President's Message

THE ECONOMICS OF ECUMENISM

Too long our singular parochial outlook has narrowed our viewpoint and scope of the Unity of the Church of Jesus Christ. Our denominational doctrines and traditional barriers have hampered us from attempting and achieving our common objectives. The time is Now when we must lift up our eyes and look upon the fields, for they are ripe already for harvest.

The highwater mark of the 104th Session of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. meeting in Convention Center, Washington, D.C., September 4-9, 1984 was the clarion call which President T.J. Jemison issued to the vast throng of delegates and members of sister churches to give our unstinting support to the ecumenical concerns as portrayed in the National Council of the Churches of the USA, and the World Council of Churches with its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. In lauding the world of the General Secretary, Dr. W. Franklyn Richardson, and the president of the Women's Convention, Dr. Mary O. Ross members of the Central Committee who recently attended a Board Meeting in Geneva, he was swift to point out the new burst of enthusiasm which they shared and brought back in their printed report to the Convention. Dr. Jemison also cited our participation in the Executive Board Meeting of the World Baptist Alliance which was represented by Dr. E.A. Freeman in Berlin, Germany, Dr. Freeman stated that President Jemison was elected Vice President of the World Baptist Alliance.

The Challenge of the United Thrust

The President's proposal to bring together the various movements of Black national organizations such as the Masons of the Northern and Southern Jurisdictions, The Independent Benevolent Order of the Elks of the World, The National Urban League, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to form a coalition to push for economic and social betterment received the approved acclamation of the Convention. On involving outstanding Laymen of National Leadership, Dr. Jemison in presenting them said: "This is not a day of division. This is a day of unity, and Negro people must come together. This is why I invited some illustrious Baptist Laymen to bring fraternal greetings to us today. We have with us today, the Grand Commander of the Jurisdiction, Russell Gideon. These men are not here by accident. They are here upon our invitation. These are Baptist leaders, these are our men, they belong to our churches."

Not only was the appeal made to Black ecumenists in the United States, but it was also made to the broad spectrum of ecumenism involving global dimensions, especially the third world. This new outlook upon what Wendell Wilkie called "One World" is analogous with the one Church in Christ Jesus that Jesus prayed for in the Upper Room. On pointing out the power of unity, Dr. Jemison provided no grounds for psychophants to become pronounced dissidents by manufacturing some flimsy excuses to walk away from the challenge of united frontiers to follow the beaten paths of rugged and rabid individualism of yesteryear.

Contemporary Concerns

The Economics of Survival was thrown down to the Convention in a plan of retirement: BENEFITS. When the flagging ends are brought together there is one item that lifts its towering head aloft all others like Alpine Mountain peaks soar above the Appalachian Hills: That is the betterment of our social and economical conditions through the aegis of a coalition of strength, beaten out on the anvil of faith by the dedicated leadership of cooperation.

President Jemison lays down certain imperatives that we must do in order to realize our goals: He said:

1. We must all come together and form a coalition of strength for Negro people all over the nation;
2. We must create jobs;
3. We must build adequate housing;
4. We must stimulate and provide funds for struggling small Black businesses;
5. We must build senior citizen homes;
6. We must build health centers;
7. We must build twenty-four hour day care centers.

President Jemison continued: "Whatever we do, we must not wait for others to provide all of the jobs for our people. We must do somethings for ourselves. Together with the National Baptist Convention of America, we represent at least 12 million people. *The time has come for us to work together to achieve some goals we could not reach alone. The time in which we live so demands."*

The President with stentorian voice echoed his plea: "Let us get together and do something for ourselves and others." Here we have the dignity of interdependence emanating from our dedicated industry of production through mass organized enterprises.

What President Jemison is saying to the Black Baptists of the nation is: *Let us get together and stay together, to work together, to plan together, to solve the ever mounting perplexing problems that plague our Black population in the United States of America!*

THE CAUSA MOVEMENT:
Statement of Purpose

"Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously, shout and

The choral group Los Internationales performing during the Interfaith Service.

sing for joy for the Lord God is my strength and my song"

The word *causa* is Latin for "cause." CAUSA derives its foundational and operational power from the great First Cause of the universe, God. The basic task of CAUSA is to propagate the teaching of Godism, a concrete expression of God and His principles.

The existence and nature of God, a question which has confronted humankind throughout history, is particularly crucial at the present time. What is needed, and what CAUSA provides, is a philosophical framework that reduces to our comprehension the issue of the nature and purpose of God and the universe, while taking nothing away from the infinite and eternal Being.

This ideological system, Godism, has a three-fold aim. First, it uncovers the lying, deceptive nature of communism. Second, it presents a clear counterproposal to the communist viewpoint. Third, it critiques the shortcomings manifested as the exploitations and hypocrisy of the democratic, capitalistic way of life. The resultant effect of this three-fold operation is to bring into focus the true perspective of the universe: man and history centered upon God.

We have been contending against the onrushing tide of materialism with a vast array of weaponry: political enhancement, social uplift, economic theorizing, military empowerment. Still complete victory eludes us. A new way of resolving the illusions of materialism is impelling itself into the flow of history: the way of spiritual values.

There is a great need to reevaluate life's priorities. This process of reevaluation is best accomplished through an awareness of absolute values. These values originate in God, and are the means that He uses to restructure our lives as we yield ourselves to them. The impact of these values initiate a quiet yet irresistible change in our heart. CAUSA is the instrument that God is using to bring about *the revolution of humankind,* turning us from a materialistic to a spiritual view of life.

As men and women embody divine values, a change is gradually reflected on the local, national, and worldwide levels. God has an ultimate objective, a telefinalistic plan: the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth, an earth which reflects His sublime glory and love.

Common Ground for Unity

The CAUSA worldview, Godism, affirms that the supreme unifier of all existence is God, the primeval Parent. To recognize this fact, and to act upon it, opens the way for all to unite

Sister Sandra Lang lecturing during the CAUSA Seminar in Harlem, July 16-18.

Dr. Billy Johnson laying on hands during the altar call at the Interfaith Service.