

A SERIES: THE BLACK FAMILY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE 80'S

PART VIII — FOR OUR CHILDREN...

THE QUEST FOR TRUTH... OUR BEST LIVING REALITY

By Maudra Jones

... SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

*A man may live out all his days
Tensing every nerve to do his best
To find at last a dead goal, a false road.
How may he know?
Is there no guide for man?
No shining light by which his steps are led?
Through all the chaos of his years
He seeks to know.
Some say, "Do this, do that,"
Or, "Give up your goods. Hold nothing back
And free yourself to find YOUR way."
Again, "Commit your way to something good
That makes upon your life the great demand.
Place upon the altar all hopes and dreams
Leaving no thing untouched, no thing unclaimed."
And yet, no peace...
"What more?" I ask with troubled mind.
The answer... moving stillness.
And then
The burning stare of the eyes of God
Pierces my inmost core
Beyond my strength, beyond my weakness,
Beyond what I am,
Beyond what I would be
Until my refuge is in Him alone.
"This... This above all else I claim," God says.*

Howard Thurman

What Dr. Thurman referred to as reaching beyond strengths and weaknesses, and what Gardner described as self-renewal, is expressed by Harding in such terms as: "resur-

recting the most ardent hopes of all humankind;" "creating a new future for ourselves with others;" "sensing our great power to transcend history;" "being in touch with all the extra-

ordinary, transformative powers within our being;" "stretching out to remake the realities of our world;" "lifting our eyes from the past toward the future, at times venturing beyond past and future;" "being tied to all the long, best freedom struggles of the past and the most creative dreams of the future;" "sensing a call to rendezvous with the life-giving forces of the morning;" and "being a powerful testimony to the possibilities of human transformation...."

There is so much wis-



Maudra Jones

dom in Harding's writings, as there is so much love and compassion and hope for his people—our people. His is indeed a powerful testimony, as he relates being "a part of

a cloud of working witnesses... a member of an ongoing company of investigators, participants, critics and testifiers" (among whom he names W.E.B. DuBois, C.R.L. James, Lerone Bennett, Lorraine Hansberry, Langston Hughes and Robert Brisbane). Harding is doing what we should all be doing — carrying on a glorious tradition. His writings are a living testimony, as he puts it, "coming out of (his) encounters with the documents of the past—the personal and social upheavals of the last century of radical movement, and the constant groundings with my brothers and sisters in the river."

It was after several readings of his brilliant introduction to "There is a River" that I discovered the source of his expressed renewed urgency to emphasize the role of religious and spirituality in the freedom struggle of our people. This discovery was made when I read the Psalm 46:4-11 ("There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most high... God is in the midst of her; she shall not

be moved... the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge...")

And even before this revelation and what emerged as my own understanding of the deeper insights of this masterful work by Harding, you may recall that I shared a part of his "testimony" in an earlier conversation about our history. For purposes of

transformative power that humans create and that creates them, us, and makes them, us, new persons. So we Black people are the river; the river is us. The river is in us, created by us, flowing out of us, surrounding us and this entire nation...."

If we, like Harding and others in the cloud of working witnesses are to

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highlighting this discussion, I offer the following, more complete account of Harding's description of the "river":

"Now with the passing of time and the deepening of our vision, it is possible to recognize that we are the river, and at the same time that the river is more than us—generations more, millions more. Through such an opening, we may sense that the river of Black struggle is people, but it is also hope, the movement, the transfor-

become empowered with a sense of truth, of meaning and vision to find solutions to the problems of this decade, then we must renew our search for meaning—our quest for vision...

(To be continued)

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Church mother had 92d birthday last month

LULA JAMES THIS WEEK'S CHURCH HONOREE

This is the sixth week that Mid City Furniture, 501 North Main, has saluted the CHURCH MOTHER of the week. This week's honoree is LULA JAMES, totally blind, of the True Love Missionary Baptist Church, 1941 No. "H" St., pastored by Rev. I.W. Wilson. She had her 92d birthday on April 9.

One of 12 children, Lula James was born near Magnolia, Ark. There were 7 girls and 5 boys. Now only two survive: Lula James and her brother Alfred Talley who currently resides in Detroit, Mich.

She moved to Las Vegas during 1975 at the

invitation of her niece, Ida Cooper and has been a part of the Cooper family since that date.

"Do I like Las Vegas?"



Lula James

No, it's too low for me," she responded when

asked her feeling about this part of the country. "The climate is not right for me. I now stay full of cold. Before coming here, I didn't know anything about a cold. It's so hot here—no rain—it's just awful."

Despite her age, Lula James has very smooth skin—there's hardly a wrinkle in her face. She is very alert.

Her pastor Rev. Wilson says, "She can cook up a storm. She had us over on her birthday and she cooked the entire meal."

"She's also quite a baker," added Rev. Wilson's wife Rebecca. "She is quite amazing."

As to her hobbies or

avocation, Lula James says she enjoys going periodically to the Blind Center. There she is able to make baby feeders, key chains, balloons, mattress buttons, etc.

When asked what she does with her remaining time during the day, she gleefully added: "I like to lay down and sleep all day if I can. I can't stand too much fuss."

Rev. Wilson and congregation are very proud of Lula James. She is very conscientious and a dedicated church worker.

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