

For Racial Progress

Chambers: Much Still Remains To Be Done

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"The most important social
change facing us today is
changing whites and blacks to

accept people without regard or
consideration to race," declared
Charlotte attorney Julius
Levonne Chambers when he
spoke on "Positive Aspects of
Social Changes" at Western
Piedmont Community College's
spring convocation Thursday.
The program was arranged by
the Student Government
Association.

"We have in ten years
wrought a small revolution in
the thinking of people about
social acceptance," Chambers
said. "In 1954 when the
Supreme Court decided that
separate but equal was not what
the 14th amendment intended it
started a chain of events that
changed many minds about
social acceptance."

He said that as a small boy he
never dreamed the day would
come when he could go into a
movie house and sit downstairs,
go to a school with sufficient
library and curriculum, and ride
anywhere on a bus.

Chambers told his integrated
audience that he first came to
Morganton when "your only
black school was closed and 12
black teachers were out of jobs."

"To you this meant black

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folks coming to white schools, black folks accepting whitefolks attitudes, with black folks having nothing to contribute to society," he said. "You have in Morganton an integrated school system, we have in Charlotte an integrated school system, but the thinking still is that what's white is right and what's black is wrong."

The attorney said that pending in North Carolina were 35 desegregation suits which his law firm was handling, as well as 235 cases of discrimination.

"We're slowly beginning to realize that we haven't yet touched the problem that needs to be changed in this country," he asserted.

Pointing out that he represents the black students at the University of North Carolina and Duke, he said, "They're tired of having to give up their habits and ideas and adjust to the habits and ideas of others. They're simply saying, 'Let us make some contribution to this university, this state, this country.'"

Chambers traced the civil rights movement from schools to other areas and said the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1967 "aided in changing the practice of blatant discrimination."

"We say we have accepted these changes but we still have not accepted blacks with their contributions and accepted them as they accept whites," he said, wondering how many whites would vote for a black president, how many whites would accept a black judge.

"Morganton is somewhat unique. You seem to have adjusted to your problems and led the way for other communities, but you still have here problems in housing and urban renewal. You don't yet have completely integrated housing conditions in the city of Morganton," the speaker stated.

"We are going to have continued protests by students, the Black Panthers, and the black militants until this state and country can accept people without racial consideration," Chambers declared. "We are not yet able to reach it, but we must reach it. We must try to do this to eradicate the Black Panthers, the black militants."

Chambers, who throughout his speech referred to his race as black, never Negro, said there is as much racial discrimination among blacks as whites.

"But we are one people, white and black, and we are going to have to live together in this country as one people. We must further implement the ideas our founding fathers sought to implement. This is the only way our country can continue to exist," he concluded.

The speaker was introduced by W. Stanley Moore, chairman of the college's board of trustees.

A native of Mt. Gilead, Chambers graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. degree in history in 1958 from North Carolina College at Durham. He received a Woodrow Wilson scholarship to study at the University of Michigan 1958-59 where he received an M.A. degree in history. He also received a John Hay Whitney fellowship to study law at the UNC Law School 1959-62 where he was awarded his bachelor of law degree in 1962. While there he was editor-in-chief of the North Carolina Law Review and was selected to the Order of the Coif, legal honorary society, and the Order of the Golden Fleece, highest campus honor.

After graduation from law school, Chambers was appointed as a teaching associate and taught first year law classes at Columbia University School of Law where he received a master of law degree in 1963. He became the first legal intern with NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc. in 1963-64 and worked principally in civil rights cases in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama.

The attorney was guest instructor at Harvard University in the summer of 1965, was lecturer at Yale University Law School in March of this year, served on the inter-government task force for the City of Charlotte, chairman of the board of the Charlotte Bureau on Employment Training and Placement, and was appointed U. S. Commissioner for the Western District on N. C. in 1965.

Chambers began law practice in Charlotte in 1963 and has worked primarily with civil rights cases. He is presently senior partner in the law firm of Chambers, Stein, Ferguson and Lanning.

Terry Childers, president of the WPCC Student Government Association, extended a welcome. Dr. Gordon Blank, WPCC president, spoke briefly on the issues of today and the need for a better understanding of them.

The convocation was concluded with a memorial service eulogizing two great leaders, Dwight David Eisenhower, who was buried this week, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who was slain one year ago today.

Miss Charlene Forney, chairman of the Human Relations Club at the college, presented Rev. W. Flemon McIntosh Jr. who paid tribute to the two fallen leaders.

"Dwight Eisenhower was a relentless crusader for what he believed right. His claim to fame is secure. No one has served his country with more devotion or with such fearless courage. Here was a man of superlatively high standards, complete integrity, and boundless energy for whatever task he took in hand. No one is likely to forget the candor of his speech, the courage of his faith, the warm and glowing brightness of his smiles. The character of the life he lived might be summed up in a few words: he was sincere, he was earnest, he was loyal, and he was self-sacrificing."

Eulogizing Dr. King, McIntosh said, "Dr. King was a leader in a great national crusade to cleanse the blot of racism from the tortured past and the stained present. The American citizens killed Dr. King just as they did President Kennedy and his brother Robert. The bullets of the assassin have done the work of an age...an age where hate has outranked love...an age wherein spiritual values are in the number two spot behind power and the lust for recognition by small people, people that are small in mind and heart."

"Dr. King will have died in vain unless those of us who believe in creating a better society redouble our efforts win what he fought for. Now is the hour for us to rededicate our lives to the things that our fallen heroes stood for. The greatest tribute we can pay to the memory of Dr. King is in our daily lives, to do everything we can to reduce the forces of hatred which drive men to such terrible deeds."

Miss Virginia Conley sang "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" and "Let Us Break Bread Together," accompanied at the piano by Miss Nan Ervin.



Attorney Speaks At WPCC Convocation

Julius L. Chambers (center), Charlotte attorney well-known for his work in civil rights, was guest speaker at the spring convocation at Western Piedmont Community College Thursday. With him are Terry Childers (left),

president of the college's Student Government Association which sponsors the convocation, and Dr. Gordon Blank, president of the college. (Staff photo by Benny Orders)