

# The Minority

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# Voice

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Carolina Group  
Greenville NC  
27834

## A MILLION WASTING AWAY IN AFRICAN JAILS

By MICHAEL WINES

**LILONGWE, Malawi** - Since Nov. 10, 1999, Lackson Sikayenera has been incarcerated in Maula Prison, a dozen iron-roofed barracks set on yellow dirt and hemmed by barbed wire just outside Malawi's capital city.

He eats one meal of porridge daily. He spends 14 hours each day in a cell with 160 other men, packed on the concrete floor, unable even to move. The water is dirty; the toilets foul. Disease is rife.

But the worst part may be that in the case of Mr. Sikayenera, who is accused of killing his brother, the charges against him have not yet even reached a court. Almost certainly, they never will. For sometime after November 1999, justice officials lost his case file. His guards know where he is. But for all Malawi's courts know, he does not exist.

"Why is it that my file is missing?" he asked, his voice a mix of rage and desperation. "Who took my file? Why do I suffer like this? Should I keep on staying in prison just because my file is not found? For how long should I stay in prison? For how long?"

This is life in Malawi's high-security prisons, Dickens in the tropics, places of cruel, but hardly unusual punishment. Prosecutors, judges, even prison wardens agree that conditions are unbearable, confinements intolerably long,

justice scandalously uneven.

But by African standards, Malawi is not the worst place to do time. For many of Africa's one million prison inmates, conditions are equally unspeakable - or more so.

The inhumanity of African prisons is a shame that hides in plain sight. Black Beach Prison in Equatorial Guinea is notorious for torture. Food is so scarce in Zambia's jails that gangs wield it as an instrument of power. Congo's prisons have housed children as young as 8. Kenyan prisoners perish from easily curable diseases like gastroenteritis.

When the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights last visited the Central African Republic's prisons in 2000, it heard that officers had deemed 50 prisoners incorrigible. Then, dispensing with trials, they executed them.

Even the African Commission's special representative for inmates has not visited an African prison in 18 months. There is no money, said the representative, Vera Chirwa, a democracy activist who herself spent 12 years in Malawi jails under a dictatorship.

"The conditions are almost the same," Ms. Chirwa said. "In Malawi, in South Africa, in Mozambique, in almost every country I have visited. I've been to



France, and I've seen the prisons there. In Africa, they would be hotels."

Most African governments spend little on justice, and what little is

spent goes mostly to the police and courts, said Marie-Dominique Parent, the Malawi-based regional director of Penal Reform International, a British advocacy group. Prisons, she said, "are at the

bottom of the heap."

With so much misery among law-abiding citizens, the world's poorest nations have little incentive to improve convicts' lives. But, then, not everyone in African prisons is a convict.

Two-thirds of Uganda's 18,000 prison inmates have not been tried. The same is true of three-fourths of Mozambique's prisoners, and four-fifths of Cameroon's. Even in South Africa, Africa's most advanced nation, inmates in

STORY CONTINUES pg 4

## GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION AWARDS \$1.5 MILLION DOLLARS TO NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY AT GALA IN DURHAM, NC.



Chancellor James H. Ammons received a mock check for \$1.5 million from the Golden LEAF Foundation to purchase equipment need for the Biomufacturing Research Institute and Technology Enterprise Center of Excellence. From left to right: Chancellor Ammons, Valeria Lee, president of the Golden LEAF Foundation; Courtney Mills, program officer with the Golden LEAF Foundation and Jessie Bunn, member of the Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors.

### NCCU's 95th Anniversary Gala,

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY  
CONTACT: SHARON SAUNDERS  
PAMELA TOLSON

At NCCU's 95th Anniversary Gala, the Golden LEAF Foundation awarded

\$1.5 million to the university as part of a "Capital Equipment for Teaching Laboratories" project for the Biomufacturing Research Institute & Technology Enterprise (BRITE) Center of Excellence.

The grant will be used to purchase equipment for the BRITE facility, which is scheduled to open in 2007.

"The University is extremely honored to receive this award and the support from the Golden LEAF Foundation to help NCCU become a leader in biotechnology," said Chancellor James H. Ammons. "We believe we can create a viable and expanded workforce among traditional and non-traditional students as well as diversify the workforce popula-

augment these competencies in the areas of QC/QA regulatory affairs, intellectual property, physiology of expression systems, immobilization chemistry, statistics of product development and bio separation theory.

"This award is truly wonderful," said Dr. Li-An Yeh, director of BRITE. "This award will allow us to take this program to the next level."

BRITE is a part of the statewide initiative to make North Carolina a premiere provider of skilled workers for the biotechnology industry. BRITE is one segment of the comprehensive training effort. The BRITE Center will provide laboratories for undergraduates and outstanding scholars conducting research in several areas critical to biotechnology and biomanufacturing.

Of the 160 biotechnology companies located across the state, 68 are in Durham and 35 in Wake County. Between 1998 - 2008, it is projected that there will be a 98% increase in jobs in the pharmaceutical - and - medicine-manufacturing industries, a 103% increase in R & D jobs in physical, engineering and life sciences and a 146% increase in jobs in the medical and diagnostic laboratories industry.

Last year, NCCU, North Carolina State University and the North Carolina Community College System formed a consortium with state's biotechnology industry to develop a comprehensive educational program to create a highly skilled workforce.



### "Remembering a Giant..."

Shown at the memorial services for Mr. Nobles, or sometimes to referred to as "Billy Myles" was his eldest son, Steven M. Nobles of Atlanta, Ga., his daughter, Ms. Rita Nobles Rhem, and his youngest son Adam "Chad" Nobles, both of Greenville, NC. Also Bishop Blake Phillips, funeral director (shown with microphone), holding the Urn with Mr. Nobles' remains is one his granddaughters, Danielle Rhem and standing in the background is Mr. Nobles' grandson Michael Rhem. Mr. Nobles was known worldwide for his writing No. 1 hits. He was most noted for his twice appearing on the Ed Sullivan Show, back in the days.

(Jim Rouse Photo)



Seen at the Memorial Services held for Mr. William "Bo" Nobles were the Jones brothers affectionately known as "Pop" (standing left) and Bro. Mule (seated), along with Zack "The Maestro" Reddick.

(Jim Rouse photo)



Sheriff James L. Knight

SPECIAL TO THE  
MINORITY VOICE

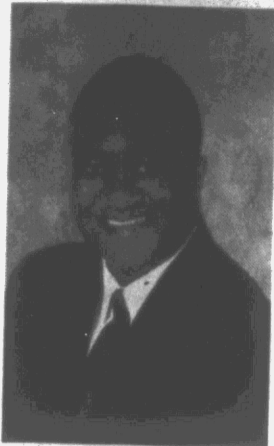
The Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office is responsible for criminal investigations, traffic offenses, service of criminal and civil processes, narcotic investigations, alcohol beverage control enforcement, court security, transport prisoners, central communications for all county emergency services, operation of the detention center and most recently, animal control.

Under the direction of Sheriff James L. Knight, the Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office continues to serve a population of 55,000 citizens of Edgecombe County in the most effective, efficient and compassionate way possible. During 2004, a total of 155,898 calls were answered. The sheriff's office, which consist of 50 sworn officers answered over 35,418 calls for service, served over 22,800 criminal and civil papers, ex partes, evictions and executions, made 1,958 arrest.

The Traffic Unit issued over 400 citations, including DWI, safety belt/child safety seat, speeding, DWLR and NOL. The Sheriff's Office has purchased 2 motorcycles from the Rocky Mount Harley Davidson Dealership, which will be added to the traffic unit. The officers will be assigned to run radar to aid in enforcing speed limit laws. They will work all types of traffic, oriented details including traffic accidents, traffic control, funeral escorts, parades and other special details. They will also educate the public on traffic safety.

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## Renewed Attacks on Affirmative Action



By George E. Curry

Despite a landmark Supreme Court ruling upholding the legality of the University of Michigan's law school affirmative action program, affirmative action programs are coming under increasing attacks, sometimes with the complicity of the Justice Department.

A recent example involves a letter the Justice Department sent to officials at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale charging that three graduate fellowship programs designed to increase underrepresented women and people of color are unfair to Whites and males. The Justice Department said if the SIU programs are not terminated by Friday, it will sue the institution. University officials have requested a meeting and an extension to avert a legal showdown.

The three fellowships under attack are the Proactive Recruitment and Multicultural Professionals for Tomorrow, the Graduate Dean's Program and the Bridge to Doctorate. University officials told the Daily Egyptian, the campus newspaper, that 129 such fellowships have been awarded since 2000, with 12 percent going to Whites. Most university fellowships are open to all students and make no effort to increase the presence of people of color on campus.

Less than 8 percent of Southern Illinois University's 5,500 graduate students are Black or Latino.

The attacks on affirmative action are being led by Right-wing think tanks, notably the Center for Equal Opportunity, headed by Linda Chavez and based in Sterling, Va.

It has filed complaints with the Justice Department against SIU and North Carolina State University.

Even more troubling than attacks on programs designed to end the under representation of people of color and women is the way that many universities have caved in without putting up a fight.

Roger Clegg, vice president and general counsel for the Center for Equal Opportunity, told the Daily Egyptian newspaper: "We have contacted hundreds of schools over the past few years about programs like this. The overwhelming majority have changed the programs after we contacted them."

In other words, the think tank has been able to accomplish through threats what it could not achieve in the U.S. Supreme Court.

The attack on affirmative action extends beyond graduate fellowship programs.

Last year, Clegg testified before the Texas Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education to oppose even the 10 percent plan favored by President Bush. Under the program, the top 10 percent of each graduating class is guaranteed admission to the University of Texas.

The cruelest hoax is that the likes of Clegg are citing laws specifically designed to help African-Americans - the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act that prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin - to dismantle programs that, if successful, would close the gap between people of color and Whites.

In an effort to identify all race- and gender-conscious programs - presumably so that they, too, can be attacked - Clegg's group has drafted what it calls a model "Racial and Ethnic Preference Disclosure Act" for states and the federal government to adopt.

The proposal for federal legislation would require annual reports from all institutions of higher education that receive federal funding.

Section 2 of the draft legislation states: "This report shall begin with a statement of whether race, color, or national origin is considered in the student admission process (if different departments within the institution have separate admission processes and consider race, color or national origin differently, then the report shall provide the information required by this report for each department separately)."

This is part of a larger campaign by the misnamed Center for Equal Opportunity to eliminate all programs that address racial inequality. It has compiled a 41-page list of legal provisions in every state that it finds objectionable.

Among them: an Alabama law that requires that half of the trustees of predominantly Black Alabama State University be African-Americans, an Illinois provision that requires that five of the nine members of a Women's Business Ownership Council be female, a Kentucky law that requires that school board screening committees in communities where people of color constitute at least 8 percent be represented by at least one African-American committee member, and a Colorado law that insists that financial institutions holding state investment funds give priority for business loans to women and people of color.

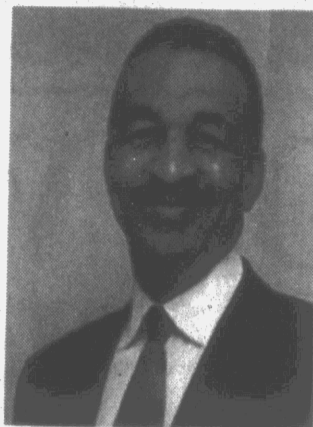
Prodded by the Civil Rights Movement, the nation has made progress in reducing racial, ethnic and gender discrimination. However, that progress will come to an abrupt halt if right-wing groups are successful in their campaign to eliminate all race-, ethnic- and gender-conscious corrective programs.

Sadly, so-called progressives have failed to counter the Right-wing attack on affirmative action.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com. He appears on National Public Radio (NPR) three times a week as part of "News and Notes with Ed Gordon." To contact Curry or to book him for a speaking engagement, go to his Web site, www.georgecurry.com.

## Blackonomics You Asked For It

by James Clingman



You have heard the saying, "Be careful of what you ask for, you just might get it;" and it's really true. When the Trent Lott debacle was upon us I was shouting, "Let him stay; don't ask for his resignation." Obviously those who wanted him to step down won that battle, but I wonder what will happen now that he is no longer the leader of the U.S. Senate. There were those who asked the Senate to censure Lott instead of defrocking him, namely, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and I commend them for that. Time will tell if their suggestion was the best, and I think we will find out very quickly.

In my opinion, it would have been better for Lott to remain in his position because during his numerous apologies he also made some very interesting statements.

He said some things for which he could have been held accountable to Black folks, thus opening the door for possible concessions on our behalf. But nooooo, we wanted him out because he said what he'd been feeling and thinking for years, and this time we not only heard him (I assume we also heard him in 1982 when he said the same thing), we paid attention to it.

If we had not gone along with his Republican cohorts, Armstrong Williams leading the charge, we would be able to say to old Trent, "Hey, didn't you say you support affirmative action? Aren't you the guy who said you didn't really appreciate the contributions of

MLK, but now after a recent epiphany you are a changed man?" We could have asked Trent Lott several questions in reference to his apologetic statements, but now African-Americans can hold him accountable for nothing.

It was really funny how things played out. The CBC asked for Lott to be censured, John Lewis accepted his apology saying, "Let's move on," Armstrong Williams decried Lott's remarks as unacceptable in the party with the "big tent," and finally, after he was granted permission by his boss, Colin Powell spoke out against Lott's remarks as well. The whole thing smacked of ridiculous theater, if you ask me.

The Republicans saw this Lott thing as a way to engender Black folks and to take greater advantage of the Democrats' laxity when it comes to their primary "minority" voting block. George "Dubya" has an agenda he is desperately trying to ram through, and scapegoat Trent Lott proved to be an unwilling assistant. Bush could not afford to be derailed and Lott was not such a big deal that he could not be sacrificed. To top it all off, Black folks, at least those who just had to have Lott out there, played a major role and actually helped Bush in the process. I bet it was congrats and attaboys all around the big tent when Lott stepped down.

I don't know what the new majority leader will do for Black folks, if anything, but already Black folks are stepping to the front of the line to endorse him, praise him, laud him, and hold Bill Frist up as though he were the Messiah himself. I guess we'll have to wait to see. But with Lott, we knew what we had, and we finally had something on him. What do they say about the bird in the hand?

I hope you can see this is all charades and more of the same when it comes to politics. Bush sacrificed Lott, but he re-nominates Charles Pickering for federal Judge (A paycheck to Lott?). So much for the "big tent."

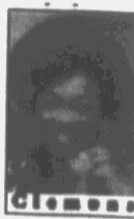
Bush says he's concerned about the poor and downtrodden, but he puts forth an economic program that will give the richest among us a windfall, while the poorest get little or nothing. Our president also has issued a brief that speaks against the use of affirmative action in admissions at the University of Michigan, a case now before the U.S. Supreme Court. Lott said he supports affirmative action; I wonder what "Uncle Clarence and the Supremes" will say.

Bush is determined to go to war in Iraq and sacrifice more young lives, and he needs the support of the American people. Trent Lott was an obstacle to that support, and he had to go. As for the role of Black folks in this whole thing, Jerry Falwell said it best in a recent interview about Lott. I paraphrase: We are about to go to go to war, and now is a time when we have to let everyone know, especially Blacks, that they are important to this country. I guess so, Jerry, especially when we will be the primary victims of the war. It's a shame we can't be as highly regarded any other time.

Yes, we should be careful, very careful about what we ask for, because we may get something worse than what we already had. Just remember, politically speaking, Bill Frist owes Black folks nothing. He made no commitments, no promises, and no deals, except those deals he may have already made with a few Black people. But that's cool; it's just politics, right?

James E. Clingman, an adjunct professor at the University of Cincinnati's African-American Studies department, is former editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper and founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce. He hosts the radio program, "Blackonomics," and is the author of the book, "Economic Empowerment or Economic Enslavement - We Have a Choice." He can be reached at (513) 489-4132, or by e-mail at jclingman@blackonomics.com.

## 45 - Block Revitalization Plans Nearing Close: What About MLK Jr. Drive?



By Susie Clemons  
Greenville, NC

45 - Block Revitalization Plans Nearing Close: What About MLK Jr. Drive?

Greenville, NC - Earlier this year, in July, The Minority Voice News reported that West Greenville Focus Group (WGFG), a coalition of residents, neighborhood groups, community organizations and business owners, were uneasy on the proposed West Greenville Revitalization Plans.

To revisit the matter the Greenville Redevelopment Commission approved plans for Center City - West Greenville Revitalization in a landslide vote of 6 to 1, over the objections of West Greenville residents. The City of Greenville Planning and Zoning Commission placed those plans on hold pending an investigative review into concerns raised by WGFG through its spokesman Mr. Ozie Hall Jr.

The Planning and Zoning Department investigation is nearing a close. They and WGFG members have been, in recent months, under intensive labor negotiating ambiguous policy related to the final proposal affecting West Greenville residents and business owners.

Although concessions have been made, this month the City of Greenville sponsored a town hall

meeting at Mount Calvary Church, on Line Avenue in Greenville, NC, to share additional planning details, hear community concerns and to answer questions.

Those persons primarily in attendance were WGFG members, SCLC and NAACP representatives and a few others. Troubling news came to a representative from the Minority Voice News from several West Greenville residents who said they would not be in the audience later that evening, as church attendance had been requested elsewhere inside the 45 - Block area.

No matter that much of the proposed changes indicate a return of West Greenville to its former desirable status; some citizens are still concerned that there may be more missing from well intended discussions and remaining negotiations.

In particular, some business owners want to ensure that they get a fair shake in the deal, including market value should they have to relocate their business. Similarly, area home owners want to ensure they are not haphazardly pushed aside for the commercial expansion of the planned 10<sup>th</sup> Street Business Connector. WGFG members are want for Martin Luther King Drive to become the commercial node for Black business as it is designated to remain a major thoroughfare into downtown Greenville.

### Recent Developments

Recently, Greenville City Department Head of Planning and Community Development, Merle Flood, Community Preservation and Revitalization Senior Planner, Carl Rees, and Greenville City Senior Planner, Christopher Davis, granted the Minority Voice News a meeting to shed light on these issues and also to offer history on the Center City - West Greenville Revitalization project planning.

Merle Flood explained that strategies for which are the umbrella for the proposed comprehensive look for all of Greenville, during a time when any number of projects were being discussed and acted upon. The main factor of planning was which projects would come first and what type of planning would be necessary to make West Greenville the community it used to be, said Flood.

In particular, the 45 - Block Revitalization strategy was perceived as having a plan of ongoing project improvement and development over an 8 year time frame. The City of Greenville's primary goal, explained Flood consisted of several key targets: 1). Remove to the blighted conditions of the West Greenville neighborhood. 2). Get home ownership increased from the current 20% to at least 50% at a bare minimal. 3). Address the issue of existing housing in need of repair, be it owner or renter occupied. 4). Begin working with code enforcement officials to get those types of situations fixed.

The final 45 - Block Revitalization Plan Proposal will include 3 elements of importance in its overall design, Carl Rees advises: Refurbishment and potential expansion to Sadie Salter Schools; Multi-generational recreational opportunity; Economic Incubator to include job training center, events center, and space for adult education instruction.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Street Connector

According to Merle Flood, the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Connector has been in the works for quite some time, approximately 10 years. Current plans regarding its placement neither call for the removal of homes along Farmville Boulevard nor have final plans for its location been approved.

More importantly, according to Flood, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) will not only have the final word on the Connector placement, but the State of North Carolina will be responsible for negotiating with effected residents, not the City of Greenville as held by some.

According to Flood, "Ultimately, we will do everything to not only make sure those home owners understand the process but we will assist those home owners with viable area relocation. Currently the 10<sup>th</sup> street connector has no permanent placement as yet, and for us to make any kind of plans with that federal highway administration money, we must comply with their standards"

### Relocating West Greenville Residents

City of Greenville planning officials Merle Flood, Carl Rees and Christopher Davis all agreed that the City of Greenville is not interested in moving populations of people from that area. The goal, they stressed, is to work with as many existing residents as is possible to make the experience of home ownership a reality.

To accomplish this, added

Christopher Davis, a positive transformation to the neighborhood must be achieved so that people want to live there and to move there; that includes renters and home owners alike, as well as consumer business such as physician offices and similar professionals. He further noted that for any of this to work and to have lasting, existing and future area home owners must get involved and become good stewards of their property and of their community.

Carl Rees pointed out that while he was not working on the project in the beginning, that he is aware of meetings that were held with current West Greenville residents and also those held with West Greenville leaders to seek out their community concerns.

He further acknowledged, "those concerns were entered into the redevelopment plan proposal, they were: additional commercial services; economic stimulus; neighborhood updates and opportunity for home ownership; safety and security; sidewalk, storm drain and lighting improvement, additional occupant dwelling code enforcement; a return of the neighborhood to its former appeal," said Rees. Additionally he noted, these are very real issues that the planners are using as a blue print into this final stage of planning.

### Home Ownership Key to Improving Blight in West Greenville

Based on models of other successful neighborhoods, it is assumed that the crucial factor to improving West Greenville is increased home ownership; with that positive element addressed then too are those earlier mentioned community concerns addressing safety, security and increased neighborhood value.

"Since Greenville has become an entitlement city to get federal funding, West Greenville has always been a target area [for improvement]. It's only that a larger target area - North Greenville - from the river down to Dickerson over to Memorial, that has received a great deal of improvement since at least 1994,"

noted Christopher Davis.

Furthermore, he added, that many of those updates were not visible or as dramatic; however, of those improvements is include the City of Greenville's successful residential development, Country Side Estates.

That in mind, ideally the goal is to convert renters into home owners, where the City of Greenville provides assistance. For example, two renters within the 45 - Block Revitalization area have been successfully converted to home owners. There also are several new homes undergoing construction in the Revitalization area. They are located between McKinnely Street and Douglas Avenue.

Also diversity in housing is a major factor in all of this to include duplexes and apartment developments... possibly something similar to Macgregor Village, added planning official Christopher Davis, who further stated "in its final stages we want West Greenville to reflect America."

### NEXT ISSUE: Cleaning Up Undesirable Properties

Questions or comments can be addressed to: [opinionsandtalk@yahoo.com](mailto:opinionsandtalk@yahoo.com)

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# M(y) Voice OP/EDs

Because whatever happens to America happens to Black America first....

## Community Voices

From the Desk of Mrs. Beatrice Mays



**Mrs. Beatrice Mays**  
Principles of Impeccable Work Behavior

Some Basic Guidelines:

1. Be careful with your appearance.
2. Honor other people's territory.
3. Expand your knowledge.
4. Honor your working hours.
5. Be friendly.
6. Keep personal information to yourself.
7. Be positive and supportive.
8. Keep an open mind.
9. Follow through.

10. Listen.
11. Communicate.
12. Solve your own problems.
13. Work hard.
14. Do not be in too big a hurry to advance.

Commonsense Statements

1. Talk about your own mistakes before criticizing the other person.
2. No one likes to take orders.
3. Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
4. Praise is the sunlight to the warm human spirit.
5. Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
6. Use encouragement.
7. Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.
8. Learn to speak effectively — prepare for leadership.
9. Give honest and sincere

appreciation.

10. Don't criticize, condemn, or complain — the 3C's for failure.
11. Become genuinely concerned about others.
12. Show respect for the other person's opinion.

SOME TRUTHS....

1. Anyone can have a wedding, but only God can create a marriage.
2. A boss should have not have to tell a Christian to use his time well or to Work hard.
3. For better or worse, you will reap what you show.
4. Our tongue can be our own worst enemy.
5. Beware of judging.
6. Hate evil; love good.
7. A godly person will be known as one who does what he says he will do.
8. God is looking for ordinary people to do extraordinary work.
9. Words and actions must agree

**IS THERE A BALM IN GILEAD?** (Excerpts from a challenge to the black church)

BY THE REV. EARL D. TRENT, PASTOR  
FLORIDA AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH IN WASHINGTON, DC

We in the black church must first take a look in the mirror and see what stares back for a number of reasons. First, it is our mandate and mission to care for our community. We are commissioned to be the light and the salt, the preserving agent, of the world of your people. The Black church has a vital role in promoting a high school code of conduct and ending the inappropriate behavior that shackles our minds. Too often sexual harassment in both pulpit and pew are ignored or labeled an "indiscretion" and never seriously addressed. We further fail to urge and model fiscal responsibility for the dollars that pass through our hands, and we fail to actively support our own people in business.

Secondly, the Black church is virtually the only institution that

is solely controlled by Black folk (although in some areas that is no longer true.) Liberation is about ownership and control.

Third, the Black church is the most fluid as an institution in our interclass structure. It is the only place where the strength of class division loses some of its detrimental impact. I emphasize some. Unfortunately, class and color divisions still have a great deal of unspoken influence in our lives.

What will we see as the Black church when we look in the mirror? Black Americans go to church at a higher percentage rate than any other group in America. Our preachers preach better. Our services are livelier and longer. We give a higher percentage or our income to the church more than any other group in America. We are represented in all the major denominations and have led the Pentecostal and now the Full Gospel Movement, yet we lead the nation in five major negative categories: more crime, more unemployment, more disease and bad health, more AIDS, and more SID (sexually transmitted disease) exist in our neighborhoods than in any other neigh-

borhoods in America.

Nearly forty percent of Black America is below or near the national poverty line. What is wrong with this picture? The grim, haunting truth is that "the harvest is past, the summer is ended," and we are not doing very well. These are harsh words and a harsh evaluation. Stop, figure out who is to blame. If the God we serve is just, why are we at the bottom heap of society as a people? Though we worship and pray loud and long, the undeniable fact is that we as a people are losing ground. To continue in the same manner of preaching and teaching on traditional and the latest fad themes and simply continuing to do "what we have always done" is a highly questionable course of action. It does not mean we have lost our faith, but we must face the reality that what we are doing can be out of step with the needs of our people and out of step with the will of God. Let us acknowledge the depth of our problems and do something about it. "A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, who gave His Son my soul to save, and fit it for the sky." Words by Charles Wesley (1707-1788). The most common tune is by Lowell Mason.

## Book Review: "Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?"



Suetje Jones

Book Review: "Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?"

By: Michael Eric Dyson

On May 17, 2004, Bill Cosby stepped to the podium in Washington, DC's Constitution Hall to receive an award for his philanthropic endeavors during an event commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education decision. Kam Williams comes forth to offer a critical review of Dyson's book. He quotes:

When Cosby opened his mouth, instead of lauding the efforts of civil rights pioneers, he bitterly scorned poor blacks for not holding up their end of the deal. On and on Cosby went, beating black parents and youth for their numerous faults, his ramblings united by one theme: the miserable condition of the black poor brought on by their own self-destructive behavior. Cosby's remarks are not the isolated ranting of a solo gun slinger, but simply the most recent, and the most visible, shot taken at poor blacks in more than century-old class war in black America. His views are widely held among the Afristocracy: upper middle class blacks and the black elite who rain down fire and brimstone upon poor blacks for their deviance and pathology. If Cosby's claim is that the black poor have lost their way, then I don't mind suggesting that the black middle class has, in its views of the poor and its support of Cosby's sentiments, lost its mind.

I wonder whether Bill Cosby has had any regrets over delivering his thought-provoking speech essentially calling upon the black community to reorder its priorities in terms of education, employment, and culture. If not, he certainly might after hearing how very intimate aspects of his own personal life have been held up to public scrutiny in Dyson's book. Dyson, ordained street minister and the author of many books on African-American earned his doctorate of divinity

**Letter To The Editor:**

MICHAEL W. GARRETT  
Greenville

Board smart to approve school uniform plan  
Monday, November 07, 2005

The decision by the Pitt County Board of Education to begin having elementary school students wear uniforms is a huge step in the right direction. The board is to be commended for having the courage and wisdom to do what is necessary to remove the overbearing influence that the profit-motivated fashion industry exerts over the lives and household budgets of families with school-age

children. Illiteracy is the No. 1 barrier against overcoming poverty. We can never begin to irradiate illiteracy until we remove the significant barriers to learning; especially during the early and formative years. A student whose self esteem is lowered because his or her parents simply can't afford the cost of keeping up with fashion trends will not do as well in their studies because part of their concern and attention is directed toward what they and others are feeling and saying about who's wearing what. The opinions of their peers mean everything to many young

kids and even older ones. The predictable argument that the cost of uniforms will be a needless burden to low-income families is thoughtless nonsense. Also, expect those who routinely spend hundreds on fashionable clothing to feel cheated because they will lose a means by which to be able to boost their egos by demeaning others who don't have hundreds to spend on fashion fads. As school wardrobes become a non-factor, students will have to win friends and popularity the old-fashioned way — with good character, humility and treating others as they wish to be treated.

## "Million More March"

By Gregory Whitfield

I asked my co-worker, Angela McWayne, about her bus trip to the Million More March on October 15, 2005. Here are the highlights of our interview.

**1. Who organized the trip?**

There was an organizing committee made up of people from the Nation of Islam, SCLC, ECU Students, and other people from the Greenville community.

**2. When/where did you leave from?**

About 150 Greenville residents met at C.M. Eppes recreation center late Friday night, October 14th to meet the buses that would take us to Washington DC where we would meet up with others participating in the March.

**3. How was the ride up there?**

The ride to Washington was uneventful. The bus left about midnight but most people on our bus slept knowing that we would have a long day on Saturday. A tape of the Million Man March was on TV for those wanting to watch

**4. What did you do when you first got off the bus?**

We arrived in Washington, DC around 4am on Saturday morning. It was of course still dark so all the people from our bus began walking from 7th to the Mall. We arrived at the Mall around 5am. The Marshals from the Nation of Islam were already in position and greeting our group as we entered. It excites me anytime that I see my people moving towards something positive. This was no exception.

**5. What was your itinerary while there?**

Arriving at the Mall around 5am we had the opportunity to walk around prior to the program beginning at 9am. As we approached the Mall, although still dark out, you could see the lights illuminating around the Capitol. In the distance you could hear morning prayers for the various faiths being offered up.

The opening program began around 9am with Marion Mayor giving the welcome. Afterwards we heard testimonials from various leaders. A tribute to victims and survivors of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was next on the agenda and I was amazed that with the number of people in attendance, the respect shown across the Mall as the moment of silence was called. Next the Millions More Movement Priority Issues was discussed which included an international connection and a youth perspective. We heard from some who spoke in opposition of the war and others who brought attention to violence in the streets of our nation.

I had the pleasure of hanging with Ms. Fannie Mae Sharpe and her granddaughter during the program. There were many people in attendance including Ms. Sharpe who wore buttons, carried signs, or wore tee shirts of loved ones who were taken away from their families much too soon. It was touching to see these people connect with one another in asking what had happened to their loved one. I sensed that it was good for them to be in an environment where they could share their story with someone who had been through a similar experience. One thing that saddened me were the number of tee shirts with small children on the front and on the back to read signs such as, "Stop the Black on Black Hatred". And "Stop the Black on Black Violence".....

At this point in the program, I was able to meet up with my son so it made the experience more valuable knowing that of all the places he could have been on a Saturday, he chose to experience this historical event.

**6. Comments on the march and speaking?**

Another person on the bus that I would like to recognize is Mr. Benny Roundtree. In 1980 I was visiting my aunt in Swan Quarter, North Carolina. A black man by the name of Allen Taylor was picked up by an officer and taken to jail. By the time he was released, I remember his face

being disfigured from the beating that he says he received from a particular officer who had a reputation in that community for that type behavior. I remember Mr. Roundtree being one of the leaders that came into that community to attend the meetings and eventually leading us on a march against the city and that particular officer. That march back in 1980 was my first and the Millions More March was my largest gathering. Thank you Mr. Roundtree for continuing in the struggle. Some of the highlights from the March that stuck with me were

- 1) MINISTER FARRAGHAN'S SUGGESTION THAT MINORITIES COME TOGETHER AND FORM OUR OWN POLITICAL PARTY, "POP" (PARTY OF THE POOR) OR THE "PARTY OF THE PEOPLE".
- 2) MINISTER FARRAGHAN'S SUGGESTION THAT WE POOL OUR MONEY TOGETHER TO FORM THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES HERE IN THE US.
  - A) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
  - B) DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
  - C) DEPARTMENT OF ART & CULTURE
  - D) DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & COMMERCE
  - E) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
  - F) DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION
  - G) DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
  - H) DEPARTMENT THAT UNITES THE SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY
  - I) DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICE
  - J) DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

There were people who did not attend for various reasons. If you want to view the speeches from the privacy of your own home the website if you have a computer is: <http://www.millionsmoremovement.com/news/mmm2005.htm>

**Additional comments and feelings**

I wish that each of you who were not there could have been there.

Interview by Gregory Whitfield, with Angela McWayne, Administrative Assistant with Eastern Area Health Education Center

# MILLION WASTING AWAY IN AFRICAN JAILS .....

Johannesburg Prison have waited seven years to see a judge.

Some of Africa's one million or so prisoners - nobody knows how many - are not lawbreakers, but victims of incompetence or corruption or justice systems that are simply understaffed, underfinanced and overwhelmed. Kenya's former prisons commissioner suggested last year that with proper legal representation, a fifth of his nation's 55,000 prisoners might be declared innocent.

The most immediate and apparent inhumanity is the overcrowding that Africa's broken systems breed, compounded by disease, filth, abuse, and a lack of food, soap, beds, clothes or recreation. A survey of 27 African governments by Penal Reform International found that national prison systems operated, on average, at 141 percent of capacity. Individual prisons were even more jammed: Luzira Prison, Uganda's largest, holds 5,000 in a 1950's facility built for 600.

Babati Prison in Tanzania, built for 50 inmates, housed 589 as of March.

Malawi's 9,800 inmates, living in effectively the same cells that were too crowded when they housed 4,500 a decade ago, are luckier than many. Three years ago, half the prisoners had yet to go before a judge. Under a pioneering program run by Penal Reform International and financed in part by the British government, paralegals have wonnowed that to fewer than one in four - among the lowest rates in sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet the flood of newly accused still outstrips Malawi's ability to deliver justice.

"This is not a hotel, where we can accommodate no more than our capacity," said Tobias Nowa, Malawi's commissioner of prison operations. "We must accommodate whomever is sent to us."

### Prison Population Doubles

Paradoxically, democracy's advent has catalyzed the problems of Africa's prisons. Freedom has permitted lawlessness, newly empowered citizens have demanded order - and governments have delivered.

Malawi's prison population has

more than doubled since the dictatorship ended in 1994. But its justice system is so badly broken that it is hard to know where to begin repairs.

Malawi's 12 million citizens have 28 legal aid attorneys and eight prosecutors with law degrees. There are jobs for 32 prosecutors, but salaries are so low that the vacancies go unfilled.

So except in special cases like murder and manslaughter, almost all accused go to trial without lawyers. The police prosecutors who try them have only basic legal training. And the lay magistrates who sit in judgment are largely unschooled in the law.

Justice Andrew Nyirenda, 49, the chief of Malawi's High Court, said the system had been swamped by the growth and rising complexity of crime since Malawi became a democracy in 1994.

"There are conspiracies to commit crimes, drug trafficking, even human trafficking, and instances of lower-level white-collar crimes where people are literally swindling institutions," he said. "These are extremely complicated cases for people who have not been trained sufficiently. We get convictions that aren't supposed to be convictions, and acquittals that aren't supposed to be acquittals."

Pacharo Kayira, one of the eight prosecutors, seconds that. "I've done so many cases where I don't agree with the conviction by the lower court," he said in an interview here. "It's not the best situation, to say the least."

Malawi's police officers can take two years merely to send prosecutors their report on a homicide. Prosecutors need months more to decide whether the case should be taken to a lower court, the start of a legal process that lasts years.

Malawi's High Court, which must pass judgment on all capital crimes, has not heard a single homicide case in the last year. There is no money to assemble lawyers, judges and witnesses for hearings in the locales where the crimes occurred; no money to empanel juries as required since 1995; no money for the written record that the Supreme Court needs for its mandatory review of convictions.

Ishmael Wadi, Malawi's director of

public prosecutions, said his eight prosecutors had a backlog of 44 untried fraud and tax-evasion cases, 173 robbery and theft cases, 388 fatal accident cases and 867 homicide cases.

"When the offenses occur, they send the files to this office," he said. "The files keep on coming, so the number keeps increasing. So what do you do? You accumulate the files, keep them nice and put them on the shelves."

And the caseload is rising. Capital crimes - homicide, rape and manslaughter - consume virtually all the time of legal-aid lawyers and prosecutors. While they process about 380 homicides a year, 500 to 600 other homicides are committed.

Shortages of judges, prosecutors and lawyers ensure that justice is both sluggish and mean. Many inmates sit in cells for lack of bail that can total less than \$10 or \$20.

The interminable wait between arrest and courtroom torments the innocent and lets the guilty escape justice. Evidence in police stations is misplaced or discarded. Witnesses die and move away.

Mr. Kayira, the prosecutor, encounters such cases far too often, after much life has been wasted and long terms already served, by both the innocent and the guilty.

"There have been many times when I have used the discretion granted me as a prosecutor to tell the police to release a person who has been there five, six years," he said. "I look at their file and say to myself, 'There isn't the evidence here to convict this person.' " For prisoners like Lackson Sikayenera, their cases lost in a system that only sporadically works, the only alternative is to hope someone hears their pleas for help - and to make a new life.

### The Road to Prison

Built 40 years ago to house 800 inmates, Maula Prison, on a recent visit, held 1,805 inmates, all but 24 of them men. Mr. Sikayenera lives in Maula's Cell 3, one of 160 in a pen the size of a two-car garage.

Once a farmer near Dowa, a dirt-road village 25 miles north of Lilongwe, Mr. Sikayenera was sent here after he killed his elder brother Jonas. Their father, he said, gave him a choice tobacco plot that

Jonas claimed was rightfully his. Jonas threatened to kill him if he did not surrender it. Lackson refused, he said, and Jonas attacked.

"To protect myself, I took a hoe handle and hit my brother on the forehead, and he fainted," he said. "Then I went to the police to report that I had harmed my brother." The police jailed him, then moved him to Maula Prison a week later.

That was more than 2,100 days ago.

awakens the rest each night for mass turnovers. The most privileged inmates sleep on their backs, ringing the walls of the cell. Everyone else sleeps on his side.

"It is so unhygienic here," Mr. Sikayenera said. "Basically, if you need any source of water, you have to get it from the toilet. The showers, most of them are broken. There is a lot of dysentery. A lot of the time, the water isn't running." Maula Prison's commanding officer, an expansive man named Gibson Singo, disputes none of that.

"They were designed for 50 or 60 people in one cell," he said. "But now it's 150, 155. If you talk of human rights, there is no way you can put 150 people in one room."

Maula and four nearby prisons split a monthly state allotment of \$12,500, from which Mr. Singo must pay Maula's 124 employees and meet inmates' needs. Maula's share is laughably small. There are no prison uniforms, no blankets, no soap, save what charities provide. The only food is nsima, corn mush leavened with beans or meat from the prison rabbit hutch. The only drink is water.

The mush is boiled in massive tubs outside the prison, where wardens moved the kitchen after hungry inmates began fighting over the food. The old kitchen is now a rudimentary school, its lessons scrawled in chalk on the walls.

These conditions exact a cruel toll. Maula Prison lost an average of 30 prisoners a year in 2003 and 2004 - about one death per 60 inmates. The average for American prisons is one death per 330 inmates.

It could be worse: Zomba Prison, 100 miles south, loses one in 20 inmates annually. But it is bad enough.

story concludes. . . . pg8



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Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Terrell Owens acknowledges the media as he arrives for his arbitration hearing Friday in Philadelphia. Eagles coach Andy Reid suspended Owens Nov. 5 for a series of incidents that included public criticism of the organization and quarterback Donovan McNabb. Following his suspension, Owens is expected to be deactivated for the rest of the season

# Gary Moore Scholarship Fund (PCC)

Local Student Honored  
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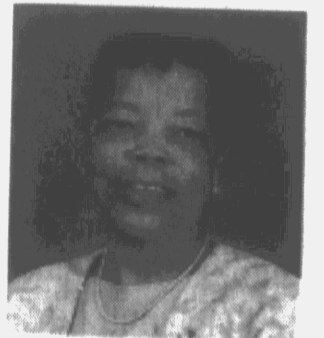


JASMINE HIGHSMITH

With the rise of crime among young people today, whenever one of our youth prepares to achieve success in life we should acknowledge them. It gives us great pleasure to recognize Jasmine Highsmith for her accomplishments. Jasmine has several awards to her credit which include; the National Science Award, the Editors Choice Award, and the National Honor Roll just to name a few. At the time of this writing Jasmine can now add "Poetic Writing" to her resume. We would also like to thank Ms Jasmine Highsmith for giving us the opportunity to share with our readers her first published writing:

I'm no Longer Mad  
To my Dad

I'm no longer mad that you didn't try to find me.  
I'm no longer mad that you died and left without me.  
I'm no longer mad that you didn't say goodbye.  
I'm no longer mad, but how can I still cry?  
I'm no longer mad because you appear in my dreams, telling me hi and saying that you miss me.  
I'm no longer at the heart-ache tha you once caused.  
I'm no longer mad that you left me without a father.  
I'm no longer mad because I forgive you for everything.  
I now realize that you loved me and that you wanted to be with me always.  
so now I'm saying I love you too and I'm sorry for rejecting you,  
I'm sorry that you're gone and that you might be all alone,  
I'm no longer mad that you didn't try to find me.  
I'm no longer mad that you died and left without me.  
I forgive you for everything that happened,  
But Dad, I miss you and I'm no longer mad.



Larcie Hardy Vines worked as a teacher's assistant in the public school system for thirty-two years, after graduating from Pitt Community College. Now retired, the author enjoys sewing and singing from her home in North Carolina. She also sings in many churches. Combining her love of reading and writing with her general enthusiasm for helping children, Mrs. Vines has written **When Mr. Rayfield Made Stone Soup**, her first published book.



Millions: pg 4



**How They Survive**

"It's just unbearable," said Frances Daka, 32, jailed on an unresolved murder charge since 2002. "We make ourselves live, just to survive."

Survive they do, in ingenious fashion. On each cell's wall,

beside the chalk artwork, is a list of rules, laws that are both prosaic and telling: Do not make noise when the lights are off. Do not smoke during prayers.

Prisoners must be clothed, lest a bare body excite sex-starved men. "Sodomy is not allowed in this house," one rule states.

A cell hierarchy maintains order. A minister of health checks daily for sick prisoners and arranges medical care.

If justice outside the prison is slow to come, inside it is swift, lest unrest ensue. Cell policemen "arrest" rule breakers, and cell magistrates hear evidence and pronounce sentences.

"Let's say someone was helping himself while the others are eating," Mr. Sikayenera said.

"This person might be given 500 days of cleaning the cell."

After 20 or so, the offender might be taken again to a cell judge, who can grant a reprieve.

"The reason why there is all this hierarchy is to find conflict resolution," Mr. Sikayenera said. "So there is no chaos. And it's effective. In most of the cells, you find there is no fighting. People don't break the rules."

Mr. Sikayenera is the magistrate of Cell 3. For six years, no one in Malawi's justice system has decided whether he should be punished or freed. But in prison, elevated by seniority and fellow inmates' respect, he metes out mercy and retribution with an even hand. And without delay. "When a case comes up," he said, utterly without irony, "it is dealt with. Right there."

**ECU's SBTDC Director Returns from Mississippi after Helping Katrina Victims**

By Jennifer Robinson

GREENVILLE, NC – East Carolina University's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) Director, Carolyn Wilburn, recently returned to eastern North Carolina after a two-week stay in Gulfport, Mississippi where she assisted business owners filing for federal assistance after hurricane Katrina.

Along with about 30 other SBTDC volunteers from around the country, seven of which were from North Carolina, Wilburn traveled to Gulfport expecting the demeanor of people to be somber. What she said she did not expect was the physical devastation resulting from Katrina.

"Sections of Gulfport looked like a tent city," said Wilburn. "Everywhere you looked there were tents. Entire families are still living in tents outside their homes. For some, that plot of land is all they have left, and they do not want to leave it. It is heartbreaking knowing that people are living in such a state; however, they continue to remain very hopeful to return to normal soon."

SBTDC volunteers worked through the Small Business Development Center at the University of Southern Mississippi in Gulfport and had an office at a local hospital which was closed for reconstruction prior to the storm.

Throughout her two-week stay, Wilburn aided approximately 20 to 25 people in filing federal assistance for their homes and businesses. Many people would

not know how to apply for federal assistance without the help of the SBTDC because it requires an enormous amount of paperwork, she said, recalling her experiences in eastern North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd.

"Not only were we there to help as professional business counselors, we also served somewhat as personal counselors," said Wilburn. "We listened to their stories about what they had been through. This was an important part of understanding both their personal and professional loss."

The city of Gulfport experienced 30 to 40 foot storm surges, spreading as much as six miles inland, flooding homes and businesses. Some structures still have standing sections, but many others have nothing left at all.

"I was here in 1999 when hurricane Floyd hit, so I knew what these people had been going through," said Wilburn. "It took many months for eastern North Carolina to recover from the effects of the flooding as a result of Floyd. That made me more emotionally attached to the disaster in Gulfport. I was glad to be able to return the favor after the help our area received six years ago from people across the country."

When New Orleans is considered safe to enter, SBTDC volunteers will probably be sent in to do the same type of work they did in Gulfport, helping business owners and the community reestablish itself.

Wilburn has been with the SBTDC since its inception in November 1985, serving most of her 20 years

as a business counselor. She was named director of the Eastern Region SBTDC earlier this year.

The SBTDC focuses on management counseling, addressing issues including financing, marketing, human resources, operations, business planning, and feasibility assessment for small and mid-sized businesses. Their purpose is to help businesses grow and to expand economic development in our region. The ECU office serves a 12-county area including Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Edgecombe, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Pamlico, Pitt, Wayne and Wilson counties.

The SBTDC is part of ECU's Regional Development Services. RDS is one of the university's gateways through which its considerable outreach and applied research resources are made available. By the use of its resources and expertise of ECU faculty and students, RDS creates exceptional opportunities for the community to address concerns in eastern North Carolina.



"Gulfport Wilburn" – SBTDC Director Carolyn Wilburn waits to help Katrina victims at a makeshift Small Business Development Center in Gulfport, Mississippi which was housed in a local hospital closed for reconstruction.



Portrait Dedication . . . The Commemorative Portrait Dedication of the late W. H. Robinson from whom the Robinson School is named was unveiled Sunday, October 16, 2005 at 3PM at the W. H. Robinson Elementary School Media center.

The principal, Mr Bruce Gray, welcomed the approximate fifty people who attended, followed by comments from The Reverend Michael Dixon, Pitt County Board of Education Chairperson. Remarks were given by Mrs. Rebecca Thomas, artist, with Mrs. Thomas and Mrs. Beatrice Maye, the former principal's wife, Mr. Calvin Henderson, community leader and Pitt County NAACP Chairperson and Mrs. Doris Harper, a student under Mr. Robinson.

A special thanks goes to the Town of Winterville, the portrait donors. A reception followed.



"It's A Celebration, Congratulations . . ." Shown above is the Bishop Henry Brown of Mt. Calvary FWB Church, his lovely wife, Mrs. Brown, their daughter and Pastors Aid Chairwoman Sister Dixie at the Pastor's Anniversary that was held at the City Hotel & Bistro.

(Jim Rouse Photo)

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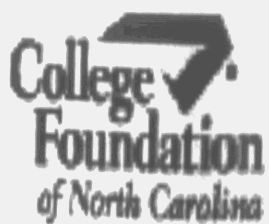
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