November 20, 1985

Dr. Roy Nichols, Superintendent
Marietta City Schools
145 Dodd Street
Marietta, Georgia 30060

Dear Dr. Nichols:

In our conversation on November 18, 1985, I stated that I would send you names of persons on our Educational Committee, who would be available to assist principals or teachers who may be interested in having programs during the month of January focusing on Dr. Martin Luther King. During the month of February we will gear all programs toward Black History Month.

The following persons will be available to give their assistance:

John F. Perdue - 424-9507
Mrs. Ann Haynes - 422-8922
Mr. Douglass Martin - 422-3209

Please give some serious thought to a topic for the Essay Contest. Since leaving your office, I have thought of one - "Building Bridges To Better Intergroup Relations".

I am looking forward to working on the task force you suggested.

Cordially yours,

John F. Perdue
November 25, 1985

Mr. Oscar Freeman, Jr.
1625 Sonya Drive
Marietta, Georgia 30067

Dear Mr. Freeman:

The Section 5 preclearance provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, requires "covered" jurisdictions to submit any changes in voting laws or election procedures to the U.S. Attorney General or the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. The NAACP has a right as an interested organization to submit comments and information to the Department of Justice regarding such changes.

The following proposed change(s) in your area have been submitted to the Department of Justice:

Proposed changes submitted October 31, 1985
Marietta (Cobb County), Georgia
Act No. 757, H.B. No. 72 (1985)—deannexation

Comments regarding the proposed change must be submitted by December 8, 1985.

Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

If you telephone, call Margay Williams, (202) 724-6245.

Send a copy of your comments to my attention, Washington Bureau, NAACP
1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 820, Washington, D.C. 20005.

Sincerely yours,

Althea T. L. Simmons
Director

ATLS:aa

NOTE:—The envelope and first page should be marked: Comment Under Section 5, Voting Rights Act.
Marietta asks U.S. to disallow deannexation bill

By Salynn Boyles
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

Arguing that Marietta is the voice for blacks in Cobb and that limiting annexation will dilute that voice, city officials have asked the U.S. Justice Department to disallow legislation deannexing half of Kennesaw Mountain.

But school board officials have taken steps to put the four property owners affected by the deannexation back on the county's tax rolls.

Kennesaw Mountain was brought into Marietta by the state legislature in 1984 as part of a compromise "solution" to the ongoing annexation fight between the city and the county school system.

That legislation also limited Marietta annexation to no more than 2 percent of the growth of the county school system's tax digest during the previous year.

Last year the legislature passed two bills deannexing about 1,400 acres on the southern half of the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park and four private homes adjacent to the park.

But before the deannexation becomes official, the civil rights division of the U.S. Justice Department must review the change to make sure minority voting strength is not diluted.

Marietta's acting city manager Rick Brun said the city received word from the Justice Department Wednesday that no decision will be made before Jan. 21 on any annexation or deannexation.

Marietta officials claim the Kennesaw deannexation would have a detrimental effect on minority voting by stopping future city growth to the west. According to city officials, westward growth is the only conceivable direction possible for residential expansion.

In a letter to assistant attorney general William Bradford Reynolds, Cobb County NAACP president Oscar Freeman said the deannexation would cause disproportionate minority growth in the city, resulting in the eventual disenfranchisement of blacks countywide.

"The minority community would continue to grow disproportionately to the entire city, resulting in probable white flight to suburban Cobb County and its almost totally white school system and neighborhoods," he wrote.

"This would serve to further disenfranchise minority voters who would have no political voice at all as a black island in a sea of conservative suburbanite Cobb County residents."

Marietta Mayor-elect Vicki Chastain said the city was "in a bind" on this issue.

See ANNEXATION, Back Page

Annexation

Continued From Page 1A

tain, Councilman John Hammond and city public information officer Bill Carbine took the city's argument to Justice Department officials in Washington late in October.

They took with them Freeman's letter along with letters from state Sen. Julian Bond, D-Atlanta, and Atlanta NAACP president Frank McAfee supporting their claim.

"As far as we're concerned, the deannexation is still up in the air," Chastain said. "If it wasn't an open question, we wouldn't have gone to Washington to convince the Justice Department that this would dilute the voting power of minorities in our city if it went through.

Cobb school board attorney Dick Still said the position of the Cobb school board that the Justice Department has approved the deannexation rests on two letters from the department, one dated June 24 and the other Sept. 6, stating that "the attorney general does not interpose any objections to the change in question."

He was unavailable for comment, however, on the letter the city received from the Justice Department Wednesday, delaying any decision until Jan. 21.

Marietta officials claim the letters are not binding because the school board had no authority to ask the Justice Department to consider the question.

"As the affected party in the deannexation, Marietta was required to file with the Justice Department," Carbine said. "Still had no legal authority to do that. We were holding off to give us time to build our argument."

Calling the Justice Department review a "technicality," Still said he filed the request for review because city officials were dragging their feet on the issue.

"I did not feel like the city of Marietta was in any hurry to submit this to Justice Department so I just did it for them," he said. "It was just another formality, and now the matter is closed. The Justice Department couldn't care less whether this land is in the city of Marietta or the county. It's just another red herring as far as I'm concerned."

The Justice Department's position on the matter appears to be one of confusion. Department public affairs spokeswoman Amy Brown said she has been unable to determine whether the department has made a final ruling on the Kennesaw Mountain deannexation.

Still sent a letter to county tax assessor Cal Phelps in November asking him to take the necessary steps to bring the property owners back into the county, and Phelps said this week he is in the process of doing that.

Phelps said the necessary computer changes should be complete by the end of next week.

"Anything that Dick Still sent to the Cobb County tax office regarding any change of status on that property is certainly premature and will be contested by the city of Marietta until a decision is rendered by the civil rights division of the United States Justice Department," Brun said.

Three of the four private parcels in the middle of the annexation fight are on Cheatham Hill Road. They are owned by C. Jack Brown, Don and Nancy Dorsey, and Rick and Carol Townsend.

The fourth parcel is a vacant lot on the north side of Powder Springs Street, east of the park, owned by Jack E. Wilson.
BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

A PROCLAMATION

COBB COUNTY NAACP DAY

WHEREAS: The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) was organized in 1909 to ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of minority citizens; and

WHEREAS: In Georgia, there are approximately 133 branches of the NAACP with over 12,000 members; and

WHEREAS: The Cobb County Branch of the NAACP, under the leadership of its President, Oscar R. Freeman, Jr., has made many achievements in securing civil rights and eliminating race prejudice among citizens of this state; and

WHEREAS: On July 1, 1985, the Cobb County Branch of the NAACP became the first local branch in the nation to establish an Advocacy Program/Employment Services Agency; and

WHEREAS: In the past two years, the Cobb County Branch of the NAACP has signed a NAACP Fair Share Agreement with the Georgia State Bank and the City of Marietta, marking the first time a local branch has obtained this type of agreement with a major lending institution and a city government; and

WHEREAS: The Cobb County Branch of the NAACP is holding its Fourth Annual Freedom Fund Awards Banquet on September 28, 1985, and on this occasion, it is fitting that recognition be given to the achievements of this vital organization; now

THEREFORE: I, Joe Frank Harris, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim the day of September 28, 1985, as "COBB COUNTY NAACP DAY" in Georgia, and commend this organization for the important contributions it is making in securing equality for all our citizens.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed. This 16th day of September, 1985.

[Signature]

GOVERNOR

ATTEST

[Signature]

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
1. Proclamation
   Governor Joe Frank Harris
2. Proclamation
   Mayor Robert E. Flourney, Jr.
3. Greetings
   President Oscar R. Freeman, Jr.
4. Branch Officers
   Executive Board Members
   Freedom Fund Committee
5. History
   Guest Speaker
   State Senator Julian Bond
6. Letters of Acknowledgements
   U. S. Congressman Buddy Darden
7. Greetings
   Earl T. Shinhoster
8. Letter of Congratulations
   Robert Flanagan
9. Letter of Congratulations
   Jerry Dodd
10. Letter of Thanks
11. History
    Purpose
    Aims
12. Life Memberships & Patrons
13. Honorees
14. Entertainers
15. Program
16. Menu
17. Life Ev'ry Voice and Sing
18. Advertisements
City of Marietta

Proclamation

WHEREAS, The Cobb County Branch NAACP has been successful in accomplishing the organizational goals for the year of 1985; and

WHEREAS, The Cobb County Branch NAACP is the first local branch to establish an Advocacy Employment Service Program. It was established on Monday, the 1st Day of July, 1985; and

WHEREAS, The Branch will be servicing the communities of Cobb County through the employment segment; and

WHEREAS, The Cobb County Branch NAACP Freedom Fun Committee will celebrate their Fourth Annual Freedom Fund Awards Banquet "HONORING OUTSTANDING COBB COUNTY CITIZENS" on Saturday, the 28th Day of September, 1985.

THEREFORE, I, ROBERT E. FLOURNOY, JR., MAYOR OF THE CITY OF MARIETTA, GEORGIA do hereby proclaim and recognize the services that the Cobb County Branch NAACP has contributed to the City of Marietta.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Marietta to be affixed this 18th Day of September, 1985.

Robert E. Flournoy, Jr.
Mayor

ATTEST:

Lillian C. Harris
City Clerk
Greetings:

On behalf of the entire NAACP family. I would like to welcome the NAACP officers, members, friends and our platform guest attending the Fourth Annual Freedom Fund Awards Banquet.

This is a most blessed and rewarding moment for me to have the privilege of welcoming you. This is more than a time of food and fellowship. It is a time of information and inspiration — a fellowship of ideas, and you have helped us to make this evening possible.

It is our desire that you will become more than supporters of the NAACP, we would like for you to become members. Together we can move mountains.

To our Honoree's, you have exemplified outstanding achievement in your respective areas. We appreciate the example you have set for our community. We extend to you our sincere best wishes in all of your future endeavors and may you continue to be a shining light for others to see.

To our very capable Freedom Fund committee, we hold your vision, dedication and service in highest esteem for we realize that, a vision without a task is a dream; a task without a vision is drudgery; a vision and a task is the hope of the world.

Sincerely,

OSCAR R. FREEMAN, JR.
President, NAACP of Cobb County
WHAT IS A NAACP BRANCH?

A group of one hundred or more persons who have paid a minimum membership fee of $10.00 in the NAACP and have satisfied the requirements of the constitution and By-Laws for Branches in organization, having had an application for charter approved by the National Board of Directors is considered a branch of the NAACP.

"The branch is a constituent and subordinate unit of the Association, subject to the general authority and jurisdiction of the Board of Directors of the Association."

Its objectives are to improve the political, educational, social and economic status of minority groups; to eliminate racial prejudice, to keep the public aware of the adverse effects of racial discrimination; and to take all lawful action to secure its elimination, consistent with the Articles of Incorporation of the Association, its Constitution By-Laws and as directed by the National Board of Directors.

The NAACP is not a burial society; it is not an insurance company; it is not a lodge; it is not a secret organization; it is not a legal aid society. It is an organization which works to secure first-class citizenship for ALL American citizens and is open to all persons who believe in its principles.
WHO ARE THE BRANCH OFFICERS?

ARTICLE III

SECTION 1(a)

The elective officers of the Branch shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Additional officers (e.g., 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, and Assistant Secretaries), as the Branch may prescribe pursuant to local By-laws.

NOTE:

Where such By-laws are adopted, they are to be considered an integral part of the Branch Constitution and By-laws and may be adopted or amended in accordance with the terms and conditions of Article XII . . .
WHO SHOULD BE OFFICERS?

Those persons, who believe in the purpose and the policies of the Association and willing to give time and energy to guiding and directing the Branch toward the realization of the NAACP goals, and have the ability to give leadership in an organization dedicated to a cause, should be considered as possible officers for the Branch. They may, or may not, have been active prior to consideration for office.

WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS?

The PRESIDENT should know the Constitution and By-Laws for Branches and should have a working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order. He should note that it is his responsibility to appoint the chairmen and members of ALL standing committees. He should be familiar with NAACP programs and policies, the relationship between the Branch, the State Conference, the Regional Office and National Office. He is a guide in group action. The PRESIDENT IS THE CHIEF SPOKESPERSON FOR THE BRANCH/UNIT.

The VICE PRESIDENT can be more than a substitute or a figurehead. He might be appointed chairman of the Program Committee or Parliamentarian so that he has a more specific responsibility than just taking over when the President is absent or otherwise unable to function.
WHAT IS THE NAACP?

The most famous initials in America are N.A.A.C.P.

The most talked about non-political organization in America is the N.A.A.C.P.

The most written about voluntary association in America is the N.A.A.C.P.

The most damned group of respectable citizens, and on the other hand, one of the most praised groups in America, is the N.A.A.C.P.

The initials - N.A.A.C.P. - stand for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Because of the measure of courage by group effort in recent years the men and women behind these five letters have changed the legal and social history of the United States and they are still effecting monumental changes today.

- Langston Hughes, *Fight for Freedom*,

The Struggle of the NAACP (1962)
BROWN & WILLIAMSON TOBACCO CORPORATION SIGNS $100 MILLION FAIR SHARE AGREEMENT WITH NAACP.

NAACP Executive Director Benjamin L. Hooks and Brown and Williamson's Chairman of the Board; Dr. I.W. Hughes shake hands upon signing of a major FAIR SHARE AGREEMENT during the NAACP's 74th Annual Convention in New Orleans, LA. The worth of the agreement in terms of economic benefits for Blacks and other minorities is estimated at more than $100 million in the first year.

The FAIR SHARE PROGRAM encourages private enterprise to increase its business involvement with minority communities. This involvement takes the form of increased purchases from minority suppliers; corporate financial support of traditional minority colleges and charitable organizations; and employment of minority group members.

Under the B&W agreement, the corporation will increase its annual purchases from minority vendors substantially. It is estimated that the first year purchases from all minority vendors will be approximately $26,000,000.

NAACP Executive Director, Benjamin L. Hooks praised B&W for leading the tobacco industry in this type of commitment to the minority community. In entering this agreement with the NAACP, Mr. Hooks said, “Brown and Williamson is recognizing that what is good for the economic development of Black Americans is good business for B&W”.

Pictured with Mr. Hooks and Dr. Hughes are: seated (L—R) Scott Wallace, Sr. Vice President, Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation; and Kelly Alexander, Sr., Vice Chairman, NAACP Board of Directors. (Second row L—R) John Johnson, President NAACP Kentucky State Conference; Kelly Alexander, Jr., NAACP; Fred Rasheed, Director of the NAACP National Fair Share Program; Michael Bateman, B&W’s Manager, Minority Affairs; and Sidney Finley, Chicago Regional Fair Share Program.
NAACP moves its Cobb offices

By Lauren Schad
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The Marietta-Cobb branch of the NAACP has moved to a new location at 605 Roswell St. and invites the public to an open house, Saturday from 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

"This is the by-product of everything we've done in the last seven years," said branch president Oscar Freeman.

The branch office was at 165 Hunt St. and was described by Freeman as being a 9x12 space, obtained 18 months ago and furnished with a telephone, chair and a desk.

Nevertheless, the office is considered to be an achievement by the organization.

"We felt then that it was a milestone for us," said Freeman who has been president since 1982. "It gave people a chance to bring in their complaints, and we could deal with them in a legal and intelligent way. We could make the legal system work for us.

The new location is also the office for the branch's employment service program which offers counseling on job skills, interviewing, placement, referrals and training.

Freeman said the Cobb branch is the only one in the country to offer such a program.

Freeman said the Marietta branch has between 560 and 575 members. He hopes to increase its membership by 560 before the end of this year.

"We do want people to come and look at where we are and where we've come from," he said.

The hours for the new office will be 1:30-5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, with extended hours on Tuesday until 7 p.m.

The hours for the employment service program are 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

General membership meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Roswell Street office at 7 p.m.
Declaration of Community / Conscience of the Citizens of Cobb County

Marietta and Cobb County as a religious community is united. We share a common faith in God, an abiding respect for all people of all races, creeds and origins, and a patriotic love for our country which guarantees our freedom. We stand together in mutual love.

We serve notice upon all who would divide, diminish and destroy, that there is no place in the Marietta-Cobb Community for intolerance, discrimination and hate.

We, the undersigned, Citizens of Cobb County, therefore, hereby pledge ourselves and our sacred honor to the equality of all men and women, to the Fatherhood of God, and to the Brotherhood of all races and creeds.

We declare, by these presents, unequivocally and without reservation, our commitment and dedication to these principles and publicly and openly so declare the same!

__________________________  __________________________
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NAACP chief pleased by Mary Cater effort

By Ken Stickney
Editor

A Cobb County NAACP official said he’s delighted Mableton resident Mary Cater is running for the District 20, Post 1 state representative seat held by Joe Mack Wilson.

And, he said, she just “might surprise a lot of people” when Democratic Party votes are counted on Aug. 12.

The winner of the primary race between Mrs. Cater, who works for an Atlanta bank, and Wilson, a 25-year veteran representative who serves as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, will face Republican Laurie Davis in the November election.

“I don’t have anything against Joe Mack Wilson,” Freeman said. “But 25 years is a long time. Maybe it’s time for some new blood.”

But Freeman did take issue with Wilson’s statement that Mrs. Cater is running for office primarily “...to make that point of black person running for office in Cobb.” No black has run for an office as high as state representative for 100 years, partly leaders said.

“That was uncalled for, an ugly way to say she doesn’t have a chance,” Freeman said.

“She has surprised an awful lot of people” with her campaign thus far, the NAACP leader said. “She is going to surprise an awful lot of people Aug. 12.

“Mary Cater is a very viable candidate for that office.”

Freeman predicted broad support from around the voting area for Mrs. Cater, rather than support from specific strongholds.

The voting area includes the Western District of Cobb, which includes Acworth and Kennesaw, much of Marietta, Powder Springs and Austell.

“She will pick up support in all areas ... from wherever there is some sensitivity in the community,” Freeman said.

“There will be people silently working for Mary Cater.”

Whether black voters specifically have taken an interest in the Cater-Wilson race is difficult to measure, Freeman said. Voter registration at the NAACP office

Oscar Freeman

has not been heavy, he said, although the office was kept open last Saturday and local pastors at black churches were expected to urge registration at Sunday services. Voter registration closed Monday.

Freeman said Mrs. Cater formerly served on the board of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, but had to resign her position to run for office.

The NAACP does not make endorsements of candidates.
September 16, 1986

Mr. Oscar Freeman  
NAACP  
168 Hunt Street  
Marietta, GA 30060

Dear Mr. Freeman:

The Admissions Office staff has a keen interest in assisting the citizens of our community with preparations for successful educational careers.

Dr. Jesse Lewis, in his book *Survival of a Race: A Piece of the Rock*, writes that education is one of the keys to success, and that when educational goals are accomplished, strategies for involvement in the economic and political arenas can successfully be put into place.

We would like to offer to community groups workshops relating to academic achievement and success. Listed below are workshops we would like to present to your group. If there is a topic more suitable to your needs, we will be happy to accommodate.

- 1988 Georgia State Requirements for College Admission
- How To Prepare For College
- How To Prepare For The SAT
- Kennesaw College Programs and Activities
- Student Financial Aid
- College Opportunities for Non-Traditional Students

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you. Please call me at 429-2735 if we can assist you in any way.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Julia M. Collier  
Assistant Director of Admissions

JMC:ml
Cobb NAACP to elect president Saturday

By Salynn Boyles
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

Members of the Cobb NAACP will elect a new president Saturday and two locally known black activists are vying for the job.

Mary Cater, who unsuccessfully challenged state Rep. Joe Mack Wilson in the August primary will face Jerry Dodd, who lost two previous challenges for the post to outgoing president Oscar Freeman Jr.

Cater served as interim president of the organization after it reformed in 1979. Dodd serves as vice president of the local NAACP and will take office in January as vice president of the state organization.

Freeman, who has been president of the local chapter since 1982, said he decided not to run for re-election after Dodd got into the race.

"I'm not running primarily because I didn't want to split the community again," he said.

Freeman said he is supporting Cater because of her years of service to the local organization.

"She has always been there," he said. "She was the primary person who got this charter going again in 1979."

Cater, a Mableton resident, works for the Federal Employee Credit Union in Atlanta. Dodd lives in Powder Springs and is a conductor with Southern Railroad. He is a past president of the West Cobb Jaycees and the West Cobb Civic Association.

The election will be held from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Saturday at the NAACP branch office at 605 Roswell St.

All those who are dues-paying members of the Cobb NAACP in good standing are eligible to vote.

In addition to president, local chapter members will choose a vice president, second vice president, and a treasurer.

Vice presidential candidates are Ernest Christian, an inspector at Lockheed Georgia Co., and Gail Walton, who works for IBM.

Longtime NAACP member Deanne Bonner is running against Joe Neely, who is new to Cobb County, for second vice president and Lockheed assemblyman George Williams and Southern Bell employee Walter Robinson are running for treasurer.
May 12, 1986

Mr. Oscar Freeman
President
Cobb NAACP
605 Roswell Street
Marietta, Georgia 30061

Dear Oscar:

I felt that the Executive Board Meeting on May 6 was very productive. The new appointments you made to the standing committees of membership and education should prove to be very helpful. I know that my recommendation to appoint Mr. Dodd as the First Vice President probably caught you by surprise. But let me attempt to explain to you my rationale.

First of all, the Cobb branch of the NAACP has been moving very rapidly in the right direction. No other branch in the state of Georgia, the southeastern region, or for that matter, the entire nation, has done the kinds of things that we have done as a local branch. The job with the training program, under the Advocacy Program, and the negotiation of the community block grant is indeed very noteworthy and probably a first so far as local branches are concerned. The very successful Freedom Fund Banquet that we held this past year has also been very positive. Also, the fact that we have made a decision to move into our own offices, which are well equipped and very pleasing so far as structure is concerned, indicates that we are still forging ahead. The one missing variable in this movement that has been spearheaded by your vision has been the lack of unity amongst the various factions within the black community. We are at a point now that we cannot afford to let petty politics stand in the way of the good of our people.

I realize the political differences, and maybe even personal differences, between Mr. Dodd and you. I also realize that so far as knowledge of branch management and organization, Mr. Dodd has a wealth of experience. Further, he has spearheaded an organization, the West Cobb Association, which has been doing very positive things for the community. We must realize that there is a following and that there are some skills that can be utilized. We, as a Cobb County branch, can no longer afford to be close knit. We have to implement strategies to incorporate every aspect of the county, not only Marietta. I feel that

(Continued)
Mr. Oscar Freeman  
May 12, 1986  
Page 2

bringing Mr. Dodd back to the Executive Board will facilitate us bringing the westside into the folds of the NAACP. We have to develop other strategies to incorporate all of Cobb County into our branch. I say this because we are facing serious problems in that county as it relates to political affairs, human and civil rights, housing questions, and accessibility to the educational facilities within that county. The only way that we can combat the powers that be and make them realize that as citizens of Cobb County we should have opportunities in all of these areas, is to deal with them from a point of strength and unity. And this is a goal that I would like to see our branch vigorously pursue.

I also understand your reservations as president because of some of the old wounds and battle scars that you may have in dealing with certain factions of the county. But in the interest of the people of Cobb County and in the interest of the Cobb County Branch, I trust that you can forgive and forget and keep your eyes elevated on the goals that you have established as our very successful and visionary president. If you exercise your authority as president of the local branch, Mr. Dodd can remain in check based upon the assignments that you give him and that the Executive Board gives him. Personally, I think his energies could be best expended on assisting with the various committees in terms of organizing them according to the bylaws of the national office. He may also be very useful in terms of grassroot organization as it relates to increasing membership and political activity. At any time that Mr. Dodd or any other member of the Executive Board feel that they cannot operate within the guidelines of the bylaws, then it is the responsibility of the Executive Board to take appropriate action. I feel, however, that this would not be necessary because of the recent humbling experience that Mr. Dodd encountered at the district level. We, as Christian brothers, should not beat a person when he’s down but look for avenues to pick him up and help him along the way. It is in that spirit that I feel we can count on Mr. Dodd’s expertise and energies in a very positive manner.

I was surprised, as apparently you were, with the re-surfacing of Miss Bonner to our Executive Board meeting. I had no prior knowledge of her decision to attend that particular meeting, but we can seize this opportunity all the same and mold it in a very positive manner; even though I urge caution. I say this again because of the grassroot appeal that Miss Bonner enjoys. If we sit down and analyze why the old guard is coming back into the fold, principle among that analysis would be the fact that even though there were obstacles placed in our way as a local branch, we overcame those obstacles and moved the branch in a very positive direction. I feel that the old guard is seeing that our head may have been "bloodied but never bowed." Therefore, they are seeking to rejoin us and get on the bandwagon. Personally, I don't have any problems with that as long as we do not compromise the vision and the hope and the directions that the branch has established in the last two years. I trust that after you've had time to think and pray about these new situations, that you will concur with my line of reasoning. Oscar, I have personally watched you grow in the position as president of the Cobb NAACP. I remember, also, when I served as a consultant to the local
branch before I was invited to be a member of the Executive Board; I
told you then and I'll tell you again today that you have my full
support. We all have to remember that we are in this game for one reason
and one reason only, that reason is to advance the cause of oppressed
people. I have no doubt that you not only understand that but that
position is also your guiding principle. As a friend I urge you not to
allow any of the proceedings that are a part of the Executive Board
meeting or the general membership meetings to be taken as a personal
attack because that would compromise your effectiveness as the quality
leader you have become.

When we put ourselves, or allow ourselves to be in the forefront of
any struggle we can expect to take a few lumps, and you know I've had my
share. But we cannot forget, as long as we are doing the "right thing",
then God is on our side, and with him on our side we cannot help but to
succeed. I will take it upon myself to write Mr. Dodd a letter
indicating that I expect from him nothing more than full cooperation
with you, the Executive Board and the goals of the NAACP. I will also
include in that letter the necessity of pulling together as we begin to
address those concerns that will face us. I will also inform him that
just as I put his name before our Executive Committee because of the
positive attributes that I know he has, that if he is not able to
cooperate with the Executive Board and you that I will be the first to
ask the Executive Board to rescind his appointment.

I trust that you and your family will continue to receive the very
special blessings from God and know that I have each of you in my
prayers.

Sincerely,

Joseph H. Silver, Ph.D.
Coordinator of the Standing Committees

JHS/mac
LIFESTYLE

Rap groups perform together in the spirit of M. L. King, Jr.

By Rick Lundstrom
Marietta Daily Journal Sports Writer

The rapid-fire, street-tempered cadence of rap music sets it apart from most pop music forms. Though its dance beat calls to mind a party atmosphere, rappers have used the form to preach a broad range of gospels.

And in honor of the second national celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, a dozen local rap bands will be sending messages of hope and social awareness in a Rap in the '90s for Peace' concert Saturday night at 6 in the Jennie T. Anderson Theater in the Cobb Civic Center.

In addition to fostering an awareness of King and his contributions, Travis Freeman — a rapper and organizer for the yearly event — said he would like to encourage young people's self-esteem, and help turn many of them away from drugs in more positive directions.

"I think we're trying to promote staying off the street," Freeman said. "What we're trying to do is put the self-esteem method King has in his speeches."

Freeman said the two songs he'll sing — "What's This World Coming To" and "Just Say No To Drugs" — show positive messages can be sent through rap music. Ian Burke, of T.G.I.B. Productions in Atlanta, added that although rap music is commonly thought of as black music rap — like the Martin Luther King holiday — it's really for everyone.

"White youth go through the same problems, more or less," Burke said.

Freeman is a 1986 graduate of Sprayberry High School located on Sandy Plains Road in east Cobb. Both Travis Freeman, and his sister Trina will be active in the King holiday. Trina is a member of the "Teen Team for King" — a group which has been receiving instruction from the National Park Service to work as ushers and guides for tours earlier in the week, which is being played on a local radio station. The two youth talked about the upcoming holiday and King's contribution to the nation.

"He was a great civil rights leader, who wanted to make things better for black people," Redman said.

"For all people," Moore added.

Tickets for the show are $3 for students who come with a flyer — which is available at all Cobb schools — $3.50 without the flyer, and $5 for adults. The program is sponsored by the Teen Team for King, and all proceeds go to the King Center.
Hoping for sell-out

Winston Strickland, left, chairman of the advertising committee for the NAACP’s Freedom Fund Banquet, and Pearl Freman, chairman of the Freedom Fund Committee, work on preparations for this year’s banquet to be held Saturday, Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. at the Waverly Hotel. Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young will be the featured speaker. Tickets for the banquet are available at the NAACP office at the corner of Roswell and Barnes streets. More than 600 banquet tickets have already been sold. (Staff photo by Jerry Finlay)
Senate approves plan to create circuit-wide

By Stavyn Boyer
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The Senate has unanimously approved an administration plan to create circuit-wide grand juries, but rejected a Republican-backed proposal for those grand juries statewide.

The bill creating special trial districts is part of the governor's extensive drug enforcement package now being considered by the Senate.

Prosecutors claiming the grave crimes committed on a larger scale would make it easier to indict corrupt public officials in small rural counties, while some lawmakers believe juries would more than likely know those officials personally.


cobb briefs...
Arrangement delayed in policeman's death

From staff reports

Arrangement for a Cochran man accused of killing a Marietta police officer was postponed until state officials release his psychiatric evaluation and medication records, officials said.

David Melton Rogers, 21, is charged in the Aug. 30 shooting death of Harvey Adams, the first Marietta police officer to be killed in the line of duty. Rogers had been expected to enter his plea Thursday during the hearing in Bleecker County Superior Court.

Adams went undercover to help Middle Georgia lawmen investigate drug trafficking. He was reported missing three days before his body was found in a septic tank on a farm where he grew up.

Judge Phillip West ordered the Georgia Department of Offender Rehabilitation to furnish Rogers' psychiatric evaluation and information on medication he is taking.

Rogers is being held in the state prison in Reidsville.

Rogers' attorney, W.W. Ladd Jr., of Dalton, said he has not been able to obtain his client's psychiatric record from the police department or the Department of Offender Rehabilitation.

After obtaining the medical records, West will release them to state and defense attorneys and set a new arraignment date.

The trial date has tentatively been set for March 23.

- Lauren Schad

Marietta OKs pension plan

Although Marietta officials may end up breaking their promise on employee pay raises this year, they have come to a second promise that the city pension plan be upgraded.

A revised retirement plan—effective March 1—provides all employees with equal pension coverage and eliminates the distinction between different employee groups, said Marietta City Councilwoman Betty Hunter.

The existing pension plan differentiates between uniformed employees (fire and police) and general employees with regard to usual and early retirement ages and pension benefits. Under the revised plan, the minimum retirement age for all employees is 55.

The new plan, which was unanimously approved by City Council Wednesday, also incorporates a new method of funding the retirement program and a small benefit increase.

Officials of the city's actuarial firm, Martin E. Segal Co., told the council present employees will be given first option of choosing the new retirement plan or staying under the old one.

All future employees will be placed under the revised pension plan.

The plan also provides a "big step for the city," Mayor Vicki Chastain said she believes every employee will be happy since each will be given 90 days to adopt or reject the plan.

"Who can complain?" the mayor asked.

- Katie Long

Woman injured escaping fire

A Mableton woman was listed in stable condition today in Cobb General Hospital where she was being treated for injuries suffered when she and her two children jumped from their second-story apartment to escape a fire.

Theresa McGinnis was reunited with the children, Tuesday, at 11 a.m., a hospital spokesman said.

The fire, which started at 3:30 a.m., burned the top floor of a three-story apartment complex.

No one else in the building was injured.

- City Wide

NAACPs seeks investigation

By James A. Budd
Marietta Daily Journal Staff Writer

The NAACP's Cobb chapter has received six reports of alleged police brutality involving Marietta police officers in the last three months but refused to blame Police Chief Claud Collins.

Oscar Freeman, president of the Cobb NAACP, also repeated his request Thursday for a news conference to announce the formation of a biracial committee to improve race relations in Cobb.

"We have been receiving an increasingly high number of police brutality reports involving the Marietta Police Department," said Freeman, who suggested the biracial committee could review such reports.

Aaron Cuthbert, chairman of the Marietta Civil Service Board, who attended the conference, said he was unaware of the alleged racial brutality incidents.

Freeman, who said he had no documentation of the incidents, said he would gather information and supply it to Cuthbert.

Cuthbert, contacted today, said he was surprised by Freeman's charges of alleged brutality involving Marietta police.

"I don't know anything about this," said Freeman. "But you better believe we're going to look into it."

Cuthbert said one of the incidents allegedly involved two Marietta officers who beat a black resident at a Franklin Road apartment.

"I haven't received the full details yet," said Cuthbert.

At the news conference, Freeman and Cuthbert discussed the impact of the death of Marietta rookie police officer Harvey Adams on the
September 30, 1987

Mr. Oscar Freeman, Jr.
1625 Sonya Drive
Marietta, GA 30066

Dear Oscar:

Just a note to let you know how tremendously moved I was with your words at the memorial service for Kathryn Woods. Your words of reflection expressed so eloquently the warmth and care that Kathryn brought to all her activities. She was truly a fine political activist in that as a dedicated colleague and inspiring mentor, she served as wise counsel to so many. She would have been pleased with your words of affirmation and respect.

I thought your beautiful rendering of the poem at the conclusion of your remarks was so appropriate. Indeed, I would like to have a copy if you could make it available to me, for it sums up so beautifully my own feelings that whatever we do for good on this earth does come back to touch others.

Again, my thanks for your touching tribute to Kathryn, along with my warm personal regards.

Sincerely,

Betty L. Siegel
President

BL5:1kj
SCLC Says It's Not Critical of NAACP but Wants to Start Own Chapter in Cobb

By Eugene Morris
Staff Writer

In order to add "more muscle and more thunder" to the civil rights struggle in Cobb County, spokesmen for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) said Wednesday it plans to launch a Cobb chapter this summer.

"Our getting started in Cobb is not meant to compete with anybody but to complement and supplement all good organizations which affect the lives of the good people who live here," said the Rev. Fred Taylor, the SCLC's coordinator of direct action. However, some Cobb blacks contend that Cobb's NAACP chapter has been largely ineffective in representing the county's nearly 29,000 black, Hispanic, Asian or other minority residents, amounting to 7 percent of the population.

Having a more vocal civil rights organization would have enabled that Cobb's proposed transit routes were better designed to serve black neighborhoods and that voting districts were better aligned to ensure more blacks would hold elected office, the NAACP's critics said.

They also contended that programs providing employment and financial assistance for blacks lagged under the current regime of the NAACP, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. (The NAACP is not doing anything to solve the crisis or help the group of disenfranchised people who haven't been getting an equal share," said Oscar Freeman, a former NAACP president who says he will participate in the new SCLC chapter.

Perry Price, a local black activist, said the NAACP has been inactive due to poor leadership.

"I believe in standing up for civil rights, which is something that nobody has done out here," he said. "Having an SCLC chapter will show people we're tired of playing games, and that we're ready to get down to business."

Cobb NAACP President Jerry Dodd downplayed criticism of his administration and said he welcomed a new chapter of the civil rights group that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. founded in 1957.

"I don't think you can have too many groups in one place because the problems are rampant," he said. "We've been very busy, and there's more than enough for everybody to do. If they're established in Cobb, I would certainly look forward to working with them."

Mr. Freeman agreed Cobb needs the SCLC.

"There's no reason in the world why we can't have more muscle and more thunder," he said. "Maybe this will be the catalyst we need to get something done."
Housing Authority Relocation Plan Draws Fire From SCLC

By McKay Jenkins
Staff Writer

The Marietta Housing Authority is forcing residents of a local public housing project to relocate to other apartments without providing them enough money to move, executives of the newly formed Cobb County chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) said Tuesday.

Residents Short of Funds to Move

"Who will be moving these people for $100? A wino in an old truck?" Mr. Freeman asked Housing Authority officials Tuesday. "This is totally unfair and out of line. Those figures seem to be awfully low."

Unlike many areas that pay a single contractor to move every resident in a given project, the Marietta Housing Authority gives money directly to each family for moving expenses, said Larry Thompson, the authority's director.

"The majority of families are probably relying on their families to help them move," he said.

Though renting a U-Haul truck might be an affordable option, many Fort Hill residents are senior citizens and would be unable to move their furniture even if they could afford a truck, said Hugh Grogan, vice president of the SCLC and a former Marietta City Council member.

Mr. Thompson said the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates only so much money for moving expenses, and local offices have little chance of securing more funds. More limiting still, the money being used for Fort Hill residents must be used for two moves - from their home to a temporary home and back again, Mr. Thompson said.

James Luster, housing chairman for the SCLC, suggested the housing authority allocate the money according to family income.

"This seems to be a case of people on fixed income having the hardest time getting the funds together," he said. "If we could have a list of people to be moved, maybe we could have gotten more funds from HUD to assist these people."

But federal regulations determine relocation expenses based on the number of bedrooms used by a family and have nothing to do with household income, Mr. Thompson said.

The housing authority met with residents of Fort Hill in March 1988 to discuss the upcoming move, but only eight people attended, Mr. Thompson said.

Deane Bonner, a vice president of the SCLC, said such a low turnout shows that "somebody wasn't doing their job."

"There is not one black member on the [housing authority], and I find this board very insensitive, she said. "There are board members who are bored that we're even discussing this."

Mr. Freeman, who grew up in Fort Hill in the 1950s, said he is "totally disgusted" with the degree to which the area has fallen into disrepair.

"There are wine bottles everywhere, and there is no beautification process over there at all," he said.

In addition to a "top-to-bottom" renovation of the apartment interiors, money will be spent to repair exterior drainage pipes, resod nearby lawns and improve playgrounds.
November 10, 1989

Mr. Oscar Freeman  
1625 Sonya Drive  
Marietta, Georgia 30066

Dear Oscar:

Because I'm certain we all have very busy schedules throughout the entire holiday season, I have decided to reschedule the meeting of the Community Advisory Board for Minority Affairs scheduled for November 27 until after the first of the year. Rather than trying to hold one last meeting during what for most people is the busiest time of the year, I think it will be more productive to hold the meeting after the holidays.

I will therefore look forward to seeing you sometime in January. The holidays are traditionally a time of renewal, and I hope you and the other Board members come to the next meeting with a renewed sense of the importance of this significant initiative. I'm sure you share my eagerness to continue our important work during the coming year.

My warm personal regards.

Sincerely,

Betty L. Siegel  
President

BLS:sw
Blacks will plunk down silver in Cobb during Dollar Days

By Ellie Novek
Staff Writer

Cobb County's black community wants to show local merchants the power of the black dollar in action Sept. 1-5, when blacks will take part in the NAACP's national "Black Dollar Days" demonstration.

Cobb NAACP president Oscar Freeman said blacks are encouraged to exchange their regular cash at local banks for Susan B. Anthony coin dollars and $2 bills, and to use these for all of their purchases during the week.

"The special bills and coins used during Black Dollar Days will serve to remind big business that our cash counts," Freeman said.

"We hope to show both black and white people the economic power of black dollars and the effect they can have when a concerned community gets together," Freeman said.

Freeman said that blacks across the country spend some $28 billion a year on food and shelter, but that the economic power of the black consumer has never been demonstrated before.

Participating banks in Cobb have some $100,000 in $2 bills and Susan B. Anthony coins ready for exchange.

They include: all Citizens and Southern banks in Cobb, all Georgia State Bank locations in Cobb, the First National Bank of Cobb County at 100 Cherokee St. and 2474 Windy Hill Rd. and Commercial Bank at 506 Roswell St.

According to Freeman, the banks have agreed to tell an NAACP committee how many of the coins and dollars were used during the demonstration.

"Economics is a new direction for the NAACP. We feel there is a greater need right now for economic stability for blacks," he said.

"Our goal is to send the business community a message: if the NAACP can influence money into your pockets, it can influence it out."

Oscar Freeman

College unveils program aiming to reach blacks

by Ellie Novek
Staff Writer

Kennesaw College has announced a plan to change its image as a mostly white institution in order to attract black students, faculty and staff.

College president Dr. Betty Siegel and administrators have begun a series of dialogues with Cobb's black ministers and community leaders, executive assistant Dr. Ed Rugg said.

"Our feeling is that the recruitment of black students, faculty and staff requires more than the efforts of our admissions office and departments," he said. "We need to have an institutional climate in which blacks will feel welcome at Kennesaw College."

"One of the things that drove the point home for us recently was our loss of a very good black faculty candidate to another institution."

"We matched salary and benefits dollar for dollar, but in the one area we couldn't match was a sense of community. There's a great deal of social isolation for a black person coming into an institution that is mostly white."

Cobb NAACP president Oscar Freeman blamed the college's past image problem among blacks on an absence of dialogue. "There is a tremendous communication lag between the college and the community because there is no real vehicle of communication between the two," he said.

To counteract information gaps like one this spring, when many blacks in Cobb were unaware that political activist Dick Gregory and author Maya Angelou were appearing at the college, many ministers have offered to publish notices.

See College Page 5
County focuses on culture

By TUCKER McQUEEN
tmcqueen@ajc.com

The Rev. Oscar Freeman grew up in a segregated Cobb County. A 1959 graduate of Lemon Street School, where he was named most athletic, Freeman is proud of the changes he has seen since then.

During his five years as president of the Cobb Chapter of the NAACP, Freeman pushed for Cobb schools and the county to observe the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

By 1986, a year before his second term was over, he said, everyone was onboard.

On Monday, the Cobb NAACP and Cobb County government will hold its 20th celebration of King Day from 10 a.m. to noon at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre.

In 2005, more than 900 people attended the event, with an overflow crowd seated in the adjacent Cobb Civic Center.

Freeman said he was helped by Thomas Carter, who chaired the first event, and a diverse group of people who supported the celebration.

Early King Day events in Cobb were held at local churches with the help of an interfaith group.

“There has been tremendous work done in this county to make life better for everyone,” said the Cobb pastor.

NAACP President Deane Bonner said that the groundwork has been laid and that the event will continue for 20 years and beyond. She said there are plans for a larger space for next year's celebration.

“When this started, not all of the cities in Cobb were involved. They are now,” Bonner said. “It has evolved to the point that people look forward to expressing their support for Dr. King.”

Freeman said life today is better, socially and economically, for minorities in Cobb, but apathy is a problem.

“We were all created to live in this world and to get along. There is no perfect world, but if we keep working at it every year, we can leave the world a better place.”

After the celebration at the civic center, the Cobb branch of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference will lead a parade to the Marietta Square. The parade will start at the Lockheed Credit Union, across the street from the Civic Center.

MLK events in Cobb:

- “Youth Speak Out,” 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Saturday, sponsored by the SCLC, Southern Polytechnic University, A.L. Burruss Auditorium, 1100 N. Marietta Parkway, Marietta. 770-572-0055.
- Youth Symposium, open to middle school through high school students, 2-4 p.m. Saturday, sponsored by the NAACP, Lawrence Street Recreation Center, 800 Lawrence St., Marietta.
- M.L. King Gala Ball, SCLC, 7 p.m. - midnight Saturday, Robert Mayfair Hotel, 1775 Parkway Place, Marietta. 404-840-1536.
- Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church annual Martin Luther King Jr. commemorative service, 7:45 a.m. Sunday service, speaker Gov. Sonny Perdue. 11 a.m. Sunday service, speaker Lee E. Rhyan, executive vice president and general manager of Lockheed. Psalmist Teresa Martin will also take part in the day’s activities.
- SCLC Ecumenical Service, 3-6 p.m. Sunday, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 569 Frazier St., Marietta.
- “Continuing the Legacy: Unity through Diversity,” 10 a.m. - noon Monday, sponsored by Cobb County government and Cobb NAACP, Jennie Anderson Theatre, 548 S. Marietta Parkway.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade, 1 p.m. Monday. Sponsored by SCLC. Route from Fairground Street to Marietta Square.
- Totes 2 Tots drive to collect suitcases for foster children, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday, Georgia Cancer Specialists office, 340 Kennestone Hospital Blvd., Suite 100. Visit www.gacancer.com or call 1-866-665-4968.
- Day of Service in Cobb, sponsored by Hands On Atlanta, the King Center, Verizon Wireless and Delta Air Lines. Volunteers needed to help foster children paint murals at Austell Primary school, spruce up Cobb-Douglas Community Crisis Stabilization Unit and help at Wellness Center’s “Go Red for Women” Health Fair in Mableton.


Ashley Smith, a volunteer for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference’s Cobb branch, prepares food at MUST Ministries.
The Turner Chapel Praise Dancers perform during the annual Cobb Martin Luther King Day ceremony at the Anderson Theatre Monday morning during the 20th annual observance of Martin Luther King Day at the Jennie T. Anderson Theatre at the Cobb County Civic Center.

Staff photos by Damien A. Guarnieri

A DAY TO REMEMBER

Near right: Miss Cobb County Lauren Halford listens as 3-year-old Miracle Gober says the Pledge of Allegiance with the Kennesaw Mountain High School colorguard presenting the colors Monday. Far right: The Theatre was packed to capacity for the annual observance. Ms. Halford, and Jesse Hall perform 'Lift Every Voice' and were accompanied by the audience.
Siegel stands up for a ‘Dream’

By Kimberly Starks
MDJ Staff Writer

MARIETTA — Kennesaw State University President Betty Siegel is the recipient of this year’s NAACP “Living the Dream” Award and was one of four keynote speakers during the 20th annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration. As she addressed a record crowd of nearly 800 people Monday, Dr. Siegel said “we remind ourselves today of what’s fully important in our lives.”

“This day, at this place, this is the celebration to be at,” said Dr. Siegel, who spoke at the Cobb County Civic Center’s Jennie T. Anderson Theatre. “Martin

See Dream, Page 5A

Dream

Continued from Page 1A

Luther King left us something to be fully cognizant of: The great service of life, to spend it for something that outlasts us.”

The event, called “Continuing the Legacy: Unity through Diversity,” was co-hosted by the Cobb chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Cobb County government.

Gospel and dance performances were part of the three-hour event during which, for the first time, city officials from the county’s six municipalities attended.

Kennesaw Mayor Leonard Church said citizens and officials have a responsibility to promote and teach King’s dream for peace.

“Together, we will make a difference,” he said.

In addition, Cobb’s state legislators and county commissioners were present. County Manager David Hankerson emceed.

Rep. Alisha Thomas Morgan (D-Austell) said it’s time for citizens to act on the life and legacy of King.

“If we don’t act, we will not do what is necessary to protect the right to vote for African-Americans in this country,” she said, referring to the renewal of the 1965 Voting Rights Act next year. “We must stand, we must do what is necessary to make sure we remember, celebrate and act on what Dr. King stood for, and that is justice and equality for all people.”

First held on Jan. 20, 1986, this year marks the 20th anniversary of the federal holiday and Cobb NAACP’s annual ceremony. Sunday would have been King’s 77th birthday.

“We’ve come a long way,” said the Rev. Oscar Freeman, former Cobb NAACP president and contributing keynote speaker. “This day of celebration didn’t happen by waving a magic wand.”

Remembering Dr. King’s call for justice and equality is appropriate because “laws alone will not make Dr. King’s dream come true,” said Commission Chairman Sam Olens.

“Our hearts must also require that justice and equality,” he said. “For if we listen to each other we will surely discover there is much more that unites us than divides us.”

kstarks@mdjonline.com
NAACP says school officials violated own policy

From left, Mack Eppinger, Lorenzo Woods and Oscar Freeman Jr. of the Cobb County chapter of the NAACP talk about affirmative action plans. Freeman is president of the Cobb County chapter. (Staff photo by Barry Shapiro)
Local NAACP leaders are charging that Cobb school officials have violated their own minority hiring and promotions policy and may be doing away with the policy entirely with the blessings of the federal government.

On Wednesday, Cobb NAACP president Oscar Freeman lambasted a U.S. Justice Department letter which apparently asked Cobb officials to relax the system's affirmative action policy. He also criticized the school officials for refusing to produce a copy of that letter.

The Cobb County school system was one of 51 city and county agencies notified by the justice department that their affirmative action policies, adopted under a consent decree between the school system and the department in 1989, is too broad to meet the letter of the law.

The federal government claims that a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in June, stating that Memphis, Tenn., officials could not ignore a seniority system to keep black firefighters from being laid off, makes minority quota systems illegal.

The Cobb County school system's consent decree "could be interpreted as providing actual preferences regarding race or sex," and that is why Cobb was among the 51 agencies contacted, according to John Wilson, assistant director of public relations for the justice department.

Dr. Thomas S. Tocco, superintendent of the Cobb schools, said the system does not have — and has never used — a quota system to hire minorities. He said it was his understanding that all agencies with consent decrees were contacted by the federal government.

Wilson said the letter, sent in December, asked Cobb to join the federal government in a joint motion to change the affirmative action policy, but he did not know whether the county has responded.

The NAACP has repeatedly asked for but not gotten a copy of the letter, Freeman said.

"If the Cobb County school system has responded to the justice department and if they are about to relax their affirmative action standards, we want people to know about it," Freeman said. "We're saying that with this consent decree the school system is not doing what it should do. Without it they may do even less."

Tocco said he did not know whether attorneys for the school system have responded to the letter, but he added that there were no plans to do away with or weaken the consent decree.

"We have no problems with the consent decree as it is now written," he said. "We basically agreed to continue a good faith effort to hire minorities and that is what we have done."

Shinhoster said the NAACP recently took the Justice Department to court on the affirmative action issue, but lost. The group is now fighting the government on a case by case basis and that strategy, he said, is why they are intent on obtaining a copy of the Justice Department letter and the county's consent decree on minority hiring.

"We want to be in the position on each case to go into court if need be," he said.

Freeman said the NAACP has received seven reports of discriminatory practices in the Cobb County and Marietta city school systems in the past three months — as many, he said, as the group has received in the past five years.

He said four of those complaints were from employees or former employees of the Cobb County school system and the three others involved the Marietta city schools, but he refused to discuss specific cases. He did say, however, that the group is considering filing suit against one or both of the school systems.

Tocco dismissed the discrimination charge, saying the school system makes every effort to hire "qualified minority candidates."

"We are going to hire based on qualifications, and I strongly believe that when you hire those who are most qualified, among those are going to be minorities and women," he said.