

UBF

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- One of the most historically racist organizations in America, the American Red Cross, received a disproportionate amount of funds from UGF for the amount of service it rendered to the Black community; in fact, the Red Cross prides itself on ignoring the Black community in both its hiring and service policy.

- Certain White agencies which serve a predominantly White clientele have continued to receive funds from UGF although all these agencies are able to receive large amounts from other sources and have not had their request reviewed for their relevance to the predominantly Black community of D.C. These agencies are: The USO, Red Cross, Big Brothers of the National Capital area, Boy's Club, the Girl Scouts, Catholic Charities, Jewish agencies, Summer Outings Committee of Family and Child Services, Travelers Aid Society, Salvation Army, YMCA and YWCA.

- Of the budget and membership committee of 12 agencies, 5 committees did not elect a single Black for the 1970 term and the remaining 7 elected one Black a piece as their concession to tokenism.

- The steering committee of HWC is dominated by racist interests—business, union and government.

- Grassroots Blacks have been systematically excluded from all participation in any of the policy-making decisions of HWC and UGF.

In light of these charges, the Black United Front proposed that fund-raising efforts for needy agencies should be channelled elsewhere. At this juncture, Dr. Rolark was inspired to proffer the concept of a United Black Fund. He was joined in his effort by the Rev. Douglas F. Moore, then head of the Black United Front.

It was on the steps of Federal City College (now the University of the District of Columbia) that Dr. Rolark made the historic announcement of the launching of a new charity fund, the United Black Fund, the first Black fund to receive tax exempt status in any city in the United States. (This status was not obtained, however, without a stiff, but courageous, fight by Attorney Wilhelmina Rolark—the founder's talented wife and astute legal mind—with city and federal officials.)

Rolark boldly announced that the new charity fund would “challenge the controversial United Givers Fund.” He explained to the assembled students, who had been evacuated from the college auditorium because of a bomb scare, that “The United Givers Fund has been



Dr. Rolark, holding the April 1980 National BLACK MONITOR, featuring the National Council of Negro Women, and Dr. Dorothy Height, National President of NCNW, stand beneath a portrait of Mary McLeod Bethune, Founder of NCNW.

in existence for many years...and we feel it has not served Black people.”

UBF, Dr. Rolark said, would be administered almost wholly by volunteers “so that every available dollar will go directly to the people who need it most.” The desired volunteer staff was recruited among the students of Howard University.

Shirley Chisholm, then a Congresswoman in the U.S. House of Representatives from New York, was appointed the first honorary chairperson of the United Black Fund. The first two agencies approved to receive assistance from the proceeds of the fund were the Stoddard Baptist Home for the elderly and the Blackman's Development Center for the treatment of drug addicts.

The United Black Fund is here to stay,” President Rolark stated, “and as promised we're making our report to the public.” The proceeds from the first annual drive (1970) amounted to less than \$5,000. In 1971 UBF raised \$37,000. The largest donation was \$500 and the smallest was ten cents. “The most important fact is,” Rolark exclaimed,

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Dr. Rolark receives 1974 Gold Award from HEW Secretary Donald Weinberger.