

Local News

NAACP head urges audience to continue civil rights work

By Lee Strong

Saying "We cannot afford to give in to apathy or laziness," Benjamin L. Hooks, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, challenged blacks to continue their fight for civil rights.

Hooks, speaking at St. John Fisher College Monday, April 18, said blacks must remember the words of Elijah Muhammed, leader of the Black Muslims: "Nobody can save us from us but us." Thus, Hooks said, blacks must not depend on others to preserve and build upon the hard-earned rights gained by minorities in the last three decades.

The talk, sponsored by the St. John Fisher Student Association, was billed as a discussion of issues involving civil rights and black America, and Hooks was careful to remain focused on the announced subject. Although pressed several times to endorse the presidential candidacy of Jesse Jackson, especially in light of New York state's Democratic primary to be held the next day, Hooks told his audience of approximately 125 that the NAACP's charter forbids endorsing candidates. Instead, he urged his listeners to register and become actively involved in the political process.

Rather than talking about politics, Hooks spoke of this country's record on civil rights, calling it a mixed bag but acknowledging that progress had taken place. He said that the country now has 303 black mayors and more than 6,500 locally elected black officials.

"When I was growing up (in Mississippi), if a black man or woman even offered to run for office, (we) would have found their body in the river," he noted.

Hooks cited as other signs of progress the fact that more than one million black students are currently enrolled in post-secondary education; that the head of the Ford Foundation, Franklin Thomas, is black; and that Bill Gray, a black from Philadelphia, is one of the most powerful and influential representatives in Congress.

These achievements are "a bright and glowing sign that we've come so far," Hooks declared.

At the same time, he noted, "There's also a darker side." The seven and a half years of the Reagan administration "have not been kind to the cause of minorities and women in this nation," Hooks claimed.

"Here is an administration that has done all that it could to reverse progress." Citing President Reagan's veto of the Civil Rights

Restoration Act earlier this year as one example, Hooks claimed that the current administration's policies have forced blacks to struggle to keep civil-rights laws on the books.

"We are spending an enormous amount of time trying to regain what we already though we had," he noted.

Hooks said that discrimination is still strong in the United States, and pointed to such examples as the violence that occurred in Forsyth County, Georgia, in January of 1987. Civil rights activists had marched through the county protesting the fact that blacks had not been allowed to live in the county since 1912. They were greeted by angry, jeering crowds, throwing bricks and stones, and carrying signs bearing such sayings as "James Earl Ray — An American Hero" and "South Africa, we'll trade our blacks for your whites."

Hooks, who was among the marchers, said that when he looked at the waiting crowd, "I saw hate etched on the faces of people that I haven't seen in a long time."

Such incidents of overt discrimination have become less frequent in the last 20 years he said, but they have been replaced by subtler forms of discrimination. Instead of being told they didn't get the promotion or can't have the apartment because of their skin color, today's blacks are told that someone

was better qualified or had more experience, or that all the rooms have been rented.

He also said blacks have learned to look for code words used to conceal prejudice. For example, when politicians speak of Jesse Jackson's campaign for president, the code word that keeps appearing is "electable." The word is rarely used when discussing white male candidates, but appears frequently in discussions of black or female candidates.

To counter continuing discrimination and to further the cause of civil rights, Hooks called for action in several areas.

First, blacks should register and use the power of the vote to influence local and national policies. They should also be willing to form coalitions with other groups working for justice.

Finally, blacks — particularly young blacks — "must be willing to remember and support the institutions that brought us across the troubled waters of the past," Hooks declared.

Directly addressing the black students in the audience, he said, "You're here because somebody paid the price ... This generation must not be the first generation to let things go backwards."

Hooks concluded his talk by again calling for ongoing efforts to ensure an end to discrimination in this country. Blacks cannot solely depend on others — including God — to do the work for them, he said.

"I believe God and in the power of prayer," Hooks declared. But "when we've done our best, (then) God can and does do the rest."

Bishop to ordain Rev. Mr. Timothy T. Brown



Bishop Matthew H. Clark will ordain the Rev. Mr. Timothy T. Brown to the priesthood in ceremonies beginning at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Henrietta. All are welcome to attend the ordination ceremony.

Deacon Brown, the son of Robert and Maryanne Brown of St. Pius X Parish in Chili, has served at Good Shepherd since being ordained to the diaconate on May 30, 1987. He is a graduate of St. Pius X Elementary School; Gates-Chili High School; Monroe Community College, where he earned an associate's

degree in business administration; and the State University of New York College at Brockport, where he earned a bachelor's degree in political science.

From 1983-1987, Deacon Brown attended Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall University, graduating with a master of divinity degree.

He has completed field-education assignments at St. Joseph's Parish in Newark, N.J.; Ridgewood General Hospital in Ridgewood, N.J.; and Good Shepherd in Henrietta.

Two days after his ordination then-Father Brown will two celebrate Masses of thanksgiving. The first will take place at 9 a.m. on Sunday, April 24, at Good Shepherd, and will be followed by a noon Mass for the St. Pius X community.

Diocesan Appointments



Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following diocesan appointments:

Father Michael J. Bausch from executive director of the Genesee-Valley Office of Social Ministry to pastor of St. Helen's Church, Gates, effective June 28, 1988.

Father William G. Eades from parochial vicar of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Irondequoit, to sabbatical assistance as temporary parochial vicar of St. Mary's Church, Elmira, effective June 28 through December 31, 1988.

Father Steven R. Kraus from parochial vicar of St. Mary's Church, Elmira, to temporary administrator of same during the sabbatical of the pastor, **Father James E. Boyle**.

Susanna Becker appointed liturgy director

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the appointment of Susanna M. Becker, associate director of parish worship, as director of the diocesan Office of Liturgy. The appointment marks the first time the post has been filled by someone other than a cleric or religious. It will become effective July 1.

Becker succeeds Father Thomas Mull as liturgy director. Father Mull was recently appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral. Becker joined the Office of Liturgy in the

summer of 1986. A native of Long Island, she holds a master's degree in theology with a concentration in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame, and a bachelor's degree in theology from Molloy College on Long Island.

Prior to pursuing theology studies, Becker, who also holds an associate's degree in nursing, served as a public health nurse on Long Island. She also served as director of religious education and director of worship for New Jersey and Long Island parishes.

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