

Camp Greene Officer Charges Discrimination, Harassment

By **HERB WHITE**
Post Staff Writer

A suspended officer at a Charlotte correctional facility says the unit discriminates against blacks, often refusing them jobs in favor of whites with inferior credentials.

Warren Smith, an employee at Camp Greene for five years and seven other officers filed a complaint with the state in January contending that officials pass over blacks in favor of whites despite their qualifications.

Smith contends that since Baxter Bridges was appointed superintendent in 1986, qualified blacks have been passed over in favor of whites with fewer credentials.

Statistics obtained by The Charlotte Post show that one month before Bridges got to Camp Greene, 14 of the unit's 20 officers were black. As of last month, 11 of 30 were black.

A receptionist at Camp Greene Monday said Bridges was on vacation and couldn't be reached for comment.

Smith, who said he was suspended and recommended for firing last month for sleeping, is scheduled to meet with the Office of Administrative Hearings.

A narcoleptic, Smith, 41, has trouble staying awake at night, but requested a night shift in hopes of avoiding the politics and harassment he encountered during the day. After realizing he couldn't stay awake throughout the night, Smith re-

quested reassignment to an earlier shift. Bridges refused and suspended him when he was found asleep Aug. 15.

"I told them in May about my condition, but they wouldn't listen," Smith said. A white officer was caught napping as well, but he received only a reprimand, Smith said.

The charges of discrimination started long before last month. Smith applied for three positions during Bridges's tenure and was passed over each time for dubious reasons.

At one point, Smith was told by corrections officials that he failed a test that was necessary for a position he wanted. Records of the results show that Smith passed, but a white who scored seven points lower got the job.

It's common, Smith charges, for blacks with more education and custody experience to be denied positions.

"It's like to get ahead, you have to be twice as good and twice as smart," he said.

Smith claims the suspension is a result of Bridges's campaign to reduce the number of black personnel.

"He had a white agenda," he said. "His agenda is not only to get rid of blacks, but anyone who came in under (former superintendent Robert) Reese."

While Reese, a black, headed the unit, Camp Greene had high morale and the officers and superintendent worked as a group, Smith contends. That has changed now, with workers fearful of losing their jobs.

"Morale is next to nothing," he said. "The white guys see what's going on with us and they see they might be next."

Of the eight officers named as plaintiffs in the January complaint, four have resigned or been fired, Smith said. Those who haven't left are constantly followed at work, which Smith said led to his suspension.

"It's not just one incident. It's a lot of little incidents," he said.

Leroy Foster, a former officer, declined to say much about his experience at the camp.

"I'm not saying it was the best work situation, but I'm trying to distance myself from it," he said.

Smith questioned Bridges's qualifications to be superintendent, charging that he doesn't have the experience to run the

unit. "The man has no degree, no custody experience and no supervisory experience, yet he gets a job over guys who have college degrees and custody experience," he said. "Although some have accused him of being a troublemaker,

Smith said it's important that someone stand up.

"Our complaint's legit," he said. "Keeping quiet doesn't change anything."

Smith said his main concern is to avoid being part of a system that discriminates against blacks who work hard but re-

ceive little compensation.

"My parents worked for the state, my father worked 33 years and my mother worked for 30 and they never got a promotion," he said. "That's 63 years without a promotion and I'll be damned if it'll happen to me."

MED Week Lauds Minority Businesses

Continued from page 1A.
Chapel Hill majoring in Radio, Television, and Motion Pictures. Her career path led her to WPCQ in April, 1988.

Keynote speaker for the luncheon will be Dr. Solomon W. Walker II, Chief Executive Office of Pilgrim Health and Life Insurance Company in Atlanta, Ga.

Dr. Walker is a graduate of Morehouse College in Atlanta and also a graduate of the National Insurance Association School in Life Insurance Management and was awarded a fellowship to Stanford University's Executive Program.

Beginning as a Sales Agent in 1958, Dr. Walker was promoted to Sales Manager, Vice President, Accountant, Vice Presi-

dent, Secretary-Treasurer, Executive Vice President, Finance, and finally in November 1980, Chief Executive Officer and Board Chairman.

He was appointed by Georgia Governor Joe Frank Harris as Chairman of the State's Small and Minority Business Advisory Board. He was also the recipient of the 1983 State and National Minority Advocate of the Year Award.

Activities for the remainder of the week include the Carolina Minority Supplier Development Council's Business Expo, Thursday, September 29, at the Charlotte Convention Center; a MED Week reception on Friday, September 30; and the Minority Business Reaffirmation, involving 103 churches throughout the area on Sunday, October 2.

Cab Rules

Continued from page 1A.
eling. The addition of this requirement is just too much."

Howard is certain that this move would provide city-wide control to those few who can afford the fees, the big cab companies.

"With 98 per cent of the drivers being black, there is just a pattern of abuse with this proposal," says co-vice president, Victor Nwaguma.

He says he wants to rely on the good judgement of council members like Ella Scarborough, who are aware of the situation.

Scarborough commented that she was aware of the upcoming meeting regarding this matter. But when asked for a statement, she deferred until after she had looked at the council's response to the study.

She did say, however, "I'm not in favor of giving exclusive rights to any one group. That just doesn't seem right to me."

Howard says, "We are determined to fight this thing. We get the Ramesses thing and the new Coliseum, a NBA franchise and now they want us to go run and hide. There's a bonanza in all this and we want our fare share of the action."

Nathaniel Moore, a co-vice president agreed with Howard. He says, "We've done our part and now they want to hand us this bill. Well, we just don't want it and if there's anything to be said about it, we're not going to take it."

Black Votes

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number will grow if eligible voters stay home in November.

City councilman Charlie Dannelly said blacks may feel their votes don't count, but not participating is worse.

"Even a second-grader knows that zero plus zero plus zero is zero but he also knows that one plus one equals three," he said. "If you don't vote you don't count because zero doesn't count."

In addition to Richardson and Dannelly, other officials gathered included councilwoman Ella Scarborough, Reps. Howard Barnhill and Pete Cunningham and school board member Arthur Griffin. They outlined recent achievements and concerns in addition to answering voters' concerns during a question and answer session. Confidence in officials, especially over past behavior, was a topic seemingly aimed at the recent commissioners' race between Bob Walton and Nasif Majeed.

Walton, who served a two-week sentence last year for misdemeanor assault, said justice was served and the voters had enough confidence in him to justify his win over Majeed.

"One of the great things about this country is that we live under a nation of laws," he said. "As long as people live within the law, then that's the important thing we have to keep in mind."

Charlotte's proposed \$183 million bond referendum was a topic of debate, with Dannelly voicing concern that taxes would likely be raised for future bonds if the referendum passes.

Some westside leaders, who are considering open opposition to the referendum, feel the bonds don't address the needs of their area while about \$77 million would go to road improvements in the southeast.

People On The Move



Lattimore Is Health Ctr. Dir.

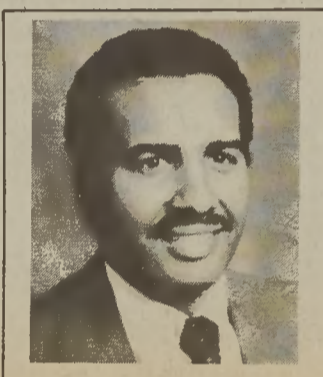
Dr. Vergel L. Lattimore has been appointed Director of Rehabilitation Services at the Syracuse Community Health Center, Inc. In this position, he will be responsible for directing the Outpatient Alcoholism Services and Individual and Family Services units of the Health Center.

A native of Charlotte, Dr. Lattimore received his bachelors degree in Social Welfare from Livingstone College, Salisbury, NC and was awarded a Masters of Divinity from Duke University Divinity School. He holds a Ph.D. in Pastoral Psychology from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.

Dr. Lattimore has previously worked as a Core Staff Pastoral Counselor/Area Coordinator, for the Onondaga Pastoral Counseling Center. He was Assistant Dean, Office of Minority Affairs, at Duke University and served as Resident Director and Minority Student Advisor at Kendall Col-

lege in Evanston. He has written articles on organizing mental health services in the black community and on pastoral counseling and black cultural values.

He is married to the former Joy R. Powell and they have two sons.



Dyer Is New Mngr. At Sears

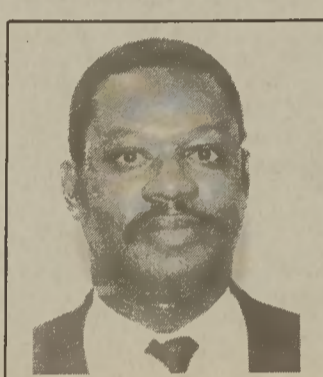
Volle E. Dyer is the new manager of Sears Charlotte-Eastland store. The announcement was made by Bernie Namie, general manager of Sears Greensboro Region stores.

Dyer comes to Charlotte from Sears Burlington, NC, store, where he had been manager since 1980. He was store manager of the company's Shelby store from 1978 to 1980.

A native of Little Rock, Ark., Dyer previously held various management positions in Sears stores in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas, as well as in the company's Greensboro regional offices. He began working

for Sears in 1969.

Dyer has a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He and his wife, Mae, have two children.



Baker Holds State Position

Lattie Baker Jr. works as the assistant secretary for substance abuse programs for the North Carolina Department of Correction, coordinating drug abuse programs throughout the department.

Baker, who has served under three governors, was the assistant secretary for programs and development in the Correction Department from March 1984 to August 1987. Two years earlier, he was the manager of the youth command for the Division of Prisons in Raleigh.

Baker received a bachelor degree in history and social studies from St. Augustine's College, Raleigh, in 1965. He took graduate courses in counseling at N.C. State University.

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