

# Tucker speaks on political involvement

by Raquel Stewart and Debbie Hodges

"Politics is using your mind, your talent, and your skills," the former secretary of state of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania told Bennett students and faculty.

C. Delores Tucker stressed political involvement to an enthusiastic audience attending the "Readers Digest" Lecture in Pfeiffer Chapel on Tuesday, March 27. While women have come a long way, she feels they can become more effective in politics, the changing process of the world.

Citing birth and death certificates, zoning ordinances, and marriage and drivers' licenses as examples of obtaining political permission, the first black female member of the Philadelphia zoning board testified that "government influences everything from conception to resurrection - so you had better be about the business of affecting government."

Urging Bennett's black women

to assert themselves politically, Mrs. Tucker pointed out that political leaders must respond to blacks and women in order to survive. She compared the chains of Kunta Kinte to the chains placed upon Blacks by their own political apathy. The barriers of no money, jobs, or education will have to be removed by those the barriers are hindering, she said.

Mrs. Tucker remembered other barriers from her days of marching with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., most notably the Selma-Montgomery march. She said it was during these marches in the North and South that she first realized the need for Blacks to put their hands on the levers of power.

Although the marches usually began in front of a church, she said, they ended in front of the "political kingdom," whether it was a courthouse or the White House.

She also charged that the "American Dream" was just that - a dream - but that America has

the potential of actually becoming that dream. The founding fathers could not have envisioned the country that the U.S. has become, she said.

She pointed out that blacks have given much to build this country and that their roots are here. "There's a lot of black in the red, white and blue - and nothing will wash it out," she claimed. But she also claimed that blacks tend to sit back when it comes to taking an active part in politics.

Mrs. Tucker gave examples from her own experiences in which her having a hand on the levers of power induced positive change. In her first two years as Pennsylvania's Secretary of State 13 women judges and 11 black judges, more than in the entire history of the Commonwealth, were appointed in that state. She was also instrumental in gaining and implementing 18 year-olds' right to vote in that state.

One of her greatest disappointments is that the young people whom she helped to gain the vote and to register have not taken advantage of their new right. No one, she said, has the right to say she is concerned about the plight of her people if she does not fully exercise her duties by voting.

Mrs. Tucker's career began at age 17 when she volunteered to pass out leaflets and to drive people to register and vote. She continued volunteering and offered to help a candidate for governor reach her people for free. When he won the primary, he offered her the vice-chairmanship of the party.

"Cast your bread upon the waters," she urged Bennett students who wish to get a foot in the political door. "Volunteer to help someone and they will remember you," she said.

Mrs. Tucker ran for lieutenant governor, but lost by a "political fluke." A biology teacher with the same name as the gubernatorial candidate ran against her, she explained. Voters, thinking

the teacher was the candidate for governor, voted for him. She didn't have a chance, she declared.

This defeat did not keep the first black woman to sit in a state cabinet back. Still very active in the lecture circuit, Mrs. Tucker is now campaigning to elect the first black mayor of Philadelphia.

Historically, she noted, women have generally been believed incapable of holding powerful positions in government. She quipped, "God put the crack in the liberty bell because he knew the founding fathers didn't mean liberty and justice for all."

Active in numerous political organizations, Mrs. Tucker noted a different type of slavery which exists in this country for blacks.

"We no longer face the peace lines, but the unemployment lines. We are no longer barred at the school house door, we are turned away at the factory door. We are perfectly free to sit at the front of the bus, but we must find the money for the fare. We can enter any eating place in town, but we can't afford to order. We no longer fear clubbing by the police, but our prolonged failure to find work is beating us to the ground," she said.

"These barriers will remain until we remove them," she added.

During the marches for civil rights in the 1950's and 1960's, Mrs. Tucker became more aware of how change would occur. She said, "In City Hall, they hold the key to what we want. Politics is what you feel is best for your community, family, and benefactors."

Tucker referred to the women's coalitions which are joining in the move for political power. Speaking of a conference held with President Jimmy Carter, she said, "We told him, we'll support you if you place more women in government, in the non-traditional areas in proportion to their representation in the country."

During the question-answer period, Mrs. Tucker discussed the disintegration of the black family. She called attention to concern about the increasing numbers of black men who opt for homosexual relationships, interracial marriage, or who are going to jail.

"The answer? We need a spiritual revolution in America," she

said, emphasizing the strong religious faith held by "our black ancestors."

"Our mothers and grandmothers could not go to Bennett; they didn't have the money. They could not read because it was against the law, but they had one thing—they had God and spiritual awareness. They had values," she said.

She noted that women must accept some of the responsibilities and return to a tradition of moral character and sound values.

"We have to search ourselves, for women are the cornerstones of any society. We are the moral weavers of the special fabric of our society."

To an audience that was greatly awed by her comments, Mrs. Tucker added that one young man informed her of part of the problem.

"He said that 'we don't respect our women because they don't respect themselves.'"

She added, "My nephew told me that there is one type of woman you marry, another type you don't."

During the question and answer period Mrs. Tucker came out in support of the ERA. Regarding the women's liberation movement, she said that black women are not fighting black men. Racism is the priority for black women, while sexism is the priority of white women. She stated that black women will help their white sisters in their fight if they will help their black sisters in their fight.

In reference to a question concerning black political leaders who are not helping blacks, Mrs. Tucker said there are two kinds of political leaders: those who are in office for personal power and ego-gratification and those who are in office for "people power."

The system tries to tear down those who are for the people with bullets and pens, she said. "If the press is never attacking a political leader, he's not doing anything for you," she said. The big political machines will select leaders who it feels will do what it says. Until blacks and women select and pay for their own candidates, she testified, they can not fault leaders for following the machines.

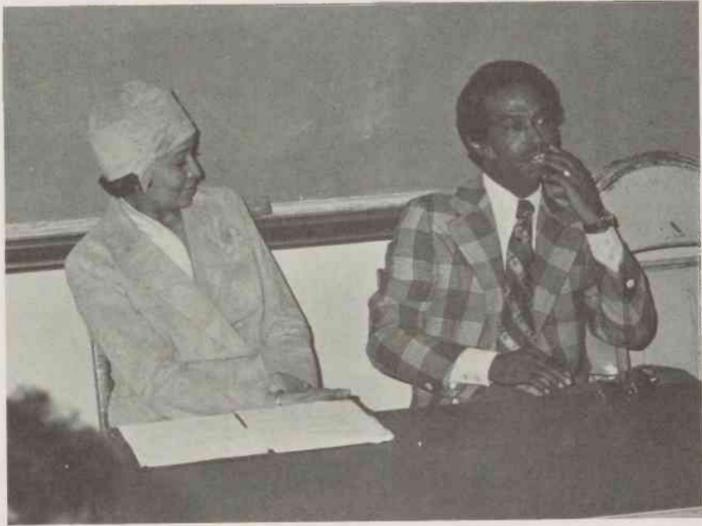


Photo by Myra Davis

Mrs. C. Delores Tucker, who spoke on campus last week, visits with Dr. Trader's class. She was joined by H. M. Micheaux, a North Carolina state attorney. They discussed many current events including the desegregation of North Carolina colleges and the plight of the Black family.

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## Bundy finds 'roots' and writes book

by Joan Walker

Dr. V. Mayo Bundy, born June 8, 1914, professor of sociology and political science, is the author of "Meeting Our Ancestors: Culbreth, Autry, Maxwell, Bundy, Winslow, Henly and Allied Families."

Dr. Bundy was told remarkable stories about his grandparents when he was a youngster back in the 'thirties by his mother, grandfather Bundy and cousin Armelia Autry Reid.

His family motivated him to learn more about his roots and till this day he still tries to gather information about his roots when he's not on campus.

He wasn't the only one who learned about his roots, however; some of his not-to-close relatives read his book, and a few of them are visiting him in May.

He is the son of Vivian Linley and Minnie Nicholson Culbreth Bundy. He married Norma Harrington Melvin on April 30, 1940. He has four children—Vee Mayo, Norma McKay Culbreth, Deborah Harrington and Linda Jo.

His book tells fascinating details of how last names were derived.

Even if one doesn't know much history, one can look at the book's photographs dated back to 1850 and take note of the fashions.

If you look closely at the photos you'll see no one smiled.

His book shows a picture of Joseph Henley (first cousin to Dr. Bundy's great-great-grandmother Elizabeth) who was active in the

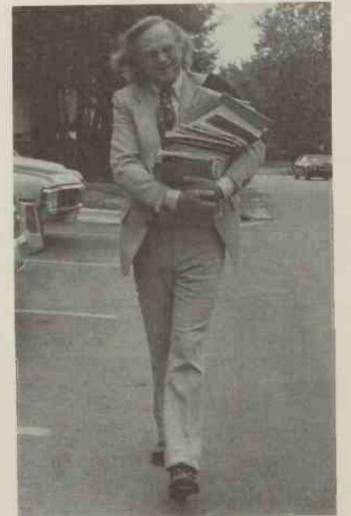
Underground Railroad.

A story that might be humorous to others is the one of Dr. Bundy's roommate in college. Every time his roommate made home-brew and drank it, Dr. Bundy would sleep in a friend's room because he was taught those who drink cause trouble.

Dr. Bundy stressed that no one in his family owned slaves.

No harsh words or bragging are to be found in this book, just plain honest information.

His book indeed is appealing.



Dr. Bundy worked hard to find enough materials for his book on his family roots. Shown are only a few he used.