

June,

Please fax duplicate of
speech segment to Kathy
Walman to look at.

Fax # 703-759-6519
ad call O'Detta at 6-6611

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And while we all work toward a time when the fires of racism will be doused forever, we need to support initiatives that designed to counter our discrimination and to create a more inclusive society that truly provides equal opportunity. That's why after careful study last year, the President decided that while we could and should make some changes in affirmative action laws, it would be mistake to end them and walk away.

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They are realizing that much more unites us than divides us. And that our differences only make our country stronger and more resilient. And perhaps in these churches they re-learning and recognizing the truth of that old song from Sunday school, "Jesus loves the little children of the world, red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight."

So let us commit ourselves to working together, to building bridges, to a new season of hope for America and for our children.

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE AME ZION CHURCH
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 29, 1996

[Acknowledgments: Board of Bishops. especially president of the board, Joseph Johnson of Little Rock. Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, senior bishop of the board of Bishops; Bishop Milton A. Williams, host Bishop; General Officers of the Church, delegates, other guests]

Thank you, Bishop Johnson for your kind introduction. [It's good to see you again.] I have to admit that I'm nervous at the thought of speaking before so many bishops and preachers, so I'm delighted that a fellow Arkansan is here to share the stage with me.

I am honored to be here today at this Bicentennial General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. On behalf of the President, I want to welcome all of you to Washington. Let me thank you -- bishops, preachers, and laity -- for your commitment to your churches and for all you are doing to nourish the spirits of our families and our communities.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the AME Zion church, an institution that has witnessed and weathered all the decisive events in our country's history. You have been a refuge, a beacon, a source of strength for millions of African-Americans today and in the darkest hours of our country. Some of our greatest Americans, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglas have found inspiration and spiritual renewal in your sanctuaries. And for all Americans, this church has served as a voice of compassion and conscience.

The President, Chelsea and I had the privilege of sharing in the AME Zion tradition when we worshipped with your host pastors, the Reverends John and Diana Cherry, one Sunday morning two summers ago. We were moved by the powerful sermon, the wonderful hymns, and the warm hospitality of the congregation at Full Gospel.

The Cherrys made a lasting impression on my family. The President and I think of them often to remind ourselves of how one or two committed individuals can make positive differences in the lives of so many.

As many of you know, families are the focus of the Cherrys' ministry. Over the years, they have helped more than a hundred couples save their marriages and keep their families together. Because of the Cherrys, hundreds of children have been spared the heartbreak, the confusion, and financial hardship of divorce and growing up in single-parent homes. Instead, they will have better opportunities to flourish, to grow to become successful adults under the love, support, and constant guidance of a mother

and a father.

The Cherrys are on to something. Families are the bedrock of our society. And God has entrusted families with the primary responsibility for raising and nurturing our country's most precious resource: Our children.

Today, I want to talk about children and how we can all work together to strengthen our families and cherish our children. Children need us. They are not rugged individualists. And while they depend first and foremost on their own parents, children rely on so many other adults in their communities -- the police officer patrolling the neighborhood, the government official who monitors food and water quality, the business owners who employ their parents, and the executives who decide what shows go on television.

We know so well what Jesus said to his disciples while holding a small child in his arms: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me, but the one who sends me." If we could only keep that in mind, and take the image we have of Jesus and transpose it onto the face of every child we see. Then we would ask ourselves "How could I deny that child the health care that child needs? How could I write-off that child because of who his parents are?"

As adults, we have to start thinking and believing that there isn't really any such thing as someone else's child. My child, your child, all children everywhere, must live and make their ways in a society and in a world that's becoming smaller, yet more complex.

That's why we all must work together to create a better world for our children. A new millennium is just a few short years away. We are undergoing sweeping changes in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to the rest of the world. The Cold War is over. And today we find ourselves living in a new global economy, in which jobs and capital and technology and ideas move across borders at lightening speeds. These are developments that present Americans with great opportunities -- but only if we are equipped with the tools to seize those opportunities.

My husband believes that America cannot afford to waste any of our citizens. He is working hard to see that all our people, especially our children, enter the next millennium with the tools and opportunities to make the most of their God-given abilities.

We are on the road to achieving this vision. Our economy is the healthiest it's been in decades. The President's economic plan has cut the deficit in half. America has 10 million new jobs. The African-American unemployment rate has been in single digits for the first time in 20 years. There are 100,000 new African American owned businesses.

The President has implemented policies specifically designed to help families like the Family and Medical Leave Law that guarantees workers unpaid leave from their jobs to take care of sick family members. He has boosted the Earned Income Tax Credit, a tax program that reduces the taxes of our poorest working families.

So we're moving in the right direction. But we can do more. The President is waiting impatiently for Congress to send him two bills that will make a huge difference to American families -- the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, which says that workers cannot lose their health insurance if they lose or change jobs, or if someone in their family has been sick, and a bill raising the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour.

We must not allow anyone to undermine our common and basic responsibility to the poor pregnant women, children, disabled and senior citizens who depend on Medicaid and Medicare.

We must also stand for the right kind of welfare reform. The President has already given waivers to many states who want to try new strategies of moving people off welfare and into the permanent workforce. The right way to move people off welfare is not only to require work, but also to offer them child care so that they can go to work without having to worry about their children. We will only transform this broken system if we do right by children and put people to work so they can earn a paycheck, not draw a welfare check.

And we have to keep working until all of our people can reap the rewards of this time of change, including those who have not been reached by the recovery, those who have been downsized by the new global economy, those who are stuck in place because they don't have the skills to move up.

Education will be crucial in meeting this challenge. The President is working to put more computers in our schools and to hook every classroom to the Internet. Last month, the President introduced a proposal that will make two years of college as accessible to all Americans as the first twelve. America's Hope Scholarships would offer a \$1,500 tax credit -- enough for tuition at a typical community college -- to any American who wants to study hard and get ready for the future.

Still, those computers and that chance at a college education will mean little if our children are afraid to walk to and from school, if they are raised in fear, seduced by the false allure of drugs, or crime or gangs into a world of distorted values, diminished hope, and ultimate disappointment.

We simply cannot go into the 21st century with children having children, children killing children, children being raised by other children, or raising themselves on the streets alone. This is not the America I grew up in, not the America you grew up

in, not the America we can pass on to our children and their children.

There are too many people in this country who have given up on these problems. But you -- the leaders and members of this great church -- haven't given up. On behalf of the President, I thank you for staying on the front lines in the war against drugs and violence.

The President stands with you. That's why he worked to pass the Crime Bill, to put 100,000 police community police officers on the streets. These are officers who are walking the beats in our neighborhoods, getting to know the people they serve, sniffing out the troublemakers, serving as role models to our children. They aren't just catching criminals, they are making people feel safe, and preventing crimes from happening in the first place.

The President signed the Brady Bill, taking 19 assault weapons off our streets and making sure that all guns stay out of the hands of tens of thousands of people with criminal records. He supports school uniforms so that children do not hurt or kill each other over designer jackets or gang colors; community-based curfews, and other programs to help our children stay out of trouble. He knows that children need something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. I think our children should be able to say yes to jobs in the summertime, yes to staying in schools after hours if they don't want to be on the street, yes to supervised recreation, yes to things that will enrich our lives and surround them with positive role models.

Like it or not, our children also learn much of their behavior from the things they see on TV. A psychologist once noted that children are like little VCRs who repeat everything they see on TV. Too often, the things they see encourage violent and destructive behavior. So the president fought for a V-chip to be installed in all TV sets that will allow parents to block out objectionable programming. And today, the President, Vice President, Mrs. Gore and I met with TV executives to see what we could do to strengthen children's television programming.

But the government can only go so far. We can move forward as a country if we reassert the basic bargain of American citizenship -- opportunity for everyone and responsibility from all. We must understand that that responsibility includes our responsibility not just to make the most of our own lives and our family's lives, but to be good citizens for our communities and for our country.

I call upon each of you, the members of the AME Zion church, to lead this effort to restore hope, responsibility, and opportunity to our communities. There is no more powerful force in this country than the force of conscience and commitment. And that is the force we all feel in this room today.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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TO: Kathy Wallman

FROM: June Shih

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NUMBER OF PAGES (INCLUDING COVER SHEET): 2

COMMENTS: Here is the part of speech that touches
church burnings. I can be reached
at 456-5640. OR 202-986-1772 this
weekend. JS

WARNING

Unauthorized use of these materials is subject to federal prosecution

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New Orleans, Louisiana)

For Immediate Release

May 30, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

11:55 A.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: I'm having such a good time I hate to interrupt it. (Laughter.) Please be seated.

PERSON IN AUDIENCE: We love you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you. (Applause.)

Bishop Owens, you don't have to calm this crowd for me, I like it the other way. (Applause.) Mother Crouch, thank you for letting me come to your meeting. Now, I know whose meeting this is. (Applause.) And I know that this is supposed to be about the spirit, but if you will forgive me, this is also one fine looking crowd today. (Applause.)

Last night my wife called me to check in, as we always do when one of us is away from home, and she was on her way to California. And Hillary said, "Well, what are you doing tomorrow?" And I said, "Well, I'm going to the Women's Convention of the Church of God in Christ." (Applause.) And she said, "Well, you finally figured out where the power is." (Applause.)

The bishops will find a way to make me pay for that, I think, but I had a good time. (Laughter.)

I'm glad to be here with some other friends today. I brought two of Louisiana's Congressmen down here with me, Congressmen Bill Jefferson and Congressman Cleo Fields.



I'm glad to be here with some other friends today. I brought two of Louisiana's Congressmen down here with me, Congressmen Bill Jefferson and Congressman Cleo Fields. I'm honored to be here with them. (Applause.) Many of these bishops here have had me in their churches -- Bishop Brooks, Bishop Patterson, Bishop Blake, Bishop Quick. I've been in their churches. My friend, Bishop Clark from Pennsylvania; Bishop Winbush. Bishop Hamilton gave us a good prayer and got us started off well. I thank Bishop Clemons, Bishop Haynes, Bishop Anderson, all the distinguished leaders of this great church.

I thank that Women's Mass Choir and Natalie Green. It's too bad she has no range to her voice, isn't it? (Laughter.) Let's give them another hand. She was wonderful and they were wonderful. (Applause.)

And I thank Bernard Johnson for coming out here on no notice to play. Bishop Owens and I were sitting there and I said, "Bishop, I love all this music, but where's that man that played the saxophone for me in 1993 in Memphis? I want to hear him again." (Applause.)

I want to say a special word of thanks, if I might claim a personal privilege to the two bishops here from my native state of Arkansas, without whom I might well not be here today -- Bishop L.T. Walker and Bishop D.L. Lindsey, thank you for your friendship for so many years and God bless you. Thank you. (Applause.)

I'm glad to be back in New Orleans. The last time I was here, I was riding in that pretty presidential limousine on Tchoupitoulas Street and we lost our hubcap. (Laughter.) And budget cutting got so bad in Washington, I was sent here to fetch it back. (Laughter.)

I think all of you who were there know that not only one of my best days as President, but one of the most memorable days in my life was when I met with you in 1993 at the 86th Annual Convocation in Memphis. (Applause.) I will never forget that as long as I live. Our good friend, Bishop Ford, was still living then and he was my friend and my confidant. (Applause.)

Back in 1993, in that magnificent church where Martin Luther King spoke his last sermon, I asked that we honor his memory by remembering what he lived and died for and by working to tackle the crushing problems of our young people. Since then, I am more certain than ever that there is not a problem in America -- and certainly not the problems our young people face -- that cannot be solved if we will take responsibility for them and work together to make things better.

As I have said so many times, when we Americans take responsibility and we work together, we always seem to succeed. But when we deny our responsibility and when we are divided, we defeat ourselves. Long before Abraham Lincoln said it, our Savior reminded us that a city or a house divided cannot stand. (Applause.) Today, I'd like to take up where I left off back in 1993 and talk about what we can do to help our children build better lives.

We stand on the threshold of a new century, indeed, a new millennium. It will be an age of great possibility and enormous challenge. I have worked hard to see that all our children enter that century with the opportunities they need to make the most of their God-given abilities -- to stand against the forces of division and destruction, to stand for rewarding work and honoring families, reducing crime and protecting our environment, celebrating our diversity, not running away from it, and building a strong, secure, vital democracy that is still a model for the world.

I am pleased at the progress which has been made. Compared to four years ago, we have 8.5 million more jobs. We have the lowest unemployment rate among African Americans since the 1970s. (Applause.) We have 1.3 million families going from welfare to work, 1 million families moving from food stamps to self-sufficiency. (Applause.) The crime rate has gone down for four years. We are fighting for the minimum wage, and we've fought for other things to help families like the Family and Medical Leave Law and a tax program that would reduce the taxes of our hardest-pressed working families so they would have more money to raise their children on. Those things are making a difference. (Applause.)

And we've fought against some things as well. We've fought against budget cuts that were too harsh and Medicare in Medicaid and education and the environment, that would have raised taxes on working people and given people like me a tax cut. I was against that, but I'm for balancing the budget; we just ought to do it in the right way. (Applause.)

We have fought to mend affirmative action, but not to end it. It should not be ended until there is no need for it anymore, and I'm sorry to say there's still some need for it. (Applause.) We have fought to define religious freedom and the Constitution's requirement that the state should not impose any religious views on anybody.

We have fought to make it clear that our public schools don't have to be religion-free zones as long as nobody's imposing their view on anybody else. We've fought against racial discrimination in all its forms. And I tell you today, we are fighting hard to get to the bottom of this rash of black church burnings and to find out who is responsible and to prosecute them to the full extent of the law. (Applause.) We cannot let people of faith be persecuted by people of hate again in America. (Applause.)

That's all good, but it's not enough. We now we have to do more and we know we have to do it together. All around us, we see evidence of our society's need for renewed commitment for the moral leadership you provide. Yes, we do need more economic advancement, but that may not be our biggest need, for it is said in the Scriptures, and we must remember, that man does not live by bread alone.

Every day our children are bombarded by influences that would turn them from a positive, good path. You are here this week to talk in real terms about what you can do to build better homes and better communities and better schools and better tomorrows for our children. You are here to reach out -- not to curse the darkness, but to light a candle, put it on a



candlestick and give that light to all of America's house.

And you are, for you are working every hour and every day to keep our children free from harm, free to grow up, free to make the most of their own lives; laying the spiritual foundation that is now, because of this church's efforts, helping thousands of young boys develop into men of courage and character with programs like Rights of Passage and God's Male Choice. Teaching young boys and girls how to say no to sex and yes to the rest of their lives through the purity classes that you run in your churches. (Applause.) Strengthening families and futures by your efforts to increase the involvement of parents in their children's schools and education.

I thank you for this more than any of you can imagine. I want the rest of America to know what you are doing, and I want the rest of America to do what you are doing. That is what we have to do together. (Applause.)

I want our country to reject the voices of division and hatred that would weaken our nation, to walk away from the cynicism which is the chief excuse for inaction, to work together for solutions. There is no more powerful force in this country than the force of conscience and commitment. And that is the force we all feel in this room today.

All of us must step up to the challenges our children face. As I said, I have worked hard to help them where government can help. I am glad that African American unemployment is in single digits for the first time since the Vietnam War; that during the past four years more than 100,000 African American businesses have been created. I am proud that homeownership is at a 15-year high, with record increases in homeownership among African Americans. But all of the homes in the world don't mean a thing if the children can't play outside in the yard or on the street in front of them. (Applause.)

I'm glad that more of our children are taking more challenging courses and that we are seeing at long last some improvement in the performance across the country in many of our educational areas. But all the schools in the world don't mean a thing if children are afraid to walk to and from those schools. All of the opportunity and hope that comes from a job, that doesn't mean much if our children are raised in fear, seduced by the false allure of drugs or crime or gangs, into a world of distorted values and diminished hope and ultimate disappointment.

We simply cannot go into the 21st century with children having children, children killing children, children being raised by other children, or raising themselves on the streets alone. (Applause.) That is not the America I grew up in, not the America you grew up in, not the America we can pass on to our children and their children. (Applause.)

Let me say again what I have said many times to my countrymen and women across this land. Sometimes, I think people just give up on these problems. You haven't given up. So if we send one message out today, let's tell America: We refuse to accept that crime and drugs

and rampant teen pregnancy and children being killed and dragged down and destroyed are things that we can't do anything about. We can do something about it. You are doing something about it. Our country must do more about it. (Applause.)

In Washington, that's why I worked so hard to pass the Crime Bill, to put 100,000 police officers on the streets. The sheriff here of Jefferson Parish is pointing out how much the crime rate in New Orleans had gone down because they use these people not just to catch criminals, but to prevent crime, to work with neighbors, to work with children, to find things that will help us to identify people who are problems and not only catch criminals, but stop it from happening in the first place. And that's why I am committed to keeping on until we have every one of those 100,000 police officers in a uniform walking the street, getting the crime rate down, making people feel safe.

That's why we took on the interest in Washington that we're so powerful in the gun lobby to try to take guns out of the hands of criminals -- taking 19 kinds of assault weapons off our street, passing the Brady Bill that requires a waiting period to buy a handgun.

You know, some people in our country were told that if those bills passed, they would lose their hunting weapons. Well, we now have quite a few seasons and we've hunted everything you can imagine in America, and everybody that wanted to is still hunting with the weapon they had the day I signed those bills. There's only one group of people that don't have the weapons they wanted -- 60,000 people with criminal records who couldn't get handguns because the Brady Bill passed. And it's a good thing. (Applause.)

That's why I supported zero tolerance for weapons in our schools and community based programs not only to punish criminals, but to prevent crime in the first place; to help our kids stay out of trouble; to give them something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. I think people ought to be able to say yes to jobs in the summertime, yes to staying in schools after hours if they don't want to be on the street, yes to adult supervised recreation, yes to things that will enrich their lives and give them a good group to hang out with. I think that is important.

And yes, I am pleased with the progress. I'm glad that the crime rate is down. I'm glad the welfare roles and the food stamp roles are down. I'm glad the teen pregnancy rate is finally coming down. But the truth is, it's not good enough. Because even though the crime rate's coming down in America as a whole, random violence among people under 18 is going up. Even though drug use is coming down, random careless use of marijuana among people under 18 is going up. And, unbelievably enough, after 20 years of working at it, smoking among teenagers is going up as 3,000 young people a day take up a habit that will end 1,000 of their lives earlier than what otherwise would have happened.

So there are a lot of challenges still out there. And we need you. We also need you to reach them. How many mothers, I wonder, in this country hold their breaths in fear when their kids leave home? How many wonder whether their kids will be shot by a gang or pressured to

buy drugs or robbed of their money or beat up because of their clothes? This is no way to live.

It has not always been this way. We have shown we can make progress. It does not have to be this way. We do not have to tolerate it. But we all have to be willing to do something about it. (Applause.)

There are some more things we can do in Washington. We ought to ban those cop-killer bullets that pierce the bullet-proof vests our law enforcement officers wear. They're not needed to shoot anything in the woods. (Applause.) We ought to do more to preserve the safe and drug-free school program so that every school will be able to do things like stay open later or open earlier, or bring in the DARE officers or others that are helping our children and supporting the work our parents are trying to do.

We ought to have welfare reform that moves people from welfare to work, but there ought to be enough child care support in there so that the kids aren't hurt, and supervision of children is not sacrificed. (Applause.) And we have to do more to inspire every community to protect our children.

I challenged one million citizens the other day across America to join the anticrime patrols in their community. There are 20,000 anticrime groups in America today. If every one of them could just get 50 more folks to show up and help prevent crime, that would be one million Americans, and it would change the future and increase the safety of our children. They deserve that.

We are taking steps to give parents more control over the things that influence their children. We've passed legislation that requires parents be given in new television sets something called the V chip so that you can screen out TV programs you think are inappropriate for your young children to watch, and the entertainment industry is helping by providing a rating system. (Applause.)

We're taking steps to prohibit advertising being specifically directed toward young people with cigarettes because of the dangers that that is causing that I mentioned. We're trying to help communities do what they can to bring more order and discipline and structure into their children's lives. One of the things that we have supported is giving every community in America the option -- not the requirement, but the option -- to consider whether schools ought to have a uniform dress policy and have uniforms for the students.

Let me tell you, I was out in Long Beach, California the other day, the third largest school district in California, where they adopted a uniform policy and they let the kids and the teachers pick what their uniform was going to be in every school. They got up a little fund for the children who couldn't afford their own uniforms. And I listened to the children talk about what had happened. I listened to one young man say that his school picked a green and white uniform because that would clearly show to everybody that they weren't in any of the gangs

around since none of them used those colors, and now the children will walk to and from school in safety.

I listened to a young girl say that the uniform policy had not just been good for the poor children in school, it had been good for the wealthier children and the middle class children because they stopped judging each other by what they had on, instead by what was inside. (Applause.) And nobody gets rolled anymore because of their jacket or their shoes.

Now, people ought to have the option to see if that works. All I know is there is more order, more learning, less violence and the kids feel better.

Today, as the summer approaches, I want to talk to you about another idea that New Orleans has made the most of, and that's community-based curfews, to keep young people off the street. These are just like the old-fashioned rules most of us had when we were kids. (Applause.) "When the lights come on, be home, Bill." (Laughter and applause.) How many of you were told that? When the lights come on, be home. They're designed to help people be better parents. They help keep our children out of harm's way. They give parents a tool to impart discipline, respect and rules at an awkward and difficult time in children's lives.

Different cities have different ways of enforcing their curfews. Some of them take a kind of a punitive approach. Some of them, even a few have gone so far as to find parents if the kids aren't home. But some have done much to go the other way to say that the parents can decide whether they want the curfews to apply to their children; they just have to tell the police and decide.

But the evidence shows that wherever these curfews are in place, they are working. The Justice Department in Washington has just completed a study of seven of these programs that are up and running -- in Dallas, in Phoenix, in Chicago, in Denver, in Jacksonville and in North Little Rock, Arkansas. They also looked at one that works perhaps the best right here in New Orleans. And I want to thank Mayor Morial and law enforcement officers who are here today. Where's the Mayor? Stand up, Mayor. (Applause.) Our host Mayor.

He is here with his police chief, Richard Pennington, and Deputy Chief Ronald Ducette, who is in charge of juvenile enforcement, with two pastors I want to talk about in a moment -- Reverend Harold Mayberry and Reverend Kenneth Thompson, with the Sheriff of this parish, Harry Lee, and the FBI Special Agent, James De Serno (phonetic). And the most important thing of all is, he brought two of the young people that have been in his program. I'd like to ask them to stand if they're still here, Shelita Smith and Anthony Anderson. I think they're here. (Applause.) Where are they? Right over there. Let's give these young people a hand here. (Applause.) And the pastors, stand up. Let's give the pastors a hand. Thank you. (Applause.) And the law enforcement officers. (Applause.)

Now, let me tell you what all these folks are part of here. New Orleans, when I became President, had one of the highest crime rates in the country -- very high rates of violence of all

kinds. They were worried about the rampant increase in juvenile crime. But this Mayor and an army of concerned parents said, enough is enough, we have to do something about this.

They put in place, in this city that is famous for its nightlife, a dusk to dawn curfew -- 8:00 p.m. on school weeks, 9:00 p.m. in the summertime, 11:00 p.m. on the weekends for people under 17. Now, it basically says, if you're young, after a certain amount of time you ought to be home and not on the street where you can get shot or fall in with a bad crowd. (Applause.)

Now, you want to know if it works? During the very first year, youth crime dropped by 27 percent during the curfew hours, armed robberies dropped by a third, auto thefts fell by 42 percent. This is working. (Applause.)

But I want to tell you the most important thing about it, because this is consistent with your mission in the Church of God and Christ. Maybe the most important thing is what do they do with people who they find out after curfew? Dozens of police officers hit the street to enforce the curfew, but they picked up children and didn't send them to jail. Instead, they took them to a central curfew center staffed with counselors, doctors and nurses and police officers and, most important, an energetic and committed local religious community represented by those two fine pastors I just introduced. (Applause.)

A local group of ministers called -- listen to the name -- All Congregations Together has several ministers at the curfew center to counsel young people and their parents or guardians, and I met with these folks earlier, as I said. I'm very grateful to them.

I also was told the story of one city council member who worked in the curfew center who found a seven-year-old child picked up from the streets shivering from fear. He was having trouble walking up the stairs, so she just picked him up and carried him up. She said, "Do you want to sit down?" And the boy said, "No." "Well, what do you want?" she said. "I want you to hold me," he replied. That's what a lot of these kids need -- somebody to care, somebody to hold on. (Applause.)

I'm sure that a lot of the teenagers think this curfew is too strict. It was a long time ago, but I can still dimly remember what it was like to be that age. But they must also know that it's a dangerous world out there, and these rules are being set by people who love them and care about them and desperately want them to have good lives.

And there is one thread that seems to run through all of these curfew programs across the country, and that is, once they are put in, the most intense supporters of the curfews are young people who know that they are too often at risk of being victims of violent crime. They want our protection and we ought to give it to them. (Applause.)

So today, I directed the Attorney General to distribute this report we did on curfews that are working, to mayors and community leaders all across this great country. We want to share

what is working -- not to tell every place they need it; maybe they don't -- but at least to let them know that it's out there, that it's a tool, that people have made it work, that children's lives have been saved and their futures have been rescued.

We've read enough of the other kind of stories; it's time to read some of the good stories. I want everybody to know about the school uniforms in Long Beach and the curfew in New Orleans. I want people to know that if we work together and we put our children first, we can make a difference and rescue their lives. That's what I want people to know. (Applause.)

This past January I had the great honor of speaking at the funeral of my friend and one of this country's most eloquent women, the great Barbara Jordan. She devoted her entire life making sure this country lived up to its promise, and she once said, and I quote, "We must address and master the future together. It can be done if we restore the belief that we share a sense of national community, that we share a common national endeavor. It can be done."

Ladies and gentlemen of this great church, my fellow Americans, can there be any greater national endeavor than saving our children, saving all of our children? Don't we have to remember -- you know, a lot of people in public life love to quote the Scripture and all of us probably do it selectively. But there are hundreds of admonitions in the Bible, hundreds, to take care of the children, especially the poor children: Even as you have done it unto the least of these, you have also done it unto me. If that was true for Jesus, surely it must be true of America.

So I say to you, I honor your commitment, I honor your actions. We must honor these actions I have cited today, but most of all, we must believe that if we will take responsibility for these children, and if we will work together, it can be done. (Applause.)

God bless you all, and God bless America. (Applause.)

END

12:25 P.M. CDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 13, 1995

REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT NAACP ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you, thank you. I was privileged in the past to attend an NAACP convention. I was privileged to attend regional and state meetings, and I see some of my friends from Arkansas and from that region here. And I have always told everyone that the organ at an NAACP convention makes it better than any gathering you'll find anywhere in the country. (Applause.)

Because, in a sense, it is a revival, isn't it? And it needs to be a revival, doesn't it? You've already heard from two exceptional leaders. I want to thank my friend, my doctor, the nation's doctor -- (applause) -- and to say to Dr. Foster that we saw, in the last few months, a real profile in courage. (Applause.) And we saw an extreme minority defeat the will of the majority.

But you didn't lose, and as you go forth with your message and continue to prescribe for all of us, more and more Americans will realize what they lost because of your defeat. (Applause.) But I know you will not desert this patient. America needs your healing hands and mind, and we are grateful for your involvement. I want to thank Merilee (phonetic) not only for that gracious introduction -- I don't know what you would have said if you hadn't been winging it; that was incredible -- (laughter) -- but I also want to congratulate all of you; congratulate your board and the membership of this organization for your wise selection of Merilee as your board chairman. (Applause.)

She is, as you know so well, a woman of extraordinary talent and integrity. As a young black woman who works in the White House said to me, she is a real shero. (Applause.) And we need, today more than ever, sheroes and heroes for all of us. And I am grateful for your leadership. I was thinking, as I listened to Dr. Foster and to Merilee, that wonderful line from Dr. Howard Thurman, who many of you know of: this is our season to reclaim our hopes.

And it is our season. It is often when night looks darkest, it is often before the fever breaks that one senses the gathering momentum for change; when one feels that resurrection of hope in the midst of despair and apathy. But it can only come to light if we nurture it; if we claim it as our own. This organization, for 86 years, has stood for hope in a lot tougher times than we live in now. (Applause.)

Yet sometimes it takes adversaries and opposition to bring

out the best in us, doesn't it? Sometimes we all get a little tired. We all just kind of want to go tend our own gardens. We all just want to turn our backs on all those problems that we've worked our way out of and been able to get beyond. But then all of a sudden we realize that we are all part of this country together. There is no "them" in America, there is only us, and we have to be part of solving our problems. (Applause.)

I want to express the regrets of my husband, the President. He has, as you may have read in the paper, been dealing with the budget on a minute-by-minute basis, trying to determine what is going to come out of these deliberations; and sending very strong signals as he did the day before yesterday -- that what was done to the budget with respect to human services and employment and education was unacceptable and would be vetoed if it came to his desk. (Applause.)

He also took on the enormous responsibility, which he believed was right, to bring to an end, once and for all, with the hope that God's blessings will rain down upon all who suffered the Viet Nam War, and put it behind us as a nation, so that we can move forward. (Applause.) And then yesterday, he gave a speech that he has been giving in bits and pieces, but put altogether -- the religious freedom speech.

It is one of the most important statements of his presidency, because we have to prevent the kind of extremist, alarmist rhetoric that is too often used to inflame people, rather than inform them. (Applause.) And we have to, as the President said yesterday, recognize the legitimate right of people to exercise religion both privately and publicly in America. And we have to instruct those in authority, particularly in our schools, what is appropriate and what is not.

The President was tired of being pulled aside by people at church or when he went to visit somewhere, saying, you know what happened in my school -- some children were trying to say grace at lunch and they were told they couldn't; or do you know what happened in a school that a friend of mine teaches in -- a young man who was reading the Bible in the cafeteria or in the library was told he couldn't. What nonsense. That is not what the First Amendment is about.

And what the President said loudly and clearly yesterday is, we don't need a Constitutional amendment; we just need to reinject some good common sense so that we let our people practice their religion. (Applause.) And today the President is in Washington, holding a long-scheduled meeting with President Soglo of Benin, West Africa. Benin, as many of you who follow events in Africa know, is making a successful transition to democracy.

And this meeting highlights American support of this leader and his efforts to move toward democracy; and underscores the relationship between our two countries in trying to promote peace in Liberia and democracy in Nigeria. Africa is an important part of the President's concerns in the world. He hosted the first ever White House Conference on Africa. And he and the Vice President actively participated.

It is very important for the United States to remain engaged

in that great continent. And the President is in the White House today, working on that. (Applause.) So although he was not able to attend, I am delighted that I got to. (Applause.) I never consider myself a replacement for my husband, but I do know that there isn't anyone who can replace me, with respect to my admiration for this organization and what it has stood for. So it is I who feel privileged to be part of this anniversary annual convention. (Applause.)

You know, as Dr. Foster said, when one re-reads modern American history, the role that the NAACP will stand right up there at the top of the important efforts that made America freer and more just. You have been America's vigilant, peaceful warrior for racial justice. Even though we still have a long way to go, I shudder to think where we would be today without the brilliant legal and political and moral leadership of the NAACP. (Applause.)

I am delighted to see with us today Dr. Benjamin Hooks and Mrs. Hooks. (Applause.) The leadership of this organization has made it possible for this nation continually to face its problems. You have been steadfast in holding our feet to the fire, the fire of reality, the fire of truth. You have made it possible for this nation to advance, with respect to racial relations. And for that, whether they know it or not, every American owes a debt of gratitude to the NAACP. (Applause.)

But now we have to go forward, don't we? Now we have to think through, what is the strategy as we move toward a new century. We meet here at a time of unprecedented challenge. When historians look back on this era, they will see a time of great change and transition. Whether one calls it the end of the post-World War II era, the end of the post-Industrial Age, we know that we are going through rather significant changes here at home and around the world.

We see the effects of the new global economy, in which jobs and capital and technology and ideas move across borders at lightening speeds. Yes, that holds out extraordinary promise. But it also holds out great question, and for many, threats and anxiety. Because this new economy puts tremendous pressures on our families, our communities, our values. People worry that they will not be able to give the same opportunities they enjoyed to their children.

They worry because they see it every day, that they will lose a job and not find one that pays anywhere near what they were making before. They know that families every day are being downsized out of the middle class. They know that families every day are losing benefits to health care, to pensions, to other necessities of life. And at the same time, they worry about their schools; about their streets.

Now, there is a great debate raging in Washington about the proper role of government as we approach this millennium. There are those who argue strongly that all of our problems in America are personal and cultural. Now, at a level, that is true, isn't it? I mean, if every person in America woke up tomorrow and did absolutely nothing wrong, we would be living in the afterlife, but it would make a big difference in how people behaved, wouldn't it?

(Laughter.)

You hear it all the time. You know if you turn on C-SPAN, you hear it, don't you? These pointed fingers, these admonitions that people just have to act right and that's all that we need to change America. And because those people who promote that point of view think it is only a personal issue, they don't believe government has any role to play. In fact, as my husband often says, these are the people who believe government would mess up a one-car parade. (Laughter.) And anything you can do, just move it out of the way.

Now, on the other hand, there are still the voices of those who say that government is the only answer to our problems -- you know, that the government has to solve everything. If you don't study in school and you barely graduate, the government should still give you a job. If you don't show up to work on time, you don't put in a full day's work, the government should prevent you from being fired. The government should do everything for you.

Now, that view absolves us of personal responsibility. And the people in this auditorium did not get here today believing somebody else was going to take care of all your problems, did you? (Applause.) So as is with most debates that are emotionally charged and filled with more heat than light, this debate is not very helpful. But it's what we hear all the time; it's what the news covers. If you're not into a confrontation, if you're not calling somebody a name, if you're not defaming people's character, well, then you don't get on the news.

If you don't have an extremist answer that you can give in eight or 10 seconds, nobody wants you. So that's what the American people have been fed over and over again. And everybody has a bad experience with government. I mean, you've gone and gotten your driver's license renewed, haven't you? (Laughter.) I mean, we know that it doesn't work perfectly. There's no human institution that does. And yet those of us who have lived long enough and seen what happens to people in their lives, no matter how hard they're trying and how good a life they're leading know that personal and cultural is not all there is, either.

So how do we bring that together? How do we create a third way, a third leg to this debate, that really is where most people live their lives? It's how they make decisions. Well, that's what the President has been trying to do, and it is not easy. It's complicated. I mean, when you have a problem and you say to everybody, this answer and this answer, on both sides are inadequate; we need to come up with something different. Well, then you get accused of not being able to take a strong stand and stick with it, don't you?

Because you're looking for both common ground, but also common sense. And so when you look at some of the policies that the President has been following, what he's been looking for is a way to use government -- not to give people a hand out, but to give them a helping hand; to give them the chance to have opportunities in their own lives; but in return, to ask for responsibility. That is the way we lead our own personal lives. That's the way you try to raise your children. That's the way you try to manage your business or your family.

So the President has, on many fronts, moved to try to create that new consensus, what he calls a New Covenant. His economic policies, for example, have both allowed us to reward working families and maintain investments that will help working Americans. The biggest difference between the President's approach to a balanced budget and the alternative is not that he will take 10 years and they will take seven -- although that's significant. It is that he is trying to use government as a way of helping and supporting people.

So what does he want to invest in? He wants to invest in education and training so that people get good jobs and are able to compete in the global economy. (Applause.) He wants to create opportunities for people who don't start off on a level playing field. That's why he wants to increase Head Start and childhood immunizations and programs that will help a lot of our poorest children. (Applause.) That's why he created empowerment zones to revitalize the inner city and create jobs.

Because we know that if we don't rebuild our cities, we're going to leave too many people behind in this global economy, as we move toward the next century. It's also why, as a Democrat, he said these Republicans have been talking about crime; they talk it to death -- let's pass a bill, let's get more police on the street, let's get the guns off the street. That was a very tough effort that is finally beginning to take effect.

We've been watching these crime statistics. It makes a difference if there are 100,000 more police on the streets, especially if they are community police officers, working with the community to try to prevent crime before it happens in a neighborhood. (Applause.) And I've got to say, anybody who says that this President won't stand up to anybody, where have they been? What is the NRA doing to us if it isn't because he has stood up to them not once, but twice?

No sitting President has ever taken them on. Why? Because they are so powerful. Why did the Democrats lose the House of

Representatives, in addition to what Dr. Foster said? Because not enough people with a stake in the future voted, but also because a lot of those who voted, voted for the Brady Bill, they voted for the assault weapons ban and they were punished. And the people who should have been there standing shoulder to shoulder to get the Uzis out of our high schools and the Tech-9s out of our housing projects, they stayed home. (Applause.)

We can win on these issues. A majority of Americans believe as we do. They want to invest in education and training for better jobs. They want to invest in our children. They want safer streets that doesn't come by letting people run amuck, but instead keeping them under authority properly. And they don't want to spend billions of dollars sending every third young man to prison. They want to spend it on things like drug treatment and recreation, to give young people something to say yes to.

But the majority will not be heard, just as the majority was beaten when it voted for Dr. Foster. The majority that does not vote will lose every single time to an organized minority. (Applause.) Now, what's at stake? You know better than I. Much of what we believe as a nation is at stake. The President's policies are working. They have resulted in an additional 7 million new jobs, just since he was inaugurated.

The unemployment rate for African Americans is below 10 percent, in single digits, for the first time since the Viet Nam War. We are finally putting young men and women back to work. And he's done this not by just talking about making government more efficient, but actually doing it. So we thank the NAACP because you have stood shoulder and shoulder during a lot of these tough fights. I know Merilee was elected chair by only one vote. That's the margin for this President. That's what passes things like deficit reduction and tax relief and crime control. (Applause.)

So please, know that you have already made a difference, but we have so much more to do. As we move forward, it is imperative that the NAACP stay strong. It is imperative that you stand with those who, as Dr. Foster said, stand with you; but that you also inform yourselves and your neighbors and your friends about what it is that this administration is trying to do, because it is a different way. Let me give you just one more example, and it's from foreign policy.

Now, there are many -- in fact, the majority of Americans at the time -- who thought that the President should do nothing about Haiti. Haiti was just down there somewhere, lots of poor people -- let them just stew in their own juices. And if the President had chosen to ignore Haiti, the majority of Americans who don't understand how important it is to restore democracy everywhere, including in our own backyard -- those folks would have been happy because they wouldn't have had to worry about Haiti.

Or if the President had invaded, you know, with all the flags flying, raising the excitement, having the people on t.v., you know, whispering into the microphone as the planes flew over and the missiles landed, and hundreds and maybe thousands of Haitians, and certainly some Americans, were killed, people could have understood that. That fit into one of the old categories.

So what did the President do? He basically invaded without firing a shot. He restored democracy. He gave people's dignity back to them. And nobody can say that we have not fulfilled our responsibilities. But it doesn't fit into the easy eight-second sound bite on t.v. It takes too long to explain coercive diplomacy. It takes too long to explain that this was the first military operation in American history under a single command, and it went off without a hitch. (Applause.)

Nobody understands when things happen differently that break old categories. But that's what you're going to have to do, isn't it? You're going to have to build on the past, take the strength and the values that have made you an absolutely imperative part of American history, but think differently; move differently; be strategic; get back in those streets, knock on those doors, pull people out of their houses, talk to them about what's at stake. (Applause.)

And you have a President who will stand with you, whose commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity is strong and unwavering. (Applause.) When you look at what is at stake in this debate over affirmative action, it is clear, as the President has said, affirmative action is still needed to remedy discrimination and to create a more inclusive society that truly provides equal opportunity; and that to be effective, affirmative action must be done the right way.

So we have to move forward, but we have to move forward knowing what has happened in the past, thinking new, thinking creatively, in order to reach the same objective. The President recognizes that the Supreme Court raised the hurdle, but they did not make it insurmountable, in setting a new legal standard for judging affirmative action. And he has wisely cautioned people on both sides of the affirmative action debate not to use the court's ruling as a reason to abandon our national commitment to inclusion and opportunity.

While the Constitutional test is now tougher than it was, it does not mean the end of affirmative action. We know that from the experience of state and local governments, which have operated under tougher standards for some years now, it can still be done. And for those who say we want a color blind society, if they are using the term to mean that we want opportunity, where we have a level playing field, where everyone has the chance to compete fairly, then I guess that's what we want.

But do we have it now? No, we don't. Do we want to work for it? Yes, we do. And is affirmative action still part of the work and strategy we must follow? Yes, it is. So if we look at what has happened so far with affirmative action, we need to not only carefully describe what we will do and can do, we have to enlist people in understanding that and implementing it from the grass roots level to the federal government.

But you know, affirmative action starts with affirmative thinking. (Applause.) And that means that every one of us has to think harder and express our thoughts about what we will do to end the scourge of racism, not turn a blind eye, not claim to have a color blind eye, but to actively think through and express what we

will personally do. Now, I believe that if, starting tomorrow, every single adult in America counted to 10 or bit their tongue before they said something stereotypical, before they made a racial slur, before they made a disparaging comment, we would change the atmosphere in which this country now operates.

Now, is that simple? Yes, it is. Is it self-evident? Yes, it is. But until we all start thinking and being more committed to a truly open society where we do judge people by the content of their character, then all the programs in the world will not guarantee that level playing field. So we have a double burden. We have to explain, defend, and institute affirmative action that will continue to work. But we also individually have to start engaging in affirmative thinking.

You can pick up the paper any day, and you can see people, particularly young people, who have already been poisoned by racism, who are already being religiously or ethnically biased. That is one of the great tragedies, and we have to do all that we can to try to eliminate it. Recently, the President also expressed his disappointment at the Supreme Court decision in the Georgia congressional redistricting case.

He described that decision as a setback in the struggle to ensure that all Americans participate fully in the electoral process, one that threatens to undermine the promise of the Voting Rights Act. This President and this administration remain firmly committed to the full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. (Applause.) But you have to be our partners.

You know, before we came out here, Merilee and Alexis Herman, the assistant to the President who is here with me, were talking about how they remember when they first got their NAACP membership cards as young girls. Alexis said that in order to get her membership card, she also had to get a library card. But as a young girl, she got to carry both around; she felt really important. And she knew, as Merilee did, because Merilee said she carried that card plus her first receipt from the poll tax, until they yellowed with age.

They knew what the struggle was about. And they were able to articulate it based on personal experience. As Merilee poignantly told this convention, now is the time to go forward, not backward; to remember our martyrs and take strength from their (GAP IN TAPE)

If we don't raise our children right, nothing else we do counts for very much. And we need to intensify our efforts on behalf of our children. We need a reaffirmation among all Americans of our long-held belief that every single child has the right and responsibility to rise as far as his or her God-given talents and determination can take them. (Applause.) That is the principle we should be inculcating in our children.

My minister recently gave a sermon in which he related the story of Leviticus, you remember, about the ancient Israelites who annually, ever year, placed all their sins and miseries on the head of a goat, and then sent that goat out into the wilderness, thinking that that would purge them of all that had happened that previous year. When the goat reached the wilderness, the tribe

felt cleansed of all problems, all evils, all sins.

That is an apt parable for what is happening in America today, because in today's society, the goat, or the scapegoat, is poor children and their parents. Somehow we think we can rid ourselves of all our social problems by scapegoating children and exiling them to a wilderness of greater poverty and hopelessness. Well, you know that that won't work. You know that every child in this country is linked to every other one. My husband and I can do all we can, and we do, to make sure our daughter has every opportunity.

We'll give her the best education she can get. We'll take care of her. But I know that she could walk down the street some day, on the way to or from school, and be a victim of a drive-by shooting because of other children who were neglected and denied their God-given rights to feel like a full and decent human being. (Applause.) But you know, just like Dr. Foster, some of what we have to say about this is not easy to hear.

Parents and families are the primary responsibility. They have to take the lead. (Applause.) Parents, every one of us, have to be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to create conditions within families that enable children to flourish. Young boys and girls need to postpone having sex, and certainly having children, until they are mature and responsible enough to understand their decisions. (Applause.)

Parents with children should think a lot longer and harder about divorce, and put their children's needs and interests first. (Applause.) And child support, as the President has made clear, has to be part of what it means to be a responsible parent. But you know, child support is not only financial. Child support is emotional; child support is intellectual; child support is spiritual. And I want to say a special word of thanks to my old friend, C. Delores Tucker, for speaking truth to power when it comes to what is being fed and sold to our children. (Applause.)

So I come back to where I started. Yes, we have personal responsibility. Yes, we have to clean up our culture. Yes, we should be talking about and transmitting the values that we were raised with. Most of us in this room were raised differently than we are raising our children and our grandchildren. (Applause.) We wouldn't have allowed a person to walk in the door and say some of the things we let the t.v. say for hours and hours every single day. (Applause.)

Fight for this ^{V-chip} ~~veedship~~* that the President is championing. Make every parent have the right and responsibility to use that remote control, not to turn over their children to it as a babysitter, but to block out the violence and sex that destroys and desensitizes the minds of our children. (Applause.) But just as we can list all that parents and families and individuals must do, all that personally, and culturally and morally we are called upon to do, there are also political and economic problems that we must address together.

You can work, as many of you have, from dawn to midnight every single day. You can work those fingers to the bone. You can do the very best job you know how to do, and then be afraid to let your child walk outside the door because of what waits out there. You can show up for work on time, do a full day's work for 35 years and be given a pink slip and not even a thank you. (Applause.) You know that you can go to school and do the best you can.

I'll never forget, Reverend Gaylord may remember this, because it's the kind of thing that used to happen to me all the time in Arkansas. I'll never forget standing in the living room of the Arkansas governor's mansion when the President and I had invited every young person who was the valedictorian or salutatorian of every high school to come with their parents to be honored. Because we wanted to honor academics as well as athletics. (Applause.) And we stood there for six hours, we shook every hand.

And there was one handsome young black man who came through, and his mother was so proud. And I said to him, I said, well, now, what are you going to do next year? He said, well, I want to be a doctor. And I said, that's wonderful; I said, so where are you going to go to college. And he looked a little embarrassed and he said, well, ma'am, he said, I finished high school, I took every course my high school offered; I did well, I was on the honor roll, made valedictorian; and then I started applying for college and they said the school I went to wasn't good enough for me to be able to compete with the kids from Central High and the big high schools in Arkansas.

Now there was a young man and his family who had played by the rules. It was society that had failed them. (Applause.) And so part of what we have to do is quite blame-placing, quit finger-pointing. There is enough accountability to go around for what's wrong with our children in this country. (Applause.) And you know, you can't roll up your sleeves if you're wringing your hands. (Laughter.) And it's time we roll up our sleeves and we get to work to solve the problems in our communities, our families, and our nation. (Applause.)

And finally, let me just be a bit more personal and return to the subject of faith. Because we can't do any of this alone, can we? We have to work with each other, and we have to know that we're working on behalf of a higher power and eternal values that will guide us if we stray from the path. There's a book that I keep in my office that many of the people who work for me consult from time to time, written by Susan Taylor, the editor of Essence magazine. (Applause.)

It's called, "In the Spirit." And this is a young woman, young by my standards. They get younger every year. (Laughter.) I just can't tell -- if you ever want to make my day, if you ever have a chance to introduce me, just introduce me as a young woman. (Laughter and applause.) So this young woman, this extraordinary young woman, Susan Taylor, she writes, "The most revolutionary thing we can do is to have faith, to hold a positive vision of what we want for ourselves and for our children, and to put energy behind that vision to make it a reality."

Let us keep our expectations and our vision high. If the NAACP does that; if you work through all of the difficult issues you're confronting internally, to emerge even stronger; if you take your message to people who really need to hear it, because you know, this is like preaching to the choir, us talking to each other. But if you have a vision and you have high expectations, people will respond. They will know that you speak the truth.

And if we do that, then together, we will once again inspire that season of hope that will lead to the kind of country we deserve to have and to leave to the children we love. Thank you for what you've done. Thank you for what you're doing. And thank you and God bless you for what you will do for the United States of America. (Applause.)

* * * * *

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE AME ZION CHURCH
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 29, 1996

[Acknowledgments: Board of Bishops. ~~especially president of the board, Joseph Johnson of Little Rock.~~ Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, senior bishop of the board of Bishops; Bishop Milton A. Williams, host Bishop; General Officers of the Church, delegates, other guests]

Thank you, Bishop Johnson for your kind introduction. [It's good to see you again.] I have to admit that I'm nervous at the thought of speaking before so many bishops and preachers, so I'm delighted that a fellow Arkansan is here to share the stage with me.

I am honored to be here today at this Bicentennial General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. On behalf of the President, I want to welcome all of you to Washington. Let me thank you -- bishops, preachers, and laity -- for your commitment to your churches and for all you are doing to nourish the spirits of our families and our communities.

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the AME Zion church, an institution that has witnessed and weathered all the decisive events in our country's history. You have been a refuge, a beacon, a source of strength for millions of African-Americans today and in the darkest hours of our country. Some of our greatest Americans, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglas have found inspiration and spiritual renewal in your sanctuaries. And for all Americans, this church has served as a voice of compassion and conscience.

The President, Chelsea and I had the privilege of sharing in the AME Zion tradition when we worshipped with your host pastors, the Reverends John and Diana Cherry, one Sunday morning two summers ago. We were moved by the powerful sermon, the wonderful hymns, and the warm hospitality of the congregation at Full Gospel.

The Cherrys made a lasting impression on my family. The President and I think of them often to remind ourselves of how one or two committed individuals can make positive differences in the lives of so many.

As many of you know, families are the focus of the Cherrys' ministry. Over the years, they have helped more than a hundred couples save their marriages and keep their families together. Because of the Cherrys, hundreds of children have been spared the heartbreak, the confusion, and financial hardship of divorce and growing up in single-parent homes. Instead, they will have better opportunities to flourish, to grow to become successful adults under the love, support, and constant guidance of a mother

/

and a father.

The Cherrys are on to something. Families are the bedrock of our society. And God has entrusted ~~these~~ families with the primary responsibility for raising and nurturing our country's most precious resource: Our children.

Today, I want to talk about children and how we can all work together to strengthen our families and cherish our children. Children need us. They are not rugged individualists. And while they depend first and foremost on their own parents, children rely on so many other adults in their communities -- the police officer patrolling the neighborhood, the government official who monitors food and water quality, the business owners who employ their parents, and the executives who decide what shows go on television.

We know so well what Jesus said to his disciples while holding a small child in his arms: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name, welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not me, but the one who sends me." If we could only keep that in mind, and take the image we have of Jesus and transpose it onto the face of every child we see. Then we would ask ourselves "How could I deny that child the health care that child needs? How could I write-off that child because of who his parents are?"

As adults, we have to start thinking and believing that there isn't really any such thing as someone else's child. My child, your child, all children everywhere, must live and make their ways in a society and in a world that's becoming smaller, yet more complex.

That's why we all must work together to create a better world for our children. A new millennium is just a few short years away. We are undergoing sweeping changes in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to the rest of the world. The Cold War is over. And today we find ourselves living in a new global economy, in which jobs and capital and technology and ideas move across borders at lightening speeds. These are developments that present Americans with great opportunities -- but only if we are equipped with the tools to seize those opportunities.

My husband believes that America cannot afford to waste any of our citizens. He is working hard to see that all our people, especially our children, enter the next millennium with the tools and opportunities to make the most of their God-given abilities.

We are on the road to achieving this vision. Our economy is the healthiest it's been in decades. The President's economic plan has cut the deficit in half. America has 10 million new jobs. The African-American unemployment rate has been in single digits for the first time in 20 years. There are 100,000 new African American owned businesses.

The President has implemented policies specifically designed to help families like the Family and Medical Leave Law that guarantees workers unpaid leave from their jobs to take care of sick family members. He has boosted the Earned Income Tax Credit, a tax program that reduces the taxes of our poorest working families.

So we're moving in the right direction. But we can do more. The President is waiting impatiently for Congress to send him two bills that will make a huge difference to American families -- the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, which says that workers cannot lose their health insurance if they lose or change jobs, or if someone in their family has been sick, and a bill raising the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour.

We must not allow anyone to undermine our common and basic responsibility to the poor pregnant women, children, disabled and senior citizens who depend on Medicaid and Medicare.

And we have to keep working until all of our people can reap the rewards of this time of change, including those who have not been reached by the recovery, those who have been downsized by the new global economy, those who are stuck in place because they don't have the skills to move up.

Education will be crucial in meeting this challenge. The President is working to put more computers in our schools and to hook every classroom to the Internet. Last month, the President introduced a proposal that will make two years of college as accessible to all Americans as the first twelve. America's Hope Scholarships would offer a \$1,500 tax credit -- enough for tuition at a typical community college -- to any American who wants to study hard and get ready for the future.

Still, those computers and that chance at a college education will mean little if our children are afraid to walk to and from school, if they are raised in fear, seduced by the false allure of drugs, or crime or gangs into a world of distorted values, diminished hope, and ultimate disappointment.

We simply cannot go into the 21st century with children having children, children killing children, children being raised by other children, or raising themselves on the streets alone. This is not the America I grew up in, not the America you grew up in, not the America we can pass on to our children and their children.

There are too many people in this country who have given up on these problems. But you -- the leaders and members of this great church -- haven't given up. On behalf of the President, I thank you for staying on the front lines in the war against drugs and violence.

The President stands with you. That's why he worked to pass

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the Crime Bill, to put 100,000 police community police officers on the streets. These are officers who are walking the beats in our neighborhoods, getting to know the people they serve, sniffing out the troublemakers, serving as role models to our children. They aren't just catching criminals, they are making people feel safe, and preventing crimes from happening in the first place.

The President signed the Brady Bill, taking 19 assault weapons off our streets and making sure that all guns stay out of the hands of tens of thousands of people with criminal records. He supports school uniforms so that children do not hurt or kill each other over designer jackets or gang colors; community-based curfews, and other programs to help our children stay out of trouble. He knows that children need something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. I think our children should be able to say yes to jobs in the summertime, yes to staying in schools after hours if they don't want to be on the street, yes to supervised recreation, yes to things that will enrich our lives and surround them with positive role models.

Like it or not, our children also learn much of their behavior from the things they see on TV. A psychologist once noted that children are like little VCRs who repeat everything they see on TV. Too often, the things they see encourage violent and destructive behavior. So the president fought for a V-chip to be installed in all TV sets that will allow parents to block out objectionable programming. And today, the President, Vice President, Mrs. Gore and I met with TV executives to see what we could do to strengthen children's television programming.

[welfare reform ?]

But the government can only go so far. We can move forward as a country if we reassert the basic bargain of American citizenship -- opportunity for everyone and responsibility from all. We must understand that that responsibility includes our responsibility not just to make the most of our own lives and our family's lives, but to be good citizens for our communities and for our country.

Being good citizens begins with a committed effort to reject what Martin Luther King called "the stale bread of hatred and spoiled meat of racism" that continue to poison our communities. As President has said so many times, we need to reject the voices of division and hatred that encourage so many of us "to define ourselves in terms of who we're not, instead of who we are; define ourselves in terms of who we can look down on, instead of what we can look up to."

And while we all work toward a time when the fires of racism will be doused forever, we need to support initiatives designed to counter our country's persistent legacy of racism. That's why after careful study last year, the President decided that while

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we could and should make some changes in affirmative action laws, it would be mistake to end them and walk away.

We also have to keep standing firm against this recent rash of church burnings. This whole country was founded by people seeking the freedom to worship God in their own way in their own churches. An attack on a house of worship, whether it's a big Southern Baptist church, an AME Zion church, a tiny synagogue or Muslim Mosque is an attack on the whole idea of America.

The President has created a national task force to investigate these church burnings -- headed by two African-Americans Deval Patrick, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights; and Jim Johns, the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for enforcement. More than 200 FBI and ATF agents are working to solve these crimes. And they've made arrests in Missouri, North and South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Washington. The Administration is working on transferring funds to efforts to help rebuild churches and prevent fires from happening in the first place.

We are discovering that some good has come out of these fires. All across the south, white churches are helping black churches rebuild. Suburban teenagers are travelling to these small southern towns to shingle new roofs, plaster new walls, and polish new altars. They and the African-American parishioners with whom they work side by side are learning that they have much more in common than they thought they did.

They are realizing that much more unites us than divides us. And that our differences only make our country stronger and more resilient. And perhaps in these churches they re-learning and recognizing the truth of that old song from Sunday school, "Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World, red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight."

So let us commit ourselves to working together, to building bridges, to a new season of hope for America and for our children.

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And while we all work toward a time when the fires of racism will be doused forever, we need to support initiatives that designed to counter our discrimination and to create a more inclusive society that truly provides equal opportunity. That's why after careful study last year, the President decided that while we could and should make some changes in affirmative action laws, it would be mistake to end them and walk away.

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Schedule Proposal

July 22, 1996

___ACCEPT	___REGRET	___PENDING
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TO: Patti Solis

FROM: Alexis Herman
Assistant to the President and Director
Office of Public Liaison

REQUEST: Address the General Conference of the African Methodist Zion Church.

PURPOSE: This is an opportunity for the First Lady to establish rapport and build support among members of a very important African American religious denomination.

BACKGROUND

The General Conference of the African American Methodist Zion Church is holding its annual meeting in Washington July 24 through August 2, 1996. The General Conference is the legislative, policymaking body which sets the direction for the Church for the next four years. Full Gospel AME Zion Church, which is pastored by the Rev. John Cherry, has been selected to be the host church for the 1996 General Conference. The President and Mrs. Clinton worshiped at Full Gospel AME Zion Church in August 1994 and have since become friends with Rev. Cherry and his wife Diana.

— legislative/policymaking body

Monday 2:00

POTUS originally invited

The General Conference is a quadrennial meeting and is the supreme body of the AME Zion Church. It is composed of ministerial and lay delegates elected from regional conferences throughout six continents. This is the bicentennial anniversary of the AME Zion Church and they expect approximately 30,000 participants to be at the Conference. The AME Zion Church is very influential in the black community. This is an excellent opportunity for the President because they can be counted on to carry our message to African Americans.

(SOTU)

According to Rev. Cherry, he has spoken to the President about the event and has verbally extended an invitation to him to be their special guest at the conference.

* NAACP Themes
* Methodist themes
Key message - what POTUS is doing for Af. Am. community
it church running
* who's going to be acknowledged?
- Ben

PREVIOUS
PARTICIPATION: The President has not spoken to the General Conference
but has been to Rev Cherry's church.

DATE AND TIME: ~~July 24, 1996 at 3:00 pm~~ July 29 2:00

BRIEFING TIME: 5 Minutes

DURATION: 1 Hour

LOCATION: Renaissance Hotel, 999 9th St, NW, Wash, D.C.

PARTICIPANTS: 6,000 CHURCH OFFICIALS

REMARKS: Provided by speechwriting with input from OPL

MEDIA
COVERAGE: yes

ECOMMENDED BY: Ben Johnson

CONTACT: Ben Johnson 6-5189

ORIGIN OF PROPOSAL: Letter



WASHINGTON, D.C.

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HOTEL**EXECUTIVE BUSINESS CENTER**

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202-456-6682
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COMPANY: _____
FROM: Bishop Johnson

MESSAGE: _____

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PROJECTION 

THE 1996 GENERAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1996

Opening Service

Full Gospel A.M.E. Zion Church

4207 Norcross Street

Temple Hills, Maryland 20748

9:00 A.M. Bishop Ruben Lee Speaks, Presiding
 Procession of Bishops, General Officers and Choirs
 Quadrennial Sermon Bishop George W. C. Walker
 The Offering
 The Holy Communion Celebrants Bishop Cecil Bishop
 Bishop Joseph Johnson
 Music Full Gospel A.M.E. Zion Church Choir
 12:00 P.M. Closing Hymn, Recessional and Benediction
 1:00 P.M. Luncheon (Available in the Full Gospel Lunch Rooms)

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

2:30 P.M. Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, Presiding
 Organization of the General Conference
 1. Roll Call
 2. Committee on Credentials and Seating of Delegates
 3. Report of Committee on Rules
 4. Adoption of Program Agenda
 5. Registration
 MESSAGE from THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
 The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
 5:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction
 6:00 P.M. DINNER
 (General Conference Delegates Meals Available in the Full Gospel Lunch Rooms)

WEDNESDAY EVENING SESSION

7:30 P.M. Bishop Milton Alexander Williams, Presiding
 THE WELCOME PROGRAM Full Gospel A.M.E. Zion Church
 The Fifth Episcopal District
 Music furnished by Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference Choir

~~WT~~
 Full Gospel Ch.
 Temple Hills, Md.

07-17-1996 10:11PM

P.02

GREETINGS from the STATE OF MARYLAND**The Honorable Parris N. Glendonning, Governor****GREETINGS from the District of Columbia****The Honorable Marion Barry, Mayor****GREETINGS from the Prince Georges County Government****The Honorable Wayne K. Curry, County Executive****GREETINGS from the District of Columbia Congressional Representative****The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Washington, D. C.****GREETINGS from a Congressional Representative****The Honorable Louis Stokes - Saint Paul A.M.E. Zion Church,
Cleveland, Ohio****GREETINGS from The Council of Churches of Greater Washington and
Vicinity****The Reverend Adolph Keller, President****Welcome Skit****FULL GOSPEL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH****Response To The Welcome****The Reverend Dr. Staccato Powell, Pastor
Washington Metropolitan, Saint Louis, Missouri****THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS****BENEDICTION****Bishop Joseph Johnson, President
Board of Bishops - A. M. E. Zion Church****9:30 P.M.****The Fifth Episcopal District Reception to the General Conference
(at the Renaissance Hotel and Towers - Transportation provided by the Host Church)****THURSDAY, July 25, 1996****Morning Session****(Meeting at the Renaissance Hotel and Towers)****900 "H" Street, N.W.****Washington D.C.****8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by the Twelfth Episcopal District****The Reverend Joyce M. Smith, Worship Leaders****The Reverend George E. Kent, Pastor,****Second A. M. E. Zion Church, Englewood, California, Preaching**

07-17-1996 10:11PM

P.03

9:45 A.M. Bishop Cecil Bishop, Presiding

Reading of Minutes

The Quadrennial Address

Read by Bishop Milton A. Williams

Report of the Restructuring Commission

Reading and Assignment of Resolutions To Proper Committees

Reports of the Bishops:

First District

Bishop Ruben L. Speaks

Second District

Bishop Herman L. Anderson (Deceased)

Third District

Bishop Cecil Bishop

Fourth District

Bishop George W. C. Walker

Fifth District

Bishop Milton A. Williams

Sixth District

Bishop S. Chuka Ekemam

1:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

1:15 P.M. LUNCH

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

2:15 P.M. Committee and Commission Meeting

3:30 P.M. Bishop George W. C. Walker, Presiding

Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

Report of the Bishops (Cont'd)

Seventh District

Bishop George Edward Battle, Jr.

Eighth District

Bishop Joseph Johnson

Ninth District

Bishop Richard Keith Thompson

Tenth District

Bishop Enoch B. Rochester

Eleventh District

Bishop Marshall Haywood Strickland

Twelfth District

Bishop Clarence Carr

THE RITUAL AND CEREMONY OF RECOGNITION OF RETIRING BISHOP

Bishop Ruben Lee Speaks

Greetings from our Retired Bishops:

Bishop William Alexander Hilliard

Bishop Charles Herbert Foggie

Bishop James Clinton Hoggard

07-17-1996 10:12PM

P.04

Bishop Clinton Reuben Coleman
Bishop John Henry Miller

5:45 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction
6:00 P.M. DINNER

THURSDAY EVENING SESSION

7:30 P.M. Bishop Milton Alexander Williams, Presiding
Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

REPORT OF GENERAL OFFICERS:

1. General Secretary
2. Financial Secretary
3. The Publishing House Board
4. The Star of Zion-- Editor
5. The Quarterly Review-Editor and the Historical Society
6. The Church School Literature- Editor
7. The Secretary of Christian Education- Home and Church
School and College

10:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

FRIDAY, JULY 26, 1996 Morning Session

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by the Eleventh Episcopal District
The Rev. Dr. Godfred N. Zornelo, Pastor, Price Memorial A.M.E. Zion
Church, and Presiding Elder, Winneba District, Winneba, Ghana,
West Africa, Worship Leader
The Rev. Dr. Frederick Umoja, Field Superintendent, Monrovia,
Liberia, Preaching

9:45 A.M. Bishop Samuel Chuka Ekemam, Presiding

07-17-1996 10:12PM

P.05

Reading of Minutes

Reports of:

8. President of Livingstone College and Hood Theological Seminary
9. Clinton Junior College
10. Lomax-Hannon Junior College
11. Secretary-Treasurer of Church Extension and Home Missions Department
12. Secretary of Overseas Missions and Editor of the Missionary Seer
13. The Secretary of the Brotherhood Pension Service and Ministerial Relief
14. The Director of Evangelism
15. Director of Public Affairs
16. The Connectional Trustees
17. The Connectional Lay Council

1:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction
 1:15 P.M. LUNCH

FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

2:15 P.M. Committee Meetings
 4:30 P.M. Bishop George Edward Battle, Presiding
 Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

Reports of :

18. The Health and Social Concerns Department Director
19. Harriet Tubman Foundation
20. Family Life Commission
21. Judicial Council
22. BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION
23. The A. M. E. Zion University - Monrovia, Liberia
24. Hood Speaks Theological Seminary

5:45 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction
 6:00 P.M. DINNER

FRIDAY EVENING SESSION

7:30 P.M. Bishop Joseph Johnson, Presiding

07-17-1996 10:13PM

P. 06



7:45 P.M.

Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

Ecumenical and Fraternal Night

Music furnished by the Choirs of:

1. The London-Birmingham Conference
2. The Virginia Conference
3. The Trinity Church, Washington, DC

Greetings from Representatives of:

The United Methodist Church

The African Methodist Episcopal Church

The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Bishop Nathaniel T. Lindsey, Senior BishopThe Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.
The Reverend Dr. Tyrone S. Pitts, General SecretaryThe Protestant Episcopal Church In the United States of America
The Reverend Canon David W. Perry, Ecumenical OfficerThe National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
The Reverend Dr. John D. Chaplin, First Vice PresidentHoward University School of Divinity
The Reverend Dr. Clarence G. Newsome, DeanThe World Council of Churches
The Reverend Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald, Executive Director
Unit I "Unity and Renewal"The World Methodist Council
Dr. James W. Holsinger, Jr., TreasurerThe American Bible Society
The Reverend Fred A. Allen, Assistant to the President
Church Relations/ABS Chaplain

07-17-1996 10:13PM

P.07

The Church of God In Christ**The Consultation On Church Union
Dr. Daniel C. Hamby, General Secretary****The National Council of Churches****Interfaith Impact For Justice and Peace
The Reverend Fr. Paul Ojibway, S.A.
Legislative Director****The Congress of National Black Churches, Inc.
The Reverend H. Michael Lemmons, Executive Director****Youth For Christ/USA
Mr. Roger Cross, President****Interdenominational Theological Center
The Reverend Dr. Calvin S. Morris, Vice President and Academic Dean****The Offering****9:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction****SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1996****MORNING SESSION****8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by the Tenth Episcopal District
The Reverend Carol Johnson, Worship Leader
The Reverend Donald L. Jones Presiding Elder - Evansville District
Indiana Conference - Preaching****9:45 A.M. Bishop Richard Keith Thompson, Presiding****Reading of Minutes**

07-17-1996 10:14PM

P. 08

Report of

Commission on Discipline Codification
 Commission on the Judiciary
 Commission on Organic Union
 Commission on Ecumenical Affairs
 Commission on Pan Methodist Cooperation
 Committee on Public Worship and Sabbath Observance

Election and Legislation
 Presentation of 1996-2000 Budget (First Reading)
 Report of the Revision Committee

12:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

SATURDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

1:00 P.M. Official General Conference Picture

1:30 P.M. Committee Meetings and Sightseeing Planned by the Host Church

2:30 P.M. *Evangelistic Community Thrust*
 Led by the Department of Evangelism Rev. Dr. N.H. Hicklin, Director

SATURDAY EVENING SESSION

7:30 P.M. **BISHOP JAMES VARICK QUADRENNIAL**
SALUTE TO SERVICE!
CELEBRATING "FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA"

WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER (Tickets must be purchased)

OSSIE DAVIS & RUBY DEE

07-17-1996 10:14PM

P. 09

SOUTH CAROLINA A. M. E. ZION METER-HYMN CHOIR**WILLIAM BECTON****SANDRA REAVES****JAY HOGGARD****TWINKIE CLARK****SUNDAY, JULY, 28, 1996**

9:15-10:30 A.M. Sunday Church School Renaissance Hotel and Towers
 Department of Christian Education
 Reverend Raymon Hunt, General Superintendent
 Ms. Mary Love, Associate General Superintendent

MORNING WORSHIP**WASHINGTON CONVENTION CENTER**

11:00 A.M. Call To Worship Bishop Enoch B. Rochester, Presiding
 Sermon Bishop Cecil Bishop

Music furnished by Choirs of:

Full Gospel - Temple Hills, Maryland
 John Wesley - The National Church of Zion Methodism, Washington, D. C.
 Washington Metropolitan - Saint Louis, Missouri

Offering The Reverend John A. Cherry

The Ushers Grand March Ushers of the A.M.E. Zion Church

1:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

SUNDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

07-17-1996 10:15PM

P.10

Renaissance Hotel and Towers Ballroom


 3:30 P.M. Anniversary Service of Home and Overseas Missions

Presiding Officers: Bishop Cecil Bishop, Chairman - Home Missions
 Bishop George E. Battle, Chairman - Overseas Missions

Worship led by the Overseas Missions Department
 Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. Dr. Kermit J. DeGraffenreidt

Greetings from:

Liberia, West Africa	Great Britain
Ghana, West Africa	Bahamas Islands
Nigeria, West Africa	Trinidad-Tobago
Cote D'Ivoire, West Africa	South Africa/Malawi/Mozambique
Guyana, South America	Barbados
The Virgin Islands	Jamaica-West Indies
India	

Home Missions

Arkansas

Georgia and South Georgia

Representatives from each area will bring greetings to the
 General Conference (Not to exceed 3 minutes per area).

Greetings

Dr. Lem Long, Secretary-Treasurer,
 Department of Home Missions
 Mrs. Dorothy Johnson

Music furnished by:

East Tennessee and Virginia Conference Choir
 Ohio Conference Mass Choir
 Saint Luke Church Choir, Buffalo, New York
 The Sanctuary Choir of Trinity Church, Greensboro, North Carolina

5:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

5:30 P.M. DINNER

07-17-1996 18:15PM

P.11

SUNDAY EVENING SESSION**6:30 P.M. Varick Christian Endeavor**

The Reverend Raymon Hunt, Director
The Reverend Clifford Barnett, Youth Director

7:30 P.M. General Conference Memorial Service**Bishop J. Clinton Hoggard, Presiding****Music furnished by:****South Carolina Meter - Hymn Choir****8:30 P.M. Christian Education Anniversary Service Worship**

Bishop Milton A. Williams, Presiding Officers
Bishop Joseph Johnson, Presiding Officers

Sermon

The Reverend Dr. Cynthia Russell, President
Clinton College - Rock Hill, South Carolina

Music furnished by:

California/Southwest Rocky Mountain Conferences Mass Choir
Grace A.M.E Zion Church, Raleigh, North Carolina
Butler Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church, Greenville, Alabama
Hood Temple Male Chorus, Richmond, Virginia

10:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

07-17-1996 10:58PM

P.01

MONDAY, JULY, 29, 1996

MORNING SESSION

Renaissance Hotel and Lower Grand Ballroom
900 "H" Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by Ninth Episcopal District
The Reverend Lester A. Jacobs, Worship Leader
The Reverend Claude A. Shuford, Pastor, Mount Zion, Preaching
Montgomery, Alabama

 9:45 A.M. Bishop Enoch B. Rochester, Presiding

Reading of the Minutes

Final Reading, Consideration of, and Action on the Budget for 1996-2000

1:00 P.M. Recess and Luncheon

MONDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

 2:30 P.M. Bishop Marshall H. Strickland, Presiding
Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

Report of Committees:

American Bible Society
American History
Appeals
Audit
Legislative Session (Cont'd)

5:30 P.M. RECESS

6:00 P.M. DINNER

MONDAY EVENING SESSION

7:30-8:30 P.M. Worship led by the Eighth Episcopal District

07-17-1996 10:59PM

P.02

The Reverend Dr. Dennis A. Haggray, Pastor, St. Mark A.M.E. Zion Church
and Presiding Elder, Dallas District, Texas Conference, Worship Leader
Rev. Dr. Willie G. Johnson, Pastor, Petty A.M.E. Zion Church, and Presiding Elder,
New Orleans District, Louisiana Conference, Preaching



8:45 P.M. Bishop Clarence Carr, Presiding

Elections and Legislative Session (Cont'd)

10:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 1996

Morning Session

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by the Seventh Episcopal District

The Reverend Charles Jackson, Worship Leader
Founder and Pastor - New Life, Atlanta, Georgia
The Reverend W. O. Thompson, Presiding Elder
Rock Hill District, South Carolina Conference, Preaching

9:45 A.M. Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, Presiding

Reading of Minutes
Elections (Cont'd)
Legislative Session (Cont'd)
Report of Committees:
Church Extension
Civil Rights

1:00 P.M. RECESS AND LUNCHEON

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION



2:30 P.M. Bishop Cecil Bishop, Presiding
Hymn, Scriptures and Prayer

07-17-1996 10:59PM

P. 03

Legislative Session (Cont'd)

Reports of Committees

Revision Committee
 Conference Boundaries
 Education
 Schools and Colleges
 Home Missions

5:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction
 6:00 P.M. DINNER

TUESDAY EVENING SESSION

7:15-8:00 P.M. Worship led by the Sixth Episcopal District
 The Reverend Emmanuel J. Umo, Presiding Elder,
 Northern-Nigeria Conference, Worship Leader
 The Reverend Nya E.E. Ebitto, Senior Magistrate
 and Presiding Elder, Uyo Metropolitan District,
 Nigeria Conference, Preaching

8:15 P.M. Bishop George W. C. Walker, Presiding

Freedom and Human Rights Night

Greetings From:

Mr. William Allen, Executive Vice President Special Projects
 Secretary of the Corporation
 The College Fund / UNCF

Dr. Bernard E. Anderson, Assistant Secretary of Labor
 Employment Standards - U. S. Department of Labor

Ms. Doris Crenshaw, Executive Director
 March From Montgomery

07-17-1996 11:00PM

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Mr. Harvey Gantt, Former Mayor
Charlotte, North Carolina

National Urban League

People United To Save Humanity

Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Congressional Black Caucus

National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People

Dr. Dorothy I. Height, President and CEO
National Council Of Negro Women, Inc.

Music furnished by:

Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion, Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 1996

Morning Session

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by Fifth Episcopal District
The Reverend Gloria Morris Snipes, Presiding Elder, Salisbury District
Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference, Worship Leader
The Reverend Dr. General L. Scott, Pastor, Saint Thomas A. M. E. Zion
Church, Norfolk, Virginia, Preaching
Music Furnished by the Saint Thomas Church Choir

07-17-1996 11:00PM

P.05

9:45 A.M.....Bishop Milton A. Williams, Presiding

Reading of Minutes

Legislative Session (Cont'd)

Report of Committees:

Evangelism

Executive and Judiciary Business

Overseas Missions

Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society Committee Report

Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society Memorials to the
General Conference

1:00 P.M.....RECESS

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

* 2:30 P.M.....Bishop S. Chuka Ekemam, Presiding

Hymn, Scripture and Prayer

Legislative Session (Cont'd)

Report of Committees:

Lay Activities

Ministerial Relief and Brotherhood Pension

Periodicals

Superannuated Ministers

Widows and Orphans

Minimum Salary

5:30 P.M.....Closing Hymn and Benediction

6:00 P.M.....DINNER

WEDNESDAY EVENING SESSION

7:15-8:15 P.M.....Worship led by the Fourth Episcopal District
The Reverend Robert Graham, Pastor, Saint Luke A.M.E. Zion Church,
Buffalo, New York, Worship Leader
The Reverend W. Darian Moore, Pastor, Greater Centennial
A.M.E. Zion Church, Mount Vernon, New York, Preaching

07-17-1996 11:01PM

P.06

8:30 P.M. Bishop George E. Battle, Presiding

Music Furnished by:

C. H. Foggie Allegheny Conference Choir
Greater Centennial Church Choir

Conference Business

10:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1996

Morning Session

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by Third Episcopal District
The Reverend Brenda K. White, Worship Leader
The Reverend Charles Wilson, Pastor, Saint Paul A.M.E.
Zion Church, Trenton, New Jersey, Preaching~~8~~ 9:45 A.M. Bishop Joseph Johnson, Presiding

Reading of Minutes

Report of the Episcopal Committee

Legislative Session (Cont'd)

Report of Committees on:

Public Relations

State of the Country

Publishing House

Temperance, Law Enforcement

Social Concerns

and Public Morale

State of the Church

Theological Seminary

1:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

07-17-1996 11:01PM

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THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

 2:30 P.M. Bishop Richard K. Thompson, Presiding

Legislative Session (Continued)

Recognition Of Armed Forces Chaplains

Recognition of Veterans' Administration Chaplains

5:30 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

6:00 P.M. DINNER

THURSDAY EVENING SESSION

7:15-8:15 P.M. Worship led by Second Episcopal District

The Reverend Ronald Butler, Pastor Mt. Lebanon A.M.E. Zion
Church, Elizabeth City, North Carolina, Worship LeaderThe Reverend Florence S. Brown, Pastor, Mt. Pleasant A.M.E.
Zion Church, Rieglewood, North Carolina, Preaching

8:30 P.M. Bishop Enoch B. Rochester, Presiding

Legislative Session (Concluded)

10:00 P.M. Closing Hymn and Benediction

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 1996

Morning Session

8:30-9:30 A.M. Worship led by First Episcopal District

The Reverend Dr. Seth O. Lartey, Pastor Goler Memorial A.M.E. Zion
Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Worship LeaderThe Reverend Dr. James R. Samuel, Pastor, Little Rock A.M.E. Zion
Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, Preaching
Music by the Little Rock Church Choir
 9:45 A.M. Bishop Marshall H. Strickland, Presiding

07-17-1996 11:02PM

P. 08

Report of Committees:

Courtesy and Decorum

Finance

Appointment of Administrative Boards and Ecumenical
Representatives**CLOSING SESSION**

Held at Full Gospel - Temple Hills, Maryland

2:00 P.M. Bishop Joseph Johnson,
President of the Board of Bishops

Final Reading of General Conference Minutes

Consecration of Bishops

Sermon

Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, Senior Bishop
African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Closing Service

Adjournment of the Forty-Fifth (45th) Session of the General
Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

Music furnished by:

The Full Gospel Church Choir, Temple Hills, Maryland
The Little Rock Church Choir, Charlotte, North Carolina

Revised 07/1996




AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH



Bishop Joseph Johnson • President, Bd. of Bishops • #4 Russwood Cove • Little Rock, Ar 72211 •
Telephone (501) 228-9711 • Fax (501) 228-9069

PRESS RELEASE

July 23, 1996

More than 2000 Delegates, alternate Delegates, and visitors are converging on the Nation's Capitol to participate in and observe the Bicentennial General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

200 years ago, in 1796, a group of Blacks petitioned the Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church to allow them to establish a church for Blacks that would be unbiased, unrestrictive, and impartial to Blacks.

The request was reluctantly granted, with the provision that the group would be under the supervision of Methodist Episcopal Church ministers until the leaders could prove that they could manage their new church.

In 1801, the new church gained its total independence from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and began a process of expansion that has resulted in African Methodist Episcopal Zion Churches being established on five of the six inhabitable continents.

Today, 200 years after its beginning, the denomination has over 1 Million Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand members, and among its most famous members were Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Paul Robeson. A current outstanding member is The Honorable Louis Stokes, Congressman of the State of Ohio.

The Conference will hear reports from Bishops, General Officers, Commissions and Committees. It will elect two new Bishops from among a list of 15, one of whom is a female. Should the female be elected, she will be the first female elected to the Episcopacy in Black Methodism.

The Episcopal Address presented by the 12 Bishops of the Church, will speak to issues that effect our Church, nation and the world. Some of the issues to be covered in the address include: CHURCH BURNINGS, AFFIRMATIVE ACTION, GANG VIOLENCE, SAME SEX MARRIAGES, HEALTH CARE, WELFARE REFORM, ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, HATE GROUPS, VOTER REGISTRATION \ EDUCATION, THE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA, RACISM, FAMILY VALUES, AND THE PROPOSED MERGER WITH THE C. M. E. CHURCH AND OTHERS.

The Conference will pass a budget, make final plans for the Bicentennial celebration to be held in New York City in October, and decide on over one hundred resolutions presented by delegates, Commissions, and the Board of Bishops.

MEMORANDUM

July 24, 1996

TO: Ben Johnson
FROM: Rev. Willette O. Wright
SUBJECT: Mrs. Clinton's Visit



Per our conversation on Wednesday, July 24, 1996, attached is a copy of a Press Release for the 45th Quadrennial Session of the General Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. While the opening sessions for the Conference were held at the host church, the Monday afternoon session will be held at the Renaissance Hotel and Tower Grand Ballroom, located at 999 9th Street in downtown Washington. We are thankful that Mrs. Clinton's schedule will allow her to address the leaders and laity of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on Monday, July 29 at 2 p.m.

When Mrs. Clinton addresses the Conference, the usual greeting should include acknowledgement of the Board of Bishops (specifically Bishop Joseph Johnson who is the current President of the Board of Bishops, Bishop Ruben L. Speaks, Senior Bishop of the Board of Bishops, and Bishop Milton A. Williams, Host Bishop); Pastor and Mrs. John A. Cherry, Host Pastor; General Officers of the Church; Delegates to the Conference; and other guests.

Please contact my office with any further questions. We anticipate hearing from the White House regarding the Secret Service and other security-related matters.

Thanks again, Ben.

Date: Fri, 17 Nov 95 10:27:14 PST
From: "Darin D. Peterson"
To: dee@wsunix.wsu.edu
Subject: African-American Religions assign.

In many cases in the history of black religion in the United States slaves chose to go to their master's church to worship. They were often forced to sit in the back rows set apart from the whites. Since this time African-Americans and their religions have come a long ways to gaining their religious freedom.

Today and throughout the twentieth century there are a great number of religions blacks belong to in the United States. The Union American Methodist Episcopal Church and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church are two of the churches today that are strictly black related churches stemming from the methodist seperation in the 1800's. But on the other hand African-Americans belong to almost every other American religion you can think of including Baptist, Catholic, Lutheran, Mormon and Methodist just to name a few.

In the book "Religions of America" written by Leo R`osten he states that while there are blacks in every religion there are six predominant groups that seperate blacks from the rest of society just as all of history has done. The six are National Baptist USA, National Baptist of America, African Methodist, African Methodist Zion, National Primitive Baptist and Progressive National Baptist.

Another sect religion that many blacks belong to was Black Muslim. They considered themselves "the Lost Found Nation of Islam in the Wilderness of North America" and membership mainly centered around large cities.

Overall I believe that African-Americans will continue to worship many if not all of the same religions whites do in this country and it is important for us not to set any boundaries for any other race or ethnic background.

Brad Miller
99985839

MISSION NEWS

The Woman's Home and Overseas Missionary Society participates with and supports various ministries and social projects. A partial listing follows:

- ☐ Field Workers Project, Overseas and Home
- ☐ World Hunger Project
- ☐ Prison Ministry
- ☐ Schools and Colleges supported:
 - ☐ Livingstone College, Salisbury, North Carolina
 - ☐ Lomax Hannon Jr. College, Greenville, Alabama
 - ☐ Clinton Junior College, Rock Hill, South Carolina
 - ☐ Hood Theological Seminary, Salisbury, North Carolina
 - ☐ AME Zion Community College, Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa
 - ☐ Hood Speaks Theological Seminary, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria
- ☐ Ecumenical Affiliations:
 - ☐ World Federation of Methodist Women
 - ☐ Church Women United
 - ☐ National Council of Negro Women
- ☐ Life Members Educational Endowment Fund
- ☐ Agape Luncheon
- ☐ Walk-a-Mile for Second Mile



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Webmaster: Dr. Adlise I. Porter
For information please send e-mail to whoms@nonprofit.net
Last Update: February 1, 1996

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 8, 1996

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

The Oval Office

10:06 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This morning I want to talk with you about a recent and disturbing rash of crimes that hearkens back to a dark era in our nation's history. Just two days ago, when the Matthews-Murkland Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, was burned to the ground, it became at least the 30th African American church destroyed or damaged by suspicious fire in the South in the past 18 months. And over the past few months, Vice President Gore has talked with me about the pain and anguish these fires in his home state of Tennessee have caused. Tennessee, sadly, has experienced more of them than any other state in the country.

We do not now have evidence of a national conspiracy, but it is clear that racial hostility is the driving force behind a number of these incidents. This must stop.

It's hard to think of a more depraved act of violence than the destruction of a place of worship. In our country, during the 50s and 60s, black churches were burned to intimidate civil rights workers. I have vivid and painful memories of black churches being burned in my own state when I was a child. In 1963 all Americans were outraged by the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, that took the lives of four precious young children. We must never allow that to happen again.

Every family has a right to expect that when they walk into a church or synagogue or mosque each week they will find a house of worship, not the charred remnants of a hateful act done by cowards in the night. We must rise up as a national community to safeguard the right of every citizen to worship in safety. That is what America stands for.

As President, I am determined to do everything in my power to get to the bottom of these church burnings as quickly as possible. And no matter how long it takes, no matter where the

leads take us, we will devote whatever resources are necessary to solve these crimes. Today more than 200 federal agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the FBI are working with state and local authorities to solve these cases. Fire investigators, national response teams, polygraph examiners, and forensic chemists are combing through fire sites, interviewing witnesses, and following leads. A task force chaired by our Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Deval Patrick, and our Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement, James Johnson, is coordinating these efforts. FBI Director Louis Freeh and ATF Director John Magaw are also serving on the task force. To date there have been a number of arrests. Two of those in custody are known members of the Ku Klux Klan. So we are making progress, but we must do more.

That is why today I am announcing four steps we are taking to fight back. First, I have asked the task force to report back on their progress and to let me know if there are other actions the federal government can take beyond those underway to stop these crimes.

Second, I have instructed the ATF to inform churches of any steps they can take to protect themselves from arsonists. Churches throughout the South will be visited by ATF special agents to answer any questions church leaders and parishioners may have. We are also making this information available to national church organizations for distribution to their members.

Third, I am announcing my support for the bipartisan legislation introduced by Congressmen John Conyers and Henry Hyde to make it easier to bring federal prosecutions against those who attack houses of worship. I look forward to working with Congress to make it even stronger.

And, finally, I'm announcing that we are establishing a new toll-free number that is now available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you have information about who is responsible for these church fires, please call it. It's 1-888-ATF-FIRE. That's 1-888-ATF-FIRE.

In the end, we must all face up to the responsibility to end this violence. We must say to those who would feed their neighbors what Martin Luther King called, "the stale bread of hatred and spoiled meat of racism" -- that is not America; that is not our way. We must come together, black and white alike, to smother the fires of hatred that fuel this violence.

I am pleased that the National Council of Churches of Christ, one of the largest inter-faith groups in the country, has spoken out against these crimes and is mobilizing to assist in the rebuilding of damaged churches. I encourage communities everywhere where churches have been burned to roll up their sleeves and help the folks there to rebuild their churches.

Religious freedom is one of the founding principles of our democracy, and the black church has historically been the center of worship, self-help and community life for millions of families in our country.

That's why it was so hard for Reverend Terrence Mackey to break the news to his daughter last June when they woke to find an ash-scarred field in the spot where only the day before stood their church home, Mt. Zion AME Church in Greeleyville, South Carolina. Reverend Mackey reassured his daughter with these words: He told her, "They didn't burn down the church. They burned down the building in which we hold church. The church is still inside all of us."

On June 15, Reverend Mackey, his daughter and his congregation will march from the site of the old church to a brand new building. And all Americans will march with them in spirit.

We must all do our part to end this rash of violence. America is a great country because for more than 200 years we have strived to honor the religious convictions, the freedom, the extraordinary religious diversity of our people. The only way we can succeed in the 21st century is if we unleash the full power of those convictions in that diversity and refuse to let anything divide or defeat us.

Thanks for listening.

END

10:12 A.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 2, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON CHURCH BURNINGS

The Rose Garden

11:39 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I'd like to begin today by saluting the law enforcement officers who made the arrest in Arizona yesterday to avert a terrible terrorist attack. Their dedication and hard work over the last six months may have saved many lives, and they deserve our thanks.

I'd like to offer a special congratulations to the gentleman to my right, Ray Kelly, the Under Secretary of the Treasury for Enforcement for his role in that endeavor.

Just as we acted to prevent a vicious crime from occurring there, today I'm announcing stepped up efforts to prevent the spread of violence against houses of worship. Again, I want to thank Mr. Kelly and Nancy Gist, the Director of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, who is standing to my left, the representatives of the law enforcement organizations who are here and who have been supporting our efforts.

These attacks against African American churches and other houses of worship are an affront to our most basic beliefs of religious liberty and racial tolerance. They pose a challenge to our entire nation. I am gratified that law enforcement, government, business and religious leaders are coming together to meet this challenge. Today, attorneys general from throughout our nation are meeting at Howard University to discuss the problem.

I am also pleased that Congress acted to quickly to pass legislation making it easier to prosecute and punish anyone who burns a house of worship, and I am eager to sign that legislation as soon as possible. I'm gratified by the outpouring of private support that will help to rebuild communities that are torn apart by these actions.

But we must do more to prevent these crimes. Last week, I asked Federal Emergency Management Administrator, James Lee Witt, to take the lead in working with law enforcement to find ways to stop the burnings before they happen, and to give our communities the tools they

need to help in the prevention effort.

Today, I am taking emergency action to prevent church-burnings by transferring \$6 million to communities in 12 targeted states. This emergency transfer would allow every county in the affected states to hire a new police officer for the summer to patrol the back roads, to visit the churches, to keep watch for signs of trouble.

These new officers, working with local police and community watch groups, can maintain a wall of protection to ward off people who would strike out in hate at a house of worship. Or communities can spend the money for other purposes -- installing floodlights, hiring private security guards, paying overtime for existing officers -- whatever they believe will work best to forestall the fires.

I'm asking Congress to quickly approve the transfer through a special procedure that allows action without a time-consuming floor vote. We don't have any time to waste. With this step, the national government will be helping local police not only to investigate arson and apprehend the guilty, but to help to physically protect churches from harm in the first place.

If this emergency measure is not enough to beat back the church-burnings, we will take further steps as needed. This is a struggle against racism and religious bigotry, and we will escalate that struggle as necessary with enough people power and willpower to make sure the struggle is won. This is a test not just for law enforcement, but for all law-abiding Americans.

Earlier today, I signed a proclamation designating a national month of unity. During the month of July, I call on religious leaders of all faiths to speak from the pulpit and emphasize the need for healing. And I call on all citizens to join together, to reach out to one another, to strengthen the ideals that light our way and keep us strong.

On Thursday, we will celebrate America's Independence Day. This year, let us take this opportunity to rededicate ourselves once again to the proposition that all Americans are created equal, and that every American should be able to worship in freedom and freedom from fear. Thank you very much. Thank you.

END

11:42 A.M. EDT

Black churches form groups to boost black purchasing power

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) - Five of the nation's largest black denominations are joining to form a national consumer group whose revenues will help fund black home ownership and black churches.

The Revelation Corporation of America will use the combined buying power of church members to solicit discount and cash rebates from companies on products ranging from groceries to insurance. Rebates will be calculated as a percentage of purchases made by members. Revelation Corporation will give 30 percent of the rebates to participating congregations and purchasing groups, and use 70 percent for a national housing fund to help home buyers and developers in minority neighborhoods.

Participating congregations include the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention USA, and the Progressive National Baptist Church. The church bodies include some 43,000 churches and 20 million members.

Participating denominations own 70 percent of Revelation Corporation; the remaining 30 percent is owned by Lowery Riggan Co. of Memphis. That company is headed by John Lowery, a white Republican who will serve as chief operating officer of the new corporation. Lowery's involvement caused some controversy. Bennett Smith, president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, said, "I say to you who don't like the split, 70 percent of something is better than 100 percent of nothing, and 100 percent of nothing is what we've had." Organizers say Lowery's company is needed for its corporate contacts:

The plan was announced Jan. 15, on the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. E. Edward Jones of the National Baptist Convention of America called the program "an extension of Dr. King's dream," and noted, "Economic development is a next step in freedom for black people."

Electronic Data Systems has agreed to take sales and rebates, and to staff a service center with a toll-free number. Prudential Securities is advising the group. Organizers say major manufacturers have already signed on, agreeing to offer products at a discount to members in return for being designated as an exclusive vendor of a given product or service.

Revelation Corporation will be a for-profit company, and organizers liken it to the American Association of Retired Persons, which earns revenue through rebates while arranging discounts for its members. The first participants in the program will be members of predominantly black churches, but any group can participate without regard to race or religion.



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HEADLINE: Clinton's Choice

BYLINE: E. J. Dionne Jr.

BODY:

President Clinton should stand up and stop the charade that is passing for welfare reform in Congress. He should say that election-year bills crafted for political purposes are a bad idea and don't reflect the consensus in the country on the need to help welfare recipients find work.

A gutsy Republican has even provided him with a text for fighting the proposals before Congress. "No children will go hungry and homeless on my watch if I can help it," said Rep. Marge Roukema of New Jersey, one of only four House Republicans to vote against her party's most recent welfare proposal.

He could also quote Gov. Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin, the Republicans' welfare reform hero, who has said over and over that welfare reform that gets people working costs more money upfront than the current system. It's cheaper to write checks than to give welfare recipients job training, education, child care and jobs.

Don't expect the president to do any of these things. The White House is playing a tactical game, leaving its options open and making sure that whatever happens, Clinton will not give the hapless Dole campaign an issue.

True, Clinton says most of the right things about what's wrong with the Republican proposals, which are scheduled to be debated in the Senate today -- that their cuts in food stamps and assistance to legal immigrants are too severe and that they lack adequate backup mechanisms to help poor children whose parents can't or don't meet work requirements.

But many in the Clinton White House want Clinton to sign anything the Republicans put on his desk, as long as it carries the label "welfare reform." That way, he can say he kept his campaign promise to "end welfare as we know it." But doesn't a president who is 20 points ahead in the polls have at least a little room for courage?

The fact that this is all about politics was underscored by House Majority Leader Dick Armey, with his usual bluntness. The president, Armey said, would now have to decide whether "to sign this bill and satisfy the American people while he alienates his left-wing political base, or if he's going to veto the bill in order to satisfy the left wing of the Democrat[ic] Party, and thereby alienate the American people."

The Washington Post, July 23, 1996

So much for all the Republicans' pious talk about how they are just trying to "liberate" the poor from a "corrupt" welfare system. To the extent that this is a work program, it's an effort to keep incumbent members of Congress in their current jobs, and to try to get Dole a new one.

Of course the current welfare system needs replacing. Welfare should be a jobs program where those who need public help and can hold a job are put to work in exchange for a decent level of support. Every poll ever done shows that Americans want to make a historic trade-off: They are willing to spend some extra money to help the poor, provided the system embodies a commitment to work and family stability.

Serious money also needs to be spent to help today's children on welfare to avoid becoming tomorrow's welfare recipients. Among other things, the country needs to build a network of "second-chance homes," small group homes that would give teen mothers and their children education, nurture and -- perhaps most important -- protection from unsafe environments and unsafe streets. It also needs to support and expand the mentoring movement which, as Gary Walker and Marc Freedman show in the current issue of the American Prospect magazine, has made a big difference for many kids. Both ideas enjoy support across the usual ideological and political dividing lines.

The shame is that Democrats had an opportunity to reform welfare in a constructive way in the last Congress and blew it. In failing to act, they opened the way for the Republicans. If the president signs the Republican bill and gets pummeled by liberals for doing so, his supporters will argue that liberals missed the boat and gave the president no choice. But Clinton does have a choice.

This president is an expert on welfare. He is also an expert on public opinion polling. He knows what a good welfare bill looks like because he proposed one. And he knows what's wrong with the proposals the Republicans are rushing to enact. As for the polls, there's no doubt that the president would pay a political price for a veto. But the polls also show he has room to make the case for real reform. Doesn't that give this president a unique opportunity to end welfare demagoguery as we know it?

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 23, 1996

CHAPTER VII

Racism and Democracy

Fighting Jim Crow

RAYFORD W. LOGAN, in his book *The Betrayal of the Negro* described the turn of the century as the low point in Afro-American history. After Emancipation, he contended, the hopes of the Negroes were betrayed. Again they were pushed down into second-class status. It appeared that democracy was for whites only. Actually, the increasing growth of racism and of segregation as well, led inevitably to the development of opposition groups bent on destroying this discrimination. Segregation promoted the creation of Negro institutions which then became the center for this counterattack.

The most prominent of these Afro-American institutions was the Negro church. Like the white church, it was fragmented into many separate denominations. There was the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, the National Baptists, and a host of denominational organizations.

However, integrated congregations within the mainly white church groups were almost nonexistent. Those blacks who did belong to such white denominations usually attended all-black congregations within the larger institutional structure. Negro colleges also sprang up throughout the South as well as an occasional one in the North. These included such well-known schools as Howard, Hampton, Tuskegee, and Fisk. The churches and colleges became training grounds for a growing middle-class and for future community leaders. Each in its own way provided a debating center in which racial problems closing in from all sides were considered.

As Negroes were frequently denied employment by whites, they began to develop businesses of their own. Because their capital was almost always small, their task was made more difficult. White-owned banks hesitated to lend money to Negroes, forcing them into developing banks of their own. By 1900 blacks had founded four banks which appealed mainly to a Negro clientele. They had a combined capital of more than \$90,000. White-owned insurance companies often refused to sell insurance policies to Negroes. Standardized mortality charts showed that Negroes died at an earlier age than whites. When insurance companies did accept them as clients, they were charged higher rates than were whites. During the nineteenth century, various Negro secret societies attempted to develop insurance programs for their members. In 1898 the National Benefit Insurance Company was opened in Washington. Owned by blacks, it deliberately sought out Negro patronage. In the same year, the Mutual Benefit Insurance Company was opened in North Carolina along similar lines.

White undertakers and beauticians were reluctant to cater to Negro customers. Aside from their personal tastes, they feared that it would alienate their white patrons. A similar situation held true for dentists and doctors. This forced the Afro-American community to develop its own professionals. By 1900, Negroes had invested half a million dollars in undertaking establishments. That same year, the Afro-American community had produced 1,700 physicians, 212 dentists, 728 lawyers, 310 journalists, an several thousand college, secondary, and elementary school teachers.

Other Negro professionals, finding themselves excluded from existing official affiliations formed their own professional fraternity in 1904. Two years later, the first Greek letter society for Negroes was established to help its members in coping with the effects of social discrimination on largely white college campuses. In 1915, Carter G. Woodson established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and began publication of the *Journal of Negro History*.

In 1905, W. E. B. DuBois, John Hope, Monroe Trotter, Kelly Miller, and other outspoken young Negro intellectuals met in Niagara Falls, Ontario, and founded the "Niagara Movement." Unlike the other black institutions mentioned above, the "Niagara Movement" was primarily political in its objectives. On the one hand, it strove to seize the leadership of the Afro-American community, taking it away from the more conciliatory emphasis of Booker T. Washington. On the other hand, they wanted a platform from which to condemn, loudly and clearly, the white prejudice they found all about them.

The organization deliberately tried to resurrect the spirit of the angry abolitionists immediately preceding the Civil War. The meeting places of their three conventions were chosen for their symbolic value. Niagara Falls was the terminal on the underground railway, the point at which runaways had reached freedom. Harpers Ferry had been the site of John Brown's violent assault on slavery, and Oberlin, Ohio, had been well known as a center of abolitionist activity.

The growth of racism at the turn of the century, besides encouraging the development of Negro institutions, revived the interests of some whites in fighting for racial justice. Whites were particularly upset by racially motivated acts of violence. Lynchings reached a high point in American history at this time. Between 1900 and 1910, there were 846 lynchings, in which 92 victims were white and 754 Negro. Northern whites were especially perturbed as racial violence began to move into the North. Previously they had viewed it as a Southern white man's problem. When a vicious race riot occurred in Springfield, Illinois, in 1908, this illusion was shattered. William English Walling, the journalist, was shocked and wrote an impassioned article, "Race War in the North," which was published in *The Independent*.

Walling's article, which was based on his visit to Springfield, brought several collaborators to his side. In it, he contended that Southern racists were bringing the race war into the North and that the only alternative was to revive the spirit of abolitionism and to fight for racial equality. The following year a group of concerned individuals, black and white, met in New York City and their meeting resulted in the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Those attending this meeting, besides Walling, included Oswald Garrison Villard, the grandson of William Lloyd Garrison. Jane Addams, the founder of Hull House in Chicago, John Dewey, the philosopher, William Dean Howells, the

editor of Harper's magazine, Mary White Ovington, a New York social worker, and Dr. Henry Moskowitz. The Negro delegation consisted of W. E. B. DuBois and most of the other members of the Niagara Movement. At this meeting it was decided that the achievement of racial equality must be the major target of their attack. In order to achieve this goal it was decided that their immediate priorities should include the enfranchisement of Negroes and the enforcement of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. The members also insisted that it was time to launch a concerted attack against lynching and other kinds of mob violence.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was officially established in 1910 with Moorefield Storey as its president. W. E. B. DuBois was the only black on its board and served as its director of publicity and research. Most blacks and whites at the time believed that the N.A.A.C.P. was irresponsible for including so many of the members of the Niagara Movement in its membership. Monroe Trotter and a few others, however, held that an interracial organization such as the N.A.A.C.P. could not be trusted to take a strong enough stand on important issues, and they refused to cooperate with it. The N.A.A.C.P. began publication of its own Journal, *Crisis*, which was a basic part of its informational program. *Crisis* was edited by W. E. B. DuBois.

The most important work of the Association was done by its legal department. Its lawyers attacked the legal devices used by some states to disenfranchise Negroes. In 1915, the Supreme Court declared, in *Guinn v. United States*, that the "grandfather clause" in the constitutions of both Maryland and Oklahoma was null and void because it contradicted the Fifteenth Amendment. Two years later, in *Buchanan v. Warley*, the court said that Louisville's ordinance requiring Negroes to live in specified sections of the city was unconstitutional. In 1923, the N.A.A.C.P. came to the defense of a Negro who, it believed, had not received a fair trial. In *Moore v. Dempsey*, the Supreme Court granted the defendant a new trial because the court which had convicted him of murder had exempted Negroes from serving on its Jury.

Branches of the N.A.A.C.P. spread all across the country. By 1921 there were more than 400 separate chapters, and the Association was still growing. Its membership, whether white or black, tended to be middle-class and educated. In this respect it bore a marked similarity to the National Urban League which came into existence at about the same time.

The National Urban League grew out of a concern for the employment problems of Negroes in New York City. George Edmund Haynes, a Negro graduate student at Columbia University, was researching the economic conditions of New York City Negroes. He was invited to present his findings to a Joint meeting of two city organizations which were probing the same problem. The Committee for Improving Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York as well as the National League for the Protection of Colored Women had been formed early in the century and were eager to base their efforts on scientific study rather than on mere sentimentality. Haynes's research was later published as *The Negro at Work in New York City*.

This meeting resulted in the establishing of the Urban League which has been concerned primarily with finding employment for Negroes and aiding them in acquiring improved job skills. Haynes and Eugene Kinckle Jones were its executive directors. One of its sponsors was Booker T. Washington, who was more sympathetic with its orientation than he had been with either the Niagara Movement or the N.A.A.C.P., both of which were more political and aggressive. The philanthropist Julius Rosenwald gave the League substantial financial aid. The Urban League soon spread into other major cities and gained increasing importance as ever-growing numbers of Negroes migrated into Northern urban areas and needed assistance in making the adjustment. Negro churches and colleges, along with interracial organizations, began to establish the foundation for the long hard struggle for racial equality which lay ahead.

Making the World Safe for Democracy

While Negroes and some whites were engaged in trying to put American ideals into practice within the country, others were reaching out to spread American democracy to more "underprivileged" peoples. American society had always contained a missionary dynamic. The Puritan Fathers came to America to escape religious oppression and to establish what they believed would be the Kingdom of God. While it appeared that all they wanted was space in which to be left alone, their conviction that they were building God's Kingdom implied a belief that their new society would prosper and spread. If it were really the Kingdom of God, it could not be expected to remain an insignificant settlement on a distant and unimportant continent. For the next two hundred years, this missionary dynamic was absorbed in spreading across the North American continent. While the Americans did not see their expansion into the West as being imperialistic, American Indians saw it otherwise.

With the disappearance of the Western frontier, missionary-minded Americans felt compelled to carry the benefits of their civilization to backward areas of the world. At the same time, European imperialism was gaining new vitality. Businessmen were looking for new markets and for new sources of raw materials. Patriots, in their turn, believed that they were being called upon to assume the "white man's burden" and to civilize and democratize the world. Both drives seemed to coincide. The Berlin Conference in 1885 divided those parts of Africa not yet annexed among the major European nations. The point of the conference was to plan national exploits in such a way as to reduce conflicts. In the course of a very few years, the rest of Africa was colonized by these nations. Africans, of course, were given no voice in the matter. China, though it was not colonized, was also divided into spheres of economic influence. The United States was quick to join in this scramble. Its influence, however, was limited largely to Asia and Latin America.

This new imperialist expansion was not interpreted by its proponents as being exploitative. Instead, they depicted it as bringing the blessing of civilization to the "underprivileged." The concept of the "white man's burden" was particularly common in Britain and America. The prevailing idea was that the white race, especially the Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic branches of it, had been especially blessed by God so that it could achieve industrialization and democratization. It further taught that it was their obligation to carry the benefits to less fortunate peoples.

This new imperialism hid its domination behind paternalism, but it still presented the imperialists as superiors and the colonials as inferiors. Moreover, because in most cases the imperialists were white and the colonials colored, it meant that this imperialist drive also carried racial connotations. The American version of the "white man's burden" was most blatantly presented by Josiah Strong in his book *Our Country*. According to Strong, the superior Anglo-Saxon race in America would multiply rapidly, become powerful and prosperous, and then would spread the blessings of industrialization and democracy south into Mexico and into the Caribbean Islands. At the same time, American commercial interests were searching for new markets and were making increasing investments in these very areas. The merchants were looking for new markets to exploit, but the idealist rhetoric talked only in terms of benevolent paternalism.

These trends came to a head in the Spanish-American War. Conflicts had been increasing in Cuba between the Spanish authorities in control and the local citizens. Americans became interested in several abortive uprisings which occurred on the island. The brutal way in which the Spanish had suppressed them incensed the Americans. The violence in Cuba also endangered American life and property--the result of increasing American investments. The public favored intervention, proposing that their Caribbean neighbors should also share in the benefits of democracy. They viewed the Spaniards as an antidemocratic element from the Old World blocking the road to progress in the western hemisphere.

The battleship *Maine* was sent to the Havana harbor ostensibly on a courtesy visit. Its real object was to protect American interests. It was mysteriously blown up, and many of its crew were killed. The cause of the explosion is still unknown. American chauvinists chose to believe that the ship had been deliberately destroyed, and they demanded retaliation. Before long, American troops were sent to "liberate" the Cubans from Spanish oppression.

Although the number of Negro troops who participated in the Spanish-American War was small, they fought heroically and contributed significantly to the American victory. The Negro participants served in segregated units. These included the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry units. In the battle of San Juan Hill, the Negro cavalry opened the way for the Rough Riders' famous charge which was led by Theodore Roosevelt. Later in the day, the 24th Infantry came up from the rear to support the action.

At the end of the war, Spain gave the United States sovereignty over Puerto Rico and, for the payment of a sum of money, the U.S. also gained the Philippines. Spain gave up her sovereignty over Cuba, but its future status was not made clear. American public opinion had become so wed to the cause of democracy in Cuba that the American government felt it could not take direct control of the island. It was deemed necessary to establish a Cuban Republic, but it was obvious that America would exercise considerable influence over it. Early in the century the Platt Amendment was passed by the U. S. Congress, and Cuba was required to include it within her own constitution. This gave the United States authority to intervene in Cuban affairs in order to maintain law and order. The U. S. also obtained Guantanamo Bay as a naval base in Cuba.

In 1916 American marines landed in Santo Domingo to restore law and order there in the wake of a series of local uprisings. Again, Americans wanted to protect their business interests in the island. The American presence, however, only contributed to the total collapse of civil government, and the marines were not withdrawn until 1924. American commercial influence continued and grew even after the soldiers left. Similarly, America intervened in the internal affairs of Haiti. It began with the assumption of financial control of the Haitian government to help it achieve stability and, at the same time, to secure American investments. In an attempt to maintain law and order, American intervention spread to include taking control of the country's police force. In 1917, the U. S. established military rule in Haiti and this was not appreciated by the local citizens. The marines were compelled to shoot some two thousand Haitians in the process of restoring peace. The troops were not finally withdrawn from Haiti until 1934.

In spreading the benefits of her civilization into the Caribbean, America acquired a colored empire which only served to complicate her own racial situation. Blacks, however, played an important role in the acquisition of this territory. American ministers to Haiti were usually Negroes, and Negro soldiers played a significant part in the Spanish-American War. In their attempts to demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism, American Negroes unwittingly helped to bring more colored peoples under the sway of American racism.

America's real involvement in world politics occurred with her entrance into the First World War. The British and French had sought to give the war an ideological flavor in order both to stir up the patriotism of their own citizens and also to draw in support from other nations, especially the United States. The war was portrayed as a conflict between democracy and authoritarianism. When America joined the conflict, President Wilson emphasized even further this posture of idealism. Americans viewed the war as the last war--the war which would make the world "safe for democracy."

The Afro-American community remained oblivious to the hostilities in Europe and was late in becoming aware of the imminence of war. Negroes were preoccupied with the racial harassments confronting them at home and seldom looked beyond the country's borders. Once America became involved in the fighting, however, they were eager to demonstrate that they were patriotic and loyal citizens. Even W. E. B. DuBois, who was as hostile and angry as any, came to support the war effort. In an article which he wrote in *Crisis*, he called for his brothers to close ranks with the rest of American society and to present a solid front against the enemy. This patriotic solidarity came in spite of the fact that segregation was creeping into the Federal Government itself. President Taft, who had tried to broaden the base of the Republican Party in the South, had made some feeble beginnings at instituting segregation in federal facilities in Washington. In 1913, Wilson the first Southern Democratic president since the Civil War, vastly expanded the process. The N.A.A.C.P. expressed shock at Jim Crowism becoming an official part of the government in the nation's capital. At the same time, the Civil Service required job applicants to file their photographs with their applications. The N.A.A.C.P. charged that this was part of the spread of

discriminatory practices in Washington, but the Civil Service denied it.

When America declared war against Germany in April, 1917, only a few Negroes were members of the standing army. However, many immediately rushed to enlist, but only a few were accepted. Local enlistment officers were dubious about the ability and the loyalty of Negroes. Apparently their previous service record had been forgotten. When Congress passed the Selective Service Act in May, it was made to apply to all citizens alike. During the course of the war, some 367,000 Negroes were called into military service. This was 31 percent of those who had registered. Meanwhile, only 26 percent of the white registrants were called. Once the Selective Service Act went into effect, discrimination had the reverse effect from what it had produced before. Instead of keeping Negroes out of the Army, some Selective Service Boards discriminated against them in terms of the exemptions which were permitted. Throughout the war, the Navy only accepted Negroes in menial jobs, and the Marine Corps barred them altogether.

Training the Negro troops presented another problem. No community welcomed an influx of hundreds or thousands of young Negro men. The South, especially, was outraged when large numbers of "cocky" Negroes from the North descended upon some sleepy, peaceful town. Segregation and discrimination within the military itself caused further irritations and triggered violence at more than one camp. The 92nd, an all-Negro outfit, was trained at seven separate locations, and it was the only American unit never to come together before reaching the front. The 93rd, another all-Negro unit, was never consolidated. When it reached France, it served with various units of the French Army. It had been sent overseas hastily, and its troops received most of their training in Europe. Its men had largely been recruited from New York State, and they were sent to Spartanburg, South Carolina, for their training. The local citizens deliberately picked a fight with the men in order to "put them in their place." A riot was narrowly averted. When they were shipped back north for training, they found themselves sharing a camp with white troops from the South. Another incident almost occurred, and they were immediately sent overseas for training.

Besides serving in segregated units, most of the Negro troops were assigned to menial tasks. One third of the American stevedore force in Europe was Negro. Nevertheless, many of them did become involved in the fighting and distinguished themselves heroically. Besides receiving American awards, they were generously honored by the French. The 369th was the first American unit to reach the Rhine, and the French praised it highly.

Many of the Negro soldiers were surprised by the hospitality which they received in France. Several stayed behind, after the war, to study in European universities. In spite of the fact that many whites warned the French of dangers involved with associating with Negroes, especially white women with Negro men, the French were happy to have them share in the defense. Many invited them into their homes. In the meantime, rumors spread in America that Negro troops were taking unwise liberties with French women. It was also said that the crime of rape was widespread. Americans worried about what would happen when these men returned home. The rumors were so insistent that, finally, the government sent Dr. Moton, the president of Tuskegee Institute, to Europe to investigate the situation. He found that the rumors were totally unwarranted.

When the victors met at Versailles to write the treaty which ended the war, black people around the world, including Afro-Americans, hoped that they would take up the problem of the African peoples as well. The only consideration which was given to Africa, however, was the disposal of the German colonies. These were distributed among the victors. This did nothing to give Africa back to the Africans; it only changed the identity of the European masters. W. E. B. DuBois, who was looking for a way to spotlight the problem of the African peoples, called a Pan-African Congress to meet in Paris simultaneously with the meeting in Versailles. Fifty-seven delegates came, of which most were from Africa and America. While they had no authority and could do little of significance, the Congress did dramatize to the world the plight of the subject peoples of Africa.

Urban Riots

In spite of the fact that Negroes were fighting overseas to defend their country, racial tensions continued at home. In the years immediately preceding the war, racially motivated lynchings and riots, which had been largely confined to the South, began to spread into the North and Midwest.

In Statesboro, Georgia, two blacks, who had been accused and convicted of murder, were seized from the courtroom by an angry mob. After beating and burning them, the mob went on to loot and burn Negro-owned homes in the community. In 1906, a white mob raged out of control for several days in Atlanta, Georgia. In the same year, the 25th Infantry in Brownsville, Texas, became involved in a riot with the white citizens of that town, and Roosevelt dismissed the whole battalion without honor. In 1904, a riot occurred in Springfield, Ohio, much farther north than anyone would have expected. A Negro, who had been charged with killing a white police officer, was seized from jail by an angry mob. After hanging him from a telephone pole, the mob riddled his body with bullets. Then, they went on to destroy large sections of the Negro part of town.

In 1808 Springfield, Illinois, was the scene of the famous riot which helped to motivate the founding of the N.A.A.C.P. There, a white woman claimed to have been raped by a Negro. Although she admitted that she had, in fact, been assaulted by a white man, the angry mob was only further enraged. It ran out of control for several days, and the state's militia was called in to restore order. Besides looting and burning, the mob boldly and deliberately lynched two of the city's responsible Negro citizens. The leaders of the mob, as usual, went unpunished.

Although DuBois had urged the Negroes to close ranks with white America during the war, white racists did not reciprocate. An even worse race riot occurred in East St. Louis, Illinois, in 1917. The white community was afraid that a mass influx of

Negroes from the South was about to occur. On one hand, Illinois Democrats played on racial prejudice to further their political interests. They accused Republicans of intending to colonize large numbers of Negroes from the South in order to enlarge the Republican vote.

On the other hand, labor unions feared that Negroes would be imported as strike breakers. During an attempt to organize a union at the Aluminum Ore Company which led to a strike in April 1917 this atmosphere increased racial tensions. In 1913, the company had hired no Negro workers at all. By 1916, there were two hundred Afro-American employees. Within three months at the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917, the company fired some two hundred whites while, at the same time, hiring approximately the same number of Negroes. The city had been totally segregated, and the white citizens intended to keep it that way. The school system had been segregated in spite of a state law of 1874 which forbade segregation in education. Jim Crow was also standard in theaters, restaurants, and hotels in opposition to the 1885 law that had outlawed segregation in public accommodations. Local citizens were afraid that the rumored influx of Negroes would drastically alter the situation. Later investigation showed that the size of the migration had been vastly exaggerated.

Tension surrounding the racial and labor conflict in East St. Louis exploded into a minor riot in May. A Negro had accidentally wounded a white man during a liquor-store holdup but the story that was circulated was that an innocent young white girl had been shot and killed. The white community, especially the striking workers, became an enraged mob which roamed the streets beating any Negroes it could find. The mob also burned Negro-owned stores and homes. The next day the National Guard arrived and, with the help of the police, searched the Negro community for weapons. In spite of the fact that the mob had been white, it was the Negroes who were disarmed and arrested. East St. Louis became filled with rumors that the Negroes were preparing for revenge.

Late in the evening of July 1, a Ford sedan raced through the Negro section of East St. Louis shooting at doors and windows as it passed. The police heard that Negroes were on a shooting rampage, and they sent a car to investigate. They came in another Ford sedan, and most of the officers were wearing civilian dress. In the meantime, the Negro citizens had prepared for the return of the first car. As the police entered the poorly lit street, they were met by a barrage of bullets. Almost all the officers were either killed or wounded. The white community was outraged at what it believed to be an unprovoked attack, and it wanted revenge.

Although the Guard was called again, the riot lasted for several days. At one point, the white mob set a row of shacks on fire and waited in ambush until its residents were forced to flee the flames. Then, they took great delight in coldly and deliberately shooting them down as they fled. It was reported that some of those who were shot were thrown back into the burning buildings, and others were thrown into the river. Two children, between one and two years old, were found shot through the head. At times, the mob would not let ambulances take away the wounded and dying. For the most part, the Guard and the police stood by. According to some reports, they occasionally participated themselves.

According to official reports thirty-nine Negroes and two whites had been killed, but the police contended that, because so many bodies had been burned, thrown in the river, or buried in mass graves, the figure was really much larger. They estimated the number of dead at a hundred, and the grand jury accepted their calculation. It was also estimated that as many as 750 had been wounded. The Guard held an investigation of the riot, and it exonerated the behavior of its soldiers. However, a Congressional investigation later accused the Guard's colonel of cowardice, and it said that the Guard had exhibited extreme inefficiency. The Washington Evening Mail carried a cartoon which depicted Wilson standing before a group of Negroes reading an official document proclaiming that the world should be made safe for democracy. The caption over the cartoon read "Why not make America safe?"

When the Negro soldiers returned home from Europe, they brought new experiences and changed attitudes with them. As soldiers, they had been taught to stand up and fight like men. In Europe, they had been treated more like men than ever before. The attitude of submissiveness which had been stamped on the Afro-American community by its slave mentality and which had been reinforced by the philosophy of Booker T. Washington was undermined by this new sense of manhood. When a wave of two dozen riots swept America in the summer of 1919, Negroes fought back as they had not done in East St. Louis. Riots occurred in places as diverse as Longview, Texas, Washington, D.C., Omaha, Nebraska, and Chicago, Illinois.

The worst riot of that bloody summer occurred in Chicago. It began when a young Negro boy, swimming in Lake Michigan, crossed into a section of the water which had been traditionally reserved for whites. White youths began throwing stones at him, and he drowned. A later investigation showed that he had not been hit by any of these rocks. Nevertheless, this incident triggered the tense racial situation in Chicago into an explosion. Fighting broke out all over the city. Whites pulled Negroes from streetcars and beat them openly. The fighting raged for thirteen days. At least thirty-eight people were killed. Fifteen of these were white, and twenty-three were Negro. Also, some five hundred people were injured of which the majority were Negro. Many houses were burned, and it was estimated that one thousand families were left homeless.

The Klan Revival

While the nation went to war to make the world safe for democracy, many at home believed that it was still necessary to make America safe first. These people fell into two groups. There were those within the Afro-American community who felt that a country which systematically disenfranchised a large minority group and which also tolerated widespread discrimination, segregation, and violence against that minority was not a secure democratic state. At the same time, those who were responsible for much of this harassment and terror believed that violence was necessary precisely in order to protect democracy. They believed that true democracy sprang from the virtue of a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant civilization, and they wanted to protect it against alien subversion.

One of the main "protectors" of white American civilization was the Ku Klux Klan. The original Klan had thrived in the deep South immediately after the Civil War. In 1915, it underwent a revival. Inspired by the migration of Afro-Americans from the South into the North and West as well as by the gigantic immigration of South and East Europeans, the Klan, beginning in Georgia, rapidly spread beyond the South into a national movement. Confidently believing in the superiority of its own democratic way of life, America had thrown open its doors to the hungry and oppressed of Europe. American society took pride in being the world's great melting pot. However, many old-stock Americans did not view their society as being a cultural amalgam, and they expected that the new European immigrants, as well as the Afro-Americans, would want to be assimilated into their society as it already existed. When they promised the newcomers freedom and equality, many of these Americans were offering these benefits expecting that the immigrants would adjust and conform. They did not believe that the values and life style of foreigners were equal to their own, and therefore they did not want to grant the outsiders the freedom to "pollute" American society with alien cultures. When it became evident that American Negroes as well as many of these new immigrants were not able to be absorbed into white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant America as easily as had been expected, many ardent patriots became panic-stricken over the future of the American way of life. This sense of terror drove them to take extreme action in its defense.

The invisible empire of the Ku Klux Klan was the most militant and best organized of several defenders of this kind of American patriotism. It built its power on a series of appeals which had deep roots throughout American life. During the 1920s, anti-Semitism was widespread, and many respectable hotels and clubs were closed to Jews. Discrimination against foreign-born Americans was prevalent. Many patriotic and artistic societies were exclusively for native-born Americans. Discrimination against Afro-Americans was a national phenomenon, but in the South it was an orthodox social and political creed.

The revival of the Klan in 1915 was closely associated with the release of the famous motion picture, *The Birth of a Nation*. D. W. Griffith based his movie on material taken from two novels by Thomas Dixon: *The Leopard's Spots* and *The Klansman*. At first *Birth of a Nation* was censored in some cities in the North and West for being inflammatory because of its racial attitudes. This angered many who claimed that it was, in fact, a truthful account of the Klan. Concerned by the official opposition to the movie, Dixon contacted an old college friend who was then occupying the White House. President Woodrow Wilson consented to a special White House showing of the picture. After the White House showing, opposition throughout the North and West disintegrated, and the movie went on to become a gigantic success. It grossed eighteen million dollars. While much of this success was undoubtedly due to its appeal to common underlying racial prejudice in the American character, it must also be admitted that much of the popularity was due to the fact that it was the first full-length successful movie and that it had much entertainment value.

Colonel William J. Simmons chose the opening of the movie in Atlanta, Georgia, as the time to launch his Klan revival. His father had been a member of the original Klan. When the revival began in 1915, the Klan was primarily a fraternal, Caucasian-supremacy organization without the violence normally associated with it. But when Simmons later decided to develop it into a larger organization, he found it necessary to adopt more aggressive tactics.

At one meeting, Simmons dramatically portrayed the dynamic, hostile note that helped the organization to spread and appeal to the fears and the hatreds of people throughout the country. In the middle of a speech, he first drew a gun from one pocket and laid it on the table before him. Then, he pulled a second gun from another pocket and placed it beside the first one. Opening his jacket, he unfastened a cartridge belt and draped it ostentatiously across the table. Finally, he reached into still another pocket, pulled out a knife and plunged it into the wood between the two guns. With this flamboyant gesture, he issued a challenge to all "niggers," Catholics, Jews, and all others. He warned them that his organization and its supporters were ready to meet them and would protect themselves and the American way of life from any kind of corruption. While the Klan is normally thought of as being an anti-Negro institution, the other major themes on which it built in the 1920s were opposition to Catholicism, dope, bootlegging, gambling, roadhouses and loose sexual behavior.

For the Klan, the end justified the means. Defending the values of American society was to them so important as to condone the use of violence and murder. By 1921, Klan membership had soared to 100,000 but its real growth had only just begun. As it came under public attack, its popularity increased. Newspapers and Congressmen charged that the Klan had violated the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Thirteenth Amendments to the Constitution. The House Rules Committee held hearings on the Klan. However, the committee chairman found that he lost the next election. Newspapers attacked the Klan in lurid headlines which, although they helped to sell copy, only succeeded in making the Klan more attractive to potential members. By 1923 Klan membership was estimated between two and three million.

When it was at its zenith, the Klan used violence, intimidation, and parades to make its presence known in the community. Its members were prominent on police forces, sheriff departments, and various other local branches of government. In the early 1920s, Klan support was responsible for electing a handful of senators and several Congressmen. Finally, in 1924, an attempt was made to capture both political parties on the national level. Failing to get its nominee chosen as Vice President on the Republican ticket, the Klan swung its full attention to the Democratic convention in Madison Square Garden in New York. Anti-Klan forces at the convention were also strong. The convention leadership made the attempt to keep the issue in the background, but a minority report on the platform resulted in forcing the convention to condemn the Klan by name. The convention was split in two. As a result, it took the party nine days and one hundred and twenty-three ballots before it was successful in choosing its national candidates. In the following year, the Klan again tried to make its presence felt on the national scene. It held a march of its members in Washington. Forty thousand robed and hooded Klansmen marched down Pennsylvania Avenue in a display of strength while thousands more cheered and watched.

The violence which, for a short time, had helped the Klan to grow, would eventually contribute to its decline. It appealed to public animosity against Catholics, Jews, and Negroes, but its own vitriolic crusade swung segments of that same public opinion in favor of its victims. The Klan revival was particularly disheartening to Negroes, who had assumed that the Klan was dead. While slavery was gone, brutality and intimidation remained. Half a century after the demise of the original Klan, it had risen again and, this time, had become a nationwide phenomenon. Jim Crow was the law in the South, and racism had become rampant in the North. Slavery had been abolished, but Negroes were aware that they still were not free.

next...

Young People of the African Methodist Episcopal Church



This yearly retreat sponsored by the Young People's Division of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, is to help attendants gain skills in leadership; service and career decision making. This is done through a series of workshops, seminars, speakers, and activities. Participants will come from Louisiana and Mississippi. It is a fun time of fellowship and education.

Camp Sponsor: Office of Minority Students. **Contact:** Gwen Snearl. **Dates:** 5/17-19. **Time:** Begins at 4:00pm on May 17th. **Phone:** 504/388-4309. **Ages:** 10-20. **Cost:** TBA. **Mailing Address:** Gwen Snearl, Office of Minority Students, LSU, Baton Rouge, LA 70803.



Last updated March 10, 1996.



ZONDERVAN PARTNERS WITH THE CONGRESS OF NATIONAL BLACK CHURCHES

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Zondervan Publishing House (ZPH), Grand Rapids, Mich., and The Congress of National Black Churches, Inc. (CNBC), Washington, D.C., are announcing their partnership to produce a devotional Bible with notes and resources that relate specifically to the needs of African Americans.

"Zondervan has become known for its commitment to product development and distribution within the African American community and with other churched people of color," says Thomas J. Mockabee, Vice President, Bible Group, ZPH. "We're excited to establish this relationship with The Congress of National Black Churches. We look forward to working together to create a Bible that meets the real needs of black Christians seeking spiritual growth."

"CNBC was established as a vehicle which enables national black religious leadership to dialogue together and develop model programs across denominational lines," says the Rev. H. Michael Lemmons, Executive Director, CNBC. "This partnership with Zondervan comes at an appropriate time for CNBC to contribute to the growing body of religious and devotional material designed to respond to the spiritual aspirations of our members."

This new Bible will be in the tradition of ZPH's successful line of devotional Bibles. It will be written by African American Christian scholars, leaders, and pastors across CNBC's eight denominations who are known for some of the finest pulpit preaching in the world. Their devotions will address the specific concerns of black readers.

ZPH is the world's leading Bible publisher. It has held positions of dominance on the CBA Top Ten Bible Bestselling List since 1990, including the unprecedented achievement of simultaneously holding all ten positions for two months. In partnership with International Bible Society, Colorado Springs, Colo., ZPH is the exclusive commercial publisher of the *New International Version* of the Bible, the number one bestselling Bible translation.

The Congress of National Black Churches, Inc., founded in 1978, is a coalition of eight major historically black denominations: African Methodist Episcopal; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Christian Methodist Episcopal; Church of God in Christ; National Baptist Convention of America, Inc.; National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.; National Missionary Baptist Convention of America; and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. Together, these denominations represent 65,000 churches and a membership of more than 19 million people. Bishop Roy L.H. Winbush of the Church of God in Christ is the chairman of the board of directors of CNBC.

For more information, contact:

- ☐ **Sam Hooks, Director, Segmented Mkts, ZPH, 616-698-3398**
- ☐ **Jonathan Petersen, Director, Media Relations/Public Affairs, ZPH, 616-698-3417**
- ☐ **Sullivan Robinson, Director of Institutional Advancement, CNBC, 202-371-1091**



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FOCUS - 74 OF 89 STORIES

The Associated Press

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April 24, 1996, Wednesday, PM cycle

SECTION: Domestic News

LENGTH: 602 words

HEADLINE: United Methodists Vote to Seek Unity With Black Churches

BYLINE: By DAVID BRIGGS, AP Religion Writer

DATELINE: DENVER

BODY:

U.S. churches are shaking up their black-or-white Sunday morning world.

United Methodists on Tuesday night approved plans to seek a merger with the three largest black Methodist churches.

"The time is right now for us to openly confess to sins of our past and to realize these brothers and sisters belong in one church," United Methodist Bishop Melvin Talbert said at the General Conference of the 8.6 million-member denomination.

The move by the nation's second largest Protestant church follows nearly two years of attempts at racial reconciliation by white Christians, including an apology from the Southern Baptist Convention for racism and the creation of an alliance of white and black Pentecostal churches.

The United Methodists voted 767 to 45 to establish a Commission on Pan-Methodist Union, which will draw up a plan with the 3.5 million-member African Methodist Episcopal Church, the 1.2 million-member African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the 720,000 member Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.

The commission is to submit a plan of union to the general conferences of three of the churches by 2000 and to the CME church for its meeting in 2002.

Church officials said that in the beginning the churches will work more closely on cooperative ministries, but the hope is to eventually have one Methodist church. The merger is probably eight to 12 years away, Talbert said.

Bishop Joseph Johnson of the AME Zion Church said the merger may not happen in his lifetime but the churches must try.

"We'll be able to be in concert with the teachings of Jesus Christ that we

all be one," he said.

However, Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt Jr. of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church said to break down the color barrier in pews, predominantly white churches must be willing to share power in the church hierarchy and incorporate black styles of worship.

"Until that time, I'm very skeptical," he said.

American Methodism formally began in 1784 with the organization of The Methodist Episcopal Church, but quickly split over racial issues. In 1796, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was formed over such issues as restrictions in public worship and the failure to ordain black clergy.

When a former slave was forced to move to the balcony during prayer at a Philadelphia church, the seeds were planted for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded in 1816. The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in Jackson, Tenn., in 1870, due to racism.

The vote comes at a time when several Christian groups are addressing racism in the church. In 1994, leaders of major Pentecostal denominations created the Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches of North America, with an executive committee of six blacks and six whites.

Last year, the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant church, denounced racism and repudiated the denomination's failure to support the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s.

The Promise Keepers Christian men's movement has made racial reconciliation a priority. The Christian Coalition offered a \$ 25,000 cash reward Monday to help catch and convict those responsible for a series of fires at black churches in the South.

Some of these groups may be at the vanguard of bringing about a racially inclusive church, Johnson said. "There's a new wind blowing," he said.

Hoyt, however, said he is concerned that much of the rush to repentance doesn't address the "systemic evil" of racism in society.

"Even those that are raising their hands toward heaven," he said, "some of them won't show you anything in everyday life."

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 24, 1996

FOCUS - 56 OF 89 STORIES

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THE HARTFORD COURANT

May 9, 1996 Thursday, 7 HARTFORD NORTH FINAL

SECTION: METRO HARTFORD; Pg. B4

LENGTH: 530 words

HEADLINE: METROPOLITAN CHURCH WILL HOST CONFERENCE

BYLINE: COURTNEY ANDERSON, Courant Staff Writer

BODY:

Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, 2051 Main St., will host the New England annual conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Monday through May 19.

Rosa J. McWhite, media relations spokeswoman for Metropolitan, said more than 1,500 people are expected to attend the final services, with 200 to 300 people expected to take part in events throughout the week.

The conference consists of 41 churches throughout New England. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is predominantly African American, but church officials say its membership is expanding to people of other races.

The annual convention is important for the organization.

"It's the reorganizing of the church. Pastors are reappointed, and it keeps the churches focused on what we are doing," McWhite said.

Officials say the convention will be good for Hartford's economy, because the large crowd expected to attend will patronize local businesses.

McWhite also said the location of the church and the conference is essential to the neighborhood and its surrounding communities.

"Outside . . . that's where the people are," she said. "What's going on inside the church doesn't mean a thing if you are not reaching anybody in the community.

"I see churches leaving the neighborhood, saying it's too unsafe here. If we don't stay in the neighborhood, we can't make a difference."

The conference will begin Monday at 7 p.m. with a Lay Council Banquet at the church.

Tuesday at 6:30 p.m., welcoming and evening worship with Communion will take place, also at the church. The Rev. Michael Ardray, pastor of Redeemer's A.M.E. Zion Church in Plainville, will be the speaker.

Wednesday at 10:30 a.m., voter registration and an education forum will be

held. The facilitator of the forum will be Larry Charles Sr., executive director of ONE/CHANE, a community organization.

Then at 2:30 p.m., Bishop George W.C. Walker Sr., who will preside at the New England conference, will speak.

At 7:30 p.m., the Rev. Timothy Howard, pastor of Walter's Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Bridgeport, will deliver the annual sermon.

Thursday will be Christian Education Night at Metropolitan. Services will begin at 7 p.m.

May 17 at 8 a.m., the Woman's Home and Overseas Mission Society will have a breakfast. At 2:30 p.m., the society's convocation will begin, and at 7:30 p.m., the society's evening worship service will start.

May 18, youths will participate in Christian Education Day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Faith Congregational Church, 2030 Main St. Faith Church is across the street from Metropolitan.

At 7 p.m., the 32nd Annual Spottswood Memorial Home Missions and Quadrennial Banquet will take place at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center in Cromwell.

May 19, the last day of the conference will begin with church school at 9 a.m. at Metropolitan.

From 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., the Annual Conference Sunday Worship Service will take place along with other activities, all to be held at Hartford Public High School, 55 Forest St.

For more information on services and tickets to various activities, please call Nita Zarif, office administrator for Metropolitan, at 527- 7087.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

COLUMN: FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

LOAD-DATE: May 9, 1996

FOCUS - 27 OF 89 STORIES

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NPR

SHOW: Weekend Edition Sunday (NPR 10:00 am ET)

June 16, 1996

Transcript # 1180-4

TYPE: Package

SECTION: News; Domestic

LENGTH: 904 words

HEADLINE: Rural Churches on the Alert for Arsonists

GUESTS: ISAAC HOUSTON, Trustee, Twin Beach African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; Rev. DAVID KNIGHT, Pastor, Twin Beach African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; BEN OWEN, Deacon, Midway Baptist Church

BYLINE: DEBBIE ELLIOTT

HIGHLIGHT:

Following the 30 suspicious church fires in the rural South, local congregation members are taking extra steps to protect their houses of worship. Debbie Elliott traveled to Alabama to talk to parishioners.

BODY:

MARTHA RADDATZ, Host: Federal authorities continue to investigate more than 30 suspicious church fires in black churches across the South. Five of the churches were burned in just the past two weeks. NPR's Debbie Elliott travelled to a rural community east of Mobile, Alabama, to find out how local congregations are protecting their places of worship.

[chirping birds]

DEBBIE ELLIOTT, Reporter: On a bluff less than five miles from the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, thick woods surround the sanctuary and parsonage of the Twin Beach African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Founded in 1869, after the Civil War, the 200-member congregation is among the oldest churches in Baldwin County, Alabama.

ISAAC HOUSTON, Trustee, Twin Beach African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: We just hope it don't happen here.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: Church trustee Isaac Houston's [sp] great-great-grandfather helped to build the church's white-brick sanctuary 71 years ago. As more and more churches burn, Houston says, members here are forced to think about the safety of their sanctuary. He says they've even thought about installing a sprinkler system to protect against fire.

ISAAC HOUSTON: You just don't know, and you hate to- you don't like to think about it, you know? You kind of put it in the back of your mind, you know, but you have to realize that it is going on and it can happen.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: At least five African-American churches in Alabama have been destroyed by fire in the past year. It's hitting too close to home, says the Reverend David Knight [sp], pastor of Twin Beach AME Zion.

Rev. DAVID KNIGHT, Pastor, Twin Beach African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church: And the thing that really caught my attention was when they say Alabama, you know, and I said, 'Oh Lord, it's going back to where it was back in the pre-civil rights days,' you know, when they started attacking our churches.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: Black churches in Alabama were often the target of racial violence during the '60s. The most well-known incident was the firebombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, where four girls were killed. Although no one has been hurt in the recent rash of church fires, says Knight, the violence opens old wounds.

Rev. DAVID KNIGHT: If you had a scar that it happened two years ago, if I started hitting that scar, if I punched that scar again, it would start bleeding and hurting in the same. It bleeds from that memory those two years ago how that same scar felt, and that's what's happening.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: The Twin Beach Church was untouched by the violence of the civil rights movement, and members hope and pray it won't fall victim to arson now, but, as a safety precaution, they've installed outdoor lights and plan to put in a new security alarm system. Other African-American churches are also taking safety measures.

Ben Owen [sp] is a deacon at the Midway Baptist Church in Dawes, Alabama, a small town west of Mobile.

BEN OWEN, Deacon, Midway Baptist Church: We're beginning to do patrol and watching out. We got members, you know, watching in the neighborhood, and we was talking about, you know, getting a police officer come down every now and then, control and watch the place, especially at night.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: Owen says the five black churches in the Dawes area have agreed to look out for one another. Black communities have got to come together to protect their places of worship, says Twin Beach pastor David Knight. He says the churches represent the very heart and soul of black America.

Rev. DAVID KNIGHT: The church is a sacred- is sacred grounds for us. That's the only place we could come and really feel safe and secure, and we're going to let things loose that we cannot- we don't feel comfortable letting them out anywhere else, and to have that taken away from you is just like being raped.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: There is no history of vandalism at Twin Beach AME Zion, and the church has never received any threats, but Reverend Knight says there have been racial tensions in the community.

Rev. DAVID KNIGHT: See, the attitude is still there. All the precaution we're taking, you know, is better safe than sorry, you know? If it never happens, to

God be the glory, you know, but if it does happen, the least it may save a little bit more than what could be lost.

DEBBIE ELLIOTT: Religious and civil rights groups around the country, both black and white, are rallying to support the burned-out churches. The Southern Baptist Convention took up a collection at its annual meeting in New Orleans last week, and the Anti-Defamation League has launched a fund drive to help churches rebuild. This is Debbie Elliott reporting.

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LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: June 16, 1996

FOCUS - 32 OF 89 STORIES

Copyright 1996 Multimedia Publishing of North Carolina, Inc.
Asheville Citizen-Times (Asheville, NC)

June 8, 1996, Saturday

SECTION: Religion; Pg. B3

LENGTH: 459 words

HEADLINE: WNC PASTOR LAMENTS VANDALISM, BURNING OF SOUTHERN CHURCHES

BYLINE: By Henry Robinson RELIGION EDITOR

BODY:

Photo

The Rev. Wayne Purcell is shown in 1991 leaving Shaw's Creek African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Horse Shoe the day after vandals did thousands of dollars in damages to the church and adjacent cemetery.

When the Rev. Wayne Purcell reads about the deliberate burning of black churches across the South, it brings back painful memories of the incident that occurred in 1991 at Shaw's Creek African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Horse Shoe.

At the time, Purcell was serving as pastor of the small rural Henderson County church.

An early Sunday morning phone call alerted him that the church and an adjacent cemetery had been vandalized.

"I think it is the worst feeling in the world to come to church on Sunday morning after being told the church had been vandalized. Just the thought that someone had done something as evil as destroying God's house - a place where you worship," Purcell said.

"And I'm certain that those ministers and members of churches that have been destroyed by vandals have an empty feeling in their hearts in trying to fathom how somebody would arbitrarily single out their church and burn it down. I sympathize with them because that's a tough pill to swallow.

"It saddens most preachers, black and white, when we see malicious acts against God's house," Purcell said. "Church is not an organization that's counter-cultural or a cult against humanity. Church is designed to bring people together and to teach morality and foster love.

"To do what these individuals are doing really saddens one. To think that people believe that the God you serve is not real - that's my only conclusion - they must think that the God I serve is not a real God."

Purcell, now serving as pastor of Zion Grove African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Polk County, said even though what vandals did at Shaw's Creek African

Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was meant for evil, God meant it for good.

"We could have responded in like kind by becoming angry and speaking out against the vandals, but instead, we responded the way Christ would have responded with love, patience and humility.

"And because of the way we responded, I believe Christ turned that whole evil situation into a blessing for that church."

He said that the building today is nothing like the building those vandals came to destroy in 1991. The church received tremendous support from the people of Henderson County and from as far away as Canada and California.

The burning of church buildings around the South is evil, Purcell said. "But still we are Christians and we must always recognize that God is in charge. If we are patient and keep our trust in him, I'm a living witness that God will make a way out of no way."

GRAPHIC: Photo of Rev. Wayne Purcell shown in 1991 leaving Shaw's Creek African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Horseshoe after it was vandalized.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: June 12, 1996

FOCUS - 55 OF 89 STORIES

Copyright 1996 Multimedia Publishing of North Carolina, Inc.
Asheville Citizen-Times (Asheville, NC)

May 11, 1996, Saturday

SECTION: Religion; Pg. B3

LENGTH: 305 words

HEADLINE: AME ZION CHURCH BLUE RIDGE CONFERENCE PLANS BANQUET FRIDAY IN BLACK MOUNTAIN

BYLINE: FROM STAFF REPORTS

BODY:

The quadrennial banquet of the Blue Ridge Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church will be at 7 p.m. Friday at Camp Dorothy Walls Conference and Retreat Center in Black Mountain. The gathering also will honor conference leader Bishop R.L. Speaks and wife for their eight years of service in the conference.

In July, Speaks will retire from 24 years as a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Speaks, who was assigned to the Blue Ridge Conference in 1988, began his Episcopal ministry and service in 1972 when he was elected as the 76th bishop in succession of the AME Zion Church in Alabama.

Speaks' first appointment was to West Africa where he led the construction of two school, a hospital and an Episcopal residence.

Returning to the United States, Speaks served as bishop in Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana and the Cape Fear area of North Carolina. While presiding in the Cape Fear area, Speaks led the people in building the Shaw-Speaks Center in Wilmington, which provides human resource services to the Wilmington community.

Recently, Speaks led the Blue Ridge Conference in building a \$ 2 million facility at Camp Dorothy Walls in Black Mountain. The building is designed to provide programs for persons of all ages.

The gymnasium-style structure features classrooms, lockers, two dining facilities - one with a 150-seating capacity and a larger area capable of serving 1,000 banquet style and a commercial kitchen.

The facility will be dedicated at noon May 18. The special service will include representatives from town of Black Mountain, City of Asheville and Buncombe County and members of churches in the Blue Ridge Conference. The Blue Ridge Conference include African Methodist Episcopal Zion churches in Western North Carolina and in eastern Tennessee.

GRAPHIC: Photos of R.L. Speaks and Janie Speaks appeared with article.

FOCUS - 40 OF 89 STORIES

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The Ethnic NewsWatch
about...time Magazine

May 31, 1996

SECTION: Vol. XXIV; No. 5; Pg. 16

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HEADLINE: The Trail of a Legend: Homesite Preserves Memories of Harriet Tubman

BYLINE: McCampbell, J.B.

BODY:

The Trail of a Legend: Homesite Preserves Memories of Harriet Tubman.

Dirt fills the tunnels that once led to the nearby woods. One hundred forty years ago those passageways provided some assurance to fugitive slaves from the South. Miraculously, bounty hunters hot on their trail never ventured to this southern edge of Auburn, New York.

Today, this stop along the Underground Railroad, shrouded in secrecy for many years, preserves the memory of Harriet Tubman. The legendary Underground Railroad conductor helped more than 300 men, women, and children escape to freedom. Some passed through it on their way to Rochester, Buffalo, and on to Canada.

Tubman remarried and settled in Auburn. Unlike the collapsed tunnels, Tubman's legacy remains intact in this central New York city of 35,000, located about 30 miles from Syracuse and 60 miles from Rochester. In these parts, some people call her Aunt Harriet as if they were related and she was still alive.

Pauline Copes-Johnson is related. She is a great-grandniece born in 1927, 14 years after Tubman died from pneumonia. Tubman is the reason Copes-Johnson lives in Auburn. Besides her parents, Tubman led one of her three sisters, Anne Marie Stewart, out of slavery and to Auburn, where they eventually settled. Stewart was Copes-Johnson's great grandmother.

"Aunt Harriet was a great heroine. She did a lot for all people, not just Negroes," says Copes-Johnson, who leads tours at the Harriet Tubman Home.

The home is located one and a half miles from routes 5 and 20, which traverse Auburn on their way through the northern edge of the Finger Lakes, an Upstate New York region known for its scenery and wineries.

Each May, the Tubman Home hosts a weekend pilgrimage that features a community banquet, graveside memorial service, and barbecue. Up to 700 people from around the United States are expected to attend this year's pilgrimage, May 24 and 25.

"It gets bigger every year," says Rev. Paul G. Carter, the home's resident

manager and director. The pilgrimage will also mark the bicentennial of the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

The denomination's Western New York Conference owns and provides financial support for the Tubman property, which features the reconstructed white frame home where Tubman once housed elderly ex-slaves. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the A.M.E. Zion Church added a memorial library and multi-purpose center at the 33-acre site. A red brick house adjoining the complex, which was purchased in 1990 by the church, also bears special significance. Bricklayer Nelson Davis, Tubman's second husband who she married in 1869, built the three-bedroom, two-story home before he died in 1888. It is not open to the public.

A look back

Historians believe Harriet Tubman was born in 1820 or 1821, in the tobacco-growing region of Maryland's Eastern Shore, on the Brodess Plantation. A historical marker keeps vigil at the site today.

One of 11 children of Harriet Green and Benjamin Ross, Tubman often felt the bitter sting of slavery during her childhood. She did not like to work indoors, and she was routinely beaten by her masters. By her early teens, Tubman was no longer allowed to work indoors and was hired out as a field hand. She was a hard worker but considered defiant and rebellious.

When she was 15 years old, Tubman tried to help a runaway slave. The overseer hit her in the head with a two-pound lead weight, which put her in a coma. It took months for her to recover, and for the rest of her life she suffered from sleeping spells.

When Tubman heard that her deceased masters' property would be sold in 1849, she escaped to freedom in Pennsylvania and left behind her first husband, John Tubman. After she discovered what it meant to be free, she wanted to help liberate others. She worked part-time jobs until she had enough money for her first mission. She traveled to Baltimore and rescued her sister and her two children.

There would be 18 more trips South. Because of her daring, cunning, and planning, she never lost a passenger on the Underground Railroad. Her exploits earned her the moniker, "Moses of Her People" and a \$40,000 bounty for her head.

During the Civil War, she served as a cook, nurse, and spy for the Union Army. She helped bury the dead of the black 54th Massachusetts Regiment featured in the film "Glory," and led an attack of 300 black soldiers across South Carolina's Combahee River in 1863. The mission successfully led to the destruction of enemy supplies and the freedom of 800 slaves.

In 1857, Tubman settled in Auburn in a small home on property owned by her friend and supporter, William H. Seward. The Auburn native served as governor and senator of New York and would become Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of State.

Tubman returned to Auburn after the war and purchased Seward's seven-acre

plot in 1873 with \$1,200 donated by author Sarah Bradford from sale proceeds of her book, *The Moses of Her People*. The Tubman-Davis brick home remains today on that property.

For many years, it was not generally known that Tubman, her husband, and parents once lived there. The property was bequeathed to Tubman's niece, Mary Gaskin, a grandniece, Katy Stewart, and a minister's widow, Frances R. Smith. They sold the site in 1914, a year after Tubman's death, to pay off old debts. It stayed in the Norris family until the 1990 church purchase.

"There have been so many changes inside and outside from its original condition," says Rev. Carter, who lived in the home for three years with his wife. The Norrises added a porch and modernized the bathrooms and kitchen over the years. Rev. Carter is insulating the home to make it "livable." Afterward, it will remain a living space for the resident manager and viewed by the public only from the street and outside grounds. The house is not listed with the remainder of the Tubman site on the National Register of Historic Places.

For decades, historians believed the original frame house on the complex was Tubman's primary residence during most of her life in Auburn. Actually, Tubman acquired the home, another building, now in rubble, and 26 acres in 1896 for her Home for the Aged. She deeded the property to the A.M.E. Zion Church in 1903.

It was nearly demolished in 1944 after years of neglect. But with a \$25,000 reconstruction, electrical wiring was added as well as an indoor bathroom. Today, the white frame house remains sparsely furnished with donated antique furniture and other items.

The only original artifact in the home is the carved oak bed in which Tubman died on May 10, 1913. The home's second floor was closed off because it was being repainted. It may be converted into office space, according to Rev. Carter.

Divided feelings

Tubman was buried with military rites in Fort Hill Cemetery, a short drive from the home. A year after her death, Auburn declared a one-day memorial to its anti-slavery heroine. Residents of the city that day unveiled the Harriet Tubman plaque, which remains on display at the entrance of the Cayuga County Court House.

Years later, when the last remains of the Tubman Home for the Aged faced demolition, the community rallied to help pay for part of its reconstruction. And when the Tubman home opened to the public in 1953, hundreds attended the dedication ceremony.

Blacks were among two of Auburn's first four residents, but the city has not always proven a hospitable place for those who followed, especially in recent years. Though the black population of Cayuga County numbered 2,995 in 1990, few hold political office or are employed by the county or city.

- In September 1993, a small band of Neo-Nazis attempted to march on City Hall from Freedom Park, which had been dedicated to Tubman's memory in June. However, a large group of counter-demonstrators, many from outside Auburn,

turned the group away.

- Earlier that year, a local white sign painter donated his labor to place two portrait-like signs of Tubman on the home's front entrance. Previously, for 40 years, says Rev. Carter, there was no indication to let visitors or passers-by know of the home's location.

- In October 1993, a multi-racial group of marchers walked from Syracuse to the home in Tubman's memory.

- Two years later, however, 100 students at Auburn High School protested a proposal to change the school's name to honor Tubman.

- In May 1994, Rev. Carter found a 3- by 5-foot flag with red, white, and black stripes and a black swastika in the middle hanging on the front door. A suspect was later arrested.

"I was disturbed but not surprised," says Rev. Carter. "He may have thought he could make things bad for the pilgrimage and frighten people from coming, but in reality, it actually helped things because we got more people involved. It gave us publicity we normally wouldn't have been able to get."

Though Rev. Carter says the Auburn community accepts the Harriet Tubman Home, he believes the site doesn't receive its fair share of promotion.

"A number of tours come through this area for other things, such as the Seward House and Case Museum. But a lot of those tours never get to the Tubman Home."

Gary Chabot, president of the Chamber of Commerce of Auburn and Cayuga County, says tours of the area's historic sites "absolutely" include the Tubman Home. "It's very much a part of our tourist activity," says Chabot, who added that the home is becoming more recognizable in the community.

A survey conducted by the chamber this year showed the Tubman Home was the area's third most requested tourist site for information.

A look ahead

Like the former Tubman Home for the Aged, the complex's memorial library is sparsely furnished with artifacts and other memorabilia. A fan presented to Tubman by Seward's daughter, Fanny, is in one of several glass display cases, as well as two drinking glasses given by Tubman as a wedding gift. There is a photo album and stacks of old magazines on bookshelves.

A duplicate of the Tubman Plaque in the County Court House rests unattached against a wall, while folding chairs fill much of one side of the library facing a television and VCR that plays a video of Tubman's life. A computer workstation, used mostly by Rev. Carter, is in another corner of the library building. He would like to upgrade the facility into a full-scale library that would be accessible through the Internet.

A cultural research center on Black History and the Underground Railroad and a retreat with rooms to stay overnight are also plans Rev. Carter wants to bring

to fruition at the Tubman complex. However, there are some major roadblocks. The A.M.E. Zion Church operates the site with a \$25,000 annual budget used for maintaining the grounds and to pay Rev. Carter, the only paid staff member, a regular stipend. Copes-Johnson is paid for her services through Green Thumb Inc., a national, non-profit organization that provides employment for people older than 55 with limited incomes.

Much of Carter's time is also consumed by his duties as pastor of Thompson Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church in Auburn. The church itself is a landmark. Tubman worshipped there as a member.

Though the home receives financial donations from the public, its fund-raising efforts are also hampered because the church board that oversees the home has yet to secure federal tax-exempt status, so donations are not tax-deductible. The board is currently working on filing papers with the Internal Revenue Service for tax exemption.

Some money is generated at the pilgrimage and at the home during the year through the sale of Tubman memorabilia. The multi-purpose center, which seats 500, is also rented for receptions, dances, and meetings.

Rev. Carter also encourages skilled professionals or business owners, especially those with architectural engineering, grant writing, and landscaping skills, to help.

"Visiting the property is always a good idea," he says. "That way, you get to see it first hand and see the potential it has."

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COMMENTS

June,

I hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Charlotte, North Carolina)

For Immediate Release

July 10, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE 87TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NAACP

Charlotte Convention Center
Charlotte, North Carolina

12:30 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much. President Mfume, I hope you do get your four more years. (Laughter and applause.) And I hope I get to hang around to work with you. (Applause.)

Madam Chair, Bishop Graves, Hazel and other distinguished members -- (laughter.) Hey, she met me outside and kissed me. (Laughter.) Brother Williams, thank you for singing for us. Reverend Hooks, you're looking young and handsome, I'm glad to see. (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, last year I know the First Lady came to visit with you, and she had a wonderful time. (Applause.) And she is completing a trip that she made on behalf of our country after the meeting of the G-7 industrial countries in France. She went to a lot of the nations that used to be part of the Soviet Empire that were once communist and are now free. And she's had a wonderful trip. Last night I talked to her; she was in Finland, and so far north the sun never really goes down at this time of year. So I knew she wouldn't be mad when I woke her up at two o'clock in the morning to talk. (Laughter.) And she asked me to give you her best.

I also want you to know what I did -- the last thing I did before I got on the helicopter at the White House to come here today was to meet with Mickey Kantor, our Secretary of Commerce, and Michael Brown, Ron Brown's son, and the delegation who are leaving today to finish the mission Ron Brown started in Bosnia and Croatia. (Applause.)

And I was especially proud that almost all the companies who lost executives on that terrible day sent replacements to go on this mission to finish the work of advancing the cause of peace. (Applause.) And I want to thank you, Mr. President, and all of you, for the tribute

that you gave to Secretary Brown yesterday.

I am honored to be here today because of what the NAACP has meant to America. As a young boy growing up in the segregated South, it was the NAACP that gave all of us hope that there could be a better day. (Applause.) I told Myrlie -- I don't think she quite believed it -- that in early 1974, when I started my political career, I actually purchased a membership at the Malaloo (phonetic) AME Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. I came to a meeting one Sunday afternoon and bought myself a membership card. (Applause.) I hate to say that because I'll get a letter from Kweisi next week pointing out that I have not kept up my renewals over the last 20 years. (Laughter and applause.)

What a difference a year makes. Last year you announced your new leadership, a new sense of partnership, a new spirit of commitment to go into the 21st century. You elected Myrlie Evers as your chairman -- (applause) -- you elected this great former member of Congress -- that's right, give her a hand. (Applause.) You elected this great member of Congress as your new president and CEO, Kweisi Mfume. (Applause.) As you might imagine, given the way things are around here in Washington, I miss him more than ever. I was riding in with Congressman Mel Watt, from Charlotte today, from the airport and we were talking about -- where's Mel? He's here somewhere I think, Congressman Watt. (Applause.) And we were talking about what a great voice Kweisi was in the Congress. But I think we gained a greater leader in the struggle for equality and progress in America when he changed jobs. (Applause.)

I want to thank you for making your voice heard again, for economic justice, for the empowerment of all voters, for educational excellence for our children. And I want to thank you especially for your effort to bring young people back into this organization and into the spirit of citizenship in America. (Applause.) We need these young people -- after all, they have more tomorrows than yesterdays. (Laughter.) There are some days when I resent that, but it's true. (Laughter.)

And we can't remake our yesterdays, we can only make tomorrows. And we can't afford to have young people saying, well, oh, this doesn't matter. It doesn't matter whether I am involved in the NAACP. It doesn't matter whether I vote. It doesn't matter whether I'm in a community group to try to help save my peers from drugs and gangs and give them a bright future and a better life. It does matter. It matters. (Applause.)

And because of the dedication of Mr. Mfume to the young people of his congressional district and to the young men in his own family, he brought that conviction that he could inspire young people to his work here. And in a way, it may be the lasting legacy of this period of reform of the NAACP that you brought the young blood of America back into this organization, fighting for the future and working together. (Applause.) And I hope he will stay with us. I'm glad that us gray-haired people still have a role in it, however. (Laughter.)

My fellow Americans, our nation, as you all know, is at a crossroads. We are only four

years away now from a new century in a new millennium. Anytime you change the calendar in that way, people start to think in bigger ways. They start to imagine the great significance of the moment. But it happens to be true now, for we are undergoing a sweeping change in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to the rest of the world.

We are leaving the Cold War that dominated most of our lives behind and moving into a new global village, if I can use my wife's term, with lots of opportunity and a lot of troubles -- some of them new and some of them very old. We are moving away from the Industrial Age into a new era dominated by information and technology, where more people will have more opportunities ever before, but unless they have the capacity to seize those opportunities, they'll be left behind faster than ever before. (Applause.)

So, when I sought this office, I did so because I wanted to get our country ready for the 21st century, because I thought there were three simple things that we had to do. One is to make sure we enter the next century with the American Dream alive for everybody who is willing to work for it, without regard to their race, their gender, their region or where they start out in life -- high, low or somewhere in the middle.

Secondly, I thought we had to find a way to resist these destructive winds that are blowing in so many other countries to divide people by race and religion and ethnicity and, instead, come together in a greater sense of community -- to bridge our divisions, respect our diversity, extol our shared values and make America stronger because of our diversity, not weaker because of it.

And the third thing I wanted to do is to make sure that in this new world our country continues to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. It matters in Haiti. It matters in South Africa. It matters in Northern Ireland. It matters in the Middle East. It matters in all these countries, but it matters to us here at home, when we can work with the Russians to reduce our nuclear arsenals; when we can work with other countries to stop the proliferation of dangerous weapons; when we can cooperate with other countries to prevent terrorist incidents before they occur -- it matters that America is a force for peace and freedom and prosperity. It matters to every single one of you.

My strategy to achieve that vision was remarkably simple. I thought we had to reassert the basic bargain in American citizenship -- more opportunity for everyone, and responsibility from all. And the understanding that that responsibility includes our common responsibility not just to make the most of our own lives and our family's lives, but to be good citizens for our communities and for our country.

At this time of decision, that's what I hope the discussion will be about in this election year. We've come a long way in the last four years, but we've got a long way to go. (Applause.) When I -- four years ago, when I became President, the economy was stagnant, we had the slowest job growth since the Great Depression, the deficit was spiraling, we had quadrupled our national debt in only 12 years from what we'd done in the previous 200.

We put in place an economic plan designed to cut the deficit, expand trade for American products on free and fair terms, and invest more in the people of this country, wherever they lived and wherever they were starting out in life. And four years later, it's made a difference.

I said four years ago that if the Congress would adopt my plan I thought it would cut the deficit in half and produce 8 million jobs. Well, in three and a half years, we know it's cut the deficit by more than half and produced over 10 million jobs. That is a good beginning for the American people. (Applause.)

For much of the last four years the African American unemployment rate has been in single digits for the first time in 20 years. (Applause.) There are 100,000 new African American-owned businesses. After falling by \$2,000 in the previous four years, median income for African American families has increased by \$2,400, or 11 percent, in just the first two years of this administration. Average wages are going up now for the first time in a decade. Home ownership is the highest in 15 years -- there are 3.7 million new American home owners. The growth of home ownership among African Americans is higher than the national average. And one reason is we have a Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in Henry Cisneros that has worked to cut the closing costs on those homes by \$1,000 for first-time home buyers. (Applause.)

So we're moving in the right direction. But we have to keep working until all of our people can reap the rewards of this time for change, including those that have not been reached by the recovery, those that have been downsized in competition, those that are stuck in place because they don't have the education and the skills to move up. So we have to keep working on balancing this budget because that keeps the interest rates down, the investments coming, and takes the burden off these young people you're trying to get interested in their own future.

But we have to do it in a way that recognizes our obligations to each other, that keeps the community together. Yes, reform Medicare, but don't create a two-class system and make the oldest, the poorest and the sickest seniors more vulnerable. (Applause.) Yes, slow the inflation rate in Medicaid, but don't give up the guarantee that we have a national responsibility to take care of poor pregnant women, poor infant children, people with disabilities in families all over this country, and elderly people who have to go into nursing homes. I think that's our common responsibility. We don't have to give that up. (Applause.)

Neither should we reduce our commitment to excellence in education and to the environment in the name of balancing the budget, because that's not necessary to be done. We have to go on with the cause of health care reform. There's still too many people in this country that don't have health insurance or that lose it. That's what the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill is all about. It simply says you don't lose your health insurance if you lose your job, you're moving from job to job, or if someone in your family has been sick. A simple little guarantee that could immediately benefit over 8 million Americans who are working in this country trying to support

their kids and hold their families together. And I hope the Congress will pass it without delay. (Applause.)

I was very happy that yesterday the Senate voted to pass a 90-cent increase in the minimum wage, something we need very much. (Applause.) Ten million of our hardest-pressed workers will get a raise. And I urge Congress to go on and pass it now. It's passed the House and passed the Senate. Let's go on and pass it just as soon as possible. Get it on up here so I can sign that bill and we can give people a raise. (Applause.)

In addition to the minimum wage, there's some other provisions in that bill that I'm very proud of that have, to be fair, bipartisan support. One is -- and for all of you in small businesses, it will matter a lot -- we're going to increase the expensing provision of small businesses, their write-off capacity from \$17,500 to \$25,000 a year. That's important for a lot of you here in this room. (Applause.) It was only \$10,000 when I took office, and the small business community said it ought to be \$25,000. If that bill gets to my desk, it will be \$25,000. (Applause.)

The other thing that I think is very important is that this bill contains a package of pension reforms which will make it easier for people who work for small businesses and people who are self-employed, and especially for people who have to change jobs a lot -- people who are out there selling computer software or otherwise have to move from job to job -- to take out a pension, to keep it when they're unemployed and to keep it when they move from job to job without being interrupted. People ought to be able to save for their family and save for their own retirement even if they're working in little businesses, even if they're self-employed, even if they have to move across the country, even if they have to change jobs. That is in there with the minimum wage bill, too. (Applause.)

Four years ago we had a lot of rhetoric on crime, but not a lot of action, and the crime rate was at unbelievably high levels. But there was a quiet change going on in many of our communities, who recognized that we had to have more police on the street, trying to prevent crime, not just catch criminals; relating to people in the communities, working with the parents, working with the children. They recognized that in addition to tougher punishment for serious offenders, we needed more prevention programs for community activists who wanted to help save these kids.

And when I became President I asked the Congress to pass that kind of crime bill, and they did. And now we're putting 100,000 police back on the street. We're taking guns off the street with the assault weapons ban and the Brady Bill. We're increasing penalties for people who should be punished more, but also giving our young people something to say yes to.

Under the direction of General McCaffrey, who this week is chairing a conference in El Paso, Texas, on how to stop drugs at the border, we are targeting a drug strategy to help young people. We cannot let another generation of our young people fall into the trap of drugs and gangs and crime. (Applause.)

We're working with communities all over this country with innovative strategies -- not telling people what to do, but saying, if you want to do this, we'll help you. School uniform policies in places like Long Beach, California, or Las Cruces, New Mexico. We're working on enforcing the truancy laws. Kids ought to be in school, not on the street during school hours, I think. (Applause.) And helping people do that. We're working on community-based curfews. And I'm holding up to this country especially the example of New Orleans, where they had a huge drop in juvenile crime not only because they imposed a curfew system, but because when they caught a young person out after curfew, instead of just punishing the person, they took these young people to a curfew center and said, tell me about your life, what's going on in your life, what are your problems, what can we do to help? It was a positive as well as a disciplinary move. (Applause.) And the juvenile crime rate is going down dramatically.

These things are working all across America. We set up a framework in Washington, but all we're really trying to do is help people at the community level come together and take responsibility for their own kids and their own future. And we are now seeing the fourth year in a row where the crime rate is going down. And that's something to be proud of. (Applause.)

Now, having said that, you'd be cheering from the rafters but for two things. Instead of polite applause, we'd get a roaring cheer, but there's two things that keep you from giving a roaring cheer. What are they? Number one, the crime rate's still too high. So what if it's lower, it's still way too high. And that means it's important. We dare not turn back on a strategy that's working. We've got to keep strengthening our community efforts -- putting more of these people out on the street who can be community police officers.

I won't be satisfied with this crime problem until we can meet this test -- we will never purge the country completely of crime because you can't -- at least the President doesn't have the power to alter human nature. The preachers here can call on a higher power, but I can't. So we'll always have some crime. What will be the test for you -- when you know that the crime rate is at a manageable, acceptable level in a civilized country? When you go home at night after a long day at work and you flip on the evening news, and the lead story is not a crime story, or if it is, you're surprised instead of deadened by it. You're really surprised. Then you will know that we got the crime rate going in the right direction for good. (Applause.)

The other thing that bothers people is that even though the crime rate's going down in the country as a whole, the rate of crime and violence by people under 18 is going up. We've still got too many innocent kids being killed in crossfires by drive-by shootings. We still have too many kids that are out there raising themselves in the streets, so they wind up in gangs, because everybody wants to be part of something. Most people can't just live wandering around as hermits all alone. So if you put people out there on the street and they have to raise themselves, they wind up in gangs because people don't want to be alone. There's not another compelling alternative. We have to fill that gap. And we have to do the things that are responsible, those of us who are responsible for the future. We cannot lose another generation

to gangs and guns and drugs. We cannot waiver on it. (Applause.)

We cannot show weakness, and we dare not cater to special interest groups on this. We are determined to stand by the ban on 19 deadly assault weapons. It was the right thing to do. (Applause.) We are determined to stand by the Brady Bill's requirement of waiting periods.

Let me just tell you, I know when we passed the Brady Bill and when we passed the assault weapons ban in 1994 --and Mr. Mfume will tell you this -- we lost some members of Congress who actually lost their seats in Congress because they voted for these bills. People went into their districts, called voters on the telephone, sent them letters, ran ads saying these people are trying to take your guns away from you; they're trying to end your ability to go out in the country and hunt. That's what they said. And, you know, most people who work hard don't have time to keep up with what's going on every day. A lot of people didn't know, and they went right in and dutifully voted against these members of Congress. And some of them gave up their seats.

But you know what? It's been two years now -- two deer seasons -- (laughter) -- two ducks seasons, two turkey seasons, two quail seasons, two squirrel seasons -- (laughter) -- and everybody in this whole country that likes to do that is still shooting at those animals with the same gun they had before we passed the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban. (Applause.) Every single soul. So they didn't tell the truth.

But I'll tell you who doesn't have guns. Because of that Brady Bill, 60,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers have not been able to get handguns and pull the trigger on innocent American citizens. We were right and they were wrong about that, and we've got to stand tough on it. (Applause.)

Now, this year, we've gone through a great debate about whether or not to repeal the assault weapons ban. I couldn't believe it. Just four months ago the House of Representatives actually voted to repeal the assault weapons ban. They want to take Uzis out there and shoot at the deer. (Laughter.) Wild turkey fly fast; you need lots of bullets -- (laughter.) I'm kind of laughing to keep from crying about this.

And let me say, there's now a lot of talk about you know where the major candidates ~~li~~ stand on this repeal of the assault weapons ban, who will push for it, and won't, and whatever. But I will say one thing that the Republican candidate for president has not said, and probably will not and cannot say. I will veto any attempt to repeal the assault weapons ban or the Brady Bill. I will veto it. (Applause.)

We should stand with law enforcement; we should stand with the victims of crime. You can't tell me it doesn't make any difference. I'll never forget a handsome young businessman from northern California I met a couple of years ago when we were fighting this battle. He had a beautiful young daughter, but his beautiful young daughter no longer had her beautiful young mother, because the beautiful young mother just happened to be in a high-risk one day when a

madman happened to walk in and cut loose with an assault weapon.

Now, people go crazy; these things happen. But if he'd had a revolver instead of an assault weapon, there wouldn't be so many people dead in that building. And this is important. This is an important issue.

So I ask you all to think about this and talk about this. And let me just tell you something that makes, again, Kweisi's attempt to bring all the young people in here so important. Just starting in grade school now, we have the largest group of young Americans more diverse than ever before in terms of their racial and ethnic backgrounds -- the largest group of young Americans entering our school system since the baby boomers entered right after World War II.

It was thought for a long time we would never have a group of youngsters that large again. This group is larger. They are more likely to be people of color. They are quite likely to come from families with difficult situations, or at least difficult economic situations. We must turn this problem of juvenile violence and gangs around before they reach their adolescent years if we don't want to reap the whirlwind of this. (Applause.)

One way we have to do it is with the right kind of welfare reform. Three-quarters of the people in America on welfare are already under welfare reform experiments because of the action our government has taken to encourage strategies to move people from welfare to work.

My criteria is simple. I don't mind being tough on requiring people to work, but we ought to want for people on welfare what we want for ourselves. What do we want? We want to succeed at home and at work. We want to be good parents and we want to be good from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We want to feel good about ourselves when we come home from work, but we want to feel good about ourselves when we leave home with our kids behind. That is the simple test. So I say, tough on work, yes; tough on kids, no way. Be good to the kids. Invest in child care. (Applause.)

And we've had time enough now to see who is right. We have 1.3 million people less on the welfare rolls today than the day I took the oath of office as President of the United States. (Applause.) That's the way to move people from welfare to work -- support them with child care and then require those work requirements.

And the most important thing we can do is make a wholesale commitment to educational excellence and educational opportunity in this country. We have got to do more. People say we've done a lot on that in the last 15 years. Not nearly enough. We've expanded Head Start, but not enough. We've worked to shrink class sizes and help teachers be retrained. We've worked to encourage states to set high standards and to give them the flexibility they need to meet the standards. We've worked to open the doors of college wider than ever, increasing the Pell grants, changing the student loan program so that people could borrow the money at lower costs with less hassle and then have the option to pay it back as a percentage of their income,

so that no young person should ever drop out of school because of the burden of a student loan. (Applause.)

But we have to do more. I am determined to see every classroom and every library in every school in the United States of America hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000 so the poorest kids can get the richest education and have access to all the information that any student anywhere in the world had. (Applause.)

I believe that the best tax cut we could give the American people is a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition up to \$10,000 a year. (Applause.) I believe that we ought to make at least two years of college after high school just as universal as a high school education is today. (Applause.)

I think everybody out to have access to it. That's why I have proposed a \$1,500 refundable tax credit -- enough to pay the entire tuition cost at the typical community college in the United States, so that everybody of any age can at least go back and get two years of college, so they can do well in the world toward which we're going. (Applause.)

If you want to inspire young people of the future, you at least ought to be able to tell them -- you at least ought to be able to tell them -- you ought to be able to look them right in the eye and say, you will go to college if you do this. (Applause.) That's the least that we can do in Washington to help those of you who are out there in our neighborhoods help to rescue this generation of young people and give them something to say yes to and a bright future to embrace.

So these are the things that I think we ought to be focusing on. Things that help people make the most of their own lives -- not a guarantee, but an opportunity. Things that help build strong families. Things that help build strong communities. They'll build a strong country. And it's one thing to preach to people that they ought to be responsible -- and I'm for that -- but if they are responsible, they ought to be rewarded with opportunity. The two things should go together as a bargain. (Applause.)

Let me say one other thing. Now that the Cold War is over, we have, unfortunately, not a world free of danger, we've got a lot of security problems. You know it as well as I do. We just dealt with it with a terrible, terrible loss of our Air Force personnel in Saudi Arabia.

What is leading to all this terrorism around the world? What does it have in common, when the Hutus and the Tutsis just slaughter each other in Rwanda or Burundi? What does that have to do with people rioting in Northern Ireland? What does it have to do with the Bosnians, the Muslims, the Croats and the Serbs and what they did to each other for four years after living together in peace for decades? What does it have to do with the continuing tensions in the Middle East?

Well, I think it has to do with human nature being vulnerable every day to taking the

easy way of defining ourselves in terms of who we're not, instead of who we are; defining ourselves in terms of who we can look down on, instead of what we can look up to. What leads to an Oklahoma City bombing? What were those people thinking in that group in Arizona where our federal officials broke it up the other day before -- when they had that massive weapons cash and all those -- at least they have been charged with plans to blow up all kinds of federal facilities? What are they thinking about when they burn all those churches and synagogues -- or, in a few cases, mosques and Islamic centers? What are they thinking about?

I'm telling you, it's something endemic to human nature, something you have to teach your kids about all the time -- something we all have to fight. It's almost like, every day you wake up and the scales are going inside you -- you know, hope and fear, hatred and reconciliation. But there are people all over the world that look like they just can't exist unless they go out and kill somebody who is different from them -- or at least keep them at arm's length.

And nobody has ever perfectly solved this problem. There are no perfect answers because, again, it deals with the human spirit and the things that are endemic to human nature. But that's why I know that even though we desegregated our schools and threw racism out of public facilities and elected African Americans and Hispanics and Asian Americans to Congress, passed civil rights laws, this job is a never-ending job -- here and around the world. It's a never-ending job. (Applause.)

That's why, notwithstanding the political movement of the moment, after I studied it for several months, I thought we could and should make some changes in the affirmative action laws, but that we should mend them and not end them. I thought it would be a mistake to end them and walk away. (Applause.)

I think it's a mistake not to try to keep working for voting rights and greater impact of voting rights. And, notwithstanding the recent Supreme Court decisions which, of course, we will all honor, we still have to be on a mission of making sure that the Congress of the United States represents the American people in a fair way. (Applause.)

And it's why we have to keep standing against this rash of church burnings. You know, it's hard to think of anything an American could do that didn't kill a lot of people that would offend our sense of decency more than burning a house of worship. This whole country got started in part by people coming here so they could build their own churches and worship God in any way they pleased, and they wouldn't be oppressed here. That's how we got started. (Applause.)

In the darkest hours of our country, when we lived with the awful curse of slavery, and then later with the problems associated with the attempt to escape it, if it had not been for the African American church -- if it had not been for the African American church what would have happened? (Applause.) We might have plunged this country into an orgy of violence and killing, and lost tens of thousands more people, and hardened our hearts against one another in

ways that it would have taken a century or more to overcome.

An attack on a house of worship, whether it's a big old Southern Baptist church, or a big old black Baptist church, or a tiny synagogue, or a Muslim mosque that only a few people ever frequent, is an attack on the whole idea of America. And it represents our problem in dealing with this curse of hatred based on race and religion and ethnicity that is sweeping the world and fueling so much of this terrorism.

I want to thank you for what you have done. The NAACP has worked with law enforcement and government and business and religious leaders to help us catch and prosecute people, and to help us rebuild, and to help us prevent these burnings. You know that my administration stands behind you. We created a national task force on these church burnings, headed, I might add, very ably by two of the finest African Americans in our administration -- Deval Patrick, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil rights; and Jim Johnson, the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for enforcement.

We've got over 200 FBI and ATF agents working to solve these crimes, going through the evidence, doing the investigations. And we're making arrests. In just the last three weeks, arrests have been made in connection with fires in Missouri, North and South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Washington. (Applause.) And just this past Monday, while you were here, two members of the KKK were charged with the burning of the Mt. Zion AME church in Greeleyville, South Carolina, where I visited just last month. (Applause.)

This morning before I left the White House, I met with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders to thank them for quickly and unanimously passing bipartisan legislation to make it easier to prosecute arson attacks against houses of worship. (Applause.) Also, that legislation authorizes a \$10-million Department of Housing and Urban Development loan guarantee program to be used for church rebuilding -- to work with the money that's been raised by the National Council of Churches, the guarantees of volunteers that have been given by Habitat for Humanity and others.

But we must do more. Two weeks ago, I began to convene religious leaders and governors and others in the White House to talk about what else we can do. I asked the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, James Lee Witt, who's used to working with local community groups when we have natural disasters, to work with the Justice and Treasury Departments, with the governors to frame a national prevention initiative. One of the big problems here in preventing these crimes is that you've got so many of these little churches that are out on country roads, and they're old wooden structures, and they don't even have a full-time staff, so they can't afford to have full-time people there as night watchmen.

Keep in mind, so far there's no evidence of a national conspiracy. Most of these people are not armed when they sneak in in the middle of the night to do this. If you just had bright lights and somebody hanging around most of the time it wouldn't happen.

Last week I transferred \$6 million to local communities in 13 states across the South -- that's enough to pay for one new police officer in a county to drive around on these back roads to patrol the churches at night, or for lighting, or for whatever else they want to use it for to try to prevent, prevent the fires from occurring in the first place. (Applause.)

And tomorrow the Vice President is meeting with leaders of the insurance industry at the White House to build on their pledge to work in partnership with all of us to prevent these crimes, and to make sure that we can still get insurance for these churches. I've heard a lot about that from people, and it's important. (Applause.)

So we're going to do everything we can to stop these fires, to catch who is doing it, to rebuild. But I say again, this work we're doing here is dealing with a flaw in the human spirit that all of us have to fight always. We cannot -- we cannot -- let significant numbers of the American people turn into cowards, acting in the dark of night, on racial, ethnic or religious bigotry. We cannot do that. (Applause.) We cannot let people in this country develop terrorists cells to manifest their hatred of their own government in the greatest experiment in self-government in human history.

If we are going to continue to be a force against terrorism and against hatred in the rest of the world, we have to continue to purge ourselves of it. (Applause.) That's why earlier this month I signed a proclamation designating July as the national month of unity for Americans. I asked religious leaders of all faiths and citizens from all walks of life to reach out to one another, to strengthen the ideals that light our way and keep this country strong.

We have not always lived up to our promise. We're people, we're human, we make mistakes, we're imperfect. But we have never stopped trying. And we have never stopped moving. And as we enter this great new century, we have got to say that we're going to stamp out the fires of hatred and bigotry. (Applause.) We have got to say we are going to find a way to reject intolerance and heal our divisions. We have got to find a way to say, as your president has said, this is the new day begun. (Applause.)

I just want to leave you with this thought. A couple of nights ago I met with a group of businesspeople to talk about a number of issues, and one of them said to me -- he said, Mr. President, I've been in business for over 30 years, I've built facilities in more than 25 nations; I have seen this world changed a lot. He said, there is no country in the world today in better shape for the next century than the United States. And he said, our diversity, the fact that we are all so different is an enormous asset in a global economy where information and ideas have to be exchanged at a rapid rate and people have to understand each other and deal with each other. He said, that's why it's so important that we learn how to work together and be together, because if we do, there is no stopping this country. (Applause.)

I've said several times in the last few weeks --I'll just close with this -- it seems like my life as your President has been dominated by fires in the last couple of weeks -- arguably, for longer than that. But, I mean, literally. On the one hand there's the church fires, which are

the symbol of everything that is wrong, that we want to reject when it occurs in our country. And on the other hand, there is the fire that burns in the Olympic flame that's making it's way to Atlanta.

And I'm sure every one of you has read as this flame has moved through your states of all these community heroes who are picked to carry the torch for a kilometer. Some of them were in wheelchairs and had to roll along. Some of them were very old and had to walk along. Some of them were great athletes and could fly along so fast the flame almost went out. But every one of them had one thing in common -- they were picked to carry that torch because they were, first and foremost, great citizens.

There was a 74-year-old woman in Nevada that had taken 100 kids in who had been abandoned, so she took them in. There was a man who came in in Washington, one of the torchbearers at the White House, probably about 60, African American man, who had devoted his life to rescuing the lives of children. And he walked up with 12 of his kids, and they were white, black, brown, and Asian Americans. He had given his life to them.

There was a Catholic nun who had devoted her whole life to fulfilling the Catholic social ministry in her community. There was the deaf president of Galludet University, our nation's deaf university, who is in his late 50s. And when he left what he was doing with us, he was going that week to run a 100-mile race. There was a young woman who played basketball at the University of Tennessee whose body was crushed in an accident and she thought her whole -- her life was nearly over, her athletic career was certainly over. But by sheer force of will, she got herself back into shape, resumed her basketball career, helped them win a national championship, and is one of the leaders on our basketball team.

All of these people shared one thing in common -- they're all different races, all different religions, all different backgrounds -- they lived their citizenship. They bridged the differences between us. They were looking for the future. They saw themselves in terms of who they were, not in terms of what they weren't. In terms of what they could become, not who they were supposed to hate. (Applause.) In terms of what kind of partnerships and teamwork they could build, not how they could be divided.

That is the mission that the NAACP will carry, with great success and energy and commitment and conviction, to the hearts and minds of these young people into the 21st century. That is the mission we must be on. And that is what I hope and pray we will be discussing in this election season: How can we give to our children the kind of America they deserve to have.

Thank you, and God bless you all. (Applause.)

END

1:21 P.M. EDT

families in New England, only one percent owned slaves.⁽³²⁾ We get a clear picture here of the high ratio of New York City slaves in comparison with other large northern cities, in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

In 1791, the revolt of Haitian slaves influenced the slaves in the states. Haiti had 40,000 whites, 28,000 freedmen, and 500,000 slaves. In April 1794, Toussaint L'Ouverture, a man of rare courage and remarkable leadership, who had attained high rank in the Spanish Army at the head of 4,000 troops, deserted the Spanish and his defection led to the surrender of the Spanish garrison in Santo Domingo. L'Ouverture, Dessalines, and Christophe led the slave revolt in Haiti against French rule. Toussaint L'Ouverture issued a constitution which abolished slavery.⁽³³⁾ It is said that some thirteen thousand black Americans migrated to free Haiti after this revolution, where they found refuge.⁽³⁴⁾

This incident brought about a new assertiveness among the blacks in America. Freedom was making attempts to burst from the seams. Fears became more prevalent and tensions began to mount all over America. This was the period when humanitarian consciousness among whites began to grow, and manumission societies were being formed in several cities and towns, to enhance freedom of these human beings who for nearly two hundred years had been chattel of the market. This, however, was still a vast minority against the persons who were blinded by materialistic greed, race hatred, and diabolic superiority complexes.

In New York City, members of the "New York Circuit" numbered 575 whites and 135 blacks.⁽³⁵⁾ The leading black members were beginning to lay concrete plans for the new movement of Methodism which would create a new emphasis in freedom and self-expression. They planned hard and well and reached the crest of their fondest dream in 1796. After prodding their way through numerous obstructions, they made their move to a humble house on Cross Street. Few in numbers, poor and despised, they prayerfully and zealously fought their way to victory by 1821.

Indeed, the story of the earliest period of the A.M.E. Zion Church is a romance, built on faith, hope, fortitude, and courage, inspired by God Almighty and his Son, Jesus Christ, witnessed by the Holy Spirit. Between the organization of the church in 1796 and the separation in 1821, this group passed through turbulent days. Some preachers withdrew, others wavered, and the people sometimes lost heart, but Varick stood like a rock amid some raging storms, and brought the old ship of Zion through a series of crises to freedom, and therefore was rewarded by God and his people to become the first leader of a great denomination.

32. Bergman, *Chronological History of the Negro*, p.69.

33. *Ibid.*, pp.74-75.

34. Otley and Weatherby, *op. cit.*, p.53.

35. *Minutes of the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, *op. cit.*, p.56.

Part II— The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

CHAPTER 6

DEFINITION AND ORIGIN OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH

Defining Zion Methodism

In October 1796, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was founded in New York City. The organization grew out of the well-known dissatisfaction among the people of color over the kind of treatment they received in the services of the church. Bishop Moore describes this dissatisfaction as follows:

When the first Methodist Episcopal Society was established in New York (white), among whom were several colored persons, the two races found no difficulty in the reciprocity of religious fellowship, and the equal enjoyment of religious rights and privileges, but as the church grew popular and influential, the prejudice of caste began to engender Negro proscription, and as the number of colored members increased, the race friction and proscription increased, which finally overcame the tolerance of the colored members of the M.E. Society. Again the M.E. Church in New York, licensed a number of colored men to preach, but prohibited them from preaching even to their own brethren, except occasionally, and never among the whites. The colored preachers, being thus deprived of the opportunity of improving their gifts and graces, as they then stood connected with the white M.E. Society, and prohibited from joining the annual M.E. Confer-

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ence, as itinerant preachers, with their white brethren; thus restricted in their church relations, they were prompted to seek the privilege of holding meetings among themselves. (1)

Bishop Hood gives us the following general description of the state of the church during this period:

[The Negro] was wanted in the church for the support he gave it, for the numbers he enabled sectarians to claim in exhibiting their strength, and with the minority, who were truly pious, he was wanted there for the good of his soul. For these and other reasons he was not kept entirely out of the church. But in the church he was hampered and regulated. His privileges were proscribed and limited; every possible effort was made to impress him with a sense of inferiority. Preachers were selected who delighted in discoursing to him upon such texts as "Servants, obey your masters," and who were adepts at impressing the Negro with inferiority in the most ingenious and least offensive way. . . . This state of things was not confined to any one particular branch of the American Church, but it was found in every denomination in every community in which there was any considerable number of the black race. (2)

In consonance with Hood's concept, Roi Ottley states that "the first independent act of Negroes was to sever all connections with the white churches, which had assigned them to sections marked 'B.M.,' meaning black members. The movement, extending to every denomination, began when Negroes broke away from the Methodist Episcopal Church and started the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church." (3)

Wheeler states that

[The] Methodist Episcopal Church at the time that Varick and his followers withdrew from it, was a victim of circumstances. African slavery had produced its sickening effects all over the country, in Church and State. The Methodist Episcopal Church, like all other churches at the time, had been influenced by it. They did not persecute their colored brethren, however—they simply denied them certain rightful privileges which were accorded to white brethren. But this the colored brethren did not think they could stand and at the same time work out for themselves the high destiny which God holds out to all men and women who serve Him aright. (4)

In the formation of any organization that gains potency, there is practically always one who provides inspirational leadership and directional prudence, who is heavily depended upon by others to steer the ship sailing into new harbors, safely into the port. From the beginning, this independent movement of the A.M.E. Zion Church was largely influenced and structured by James Varick. He was the consistent leader and was later made the virtual pastor of this first church called Zion. Even though white preachers were in charge, black leadership among our own was a necessity.

The other leaders that became prominent in the movement were Father Abraham Thompson, June Scott, and William Miller. Thompson wavered, Scott left the movement, and Miller wandered during the birth of the movement. Varick was the most prominent name from the beginning and played the diplomat between Zion and other churches, both the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Bethel movement, but maintained the constancy and unity of the A.M.E. Zion movement.

1. Moore, *History of The A.M.E. Zion Church in America*, pp.15-16.

2. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p.3.

3. Ottley, *New World a-Coming*, p.11.

4. B. F. Wheeler, *The Varick Family*, pp.6-7.

Father Rush, in his history, attempted to give as broad an account as possible of these happenings, most of which were related to him by others, but it was eight years after this movement officially began that he came to New York and joined the Zion Church in 1803. What occurred in the eight years of his absence is, without a doubt, one of the most vivid and heroic stories of the formation of a Christian church.

The fathers agreed that they had no fault to find with the doctrines, form of government, and evangelistic and soul-saving emphases of Methodism, but they could not endure the constant humiliation and restriction imposed by the people into whose hands Methodism had fallen. The founders were opposed to slavery and inhumane treatment of slaves, so that they could logically remain Methodists because of the spirit of the originators and the meaning of the first-born movement in England and America.

Bishop Hood who was licensed to preach in Mother Zion Church in 1856, and knew some of the founders and their direct descendants, further states:

Their teaching from the pulpit was that God is no respecter of persons. The practice was that the black people were proscribed and hindered from exercising themselves with that freedom which the form of government held out to white members. Both the masses and also those who were favored with special gifts and callings were discriminated against. The colored members were not permitted to come to the sacrament [of the Lord's Supper] until all the white members, even children, had communed. The line was also drawn at the baptismal font. (5)

He relates the story of a minister who was baptizing children. When he was through with the white children he looked up to the gallery and said, "Now you niggers can bring your children down." A sister brought her child and presented it. When the minister said, "Name this child," the mother said, "George Washington." The minister looked at her for a moment as though she had been guilty of some great crime, and said, "George Washington, indeed! Caesar's his name. Caesar, I baptize thee, etc." (6) They suffered many other such indignities while in John Street Church, which contributed to their final decision to withdraw. "They found it impossible to be true to their manhood and remain in this church and submit to these indignities." (7)

Thus we have the comprehensive and living definition of a small, restless, dissatisfied group, who with wholehearted determination and zeal made the giant step in eliminating brutal slavery and proscription. From then on they moved with magnifying force, not only to produce some of the world's greatest freedom fighters and advocates, but to shine as a beacon light, for individual rights and privileges, in becoming prominent and well known as "The Freedom Church."

Origin of Zion

These growing conditions of slavery, humiliation, and persecution inspired a few of the most intelligent black leaders of John Street Church to move forward. Dissatisfaction among blacks regarding their burial situation in the city was a live issue in 1795. Bishop Asbury made a visit to New York on Sunday, July 5, 1795, administered the sacraments at the New Church in the afternoon, and held a meeting with the black classes afterward. (8) There were 155 black members in

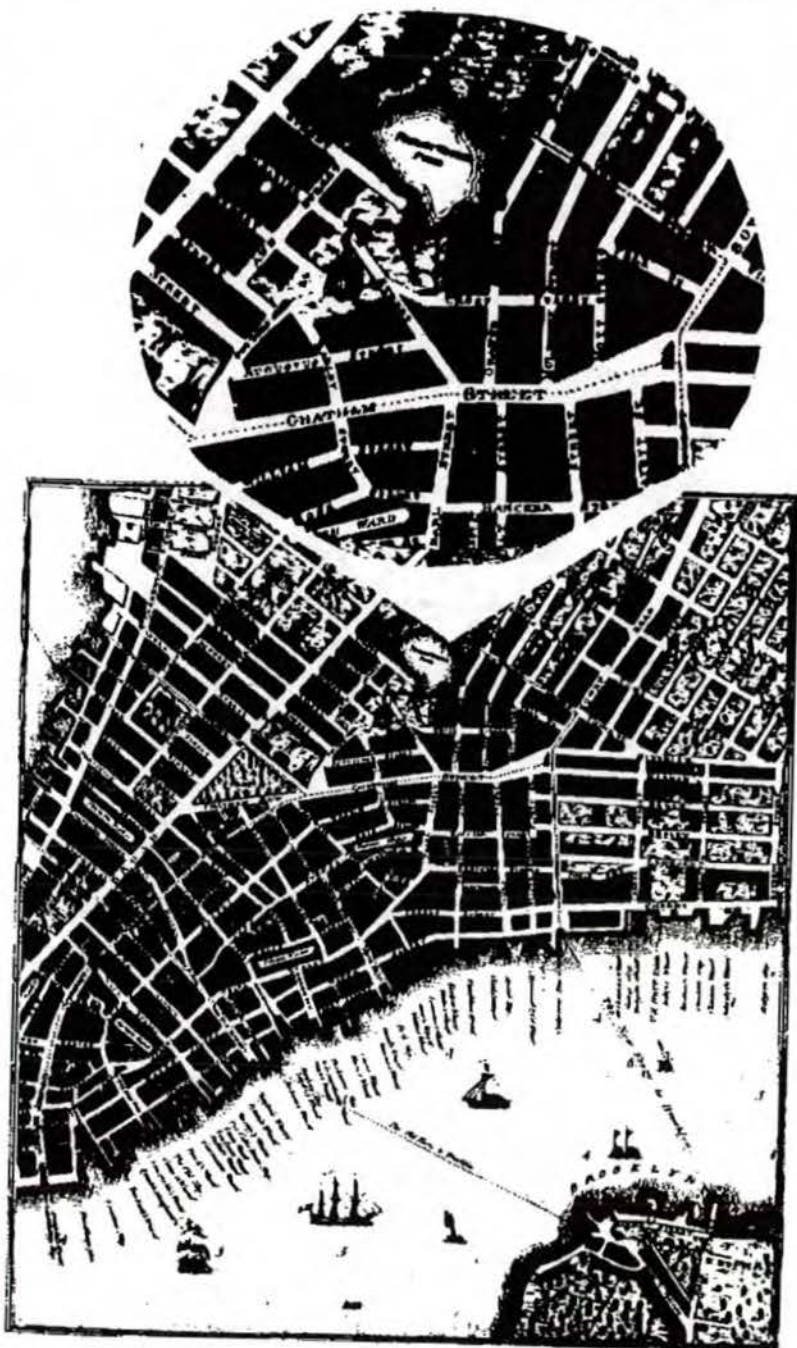
5. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p.10.

6. *Ibid.*, p.10.

7. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.6.

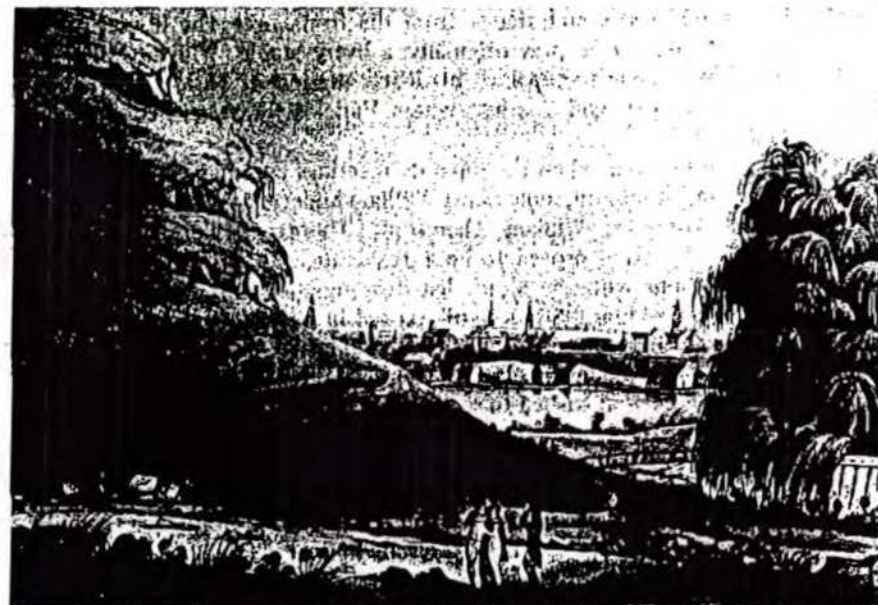
8. Asbury, *Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury*, Vol. II, p.55.





The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church makes its debut as an independent religious organization in the fall of 1796 in a house near The Collect Pond on Cross Street between Orange and Mulberry.

Map Division, New York Public Library: Astor, Tilden and Lenox Foundations.



View of New York City from the Collect (or Fresh Water) Pond, March, 1798. Birth of the A.M.E. Zion Church where meetings were held from 1796 to 1800 in house on Cross Street opposite the pond.

The Edward W. C. Arnold Collection. Lent by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo Courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York.

8 classes, only 2 of which were male classes, totalling 34. Class Number 31, led by Cornelius Warner, was the impressive class of A.M.E. Zion Church founders: James Varick, Abraham Thompson, William Miller, William Hamilton, Francis Jacobs, Thomas Miller, George Moore, George White, Thomas Cook, David Bias, Samuel Pontier, and 10 others whose names are not familiar in our history. (9)

After a group of these leading men of Class 31 held a series of meetings in the home of James Varick in number 4 Orange Street, and agreed to make firm their desire to become a separate society of Methodists, they again met with Bishop Asbury in August 1796, while he was visiting New York meeting all the classes and handling business affairs, and received permission to hold meetings separate from the Methodist Society. In October, they rented a house in Cross Street. (10)

This house, located between Mulberry and Orange Streets, was one of a group of houses on the east side of "The Collect Pond," owned by Edward Livingston, a prominent New York lawyer who became Mayor of the City in 1803, and his wife, Mary. Mr. Livingston and others had built up these houses to serve any and all purposes, for rental income. (11) In the fifth ward of the city, thickly populated with blacks, segregated not by race but by social and economic status, these two and three-story houses were used in a two-fold manner; occupants for the most part lived either above or in the rear, and

9. Ms. Record, John Street Church, Book 1B.

10. Asbury, *op. cit.*, pp.95-96; B. F. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.15; *New York City Directories; Star of Zion*, October 1, 1896, p.1.

11. William Smith Pelletreau, *Early New York Houses*, pp.167 & 213; 1795 Tax Book, New York City; 1796 Tax Book, NYC.

operated their businesses and trades from the front.⁽¹²⁾ The house, on the north side of Cross Street, was originally a livery stable. William Miller had moved his cabinet-maker's shop into his living quarters at 36 Mulberry Street, just around the corner, and this was where Varick's followers had their first meeting house.⁽¹³⁾

The original pioneers when the separate meetings commenced were: James Varick, Abraham Thompson, June Scott, William Miller, Francis Jacobs, William Brown, Peter Williams, William Hamilton, Thomas Miller, and Samuel Pontier.⁽¹⁴⁾ Their action proved to be a deliberate, determined and complete severance of relations with the Methodist denomination and a bold stroke for religious and race freedom. "Slavery still existed in New York. Every family of any pretension to affluence owned household and other servants. In all the newspapers of the period were advertisements of sales, and of runaway slaves. Many high-minded persons wished to see it abolished."⁽¹⁵⁾

For the most part, the church leaders were free, although quite a number of the members were still slave. They were possessed of unusual intellect and manifold skills. William Hamilton, like Philip Embury (who had the distinction of building his own pulpit, in the first John Street Church), was a house-carpenter.⁽¹⁶⁾ Cabinet-makers in those days are known as furniture manufacturers today. They themselves fitted up the house with seats, a pulpit, and gallery.⁽¹⁷⁾

In this house, they first "held prayer meetings on Sunday afternoon in the interval of Divine Service among the white brethren, between afternoon and evening service, and also held preaching and exhorting meetings on Wednesday nights by such of their colored brethren as were licensed to preach and exhort."⁽¹⁸⁾ There were three licensed preachers in New York, James Varick, Abraham Thompson, and June Scott, the first three Africans of this state to be ordained in the Methodist Church.⁽¹⁹⁾

They continued worshipping and meeting in this house on Cross Street, until they moved into their newly erected edifice on Sunday, September 7, 1800, led by these three preachers. In the beginning of the Christian movement, they were known as Apostles.

The A.M.E. Zion Church was firmly established in 1820, when the leaders voted themselves out of the Methodist Episcopal Church and published their first Discipline. The principal reasons were described in the Founders' Address of that and the subsequent Discipline:

12. Ms Record, Bancker Land Papers.

13. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.16.

14. Christopher Rush, *The Rise and Progress of the African Methodist Episcopal [Zion] Church in America*, p.10.

15. Martha J. Lamb, *History of the City of New York*, Vol. 3, p.419.

16. *New York City Directory*, 1797, p.195.

17. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, p.10.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Daniel Coker, *A Dialogue Between a Virginian and an African Minister*, p.40.

FOUNDERS' ADDRESS

To the Members of the African Methodist Episcopal [Zion] Church in America:

BELOVED BRETHREN: We think it proper to state briefly that, after due consideration, the Official Members of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Asbury Churches in the city of New York have been led to conclude that such was the relation in which we stood to the white Bishops and Conference, relative to the ecclesiastical government of the African Methodist Church or Society in America, so long as we remain in that situation our Preachers would never be able to enjoy these privileges which the Discipline of the white Church holds out to all its Members that are called to preach, in consequence of the limited access our brethren had to those privileges, and particularly in consequence of the difference of color. We have been led also to conclude that the usefulness of our Preachers has been very much hindered, and our brethren in general have been deprived of those blessings which Almighty God may have designed to grant them, through the means of those Preachers whom He has from time to time raised up from among them, because there has been no means adopted by the said Bishop and Conference for our Preachers to travel through the Connection and promulgate the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and they have had no access to the only source from whence they might have obtained a support, at least, while they traveled. Under these circumstances they believed that the formation of an itinerant plan and the establishment of a Conference for the African Methodist Preachers of the United States, who are not yet attached to any Conference of that nature, would be essential to the prosperity of the spiritual concerns of our colored brethren in general, and would be the means of advancing our Preachers (who are now in regular standing in connection with the white Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church), whenever it should be found necessary for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among our brethren, to bring forward for ordination those who are called of God to preach the Gospel of our Lord, which may be done from time to time, according to the best of our judgment of the necessity thereof, and not according to the method which is natural to suppose our white brethren would pursue, to determine upon the necessity of such ordination. We are under strong impression of mind that such measures would induce many of our brethren to attend divine worship, who are yet careless about their eternal welfare, and thereby prove effectual in the hands of God in the awakening and conversion of their souls to the knowledge of the truth.

And whereas, Almighty God, in His all-wise and gracious providence, has recently offered a favorable opportunity, whereby these Societies may be regularly organized as an evangelical African Methodist Church, we have therefore resolved to embrace the said opportunity, and have agreed that the title of the Connection shall be the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America,* and we have selected a form of Discipline, with a little alteration from that of our Mother Church, which selection we recommend to you, for the Doctrines and Discipline of our Church, hoping that the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, the all-wise and gracious God, will be pleased to approve of the above measures and grant that we may obtain and preserve those privileges

which we have been heretofore deprived of; that thereby we may unite our mutual efforts for the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom among us, and for the encouragement of our colored brethren in the Ministry.

Earnestly soliciting your prayers and united endeavors for the same, we remain your affectionate brethren and servants in the kingdom of our ever-adorable Lord.

ABRAHAM THOMPSON,
JAMES VARICK,
WILLIAM MILLER.

* The word "Zion" was added to the title by the General Conference of 1848.

The Name

This first church organized in 1796 and built in 1800 was called *Zion*. The founders chose this name because "it is the name most frequently used in the Bible to designate the Church of God," (20) even Zion Hill, before there was a worship house.

Zion Church was incorporated in 1801 by the name, "The African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York." Methodist Episcopal was always in the title to exhibit the retention of the doctrine and form of church government under which the denomination originated. "African" was prefixed to the rest of the title of this church because it was to be controlled by descendants of Africa, in the interest of humanity, regardless of race, color, sex or condition." (21)

Therefore, these people of African descent, with an indubitable pride in the Fatherland and abiding love of kinship, desired to maintain their identity, their ancient cultures and background, for posterity. Because another organization came into existence around the same time, with the same title, and much confusion was brought about, the General Conference of 1848 voted to make Zion a part of the denominational name, henceforth to be known as *The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church*. (22)

20. C. R. Harris, *Zion's Historical Catechism* p.8.

21. *Ibid.*, p.8-9.

22. Hood, *op. cit.*, p.524.

CHAPTER 7

CONFLICTS AND SOLUTIONS IN THE FORMATIVE YEARS, 1796-1822

"When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord." Psalms 103:16-18.

Building the First Church

A movement eventuating out of such traumatic hardships could not expect to experience anything but trial and heartaches during its first effort to build a permanent church. This small group of men and women, led by Varick, "realized that in starting out to purchase or erect a house of worship of their own, with their own poverty staring them in the face, and the prejudice of their white brethren against them, their pathway was beset with many discouragements and obstacles." (1)

In 1846, Jonathan Greenleaf wrote: "In 1796, the colored members of the Methodist Churches of the City of New York, feeling a desire to hold meetings among themselves, where they might have opportunity to exercise their spiritual gifts, and thereby, as they hoped, become more useful to each other, obtained permission from Bishop Asbury to hold such meetings in the intervals of the regular preaching hours of the white church." (2) These three little words, as they hoped retrospectively formed a key to many of the difficult experiences they subsequently endured. Unfortunately, their hopes were delayed, jarred, and in some respects smashed. At the time of our founding, the following rule existed in the Methodist Church regarding trustees and temporal affairs:

By a law of the State of New York for incorporating religious societies, the male members of each church annually elect a certain specified number of Trustees for the especial oversight and management of the temporal concerns of said church. To the Trustees so elected of right belong the churches and other buildings erected for the convenience of the congregations and for the officiating ministers, they receive the revenue and satisfy all demands which may be made. The churches are erected by the Trustees, the ground is purchased by them, and all monies required for the purpose is procured by them. They are alone known in law as capable of suing and being sued. They borrow money when it is necessary, and when other security than their bond is required, they give a mortgage on the property held by them as Trustees.

Whatever relates to the spirituality of the church, the Trustees do never interfere excepting with their advice. When a church is built, the preacher in charge has notice thereof and is requested to adopt the proper measures for opening and occupying the same, in accordance with the discipline of our

1. B. F. Wheeler, *The Varick Family*, p.6.

2. Jonathan Greenleaf, *A History of the Churches of All Denominations in the City of New York*, p.321.

Note: March 3, 1803, Christopher Rush (Second Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church) was received on trial and assigned to the class of Samuel Pontier.
The New York Public Library Manuscript and Archives Division: Astor, Tilden and Lenox Foundations. Used by permission of the John Street United Methodist Church of New York City and New York Conference Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, Hudson, N.Y.

ARTICLE IV.

It is provided and declared that the said Trustees and their successors shall not, by deed or otherwise, grant, alien, convey, or otherwise dispose of any part or parcel of the estate, real or personal, in the said Corporation vested or to be vested, or in any other way to mortgage or pledge the said real estate for the payment of any debts by them contracted to any person or persons whatever, unless such grant, alienation and conveyance be made by and with the consent of two-thirds of the regular male members of the said church, of at least twenty-one years of age, and one year's standing.

ARTICLE V.

It is provided and declared that none but Africans or their descendants shall be chosen as Trustees of the said African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and such other church or churches as may or shall hereafter become the property of this Corporation, and none shall be eligible to the office of a Trustee but such as are received and acknowledged to be members of the said church by the elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York, who shall be appointed by the Conference of the said church, to the charge of the Methodist Society in the said city.

ARTICLE VI.

All elections for Trustees for the aforesaid Zion Church shall be by ballot of the male members, in close communion with them, or as many of them as attend, after being duly warned thereto; and no one shall have a right to vote for Trustees until he has been a member standing in full connection, one year at least; and no person shall be chosen a Trustee of the said Corporation until the said person shall have been a member in full connection and standing, at least two years. And no person shall be admitted into close connection with their classes or be enrolled on their books but Africans and descendants of the African race.

ARTICLE VII.

It is provided and declared that the Trustees aforesaid and their successors forever are and shall be empowered to have, and shall have, the entire direction and disposal of the temporal revenue of the aforesaid African Zion Church, and, after paying the ground rent of the said church, are to apply the remainder for the benefit of the said church, as a majority of the aforesaid Trustees and their successors shall, from time to time, direct. And the aforesaid Trustees and their successors forever shall have the disposal and management of the temporal concerns of the aforesaid African Methodist Episcopal Church, subject, nevertheless, to the provisions, and under the regulations made and provided in the fourth article of this instrument.

ARTICLE VIII.

It is declared that the Trustees and members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church do acquiesce and accord with the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church for their church government and discipline, and with their creed and articles of faith, and that they and their successors will continue for ever in union with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York, subject to the government of the present Bishops and their successors, in all their ecclesiastical affairs and transactions, except in the temporal right and property of the aforesaid Zion Church, which is to be governed as herein directed, as long as the said articles and creeds of the said church remain unchanged.

ARTICLE IX.

It is declared that the elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the time being, in the City of New York, appointed as aforementioned, shall have the direction and management of the spiritual concerns of the said Zion Church, or any other church or churches which may or shall be built hereafter by the Corporation aforesaid, or by any other means become their property, agreeably to the form of discipline of the said Methodist Episcopal Church, Provided, always, that the said elder shall receive no person into the African Society but such as are previously recommended by a Trustee or Trustees of the said African Zion Church. And upon complaint being made to the said African Church, or to the elder, of any of its members having walked disorderly, they shall be dealt with according to the form of discipline; provided, always, that their triers be members of their own church, and that the member, if condemned in the first trial, have an appeal to the Trustees, local preachers, exhorters and class leaders of the aforesaid Zion Church. And it is further declared that no person who may come recommended to the elder from other societies as a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, shall be admitted or considered as a member of the African Church if he refuses to have his name registered in the books of the said Zion Church, after notice having been given him.

ARTICLE X.

It is agreed and declared that the elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York, appointed as aforesaid, shall, from time to time, for ever hereafter, nominate the preacher who shall officiate in said African Methodist Episcopal Church, and any, and all, other church or churches, which shall hereafter become the property of the Corporation, and shall attend to the said church or churches himself, to administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as often as he, the said Elder, can make it convenient. And the said Elder for the time being, shall license to exhort and preach any one or more of the brethren who are, or shall be, members of the said church, and shall appear, to the satisfaction of the said Elder, to be adequate to the task, and to have grace and gifts proper to appear in public: Provided, always, that such persons are previously recommended to him by a majority of the Trustees, local preachers, exhorters, and class leaders, of the aforesaid church. And if either of the said African brethren shall graduate into holy orders, it shall be done in such manner and way as the General Conference has directed. And it is provided and agreed that the said elder may claim for himself and his white brethren, and shall have and possess, a right to preach once on every Sunday, and once during the course of the week (and no more, when there is a sufficient number of African Preachers), in any or all the houses set apart and built, or to be set apart and built, by the aforesaid Trustees, or their successors, of the said African Zion Church, in the city and suburbs of New York.

ARTICLE XI.

It is provided and declared that no powers and authorities hereby given to the aforementioned Trustees shall be understood, taken, or construed, in any wise to prohibit or prevent the Elder for the time being, duly authorized and appointed as aforesaid, the religious use, benefit and enjoyment of the church known by the name of Zion Church, or of any other church or churches which, at any time hereafter, may be purchased or built by the said Corporation, or in any other way become their property, in the City of New York or the suburbs thereof, but that the same shall be, and forever hereafter continue to be, had,

used, and enjoyed, by the said Elder for the time being, as heretofore, and by no other person whatever, of another denomination, unless by the particular license and consent of the Elder for the time being, with the concurrence of two-thirds of the Trustees for the time being, anything to the contrary in these articles notwithstanding.

(Signed) FRANCIS JACOBS,

THOMAS X SIFKINS, GEORGE X WHITE, PETER X WILLIAMS, WILLIAM X BROWN,
mark mark mark mark
 GEORGE E. MOORE, GEORGE COLLINS, THOMAS COOK, DAVID BIAS.

Bishop E. D. W. Jones states that George Collins signed the charter. (29) The records show that George Collins did not sign the charter, although Francis Jacobs and George Collins were the legal persons elected by the trustees to sign the charter. The puzzling questions to members of the A.M.E. Zion Church over many years are were:

Why did not the proper officers of the Board request and sign the Charter, which included secretary, George Collins, a highly skillful and trained man, known to be a teacher in New York City? (30)

Why was the Charter secured in a secretive way without knowledge of the preachers and other trustees involved?

How did the Articles of Agreement affect full assurance of securing the Charter?

Why did the trustees sign an Article of Agreement protecting the rights of Africans to be elected trustees in Article 5, and in Articles 9, 10, and 11, sign away the rights of the African preachers to white preachers, when they were not to make decisions regarding spiritual concerns of the society?

How could the preachers freely exercise their spiritual gifts, as they hoped, under these conditions?

The answers to these questions, we do our best here to give according to records available.

It was obvious that the Methodists were stalling for time from the fall of 1800, in order to work out strategy to make sure this African Church would be controlled by them once the Charter was secured. They selected Rev. John McClaskey, one of the three pastors appointed to New York City at the New York Conference in June 1800, to work with the African group in securing this charter. Similar troubles are contained in the records of the African Methodist (Bethel) Church in Philadelphia when McClaskey was pastor of the Methodist Church in that city. (31) This made it necessary for our fathers to be alert when he was appointed to New York.

Reverend McClaskey, working under instruction of his conference, as implied in the action of the General Conference defining procedure in this matter, began his hindering tactics by first delaying the leaders and people who constantly kept before the Methodists the urgency of securing their charter.

On February 5 and 16, 1801, when he maneuvered Peter Williams and Francis Jacobs to apply for the charter in the City Clerk's office, it was an undercover movement of the Methodist Church. Peter Williams, sexton of John

29. E. D. W. Jones, *Comprehensive Catechism of the A.M.E. Zion Church*, p.63.

30. *New York City Directories*, 1806-1810.

31. *Doctrines and Discipline of the A.M.E. Church*, 1956, p.6; Payne, *History of the A.M.E.*

Street Church, was never a member of the A.M.E. Zion Church. He was named by the white pastor, and accepted as one of the original trustees of the African Church, and like the other trustees helped to raise subscriptions for the church building. (32) As a matter of fact, Peter Williams was not motivated to get an incorporation for a church of an independent denomination. He was acting to secure an incorporation of a church to remain within the boundaries of the Methodist Episcopal denomination. The chairman of the board of trustees was rather a pliable man, as was shown by his permitting the first effort to purchase property for the church building to get out of hand. Francis Jacobs had intelligence enough to know that the charter had to be finalized by one of the two persons designated, or both. He returned to the City Clerk's office to have it recorded, aware that he was the logical person as chairman of the board. While waiting for direction, he was by-passed by some of the powers who sent Peter Williams to the City Clerk's office, and on March 9, 1801, the Charter was recorded at the request of Peter Williams, (33) without the knowledge of Jacobs or the other trustees. (See Charter and Articles of Agreement, pp 58-62).

The trustees were informed that they must come to some agreement with the Methodist Episcopal Church as to how the African Church would be governed, before they could receive the Charter. (34) The Articles of Agreement were presented to them by Rev. McClaskey, apparently not collectively, for it would have been barely possible to hold a full meeting of trustees, and secure signatures for a document of that type, with the exclusion of the four black preachers altogether, including William Miller, the exhorter. The document was dated April 6, 1801. This ill-fated document finally had to be ignored when they made a formidable organization and withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Two days after this grievous misstep, on April 8, the property deal for the Church and Leonard Street lots was consummated between the trustees and John Colvill and his wife, Effie, signed by the designated officers, and recorded for and at the request of Francis Jacobs on April 22, 1801. (35) The property deed, the Charter, and the Articles of Agreement were presented at a subsequent church meeting with the preachers and people getting their first knowledge of them. The inevitable happened. Instead of turning on the Methodists, they turned on themselves. A bitter dissension arose, which affected leading members of the society and their children permanently. Abraham Thompson was most deeply hurt. Being the senior licentiate, he had dreamed of becoming the first pastor of the church after it was built. The members then made use of the point in Article 6 of the Agreements, which states that "all elections of Trustees for the aforesaid Zion Church shall be by ballot of the male members. . . ." In the next election of trustees, they voted out five and replaced them, including the chairman. Thus the trustees elected were: Thomas Edsell, chairman, George Collins, secretary, William Brown, treasurer, James Jacklin, George White, Thomas Jenkins, William Butler, Jacob Matthews, and Thomas Cook. (36)

32. J. B. Wakeley, *Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism*, p.444. . . . David H. Bradley, Sr., *A History of the A.M.E. Zion Church*, Vol. I, p.44.

33. Liber 1, Record of Incorporations of Religious Denominations, p.28.

34. Rush, *op. cit.*, p.13.

35. Property Conveyance Deeds, Liber 60, N.Y. City, p.144.

36. *Minutes*, Common Council of the City of New York, 1801-1810, City Clerk papers, Municipal Archives and Record Center, New York City.

CHAPTER 8

JAMES VARICK

"Pioneer of Ecclesiastical Freedom"⁽¹⁾

James Varick, the founder and first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, occupies a peculiar place in the history of the Negro race in America. Destined by Providence . . . he was to lead a few devout men and women out of the John Street Methodist Church, New York City, to establish an independent local church for members of his race, which local church soon leaped the bounds of localism to be formed into a denomination, which has grown to be one of the great religious bodies of the world. Beginning with these few members, not more than two or three dozen, it now numbers its members by the hundreds of thousands, and is an important factor in the prosecution of the work of the Christian religion among the inhabitants of the earth.⁽²⁾

Varick was born in Orange County, near Newburgh, N.Y., in 1750.⁽³⁾ His mother was a Negro slave of the household of Varicks of Dutch descent, who settled in Hackensack, N.J., as early as 1687. His father, Richard Varick, was born and baptized in the Dutch Church of Hackensack in 1720, and later moved to New York with his family.⁽⁴⁾ Members of this Varick family, with their slaves, were from time to time in the Newburgh, Highland Falls, and the West Point area, as well as New York City, before and during the Revolutionary War. In some instances, the slaves of this Varick family were moved around with them, willed to their heirs, or manumitted.⁽⁵⁾ The Varick family figured conspicuously in the early history of New York City, in its social, political, and commercial life, and Varick Street, in the area where the A.M.E. Zion Church once made itself profoundly felt in the freedom struggle, is named in honor of the one-time mayor.⁽⁶⁾

Wheeler states that Varick's mother was a resident of New York City and was visiting Newburgh, N.Y., when Varick was born. There was something of this territory precious and dear to Varick, which caused his family to carry his

1. H. K. Carroll, *The Star of Zion*, October 8, 1896.
2. B. F. Wheeler, *The Varick Family*, p.5.
3. *Ibid.*, P.8; Beigman, *Chronological History of the Negro*, p.36.
4. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.5. Genealogical And Biographical Record, 1877 Vol. VIII, 1, pp.16-21. This Richard Varick was the uncle of the Richard Varick who was mayor of New York City during the time the A.M.E. Zion Church was organized. We also note that Mayor Richard Varick, in one of his Last Wills and Testament, dated 1782, used the Dutch spelling *VAN VARCK*. This is the same way James Varick's name was spelled in the records of the "black classes of John Street Church, of 1795."— Cf. Ms. Collection, *Richard Varick*, New York Historical Society.
5. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9; Abstracts of Wills, N.Y. Historical Society, Vol. III, pp.197-198, Vol. IV, p.337.
6. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9; Scrapbook of News Clippings of Old New York, New York Public Library.

remains there for burial upon his death in New York City. His mother was evidently later manumitted and returned to New York City with her son.⁽⁷⁾ James Weldon Johnson points out that "there were a good many Negroes in New York who were the descendants of the manumitted slaves of the original Dutch settlers and who retained much of the Dutch training." He mentions the names of New York Negroes of his day bearing the names of "Van Ransselaar, Van Vechten, Van Vrancken, Van Deusen, Van Dyck . . . and other such honourable Dutch names."⁽⁸⁾

From Varick's early life in New York City, where he grew up, he began to obtain independence and free spirit. After the effort of Elias Neau before the 1712 Insurrection, just about the only source of learning for Negro children during Varick's childhood was the Free School opened for blacks on September 15, 1760, when the following notice was published in the *New York Mercury*.⁽⁹⁾

This is to inform the public, that a Free School is opened near the New Dutch-Church (Nassau street between Cedar and Liberty), for the instruction of 30 Negro children, from 5 years old and upwards . . . which school is entirely under the inspection and care of the Clergy of the Church of England in this city . . . N.B. All that is required of their masters and mistresses is that they find them wood for the winter. Proper books will be provided for them gratis.

It is not certain that Varick attended this school; however, he being a well-trained scholar had availed himself of such school privileges as Negro children had in the city in that day.⁽¹⁰⁾ There was no real plan for education of black children until the founding of the African Free School by the New York Manumission Society, in 1786,⁽¹¹⁾ and later in the early 1800's, when a school was operated in the Zion Church, where Varick taught in his spare time.⁽¹²⁾

"Varick was born in stirring times when the best brains and the best blood were all aflame with a desire for liberty, which was expressed twenty-six years after his birth in the Declaration of Independence of English rule."⁽¹³⁾ As was observed by Bishop Frederick M. Jacobs:

The history of the development of the race begins with the history of the Revolution period. The shedding of the first patriotic blood and the exposure of the first patriotic person to the bayoneted and sworded red coats of English tyranny and despotism was the opening scene of Afro-American development. From the shimmering ashes of a war which brought freedom to the colonies and sounded a bugle of patriotic defiance in the soul of every American citizen the Negro read a glorious triumph of American liberty, and at the same time saw his fated picture, blighted ambitions, and fondest anticipations, the loss of which was traced and pictured there. But little did the people who robbed him of his well-earned liberty see that there was a "divinity which shaped his end." His experience through war and carnage prepared him for the higher attainment ever toward which he, from that period, strove.⁽¹⁴⁾

7. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9.
8. Johnson, *Black Manhattan*, p.26.
9. Stokes, *Iconography*, IV, p.714.
10. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9.
11. Ottley and Weatherby, *The Negroes in New York*, p.63.
12. *Minutes*, Common Council of NYC, III, p.564.
13. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9.
14. Jacobs, "Negro Methodism, A Factor in the Development of the Negro Race." *A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review*, July 1898, p.24.

"Varick caught the spirit of his age," (15) and here began his noble work of breaking down the walls of slavery and caste prejudice. "The spirit of the Revolution not only wrought in New York a humanization of sentiment regarding slavery and a softening of the condition of the slave, but also aroused and strengthened a considerable section of public opinion and set it in motion against the whole institution." (16) New York was the last Northern state (with the exception of New Jersey) to emancipate her slaves, (17) and Varick played an integral part in this tedious effort to achieve emancipation with dignity.

By the close of the war, Varick had learned the trade of shoemaking, and was operating his shop from his home at No. 4 Orange (now Baxter) Street. This whole time his devotion and dedication was toward religion and a burning desire to know the Bible. He was about 16 years of age when Philip Embury and Captain Thomas Webb began their preaching in New York City as early as 1766. He took a deep interest in the Methodist persuasion, becoming converted under their preaching and joining the famous John Street Church, the cradle of American Methodism and the place where Varick got his first religious training. (18) Varick was first privileged to exhort and then licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, and "because of race friction, held separate religious meetings for his people as early as 1780." (19)

Mary White Ovington points out:

While the colored people in New York started with segregated schools and attained to mixed schools, the movement in the churches was the reverse. At first the Negroes were attendants of white churches, sitting in the gallery or on the rear seats, and waiting until the white people were through before partaking of the communion; but as their number increased they chafed under their position. Why should they be placed apart to hear the doctrine of Christ, and why, too should they not have full opportunity to preach that doctrine? The desire for self-expression was perhaps the greatest factor in leading them to separate from the white church.

In 1796 about 30 Negroes, under the leadership of James Varick, withdrew from the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, and formed the first colored church of New York. (20)

The sphere in which the local preacher, both black and white, could operate in early Methodism was exceedingly limited. He was able to preach occasionally, but could have no pastoral charge, and could exert but little influence. (21) Yet the importance attached to local preachers was brought out years later by a Rev. J. W. F. White:

In the early days of Methodism, in both England and America, local preachers were a mighty power in the Church. The great revival under Wesley was effected mainly by local preachers. Methodism in this country was planted by local preachers. They were the pioneers of our church in every state and almost every neighborhood. In the poor and neglected districts of cities, in out-of-the way villages, on the frontiers of advancing civilization, they were generally the first to preach a full salvation for all,

15. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.9.

16. Johnson, *Op. cit.*, p.12.

17. *Ibid.*, p.14.

18. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, pp.10-11.

19. *The Star of Zion*, Feb. 11, 1897, Historical Supplement, p.1.

20. Ovington, *Half a Man*, pp.10-11.

21. William C. Larrabee, *Asbury and His Coadjutors*, Vol. II, p.144.

and in most cases they preceded the regular itinerant in the formation of societies. They were esteemed and honored by the Bishop and traveling preachers. (22)

Thus the man Varick became distinct, first as a local preacher, leading his people through the rugged way of the faithful in the church. He had high ideals for the ministry, and no doubt dreamed of becoming an itinerant in the interest of his race, but he realized early that through previous trials and hardships, he had reached the peak for the black preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The gospel, however, was in his heart, and he continued his evangelization among his people in the best manner he could under the rules of Methodism, which prevented blacks from even being class leaders of their own group. (23)

Varick met and married Aurelia Jones around 1790. "He was a man of purest morals and he placed a high premium upon the bond of sacred wedlock." (24) To this union were born seven children: four sons and three daughters, four of whom survived. (25) There is a record of baptism of the baby daughter preserved, however, in the John Street Church records: "ELIZA VARICK, Parents: James and Aurelia, colored, Born Sept. 13, 1801, Baptized, January 27, 1803 — By Rev. Thomas Morrell." (26)

The humble home of James Varick in Orange Street is where he secretly assembled small groups of his friends. For the most part they were fellow preachers, members of the black male classes of John Street Church, and other leading black men of New York City. They met in this way because of an ordinance that prevented blacks from holding meetings of any kind, in case they should plan uprisings to free themselves from oppression and their brothers and sisters from the shackles of bondage. (27) Here is where he planned the strategy of the new church movement, which he felt was of the utmost importance. "Caste prejudice had crept into the Methodism of Wesley and Coke [and Asbury] who never expected there would be any distinction in the Methodist Societies. . . . The Church had grown influential and indeed to some degree rich, and there seemed to be a disposition to push and crowd the brother in black, which soon began to impress the Negro members of the Methodist Societies that the time had come to assert their rights to worship God unhampered." (28)

After these conditions "which hindered their intellectual development and religious growth, and prevented them from engaging in the work of spreading the cause of Christ and uplifting their fellows according as they felt themselves moved by the spirit of God," and which "became so unbearable for these people of African descent, they decided to make their first move in 1796." They withdrew from the Mother Church and formed a separate organization, out of which has grown the A.M.E. Zion Church. (29) "1796 marks truly the starting point of the development of a race of people destined to become one of the

22. *The Christian Advocate*, Sept. 4, 1879.

23. Methodist Episcopal Church Annual Conference, 1780, Question 25.

24. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, pp.11, 16.

25. *Ibid.*, Dumas Malone (ed.), *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. X, p.225, *Who Was Who in America*, (Historical Volume), p.621.

26. Ms. Records, John Street Church, Baptisms, 1788-1820.

27. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p.15; *The Black Minority in Early New York*, pp.13-14; Ms. Records, John Street Church, Classes; Stokes, *op. cit.*, Vols. IV & V; Jan. 5, 1755, Feb. 16, 1756, May 25, 1780, April 9, 1782.

28. J. H. White, "History of the First Twenty-Five Years of the A.M.E. Zion Church," *A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review*, Vol. VIII, 1898, p.2.

29. *The Star of Zion*, June 11, 1896; Johnson, *op. cit.*, p.24.

most powerful on the American continent, under the special and civilizing influences of the Christian religion whose uprising marks an epoch in the rise and progress of races unparalleled in the annals of history." (30)

This is the year that Varick first came to prominence, when he led a group of some of New York's leading black men, to secure permission from Bishop Asbury to hold meetings separate and distinct from the white churches. (31) Associated with Varick in this noble venture were Francis Jacobs, William Brown, Abraham Thompson, Peter Williams, June Scott, Samuel Pontier, Thomas Miller, William Hamilton, (32) and other members of Class Number 31, the black class at John Street Church, led by Cornelius Warner, in 1795.

In 1799 Varick was instrumental in leading these members into a more permanent situation; "to think about building a house of worship for themselves, and to form themselves into a corporate body separate from the white church, according to the privilege granted religious societies by the law of the State of New York." (33) During this period, Roi Ottley states, "the black population of the city had grown to seven thousand and was now concentrated in the neighborhood of Bleeker and Mercer Streets on the lower East side. On the whole, they were industrious and thrifty." (34) Wheeler gives a more detailed description of the same area:

The city of New York was built up around the battery, and Wall Street was on the northern outskirts of the city—and this section was the place where most of the colored people lived. Strange to say that the part of New York where most of the money in America [Wall Street area] is handled today was in the days of James Varick the place where the bulk of colored people lived. . . . The corner of Church and Leonard Streets, where Varick's followers built their first church, was within a few minutes walk of Wall Street. This, then, was the battleground of Negro endeavor in the days of James Varick. If Varick were to return to the earth today he would find that his followers, so far as this section is concerned,

"Have folded their tents, like the Arab,
And as silently moved away." (35)

The church was dedicated to the Glory of God on September 7, 1800, and called "Zion." The disappointments and trials of these humble worshippers were many. Among their greatest disappointment at that time was the incident of the Articles of Agreement between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the trustees of Zion Church, and securing the Articles of Incorporation in 1801 (see Chapter 7). "Varick was remarkable for his prudence, energy, patience and integrity of character. By this he succeeded in firmly establishing, against much strong opposition, the church which chose him as its first leader." (36) It was a gradual, painful, heartbleeding process every step of the way. "On account of his superior talents and capacity for leadership," states T. Thomas Fortune, "James Varick became the spokesman of his brethren and the chief pioneer in this new field of church work. It is not surprising that he became the exhorter, the local preacher, the elder, by reason of his superior gifts of head and tongue." (37)

30. Jacobs, *A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review*, op. cit., July, 1898, p.27.

31. *Dictionary of American Biography*, X, p.225; Hyamson (ed.), *A Dictionary of Universal Biography* p.627.

32. Wheeler, op. cit., p.39.

33. *Encyclopedia International*, Vol. 19, p.17; Moore, *History*, p.17.

34. Ottley, *New World A-Coming*, p.12.

35. Wheeler, op. cit., pp.14-15.

36. Harris, *Zion's Historical Catechism*, p.13.

37. *The New York Age*, October 1, 1896.

There was no misunderstanding about the spiritual obligations of Varick and his colleagues, Abraham Thompson, June Scott, and William Miller an exhorter. According to Methodist rules of that day, church property matters or temporal concerns were placed squarely in the hands of trustees. It was a heavy blow when the preachers of this first black movement discovered that the trustees had been maneuvered into signing their rights to pastor their first church, away to white preachers in the Articles of Agreement of 1801. However, Varick had been through previous hardships, and when he discovered this new obstruction to their organization and freedom, he persevered. He remained steadfast while his other three colleagues either wavered or left the movement under the weight of this heavy pressure. However, after a tedious and arduous struggle, Varick, Thompson, and Scott graduated into deacon's orders by 1806, and became the first blacks ordained in New York State. (38)

Varick's activities for his race were unceasing. Free black people of New York City were normally poor, although amazingly gifted and skillful in their circumstances, just as they were in other parts of the country. Varick's fond devotion for his wife and family, and his love for religious and race freedom, impelled him into the orbit of a selfless and sacrificial life. Along with his trade of shoe-making, he labored outside his home as a tobacco-cutter to earn extra wages to care for his large family, while he also ran a classroom in his home and at his church, teaching his and other people's children the basic principles of learning. (39) But his primary interest was geared toward that which he had learned best to do in adhering to the admonition of the Apostle Paul, to "watch thou in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry," and to preach the unadulterated gospel of Jesus Christ with such magnitude and power that he was requested by his and other African groups beginning to organize, to give spiritual direction in their unabating freedom cause.

In 1807, the act of the British Parliament of March 25 officially abolished the slave trade, one year before the U.S. law went into effect. In 1808, the slave population in the United States stood at the million mark, and on January 1, a federal law went into effect discontinuing the importation of slaves. It has been estimated, however, that from 1808 to 1860 approximately 250,000 slaves were illegally imported. (40) Upon learning of the abolition of the African slave trade, which was announced by the government in March 1807, the people of African descent in some large cities of the North planned thanksgiving celebrations for the momentous occasion.

In New York City, the celebration was held at Zion Church, the city's only black church at that time, and it was indeed an effective occasion. Coker was proud of those few men who had achieved for the race, and recorded these "descendants of the African Race who have given proofs of talents," among whom was James Varick who preached the "Sermon of Thanksgiving on the Occasion of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade," in the afternoon of January 1, 1808, and closed the service. (41) It was the first recorded sermon in history preached by an African on behalf of African people, Absalom Jones being the other known African to perform this same task in Philadelphia. In the

38. Coker, *A Dialogue*, p.40.

39. Wheeler, op. cit., New York City Directories, 1800-1828; Elliott's New York City Directory, 1812.

40. Bergman, op. cit., pp.89, 90.

41. Coker, *A Dialogue*, p.42.

New York City services, William Hamilton composed the hymns for the day, and Peter Williams, Jr. gave the oration in the morning.⁽⁴²⁾ This became an annual celebration for a period among the people of African descent, with Abraham Thompson having the honor in 1809, and William Miller in 1810.⁽⁴³⁾

A little later this same year, a movement led by William Hamilton, the New York African Society for Mutual Relief, was begun and received a state charter two years later, March 23, 1810, with Hamilton as its first president. Its object was "to raise a fund to be appropriated toward the relief of the widows and orphans of the deceased members."⁽⁴⁴⁾ Its members were composed chiefly of businessmen, many of them members of the A.M.E. Zion Church, and several preachers (practically all the black preachers of the city of that day). James Varick was elected its first chaplain and functioned at the various services, especially anniversary celebrations, usually held in Zion Church.⁽⁴⁵⁾ This organization was still in existence in 1969, when a historic marker was placed on the site at 42 Orange (now Baxter) Street, the first building of this society.

In 1812, while Varick and the other preachers were increasing their church work and holding occasional conferences in and around the City of New York,⁽⁴⁶⁾ he continued active in organizations established in New York City to serve the race, locally and nationally. The black people organized numerous societies and associations during these early days, before the coming of the active abolition movements in the 1830's, in efforts to be free and recognized as citizens.

The first Lodge of Freemasonry was established in New York State in 1812, when Peter Lew, Grand Master of Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Boston, granted a warrant to nine Master Masons to open and work a Lodge of Master Masons in New York City under the title of Boyer Lodge No. 1 F. & A.M.⁽⁴⁷⁾ It was named in honor of General Jean Boyer, the Haitian general. Sandy Lattion, Worshipful Master, had created deep concern among the white lodges when he announced his meetings in the city newspapers. So far as is definitely known, he was the first Master.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Sandy Lattion was a member of the A.M.E. Zion Church, both Zion and later Asbury, where he was an original trustee.⁽⁴⁹⁾ None of the other eight members of the original charter have been discovered, but it is believed that Varick and Miller were associated with Lattion in this first Masonic organization of New York State, for they worked closely together in the church and other African organizations. Boyer Lodge was also known as the African Lodge, and today represents the oldest black lodge of New York State.

On January 17, 1817, The New York African Bible Society was established in William Miller's schoolroom in his home at 36 Mulberry Street, where he also operated his cabinet-maker's shop. The group met and drew up its constitution and chose the following gentlemen as managers: William Miller, president; James Varick, Jacob Matthews, and Thomas Miller, vice-presidents; George Collins, secretary; Lewis Carter, treasurer; George DeGrass, Sandy Lattion, Robert F.

42. Peter Williams, Jr. *Abolition of the African Slave Trade*, 1808, speech.

43. *Ibid.*; Orations and Sermons on the Abolition of the African Slave Trade (Schomberg Collection, New York City).

44. John J. Zuille, *Historical Sketch of the NY Society for Mutual Relief*, pp.1-26; Annual Programs and Orations, NY Society for Mutual Relief.

45. *Ibid.*, p.25; Programs, 1809-.

46. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p.213.

47. William H. Grimshaw *Official History of Freemasonry*, p.124.

48. Ms., Harry Albo Williamson papers, Schomberg Collection. Sesqui-Centennial Program Celebrating Boyer Lodge, 1812-1962, NY Historical Society.

Williams, Andrew Smith, and William Lambert.⁽⁵⁰⁾ It had 42 members in the beginning, and became an auxiliary society to the American Bible Society founded in 1816. By the end of the year of the American Bible Society's report for 1820, it had made donations and paid for Bibles to be distributed among its race people. The Society continued to grow, along with a sister group, "The New York Female Bible Society of People of Colour," which raised large sums for the distribution of the Bibles and reported to the American Bible Society. Its object was "to encourage as wide a circulation as possible of the Holy Scriptures amongst the people of colour in this City without note or accompanied with any comment. . . ." ⁽⁵¹⁾

James Varick worked hard, also, to establish the church in New Haven, Conn., as early as 1818, with 35 members. This church later became a part of Zion connection in 1820. It was formerly the John Wesley Church on Webster Street, now the Varick Memorial Church, mother church of the New England Conference, at Dixwell Avenue and Charles Street.⁽⁵²⁾

Varick was enthusiastically versatile in his endeavors for church and race, and "plain but orthodox in his preaching."⁽⁵³⁾ Much of his writing is lost, by decay or design, though some of it may yet be discovered. But the paucity of it need not be too surprising, for he was a man with a large family, supporting the work of his church venture and the work for his race in general, which absorbed most of his economic strength. A large number of the members of this pioneering movement, we will recall, were slaves, and generally poor. Varick's wisdom and pen were dominant and strongly directive in the documents that created the A.M.E. Zion Church and that still constitute its classic preservation. But printing was so expensive in that day, for our people in New York, that in some instances, only 100 or 200 copies of items were printed and circulated. A good instance of the difficulty of small preservation of published material is the first Discipline of the A.M.E. Zion Church of 1820. Twelve hundred copies were printed, and only three can be found in the leading libraries of the country today, including the Library of Congress. Another instance is the newspaper established by the son of William Hamilton, *The Peoples Press*, which circulated for a brief period, and no copy can be found.⁽⁵⁴⁾

Varick once again came to the front in behalf of his race when a group of black ministers and businessmen met in New York City, and appointed Thomas Sipkins secretary of the committee to petition the New York State Constitutional Convention regarding their right to vote. The memorial was sent for direct action, and brought to the attention of the convention, meeting in Albany on September 12. There was much opposition on the right of suffrage, and lengthy debates. The Convention finally passed a limited law based upon age, amount of property owned, amount of taxes paid, etc.⁽⁵⁵⁾

Varick figured prominently, also, in the black man's effort to start a newspaper for his race. I. Garland Penn states that: "New York State appears to have been the great fighting ground of the Afro-American abolitionists. Not only

50. *Constitution*, New York African Bible Society; American Bible Society Library.

51. Eric M. North, *Ms. History*, American Bible Society Library.

52. Robert Austin Warner, *New Haven Negroes*, p.85; Hill, *Modern History of New Haven and Eastern New Haven County*, Vol. 1, p.217; *Freedom's Journal*, May 4, 1827.

53. Moore, *History*, p.349.

54. This journal mentioned by Penn in *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors*; also by James Brown of Fishkill Landing, N.Y., in his diaries. Ms. Division, New York Historical Society.

55. *Journal*, Convention of the State of New York, 1821, pp.49-51.

in New York, but throughout the whole section of New York state, papers were established, here and there, for the purpose of agitating Afro-American freedom and citizenship."⁽⁵⁶⁾ The Negro church helped build *Freedom's Journal*, the first black newspaper in America, and *Freedom's Journal* helped the Negro church. A group of leading men met at the home of Boston Crummell, father of the noted Alexander Crummell, who lived at 139 Leonard Street, near Zion Church and Varick's home, called by John Brown Russworm "to consider the attacks of the local paper," and "to vindicate the Negro race and unite the entire Negro people;" and there they established the *Freedom's Journal* in March 1827.⁽⁵⁷⁾ Russworm had the assistance of the leading preachers of that day: Samuel Cornish who was associated with him and did editorial work, James Varick, Richard Allen, Peter Williams, Jr., and others. "They exposed the contradiction of the white churches mercilessly, and challenged the sincere believer to examine the doctrines of true religion."⁽⁵⁸⁾ For one year, May 4, 1827 to May 2, 1828, the *Freedom's Journal* operated from the commodious and spacious facility of Zion Church at 152 Church Street.⁽⁵⁹⁾ An advertisement in the *Freedom's Journal* shows the interest of the leading black preachers of the city in furthering the cause of education: B. F. Hughes operated a school at St. Philip's Episcopal Church, and James Varick was one of the supporters even though there was also a school in Zion Church supported by its members.⁽⁶⁰⁾

It is well known that "the church leaders influenced the thought of their time." The anti-colonization movement in New York included Rev. Samuel E. Cornish, Bishop James Varick, Rev. Peter Williams, Jr., and Rev. T. S. Wright, in its earlier period. "It was these men who saw the vicious motive of the pro-slavery men beneath the apparently innocent purpose of the colonization, and pointed it out to the gullible white abolitionists. These same men were active in the early abolition movement, as orators, writers, editors." These men formed the African Wilberforce Benevolent Society of New York, the African Clarkson Association and various organizations of that nature to fight for the cause of justice, equality, and dignity for all men, which organizations were mentioned as "the forerunners of the Urban League and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People today."⁽⁶¹⁾

When Bishop Moore gave his graphic description of Varick as a "man of great firmness, patience, perseverance, forethought, caution, and uprightness;"⁽⁶²⁾ Bishop Hood in his history, "as with the skill of a modern photographer, enlarged Bishop Moore's pen picture of James Varick."⁽⁶³⁾

His *forethought* is conspicuous in that he wholly avoided the difficulty that later movements had to contend with respecting the title of church property. Varick's skillful hand was in drawing up the Articles of Incorporation, and the church property of the organization, led by Bishop Varick, was all deeded to their own incorporation, viz., "The African

Methodist Episcopal Church," commonly called Zion.

James Varick's *patience* is seen in his long waiting on the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the realization of his hopes which they held out to him. The petition of his people to grant him holy orders was deferred twenty years. . . . Varick waited and manifested his firm belief in proper procedure all along the line.

His *firmness* was not only seen in his long waiting, but in his ability to stand the tests in times of crisis, when our other leaders and people were torn asunder and wondering whether to go back to Mother Methodism, to unite with other black Methodists, or to build an independent religious movement of their own.

His *perseverance* shows he had a purpose from which nothing could turn him aside. His eye of faith rested upon a prize, and he persevered until the jewel of holy orders was handed to him by ministers whose authority was as unquestionable as history could make it.

It takes a very *cautious* man to hold his associates through a long course of years to the interest of his purpose, when they at the same time had a different purpose. Varick started out to establish an independent church. The bishop and other ministers were opposed to this and determined, if possible, to get him and his organization back into the Methodist Episcopal Church. Varick determined to maintain his own organization. [In the first Annual Conference, New York Conference, which he organized and held; Rev. Joshua Soule, who afterwards became bishop, acted as secretary.]

Varick was noted for *uprightness*. Through all the trying years of his leadership, nothing of a discreditable character is recorded of him.

To those characteristics ascribed to Bishop Varick by Bishop Moore, [Hood adds] I wish to add a few traits which I have learned are eminently characteristic of the church, which I believe are equally conspicuous in the life of James Varick. One of these traits is *humility*. Another trait of Varick and his church is *moderation*, the opposite of bigotry and sectarianism. While the fathers held to their self-prescribed course firmly and patiently, they were willing to accord another course. When Bishop Allen's missionary came to New York to organize a church of his Connection, James Varick welcomed the new organization by opening the meeting for Bishop Allen on the second or third Sunday night of the existence of the Society, then worshipping in Mott Street.

Look at the picture of Bishop James Varick. Mark his features. Do they not all stamp him as the man he proved to be, and best fitted to organize and foster a race movement, which places a grand multitude today under the guidance and religious teaching of their own race leaders? Long may his name be revered and his silent yet potent influence felt in the branch of the Apostolic Methodist Church which he did so much to found—The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America.⁽⁶⁴⁾

A lay person of the church expressed her views on the sainted father. Miss Maud E. Hazel of Beaufort, N.C., says of Bishop Varick:

As a man, as a leader, and as a ruler, I think him equally entitled to our praise and admiration. If I survey him as a man, I find him irreproachable in every avocation of life. His personal character was pure beyond a shadow of suspicion, and his social character was equally above the reach of blame. He was just and honorable to all men, and he infringed no unlawful rights, and exacted no undue obedience. I further regard him as a leader. I find in him everything to admire and nothing to condemn. He was brave, far-seeing, quick in insight, bold, prudent and deserving. He was just to those under his

64. C. R. Harris, *op. cit.*, *Star of Zion*; Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp. 162-168.

56. J. Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors*, p. 28.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 28; Federal Writers Program Negroes of New York, *The Negro Press*, 1939-1941, Schomburg Collection; Ottley and Weatherby, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

58. Federal Writers Program, *op. cit.*

59. *Freedom's Journal*; New York City Directories, African Zion Church; Property Conveyance Deeds.

60. *Freedom's Journal*.

61. Federal Writers Program New York Negroes (Churches) Schomburg Collection; Constitution, N.Y. African Clarkson Association, 1825.

62. Moore, *History*, pp. 348-349.

command. . . . We next notice him as a ruler. He is perhaps more remarkable still for sagacity, strong, practical wisdom, promptness, firmness, fearlessness, and unsullied justice. . . . Thus we see that we had a great and noble leader. (65)

Varick and his devoted companion toiled together in faith to produce a distinguished family of useful citizens. His time and effort were dedicated to building up his new race movement and to public service, as were those of our mother in Israel, Aurelia Varick, who used her spare time in working with the ladies of the church, particularly the Dorcas Society, and other such endeavors, while at the same time rearing a notable family. We note with particular interest their granddaughter, Aurelia Varick, daughter of Daniel and Mary Clark Varick, who taught school in the Newburgh area before she married a prominent member of the Odd Fellows and moved to New York. She was apparently proud of the fact that a Zion society was established in the town of her grandfather's birthplace, the same year in which he died, by George Matthews, and pastored later by Rev. Jacob Matthews, one of Varick's coadjutors. From a young child she took a deep interest in the work of the Newburgh Church, and the one just across the river at Fishkill Landings, where she and her mother were many times guests of James and Julia Brown. For a while Aurelia lived with the Browns, and was quite attentive to her Zion Church. Perhaps her biggest thrill was the dedication services of the new church, Sunday April 17, 1853, by Bishop Rush, while the outstanding preacher-physician, Rev. J. P. Thompson (later bishop), was pastoring there. (66)

Varick's grandson, Daniel, Jr., was quite a unique businessman in New York. He married the young widow of Zion's first record-keeper, George Collins. He was a first-class barber by trade, and "kept about the most pretentious barber shop in the city." (67) There were several other surviving descendants of Varick, who served humanity well.

William Howard Day, one of the most outstanding educators of the nineteenth century, who later became a prominent minister and general officer of the A.M.E. Zion Church, was baptized by James Varick at Zion Church, New York. His mother often entertained Varick and a host of other preachers in her home. (68)

Varick was elected first bishop during the annual conference, according to the Discipline of the A.M.E. (Zion) Church, and consecrated on Sunday morning, July 30, 1822, after which he, assisted by elders Abraham Thompson and Leven Smith, ordained six deacons: Christopher Rush, James Smith, James Anderson, William Carman, Edward Johnson, and Tilman Cornish. These same men were ordained elders in the afternoon, and appointed by Varick to go forth and commence building a strong organization in the name of Jesus Christ. He presided over the next five annual conferences of the New York Conference until his death in 1827. (69)

James Varick had lived down the mountain of jealousy and opposition, long enough to see partial achievement of his church and race people, for which he

65. Maud E. Hazel, "Our Zion, Its Origin, Leaders, and Growth." *The Star of Zion*, Jan. 28, 1897.

66. *Diaries of James Brown of Fishkill Landing*; *op. cit.*, John H. Nutt, Newburgh, *op. cit.* pp. 128-129.

67. Ovington, *Half a Man*, p. 14; Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

68. Wheeler, *op. cit.*, p. 4; Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp. 321-322.

69. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, p. 79; *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1820; Anderson, *Official Directory*, p. 35.

had so zealously wrought. When final emancipation came to the black race in New York State, July 4, 1827, and the people assembled in heavy numbers for thanksgiving to God, and heard the major oration given by William Hamilton at Zion Church on the corner of Church and Leonard Streets, Varick sensed that this was only the beginning of their humble efforts of vigilance and protests of the evil conditions in this nation, which would continue here and elsewhere in Zion, until the black race in the entire nation, and across the world, achieved its freedom and universal dignity.

Two weeks later, Sunday morning, July 22, 1827, Varick was no more. "The Bishop of the African Zion Connexion" had passed away at his home, (70) and funeral services were held at Zion Church. Varick's remains were carried to the Colored Union Cemetery in New Windsor (now known as Woodlawn Cemetery), one mile from Newburgh, for interment. Upon the completion of the present Mother Zion Church structure, at 146 West 137th Street, in 1925 led by Rev. Dr. J. W. Brown; a committee of the New York Conference, headed by Bishop Josiah S. Caldwell had Varick's sacred ashes removed from the Woodlawn Cemetery and placed in a crypt beneath the sanctuary of the church. Dedication services of the crypt were held on February 1, 1926. "A bust and tablet to his memory are on the walls of the sanctuary, which is the shrine of Zion Methodism." (71) Above all, the greatest monument today to James Varick, sanctioned by God Almighty, and his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, is the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

"And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the Commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart and prospered."

II Chron. 31:21

70. *Freedom's Journal*, July 27, 1827.

71. *The Newburgh News*, September 5, 1935; J. W. Brown, Ms. *History of Mother Zion Church*, 1927, W. J. Walls Collection.

o meet annually. They shall form the Board of Apportionment and make appropriations of the monies of the following departments: Education, Missionary, Church Extension, Widows and Orphans, Contingencies." The General Conference approved the recommendation with modification. On the twentieth day of the session, Bishop Alexander Walters made the motion that "Bishops, General Officers and three officers of the several boards shall constitute the Connectional Council." After the motion was seconded a discussion ensued. It was ruled that this body could codify such laws as had been recommended by the General Conference, but could not enact new legislation, as it was only an executive body. The motion carried. Therefore, the part of the bishops' recommendation regarding appropriations was ruled as legislative, and must be decided by the General Conference.⁽³⁵⁾ The Connectional Council was thus born, and the first Council was held in Indianapolis the first Wednesday in September, 1900.

Additions to its representative body have been the connectional boards and general officers created since its birth, inclusive of the officers of the Connectional Laymen's Council.⁽³⁶⁾ The chairman of the Board of Bishops is president, and the secretary is the General Secretary. Its annual meetings are held at the time and place of the summer meeting of the Board of Bishops. The council exercises executive power over the several connectional boards, and makes and enforces such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the successful operation of the several boards. Departmental reports are made, first to the board; then on behalf of the board, by the officer elected or approved by the General Conference, who must satisfy this body of its results and progress. It is an annual inspirational assemblage in our church economy, a combination of intense spiritual fellowship and strict regulatory church business.

Board of Bishops: In 1860, after 20 years of strife over assistant superintendents, three bishops were elected on equality: Joseph J. Clinton, Peter Ross, and William H. Bishop.⁽³⁷⁾ Thus Zion moved forward with its leadership when the bishops formed themselves into a Board of Bishops, and after 1868, intensely strengthened their cause to project and regulate certain interests of the connection. The General Conference of 1872 stabilized the Board of Bishops when it required them to "meet semi-annually, to counsel for the general interest of the connection, and to attend to such duties as are required by law and shall hold other meetings, as may be necessary." The only officers named were president and secretary. The Board was to have general supervision over the entire connection in the interval of the General Conference, but not to interfere in an individual bishop's work or charge. At first, it had the authority to make provision for new episcopal districts when necessary, and provide for any vacancy of the existing districts, created by death or resignation.⁽³⁸⁾ The history of this body has been altered through the years, and its responsibilities augmented, based upon changing conditions and growing needs. In addition to these existing authorities, (with exception of making new episcopal districts) it shall hear complaints, receive petitions when properly submitted by aggrieved parties in good standing, and give such advice, instructions, or corrections as the

35. *Minutes*, Twenty-First Quadrennial Session, 1900, pp.82, 107; *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1901, pp.70-72, 87.

36. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1968, p.232.

37. Moore, *History*, op. cit., pp.229-230; *Minutes*, Nineteenth Quadrennial Session, 1892, p.19.

38. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1872, pp.117-119.

majority may deem necessary, or make adjustments suitable for the good of the denomination, as in their judgment considered wise and imperative. The president of the Board of Bishops is traditionally elected by rotation for a six-months term. At the mid-winter meeting of the board, it is to submit reports of the general condition of the work in each bishop's field, and to hear reports of a six-months period of general officers in charge of various departments. It is to fill vacancies that may occur among general officers and on administrative boards, in the interim of the General Conference. It is to hand down interpretations of existing church law and explanations of methods for administering the law when so interpreted. It is to make a Quadrennial Address to the General Conference, with recommendations to be in the best interest of the connection. It shall consecrate bishops upon election by the General Conference. The terms *installation* and *consecration* of superintendents and bishops were used interchangeably until the 1880 General Conference adopted the term *consecration service* when the bishops were "elected for life."⁽³⁹⁾

General Conference: This body, which convenes every four years on the first Wednesday in May, is the one law-making body of the A.M.E. Zion Church. It enacts laws for governing the church on every level, and defines the powers and duties of the ministry, including the episcopacy. It elects all bishops and general officers and assigns them to their fields of operation, appoints the connectional boards, and regulates all spiritual and temporal affairs of the connection. The bishops and general officers report to this body on their four years labor in their field of operation. The bishops preside over the sessions by rotation.

There are five restrictive rules inherited from early American Methodism, which the General Conference cannot transform. 1. It cannot revoke, alter, or change our Articles of Religion, the only doctrinal formula which tied American Methodism forever to the evangelical form of Trinitarian Christianity; nor can it establish any new standard of rules of doctrine contrary to those existing. 2. It cannot do away with the episcopacy or the plan of itinerancy. This perpetuates a skillful design of spiritual attention to all, through peripatetic and hierarchal government. 3. It cannot abolish the right of trial and appeal by accused preachers and members. The natural democratic process is retained, giving every member due consideration in cases of conflict. 4. It cannot revoke or change the General Rules of our United Societies. This means the preservation of Methodism as a positive ethical and spiritual force. 5. It cannot appropriate the proceeds of the Publishing House or of the Chartered Fund to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling and superannuated ministers, their wives, widows, and children. The connectionalizing of the publishing interests and elimination of private gain in denominational enterprises are primary,⁽⁴⁰⁾ which are also provisions for those who labor or have labored in the preaching and teaching ministry.

Representation: Our first General Conference was held on July 10, 1820, with Varick presiding. The only delegates were ministers. The history of the development of lay representation in conferences of Methodist bodies is interesting, with the exception of the Methodist Protestant Church which included this among its principles of difference when it severed from the Mother Methodist Church, and held its first General Conference in 1830.

39. *Minutes*, Sixteenth Quadrennial Session, p.34.

40. *Doctrines and Discipline*, Townsend, Workman, Eayres, *A New History of Methodism* II, p.116.

[Handwritten mark]

Lay Representation: This has been a prominent feature in Annual and General Conference in Zion since 1851. The A.M.E. Zion Church held its first ten General Conferences with no lay representation. In the Reunion General Conference of Zion and Wesley Churches, held at Wesley Church, Philadelphia, May 30, 1860, nine lay delegates were included in the roll of 98 preachers and four bishops, including retired Bishop Rush, representing three of the seven annual conferences.⁽⁴¹⁾ They continued this custom of representation until 1872, with eight lay delegates in 1864, and their number steadily increasing in 1868 and 1872 because of the rapid growth of the church in the south. The General Conference of 1872 adjusted lay representation in both Annual and General Conferences. It ruled that the General Conference, with the ministerial delegates, shall be composed of two lay delegates from each Annual Conference, except such conferences having but one ministerial delegate and increased it to three in 1884.⁽⁴²⁾ Bishop C. C. Pettey, in 1900, introduced a resolution granting laymen equal representation with ministers in district, annual, and general conferences, which failed to pass. This was the prevailing circumstance until the post World War I period, when surging growth in the democratic trend of the country prompted a desire for a larger share of responsibility in the growing church. This sentiment had its influence in education and all forms of economic and political life, and the Church joined the trend. The *Star of Zion*, during the editorship of W. J. Walls, and the *Quarterly Review*, edited by C. C. Alleyne, took a leading share in fomenting the sentiment for equal lay representation in the General Conference. Numbers of leading ministers and laymen made this sentiment invincible with eager pursuit.

The Board of Bishops included the importance of "increased lay representation" in their Quadrennial Address at the 1924 General Conference in Indianapolis, but would make no recommendation regarding it. Resolutions were presented at various times by Revs. Benjamin W. Swain, Thomas W. Wallace, and A. C. Cook. The General Conference voted that "lay delegates shall consist of one layman for each Annual Conference having one ministerial delegate, two laymen for each conference having from two to four ministerial delegates, and three for each Conference having five or more ministerial delegates."⁽⁴³⁾

In 1928, at St. Louis, the Bishops' Quadrennial Address was divided on recommending equalization, but gave favorable comment on the issue and referred it to the General Conference for decision. Resolutions were presented by Revs. A. C. Cook, W. C. and W. M. Anderson, and S. W. Hamilton. The resolution presented by Rev. Hamilton⁽⁴⁴⁾ was passed by the revision committee and ratified by the General Conference.⁽⁴⁵⁾ From this time forward, the General Conference has been composed equally of ministerial and lay delegates. The other important stipulation is that the lay delegate must be a member in full connection for four consecutive years preceding his election, which law went into effect after the 1900 General Conference.⁽⁴⁶⁾

In the *Ministerial Representation*, an important change was the ratio system based upon pastoral appointments within an Annual Conference, which was first introduced in the General Conference of 1872. The law stated that one

1. Moore, *History*, op. cit., pp. 221-224.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 282; *Doctrines and Discipline*, p. 70; *Minutes*, Seventeenth Quadrennial Session, 1884, p. 146; Twenty-First Quadrennial Session, 1900, p. 40.

3. *Minutes*, Twenty-Seventh Quadrennial Session, 1924, pp. 30, 37, 85, 104.

4. *Minutes*, Twenty-Eighth Quadrennial Session, 1928, p. 230.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48, 62, 65; Bradley, *A History of the A.M.E. Zion Church*, II, pp. 416-418.

6. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1900, p. 61.

delegate for every seven members of each Annual Conference shall be elected,⁽⁴⁷⁾ which remained in effect until 1888, when Bishop Hood offered a resolution referring to the election of delegates to the General Conference. The ratio was then changed to one delegate for every ten members, to be appointed by seniority or choice, at the discretion of the Annual Conference.⁽⁴⁸⁾ This rule continued until the General Conference in Charlotte, in 1912. After Bishop Harris presented a resolution on representation in the General Conference, the revision committee recommended that there be one ministerial delegate for every 10 pastoral charges up to 20, and above 20, one for every 15 pastoral charges, and one for every two-third fraction.⁽⁴⁹⁾ In order to qualify, the General Conference of 1900 also made the regulation that a minister shall have traveled at least four years from the time he is received into conference.⁽⁵⁰⁾ An elected delegate must promise to remain until the close of the session, unless excused by the General Conference. This law went into effect after the General Conference of 1884 to avoid the difficulty of running out of a quorum before the close of the General Conference.⁽⁵¹⁾

The Woman's Role

Woman's integral role in the A.M.E. Zion Church is synonymous with primitive Christianity. The strict orthodox rules of Methodism, however, prevented women from assuming certain leadership responsibilities in the church, and the A.M.E. Zion Church became the first Methodist denomination to open the door.

It was voted at the General Conference of 1876 to "strike out the word 'male' in the Discipline." This permitted women for the first time to vote for trustees in the local church, and have a greater participation in the Quarterly and Annual Conferences.⁽⁵²⁾ Duties of stewardesses were first defined when it was also voted that: "The Quarterly Conference may appoint three female members to act as stewardesses in assisting the preacher's steward in providing the necessary comfort for the minister."⁽⁵³⁾ In 1892, Miss Fannie Van Bronk of New York, a useful member of Mother Zion Church, of large influence and great capacity for successful work, was one of the first duly elected delegates to occupy a seat in the General Conference of the A.M.E. Zion Church.⁽⁵⁴⁾ The Centennial General Conference of 1896, therefore, included a number of lay women delegates from all parts of the country.

The highest attainment came when Bishop James Walker Hood ordained Mrs. Julia A. J. Foote, conference missionary, a deacon at the Seventy-Third Session of the New York Annual Conference, May 20, 1894, at Poughkeepsie, N.Y. The following year, Mrs. Mary J. Small, wife of Bishop John B. Small, was ordained deacon by Bishop Alexander Walters at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference, May 19, 1895 at York, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Small, who had been licensed to preach in 1892 by Presiding Elder John E. Price, was the first woman of Methodism ordained an elder, by Bishop Charles Calvin Pettey at the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference, in

47. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1872, p. 70.

48. *Minutes*, Eighteenth Quadrennial Session, 1888, pp. 51, 113, 114; *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1888, p. 148.

49. *Minutes*, Twenty-Fourth Quadrennial Session, 1912, pp. 114, 133, 535.

50. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1900, p. 59.

51. *Minutes*, Seventeenth Quadrennial Session, 1884, p. 145.

52. Harris, *Zion's Historical Catechism*, op. cit., p. 17; *Minutes*, Eleventh Session, South Carolina Annual Conference, 1876, p. 9.

53. *Ibid.*

mpassioned culture and unique Christian heritage.

The spirituals are the most sacred and renaissance songs of the black race. "They are the music of an unhappy people, of the children of disappointment; they tell of death and suffering and unvoiced longing toward a truer world, of misty wanderings and hidden ways." (21) We are reminded by DuBois that since their day they have been imitated, sometimes well by college choral unions, sometimes ill, by straggling quartettes. "Caricature has sought again to spoil the quaint beauty of the music, and has filled the air with many debased melodies which vulgar ears scarce know from the real. But the true Negro folk-song still lives in the hearts of those who have heard them truly sung and in the hearts of the Negro people." (22) It is the responsibility of the black race of every age to keep inviolate and preserve this precious gift squeezed out of the toils and tears of our ancestral afflictions.

The gospel songs were born out of Negro singing of a later era, and brought a special message of spiritual and harmonious balm. Songs and hymns had been written by Negroes, and used as supplements to hymn books adapted from white churches. *Soul Echoes* was among the first serious and most ambitious efforts of black religious leaders to publish a song book. Charles A. Tindley would compose his songs during the week and sing them on Sunday in his worship service. His songs were published, along with other gospel songs, by a team of black Methodist churchmen, namely, Bishops J. S. Caldwell and G. L. Blackwell of the A.M.E. Zion Church, Bishop L. J. Coppin of the A.M.E. Church, and Rev. Charles A. Tindley, Methodist. Their prefatorial statement of this booklet produced in 1909 was:

A long felt desire for songs with words of Hope, Cheer, Love and Pity; for melodies that can sink to the depths of sorrow, and rise to the heights of joy, has had most to do with the publication of this book. It is the prayer of the publishers that these messages in rhyme shall float from soul to soul until the hills and valleys shall awake into joyful singing. (23)

"We'll Understand It Better Bye and Bye," "Stand By Me," "The Storm Is Passing Over," "What Are They Doing In Heaven Today," "God Has Promised to Provide for Me," and "Nothing Between My Soul and My Saviour" are but a few of these immortal productions.

Anthems and oratorios, in which the Negro has found his place with the most excellent singers of mankind, are a part of our modern church music. Church music is patently the soul's sincere desire to express itself through divine art, by God-given voices, filled with bounteous love.

21. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, p.253.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Soul Echoes*.

Part III— Development

CHAPTER 11

PROGRAM OF PLANNING AND EXPANSION

When the members of Zion Church in New York City officially voted themselves out of the Methodist Episcopal Church on July 26, 1820, thus operating under their Discipline published October 25, 1820, the members moved forward, continuing their first conference, June 21, 1821, and elected James Varick acting superintendent, pending the higher holy order, to function according to the Discipline. The roll of delegates numbered twenty-two:

NEW YORK:

James Varick
Abraham Thompson
Leven Smith
William Miller
Christopher Rush
John Dungy
Charles Anderson
James Smith
Timothy Eato
Samuel Bird
Peter Vanhas
Abraham Marks

CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON

John Palmer
James Anderson
William Carman
Elijah Jackson

PHILADELPHIA:

Simon Murray
Edward Johnson
Durham Stephens
Daniel Pernal
Arthur Landford (1)

Durham Stephens, Daniel Pernal, and Arthur Landford being absent, the

1. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, pp.70-71.

conference was attended by 19 preachers, representing six churches and 1,426 members. (2)

Bishop George of the Methodist Episcopal Church sent Rev. William Phoebe and Joshua Soule, who fraternally associated them during the first two days of the seven-day conference, and on June 25, the fifth day, Rev. Freeborn Garrettson came also as a fraternal visitor. Each session was spent in joint reverence and spiritual devotion, with total awareness of their new independence. The Discipline was carefully reviewed, and these leaders seriously observed the weighty responsibilities that attended it. The superintendent, elected by ballot in the annual conferences for a period of four years, would be accorded the opportunity of re-election each succeeding quadrennium, so long as his qualification, character, and deportment sustained this highest office of the church. (3) "If a superintendent ceases from traveling, without the consent of the yearly conferences (unavoidable circumstances excepted), he shall no longer exercise the episcopal office in our church: nevertheless the yearly conferences shall finally determine the case." (4) This was a typical regulation.

It was an assembly full of thrills, trials, revelations, and adventure, accompanied by faith and prayer. The preachers were appointed by Varick as follows:

Zion Church, New York: Abraham Thompson, Leven Smith, Christopher Rush, John Dungy, Charles Anderson, James Smith, Timothy Eato, Samuel Bird, Peter Vanhas; Asbury Church, New York: William Miller, Abraham Marks, Christopher Anderson, John Palmer; New Haven: James Anderson; Long Island: William Carman and Elijah Jackson; Wesleyan Church, Philadelphia; and Easton, Pennsylvania: Simon Murray, Edward Johnson, Durham Stephens, Daniel Pernal, and Arthur Landford.

The conference adjourned on June 27 in high spirit and deep harmony, to meet in the next Annual Conference in Philadelphia, May 16, 1822, and hold the next General Conference in the spring of 1824. (5)

Because of the enormous difficulties facing this new organization, which threatened destruction in its infancy, the state of affairs in the interval of the annual conferences became critical. The variableness of a few in the New York group, who had become shaken after the negative action of the New York Methodist Episcopal Conference on their petition for conference recognition, and the determination of the Wesleyan group in Philadelphia, produced a serious difference. While the second session of the conference was being held at Philadelphia during the week of May 15, 1822, the Wesleyans were approached on the subject of returning to the Methodist Episcopal Church by Bishops George and Roberts. They boldly declared that they would in no way consider this proposal, and expressed the continued desire to be governed by the Discipline of the Zion Connection. This session adjourned to be consummated in New York, in July, and a delegation came over to New York the end of May, to encourage them to stand steady in spite of the difficulty of obtaining elders' orders.

The African Wesleyan Church of Philadelphia (now Big Wesley) was a dynamic force in the demand for freedom. In their background was a readiness

2. *Ibid.*, H. F. Kletzing and W. H. Croghan, *Progress of a Race*, pp. 430-431.

3. *Doctrines and Discipline*, 1820, pp. 54-55.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

5. Moore, *History of the A.M.E. Zion Church*, p. 89.

to confront the most austere situations. A few members of this group also were a part of St. George's Church, and became charter members of The Free African Society of Philadelphia, 1787. Yet their surroundings in general were different. "The state of slavery in Pennsylvania was always of mild character, not only from the favorable and mild feelings of the Friends in their behalf, but from the common regard they found in families in general where their deportment was commendable." (6) The state also had been free long before New York's emancipation in 1827. Having this advantage over the New Yorkers, they gave the necessary boost at the right time, which proved essential in the destiny of the A.M.E. Zion Connection.

These Philadelphians had a peculiar independent air from the beginning of their church existence in 1820, which later influenced a serious schism in the denomination, and which always provided effective leadership in the church and race. Their very name, was an attraction that helped to increase the bulk of their numbers. Their selected name was actually a motivation to operate differently from American Methodism, and pattern themselves after the original Wesleyan Methodist movement of England and the West Indies. They kept up with the grand warrior against slavery, Thomas Coke, and his noble work in the West Indies, which no doubt influenced their name and independent thinking away from the American Methodist Episcopal Church, which in those days was fiercely divided on the slave question.

This group submitted a plan for ordination by A.M.E. Zion leaders, which was rejected by the New York group. Within three weeks of their arrival in New York City with their firm decision not to petition the white Methodist Conference any further, the leaders "availed themselves of the help of Dr. James Covell, Sylvester Hutchinson, and William Stilwell, who set apart Abraham Thompson, James Varick, and Leven Smith as elders, they having been previously ordained deacons." (7)

The Second Annual Conference reconvened at Zion Church in New York City, on Tuesday, July 18, 1822, to complete the business. There was much more room for rejoicing at this session. The dark cloud hovering over them for two years had been removed, and they at last had the assurance, confidence, and certainty needed to expand in the name of religion and freedom. "The work of development from this time went forward with considerable rapidity under the supervision of Right Reverend James Varick, the first regularly elected bishop of the Connection." Being the leading factor in the formation of Zion Church in 1796 and in all succeeding steps leading to the establishment of a successful itinerant system, and like Asbury, serving as superintendent of his connection before he received the highest holy order, he had conducted the efforts of the societies successfully amid great difficulties, and had shown himself equal to every emergency. Hence when he, with others, received elders orders, he was elected as first among his peers to superintend the connection. (8)

Six preachers were ordained deacons and elders at this conference, and sent out as missionaries, to take charge of societies already formed and to form new societies. Christopher Rush was assigned to the Newark charge by Bishop Varick. He rallied a group of devout, freedom-minded people around him to give this city its first black organization. An African Presbyterian Church was established

6. John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia*, p. 479.

7. J. M. Buckley, *A History of Methodists in the United States*, p. 348.

8. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp. 64-65.

sermons were well arranged, logical and forcible. They were generally laid off in from three to five general divisions, with a larger number of subdivisions, and his entire discourse would have looked well in print. (54)

Rev. Giles and Dr. Gray were known as the theological instructors. Giles taught the preachers church decorum and respect for seniority in the ministry. "There were ministers then who were neither greatly endowed nor well cultured, but who had peculiarities by which they accomplished wonders. The Church, as a whole, was a power for good." (55)

"The Conferences held long sessions; they were the only theological institutes the ministers had in those days; they generally spent nearly two weeks in session." As was the Methodist custom the conferences were not held with open doors in the early days of the church, but gradually the public was admitted. "The ministers in Zion Connection, almost from its organization, were more liberal toward the laity than any other branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Laymen were admitted to representation in the Annual and General Conferences as early as 1851. (56)

This era of the church had elevated 13 men to the episcopacy, from James Varick to Joseph Jackson Clinton. Each made his own unique contribution to the growth of the church. A few served very short terms during the 20 years of inconstancy from 1840-1860, some served 12 and 16 years. Rush served 24 years actively, and gave a lifetime of devotion even after ill health. George Galbraith was elected for one year from 1852-1853, but he was Assistant Superintendent from 1848-1852; counting this, he had five years of service. This was the period in which Rush began to go blind, and "Galbraith did more than any other Assistant Superintendent, either before or after his time. He was the natural successor of Rush and bid fair, if he had lived, to make a glorious record." (57) The others, not listed in the roll of preachers from 1830-1840, who became bishops were Revs. D. S. Scott, Peter Ross, Samson D. Talbot, and John D. Brooks. William H. Bishop bore the brunt and passed through many trials in reuniting Zion and Wesley. That noble man, Christopher Rush, who lived to be 96 years old, was a mighty force in spirit and truth. The man who became the second bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church sealed his fame through his versatile talent, magnetic personality, moral tenacity, far-reaching evangelical labors, and impeccable devotion to religion and freedom. He is described in brief by one of the most renowned and proficient black journalists of all times, Timothy Thomas Fortune, as follows:

Christopher Rush, a man of rare oratorical powers, deep piety, and a fine executive capacity, came North from New Bern, North Carolina, and at once identified himself with the new church. His influence was at once recognized. He knew how to organize men and wisely advise them. He was regarded as a great preacher. All classes, conditions, and races heard him gladly. To announce that he was to preach was to insure an overflow congregation. Frederick Douglass declared that he was one of the most powerful preachers he ever listened to. That he was elected as the second Bishop was no surprise to those who knew the man. (58)

The connection, passing through its second most crucial period of history, while slavery was still widespread and men and women were on fire to suppress it, made salient progress through deep faith, persistent beliefs, courageous undertakings, and freedom consciousness.

54. *Ibid.*, p.84.

CHAPTER 12

THE RISE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CONFERENCE

That woman, the gentler half of God's creation, was an important, even though invisible, factor in the pioneer work of the Church cannot be doubted. Since the creation of the world, woman has been a help-meet for man, and notwithstanding her power has been wrought out behind the throne, still she has been steadily at work in whatever of good the world has known. (1)

The A.M.E. Zion Church has been a prophecy of the rise of women in the church, and other affairs, all of its existence. A sort of pertinacity was bred into these women who stood by the side of the men, fought the battles of freedom, and expanded the church across the continent and across the seas. Some of the women who walked by the sides of their noble husbands and fathers in establishing the A.M.E. Zion Church in 1796 were Aurelia Varick, Sarah Thompson, Jane Cook, Jane Pontier, Pemilia Pontier, Susannah Moore, Sarah Moore, Amy Jacobs, Jane Miller, Betsy Miller, Sarah Bias, Elizabeth Brown, and a number of slave women listed in the John Street classes of black women with no surname. (2)

During this time, women in the church, as in all other public walks of life, were severely proscribed. The power women did exert was principally through advice and counsel asked of them by husband, son, or brother. Should they become inspired with ardent zeal to lift their voices in the congregation for the betterment of the church, they were met with the Pauline doctrine—"Let the women keep silence in the church." (3) Bishop Varick, Abraham Thompson, William Miller, and the other heroic pioneer workers, aware of this sentiment, did not attempt the great undertaking of establishing a separate church without wife, mother, or sister.

The Church has always had a hearty and healthful support from her women, and no doubt the women were more zealous in effecting this separation. It is probable they spent sleepless nights in this time of perplexity advising, admonishing, planning and praying over the seemingly insurmountable obstacle that confronted them. They endured discouragements thinking only of that hidden secret within their bosoms—the longing desire to worship God with freedom and ease under their own fig tree. Through patience, perseverance and prayer, they reached the goal. The independent Church was established. (4)

The parent group of all women's organizations in the A.M.E. Zion

1. Meriah E. Harris, "Woman in the Pioneer Work of the Church," *A.M.E. Zion Quarterly Review*, April, 1899, p.22.
2. John Street Church Ms. Records, New York Public Library; 1801 Census Book, New York Historical Society.
3. Meriah E. Harris, *op. cit.*
4. *Ibid.*

gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Payne, and a mission was established thereafter by Rev. Richard Tompkins, a local preacher of Zion Wesley Church. The first building was erected in 1853. In 1858, Rev. R. H. G. Dyson was received into the Philadelphia Annual Conference on trial, and appointed to the Washington City Mission. "He organized Galbraith Chapel (anew) in a small room with three members, but soon had to get a larger place. He secured a lot and erected a church which was dedicated March, 1862, and 390 members were enrolled." (39) It flourished also under the pastorate of Rev. Abraham Cole, who joined the Philadelphia Conference June 8, 1839, and became prominent in the growth of our early societies in Pennsylvania and Washington, especially the mother church of Washington, Zion Wesley. (40)

The Union Wesley Church was established in 1844, when a small group of men and women, chafing under oppression and longing for self-expression, withdrew from the Mt. Zion Methodist Church in Georgetown, and started this organization with black leaders in the A.M.E. Zion Church. (41) Their edifice was destroyed by fire on December 18, 1859, and rebuilt in December 1860, under the direction of Revs. Jacob P. Hamer and Charles Wallace. (42) The John Wesley Church started out with 15 members in 1848, and was one of the fastest growing churches of that day, in spite of the prejudices against it. (43) Rev. R. H. G. Dyson, before he joined John Wesley Church in 1852, organized a choir in the church while that congregation was still worshipping at the private residence of Rev. John Brent, its pioneer pastor, on Connecticut Avenue, where the church was organized. (44) The church is known today as the "National Church of Zion Methodism."

By 1836, Zion had two churches in Pittsburgh. The first was Old John Wesley Church, organized this same year in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Parker on Roberts Street. It later acquired a lot on Peru Way, with a one-story building, under the leadership of Rev. Tabbs. The second church was Avery Mission. (45)

Zion's first society in the city of Baltimore was established as early as 1842, led by Rev. Jacob M. Moore, a local preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and William Johnson and Severn Johnson. It was known as the First Colored Wesley Methodist Independent Society of Baltimore. This church joined the Philadelphia Annual Conference meeting at (Big) Wesley Church, Philadelphia, in 1844. It is now known as the Pennsylvania Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church.

The Allegheny Conference stands fourth on the list, organized August 1849 by Bishop Rush, with Bishop Galbraith associating him. It was set apart from the Philadelphia Conference. The General Conference of 1848 set off the Allegheny Conference (as well as the Genesee Conference) from the Philadelphia Conference and approved their boundaries. (46) As early as 1829, the section of western Pennsylvania was referred to as the "Western District," and Rev. Jacob D. Richardson was present at the Philadelphia Conference from this district. (47)

39. *The Star of Zion*, July 25, 1946; Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp. 229-230.

40. J. P. Hamer, *The Weekly Anglo-African*, December 29, 1860.

41. *Souvenir Program*, Service of Church Opening, August 1, 1949.

42. *The Anglo-African*, Dec. 29, 1860; Moore, *History*, op. cit., p. 124.

43. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p. 229.

44. *Ibid.*

45. Moore, *History*, op. cit., p. 124; Ms. records, History of John Wesley Church, from Mrs. Wilhelmina Spencer.

46. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p. 524.

Rush organized the Fifth Annual Conference, apart from the New York Conference, known as the Genesee Conference, also in September 1849. Its first session was held in Auburn, N.Y., with Rev. W. S. Sanford, secretary-compiler, September 14-20, 1850. (48) The name was changed to Western New York Conference in 1897, while Bishop Walters presided.

Zion's work in Canada started in 1829. During the conference that year a preacher named Hamilton Johnson attended from Prescott, Upper Canada, requesting to join the New York Conference and represent a Zion society in that part of the country. (49) By the 1860 General Conference, there were five representatives from Canada. Several outstanding church leaders served in Canada. The churches, however, were later attached to the New England Conference. After Zion expanded into Michigan, a conference was then organized named the Canada-Michigan Conference, which later evolved into the Michigan Conference.

In the General Conference of 1852, an Eastern District was formed over which Bishop G. A. Spywood presided, embracing the New England, Nova Scotia, and British Guiana Conferences. (50) Our work in British Guiana survived, and the name of the conference changed, during independence of that country, in 1966, to Guyana Conference. Zion Church also had work in Haiti in 1861, when Rev. J. W. Lacey was sent there. (51)

"The Southern Conference was organized May 2, 1859, in Washington, D.C. The Conference was shortlived. It was represented in the General Conference of 1860. Its name was later changed to Baltimore Conference. In 1872, it was consolidated with the Philadelphia Conference, and since, we have had the Philadelphia and Baltimore Conference." (52)

There were a number of outstanding preachers added to the first roll; among them such notables as William F. Butler, John Williams, and Henry Dumpson of New England, William H. Decker, Samuel M. Giles, and William R. Brooks of New York Conference; J. P. Trusty, H. H. Blackson, Jacob Anderson, and George Johnson of the Philadelphia Conference; Abraham Cole, Daniel Matthews, and Joseph Armstrong of the Allegheny Conference; Hezekiah Butler, William Sanford, Jermain W. Loguen, William A. Cromwell, Thomas James, Richard Estep, and James H. Smith of the Genesee Conference; and R. H. G. Dyson, J. D. Brooks, William T. Biddle, Jacob P. Hamer, J. A. Williams, and Joseph Sinclair of the Southern Conference.

At the end of this period just before Emancipation, there were 6 annual conferences, and 197 ministers received into the itinerancy. Of this total number of preachers, 92 were still living and in active service. (53)

One remarkable thing about this period is that there were very few expulsions; a few recorded, but they were exceptions. . . . The ministers of the period were, as a rule, good preachers; few of them were what would be called brilliant men, but a large portion of them could preach a good sensible sermon. Some were powerful, awakening preachers; sinners could not listen without being affected to such a degree that it was impossible for them to hide it. Rev. Samuel L. Giles was a reasoner of great force; his

48. *Minutes*, One Hundred Eighth Annual Session of the Western New York Conference, 1957, p. 1.

49. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, p. 83.

50. Moore, *History*, p. 215.

51. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p. 277.

52. Hood, *History*, Vol. II, p. 28.

53. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp. 82-83.

come into church were Elders Basil McKall, Abraham Cole, and especially David Stevens. (29)

Leven Smith was a dauntless pioneer, and not only established smaller societies in New England but organized our first church in Providence, in 1822; (30) Rev. Hosea Easton joined the New York Conference in 1832, and was ordained deacon and elder in 1834. He firmly established our Hartford society, now known as the Metropolitan Church, in 1836 and incorporated the church in 1841. Before 1827, the African Relief Society came into existence and



Fire breaks out at the theater on the Northwest corner of Church and Leonard Streets, September 23, 1839 and spreads across the street to the Southwest corner, totally destroying the First African Church built in the City of New York; Zion Church which was rebuilt and dedicated in 1840.

Eno Collection. Prints Division, The New York Public Library: Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

owned a building which they used for worship services. About 1833, there came about a split in the organization, out of which two black churches were formed, the Congregational and Methodist churches. For a while, both used the same building. However, Rev. Easton led the group of Methodists, which became the A.M.E. Zion Church, into purchasing land at 38 Elm Street. (31)

It was in this Elm Street Church that the New England Conference, the third conference of our connection, was organized by Bishop Rush on June 21, 1845. Among its earliest societies were Boston, New Bedford, and Nantucket, Mass.; Providence, R.I.; New Haven, Middletown, Stonington, Bridgeport, and Hartford, Conn. Its ministers were Thomas Henson, Daniel Vandevier, Leven Smith, James Simmons, George A. Spywood, Thomas James, John P. Thompson, and

29. Woodson, *History of the Negro Church*, pp.90-91; Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp.66-67.

30. *Weekly Anglo-African*, December 15, 1860.

31. *The Hartford Daily Times*, March 21, 1936.

Dempsey Kennedy. Among the New York delegates were William H. Bishop, John A. King, Peter Ross, Henry Johnson, and J. W. Loguen. In 1856 the Hartford Church moved to a new location at 91 Pearl Street, under the eye of the state capital. (32) This church is presently located on Main Street.

"The A.M.E. Zion Church of Boston was organized June 13, 1838 with seventeen members who had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church; for more religious freedom and with a desire to become part and parcel of the A.M.E. Zion Connection which was manned and controlled by men of their own color." (33) They selected a worship hall on Cambridge Street, and petitioned the New York Conference for a minister. The right man for the right task was sent, Rev. Jehiel C. Beman. By October 5, 1840, the membership had grown to 140, and Beman's leadership was felt throughout the entire city. The church subsequently moved to Russell Street and was known as the Russell Street A.M.E. Zion church. (34) This congregation is now known as the Columbus Avenue Church, the present building having been purchased by Rev. J. H. McMullen, and dedicated on June 7, 1903 by Bishop J. W. Hood and Rev. E. George Biddle, presiding elder and member.

Zion Church (Mother Zion), which had been ravaged during the abolition riot of 1834 and destroyed by fire, September 23, 1839, (35) was rebuilt in the spring of 1840 under the leadership of Rev. Timothy Eato. It was "undoubtedly the largest and most commodious Protestant house of worship, owned and occupied by our people, in the world." It was dedicated on Wednesday, April 22, at 10 o'clock A.M. by Bishop Christopher Rush, with Rev. William Miller of Wesley Church, Philadelphia, and Rev. Theodore S. Wright, the noted pastor of the first Presbyterian colored church in the city, associating him. (36)

Rev. Jacob D. Richardson was quite an impressive preacher and organizer. He organized a Wesleyan society around 1826 in Middletown, Pa. George Galbraith joined that church the same year, and then joined the Philadelphia Conference in June, 1830 and was appointed to the Harrisburg circuit, under the leading minister, Rev. David Stevens. (37) From this sector, the most distinguished and exceptional leaders of the church came forth and made the greatest contribution to the development and growth of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church of any group in any era. These included Singleton T. Jones, who was licensed to preach at Harrisburg by Rev. George Galbraith, Joseph Jackson Clinton, John Jamison Moore, James Walker Hood, Jehu Holliday, Samson D. Talbot, all of whom became eminent bishops of the church; scores of preachers who founded churches from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C.; and William Howard Day who became the three or four renowned Negro leaders during the last half of the nineteenth century.

Under Rush's dynamic leadership, along with Galbraith, Zion had four churches in the nation's capital by 1860. The first was Zion Wesley, organized by Rev. George Galbraith in 1837, in D Street (now known as Metropolitan Wesley). (38) The Galbraith Church was organized in 1843 when six members

32. Moore, *History*, pp.140-141; *Hartford Daily Times*, *op. cit.*

33. Jacob W. Powell, *Bird's Eye View of the General Conference*, 1916 (History by Eliza Ann Gardner) p.21.

34. *The Colored American*, October 17, 1840.

35. Stokes, *Iconography*, Vol. V., pp.1728, 1760.

36. *The Colored American*, May 2, 1840.

37. Moore, *History*, p.356.

38. *Ibid.*, p.124.

presidents. Mrs. Galpin's dedication was a stimulation to other members, and by 1841 they were in possession of their own building. Through all its difficulties, the church had grown to 80 members by 1848.⁽¹⁹⁾ The name was changed from John Wesley to Varick Memorial. (See chapter 8.) This society had been through various vicissitudes, including a fire in 1842, which caused \$500 damage, of which \$350 was covered by insurance.⁽²⁰⁾ It is the mother church of the New England Conference.

Varick presided over the fifth, sixth and seventh annual conferences, from 1825 through 1827, and before the expiration of his second term "God was pleased to call him from labor to reward."⁽²¹⁾ He had ordained a dozen deacons and elders during his seven years as first bishop, and had received twice this many traveling preachers into conference and sent them out to serve the needs of a race in despair. After Varick's death, July 22, 1827, the senior elder, Leven Smith, took on the responsibilities of the office, except ordination, according to the Discipline, until the next General Conference in 1828, when he was regularly elected by the Conference and declined. Christopher Rush was then elected the second bishop,⁽²²⁾ at Zion Church, New York, on May 15, 1828.

"As Joshua followed Moses, so did Rush follow Varick." Christopher Rush founded all our Northeastern conferences except the New York and New Jersey Conferences. He was truly a mighty leader.⁽²³⁾ He made appointments and began to lay the groundwork for expansion. On May 21, 1829, the ninth annual conference, meeting in Zion Church, not only included the preachers from the New England and New York areas but a number of preachers from Philadelphia and other parts of Pennsylvania. At this conference they set off the Philadelphia Annual Conference, to be organized June 14 following, in the city of Philadelphia. After making appointments for the regular work, the conference adjourned.

On June 13, 1829, the First Philadelphia Annual Conference met at Wesley Church, on Lombard Street, Philadelphia, with Bishop Rush presiding. There were 17 ministers in attendance including the bishop and two from New York. After a pleasant session of several days, the Conference completed its business with Rush reading the appointments, and adjourned.⁽²⁴⁾ Edward Johnson was reappointed to Wesley Church, Philadelphia, Jacob Richardson to the charge of the Western District (of Pennsylvania), and David Smith and Richard Phillips were appointed missionaries. The other preachers in attendance were Durham Stephens, David Stephens, George Stevenson, David Crosby, Jonathan Gibbs, Arthur Landford, Tower Hill, John Marshall, Samuel Johnson, and Abraham Green.⁽²⁵⁾

The roll of the New York Conference at this time, and until 1840, was as follows:⁽²⁶⁾ Bishop Christopher Rush;

19. Warner, *New Haven Negroes*, p.85.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p.531.

22. *Ibid.*

23. Moore, *History*, op. cit., p.100.

24. *Ibid.*, pp.101-102.

25. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, p.82.

26. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, pp.65-66.

Revs.:	Charles Anderson	Shadrach Golden	Abraham Miller
	Jehiel C. Beman	Francis P. Graham	*William Miller
	Edward Bishop	Samuel T. Gray	Richard Noyce
	*William Bishop	John Jackson	*Peter Ross
	David Blake	Thomas Jackson	Samuel Serrington
	Nathaniel Blynt	Thomas James	William Serrington
	W. L. Brown	Henry Johnson	*James Simmons
	William Carman	J. B. Johnson	Benjamin Simms
	John Chester	William Jones	Leven Smith
	Abraham Cole	Jesse Kemble	*George Spywood
	Leonard Collins	Dempsey Kennedy	*John Tappan
	Henry Drayton	John A. King	John P. Thompson
	John Dungy	John W. Lewis	*Joseph P. Thompson
	Hosea Easton	Peter Lum	William Tillman
	Timothy Eato	John N. Mars	Daniel Vandevier
	Adam Ford	Jacob Matthews	Peter Vanhas
	William Fuller	William McFarlan	George Washington
	George Garnett	Basil McKall	John Wells
			J. H. Williams

* Became bishops of the church.

Several of the others listed became quite distinguished in their day. We will note later that among the most outstanding abolitionists of the race were Jehiel C. Beman, Hosea Easton, Bishops Rush and Thompson. The above mentioned men established our first churches as far west as Jamestown, N.Y., and western points in Pennsylvania, as far north as Boston, and later Portland, Me., and as far south as Washington, D.C.

"From the years 1828 to 1840 Rush had filled the episcopal office alone, and had filled it well, and afterwards served effectively until his retirement in 1852 due to loss of sight. Every year there was an increase of members, ministers, and churches; new territory was occupied, and the connection increased in strength and influence continually." However, the General Conference of 1840 produced a disturbing element which culminated 12 years later in a split in the connection, which lasted for 8 years.⁽²⁷⁾ While the A.M.E. Zion Church was passing through its second most cataclysmic period, the Lord enabled them to reign over all difficulties, and brought the church through victoriously in 1860.

Our work was extended chiefly over the states of the north, until the emancipation of the race and the close of the Civil War, when it entered the South to organize many churches.⁽²⁸⁾ Those men who showed exceptional power which aided the development of our church were: Rev. Samuel T. Gray, who was not only a remarkable natural orator, noted for his ability to rouse enthusiasm, but was a very successful medical doctor. "He was a man of unusual acumen, easily triumphed in debate, and as a logician and parliamentarian could vanquish his opponent;" Rev. Henry Johnson who passed among his fellows as "Old Hickory" because of his strong force of character; Rev. John A. Williams was an unusual revivalist; Rev. Leonard Collins was one of the pillars of the church for a number of years, but lost his standing by yielding to the temptation of strong drink. Those who had great preaching ability and moved multitudes to

27. *Ibid.*, p.70.

28. DuBois, *The Negro Church*, p.45.

in the early 1830's. This humble African Methodist group, led valiantly by Rush, obtained an incorporation for the society and laid the foundation (cornerstone) stone, on April 7, 1823, at Academy Street near Plane Street.⁽⁹⁾ This church is now known as Clinton Memorial.

New York City began to expand northward, and Harlem developed under a large number of Dutch settlers. Zion kept pace with the growing city, and a third society was founded in Harlem in 1822 by Peter Vanhas,⁽¹⁰⁾ called "Little Zion," and a small brick building was erected there in 1843.⁽¹¹⁾

The connection had advanced commensurably in the northeastern section when the Third Annual Conference met at Zion Church, New York City, May 21, 1823. Three disruptions faced Bishop Varick and the preachers at the conference and during the ensuing year. First, during this session, it was learned that William Miller of the Asbury charge had connected with the Bethel Connection, and was ordained elder by them and appointed to a charge in Washington, D.C.⁽¹²⁾ Shortly after this, the Asbury Church in New York placed themselves under the government of the Bethel connection. This same year, their church in Elizabeth Street was destroyed by fire. They then occupied for some time a room in the basement of the Broadway Tabernacle, entering from Anthony Street. They were also in a hall on the corner of Elizabeth and Grand Streets, and then occupied a hall on Howard Street. After this, they moved to Fourth Street, near the East River, and soon afterward an individual purchased for them a house of worship on Third Street near Avenue D, and in 1835 they removed to this building with a view to permanency.⁽¹³⁾ By this time, William Miller had long since returned to Zion Connection, and was pastoring in Philadelphia. The flock had scattered somewhat, its membership had dwindled to 70 by 1846, and the congregation was still giving trouble during this schismatic period of Zion's history.⁽¹⁴⁾

Second, the Philadelphia preachers did not attend the 1823 Annual Conference, because of dissatisfaction existing from the meeting of the last Annual Conference.⁽¹⁵⁾ However, they maintained cooperation with a steady growth, so much that Philadelphia was set apart as our second conference in 1829.

Third, in a continued effort at dissipation of this young connection, in 1824 a small faction of preachers of the New York group had been influenced by Methodist Episcopal Church leaders to see what their General Conference would determine for the benefit of black preachers. In order to avoid dissidence over this intervention the A.M.E. Zion Annual Conference was changed from its regular date of May 20 to July 15, to await the results of the Methodist Episcopal Conference. This was also the General Conference year of Zion Connection. When A.M.E. Zion leaders were truly convinced that nothing had been done for their advantage, they held their combined General and Annual Conferences on July 15, 1824.⁽¹⁶⁾ During the year Leven Smith had established a society in Providence, R.I., and James Anderson, while pastoring New Haven,

had founded a society at Middletown, Conn. William Carman continued his progressive work of establishing societies on Long Island.

At the Conference, James Varick was re-elected bishop. James Smith was sent to Zion Church, New York, Leven Smith to Newark, who established a society also at Elizabethtown, James Anderson to Middletown, and Christopher Rush was appointed a missionary. One of the great privileges of the preachers of that day was to be sent out as a missionary, *to do the work of evangelists, and*



CHRISTOPHER RUSH

1777 - 1873

Second Bishop

He organized four northern conferences.
Strong abolition leader and profound preacher.

make full proof of their ministry. New preachers were being received into the conference, ordained deacons and elders, and sent out to labor in the vineyard facilitating the growth of a denomination.

This year, there also arose some difficulty with the New Haven Church over the expulsion of one of its members whom many considered to be most useful to the society. "The society became insubordinate; the conference took jurisdiction of the case and by stringent steps brought them into subjection to our Discipline, and continuance in our connection." Varick nurtured this society as early as 1818 with 35 members. The interesting history behind the stabilization of this society are the efforts of two energetic women, first minister Charles Anderson, and the stamina of William H. Bishop.⁽¹⁷⁾ Bishop joined Zion Church in New York in September, 1825, and joined the annual conference as a traveling preacher in May, 1826.⁽¹⁸⁾ One of these founders, Mrs. Eliza Ann Galpin, the daughter of Jeremiah Paine, was employed with the family of Theodore Dwight Woolsey, a charter member of the African Improvement Society of New Haven, who became one of Yale University's most influential

9. Rush, *Rise and Progress*, p.79; *Newark City Directory*, 1835-1836; *Sentinel of Freedom*, April 18, 1826.

10. Varick letter, Riker Papers, N.Y. Public Library.

11. Greenleaf, *A History of the Churches*, p.322.

12. Moore, *History*, op. cit., p.98.

13. Greenleaf, op. cit., p.323; Charles H. Haswell, *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian*, p.207.

14. Greenleaf, op. cit.

15. Moore, *History*, op. cit., p.98.

16. *Ibid.*, p.99.

17. Warner, *New Haven Negroes*, p.85; Rush, op. cit., p.82.

18. Hood, *One Hundred Years*, p.531.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 14, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
DURING CHURCH SERVICES

Full Gospel AME Zion Church
Temple Hills, Maryland

1:25 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you so much. If you've been listening to the news the last few days, you know that the President has had his annual loss of voice. (Laughter.) But when I heard the choir today I kind of got my voice back. (Laughter.)

First, Paster and Mrs. Cherry, on behalf of my wife, my daughter and all of our company here, thank you so much for making us feel at home today. This was a beautiful, wonderful day for us. We've brought some old friends of ours that we've known for many years, and several members of our White House staff. Our good friend, Congressman Albert Winn joined us -- we're glad to see you. Thank you so much, sir.

I came here today of two minds. Usually, on summer Sundays like this, Hillary and Chelsea and I go up to Camp David, and we go to the beautiful little chapel in the woods there. And instead of being in a vast church, we worship at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday morning with about 50 people, and about six or seven people singing in the choir -- (laughter) -- including the President, who gets to sight read the music when he can talk. (Laughter.)

I wanted to come here today for two reasons. First of all, because, as it turned out, I needed to hear the sermon. (Laughter and applause.) Next week, Pastor, I'll try to be a little more like Jehoshaphat. (Laughter and applause.) Maybe I won't have to ask you face all our enemies all at once. (Laughter.)

The second reason I wanted to be here is that this church to me symbolizes what American should be all about right now. And it also, I believe, came about because of all the things that America should not be about right now. I mean, let me ask you, how is it that a church in

1981 could start with 24 members, and in 1994 could have 16,000 members? How could an African American church with all of the cliches people say about the black community in America have 16,000 members and over 40 percent of them be males? (Applause.)

God has worked through this Pastor and his wife and his family and all of you. But why did you have to come into being? Because of this great hole that's in our country now. Because of the breakdown of the families and the communities, and the loss of the things which hold people together inside and out -- not just the spiritual problems, but the jobs, too, and the opportunities and the things which make people believe in the future on this Earth.

And in that great vacuum, look what has usually happened. When people lose hope and lose their families and lose their communities and lose their sense of right and wrong, what has so often happened? Seventy percent increase in America in 10 years in the number of children being born out of wedlock. And let's get the whole record on -- today the fastest growth is among young, white women giving birth out of wedlock. Soon, if we don't do something about it, we'll all be equal -- too high.

In 10 years, a doubling of the rate of murder among teenage young people. Sixty-five people in America get killed every day. While we've been in church, another teenager has been murdered. Every two hours a teenager gets murdered in America. And in this great vacuum, you have teen pregnancy and drugs and crime and, worst of all, violence.

I wanted to come here because you are filling that void from the ground up and from the inside out. And I believe that this church could never have come into existence and exploded the way it has if everybody had been in a church, in a family, in a community, in a job, and had hope and direction inside and outside, and structure.

You've filled a vacuum with something good and pure and wonderful. And I thank you for it. It's beyond the reach of any president to do. It is God's work through a religious ministry. But the Bible says that the rest of us has ministries, too.

Do you remember when Martin Luther King said if you're just a street sweeper, just sweep the streets as if you were Michelangelo, painting the Sistine Chapel. (Applause.) Everybody has a job to do. And today, I don't think we have a bigger job in trying to keep our children alive and rebuild our families; and rebuild our communities; and to try to communicate some sense of right and wrong; and to give our kids something to say yes to, as well as something to say no to. It's two sides of the same coin.

And I'll tell you, before I got here, I've been pretty down the

last two or three days because the Congress voted that crime bill down. Not because it's the answer to all life's problems; here is the answer to all life's problems. (Applause.) But because this country is literally coming apart at the seams for millions of our young people. And because there are too many streets where old folks are afraid to sit and talk, and children are afraid to play. Because we're not really free anymore and people aren't free to pursue the American Dream anymore as long as we feel like we can just tear each other apart. Because our police officers go out on the streets where the gangs are supposed to -- are better armed than they are. And things are all mixed up now in our country. And so often it seems that petty political things, or superficial divisions keep us from doing what in our heart we know is right.

And I have been so troubled at the thought that at least those of us who have been given this authority by you -- the President, the Congress -- the least we can do is to help you to save the lives of your children. There are children in this church who have been gunned down; I know it. The least we can do is to help you to be protected. The least we can do is to put people on the streets who can not only catch criminals, but prevent crime as good law enforcement officers. The least we can do if people are totally hopeless is to get them out of your hair so they won't be bothering you. And the least we can do is to, yes, give your children more things they can say yes to, not just things they can say no to.

That's what all that debate was about in the crime bill. It really wasn't about whether if you had written the crime bill or I had or anybody else, it would have been just the way it turned out to be. What is a democracy, after all, but people getting together and putting their different ideas and then arguing it out and having a bunch of votes and a majority rules?

Alexis de Toqueville said many years ago, this was a good country, and as long as it was a good country it could be a great country. We're around after 218 years because more than half the time more than half the people have been right, and God has permitted us to stay and go and flourish. I believe that. Do you?

AUDIENCE: Yesss.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's what this is all about. We don't have a bigger problem than the violence which is eating the heart out of this country, and the breakdown of the basic fabric of values that says it is wrong to hurt other people; it is wrong to act in an instant for some momentary advantage in ways that will devastate other people's lives; it is wrong to take this kind of advantage. And we have to find a way out of this that punishes wrongdoers, yes, but that also offers the hand of hope, that rebuilds our people from the grass roots up.

And in a political moment, the Congress walked away from that last week. There are people in my part of the country, good people -- they are in their churches today just like we're here -- who say, we don't break the law, and we go hunting every time they open the season, and we don't want any weapons being banned. These 19 assault weapons, folks -- I had a .22 when I was 12; you don't need an assault weapon to shoot a deer or to kill quail. (Laughter.) If you're that bad a shot, you ought to be doing something else. (Laughter.) You shouldn't be hunting. But their fears are all welled up in them and they scare some of their members of Congress.

Then there are people who represent places where all the children can go to the ballpark, where they've got a place to go swimming in the summertime, where they're in church two or three times a week, and they literally cannot imagine what it is like for some of our children. And so they say, oh, these programs to let these kids play basketball at midnight instead of walk the streets are pork.

I tell you, folks, I will have to, like all the rest of you, answer to God for everything I have done, right or wrong. We all will. I have been a governor. I have presided over the execution of criminals. I have built prison cells. I believe in punishing wrongdoing. I think when people go out and deliberately hurt each other, somebody ought to do something to them and stop it. I believe that. And that's what this bill does.

But I also know that there are countless little children out there, and they could go one way or the other. You know what the best thing about this day to me was? When everybody was asked to come up here, there were all those beautiful young people standing here. They've got a chance now. And we have to give more of them a chance now.

I came here because I needed to hear the sermon. I came here because your church stands for what our country ought to be and where it ought to go. I came here because the Bible says that good Christians are also supposed to be good citizens. And I ask you this whole week to pray for me and pray for the members of Congress; ask us not to turn away from our ministry.

Our ministry is to do the work of God here on Earth. And that starts with giving our children and our families a place in which at least they can be safe and secure. It starts with standing up against this mindless violence which has torn the hearts out of people who are this church and nearly every church in the United States. It starts with trying to put families back together. And it is not the province of any one race. It is increasingly not the province of any region or any economic group. But it savages the poor the worst because that is

where the families are most broken.

And I ask you to pray, and to speak to your friends and neighbors and to hope somehow we will all find the wisdom and the judgment to come back and do the will of God in our ministries, which is to make you as safe as we possibly can.

Thank you so much for giving us this wonderful day with you.
God bless you all. (Applause.)

END1:40 P.M. EDT

DRAFT

July 25, 1995

SPEECH TO THE BICENTENNIAL GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DATE: July 29, 1996
LOCATION: Renaissance Hotel
999 9th St., NW.
Washington, D.C.
TIME: 2:00 p.m.
FROM: Alexis Herman
Ben Johnson

I. PURPOSE

To give remarks at the Bicentennial General Conference of the AME Zion Church. This is an opportunity to expand on the President's commitment to national unity and civil rights, and to thank the organization for their unwavering support of the President's priorities.

II BACKGROUND

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church was founded in 1796 and is the second largest African American Methodist denomination in the U.S. It has over 1,750,000 members worldwide. Those among its most famous members included Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Paul Robeson. Congressman Louis Stokes is a current member. The denomination is headed by a Board of Bishops whose current President is Bishop Joseph Johnson of Little Rock. Bishop Ruben Speaks is the organization's senior Bishop. You met him at the White House during the African American Clergy reception earlier this year.

The Full Gospel ABE Zion Church of Temple Hills, Maryland is the host church for the convention. As you are aware, the church is pastored by the Rev. John Cherry and his wife Diana. You and the President worshiped at Full Gospel ABE Zion Church in August 1994. Additionally, the President cited the work of **the Cherrys** on numerous occasions and during one of his State of the Union Addresses.

The General Conference is a quadrennial meeting and is the supreme body of the ABE Zion Church. You will be addressing an audience of ministerial and lay delegates elected from regional conferences. Some of the issues to be covered during the conference are church burnings, affirmative action, gang violence, welfare reform, family values and health care reform. They are very supportive of the President's efforts to stem the church fires and have publicly applauded him for the excellent manner in which he has handled the crisis. Your appearance at their convention will present to you an excellent opportunity to expand on the President's remarks on national unity and highlight his accomplishments since becoming president. While the ABE Zion Church continues to support us on key issues, they strongly urge the President to hold the line on affirmative action. In addition, the organization remains very interested in his views on welfare reform and health care.

The denomination will also elect two new Bishops from the 15 people being considered, one of whom is a female. Should she be elected, she will be the first woman elected to the Episcopacy in Black Methodism.

III. PARTICIPANTS

2,500 people, including lay leaders and ministers of the church.

IV. SEQUENCE

o Upon arrival at the hotel, you are greeted by:

GREETERS

- Bishop Joseph Johnson, President, Board of Bishops
- Bishop Rueben Speaks, Senior Bishop
- Bishop Milton A. Williams, Host Bishop
- Pastor John A. Cherry, Host Pastor

- o Off-stage announcement of you, accompanied by
- o Hymn, Scripture and Prayer
- o makes brief remarks and introduces you.
- o You make remarks.
- o Upon conclusion of your remarks, you work ropeline and depart.

V. PRESS

Open Press

VI. REMARKS

Speech Writing

could speak the language and talk to the people. And he was one of them, and we're proud of him. (Applause.)

The next two folks I've had the honor of meeting and getting to know a little bit, the Reverend John and the Reverend Diana Cherry of the AME Zion Church in Temple Hills, Maryland. I'd like to ask them to stand. (Applause.) I want to tell you about them. In the early '80s, they left government service and formed a church in a small living room in a small house, in the early '80s. Today that church has 17,000 members. It is one of the three or four biggest churches in the entire United States. It grows by 200 a month. They do it together. And the special focus of their ministry is keeping families together. (Applause.)

Two things they did make a big impression on me. I visited their church once, and I learned they were building a new sanctuary closer to the Washington, D.C., line in a higher crime, higher drug rate area because they thought it was part of their ministry to change the lives of the people who needed them. (Applause.)

The second thing I want to say is, that once Reverend Cherry was at a meeting at the White House with some other religious leaders, and he left early to go back to his church to minister to 150 couples that he had brought back to his church from all over America to convince them to come back together, to save their marriages, and to raise their kids. This is the kind of work that citizens are doing in America. We need more of it, and it ought to be lifted up and supported. (Applause.)

The last person I want to introduce is Jack Lucas from Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Jack, would you stand up? (Applause.) Fifty years ago, in the sands of Iwo Jima, Jack Lucas taught and learned the lessons of citizenship. On February the 20th, 1945, he and three of his buddies encountered the enemy and two grenades at their feet. Jack Lucas threw himself on both of them. In that moment, he saved the lives of his companions, and miraculously in the next instant, a medic saved his life. He gained a foothold for freedom, and at the age of 17, just a year older than his grandson, who is up there with him today, and his son, who is a West Point graduate and a veteran, at 17, Jack Lucas became the youngest Marine in history and the youngest soldier in this century to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. (Applause.)

All these years later, yesterday, here's what he said about that day: "It didn't matter where you were from or who you were, you relied on one another. You did it for your country."

We all gain when we give, and we reap what we sow. That's at the heart of this New Covenant -- responsibility, opportunity and citizenship. More than stale chapters in some remote civics book;