

Benjamin L. Hooks

FCC



My first speaking tour as Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has been a heartening one.

Almost immediately after my resignation from the Federal Communications Commission became official, July 27, 1977, I started a week-long string of speaking engagements on the West Coast from Portland, Oregon, to Oakland to Los Angeles, California.

I was singularly impressed by the huge crowds that gathered wherever I went and the enthusiasm they expressed.

More than 5,000 people jammed into Oakland's auditorium. Seven hundred or more crowded into Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church in Portland, Oregon, pastored by Rev. O.B. Williams. Fifteen hundred swarmed into Rev. Elliott Mason's Trinity Baptist Church in Los Angeles.

More than 700 appeared at a high school in Sacramento, and 1,200 souls made it snading-room only in San Francisco's Third Baptist Church of which Rev. Amos Brown is the pastor.

The country outside Washington, D.C., where I had spent the past five years as a member of the FCC, is excitingly different. I am not going to go around knocking the Capital City however. For it is a beautiful urban center, with lots of interesting museums, public parks, a zoo second to none and, of course, the beautiful Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, that is virtually a Taj Ma Hal sitting majestically on the Potomac River. It is also a city that is more than 70 percent Black that is struggling with historical inequities and racism.

What I am talking about, however, are attitudes. In D.C. there is a sophistication and hustle-bustle that combined with a heavy layer of political action, observation and reaction, make it a city like none other in this country -- or the world.

Politics - powerful world politics, are its principal commodity. The high and the mighty flock to its National Airport from all over the world because it is the capital of the most powerful capitalistic nation the world has ever known.

When the President speaks, the international stock market either trembles with bearish shakes or becomes exultantly bullish. Countries in the far-flung corners of the world are often highly sensitive to the actions or inactions of our Congress. Because politics is such a bullish commodity in the Federal City, one is apt to permit his/her perspective to get out of joint and truly believe that when Congress sneezes the country comes down with a cold.

So one must get out into this broad land of ours to appreciate once again the sound common sense of its people, the unflappable cool they possess in matters that seem of extreme political urgency back there in Capital City.

Well, I was indeed heartened to note all this but even more impressed in respect to matters regarding the NAACP and the expressed desire on the part of many of a continuing need for the existence of such a civil rights organization. There was widespread enthusiasm.

People stopped me in the streets everywhere I went expressing this sentiment. In hotels, airports, everywhere, not just at the gatherings (I addressed the National Dental Association; National Medical Association; National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Conventions; I spoke to the Promethean National Organization of Black Armed Service Men of Howard University, etc.), folks expressed this kind of enthusiasm not just for me or what I had said but for the NAACP organization, as well. And they undergirded this sentiment by giving thousands of dollars.

We raised well over \$30,000 on that trip

for the NAACP. And the high point of tour came when two of my old hometown friends from my boyhood in Memphis, Tennessee, walked up and presented me with \$1,000 representing 10 people who cared enough to give generously in support of an organization fighting for our rights.

My heart was brimming. Ms. Verna Canson our able West Coast regional director, shared my deep appreciation. I do hope that all this enthusiastic expression can be translated into additional NAACP memberships. If it is, then we are surely on our way to a bright tomorrow of civil rights triumphs and equality.

Questionnaires

The West Side Community Development Commission has circulated 500 questionnaires among 13,000 West Side citizens to get their input to determine how the 1977-78 Community Block Grant Funds should be spent in upgrading the areas, according to Commission Director H.P. Fitzgerald.

The Commission has also selected 100 citizens from the West Side area to form a Block Grant Blue Ribbon Committee representing every segment of the West Side. The committee has been divided into four groups of twenty-five each, with a team captain as group leader. The teams will hold a series of meetings in the Commission office at 330 West Washington Avenue. The meetings will be held September 19, 20, 21 and 22, beginning at 7:30 p.m. The Team Captains are Mrs. Hazel Geran and Dr. Lonnie Sisson, Mr. Robert Murray, Mr. Dan Curtis and Mr. Thomas Hughes, Fitzgerald stated.

West Side citizens who have not received survey forms may pick one up at the Commission office. All completed surveys should be returned on or before September 23, 1977.

During the past two years Block Grant Funds have been used to install streets, sidewalks and street lights in Vegas Heights and install playground equipment in three mini playground parks on the West Side, according to Fitzgerald.

The City of Las Vegas received a total of \$1,886,000 in Block Grant funds for community service and rehabilitation for 1976-1977. Most of this money was spent on the West Side.

WE CAN

WE CAN (Working to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect) recently received a grant from the Nevada Humanities Committee to present a three part series, Dilemmas In Child Abuse and Neglect. The programs will be held on consecutive Wednesday evenings from October 5 to October 19 in the Plaza Room of the Tropicana Hotel at 8:00 p.m.

Few issues evoke such public outrage and demand for action as child abuse and neglect. Yet few issues are as difficult to resolve. The handling of such cases creates serious dilemmas philosophically, as well as pragmatically. The question of society's right to intervene in the affairs of the family and the consequences of such intervention provide the basis for discussion in this series.

The specific dilemmas to be addressed during these programs include the reporting of suspected cases, the confusing role of law enforcement, and the removal of children from the home as depicted in a mock child abuse trial.

Dilemmas in Child Abuse and Neglect is free and open to the general public. It is presented by WE CAN, Inc. and funded by the Nevada Humanities Committee, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Further information may be obtained by calling 732-8971.

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U S Coast Guard

Gov. Mike O'Callaghan Thursday said applications will be accepted until Dec. 15 for appointments of Nevada young men and women to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

The governor urged interested high school students to determine their eligibility for the academy by meeting with their school counselors.

He said appointments to the Coast Guard Academy are based solely on annual nationwide competition, not on geographical representation, congressional appointments or recommendations by governors.

Applicants for the academy must be unmarried at the time of appointment, have no legal obligation resulting from a previous marriage and must have reached the age of 17 but not 22 by July 1, 1978.

They must also be graduated from high school by June 30 of next year, with three units each in English and mathematics. Applicants must meet basic physical and moral standards required by the Coast Guard.

Application forms may be obtained by writing the Director of Admissions at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn.

O'Callaghan said young Nevadans seeking cadet appointments must also complete one of two examinations before the Dec. 15 deadline. They are the College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing Assessment (ACT).

In addition to their performance on these tests, applicants also will be judged on their high school rank and leadership potential, including participation in high school extracurricular activities, community affairs or part-time employment.

Successful applicants are awarded a cost-free undergraduate education and living expenses. Graduates of the academy gain a bachelor of science degree and are commissioned an ensign in the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard is involved in the safety and saving of lives at sea. This includes search and rescue operations by ship and aircraft, assistance in navigation, operation of icebreakers on polar expeditions and enforcement of marine law.

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