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REGIONAL

Texaco franchisee fights within system

By Brian Powe
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — An African owner of a Texaco franchise in Salisbury says that instead of letting the recent slanderous remarks make by Texaco officials cripple him, he has plans to make more power moves from inside the company than running away from it.

Aggrey Achi, who has owned

the franchise for the past five years, said, "I was taught one fights authority from the inside rather than the outside. This situation has sparked me to invest more in Texaco, earn more shares, rather than backing up and getting out the business."

Achi, a native of Nigeria, believes that his business may have suffered a little bit from the recent boycott of Texaco

called by Jesse Jackson.

"When I first heard about the incidents, I thought it was pretty unfair," Achi said, "And furthermore, it was unacceptable."

"But instead of everyone acting so hastily about the matter, I would have liked to hear how the president or the chairman of Texaco responded to the incidents first. It seems we did not give him time enough

to comment about the case."

Achi isn't just satisfied with the ceasing of the boycott. He wants to develop a greater business sense, so that other entrepreneurs like himself can avoid future racial comments against people of color.

"This event awakened me to a who new dimension. I have three boys, and I must teach them to always fight from the

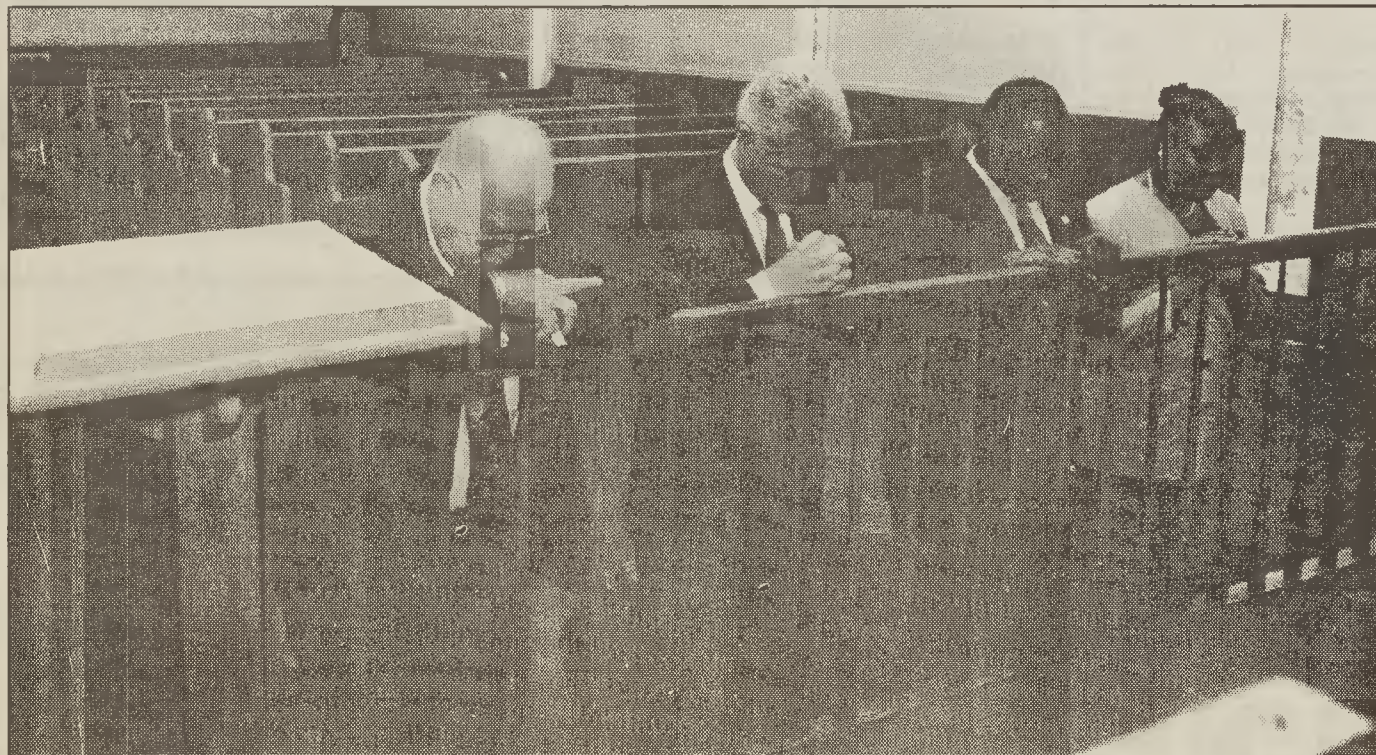
inside an unjust situation," he said. "It does not do any of us any good to stand on the sideline and try to make decisions. If we own more shares and control our own assets withing the company, we can eliminate any future segregating comments."

Achi, who arrived in America over a decade ago at the Los Angeles Airport with only \$50

in his pocket, speaks as one who has fought many battles.

"As people of color in America we must reinvest. We should buy more from any gas network from Texaco, to Sunoco, to Amoco, and many others," he said. "If we would use our potential with money more effectively we would not

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WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

Some of the most newsworthy regional events of 1996 include President Clinton praying with members of a South Carolina church (above) after their sanctuary was burned. Black churches, especially in the South, were the target of vandalism and arson, some of it racially motivated



WHITE HOUSE PHOTO

A look back at the year in pictures

Concord's Barber-Scotia College got on the road to recovery, reducing its debt to a manageable level and being removed from probationary status by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Barber-Scotia also solidified its once-tenuous leadership with the hiring of Sammie Potts as president (second photo)

Operation PUSH leader the Rev. Willie Barrow was keynote speaker at New Home AME Zion Church in York, S.C. Barrow spoke during a concert that helped New Home's food bank solicit donations. The food bank opened in November to help feed York County's needy. In addition to Barrow, several musical groups performed, including Voices of Youth Praises Choir and Beiz Group.



PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON

MLK killer out of coma in Tennessee

By Add Seymour Jr.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Convicted assassin James Earl Ray remains in serious condition after regaining consciousness last week and joking about alcohol and women.

"We talked about things like bringing some alcohol up to his room and getting him drunk," said his brother Jerry Ray.

"We also talked about a woman that's crazy about him and sneaking her up there, too," said his attorney Andrew Hall.

Ray, 68, the convicted killer of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., was admitted to Columbia Nashville Memorial Hospital on Saturday. He suffers from liver and kidney damage.

He was upgraded from critical to serious condition on Thursday, said Cheryl Goforth, chief operating officer at the hospital.

"It is still serious, but he seems to be more stable," she said. She wouldn't comment further.

Jerry Ray said his brother couldn't finish entire sentences, but he was "100 percent better" than he had been doing.

"He's in a good mood, laughing with a big grin, and I figure if he's in a good mood, he should stay in a good mood."

"But I don't get my hopes up because I know he could go right back to the way he was before," he said.

Jerry Ray said the change isn't really a turnaround because doctors have told him that his brother would be drifting in and out of consciousness.

He wasn't able to finish sentences, but Jerry Ray said his brother smiled at jokes about bringing alcohol and a woman to his hospital room.

He didn't talk with his brother about anything serious, but said doctors have given his brother only a 10 percent chance of survival, even if they perform surgery.

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Livingstone, Hood prep for annual week of prayer

By Brian Powe
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

SALISBURY — Livingstone College Campus Minister says the upcoming Annual Week of Prayer hopes to help freshmen students set their priorities by "seeking first the Kingdom of God."

Livingstone and Hood Seminary are sponsoring the Jan 14-17 Week of Prayer for students, faculty and community.

The Rev. T. Anthony Spearman said the traditional Prayer Week, held a week after the students return from Christmas break, gives students a place to go and fellowship on the campus.

"We are under new direction in the campus ministry, and we are trying to offer them (the students) something new as well as striding with the tradition," Spearman said.

This year, Spearman is bringing back a Livingstone and Hood Seminary alum, the Rev. George E. McKain, director of public affairs for the AME Zion church.

McKain seemed overjoyed about the opportunity to come home once again.

"It's a blessing from God to be able to come back to my alma mater of Livingstone and Hood to do this Week of Prayer," he said,

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Hazel O'Leary looks forward to new career

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. — Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, who faced a barrage of criticism for expensive trips abroad, said she'll start a new life outside government with a vacation — possibly to South Africa.

O'Leary, who will leave President Clinton's Cabinet on Jan. 20,

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