



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Delegate Magazine 1984

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[[image: NAACP logo]]
[[2 photos, no captions]]

NAACP is 75 years Old

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challenge Ronald Reagan to sit and communicate with the logic of his policies.

He has insisted that his policies are aimed at changing this nation for the better.

Our evidence and our experience have shown that they are changing America for the worst.

Black people, poor people, elderly people and women - we have all felt the brunt of an Administration's policies that have rewarded the rich and punished the poor, helped the powerful and ignored the weak.

Ronald Reagan must be held accountable for his policies that now threaten to set this nation's social concerns back for 50 years.

I challenge you, Mr. President, to meet and to talk about how some of your citizens are suffering in these United States.

I challenge you, Mr. President.

So many of your citizens need the help that only the national Administration can give.

I challenge you, Ronald Reagan, to communicate with me, Ben Hooks, to communicate to me how your citizens in this country - and especially your racial minorities, the poor, the elderly and this nation's womenfolk - can expect to be made a part of this nation's mainstream.

I challenge you, Mr. President, to meet with me and to communicate.

But we must say to this Administration, unless you change your course and show more concern for our interest, we will meet you at the ballot box, and there in the classic American fashion, we will express our dissatisfaction. But we do not come here merely to express gloom and doom or to criticize.

We have a program! Voter registration, education and participation are the keystones of our program. Last year we registered more than

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HIGHLIGHTS OF NAACP HISTORY 1909

In January, Dr. Henry Moskowitz, a Socialist and social worker among New York immigrants; Miss Mary White Ovington, a social worker and



descendant of abolitionists; William English Walling, a wealthy Southerner, a Socialist and a writer whose article in the Springfield, Illinois, periodical, The Independent, on the 1908 riots aroused widespread sympathy over the treatment of Negroes, met in Walling's apartment to discuss the idea of creating a national, bi-racial organization to help right the social injustices. Also comprising this nucleus were Charles Edward Russell, a close friend of Walling's, and Oswald Garrison Villard, publisher of the liberal New York Evening Post. It was agreed at the meeting that a public campaign should be opened on Lincoln's birthday to obtain the support of a much larger group of citizens.

The initial group was made bi-racial by the inclusion of Bishop Alexander Walters of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Rev. William Henry Brooks, minister of St. Mark's Methodist Episcopal Church of New York. Augmenting this group were such other Negro leaders as W.E.B. Du Bois, Ida Wells Barnett, W. L. Bulkley, the Rev. Francis J. Grimke and Mary Church Terrell, all of whom signed the Lincoln Day Call.

In a letter of encouragement to the conferees, William Lloyd Garrison, son of the Boston abolitionist, expressed the hope "that the conference will utter no uncertain sound on any point affecting the vital subject. No part of it is too delicate for plain speech. The republican experiment is at stake, every tolerated wrong to the Negro reacting with double force upon white citizens guilty of faithlessness to their brothers. The rampant antipathy to the Oriental races is part and parcel of the domestic question. Safety lies in an absolute refusal to differentiate the rights of human beings."

On February 12, over the signatures of 60 persons, the "Call" was issued for a meeting on the concept of creating an organization that would be an aggressive watchdog of Negro liberties. This date marked the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

-On May 31 and June 1, The National Negro Conference was held in the Charity Organization Hall in New York City. The theme was based on efforts to refute pre-Civil War beliefs that the Negro was physically and mentally inferior. A Committee of Forty on Permanent Organization was chosen to prepare for the incorporation of a National Committee for the Advancement of the Negro Race.

Notably participating in this conference was Dr. Du Bois, a signer of the "Call", who had organized the Niagara Movement in 1905 in an attempt to stem the curtailment of political and civil rights of Negroes.



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