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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

REMARKS TO THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1975

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - BAPTIST CONVENTION

THANK YOU, DR. JACKSON (Convention President)

DR. BURSON (Convention Director)

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

(ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS)

IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE AND PRIVILEGE FOR ME  
TO BE HERE TODAY -- BEFORE ONE OF THE STRONGEST AND  
MOST IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONS IN OUR SOCIETY -- THE CHURCH.

AS YOU KNOW, IT WAS FREEDOM -- RELIGIOUS

FREEDOM -- THAT INSPIRED MANY OF OUR EARLY SETTLERS

TO COME TO THESE FARAWAY SHORES TO FOUND OUR NATION.



THE DREAM OF BLACKS IN AMERICA ACTUALLY BEGAN

LONG BEFORE OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. HISTORY

TELLS US THAT BLACKS WERE AMERICAN PILGRIMS AND PIONEERS.

AS MANY AS 20 BLACKS CAME ASHORE AT JAMESTOWN IN 1619,

JUST 12 YEARS AFTER THE FIRST SETTLERS ARRIVED.

IN BOSTON TODAY, THE CRISPUS ATTUCKS'

MONUMENT STANDS PROUDLY AS A TRIBUTE TO A BLACK MAN

WHO DIED WHILE LEADING A PROTEST AGAINST THE BRITISH

SIX YEARS BEFORE OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

AS EARLY AS THE 1770'S, YOUR BAPTIST FAITH

BEGAN TO TAKE A FOOTHOLD IN AMERICA. AT THAT TIME,

BLACKS WERE ORGANIZING BAPTIST STATE CONVENTIONS IN OUR

VARIOUS COLONIES.



THROUGH THE YEARS, RELIGION HAS ALWAYS BEEN

A VERY IMPORTANT FORCE IN AMERICAN LIFE. IT HAS BEEN

ONE OF THE PILLARS OF BLACK COMMUNITIES -- AS WITNESS

TO YOUR FAITH IN GOD AND ALL THAT IS RIGHT.

AS WE LOOK BACK ON SOME OF THE SHORTCOMINGS  
OF AMERICA, SLAVERY LEAVES A SAD AND SORRY CHAPTER  
IN OUR HISTORY. BUT A POWERFUL BELIEF IN GOD ENABLED  
MANY BLACKS TO ENDURE THOSE DARK DAYS AND YEARS.

AS WE BEGIN TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF OUR NATION,  
WE HAVE ANOTHER HISTORIC TRIUMPH TO CELEBRATE --  
OUR VICTORY OVER THAT TRAGIC INJUSTICE -- WHERE ALL  
OF GOD'S PEOPLE WALK FREE IN THE LIGHT OF A NEW DAY.

EQUALITY, IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDING  
FATHERS, IS NOT YET A FULL REALITY FOR EVERY AMERICAN,  
I AM SORRY TO SAY. MINORITIES AND WOMEN STILL  
DO NOT PARTICIPATE EQUALLY IN EMPLOYMENT. THEY  
DO NOT SHARE MANY ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCES  
OF OUR NATION.

YET THE STRUGGLE GOES ON. AND IT MUST CONTINUE UNTIL

THE VISION OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS AND THE DREAM OF

MARTIN LUTHER KING, DR. JACKSON AND OTHERS HAVE BECOME

A REALITY.

HISTORY HAS NOT RECORDED ACCURATELY THE

COUNTLESS CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY BLACKS TO AMERICA.

YET, TIMES ARE CHANGING AS WE BEGIN OUR BICENTENNIAL

CELEBRATION. AS PRESIDENT, I WISH TO HELP BRING ABOUT

THIS CHANGE BY RECALLING SOME IMPORTANT BLACK CONTRIBUTIONS

TO OUR HISTORY.

WHO WILL EVER FORGET DR. GEORGE WASHINGTON

CARVER AND HIS EXPERIMENTS WITH THE PEANUT AND SWEET POTATO

WHICH WERE THE BASIS FOR MORE THAN 400 DIFFERENT PRODUCTS?

OR LEWIS LATIMER -- THE SON OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE --

WHO INVENTED THE FIRST INCANDESCENT ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB WITH

A CARBON FILAMENT, AND WHO ALSO HELPED ALEXANDER GRAHAM

BELL DEVELOP THE TELEPHONE? OR DOCTOR CHARLES DREW WHO

DEVELOPED THE APPARATUS FOR PRESERVING BLOOD PLASMA.

IN THE FIELD OF POLITICS, PROGRESS HAS BEEN SLOW  
BUT TODAY THERE ARE MORE THAN 3,500 BLACK ELECTED OFFICIALS IN  
THE THE UNITED STATES -- INCLUDING 135 MAYORS -- AND THOSE  
NUMBERS ARE INCREASING EACH YEAR. THERE WILL BE MORE  
AND MORE AND MORE.



AND THERE WILL BE SOLID, SPLENDID NATIONAL LEADERS LIKE

SENATOR ED BROOKE AND OTHERS IN THE CONGRESS -- PROVIDING

THE DEDICATED LEADERSHIP THAT OUR COUNTRY NEEDS.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE IS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR

DEMOCRACY. I WAS PROUD TO HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT

OF THE BATTLE TO PASS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT IN 1965 AND TO

EXTEND AND BROADEN THAT LANDMARK LEGISLATION BY SIGNING THE

NEW MEASURE ONLY LAST MONTH.

IT REPRESENTS MY FAITH IN THE DESIRE OF BLACKS AND OTHER

MINORITY CITIZENS TO STRENGTHEN OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM FOR

THE GOOD OF ALL AMERICANS.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACKS CROSS ALL WALKS OF

AMERICAN LIFE -- INCLUDING THE TRAGEDY OF WAR. IN OUR

HISTORIC BATTLES, THE BLOOD OF THE BLACK SOLDIER, SAILOR,

AIRMAN OR MARINE HAS RUN JUST AS FREELY AS THAT OF OTHER

AMERICANS DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY.

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE AMERICAN MUSIC,  
ARTS, CULTURE, SCIENCE, MEDICINE -- ALMOST ANYTHING THAT  
IS CONSIDERED AMERICAN -- WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING THE GREAT  
CONTRIBUTION OF BLACKS. MANY OF US REMEMBER THESE NAMES  
BUT IT IS WELL TO PAY THEM FORMAL TRIBUTE HERE AS WE SPEAK OF  
OUR NATION'S HISTORY AND THE AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL.

PHILLIS WHEATLEY, ONE OF AMERICA'S FIRST GREAT

BLACK WRITERS . . . LEMUEL HAYNES, A MINISTER, WHO SERVED

AT LEXINGTON . . . PETER SALEM AND SALEM POOR WHO WERE

SINGLED OUT FOR GALLANTRY AT THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL . . .

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, THE DISTINGUISHED EDUCATOR . . .

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, THE MAGNETIC ORATOR . . . HARRIET TUBMAN,

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD "CONDUCTOR" . . . DANIEL HALE WILLIAMS

FOR HIS PIONEERING WORK IN OPEN HEART SURGERY . . . A. PHILLIP

RANDOLPH AND HIS EFFORTS FOR THE WORKER . . .

WALTER WHITE AND ROY WILKINS OF THE N-A-A-C-P . . .

WHITNEY YOUNG, JUNIOR, OF THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE . . .

POET PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR . . . THE REVEREND LEON SULLIVAN IN

JOB TRAINING . . . GENERAL CHAPPIE JAMES IN THE MILITARY . . .



IN MUSIC, CONTRALTO MARIAN ANDERSON, DUKE ELLINGTON,

(LOU-EE)

LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND MANY OTHERS . . . IN SPORTS, JESSE OWENS,

JOE LOUIS, MUHAMMAD ALI, JACKIE ROBINSON, HENRY AARON --

AND OF COURSE, THE INCREDIBLE LOU BROCK AND BOB GIBSON.

THESE MEN AND WOMEN GAVE AND STILL GIVE PRIDE AND

DIGNITY TO OUR PEOPLE AND HONOR TO OUR NATION.      MANY OF

THEIR NAMES HAVE VIRTUALLY BECOME INSTITUTIONS IN OUR COUNTRY.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT THE CHURCH HAS BEEN A MAJOR  
INFLUENCE IN BLACK ACCOMPLISHMENTS. WHEN WE THINK OF  
FREEDOM -| INCLUDING FREEDOM OF RELIGION -| THE NATIONAL  
BAPTIST CONVENTION STANDS AS A MONUMENT AND TESTAMENT TO  
THE STRENGTH OF SPIRITUAL CONVICTION AND COMMITMENT.

WITH MORE THAN SIX MILLION MEMBERS, THE NATIONAL BAPTIST

CONVENTION GIVES TESTIMONY TO THE INDIVIDUAL INTEGRITY AND

DIGNITY OF THE BLACK AMERICAN. I WOULD BE NEGLIGENT IF

I DID NOT PAY TRIBUTE IN THE HIGHEST SENSE TODAY TO THE UNTIRING,

UNSELFISH WORK OF DOCTOR JACKSON, YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADER FOR

MORE THAN TWO DECADES.

MANY OF THE TRADITIONAL BLACK COLLEGES WERE FOUNDED

BY THE CHURCH. THE FIRST BLACK SENATOR, HIRAM REVELS,

WAS A MINISTER. PRINCE HALL MASONS, ONE OF THE OLDEST

BLACK FRATERNAL GROUPS, TRACES ITS ORIGIN BACK TO 1787.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, PRINCE HALL WAS A MINISTER.

IN OUR OWN TIMES, DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER KING,

DOCTOR JACKSON AND OTHER CLERGYMEN LED THE CIVIL RIGHTS

MOVEMENT -- INSPIRED BY THE TEACHINGS OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

THE BLACK CHURCH SAW THE NEED TO CONCENTRATE

EARLY ON EDUCATION. LET ME ADD THAT THE ISSUE IN 1837,

WHEN CHEYNEY STATE COLLEGE WAS FOUNDED IN PENNSYLVANIA AS

THE FIRST BLACK INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING, WAS QUALITY

EDUCATION. THE NEED TODAY IS STILL QUALITY EDUCATION.

I ASSURE YOU HERE TODAY THAT I STAND FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

FOR EVERY AMERICAN -- NOT ONE SINGLE CHILD IN THIS COUNTRY

IS EXCLUDED.

WITH REASON,

WITH CALM,

WITH SINCERITY

AND SOME PRAYERS FROM ALL OF US, WE WILL MASTER THESE TRIALS

AND TRIBULATIONS AND BECOME A GREATER NATION BECAUSE OF THEM.



THE NEED FOR STRONG CHURCH LEADERSHIP IS JUST AS

GREAT TODAY AS IT WAS 200 YEARS AGO OR A CENTURY AGO.

I FIRMLY BELIEVE ( THERE SHOULD BE MORE CHURCH LEADERSHIP IN  
THIS COUNTRY.

WE SEE ENOUGH OF MATERIAL POWER.

WHAT THE AMERICAN

PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW AND FEEL MORE OFTEN IS THE SPIRITUAL

POWER OF THE CHURCH, SCHOOL AND FAMILY IN OUR LIVES.

AS I LOOK OUT ON THIS GREAT CONVENTION HERE TODAY,

I SEE A GIANT FAMILY. ALL OF US ARE BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

THIS IS A MAGNIFICENT CONCEPT BECAUSE THE FAMILY IS THE WORLD'S

BASIC SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UNIT.

I BELIEVE WE DETERMINE THE COURSE OF OUR LIVES, FOR THE MOST

PART, IN THE FAMILY HOME. IT IS THE HOME WHICH TEACHES

BASIC PRINCIPLES -- THE IMPERISHABLE QUALITIES OF TRUTH,

INTEGRITY, UNSELFISHNESS AND LOVE.

SOCIETY HAS UNDERGONE VAST CHANGES IN THE PAST

GENERATION AND NEW IDEAS ARE CONSTANTLY INFLUENCING OUR LIVES.

NEW MATERIALISM, THE PRESSURES OF MODERN LIFE, NEW ATTITUDES,

SOCIAL VALUES, CRIME IN OUR INNER CITIES -- ALL OF THESE

GREATLY AFFECT THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF THE FAMILY.

ALL OF US HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO STAND AND SUPPORT

THE STANDARDS WE BELIEVE IN.

AS RELIGIOUS PEOPLE,

STAND UP FOR YOUR FAITH.

I STAND WITH YOU.

WE BELIEVE IN THE SAME GOD.

WHEREVER I GO, PEOPLE SAY:

~~'WE'RE PRAYING FOR YOU . . . YOU ARE IN OUR~~

PRAYERS."

THIS HAS BEEN A TREMENDOUS SOURCE OF INNER

STRENGTH AND PEACE FOR ME.



IT INSPIRES ME TO PRAY HARDER, WHEN I GET ON MY OWN KNEES,

FOR GOD'S GUIDANCE. AND IT REMINDS ME THAT I DO NOT

ACT ALONE -- BUT FOR AND WITH YOU AND ALL OUR FELLOW CITIZENS.

FOR LIFE TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE -- TO BUILD A GREATER,  
FINER NATION -- WE MUST APPEAL TO HIGHER MOTIVES THAN FEAR . . .  
HIGHER BELIEFS THAN PASSING FANCY OR FAD . . . HIGHER  
ASPIRATIONS THAN THE LAW. WE MUST APPEAL TO THE HIGHEST  
MOTIVE AND ASPIRATION OF ALL -- THE CONCEPT OF OUR  
SPIRITUAL DESTINY.

THE WORLD'S AND THIS NATION'S GREATEST PROBLEMS

CAN BE SOLVED ONLY BY SINCERE CHANGES OF THE WILL AND HUMAN

HEART.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS NOT SO MUCH BASED ON HOW MUCH ENERGY  
AND STEEL WE CAN PRODUCE -- ALTHOUGH THESE ARE VITAL  
TO OUR EXISTENCE -- BUT THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS BASED  
ON THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT WE, AS INDIVIDUAL  
CITIZENS, ARE WILLING TO COMMIT TO OTHERS AND ACCEPT OURSELVES.

WE SPEAK OF THE COMMON MAN AND WOMAN IN AMERICA.

THIS IS A GREAT AND NOBLE THOUGHT FOR IT CONVEYS

THE DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN. BUT I OFFER YOU HERE

TODAY A GREATER AND NOBLER GOAL FOR WHICH TO STRIVE --

THE COMMUNION OF AMERICANS, / THE COMING TOGETHER TO FACE A

COMMON DESTINY AS ONE PEOPLE, / ONE NATION DEDICATED NOT ONLY

TO THE PRESERVATION BUT TO THE EXTENSION OF THAT UNITY.

THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT COMPETITION

IN ALL WALKS OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE STRENGTHENS OUR COUNTRY.

AS A PEOPLE, WE BELIEVE IN COMPETITION. TODAY, AS NEVER

BEFORE, BLACKS ARE COMPETING IN OUR SOCIETY AND AMERICA

IS BETTER FOR IT. THIS IS THE AMERICAN DREAM BEING FULFILLED.

MANY OF THE PROBLEMS OF MODERN LIVING CANNOT BE  
DEALT WITH THROUGH LEGISLATION, \ THROUGH GOVERNMENT MONEY.  
THEY CAN ONLY BE SOLVED FROM WITHIN THE HOME, \ WITHIN THE  
COMMUNITY, \ AND WITHIN THE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM  
OF COMPETITION.

THAT'S WHERE EACH OF YOU COMES IN -- FOR YOU

REPRESENT THE VAST MAJORITY OF BLACKS IN THIS COUNTRY

WHO SUPPORT YOUR FAMILY, EDUCATE YOUR CHILDREN, PAY YOUR

TAXES, CAST YOUR VOTES AND SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH.



THOSE OF YOU HERE ARE TEACHING ALL OF US IN AMERICA

A GREAT LESSON. THAT IS: THE PROBLEMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

ARE NOT SO MUCH BURDENS TO CARRY AS THEY ARE AVENUES

TO ACHIEVEMENT. THE END OF THE JOURNEY IS NOT SO IMPORTANT

AS THE FACT THAT WE ARE ON THE RIGHT ROAD.

EVERY CITIZEN HAS A RIGHT TO THE MEANS NECESSARY FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF HIS MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE.      THAT SAME  
CITIZEN -- EVERY CITIZEN -- HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROMOTE  
THE GOOD OF SOCIETY AS A MEMBER OF IT.      ALL AMERICANS  
MUST BE FREE.      AND THOSE WHO ENJOY FREEDOM MUST GIVE  
FREEDOM TO OTHERS.

NO DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS HAS EVER SURPASSED

THE GOLDEN RULE.      IT IS OUR JOB -- YOURS AND MINE --

TO LIVE THE GOLDEN RULE AND THUS FORTIFY THE DECLARATION

OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE WORLD HAS MANY ROADS TO ACCOMPLISHMENT.

MOST OF THEM ARE NEITHER HIGH NOR LOW. THEY ARE  
MIDDLE ROADS. I BELIEVE THE MIDDLE ROAD - AVOIDING  
THE EXTREMES + IS AMERICA'S SUREST PATH TO CONTINUED  
ACHIEVEMENT.

LET US, \ THEREFORE, \ GO FORWARD TOGETHER TO BUILD

A NEW AND BETTER AMERICA.

LET US NOT LOOK BACK BECAUSE

WE CANNOT CHANGE THE OLD.

INSTEAD LET US LOOK TO THE FUTURE

AND CHANGE THE NEW FOR THE BETTER.

IT IS IN OUR HEARTS

TO FORGIVE WRONG.

IT IS IN OUR HANDS TO RESHAPE THOSE WRONGS INTO RIGHT.

LET US TOGETHER ACCEPT THE SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES OF AMERICA'S NEW THIRD CENTURY.

TOGETHER, WE WILL FULFILL THE HERITAGE OF THOSE

WHO CAME BEFORE US.

TOGETHER, WE WILL OPEN UP NEW HORIZONS

FOR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS NOT YET BORN.

TOGETHER,

WE WILL SERVE ONE ANOTHER, OUR COUNTRY AND OUR FELLOWMEN

AND WOMEN.

TOGETHER, WE WILL FULFILL OUR COMMON,

NATIONAL FUTURE.

GOD BLESS YOU AND THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT