



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **Delegate Magazine 1978**

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## THE HONORABLE BENJAMIN L. HOOKS

On January 10th, 1977, the NAACP Board of Directors unanimously elected the Honorable Benjamin L. Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP, effective August 1, 1977. Previously, Dr. Hooks was a Commissioner with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Washington D.C.

Since 1956, Dr. Hooks has combined careers as lawyer, minister, and businessman.

For several years, Dr. Hooks was an Assistant Public Defender in Memphis, representing the legal interests of the poor and indigent. In 1965, the Governor of Tennessee appointed him Judge of Division IV, Criminal Court of Shelby (Memphis). In 1966, he was elected to an eight-year term as Shelby County Criminal Court Judge; however, in 1968, he resigned this position to resume the practice of law.

Dr. Hooks is a licensed minister who is on leave of absence from the Middle Baptist Church, in Memphis, Tennessee, and the Greater New Moriah Baptist Church, in Detroit, Michigan.

He was a co-founder and Vice President of the Mutual Federal Savings and Loan Association (MFS & LA), and was with the MFS & LA from 1955 to 1969. He served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Savings and Loan Association and of the Tri-State Bank of Memphis until 1972.

Dr. Hooks was born in Memphis, Tennessee, on January 31, 1925. He attended LeMoyne College and Howard University. In 1948, he completed legal studies at DePaul University, College of Law, Chicago, Illinois, where he received the J.D. Degree.

In 1946, Dr. Hooks received an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army after service, in Italy, with the 92nd Infantry Division.

He is a Life Member of the NAACP, a member of the American Bar Association, and a member of the Judicial Council of the NBA. He also served on the Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Tennessee Council on Human Relations in Memphis, and the Shelby County (Tenn.) Human Relations Committee.

Dr. Hooks and his wife, Frances, have a daughter, Mrs. Patricia Louise Gray, and two grandchildren.

On 27 June 1969, EDGES, consisting of 27 Executives and Professionals, was founded. On 30 June 1972, EDGES was incorporated under the provisions of Section 402 of the Not-for-profit Corporation Law, State of New York. Members are individuals who are involved in activities or positions related to employment, affirmative action, urban and community affairs efforts. The key letters of the major thrust efforts of the Group form the acronym, EDGES, "E" for employment; "D" for dissemination of information; "G" for group development; "E" for economic awareness; and "S" for solving problems.



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