

NAACP DELAGATES AROUSED BY REV. L. H. SULLIVAN

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.—More than 2,000 NAACP convention delegates gave a rousing tribute to Rev. Leon H. Sullivan as the recipient of the NAACP'S coveted Spingarn Medal.

The NAACP cited Rev. Sullivan: "In recognition of the inspiration and resourcefulness with which he has transmuted the social gospel into economic progress for his people;

"In appreciation of his role in preparing his constituents to take advantage of the opportunities won by mobilizing their economic power for group advancement;

"In tribute to his splendid achievement in adapting his church to the social cultural and economic—as well as the spiritual—needs of its community; and

"In admiration of the singular steadfastness with which he has melded religious leadership and social vision for the advancement of Black folk."

Rev. Sullivan is Founder-Chairman of the Board of the Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Philadelphia, and the first Black director of General Motors Corporation.

In his electrifying speech, which was interrupted by applause more than 50 times, Rev. Sullivan discussed the "Steps We Must Take" in order for Black people to have full emanci-

patation in America.

"The first step," Rev. Sullivan said, "is a step in the direction of training and skill preparation. Even to this day, no less than 90 percent of the work being performed by Black Americans is in the non-skilled scope of employment. This is disturbing to me, because I know that by the year 2000, just 29 years hence, one-half of all the non-skilled jobs being performed today will not even exist. New jobs, requiring some minimal technical ability and skill, will have taken their places.

"This means if the Black man does not, on a massive scale, begin to develop skills that will qualify him for the new kind of jobs that are sure to come along in the years that lie ahead, then more and more of our families will have to depend upon doles and relief for their survival."

Rev. Sullivan called on the President and the Congress to "stop playing politics" and pass meaningful manpower legislation to help people with jobs and training.

"It is time that America should take the billions of dollars being spent meaninglessly in Vietnam, and some of the billions of dollars being spent on the space program, and put that money to work eliminating poverty from among the people of this nation," Rev. Sullivan said, "If America can put a man on the moon in outer space, then America can help put a man on his feet in Mississippi."

Rev. Sullivan pointed out that the second step Black people must take is economic development.

"Several weeks ago, I looked at the listing of Fortune's top 1000 industrial enterprises in America, and there was not a single Black-owned enterprise on the list, not even 999th. Something can, and must be done about it.

"We may not have a Rockefeller in the race, but 5,000 of us together can make one; and 100,000 of us can make a Ford Foundation. I want to see America and its free enterprises system work for Black people like it works for white people."

In discussing his "third step--group respect and togetherness--Rev. Sullivan said, "There is nothing the enemy of Black progress wants more than to see us divided and fighting among ourselves. We spend so much time in our various Black organizations vying with each other, that we don't have time left to fight the enemy.

"Rivers flow from many sources to arrive at the same destination. So with the race. Some of us are conservative; some of us are militant; some of us are quiet, some of us are loud; some of us wear dashikis, and some of us wear sport jackets. But we must let the world know that whatever we wear or however we look, we all intend to arrive at the same goal. . . and that goal is freedom for our people. We must not let the white man divide us any longer, and we must not divide ourselves. The emphasis of our future must be: 'together, together, together!'"

Rev. Sullivan said that the fourth step that Black people must take is in Black international awareness.

"Black men will not be free anywhere until Black men are free everywhere. Therefore, we must be concerned with the suffering of our brothers and sisters wherever they may be; in Angola, in Rhodesia and in the Union of South Africa."

In conclusion, Rev. Sullivan told the NAACP delegates, "The four steps I have given you may not be giant steps but they are steps in the right direction. And, I believe, if we take these steps, the day will come when we shall, with the help of God, reach our goal of full emancipation and equal opportunity, and freedom for Black people in America, and around the world."

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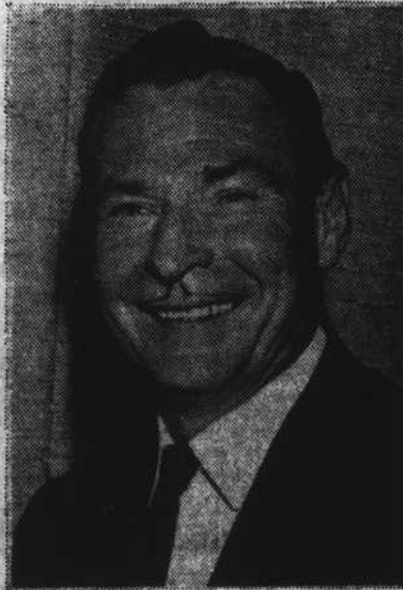
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