



SPORTS

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A&E

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The Charlotte Post

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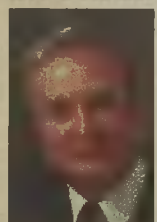
2 plans for children's insurance

By Herbert L. White
THE CHARLOTTE POST

As expected, the N.C. Senate voted to create a \$107 million-a-year health care program for poor children.

Getting the House of Representatives to go along is no sure thing, however.

House Republicans have their own plan, which differs markedly from the Senate version endorsed by Gov. Jim Hunt.



Hunt

The House Republican program would offer more limited benefits to more families as well as provide tax credits. The cost to taxpayers is unclear.

"Everybody agrees that children need health care," Democratic Rep. Beverly Earle of Charlotte said. "But when you get down to fine lines, there'll be some disagreements."

The competing plans highlight the opening of a special session of the General Assembly to debate health care insurance for children of the working poor. Because Democrats control the Senate and Republicans the House, it may take days to resolve the issue.

See HEALTH on page 6A

Bill would aid black farmers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rep. Eva Clayton, D-N.C., has introduced legislation that would ease the government's rules for making agricultural loans and give farmers with past financial problems another chance to obtain federal credits.

Sen. Charles Robb, D-Va., introduced companion legislation in the U.S. Senate last week.

"There shouldn't be a revolving door for people to have debts continually forgiven and receive additional loans," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, who joined Clayton Robb and other lawmakers at a news conference last Thursday.

"But denying thousands of farmers and ranchers from ever receiving USDA loan assistance if they ever received debt forgiveness at any time for any reason—including disaster or family tragedy—goes too far," Glickman said.

Clayton said the bill would be especially helpful for black and other minority farmers, hundreds of whom have filed complaints accusing the Agriculture Department of racial discrimination in the distribution of loans.

In a class-action lawsuit against the government, hundreds of minority farmers say they were denied loans unfairly—sometimes because of premature foreclosures on earlier credits. Past foreclosures or loan forgiveness are often used to reject subsequent credit applications.

Welcome from the Motherland



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO/GREG GIBSON

Ghana President Jerry Rawlings, left, U.S. President Clinton, first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, both wearing the Kente traditional Ghanaian dress, and Ghana's first lady Nana Rawlings, right, greet a crowd of over 200,000 people assembled in Independence Square in Accra, Ghana, Monday. Clinton is touring six African countries over 11 days.

Clinton: U.S. will aid Africa

By Sonya Ross
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KIGALI, Rwanda—Stunned by the tragic stories of genocide survivors, President Clinton said Wednesday the world did not act quickly enough when the horrors of the 1994 massacre in Rwanda emerged.

"Never again must we be shy in the face of the evidence," Clinton vowed.

Clinton recounted the days of bloodletting as families were murdered in their homes, people hunted down like animals, young and old, women and children, slaughtered in the sanctuaries of churches and hospitals.

"All over the world there were people like me sitting in offices who did not fully appreciate the depth and the speed with which you were being engulfed

by this unimaginable terror," Clinton told the audience of several hundred assembled at the airport here, including many survivors of the genocide.

The Clinton administration has said the international community failed to stop the Hutu extremists from killing up to 1 million minority-group Tutsis and Hutu moderates. It was the worst genocide since the Nazis killed 6 million Jews in

World War II.

Clinton noted the fine line between peace and war elsewhere in the world: between Muslims and Serbs in Bosnia, between Arabs and Jews in the Mideast, between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

Even as he spoke, ethnic violence flared anew in Yugoslavia. Serbian police fired

See DON'T on page 2A

Tour points to improved business ties between American companies and Africa

By Martha M. Hamilton and Lynne Duke
THE WASHINGTON POST

Investing in a continent as vast as Africa sometimes means thinking small, even for a giant corporation like Coca-Cola.

In 1990, Rubi Hassan operated a hand-cart, selling candy and an occasional Coca-Cola, chilled on a block of ice, to students at a nearby school in Nairobi, Kenya.

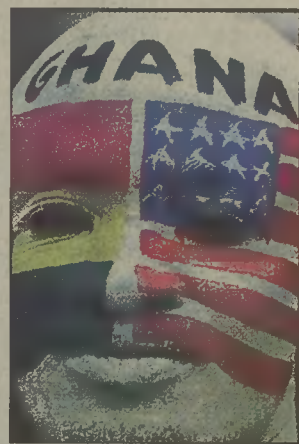
"I started with no money at all," said Hassan, who now earns enough along with her husband to put all her children through high school, to buy a second-hand car and to invest in a second business.

Coca-Cola Co., seeking to boost sales, had provided Hassan with the trolley. As business improved, the company added a kiosk, a double-door electric cooler, tables and umbrellas, a television and a picket fence. The tiny business now

has transformed into Rubi's, a corner store and sidewalk cafe, which Hassan said serves 300 customers and, not incidentally, now sells as many as 20 crates of Coca-Cola products a day. Hassan's story is just one sign of the growing corporate interest in the continent described alternately as the poor black neighborhood in the global village, the final frontier and the last emerging market.

President Clinton, who started the most extensive tour of Africa by an American president Monday, plans to use the 11-day trip to encourage Africa's slow emergence in the global economy. Africa's potential as both a trading partner and an investment

opportunity is largely untapped, administration officials say, and in recent months the Clinton administration has created an Africa trade office and backed a trade initiative, which See ECONOMIC on page 2A



AP PHOTO/STEVE JAFFEA

Paa Solo of Accra, Ghana painted his face to commemorate President Clinton's tour of Africa.

Westside theatre hinges on road construction vote

By John Minter
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Construction of a black-owned, \$22 million movie theater off Freedom Drive moved a step closer to reality Wednesday.

Charlotte City Council's Economic Development Committee voted 4-0 in favor of construction of an access road to the site. A final council vote is set for April 13.

The city investment would cost about \$400,000, or 80 percent, of the construction. The developer, Norcom Development, is kicking in the other 20 percent. That cost is down from earlier estimates of

about \$750,000.

Council member Patrick Cannon, whose district includes the site, compared city involvement to the construction of roads and other amenities near Ericsson Stadium downtown.

"The city will build the infrastructure," Cannon said. "That's been done before. The stadium is an excellent example. We went in with (Carolina Panthers owner) Jerry Richardson and the Panthers and said we will provide infrastructure. We now have a stadium downtown that has provided jobs and increased our tax base. I feel this cineplex can make the same thing happen on the

westside of town as in uptown."

Chicago-based InnerCity Entertainment wanted to have the multi-screen theater open by Thanksgiving, but InnerCity officials said Wednesday that may not be possible. The complex, with arena seating and 14-16 screens, would be adjacent to Cityview Shopping Center on about 275 acres of land.

Norcom, which developed the shopping center, is handling the land sale to ICE, owned by Alisa and Donzell Starks. Donzell Starks is a former investment banker.

The Starks claims to be the first black owned theater chain in the

country. Former pro basketball player Magic Johnson has also developed a chain of inner city theaters and is also reportedly interested in expanding into the Charlotte market.

ICE is partnered with Canadian-owned Cineplex Odeon Theatres in three \$40 million multiplexes in Chicago.

InnerCity wants to open similar centers in Charlotte, Gary, Ind., Baltimore, Md., and Cleveland, Ohio.

ICE was founded in 1993 with the aim of building state-of-the-art theaters and entertainment centers showing first-run feature See THEATRE on page 3A

Business owners file HUD complaint

By John Minter
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Nearly a dozen First Ward businesses says they are being hurt or forced to close by the redevelopment of downtown.

The businesses have filed a race discrimination complaint with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development alleging a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

The act seeks to insure that federal monies are not used to discriminate against minority businesses.

Robert Lunn is one of the businesses owners making the complaint. His First Ward Grocery & Discount Beverage closed after 17 years.

"After they moved the people out, we did not have anything to feed off of," said Lunn. "We couldn't even pay the rent."

First Ward redevelopment includes the complete removal of the Earle Village public housing project, which is being replaced by upscale and middle-income housing and a 68-unit elderly housing complex.

The Earle Village project is part of a \$41.7 million HOPE VI grant to the Charlotte Housing Authority. The housing authority and NationsBank Community Development Corp. are managing the project.

Supporters call it a social experiment to put middle-income and public housing residents in the same neighborhood. So far, 22 apartments have been renovated and reopened.

Attorney Robert Sink, counsel to the housing authority, said those involved in the project don't think they have violated Title VI, but are sympathetic about the businesses.

There had been some discussion about helping them, Sink said.

The complaint "is not conducive to any further dialogue about it," he said. "To have this kind of an attitude is really disappointing. I'm not trying to minimize the impact."

The complaint, which seeks an on-site review of the project and a halt to federal spending, list the city of Charlotte, Charlotte Housing Authority, NationsBank, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning

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