

ADDRESS BY

THE HONORABLE LOUIS STOKES

SAN DIEGO BLACK FORUM
STARDUST HOTEL
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1989

THANK YOU JIM BATES FOR YOUR KIND AND GENEROUS

INTRODUCTION.

THEME: GEORGE STEVENS: DISPARITIES BETWEEN BLACKS AND

WHITES IN AMERICA IN THE AREA OF POLITICS, EDUCATION,

EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH.

TRIP TO BOEING AEROSPACE - SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

BRIEFINGS: CONSTANT REFERENCE TO THE YEAR 2000; THE 21ST

CENTURY 10 YEARS AWAY. MARVELS OF WHAT IS GOING ON TODAY IN

PREPARATION FOR TOMORROW:

A) HUBBELL TELESCOPE (SPACE TELESCOPE) (PLANETS AND

GALAXIES)

1) NEXT YEAR (1990) -- LOOKING OUT INTO THE PAST--

12 TO 18 BILLION YEARS

2) BEGINNING OF CREATION

B) NASA PLANS A SPACE STATION IN ORBIT IN 1990'S. MANY

MISSIONS:

1) AN ORBITING LABORATORY

2) REPAIR AND SERVICE STATION - SATELLITES

3) SPACE BASE FOR MISSIONS IN DEEPER SPACE,

INCLUDING THE PLANETS

RECENTLY, NASA LAUNCHED A NEW RADAR IMAGING SPACECRAFT NAMED MAGELLAN. THAT SPACECRAFT WILL ARRIVE AT THE PLANET VENUS 15 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF LAUNCH. AT THAT TIME, FOR THE FIRST TIME WE WILL COME TO KNOW MUCH MORE ABOUT OUR TWIN PLANET.

DURING ITS TRIP TO VENUS THIS SPACECRAFT WILL SPEND 8

MONTHS MAPPING THAT PLANET AND SENDING DATA BACK TO EARTH.

IT IS REALLY A SMART ROBOT PROGRAMMED TO HEAL ITSELF OF MANY AILMENTS AND TO "PHONE HOME" IF COMMUNICATIONS WITH EARTH ARE LOST.

REALITY: "BY THE TURN OF THE CENTURY -- AND THAT'S ONLY 10 YEARS AWAY -- THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL USE OF SPACE WILL BE A MAJOR BUSINESS.

A) PERMANENTLY MANNED PRESENCE -- MEN AND WOMEN ABOARD THE STATION BASE FULL TIME, 24 HOURS A DAY -- 365 DAYS A YEAR.

CONCEPT:

A) A UNIVERSAL VISION THAT ULTIMATELY MANKIND WILL MOVE BEYOND THE CONFINES OF EARTH

B) IN 25 YEARS, THEY ARE PLANNING MASS EXPLORATION IN SPACE FROM A MANNED SPACE FACILITY

SO, I AM TALKING TO YOU TONIGHT ABOUT WHAT WE ARE DOING IN SPACE, AWAY FROM THE EARTH SO THAT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT TODAY WE ARE STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE 21ST CENTURY. IN THAT NEW CENTURY OUR NATION IS ALREADY PLANNING A TIME WHEN NEW MEDICINES, SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS AND TECHNOLOGIES ONLY DREAMED OF TODAY WILL BECOME REALITY.

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND WHERE WE WILL BE IN 10 YEARS I INVITE YOU TO THINK BACK TEN YEARS AGO. IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE BUT TEN YEARS AGO THERE WERE NO PERSONAL COMPUTERS-- NO COMPUTER DISCS -- NO VIDEOCASSETTE RECORDERS -- NO GENETICALLY ENGINEERED VACCINES. WE WILL SEE A MINIMUM OF

TEN TIMES AS MUCH PROGRESS IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS AS WE HAVE SEEN IN THE LAST TEN.

BY THE YEAR 2000:

- 1) COMPUTERS THAT DON'T LOOK LIKE COMPUTERS WILL SURROUND YOU. THEY WILL THEN BE SHIRT POCKET AND NOTEBOOK-LIKE DEVICES THAT RESPOND TO HANDWRITTEN AND SPOKEN QUESTION, COMMANDS, AND EVEN GESTURES;
- 2) YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TRAVEL WITH AN ELECTRONIC BOOK. THE BOOK'S MEMORY WILL CONTAIN AS MANY AS 200 NOVELS. YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WRITE THE NAME OF THE ONE YOU WANT TO READ AND IT WILL POP UP ON A SCREEN' AND
- 3) YOUR DOCTOR WILL CHECK YOUR HEART BY HAVING YOU WALK

THROUGH A DIAGNOSTIC MACHINE MUCH LIKE DR. MC COY'S

ON STAR TREK.

WE ARE TOLD BY OUR TOP SCIENTISTS AND TECHNOLOGISTS, "THAT'S

JUST A GLIMPSE OF THE YEAR 2000 WHEN WE'LL HAVE CAPABILITIES

NO HUMANS EVER HAD."

WE HAVE ALSO LEARNED RECENTLY THAT WHILE WE ARE

IMPRESSED WITH THE SUPER COMPUTERS BEING USED BY INDUSTRY

TODAY THAT THE SUPER COMPUTER OF THE 2000 WILL DO AT LEAST

FOUR TRILLION COMPLEX CALCULATIONS A SECOND. THESE COMPUTERS

WILL BE ABLE TO SEE OBJECTS ON A SMALLER SCALE THAN

MICROSCOPES CAN. THE TELEPHONE OF THE YEAR 2000 WILL ALLOW

PICTURE-PHONE CONFERENCES IN FULL COLOR. AND IT WILL ALSO

HAVE A COMPONENT WHICH REPLACES TELEPHONE BOOKS WITH A SMALL

COMPUTER TERMINAL. BESIDES FINDING ADDRESSES IT WILL BE ABLE

TO BUY THEATRE, PLANE AND TRAIN TICKETS AND SEND BOUQUETS OF

FLOWERS WITH NOTES.

ONE OF THE MOST REVOLUTIONARY MEDICAL ADVANCES THROUGH

COMPUTERIZATION WILL BE THE POSSIBILITY OF RE-GROWING WHOLE

ORGANS IN THE BODY INSTEAD OF REPLACING THEM WITH

TRANSPLANTS.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT IT IS FASCINATING TO PEEP INTO

THE NEXT CENTURY, JUST 10 YEARS AWAY AND GLIMPSE WHAT LIFE

WILL BE LIKE IN AMERICA.

BUT I HAVE A GRAVE CONCERN THIS EVENING AND THAT IS THAT

AS WHITE AMERICA, IT'S SCIENTISTS, ENVIRONMENTALISTS, AND

OTHERS ARE PREPARING TO EMERGE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY THAT

BLACK AMERICANS ARE STILL CONSUMED WITH YESTERDAY. AS WHITE AMERICA TALKS AND MAKES PLANS FOR THE YEARS 2000, 2025, AND 2050, BLACK AMERICANS ARE TALKING ABOUT TODAY. ANY GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE TALKING ABOUT TODAY WHILE WHITE AMERICANS ARE PLANNING FOR THE YEAR 2050 ARE ALREADY 60 YEARS BEHIND BEFORE WE ENTER THE 21ST CENTURY.

IN THE SAME SENSE THAT MARCUS GARVEY, A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH, FANNIE LOU HAMER, MEDGAR EVERS, WALTER WHITE, WHITNEY YOUNG, ROY WILKINS, MALCOLM X AND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING GAVE LEADERSHIP TO OUR PEOPLE IN THIS CENTURY, WE MUST BE PLANNING, STRATEGIZING AND PREPARING OUR PEOPLE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. WE MUST BE PREPARING OUR YOUTH FOR THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP THEY WILL ASSUME IN THE YEAR 2000, THE YEAR 2025-

- THE YEAR 2050.

YET, I DO NOT SENSE ANY SENSE OF URGENCY IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

THIS IS PARTICULARLY DISTURBING TO ME BECAUSE OF SEVERAL RECENT REPORTS POINTING OUT THE DISPARITIES BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE AMERICANS. ONE RECENT REPORT RELEASED IN WASHINGTON, D.C., BY THE COMMISSION ON MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND AMERICAN LIFE IS ENTITLED "ONE THIRD OF A NATION". THE REPORT WAS ENTITLED "ONE THIRD OF A NATION" FOR TWO REASONS. FIRST BECAUSE IT EVOKES THE SENSE OF CONCERN AND PURPOSE EXPRESSED MORE THAN 50 YEARS AGO BY PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, REGARDING THE VICTIMS OF THE DEPRESSION. AND SECOND BECAUSE WHEN SPEAKING OF MINORITY

AMERICANS WE ARE SPEAKING OF A SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION WHICH WILL SOON CONSTITUTE ONE-THIRD OF OUR NATION.

TODAY, FOURTEEN PERCENT OF ALL ADULTS AND 20 PERCENT OF OUR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN -- ARE MEMBERS OF MINORITY GROUPS. BY THE YEAR 2000, 10 YEARS FROM NOW, ONE-THIRD OF ALL SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN WILL BE MINORITIES, AND 20 YEARS LATER THEY WILL BE 39 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL.

ALREADY IN 25 OF OUR LARGEST CITIES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS, HALF OR MORE THAN HALF OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE MINORITY GROUP MEMBERS. BY THE YEAR 2000, 42 PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE NATION'S PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL BE MINORITY CHILDREN. CHANGE HAS ALREADY OCCURRED IN SOME REGIONS. CALIFORNIA -- NEW MEXICO -- TEXAS. IN DALLAS, TEXAS TODAY,

THE CHILDREN IN THEIR SCHOOLS SPEAK MORE THAN 70 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

MOREOVER, BETWEEN TODAY AND THE YEAR 2000 MINORITY WORKERS WILL MAKE UP ONE-THIRD OF THE NEW ADDITIONS TO THE LABOR FORCE. BY THE YEAR 2020, 40% OF THE WORKFORCE WILL BE MINORITY. IN A RECENT STUDY RELEASED BY THE HUDSON INSTITUTE, ENTITLED WORKFORCE 2000, WE ARE TOLD THAT 'THE LAST YEARS OF THIS CENTURY ARE CERTAIN TO BRING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY, INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION, DEMOGRAPHY, AND OTHER FACTORS THAT WILL ALTER THE NATION'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL LANDSCAPE.' IN FACT, THE AUTHORS TELL US IN THIS STUDY THAT "BY THE END OF THE NEXT DECADE, THE CHANGES UNDERWAY WILL PRODUCE AN AMERICA THAT IS IN SOME WAYS

UNRECOGNIZABLE FROM THE ONE THAT EXISTED ONLY A FEW YEARS

AGO.

WE ARE TOLD THAT ALMOST TWO-THIRDS OF THE NEW ENTRANTS INTO THE WORKFORCE BETWEEN NOW AND THE YEAR 2000 WILL BE WOMEN, AND 61% OF ALL WOMEN OF WORKING AGE ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE JOBS BY THE YEAR 2000. IF YOU THINK THAT IS AN INTERESTING FACT, LISTEN TO THIS.

BLACK WOMEN WILL COMPRISE THE LARGEST INCREASE IN THE NON-WHITE LABOR FORCE. IN FACT, BY THE YEAR 2000, JUST TEN YEARS FROM NOW, BLACK WOMEN WILL OUT NUMBER BLACK MEN IN THE WORKFORCE.

IT FOLLOWS THEN THAT AS THE RATIO OF MINORITIES GROWS AND THE RATIO OF THE WHITE POPULATION DECREASES, OUR NATION

WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT UPON MINORITIES IN A HIGHLY TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY. IN FACT, EVERY WHITE RETIREE WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON THREE ACTIVE WORKERS TO SUPPORT THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS. TWO OF THE THREE WILL BE MINORITIES SO I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY WHITE AMERICANS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS NO LONGER IN THEIR SELF INTEREST TO PERPETUATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINORITIES WHOM THEY WILL BE DEPENDENT UPON IN THE NEXT CENTURY.

LET'S PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND THINK ABOUT OUR FUTURE LEADERS. YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WHO WILL BE OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WHEN WE ENTER THE 21ST CENTURY ARE FIVE YEARS OLD NOW. HERE IS THEIR PROFILE:

- A) ONE IN FOUR IS POOR;

B) AMONG NON-WHITES ONE IN TWO IS POOR;

C) IF THEY ARE BLACK AND BORN IN A FEMALE-HEADED

HOUSEHOLD, THEY HAVE A TWO IN THREE CHANCE OF BEING

POOR;

D) ONE IN FIVE IS AT RISK OF BECOMING A TEEN PARENT;

E) ONE IN SIX HAS NO HEALTH INSURANCE; AND

F) ONE IN SEVEN IS AT RISK OF DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL.

WHEN I TALK ABOUT SCHOOLS, IN MAY OF THIS YEAR, DR.

LAURO CAVAZOS, SECRETARY OF EDUCATION RELEASED A NATIONAL

REPORT ON THE NATION'S SCHOOLS. HE GAVE US A VERY DIM AND

BLEAK REPORT. THE SECRETARY TOLD US THAT THE PERFORMANCE OF

AMERICAN STUDENTS THIS YEAR HAS BEEN STAGNANT. HE SAID, "THE

GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE SCHOOLS ARE NOT WORSE; THE BAD NEWS IS

THAT WE ALSO ARE NOT MAKING PROGRESS.

HE TOLD US THAT SCORES ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS ARE

STILL SUBSTANTIALLY LOWER THAN THEY WERE IN THE 1960'S.

IN THE AREA OF GRADUATION RATES WE LEARNED THAT ONLY 71

PERCENT OF CURRENT NINTH GRADERS WILL COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL

WITH THEIR CLASS. ON AN AVERAGE SCHOOL DAY, 3600 YOUNGSTERS

ACROSS THIS NATION DROP OUT OF SCHOOL. 700,000 STUDENTS WILL

DROP OUT OF SCHOOL THIS YEAR. ONE OF THE ENCOURAGING FACTORS

IN THIS REPORT HOWEVER WAS THE NEWS THAT MINORITIES ARE

BEGINNING TO SHRINK THE GAP BETWEEN WHITE AND MINORITY

STUDENTS ON SAT ACHIEVEMENT TESTS. BETWEEN 1978 AND 1988,

BLACK STUDENTS GAINED 21 POINTS ON THE VERBAL PORTION OF THE

SAT AND 30 POINTS ON THE MATH PORTION.

SECRETARY CAVAZOS WHILE LAUDING THIS PROGRESS CAUTIONED
 "ALTHOUGH BLACKS ARE LIFTING THEIR TEST SCORES AND CLOSING
 THE 'GRADUATION GAP'.....THE DOORS TO OPPORTUNITY STILL
 REMAIN SHUT FOR TOO MANY YOUTHS. IT IS UP TO US TO THROW
 OPEN THOSE DOORS."

THE SECRETARY FURTHER ISSUED AN IMPASSIONED CHALLENGE TO
 OUR NATION. HE SAID, "WE MUST.....DEMAND AN EXCELLENT
 EDUCATION FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN. WE MUST STIR UP THE
 EDUCATION WATERS IN AMERICA."

NOTE: RECENT POLITICAL GAINS: DAVE DINKINS -- DOUG
 WILDER -- SEATTLE -- NEW HAVEN -- N.C. 23 CONGRESSMEN: HAL
 WASHINGTON -- JESSE JACKSON -- U. S. SENATE -- 6000 BLACKS.

I WANT TO GO BACK FOR A MOMENT TO THE REPORT ENTITLED

"ONE-THIRD OF A NATION".

THE BASIS FOR THIS REPORT WAS A DEEP CONCERN OVER THE
 FALTERING PACE OF MINORITY ADVANCEMENT.

IN THEIR REPORT THE COMMISSIONERS CONCLUDED THAT NOW IS
 THE TIME FOR OUR NATION TO RENEW ITS COMMITMENT TO MINORITY
 ADVANCEMENT.

THE REPORT SETS A GOAL WHICH THEY SUGGEST IS SIMPLE BUT
 ESSENTIAL. "THAT IN 20 YEARS, A SIMILAR EXAMINATION WILL
 REVEAL THAT AMERICA'S MINORITY POPULATION HAS ATTAINED A
 QUALITY OF LIFE AS HIGH AS THAT OF THE WHITE MAJORITY". THE
 REPORT FURTHER STATES, "NO LESS A GOAL IS ACCEPTABLE. FOR IF
WE FAIL, ALL AMERICANS -- NOT JUST MINORITIES -- WILL BE THE
 VICTIMS. BUT, IF WE SUCCEED, ALL AMERICANS WILL REAP THE

BENEFITS."

THE URGENCY I SEE HERE IS THAT THIS IS A MAJORITY WHITE COMMISSION WHICH HAS SET A GOAL OF BRINGING MINORITIES INTO THE FULL STREAM OF AMERICAN LIFE AND AS THE AFFECTED MINORITY GROUP YOU AND I HAVE SET NO GOALS FOR OURSELVES. UNLESS WE SET SOME GOALS FOR OURSELVES, TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW SOME NEW COMMISSION WILL BE SETTING A NEW GOAL FOR US TO TAKE PLACE 20 YEARS FROM 2009.

THE REPORT CONTAINS SOME OF THE MOST STRIKING STATISTICAL DATA I HAVE EVER SEEN INDICATING HOW FAR WE ARE BEHIND IN ALMOST EVERY FACET OF AMERICAN LIFE.

IT WAS STRIKING TO LEARN THAT:

A) 31.1 PERCENT OF BLACKS AND 27.3 PERCENT OF HISPANICS

HAD INCOMES BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL -- NEARLY THREE

TIMES THE RATE FOR WHITES;

B) MINORITY GROUP MEMBERS ARE FAR LESS LIKELY TO HAVE A COLLEGE EDUCATION;

C) IN CERTAIN CRITICAL FIELDS OF STUDY, THE MINORITY

PRESENCE IS NEARLY NON-EXISTENT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN

COMPUTER SCIENCE, WHERE I TOLD YOU ABOUT ALL OF

THESE FASCINATING THINGS ARE GOING TO HAPPEN IN THE

NEXT CENTURY, IN 1986 ONLY ONE BLACK IN THE NATION

RECEIVED A DOCTORATE OUT OF 355 AWARDED;

D) CURRENT BLACK LIFE EXPECTANCY IS EXACTLY SIX YEARS

LESS THAN THAT OF WHITES; AND

E) THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE FOR BLACK INFANTS IN THE

UNITED STATES WOULD RANK THE UNITED STATES 28TH IN
THE WORLD IN KEEPING BABIES ALIVE IN THE FIRST YEAR
OF LIFE.

IN ITS FINAL ANALYSIS, THIS REPORT ISSUES A CHALLENGE TO
ALL OF OUR SOCIETY TO JOIN IN THIS 20 YEAR GOAL FOR OUR
SOCIETY. THE REPORT STATES:

"IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT INDIVIDUAL AMERICANS
DETERMINE WHAT THEY CAN DO TO HELP REACH THIS OBJECTIVE. BUT
TO A GREAT EXTENT, PROGRESS WILL DEPEND ON THE INITIATIVES
TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS,
VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS, AND MOST OF ALL, MINORITY CITIZENS
THEMSELVES.

IT THEN SPECIFICALLY CHALLENGES SEVEN CATEGORIES OF

AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS WITH RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD THE GOAL.

THE CATEGORY RELATING TO US SAYS: "WE CHALLENGE MINORITY

PUBLIC OFFICIALS, INSTITUTIONS, VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS TO
EXPAND THEIR LEADERSHIP ROLES."

THAT IS A CALL TO SAN DIEGO'S BLACK FORUM, THE NAACP,
THE URBAN LEAGUE, THE BLACK CHURCH, BLACK COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES, AND EVERY OTHER BLACK ORGANIZATION AND
INSTITUTION TO COME TOGETHER WITH A STRATEGY AND A GOAL.

AS LEADERS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY, WE MUST RESPOND TO
THE CHALLENGE AND MORE FORCEFULLY ARTICULATE, REAFFIRM AND
REINFORCE THE BLACK VALUE HERITAGE AND RENEWED VIGOR AND
COMMITMENT AS A BASIS FOR ACTION NOW.

WE CAN BEGIN BY ENCOURAGING ALL OF THE COMMUNITY'S

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, CIVIC AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS TO EMPHASIZE COMMUNITY VALUES AS A CENTRAL FEATURE OF THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

YET, WHILE DOING THIS WE MUST CONTINUE TO PRESS THE LARGER SOCIETY FOR EQUITY AND FAIRNESS. WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAKE PREDOMINATELY WHITE INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIVE TO OUR NEEDS. AND IF WE ARE REALLY GOING TO MAKE PROGRESS IN OVERCOMING OBSTACLES WE CONFRONT IN THE STRUGGLE IN THIS SOCIETY, WE NEED UNITY.

IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED BLACK FAMILIES IN WHITE AMERICA: THE AUTHORS AMY AND ANDREW BILLINGSLEY TELL US, "THE SPIRIT OF UNITY, OF STICKING TOGETHER WITH EACH OTHER AS A PEOPLE HAS NOT BEEN AMONG OUR FINEST ASSETS. IT IS SO EASY FOR

OUTSIDERS, WHOMEVER THEY MAY BE, TO CREATE DISSENSION AMONG US." THE AUTHORS THEN QUOTE LERONE BENNETT WHO ONCE SAID, "OUR OPPONENTS ARE STRONG NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY HAVE THEIR OWN STRENGTH, BUT MUCH OF OUR STRENGTH AS WELL".

WHAT I SUPPOSE I AM TRYING TO SAY TO YOU TODAY IS THAT AS WE MOVE INTO THE NEXT CENTURY, THE NEED FOR UNITY AMONG BLACK PEOPLE, BLACK ORGANIZATIONS, BLACK INSTITUTIONS, BLACK LEADERS, AND BLACK FAMILIES WILL BE MORE CRUCIAL THAN EVER BEFORE.

ONCE WE HAVE ACHIEVED TRUE UNITY, SELF-CRITICISM IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE, IT IS A NECESSITY.

AS MAYA ANGELOU ONCE OBSERVED, "IT WILL SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE TO POINT ONLY TO OUR STRENGTHS AS A PEOPLE AND IGNORE

SOME OF OUR WEAKNESSES". EVEN DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING SAID IN ONE OF HIS SPEECHES, "IT IS NOT A SIGN OF WEAKNESS, BUT A SIGN OF HIGH MATURITY TO RISE TO THE LEVEL OF SELF-CRITICISM..." WHICH MEANS CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT OURSELVES AS A PEOPLE AND THE COURSE WE HAVE CHARTED OR FAILED TO CHART DURING THIS PERIOD.

WE MUST MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WILLINGNESS TO EXAMINE OURSELVES AND OUR INSTITUTIONS CRITICALLY.

WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE BLACK COMMUNITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN AGENT FOR ITS OWN ADVANCEMENT. WE MADE THE TRANSITION FROM A LARGELY IMPOVERISHED MASS OF FORMER SLAVES TO A STRONG, VIBRANT COMMUNITY LARGELY THROUGH INDIVIDUAL EFFORT AND THROUGH THE WORK OF CIVIL RIGHTS, CULTURAL,

FRATERNAL, RELIGIOUS, SOCIAL, PROFESSIONAL AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY.

AND SO, THIS WE MUST DO FOR OURSELVES THROUGH OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH.

AS WE MOVE INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EACH OF US PLEDGE OURSELVES TO A NEW AND CREATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH OUR NUCLEAR AND SPIRITUAL FAMILY MEMBERS. ONLY THEN WILL WE BE ABLE TO STRIVE TO HEAL OUR NATION OF ITS ILLS AND MOVE TOWARD A DYNAMIC AND CREATIVE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

I LEAVE YOU TODAY WITH THE WORDS OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS WHO ADMONISHED US MORE THAN A CENTURY AGO, IN ONE OF HIS MOST FAMOUS SPEECHES THAT "IF THERE IS NO STRUGGLE -- THERE IS NO

PROGRESS" AND THEN HE SAID, "IF WE ARE EVER ELEVATED, OUR
ELEVATION WILL HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH OUT OWN
INSTRUMENTALITY".

