

# Black Press Institute- A Help Or A Hindrance?

(AN EDITORIAL)

A Chapel Hill-based organization was recently formed and financed with a \$250,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to "aid" the Black Press. Unfortunately, however, one of the organization's first acts was to discredit the Black Press by making unfounded statements. In a press release, distributed by the News Bureau of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, out of which the Southeastern Black Press Institute will be operating, institute co-director Bernardine Moses was quoted as having said, "The Black Press was far more influential 10-15 years ago."

We take unequivocal exception to that statement and call upon Ms. Moses and the institute to take a long, hard look at the black newspapers in the area that they propose to "aid." It seems quite ironic to us that papers that are said to be losing their influence in the community are growing at the same time. They are growing in advertising revenue, plant size and capacity, staff, circulation and the number of pages per edition.

To be sure, there are black publications that have reduced their size and have become more community-based in circulation as opposed to extensive national circulation. But that situation hardly allows the members of this institute to make uncategorical statements about the "Black Press" as a whole. After all, the demise of the Saturday Evening Post, and Look and Life Magazines were not indicative of the demise of the "White Press."

When challenged on the above statement, Dr. Senja Stone, the other co-director (both of whom are black) of the institute, could only cite an opinion article in another publication as documentation. As she put it, "There are no hard figures." So much for credibility!

Ms. Moses, who could not be reached this week for comment on the statement, also said in the news release that the black press "should be a legitimate supplement to the daily press."

Black newspapers and all other community newspapers are just that, community newspapers, papers which stand or fall on their own merits, true to their particular roles in the community. No self-respecting community publisher sees the community paper as a supplement to a daily newspaper any more than a daily newspaper publisher sees his or her publication as a supplement to a television station simply because television is more immediate. The whole question here revolves around role and purpose peculiar to the particular medium.

One tragedy is brought to mind in the critical industrial world, and that is the closing of the Hampton trade school, an act which emanated from the concept through the School of Education that the school should train teachers of trades instead of workers who would use their skills to produce, build and repair.

Up to that point in the 1930's, Hampton trade school had been administered by a technically trained director, and trade students were taught to perform, although many found themselves as teachers as they elected to formally train in the art of teaching.

When this calamity was perpetrated on the black industrial world, including the printing craft, by the professors of the School of Education, the source of personnel for plants such as The CAROLINIAN was shut off from this segment of black education.

It would, we believe, have been far more advantageous to blacks if the professors had stayed in their fields of liberal arts education and let the industrial take care of itself, as it was so satisfactorily doing.

The same thing can be said about those who really believe they are helping the Black Press without having been a working part of it long enough to know its many facets. It is difficult to aid anything from a distance.

We would suggest that those persons interested in upgrading the Black Press start with working with the press in circulation, news content, and advertising, as well as in the mechanical departments where many of the best advertising salespeople and writers were trained. This exposure would equip those interested (if they stayed long enough) to better prepare to make a contribution, as well as sound, justifiable, and positive criticisms of an institution which has stood the test of time and remains a force in the welfare of its constituents and the nation at large.

Then, too, 15 years ago, the country was launching itself into a new dimension - total racial integration. This meant that even dailies had to find a black image somewhere without facing the burden of training whoever was added to their staffs to give that image. Where did they look? To the Black Press here in Raleigh for this image in their mechanical department. These losses cost in the millions over the years as there was and is no reservoir of personnel to replace these individuals who spent 8 to 20 years preparing on a black weekly. But this paper did not weaken. It lost, however, the opportunity to capitalize on its own offset equipment by printing outside publications. If the institute is an instrument to aid the Black Press, the above assertions surely present unfavorable attitudes toward the very basic segment of our existence, i.e., those who look to our columns to sell their wares, the advertisers. The roots of most of the evils suffered by the Black Press have been the lack of advertising dollars, nationally and locally. Thus, the widely circulated and unfounded statements of the institute are contrary to the alleged purpose of helping the Black Press.

Aware of the need for total coverage in its trade zone, The CAROLINIAN augments its circulation with a Shoppers' Guide (a regular 8-page newspaper now) which is published the first of each month. Every home occupied by blacks in Raleigh and Wake County receives this newspaper free. It is distributed free by our personnel door-to-door. It is a well-known fact in the publishing of newspapers, whether they be dailies or weeklies, that 98 percent to 100 percent circulation in a given market is highly desirable by the business world. In fact, the value is so pronounced that even dailies are turning to the publication of shoppers in order to offset the competition of the shopper. Incidentally, the first shopper produced by The CAROLINIAN was in 1960. The present shopper is in its 17th month. This is not weakness; this is growth.

Better working conditions and better income have been experienced at The CAROLINIAN, as well as at other N.C. black newspapers in the past 10 to 15 years. In the 40's, practically all N.C. weeklies were 8 pages. As the publishers recognized the need for increased pages to accommodate enlarged content, including pictures, most moved ahead to 12 to 16 pages. Presently, at least five of the state's black weeklies are from a minimum of 14 pages, to at times 32 pages. This is not weakness. This is growth in spite of the misunderstandings and bad publicity for the Black Press which the institute is propagating.

North Carolina black newspapers expect an even greater growth in the years ahead; and we are sure the Black Press is not looking back on its strength or weakness, but is directing its sights and knowledge to the future where lies the test of success or failures. Surely, all advised people know that there are losses in all business categories. The business world has thousands of failures each year. The Black Press no doubt has had its share of losses. However, it has also had many successful new entrants. We point to one in North Carolina which was established some 9 years ago, in Greensboro, The Carolina Peacemaker.

The Carolina Peacemaker has steadily grown in circulation, news content and advertising lineage. Other older papers have also experienced growth, especially economically.

But more growth would be fore-coming should the emphasis be placed on advertising because, without the ad dollars, there would be no press to speak of, black or white. Marshall Field and Adam Powell both found this out years ago when they published newspapers free of advertising. Both built sizeable circulation. But without advertising, they curtailed; and so will most of us in the publishing business if more emphasis is not placed on this part of the newspapers published by blacks.

(See BLACK PRESS, P. 2)

Charged With First-Degree Burglary Here, But

# Warren, Wife To Reconcile?

Fails To Name Blacks To NC Board

## Justice Sharp Is Blasted



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Pair Works On Automobile-"Friend"

## Fatally Stabs Man

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Raleigh City

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## Council Hears Citizens Lambasts Judge's Decision

The chief justice of the North Carolina State Supreme Court, Miss Susie Sharp, came under heavy attack here Tuesday afternoon for not appointing "even the first black lawyer" to a merit selection committee that will recommend candidates for Superior Court judge appointments by N.C. Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr. Justice Sharp chose three former state Superior Court judges and 10 so-called leaders of statewide bar organizations.

(See JUSTICE IS, P. 2)

## 'Mother' Mitchell Mourned

BY STAFF WRITER  
When Bro. James Thomas announced over Radio Station WLE Sunday that "Mother" Beulah L. Mitchell passed this morning at 8:45 at a nursing home, a sudden pall fell over the entire neighborhood as radios seemed to grow softer while area citizens in the East Raleigh neighborhood, where she once lived, gathered on their front porches to sing the praises of this unusual woman.

Mrs. Beulah L. Young Mitchell, 81, 1327-B Holman St. (Walnut Terrace), known to thousands of gospel singing groups in Eastern North Carolina and throughout the



"MOTHER" MITCHELL



LEAPING TO HIS DEATH - Portland, Ore. - Joe Patterson, 39, of Vancouver, Washington, leaps to his death from the Interstate 5 bridge over the Columbia River shortly after 8:30 a.m. Aug. 15. Patterson's wife, Ella, top of photo, attempted to restrain her husband, but he wrestled free and plunged to his death. Photo was taken by Oregon Journal staff photographer Bill Murphy, who was on his way to work at the time of the incident. (UPI)

## Two Groups Air Grievances Here

About 40 black citizens, representing two different groups, met with the Raleigh City Council Tuesday night in an effort to clear up several neighborhood problems. Both went away with the assurance that their complaints had been clearly heard.

The first group was comprised of homeowners and business operators who complained of problems with congregating youth in the area of the Southgate shopping center at Rock Quarry and Proctor Roads, a problem which, in addition to causing concern on the part of the residents, could result in the closing of the public library in the center.

The residents appeared before the council and gave passionately worded and emotional accounts of living in fear of bodily harm because of the attitudes and activities of the congregating youths.

Ms. Trudy Miles, of 1601 Proctor Rd., said the youth

## Jones Is Jailed; No Bond

A 32-year-old Fuquay-Varina man is being held in the Wake County Jail without privilege of bond in the stabbing death of a "friend," with whom he had been working on an automobile only minutes before a "fuss" started. The slaying took place around 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

The body of Ernest Lee Williams, Jr., 26, Rt. 2, Fuquay-Varina, was discovered by Wake County Sheriff's deputies in a field in this southern Wake County rural area. Charged with murder is John Mark Jones, Rt. 1, Fuquay. (See FATALLY STABS, P. 2)

## United Holy Church In "10" Appeal

DURHAM - At its 8th annual convocation held here last week, the Western N.C. District of the United Holy Church of America appealed to Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr. to commute the sentences of the Wilmington Ten. Calling the case a "miscarriage of justice," church leaders strongly condemned the governor's refusal to "speak out with boldness," linking that refusal to political considerations surrounding the "pending referendum that would allow the governor to succeed himself."

The conviction of the ten for arson and conspiracy arising from social disturbances in Wilmington during 1972 has

(See UNITED HOLD, P. 2)

## Boy, 2, Drowns In City

Following the drowning Monday afternoon at 4:45 of 2-year-old Edward J. (Eddie) Lee, Jr., 604 1/2 Parnell Dr. in East Raleigh (off Poole Rd.), neighbors in the area said Tuesday they had asked the city to erect a fence around that section, which is a branch of the Walnut Creek, to keep other children from wandering

(See BOY DROWNS, P. 2)

## 2 Ladies, Man Appreciation Check Winners

Mrs. Martha Vandergriff, of 1106 Coleman St., Edward T. Jovner, of 809 Colton Pl., and Ms. Irene Hocutt, of 719 Church St., were winners of Appreciation Money checks after they found their names in last week's edition of The CAROLINIAN.

The name of Ms. Irene Hocutt, of 719 Church St., was listed on the page in the Piggy Wiggly advertisement.

## City Employee To Seek Job Justice

Thomas Odell Warren, a civilian employee of the Raleigh Police Department as an administrative aid in the records division, was charged with first-degree burglary last Friday after he allegedly broke into the apartment of his estranged wife. Warren is continuing to work on his job. He was released from jail on his own recognizance.

Monday, however, Mr. Warren assured newsmen that he and Mrs. Warren are "getting back together."

Warren, who resides at Apt. A, 3818 Bonneville Court, was arrested after his wife, Mrs. Delores B. Warren, Apt. A, 3918 Tara Dr., called police early last Monday and reported "hearing noises" at her door. Police files indicate that the apartment's front door was forced open and a chain lock was broken. Nothing was reported taken from the apartment, however. The 5-day delay in arresting Warren remains unexplained.

"It was just a trial separation," Mr. Warren said of his relationship with Mrs. Warren, who allegedly has asked "the law" to drop all charges against her husband because, "We're getting back to gether again."

Earlier this summer, Warren filed a complaint against the Raleigh Police Department with the U.S. Office of Revenue Sharing, charging the department with harassment and racial discrimination against him on his job.

Detective Captain James M. Stell of the RPD said Monday that there was no relationship between Warren's complaint to the "feds" and his arrest on Friday.

"We handled this case just like we would handle any other case," declared Stell, who heads the department's investigative division.

Detective Stell also said, "We knew it was a sensitive case. When the investigator came to me, I asked him how he would handle it if he did not know who Warren was. He told me that he would have to sign a warrant. So I told him to sign one."

Final disposition of the case had not been decided as The CAROLINIAN went to press.

## Church's Dedication Announced

Plans for the dedicational services of the First Congregational United Church of Christ in its new location on Crech Road, have been completed. Under the co-chairmanship of Rev. A. J. Turner and Lawrence Lindsey, various committee chairmen and their co-workers have been briefed with the expectation that the

(See DEDICATION, P. 2)



DR. NAMED NATIONAL GENERAL PRACTITIONER OF THE YEAR - During the 82nd annual convention of the National Medical Association and Scientific Assembly, held in Los Angeles, Calif., July 31-Aug. 4, Dr. George C. Debnam, left, Raleigh physician and surgeon, was named National General Practitioner Of The Year for the calendar year 1977. The plaque is being presented to Dr. Debnam on behalf of the Assembly by Dr. A. A. Williams of Los Angeles, Calif. The NMA, a predominantly black medical association, consisting of some 8,000 physicians in the U.S., its territories and several foreign countries, was founded in Atlanta, Ga. in 1895. The Los Angeles convention was attended by 1,300 medics, accompanied by their wives and children.

## Institute Offends Editors, Publishers

BY WILLIE WHITE, Staff Writer  
The formation of the Southeastern Black Press Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill by two black professors is not being greeted with enthusiasm by Black Press editors and publishers in North Carolina.

Appreciation Money SPOTLIGHT THIS WEEK  
BAKER'S SHOE STORE  
"FAMOUS NAME BRANDS AT REASONABLE PRICES"

STRICKEN ENROUTE TO HOSPITAL - Baltimore - Booker T. Brown is helped by his daughters, Ms. Iris Gorie (R), and Ms. Nancy Brown (L), after suffering chest pains on his way to Mercy Hospital in Baltimore Aug. 12. Brown's son, Theodore Brown, 27, a juror in the Mandel political corruption trial, was taken to the hospital earlier, suffering from head pains. (UPI)