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Words of Wisdom

"Difficult indeed is it for those to emerge from
obscurity whose noble qualities are cramped
by narrow means at home."
Juvenal

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A BLACK AGENDA FOR THE 80's

More Than 1,200 Local and National Leaders Gather In Richmond

By Wekesa O. Madzimoyo

RICHMOND, VA.—Over 1,200 local and national black leaders gathered in here for a four day conference (February 28-March 2), called to "chart a black agenda for the eighties."

Richmond's mayor, Henry March III, welcomed the conference convenors and delegates stating that "the stirring deeds to be accomplished at this conference will be recorded in history." The black Richmond mayor added, "I never dreamed that all of my heroes would come here."

Featured at the conference were nine major speakers including Ben-

jamin Hooks, Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Rev. Jesse Jackson, Executive Director of Operation PUSH, Former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young, Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Indiana; Congressman Ron Dellums, Rep. Cardiss Collins, (D-Ill.), and Dick Gregory.

The conference also held workshops on housing, income maintenance, U.S.-Africa relations, health, black economic development, inflation and twelve other topics relating to black Americans. These eight-

teen workshops were held on Friday and Saturday. Sunday's feature was to have been a presidential candidates forum with questions from the press and conference participants. However, Senator Ted Kennedy, Governor Jerry Brown and other candidates scheduled to appear, changed their minds and refused to attend.

Conference convenor Richard Hatcher responded to the candidates' actions at a Saturday press conference, saying "No useful purpose would be served by the convenors of this conference to comment on the individual actions of those candidates." "They must do the explaining, we did the inviting," he added. Rev. Jesse Jackson responded by encouraging black Americans to "dramatically underscore the lost opportunities by registering and voting in large numbers."

Billed as a conference "to chart an agenda which will move black Americans from dependence to independence," the meeting drew dramatically different responses from conference participants.

Dr. E. Lavonia Allison, Director of the North Carolina Health Manpower program, lauded



More For Mental Health

Mental health workers demonstrate in front of the State House in Trenton, N.J., asking for more funds for community mental health centers and for Gov. Byrne to sign Assembly Bill A-264 which would license all boarding homes in the state. UPI Photo

the conference as a "tremendous success." "I think the conference and the workshops resulted in very clear goals and objectives which will help guide black people through the 80's and serve as a measuring rod for identifying candidates worthy of black support," she said.

Dr. William Nelson, chairman of Black Studies at Ohio State University and president of that state's Black Assembly, challenged this view. In his estimation, "At best the conference was speaking in half-tones because there was a significant portion of the black population which wasn't

present." He continued, "there were no black leftists or progressive organizations or representatives at the conference."

Although billed as a nonpartisan conference, presidential supporters distributed campaign literature and actively courted the news media. No major speaker or workshop focused upon one candidate, but the "support Kennedy" mixers and the green and white "support Carter-Mondale" buttons left some conferees feeling that the conference's focus has been seriously compromised by the speculation about candidates.

This low key partisan wave accounted in part for the conference being referred to as "an exercise in futility" by Winston-Salem's alderman Larry Little. Little supported his charge, saying "too many leaders have already committed to Carter or Kennedy."

The conference leadership's commitment to presidential candidates was also blamed for the conference's sidestepping the issue of independent black political action or a black political party. The conference voted to appoint a task force to study the feasibility of such action. Rev. Doug Moore, civil rights activist and former pastor of Asbury Temple Methodist Church in Durham, said "I compare this conference to the 1972 conference in Gary, Ind. At that time, the politicians decided that they would play the same game of supporting particular candidates. Then, they came back in '76 in Charlotte and did the same thing. Even more so at this conference, there are more black folk who have lined up with spaghetti and macaroni in the political process. The real issue is that black folks' current leadership is not free enough to discuss forming an independent black political party."

Richard G. Hatcher, one of the conference convenors, evaded the criticism of the hastily organized meeting. The decision to hold the conference was not made until December.

Amid criticism that grass roots organizations had not been invited, a dispute with the National Tenants Organization, which says it represents seven million residents of public housing, was resolved by allowing 24 delegates from the organization to attend.

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Arrington Keynotes NAACP Regional Conference

CHARLOTTE—Dr. Richard Arrington, Jr., Mayor of Birmingham, Ala., delivered the keynote address at the public mass meeting of the 28th Annual Southeast Region Conference of the NAACP here last Thursday evening at Friendship Baptist Church.

Regional Conference delegates came from seven states in the Southeast Region: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Areas of concentration during the conference centered on building better branches, specific areas of education, employment-economic development, civil rights, political and legislative activities, including a report on the voting records of congressmen.

Among other activities was a dynamic play presented Friday evening by Stage South, the State

Theatre of South Carolina, entitled "Some Banzis Are Dead." This powerful and eloquent play by Abdul Fawad specified the plight of a poor worker who has been "endorsed out" (expelled) from New Brighton by the authorities and must assume the identity and passport of a dead man if he is to continue to qualify for a life of hopeless drudgery.

Other speakers addressing the conference were Benjamin L. Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP; Dr. Brodus N. Butler, president of the Robert R. Moton Memorial Institute, Inc., of Washington, D.C.; (Dr. Butler is a member of the NAACP National Board of Directors.); and Bishop William Milton Smith, Senior Presiding Bishop of the Second Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

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Join The NAACP Today.
You'll Be Glad You Did!

Reception For Author To Celebrate Publication Of Books

Publication of two scholarly books by North Carolina Central University Professor James Olney will be celebrated Sunday at a special 7 p.m., reception for the author at the National Humanities Center in the Research Triangle Park.

Olney, a member of the NCCU English faculty since 1970, is the author of *The Rhizome and the Flower: The Perennial Philosophy—Years and Jung*, being published by the University of California Press. He is also editor of a new Princeton University Press book, *Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical*, to which he contributed an introduction, an original essay on the "ontology of autobiography," and a translation of a French essay.

Both books are scheduled for March publication. Olney's earlier works include two other books, *Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography* and *Tell Me Africa: An Approach to African Literature*, published by Princeton University Press in 1972 and 1973, respectively.

He has also taught at Drake, Northwestern, and Amherst. Olney was a Fulbright Lecturer and chairman of the department of English at Cuttington College during a two-year stay in Liberia, West Africa.

A portion of his research on the psychologist Jung and the Irish poet Yeats was paid for by a Frances G. Wickes Foundation grant in 1972-73, when he collected materials in Ireland, England, and Switzerland.

The reception is being sponsored by the Forum Committee and the English Department at NCCU. Invitations have been extended to Olney's students and to his colleagues at NCCU and neighboring campuses.

The volume on autobiography has been selected as one of the alternate choices for February for members of the New York-based Readers' Subscription book club. The book club magazine, *The Griffin*, in its February issue, comments about the new volume as follows: "This anthology gathers together for the first time the best and most important writings on autobiography, a subject of literary study that has received increasing attention in the last twenty years."

The essays which Olney has selected for inclusion are widely varied in their approach to the study of autobiography. He has picked the strongest representatives of each view — literary, linguistic, psychoanalytic, and historic. Women's studies, black history, and anthropology are among the topics discussed.

The Griffin calls the volume "a rich and unique anthology, which brilliantly marks the rise of critical attention" to its topic.

Prof. Olney and his family live at 1500 Forest Hills Plaza in Durham.

Labor And Civil Rights Groups To Salute Rustin

NEW YORK—Bayard Rustin, the veteran civil rights leader, will be the focal point of a one-day celebration scheduled for Tuesday, March 18 at the Sheraton Center in New York City.

Vernon Jordan, executive director of the National Urban League, and Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO are expected to address the banquet honoring Rustin on his 70th birthday anniversary. Jordan and Kirkland are also serving as co-chairman of the affair.

Rustin, a long time associate of A. Philip Randolph, is best known for his role in organizing the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. Over 250,000 people assembled for the march, making it one of the largest civil rights demonstrations ever held.

Throughout his long career, Rustin has also been involved in many other human rights struggles including the libera-

tion movements in India and Africa. More recently, he has been active in organizing support for the Indo-Chinese refugees, as well as for the starving people of Cambodia.

Currently Rustin serves as chairman of the board of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. He is also chairman of the Recruitment and Training Program (R-T-P) and a member of the Black Leadership Forum.

Dinner vice-chairmen include Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the NAACP; Thomas R. Donahue, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer; Mrs. Coretta Scott King and Miss Dorothy I. Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women.

Banquet tickets can be ordered from the A. Philip Randolph Institute, 260 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010, (212) 533-8000.

National Conference On Blacks In Higher Education To Convene

WASHINGTON —

The presidents/chancellors of the nation's historically black colleges and universities and numerous other prominent educators and scholars will convene at the Washington Hilton Hotel, April 11-13, to discuss issues affecting blacks in higher education. The occasion will be the Fifth National Conference on Blacks in Higher Education, sponsored by the Washington-based National Association For Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO).

The purpose of this conference is to provide a forum for nationally ac-

claimed researchers, scholars, and policy-makers, including presidents/chancellors and chief academic officers of historically black colleges, to assemble not only to have dialogue on these crucial issues, but more important, to provide "model approaches" and proposals for attaining equality for blacks in higher education. This conference will draw upon the talents and resources of a broad cross-section of expert panelists and nationally renowned speakers who will analyze current educational efforts and chart the path toward uniqueness, access, choice and parity for

blacks in higher education.

NAFEO's Fifth National Conference will convene panels on student recruitment and retention, financial management, cross-cultural communication, graduate and professional education and research opportunities, legal issues, testing, accreditation, federal policies, engineering programs, affirmative action, student financial aid, community colleges, crime prevention, health issues and academic reinforcement strategies for blacks. The newly appointed Secretary of Education, The Honorable Shirley

Statewide Tenant Meeting Held In Spite of Weather

Despite a gathering snow storm Saturday, seventy-five tenants from as far away as Wilmington and Morganton made it to Durham for a statewide tenant meeting planned for March 1.

Due to worsening road conditions, the session was shortened to half a day. However, in that period, individuals from the different parts of the state met to initiate a network for further meetings of the North Carolina Tenant Organization. The following counties were represented: Johnston, Wake, Harnett, Alamance, New Hanover, Orange, Durham, Warren, Forsyth, Mecklenburg, Watauga, Burke and Chatham.

Ms. Pat Rogers of the Durham Tenant Steering Committee, one of the two Durham organizations sponsoring the event, said that morning that she had received ten phone calls from groups unable to attend because of the weather.

Those assembled voted to hold the next meeting in Raleigh to be sponsored by the Raleigh Tenant Association. The tenants also agreed that a larger assembly room was needed.

"If we have this many attending in a snow storm, we'll need to find a much larger place for a meeting in which the weather holds no one back," said Ms.

Mary Dunn of the Raleigh group. Representatives from Charlotte and High Point also volunteered to host future meetings.

Before leaving to drive

home on slick highways, the conferees used an open mike format to talk about tenant activities in their respective towns. The Wilmington group had

published an updated handbook on tenant-landlord law for use by tenants to know their rights in North Carolina. The Raleigh Tenant Association was working on the issue of rental discrimination against people with children in certain apartment complexes. Ms. Mildred Pierce of the Chapel Hill Tenant Organization, said that last summer the group had succeeded in getting money from the Town of Chapel Hill and Joint Orange-Chatham Community Action for a tenant organizer. Sam Reed, of the Durham Chapter of the National Council for Senior Citizens, said there should be efforts at coordination between senior citizen groups and tenant organizations.

The assembly thanked the Durham sponsors, West End Community Action Group and the Durham Tenant Steering Committee, and voted to use, at the next meeting, the agenda set up by these two groups. The agenda had included speakers from the National Tenant Organization who were unable to attend Saturday because of the storm.

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Eighty-Ninth Anniversary

ECSU Founders Day Observance Set For March 14

ELIZABETH CITY—Founders Day, commemorating the Eighty-Ninth Anniversary of Elizabeth City State University, is set for Friday, March 14. This year's observance includes the Founders Day Convocation at 10 a.m., in Moore Hall auditorium, the dedication and naming of two campus facilities; and the Annual Pilgrimage.

Highlight of the convocation will be an address by Dr. Cleon F. Thompson, Jr., vice president for Student Services and Special Programs of the UNC-General Administration. Well familiar with the development of historically black institutions of higher learning, Dr. Thompson holds

degrees from North Carolina Central University and Duke University. A native of Raleigh, he has held positions at North Carolina A & T State University, Tuskegee Institute and Shaw University.

A member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, among others, Dr. Thompson has done further studies and research at the UNC-Chapel Hill Medical School, North Carolina State University, and the Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies. In 1955, he was cited for his "Design and Construction of a Lymphatization Apparatus from Scrapped

Equipment for United States Army Medical Corp."

Prior to introducing Dr. Thompson, Chancellor Marion D. Thorpe will introduce and recognize nine alumni and supporters of the University for their significant contributions to society.

Chancellor Thorpe will lead the list of University officials and special guests when the relatively new \$1.9 million physical education complex, and the \$598,310 maintenance facility are officially named the Robert L. Vaughan Sports Arena, and the Harvey L. Thomas Charles Jenkins Maintenance Building.