

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CONFERENCE

NEWS RELEASE

**BLACK CHURCHES LEAD MASS
GET-OUT-THE-VOTE DRIVE FOR HHH**

Washington, D.C.--(Special)--Plans for a massive "get out the vote" drive among nine million church goers in some 5,000 churches were announced here by Bishop George E. Baber, senior bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in cooperation with the Democratic National Committee.

Bishop Baber announced details of the proposal following the recent historic meeting of 500 black church leaders with Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey and key staff aides in Detroit.

The Bishop, who arranged the meeting, outlined a 15 point "get out the vote" program adopted by the ministers from 10 denominations. The clergymen paid their own individual expenses to attend the sessions to give the Vice-President a rousing endorsement and pledge their all out support for his election.

"It was the most significant gathering in the political and religious history of the nation because the black churches of America called on their white brethren to help them turn back the tide of racism and join our Crusade for Sanity in American life," the prelate said.

Representatives of the National Council of Churches attended the session, but the predominantly black group included delegations from Baptist and Methodist denominations as well as the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Evangelical and Reformed Church, the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, Baber said.

The group passed a resolution declaring:

"We believe that the Honorable Hubert H. Humphrey offers our best hope to achieve sanity in our domestic and international affairs. We fear the plague of unrest and confusion which could follow the election of a biased and demagogic leadership."

Although the ministers urged all out support of Humphrey, "God forbid that anyone should ever suggest to a minister what he should include in his sermon," Bishop Baber declared.

"However," he added, "If you see great moral issues where the scriptures shed light--share this information with your congregation in the Preached Word."

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The "get out the vote" drive was scheduled to begin Sunday, October 27, with all ministers urged to preach sermons on the civil rights records of candidates and congressmen to make their congregations "politically aware."

Sunday, November 3rd, was designated as "Get Out The Vote" Sunday, when the ministers would urge their parishioners to "exercise Christian responsibility by going to vote November 5," Bishop Baber said.

Other programs to be carried out by the ministers in urging a record vote included: providing transportation pools to and from the polls; absentee ballot information; pre-election church polls and discussions; Senior Citizen telephone brigades; Youth participation programs and fund raising for local campaigns.

Baber said one group of churches in Los Angeles had raised \$7,000 to aid local candidates and that other churches were planning similar projects in their areas.

The plan may make it possible for the nation's 11 million potential black voters to realize their full potential in the November balloting, Democratic National Committee deputy chairman Louis Martin said in commenting on the ministers' actions.

"The drive is one of several get-out-the-vote campaigns being carried on at all levels in the black community despite reports of voter apathy, indifference and organized boycotts," Martin emphasized.

"Negro beauticians, barbers, physicians, insurance agents, teachers and youth leaders are all organizing full scale "get out the vote" efforts to provide the greatest turn out in history among black citizens who are not able to vote in all areas of the nation without reservation for the first time," Martin said.

Among the top clergymen at the all day meeting with the Vice-President were Bishops J. Howard Dell, Atlanta; W. H. Amos, Detroit; E. L. Hickman, Atlanta; J. Claude Allen, Gary, Ind.; William Wells, Greensboro, N. C.; W. A. Patterson, Detroit; P. R. Shay, Atlanta; Dewey Robinson, Washington; Robert F. Watts, H. J. Bryant, H. T. Thomas, AME Zion Church; and the Rev. J. T. McMillan, president of the Ministers Conference of South Carolina.