

The Hughes Report



When Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated the S.C.L.C. named Rev. Ralph Abernathy as head of the SCLC. Many thought Rev. Jesse Jackson should have been the new leader. Rev. Jackson went to Chicago, started a branch only to become involved in a disagreement with Dr. Abernathy over the Chicago branch's funds according to the reports. Rev. Jackson then formed PUSH, (People United to Save Humanity) as a national organization. Togetherness is now the order of the day for the two groups.

The parent (SCLC) and the child (PUSH) joined together recently and formed an action coalition for jobs and justice around the theme 'PUT AMERICA BACK TO WORK.'

Rev. Joseph Lowery, President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), was the guest speaker in Chicago at the regular Saturday morning national forum of Operation PUSH and emphasized that, 'We have come to a point in history when we must not only deal with America's head, but we must deal with the head and the heart. Racism has surfaced again in recent years, aided and abetted by economic uncertainty, a lack of a sense of national direction, and a loss of confidence in government.'

He further stated that, 'We realize that out of the 60's and 70's some progress was realized, to be sure. We won some significant battles, but too many of us thought we won the war.' Rev. Lowery continued, 'It is time for the action forces to go back to the streets again. On January 15 of this year, Mr. Carter received a peace prize but few noted that SCLC wasn't inside the church, but 750 of us were on the outside in the cold marching and chanting, 'Jobs Jimmy, jobs Jimmy.'

During a press conference which followed the PUSH meeting, Reverend Jesse Jackson noted that, 'It is clear that there is a greater correlation between pressure and progress than between presidents and progress. We must apply pressure from the bottom up and decide that whom-ever is in the White House, they cannot ignore my house or your house. We want jobs. We need jobs. And until every American has a job or an income, we should not allow this country to rest.'

When asked why the new SCLC-PUSH coalition had decided to turn to the streets, Rev. Jackson said, 'Right now the poor and unemployed are poor unemployed and invisible. We must engage in the drama of mass direct action - marches, demonstrations and even civil disobedience, if necessary - so as to expose the job crisis and make the socially comfortable, uncomfortable. Only if we act in massive numbers can we force those in power to respond to our needs.'

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Across The Nation

News From Home Folks

This feature is a news compilation from more than 100 black-owned and oriented newspapers in this nation. It deals with what blacks, who are all-too-often little recognized, are doing to promote full participation in American life by black Americans. It is thus a salute from all of our readers for unsung heroes... and is designed to be a challenge for all of us to keep on doing our very best.

We remain grateful to our local black press for many reasons, and especially so at this time for enabling our readers "Across the Nation" to see more of what happened in last year's elections in order to help us prepare for the much larger struggle ahead in 1980.

From the Washington Informer comes word as to how our traditionally most powerful and independent leaders helped usher a new mayor into City Hall in the District of Columbia. Mayor Marion Barry had the overwhelming support of the city or district black clergy... and won! The Informer relates:

Marion Barry received the endorsement of 64 ministers at a press conference where he stated:

"This is truly a joyous occasion for me to be surrounded and supported by this fine group of our community's spiritual leaders. Despite opinions to the contrary, I feel at home among you because all of my life, the church and church people have been an important part of my existence. I welcome your support today and feel stronger because of it."

"...although we may view from a different perspective the major issues facing our community, we certainly share a common vision—that of seeing that all of the citizens of the District have a decent life.

After taking office, I will establish three systematic means of maintaining contact and communication with the religious community; (1) having a liaison between the mayor's office and the churches; (2) forming an interdenominational ministers advisory committee; and (3) arranging to meet with you at least four times a year at fellowship breakfasts, luncheons or other kinds of gatherings.

"We will not always see eye-to-eye, but the mayor's office will always be open to you to discuss your concerns and listen to your counsel."

In a much more controversial vein, a background story appeared in the Greensboro, North Carolina Peacemaker before last fall's elections, discussing the possibility of black support for Massachusetts Senator Edward M. Kennedy. U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young had noted that he was convinced at that time that Senator Kennedy could capture a decisive share of the black vote, if he chose to challenge President Carter in 1980.

The Peacemaker quoted Ambassador Young as saying that Senator Kennedy probably has the best support of President Carter of anybody in the Senate." Later, as it turned out, both President Carter and Senator Kennedy

played, perhaps, the most decisive roles in the defeat of Senator Edward W. Brooke, the most powerful political symbol which black Americans have had since Reconstruction.

The note appearing in the Peacemaker provides us with a backdrop against which to decide whether are best off with "white friends" or with our own black leadership, even though some blemishes may appear upon them. Blacks have not taken two congressional seats seen as "black congressional seats"; one in Brooklyn, the other in Atlanta. The issue here is for each and all of us to ponder... and then to decide and act as our consciences may decree.

The Greensboro, North Carolina Peacemaker tells of a happy election, one in which all black Americans should rejoice. The Peacemaker relates:

The first black sheriff of a North Carolina county since the Reconstruction Era was voted into office last week.

John H. Baker Jr., a former professional football defensive end with the Pittsburgh Steelers and the Los Angeles Rams, defeated Republican candidate Clyde R. Cook, Jr., a Garner detective, by a narrow 1,100 vote margin in the race for the Wake County sheriff's office.

Baker walked off with most of Raleigh's city precincts in his pocket, while the county precincts including the predominantly white suburbs went to Cook.

Still, Baker denied that the

contest was racially split. "Race played no part in this election," he maintained. "I campaigned all around this county and the people treated me with respect as I did them."

The 6-foot-6, 265 pound Baker called his victory "the proudest moment in my life."

"We will be protecting your life and property at all times, seven days a week and 24 hours a day," Baker told his cheering supporters after the victory. "I'm looking forward to having the best law-enforcement agency in North Carolina."

Baker also said his outstanding National Football League career prepared him for law-enforcement work. "I've learned two things from my years in it," he declared. "One...the value of teamwork and two... discipline. These two things are important in law-enforcement. You must have both."

Since the vote was so close, Cook questioned some of the precinct results, but in his concession statement Cook said: "I want to shake John Baker's hand."

Our readers may wish to address congratulatory messages and messages of encouragement to the papers which report happenings of interest or concern to us. Such messages may be sent to the editors or other persons directly by simply addressing them, using the name of the paper, c/o Black Resources, Inc., 410 Central Park West, PH C, New York, N.Y. 10025.

The boards of SCLC and PUSH have decided to meet within the next three weeks to determine their action strategies, tactics and timetable. Rev. Jackson indicated that he and Rev. Lowery had had some discussion about the possibility of marching 5,000 people in 20 cities on August 28 of this year, the 16th anniversary of the famous '1963 March on Washington,' though a conclusion had not yet been reached on an exact date.

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