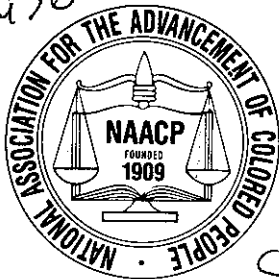


FAY (D.C.)
638.5936



Sept 29

(410) 358 - 8900

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(202) 638 - 2269

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

4805 Mt. Hope Drive, Baltimore, MD. 21215

260 Fifth Avenue, Sixth Floor, New York, NY 10001-6408

✓ 1025 Vermont Ave., N.W., Ste. 1120, Washington, DC 20005

Wade Henderson



Myrlie Evers-Williams
Chair/NAACP Board of Directors

COPY

HENDERSON (NAACP)

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August 4, 1995

Wade Henderson, Esq.
Director, Washington Bureau
NAACP
1025 Vermont Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Wade:

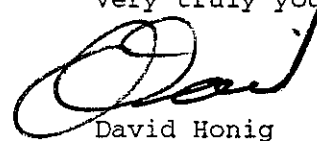
RE: Cultural Environment Movement Founding Conference
March 15-17, 1995, St. Louis, Missouri

Enclosed are materials that our co-Board member George Gerbner has sent to us. George is interested in knowing whether you'd serve as a co-convenor of a working group on Black and White/Rich and Poor. I've volunteered, of course, and think it's essential that the NAACP participate from day one in what I expect will become the leading coalition of progressive people concerned with reforming the media. I expect that CEM will be to media reform what the Leadership Conference is to civil rights.

We'd like Myrlie to participate as a keynote speaker if she's available. Could you inquire into her interest and availability?

Warmest regards,

Very truly yours,



David Honig

Enclosures

cc: Dr. George Gerbner

/dh

[58] From: srouso 8/4/95 4:11PM (1848 bytes: 33 In)

To: fgg

Subject: update

----- Message Contents -----

George,
received your phone message. put in yet another call to the NCNW and left yet another voice mail message. no return call yet. this may have to be done on the fly.

unfortunately, that may also be the case with NAACP. called and had a nice chat with Edward Hailes, the Washington office general counsel. he's a friend, fellow HU alum. PLEASE SEND HIM INFO BY FAX AS SOON AS YOU CAN (YOUR COVER, THE PROSPECTUS, BOARD LIST, ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATES):

Edward Hailes, General Counsel
Washington office, NAACP
VOICE: (202) 638-2269
FAX: (202) 638-5936

mailing, FYI:
1025 Vermont Ave
Wash., DC 20005

He'll touch base with Wade Henderson and try to set up something on August 10 or 11. Because we're nearing a congressional recess, and they've got so much on their plates anyway, Eddie says they'd be hard-pressed to schedule anything definitively.

However, he offered some very useful advice: C. DeLores Tucker, Wade Henderson, and Joe Madison have the ear of Myrlie Evers-Williams. We should try to get C. DeLores and the others each to put in a good word for CEM.

Hmm... no more news yet. If you have other Washington appointments to make and can otherwise justify the trip, it just might make sense to go ahead with your plans and figure on doing these appointments if the opportunity and timing are right.

- Brigette [Rousou]

[1] From: fgg at post1 8/2/95 8:59PM (2339 bytes: 35 ln)

To: srouso

Subject: Af-Am contacts

----- Message Contents -----

Brigette - thanks for message. Here are my comments.

I've put in a voice mail message with Esther Huggins, assistant to NCNW programs director Eleanor Hinton-Hoyt, to try to arrange a meeting on August 10. That's when I'll be in DC and have a babysitter. If that works out, I'd like to start it and then have you join us 15-20 minutes later. (The alternative would be Aug. 11, and I'd have to find a babysitter 'cause Mom would be gone out of town by then.)

I am saving Aug. 10 or 11 for DC. Let me know ASAP because I need to line up other appointments as well.

Reading the NAACP report on apartheid in Hollywood, I noticed that David Honig was on the task force. So I put in a call to him. If you would, PLEASE SEND HIM 3 FULL PACKETS ON CEM. He'll forward 2 to Wade Henderson, one with a cover letter, and ask him to take up the matter of CEM with Myrlie Evers-Williams. The goals would be 1) Myrlie as a keynoter, and perhaps as an advisor also, and 2) NAACP-national as an organizational affiliate. As a matter of fact, Wade

Henderson himself could be a backup. Will mail 3 packets to Dave. Objective is to visit with them also when we go to DC.

Honig

I also got a message at home today, a call back from Bob Bogle at the PHILA. TRIBUNE. I'm hoping he'll be willing to meet, and would like to discuss with him the One Church One Addict program and also CEM. Ok.

Just FYI ... also for One Church, I'm set to meet with State Senator Vincent Hughes, who took over Chaka Fattah's seat, next Tuesday. He's the one who arranged financing to renovate that huge building at 46th & Market. Who knows? Maybe CEM would want office space there one of these days. Great idea!

Plse help get Aug 10 visits to NCNW and NAACP lined up ASAP.
Thanks. George.

4 pages



P. O. BOX 31847
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19104

August 7, 1995

Edward Heiles, General Counsel
Washington Office, NAACP
Via Fax 202 638 5936

Dear Mr. Heiles:

I am sending the attached at the suggestion of Brigette Rousson.

Sincerely yours,

George Gerbner, Professor and Dean Emeritus
The Annenberg School for Communication
University of Pennsylvania
Founder and Chair, the Cultural Environment Movement
University City Science Center - One East
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6220 Home: 234 Golf View Rd.
Tel/fax 215 387 5202 Ardmore, PA 19003-1002
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Roy S. Johnson
-Burgette

The NAACP's Myrlie Evers-Williams: A force for change

by Roy S. Johnson

The correspondences are everywhere. They cover the kitchen table, smother the countertops and fill the side of the bed where her late husband used to sleep. The pages are filled with words of support, encouragement and hope.

The telephone won't stop ringing. From just after dawn until darkness swallows the rural skies above her home in Bend, Oregon, a parade of voices fill her solitude with words of strength and inspiration — but also with questions.

It should come as no surprise that Myrlie Evers-Williams seems tired. It hasn't yet been five months since she accepted the reins as chairwoman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), following a contentious internal struggle that nearly choked the life from the august civil rights organization. She has since buried her second husband, Walter Williams, who died after a long illness just days after her one-vote victory over Dr. William F. Gibson, the group's embattled incumbent chairman, last February in New York. And, she has struggled to navigate the aftermath — a sea filled with jealousy, doubt and fear.

Evers-Williams is often drained by the questions and uncertainty surrounding the future of the NAACP, which is in the midst of the most trying period of its 86 years of existence. But she has already proven to be a survivor, a warrior whose spirit has rebounded from setbacks no one of such humanity should endure. And, while sometimes weary, she is unwavering in her determination to lead the way toward reestablishing the NAACP as a vital and relevant force in these challenging times.

"There are people, black people who ask whether we even need an NAACP anymore," Evers-Williams said during a conversation in which she outlined her vision of renewal which will be delivered at the NAACP's annual convention in Minneapolis, July 8th-13th. "Of course we do. How can anyone who reads the newspaper or looks at the news full of cuts in the school lunch program, health care and affirmative action even question it? The NAACP has problems, many of which could and should have been avoided, but the fact is we're dealing with them. We were there when the struggle was being waged to obtain equal rights and opportunities, we are here now, and we will continue to be a force in assuring that there is no erosion of the gains this organization helped to create."

Still, the questions persist as to how the organization will move forward. It has been barely a year since the NAACP's troubles became public by the stunning disclosure that executive director Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., who had been in office for 16 months, had agreed to pay more than \$300,000 of the organization's funds to settle a threatened sexual harassment and discrimination suit levied by a former employee. That episode ignited perhaps the most embarrassing saga in the organization's storied history, a fiscal tale of woe punctuated by a reported deficit of roughly \$4 million and allegations of extravagant and questionable financial practices by some of the board members, most notably Dr. Gibson.

In the wake of the financial revelations, donations from major corporations and foundations — the Association's lifeblood — declined dramatically, prompting a painful "reorganization" that forced dozens of layoffs and unpaid furloughs for many long-time and loyal employees. Even worse, the reputation of the NAACP, once the nation's most esteemed civil-rights organization, had become tarnished. Its proud image, forged by the contributions and sacrifices of thousands of soldiers of the struggle, seemed diminished by the misdeeds of a few.

Out of this quagmire emerged Myrlie Evers-Williams: the 61-year-old widow of former NAACP field secretary Medgar Evers, who was gunned down outside his Jackson, MS home more than 32 years ago; the mother of three grown children; the former Congressional candidate, former commissioner on the Los Angeles Board of

Public Works and former director of community affairs for Atlantic Richfield who, having given 42 years of her life to the organization, the last ten as a member of the board of directors, may be the best, last hope for the NAACP.

Now, having put the back-room battles behind her, Evers-Williams has chosen to face squarely the problems confronting her beloved organization. In fact, she says her schedule is "booked solid" through March 1996 with appearances at most of the group's 2,000 branches.

Undoubtedly, the most pressing dilemma concerns the NAACP's financial condition, which she hopes will stabilize with a combination of new membership dues and increased contributions from businesses and foundations that have played "wait-and-see" with the association. "We are in the process of putting together a system of checks and balances which will ensure that contributions will be handled efficiently and for the purposes the gifts were made," Evers-Williams explains.

Another hurdle is the selection of a new executive director, a position which has been vacant since Chavis was ousted last August. Former Atlanta mayors Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young are rumored to be among the favorites and, while Evers-Williams will not comment on the candidates, she candidly lists the skills she believes the selectee must possess. "He or she must be a strong administrator who knows how to run a business and manage people. He or she must also be able to make tough decisions and still be humane. Finally, we need someone who is a communicator and possesses a background that indicates an involvement in the movement or at least a sensitivity to the events that shaped it." A search committee is expected to make its recommendations at the organization's October board meeting.

Other plans call for forging the national office into the hub of a more efficient, dynamic and pro-active organization. She would like to see the NAACP create and distribute pamphlets outlining its history and mission; establish a speakers' bureau comprised of board members who, in making personal appearances, will "reach out and touch" the association's constituency, and ease onto the information Superhighway by forming a relationship with a major computer company that will enable the NAACP to enhance its communication capabilities particularly between the national office and local branches. In addition, she expects to eliminate some of the organization's numerous committees, restructuring them to be "more manageable and better focused".

Queried, with an eye towards Minneapolis, as to the assistance she needs to fulfill her agenda, Evers-Williams spoke emphatically. "What I need most is support — in capital letters. I need moral support from those who have been a part of the NAACP over the years. I need them to reaffirm their belief in the existence of the organization by actively soliciting memberships in their communities and by being prepared to tell our story.

"I need the young people who have not yet embraced the association and who have said that it is not relevant to what is happening in their lives to withhold their criticism until they come into our fold and help us formulate an approach for attacking the issues that affect them most. I need the corporations and foundations that have lost faith in us to give us a chance to prove that the NAACP is now going to operate as a business.

"You know," Evers-Williams said returning to the letters, voices and questions that have become so much a part of her life, "I had no idea this would be a 26-hour-a-day-process. But the work must be done, the story must be told. The NAACP is going to survive and thrive."

Roy S. Johnson is an award-winning journalist and senior editor at MONEY magazine.

Wade Henderson NAAEP Harold's Row

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