pick up papers, but they didn't file," he said.

As a result, the elections board will report the committee to the state for failing to file as a political committee, which can carry a fine of up to \$100.

Bob Davis, president of the caucus, said the organization may not fall under the guidelines for PACs and will wait for a ruling from the elections board.

"We're not sure we're a PAC," he said. "We don't sponsor candidates, we just endorse them. We need a ruling from Bill Culp to decide whether we are a PAC and then we'll vote on whether we want to go that route."

Gantt Gives Challenge To Grads

ORANGEBURG, S.C. (AP) --- Former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt last Sunday told about 700 South Carolina State College graduates that he had very high expectations for them because of their alma mater.

"The name, South Carolina State College, is revered because much of the leadership cadre for black South Carolina came from this university," Gantt said.

"You young men and women who graduate today then join a line of special citizens," he said. "I hope your new status as State graduates will generate pride for you."

Gantt, who was the first black to enroll at Clemson University, said he saw in the graduates a vital force ready to bring fresh ideas to old problems.

"I see an educated gentry that can challenge age-old concepts," he said.

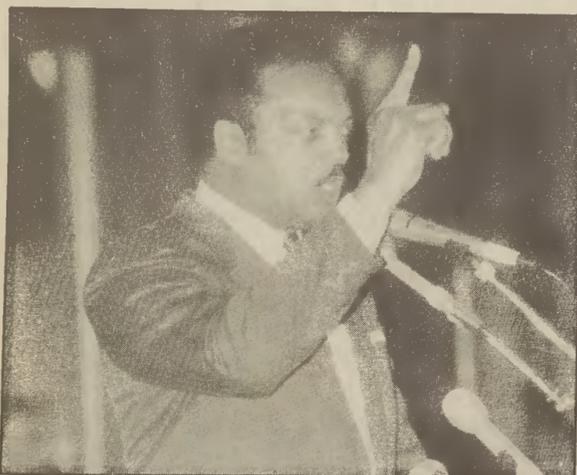
Gantt explained that though many blacks are on the rise in society, they are living in the worst of times as well as the best.

"There's a fire burning out of control across America," he said. People are becoming mired in hopelessness. This is the second America, and unfortunately it is proportionally black."

Following Gantt's speech, the college conferred honorary degrees on Lt. Gen. Henry Doctor Jr., Ruby Forsyth, U.S. Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, and M. Maceo Nance Jr.

Sammy Davis Jr. and U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond were absent from the commencement and will receive honorary degrees later.

Despite student protest during the past two weeks about the granting of honorary degrees to Thurmond and Hollings, things went smoothly Sunday during commencement exercises as Hollings received a Doctor of Laws. Protesting students had been expected to walk out of Dawson Bulldog Stadium, but all remained seated.



Jesse Jackson

Record 15,000 Cheer Jackson At N.C. A&T

Special To The Post
By Richard E. Moore

GREENSBORO, N.C. - By the time the Rev. Jesse Jackson stepped briskly onto the stage in the huge Greensboro Coliseum last Sunday morning the audience of 15,000 was ready for him.

They cheered him upon his entrance, and punctuated his 20-minute talk with constant clapping as he lambasted his political opponents or anyone else who would tend to keep blacks down.

By the time he gave his familiar "thumbs up" sign, the 900 graduates, parents and friends were standing and cheering with unrestrained enthusiasm.

That was the scene at A&T State University's 97th annual commencement, and Jackson

was at his oratorical best.

"When I'm running for President," he said, "I'm just acting out my lessons." That was a reference to what Jackson said he learned more than 20 years ago as a student at A&T. He said his candidacy should be an inspiration to other blacks to enter the political process at the highest levels.

"It's not enough to say 'run, Jesse, run,'" he said. "If I can run for President, surely you can run for governor. If I can run for President, surely you can run for senator. If I can run for President, surely you can run for attorney general."

Jackson added that by his candidacy, he is "taking the lid off dreams. There are no more

See JACKSON on page 2A.



Nasif Majeed makes a point during last week's press conference.

Candidates Trade Barbs

By HERB WHITE
Post Staff Writer

If this week's comments by District 2 county commission candidates Bob Walton and Nasif Majeed are an indication of how the campaign will turn, break out the foxholes and head for shelter.

With less than three weeks to go before the May 31 runoff election, the campaign fires got a couple of logs heaped on as Walton and Majeed traded barbs.

Majeed opened with a scathing attack of Walton's performance and morals at a Tuesday press conference, calling the 10-year incumbent "morally bankrupt."

"Bob let me tell you one thing,"

Majeed said. "With almighty God's help, I would rather be personally bankrupt any day than morally bankrupt as you are."

Walton said he wouldn't respond to Majeed's statements in a Tuesday interview, but retaliated by saying the challenger is being led by advisors who are using "underhanded tactics" and misinformation to oust him from office.

In offering his harshest criticism of Walton to date, Majeed said he had used a lot of discipline to stay away from negative campaigning before the May 3 primary. He said it would've been easy enough to blast Walton then, but he preferred to

stick to the high ground.

"If I were not concerned with the long range well-being of the citizens of Mecklenburg County, I could have made many truthful statements about my opponent that could have personally satisfied me but it is out of my character to make even those statements," Majeed said. "I wanted to win, but not at that price."

The charges didn't stop there. Majeed lit into Walton for allegedly endorsing county district representation but going for a "safe seat" in District 2 seat instead of running at-large.

"Was Hob looking out for the

See WALTON on page 2A.

Black Firms Face Restructuring

NEW YORK (AP) --- The nation's largest black-owned companies are restructuring to face competition and an uncertain economy, according to a new survey released Monday by Black Enterprise magazine.

The magazine's latest annual survey of the top 100 black industrial and service companies shows that, like many U.S. companies in general, leading black businesses are exploring new approaches in order to be competitive.

Many black companies have grown recently through mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, new technology and marketing approaches, and branching out into new industries, said the survey in the magazine's June issue.

Taken together, the top 100 companies ranked in the survey had gross revenues of \$4.1 billion in 1987. All but one of them are privately owned.

The competition was fierce enough last year to force into bankruptcy three companies formerly on the list: United Chem-Con, an electronics manufacturer and defense contractor; hair-care products maker American Beauty Products; and oil products distributor J.R. Son Inc.

The survey points to black-owned computer and information services companies, con-

struction firms, hair-care products makers and car dealerships as especially successful categories.

The biggest and fastest-growing black company is TLC Beatrice International Holdings Inc., a food manufacturer and distributor formed from the \$985 million leveraged buyout of Beatrice International. In a leveraged buyout, the acquirer finances the purchase of the target company with sales of its assets or the cash flow of the target company.

New York-based TLC Beatrice, headed by Wall Street attorney Reginald F. Lewis, was the first black company to make more than \$1 billion in annual sales and reported revenue of \$1.8 billion in 1987.

The company's 61 businesses include Butterball turkeys and Good Humor ice cream.

The buyout of Beatrice "places Lewis on the cutting edge of corporate finance and gives him access to Europe, Latin America and Asia, three of the world's fastest-growing markets," the Black Enterprise survey says.

Other black entrepreneurs --- such as Gary L. White of Trans Jones Inc.-Jones Transfer Co. and C. Everett Wallace of City & Suburban Distributors Inc. --- have used leveraged buyouts to propel their companies into the top 100.

The second-ranked company

privately owned.

The list includes the company, its headquarters city, line of business and 1987 revenues:

1. TLC Beatrice International Holdings Inc., New York, processing and distribution of food products, \$1.8 billion.

2. Johnson Publishing Co. Inc., Chicago, publishing, broadcasting, cosmetics and hair-care products, \$201.6 million.

3. Philadelphia Coca-Cola Bot-

See NATION'S on page 3A.

Nation's Top Black Firms

Inside This Week	
Editorials.....Pg. 6A	Entertainment....Pg. 1B
Is the power of the black church being usurped?	Jahruha Allsbrook to host TROPICAL BEAT on WFAE.....2B
Lifestyles.....Pg. 8A	Sports.....Pg. 8B
Church News.....Pg. 9A	The life of Jackie Robinson goes on tour. The exhibit's now in Atlanta
Albert Outing Will Give Trial Sermon at Second Calvary Baptist	Classifieds.....Pg. 14B
Subscribe to the Charlotte Post, call 376-0496.	
Salute To Local Grads Don't Miss It! Next Week In The Charlotte Post	

Urban League Mobilization Town Meeting

There have been four town meetings scheduled geographically around the city, as a result of the Urban League's Education Initiative Task Force Report.

These town meetings will be coordinated by Ron Leeper.

They are designed to get the black community involved in the education of black youth.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 12th, at Antioch Baptist Church, 232 Skyland Avenue, 7:00 p.m.

For additional information contact Ron Leeper at 525-7926.