Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the National Association For The Advancement Of Colored People. A few days ago, in one of our regular bi-monthly staff meetings the NAACP national staff concluded that because of the near hysteria that prevails in many of the Black communities of our nation following the election of the Reagan administration, and more particularly the election of a very conservative Senate and House which caused the displacement of many of the most liberal names that Blacks have come to rely upon over the years such as Gaylord Nelson, Frank Church, John Culver, Birch Bayh, in addition to others, we should call a meeting of our constituency from across the nation. We held a relatively small meeting consisting of our State Conference Presidents, seven regional chairpersons, our National staff and selected Executive Directors and Presidents of large city branches. The NAACP as you may already know is the largest civil rights organization in the nation, with 1800 chapters and 500 youth chapters. We have at least one unit in every state except in the smaller states like Nevada and South Dakota so we have a total of 35 chapters.
We have broken out into regional sessions to get a feel for what they think is going on in their communities, in the cities and the states where they live. We have, I think a very successful meeting. We are fortunate in the NAACP to have a number of prominent Black republicans who are members of NAACP among them are people like Arthur Fletcher, who has been at this meeting and let me correct a mis-apprehension Mr. Fletcher did not come here... Mr. Fletcher did not come here...Mr. Fletcher is not here as a member of the Reagan transition team. He is here as a NAACPPer who happens to be a Black Republican.

Sam Jackson is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Special Contribution Fund and he has come as a dues-paying member of the NAACP. Ben Andrews, one of our National Board members from Connecticut, Sara Green from Knoxville, Tennessee, all of these outstanding Republicans who happened to be Black. We have also made a decision I believe that while there are many things that the Reagan Administration seems to be saying and certainly there are things that have been said by people like...and I'll call names Orrin Hatch of Utah, Strom Thurmond of South Carolina that the NAACP will resist with every ounce of this ability any attempt to turn the clock and calendar back. It is unfortunate, it is pathetic and tragic that once again Black people and their sympathetic white allies are called upon almost single-handedly as a group to defend the great American idea against those who hold high office who would spit on the flag, trample on the constitution and crumble the Bill of Rights into nothingness. We believe in America. We believe in one America. We believe in rights for all and it is tragic that we have people in highly placed senatorial and congressional offices that would try to move the clock backward and we will resist it and will never yield to it. The NAACP is a long distance runner. We have fought difficult circumstances. We are not fair weather fighters. We are not sunshine soldiers or patriots. We don't disappear when the media turns the light off. We will be there and we're going to be heard.
Along with members of the Board of Directors, we are tremendously pleased and gratified that a total of more than 200 people have participated in this brief session. We have come for a number of reasons. First of all I think it is important for you to understand that in many parts of the Black community, the hysteria and the perception that this nation is moving backward, coupled with incidences of violence in New Orleans, Atlanta and Buffalo, that I have been amazed and perturbed by the number of Black people who feel that we are in a real warfare, who are buying pistols and ammunition, and rifles and who are preparing for overt violence. I would hate to see the Reagan administration clouded in his early days with events that perhaps should not be held accountable for. I have therefore sent a telegram to President-elect Reagan seeking an early meeting and I have spoken to as many influential Republicans as I can find to suggest that the Reagan Administration need the opportunity to address the many pressing problems in America without having this hysteria to break through. So we have called on our people to come here, not simply to talk with them, but for them to talk with us.
We are laying our plans now to remind the Senate that 1/3 of their members two years from now, that their governor running two years from now and the whole congress—and just as the far right have well organized themselves—we intend to well organize ourself, and we will meet them at the ballot box. We have finally decided that where the Reagan Administration is talking about jobs and economic development that all of you have to remember that we are all American citizens and if Mr. Reagan can, indeed, get this nation moving forward, if he can reduce joblessness and inflation, we as Black Americans should benefit. But we have to remind the Administration that simply moving the economy forward does not necessarily move Blacks forward, we have to make an extraordinary effort to make sure, if there is some pie on the table we get a slice of it. But one thing is sure, if there is no pie on the table, nobody will get a slice of it. It is for these reasons that we have come to New York. We are very grateful to the chairperson of our board, Margaret Bush Wilson, and to other board members, and to our staff, who have come to our call and who have stayed here and worked hard last night and this morning and this afternoon session, we hope to wrap up some very definite recommendations to go back with. We have decided that since the Reagan Administration seems to want to break up categorical grants and give them to the states, no organization in Black America is more adept at lobbying at the state house level than is the NAACP. So we will meet them at the state house, city house or the outhouse or the White House or the Black House or at no house, we will insist that progress continue and that Blacks and minorities get their proportionate share. That was a rather long opening statement and now I'm prepared for questions.

Q. You have billed this as a strategy session, do you consider the election of Ronald Reagan and the shift to conservatism in Congress as an emergency?
A. I consider more than that, it is not only what I consider as reality, this is a perception and I say that mind reading the American Black mentality today that is we feel that we've been in the depths of a crisis and we have called it in my book perception which are as important as reality. Whether the Reagan Administration is a separate crisis is yet to be seen
But there is a perceived crisis in the black community. All of this loose talk about rolling back social programs, cutting out training, doing away with or looking at social security, in themselves they may be innocuous, but taken together the cumulative effect has frightened us to death and certain statements of people like Orin Hatch talking about introducing the constitutional amendment to ban affirmative action, Senator Strom Thurmond suggesting that we repeal the Voting Rights Act and reinstate the death penalty have added to the hysteria and understandably so in the black community.

Q. What strategies did you map out?

A. Well, the strategy is really, as we look at it, we are going to do better like we have always done. When I look at the victory of the conservatives; they did not have any bullets or pistols. They did not have new techniques, they simply out voted us and so we are going to concentrate on essentials. I'm not looking to wave a magic wand, I'm not going out here with some strategy to do something. We have done some things in the past. We've used economic strength. We'll do it again. We've used our voting power, we'll do it again. We've used direct action, marches, and boycotts. If we have to we'll do it again. We've used selective buying and we'll do that again, we'll use education (cont)
consideration and negotiation. We have gotten all over the world raising sand and we'll do that again and if we happen to find a new strategy we'll use that but right now I'm saying that I have not seen the moral majority as its called, doing anything but take a book out of a leaflet from Martin King. That's why I'm not fighting preachers. Being in politics, I welcome white folk in the pulpit being in politics. What I don't welcome is an anti-Christ kind of attitude that they bring,. I'm a black preacher and I look like a fool saying that a white preacher can't do the same thing that I've done. I'm just going to beat him doing it two years from now.

Q. What do you have to say to the black community?

Where was the black communith on Election Day?

A. The black community, I think from our analysis, voted very well. Our perception is that in many cities we did as high as 70% of the registered black vote. I would suspect that when the figures are finally entered that we'll discover that there were more than 7½ million blacks who voted which is a large number and most black people voted for Carter. Carter lost, that doesn't mean our vote was wanted because those Republicans know as well as we do that those 7 million votes are still out there. I want to make a prediction now to Mr. Reagan: if unemployment is as high four years from now as it is today, if inflation is rising and unchecked, he may think he has a mandate or may not but he'll be on the outside and somebody else will have that.
mandate. I think that American people voted their pocketbook but Black folk can see Carter doing better than Reagan and the majority of white people did not. So I'm not discouraged by the Black vote. It's important that we voted. If we had not voted, I would be frightened to death, but that seven million votes remain out there as a threat or promise to those who are willing to see to it that the Black causes move forward.

Q. You're talking about the near hysteria, people buying guns... Is that a perception?

A. That is a reality. That's not a perception. These are reports I have gotten from branch presidents who have called me. I can't say how widespread. A branch president may call me and say three people bought guns out of three hundred thousand. I don't know what that means. I'm not saying that there is a widespread thing. I'm saying that people are frightened and Black folk feel, many of them that there is a conspiracy. They are connecting Buffalo, New Orleans, Atlanta. They are connecting all of those things together, the Ku Klux Klan shootings and the acquittal verdict in Greensboro, the arrest of a man who's alleged to have killed two men in Utah, the burning of crosses by the Ku Klux Klan, people running for.
public office. In the minds of Black people let me be very frank. In my own mind I'm beginning to feel that there's something more than meets the eye when all of these hate groups and violent groups come up all at the same time.

Q. President Carter said Paul Volker of the Federal Reserve Board cost him the election. Are you going to ask President Reagan to get rid of high interest rates?

I'm not prepared to deal with what I'm going to ask for because I don't think Reagan can get rid of high interest rates. I don't know that he sets them. The Federal Reserve Board is supposedly an independent agency. Presidents appoint people to do certain things but once they get a 15 year term I've found they do what they want to do. It's my judgement that when a new President comes in, he has a right to appoint a chairman, a few people who are so sensitive that if they are removed from chairmanship to committee membership they can't stand the blow to their ego and prestige and they leave. I have no opinion on Volker one way or the other and I don't take the position that high interest rates alone are the cause of Mr. Carter losing. He's blamed his loss on 27 different things and maybe all of them are part of it.

Q. Do you have any contacts? Do the prominent Republicans who happen to be Black and are in attendance here, have you had any contact with the Reagan administration?

A. I have never met Mr. Reagan in my life. I had a very interesting phone conversation with him at the time he did not appear at the NAACP convention. I could have pursued a meeting.
For many poor blacks in this nation, the civil rights revolution has not really ever occurred. They're worse off now than 20 years ago. I'm not saying the whole black community. I don't know who the Reagan administration is, I'm saying I've had contact with Republicans whom I assume will be a part of that. And until he announces, I have not had contact with the only two people he's announced.

Yes, I know many of the transition team. Richard Wiley was the chairman of the FCC when I was on the FCC and I can contact him any day. Howard Baker is the majority leader designee, he's from Tennessee, my home. Bill Brock is from Tennessee, my home state. I happen to have pastored in Michigan where we have a Republican governor so I've been in touch with a lot of people. I don't know how well they stand with Ronald Reagan so I haven't been in touch with him.

Q. Ronald Reagan has not even been inaugurated yet we've seen a very clear policy decision on busing. We've seen a clear policy decision with reference to foreign policy in Africa and aid to the cities. Does it appear likely that black Republicans will even have a minimal impact on the shapings of major issues?

A. Well, the fact of the matter is that we've seen a clear policy on anti-busing before Reagan was even elected. We haven't had a president that really savored busing in my lifetime, unless it was Johnson and then it was not an issue. The anti-busing amendments have passed the Senate 10 or 12 times in the last 2 or 3 years when the Democrats had a tremendous majority.
The anti-busing amendment that passed the other day was passed in a lame duck Congress that still has 59 Democrats to 41 Republicans and I'm not goint to be a part of the concept that they did it. We fought this present administration in Congress. We had a hard time getting the Panama Canal treaty ratified, a difficult time getting the Equal Rights extension. We had a very hard time getting the DC statehood bills through the Senate. We had a difficult time with every thing we did. We could not get the Fair Housing bill passed. We had a heck of a bad Congress before. I think it's going to be worse but I'm not going to sit here and pretend that we're moving from light to darkness. We're moving from twilight maybe to darkness but not from light to darkness. I think the fight is going to be infinitely more difficult. The NAACP was fighting in 1930 under the Hoover administration. We defeated the judgeship of a supreme court justice. We're accustomed to hard fights. We won the Brown vs. the Board of Education decision in 1954 with nine white supreme court justices in very illiberal times, so that I'm not going to sit here with a grasshopper mentality and say all of them are giants and we are grasshoppers. I'm going to say we're able. I'm not going to be a Pollyanna and claim it's going to be easy. It's going to be much more difficult but I don't care about the signals. We're going to be fighting and sometimes I think that some of these white Republicans just need a little education. They don't know what they're doing.
I think the fight is going to be infinitely more difficult. But I think we have to fight on. The NAACP was fighting in 1930 under the Hoover Administration. We defeated the judgeship of the Supreme Court Justice. We are accustomed to hard fights. We won the Brown v. Board of Education suit in 1954 with nine white Supreme Court justices in a very illiberal time. So that I am not going to sit here with a grasshopper mentality and say all of them are giants and we are big grasshoppers. I am going to say we are able. We are not going ... it is going to be ... I am not going to be a pollyanana and claim it is going to be easy. It is going to be much more difficult but I do not care about the signals. We are going to be fighting and sometimes I think that some of these white republicans just need a little education. They do not know what they are doing.

Q. Dr. Hooks, you said that Arthur Fletcher and Sam Jackson were not representatives of President-elect Reagan's transition team, nevertheless, they are members of the team. Did they say anything to you in your discussions with them over the past couple days to reassure you that the NAACP has the ear of the President or that the President is, indeed, concerned at all as to the needs of Black Americans?

A. I did not need to ask ... get the answer on either question because I think it is irrelevant to us. NAACP will be heard whether Reagan wants to hear us or not. Let me say that. If we have to put a million people in Washington to be heard, we will be heard. If we have to put 100,000 in every state capital, we will
be heard and like MacArthur, we shall return. We have never gone nowhere really. Secondly, I have to assume that when Mr. Reagan was Governor of California for eight years, they did not build any concentration camps. They did not appropriate our property, they did not send us off as they did the Japanese in 1941 under some liberal people. So I do think he is the devil's representative, and I think he is approachable. I think he is a genuine conservative and he needs to have his mind altered in some ways. But we are good in the mind altering business and raising the consciousness of people about Black rights. I shall never forget when Edward Dirksen, who was Republican Minority Leader, had been roundly cussed out by people all over the country that when the time came for the Civil Rights Bill after it had been through Martin Luther King. He took the floor of the Senate and quoted somebody and said that there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come and but for Edward Dirksen, the major civil rights legislation of the mid-60's would never have passed. So we do not give up on anybody. We may only get one vote out of 100 but we will go for that one. But we are going to meet them at the ballot box if they have a percentage that low.

Q. I would like to pursue that for just a second. The second part of the question dealt with whether Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Jackson in any way were able to reassure you about the intent of the Reagan Administration?
A. I am trying to say that we did not go to them for reassurance. Because we went to them ...

Q. They were here nonetheless.

A. Yes, but they were here to talk about the problems they perceived as we do and I did ... I say I did not ask them for any reassurance. I read the papers and I have my own concept of how much we can get. All I asked them was to come here and talk about what they conceived to be the Republican philosophy of government approach and where we might be able to deal with it. I have not really asked anybody. I am waiting ... if I never see Mr. Reagan I will never know, but I am expecting a conference. I will have to make my own concept of where he is going. Your question, I am sorry I did not follow up on about the Black Republicans, I missed that. What was that?

Q. The point I am driving at is that, historically, groups like your own have had a liaison with Democratic Administrations. The point I am driving at is do you feel that Black Republicans have a sufficient amount of influence in this Administration to even hold this Administration accountable to an agenda.

A. I do not think they would have the same strength with seven percent of the Black vote that we should have had with Carter with ninety-five percent. But on the other hand, I cannot say that our average with Mr. Carter was 100 percent. And I ... all you have to do is go back and read the press releases of Vernon Jordan,
Ben Hooks, Jesse Jackson and Joe Lowery for the last three years and you will get some ... there was somebody who said our contact with Carter was more shadow than substance. So, I mean I do not get involved with partisan politics because we have an eighteen percent Black unemployment rate today in this nation; we have a forty percent Black youth unemployment today with a friendly Administration; we have problems that transcend our blackness and go to our economic well being. So what I am saying is that I do not believe that Black Republicans can change the basic philosophy of the Republican party whose in power this time. I do think we can influence them on certain issues. For instance, if they are going to have a tax re-zone, then I do not want white people writing the whole thing, I want Blacks participating in it. If they are going to deal with anything like jobs and how we create them for the Black community, we want to have a part. When they talk about dissembling affirmative action, we are going to fight there ain't nothing to discuss except to say we are opposed to it. When they talk about antibusing, there is nothing to do but say we are opposed to it and we will try to fight on it every way we know how. But there may be a few things that we can work with him on if we do. No, I do not have any concept that we can any more change the basic philosophy of the Republican party than I do we could change Mr. Carter when we begged him not to use unemployment to combat inflation. Realistically, as a decent, kind, courageous, well-meaning human being he took the other position that that was the best way to do it so we could not change him. Any other questions.
Q. How about if Reagan wants to have a subminimum wage to ...

A. The NAACP has, historically, been opposed to the subminimum wage. We have consistently voted in our convention and our board to oppose it. We oppose it now, today. I expect we will oppose it six months from now. If the Reagan Administration makes a convincing case, I do not think we will ever support it. On the other hand, if they have the votes to pass it, we will live with it like we live with a lot of other things. But we will not change our position so far as I know.

Q. You have spoken about a perception of a feeling of crisis — some people buying guns — some feeling of emergency in the Black community. Do you have any words of reassurance or faith that you can offer.

A. Well surely I do. The first word is that that is just the other side much worse than that is not the gun buying or the threat of violence, which I think is minimal, but is there, and we have understood that a few people can create a great deal of disruption in our nation. That is not my major fear, it is a fear of many, I think millions, of Black people that all of our hopes are being dashed now which can lead to a certain resignation of support, a certain listlessness, a certain getting out of it or at the worse joining elements who would be prone to violence. And I think either one of those moods can be disastrous to a successful Reagan Administration if he can, indeed, do anything about jobs. We would like to be a part of the constituency that gives him an
opportunity to do what has to be done. We would like to be a part of that. And so, what we have come here for is to talk with the people who represent us out there. Get there assessment, come together and then those people will be back in Utah and Nevada and Mississippi and Alabama and they will be talking to their branches trying to say to them give the Reagan Administration a chance to see if they are going to do anything worthwhile, give the National NAACP a chance to talk and then if that does not work give us a chance to work a program that can be positive rather than a negative program.

Q. Let me just follow that up, Dr. Hooks. Candidate Reagan as you said, did not go to the NAACP meeting. He did not go to the meeting in Richmond. You were the supplementary entry as a speaker in the Convention in Detroit. How sensitive is not only the Reagan Administration, which is a bit fuzzy as yet, to be sure, but the Republican party going to be to your voice and your leadership.

A. Well, two things. When you say candidate Reagan did not come to the Richmond meeting, let us also be fair candidate Carter did not come, and candidate Anderson did not come. So, I am not going to get caught in that trap. None of them came. They all ignored us and insulted us. Candidate Reagan did not come to the NAACP meeting and I think that he committed an almost unpar-donable sin. Almost. And I think he made a great mistake. He did, however, go to the Urban League meeting and he did go by some other places. I do not ... I have tried to say that I think
and this is my last ... the job of human and civil rights activist, in my judgment, will be much more difficult in today's climate than it was last year and it was difficult last year. I am not being a Pollyanna, I do not have any illusions that we are going to have an easy time with this new Administration on much of our agenda. I am saying that we owe it, as the nation's largest, oldest, and most effective civil rights agency, we owe it to our people not to abandon ship or to abandon hope but to fight for what we can get and fight against a rollback. I am also saying that if there are broad grants that are going to be made to states there is no other Black agency as situated as we to fight at the statehouse to see that it is spent right to fight at the city level to see that it is spent right. So we are not going to give up on that. Is there a question back here?

Q. Your organization in the past couple of months has been taken more of a role in community development and getting more people on staff who are concerned with getting technical assistance to business. I was wondering, under the old adage, "when you are given a lemon, make lemonade," and as a Republican yourself whether in your moments of positive thinking you see signals coming from this Republican Administration which could be vehicles some new avenues which this organization has not yet ...

A. That is a very interesting statement. I had better correct you right off. I am not a Republican and I do not know, you know and its going to go out that I am because I know once the statement is made it will plaque me. Somebody will not hear my answer, they
hear your question. I am not a Republican. In my earlier life, pre-Goldwater, in Memphis, Tennessee, where Blacks could not be democrats, I started off as a Republican in protest, really started off as a Progressive supporting Wallace, but when he lost, I went the other way. But for the past fifteen years, I have been an active, ardent, devoted, devoted, fighting democrat fighting as much within the party as without. That's number one now get that straight. I hope all of you all wrote that down so I will not have to live that over. Not that I would be ashamed to be a Republican but I just do not happen to be one. I would not be ashamed to be a woman but I ain't one. I wasn't ... I may not be ashamed to be white but I ain't you know so I am just what I am and I am not a Republican, now. That is a strange freudian slip, now, I did not mean to say now either but I am not Republican. If they stay in power twenty-five years and I live that long, who knows. I may join all of you all over there. But I have tried to state ... I have tried to state that I think the fight will be difficult. I think that the Senate is feeling its Cheerios. I think that many people who have been in the Senate before this like Orrin Hatch before this election and Strom Thurmond, who has been their for years and years feel that they now have a mandate. I would suggest that the exit polls indicated, as I read them, that there were no sweeping mandates to the Republican party to change the social programs of the past 50 years. There was a mandate to do three things: reduce unemployment, reduce inflation and in some general sense, get the government off my back. And what that means is ... depends upon whose ox
is being gored. Business does not want to have government on their back on environment but they do want government on their back if they need a loan. You see. There are all kinds of ways and my experience of five years at the FCC was everybody wants government as long as it is doing what they want and they never want it if it is doing what they do not want. So that my own concept is while we will have a difficult time, we will continue to press forward.

Q. Do you think it would be appropriate for Mr. Reagan to make a statement to Black America to the people who have those fears now to sort of allay those fears?

A. Absolutely.

Q. What do you think the future is for the Democratic party and what kind of ... have specifically possible choice in the next Democratic election.

A. Well you know, that is a long story. Mr. McGovern whom I admire and Mr. Carter whom I admire would never have been selected as presidential candidates under the old system. I helped to open up the Democratic party and I am starting tomorrow to try to help close it back up. You know as soon as Blacks and women got into the smoke filled room we dealt ourselves out. And I think we may have to look at it all over again the primary process and how we select candidates who can move ... really represent the mainstream of the party. I do not know what happened to the Democratic party but the only people who remained faith-
ful on November 4th were Black folk. Women voted 50 percent for Reagan, labor voted 50 percent for Reagan, the oldsters who collect social security voted 50 percent for Reagan, the young crowd voted 65 percent, white folk in the south voted 65 percent. We have surveyed and survived the wreckage of the Democratic party and we want to help to try to put it back together again. I will be engaged in a series of meetings over the next few weeks trying ... and this is a nonpartisan attempt. I want to see two strong parties. I want to see some good, strong, active, articulate Black Republicans and Black Democrats. I am opposed to the concept of a third independent Black only party. Seven million people are not in the near future going to elect a president. We can influence the selection within the parties. I have no idea where the Democratic party is going because already I see those who are saying we ought to be more conservative and others who are saying we ought to be more liberal. Now I have a very hard choice there are people involved and I think the party's going to be rebuilt around people. And I cannot afford to pick a loser so I will be doing a lot of praying before I decide where I am going.

Q. Could not hear tape ... Democratic National party chairman?
A. Yes, I have got about ten but if I call them they would all be sure to lose so I will keep quiet.

Q. Quite some time ago you ... or or toward the end of the fall, you announced a massive voter education and registration campaign. Can you assess the effectiveness of your own campaign.
A great deal of money was spent on that. Can you tell us how effective it was?

A. Yes, it was the most effective campaign we have ever had for two reasons. In Chicago we registered more than 55,000 black voters in the state of New York, close to 60,000. These are figures we can prove and document. In the state of California, more than 85,000 Black voters were registered and there was a widespread perception, and I want to get this very clearly before you so you will remember it, a widespread perception that Black folk because they were disenchanted with Mr. Carter, mad with him if you please, were not going to vote at all. There was a widespread lie spread that we were going to stay home. Even some "so-called" Black leaders said vote for everybody but the President or stay home. The NAACP was the organization all over this nation that had the individuals in their local states and communities, respected leaders who kept hammering let's vote, let's vote, let's vote. And we led that registration drive. I just gave you three cities. We did it in many ... we did it in 82 cities and I am saying to you that it is my ... my prediction that when the figures are in that the voting percentage of Blacks nationally was about ... the number rather was about as high as it was in 1976 when we were on holy fire because of Mr. Carter's amazing ability to quote "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound," and having built us up as the new hope of our nation.
So that I think that to equal the 76 vote turn out is a great victory for an organization that almost singlehandedly was able to do it. Now there were many other Black leaders who worked hard but they were confined, perhaps, to their local communities. I want to give credit to everybody who worked. The Congressional Black Caucus, Operation Big Vote, Voter Education Project, Push, Urban League, you name them. They were all out there. But we had the most intensive effort and we spent close to $400,000 and it was intensely, immensely, tremendously successful. Much of that success is due to one of our new young rising stars and it is a great tribute to the modesty and lack of too much ego of Ben Hooks—and I got a lot of it—that I am able to recognize that I have some young people around me who do a great job and that is Joe Madison. I do not want too many like that, but at least I would like two or three. Joe Madison, who headed our Voter Registration Drive. And he will have some facts and figures which we will release in the next few days. Anybody else?

Q. Could you just give us a brief statement of a clear concise agenda for the 1980's which we can, you know, relate to the political reality of the nation?

A. Well the first agenda is if you were to go out and poll 100 Black people, I would be willing to bet you that their first concern would be economics, jobs and the lowering of inflation. Because we are poor, you know proportionately, because Black median family income is only 60 percent or 59 percent of white family income, because inflation pinches us more cruelly you can
wake up any Black person from sleep on the job and they will tell you economics. So our agenda has to coincide with our people. That is why I keep saying that if there ain't any jobs and if inflation continues to mount we are in serious trouble. So we join with any President be it Carter, Reagan or Anderson. It happened to be Reagan. If he can produce jobs that is our first agenda. We will help him produce jobs. But we cannot fall for the assumption that just because jobs are produced that Black folk will get their share of them. That is the peculiar second agenda which is not second but contemporaneous. Help the Administration to create the job and then contemporaneously fight to make sure that Black folk get their just proportion. Somebody asked about economic development. It is interesting to note that 80 percent of all the new jobs created in America in the last twenty years were created by small business. Now when you talk about Black business you do not need to say Black small business. It is automatically small. But the industries that employ 4, and 5, or 7 and 8 are the ones where we hope to get some of this Black employment moving. So if you ask me where my major agenda was it will be jobs and the reduction of inflation and to make sure that Black folk share in it. Also we are fighting all that we know how to prevent a rollback in what we might call pure civil rights laws like the Voting Rights Act and that kind of thing. That is the also our agenda. That is the agenda for the 80's. If we end up at the end of 1984 with 25 percent inflation rate then I predict that we will have a kind of a fascist mentality that will destroy human rights in this
nation. If we end up with 12 or 14 percent unemployment rate and 30 or 40 percent in the Black community I think we will have chaos and revolution. So that is the first agenda and it ought to be. People always ask me, "Well what does Reagan portend for Black folk? Well, the real question is what does he offer the white folk. We are not the only people in this land. And I have no illusions that they are going to solve inflation for Black people and make oranges a dime a dozen for us and charge white folk twenty cents. If I know anything about it, it will be most likely twenty-five cents for us and twenty cents for them. So we have got to work with this Administration if they have got any plans. Now let me say this, I do not hear anybody had any plans so I hope they are working on it. Now.

Q. Dr. Hooks, in your opening statement and your answer to a couple of questions you painted a rather scary picture, I think, of what Black people are doing in terms of arming themselves and preparing for war. On the face of that one knows that the movements of a new Administration are generally very slow and bulky and cumbersom. What, if anything can Ronald Reagan do at the moment to undercut this possibility of racial warfare.

A. Having been a newspaper person for some years and having had many television shows and being a radio personality I recognize that this whole press conference is going to go out wrong. I am very well prepared for that. I can see the headlines now. Hooks' predicts racial wars. I know what is going to come out.
That is not at all what I said, it is not at all what I meant. I said that I am afraid because our reports indicate that there are people who are doing this. I have tried to say that in my judgment it is a very small small minority. I recognize that putting is it that way ain't going to sell any papers, not going to cause anybody to look. So, I am prepared for the repercussions. I just want you to know when you do it you did not report it like I said it. I said that the prevalent mood was one of a hysterical fear which is entirely different from the guns and bullets. But I would be unfair to this audience if I did not say that I have had many many reports that are frightening of people who are so afraid, and I was specifically referring more to what is happening in Atlanta and Buffalo and New Orleans where there may be reason for that and the violence of the Ku Klux Klan in places like Greensboro and others. I would not want it said that I got here predicting that that would happen on any massive scale. My major point was and is that there is a hysterical fear that is paranoid on behalf of the majority of Black Americans in my perception that the Reagan Administration is, indeed, anti-Black. Because of that I think it is incumbent on the Reagan Administration to move very fast and to say something ...

For instance Mr. Reagan said, "I believe with all my heart and all my soul and all my might in civil rights progress and the equality of all people but if the busing amendment passes I will sign it. Now what did the headlines say. "Reagan will sign busing amendment." You had to read all the way down in the story to read the other part. So Mr. Reagan has to be aware of the
fact like I was not aware this morning that the minor premise can become major if the minor premise is more exciting and glamorous. They did not put in the headline that Reagan says he embraced civil rights. It would have been a good headline, it would have been so opposed to what we think it may have sold some papers. But they did not say that. They said, "Reagan would sign the busing bill." I could give a lecture after five years on the nature of the media if I would remind you that if America goes up in a ball of flame that journalists will not be exempt from it.

Q. Could not make out first part of question. How real are those threats? How widespread would violence be.

A. Well, let me put it this way. I sense from our people here from Buffalo where some five or six Blacks have been killed from New Orleans where we are having a lot of problems, from Atlanta where 14 or 15 children have been killed the residue ... the residual left over from Miami and from Chattanooga, I ... and the Greensboro, North Carolina acquittal. I am saying that it is my judgment, based on what I have been able to piece together that many Black folks are beginning to get the feeling that there is a national conspiracy to roll Black rights back. That the statements of people like Strom Thurmond and Orrin Hatch while they do not talk about violence, aid that fear, that growing fear in the Black community. I do not think that the threat of violence is imminent nor widespread but I do think that we will have to deal with it now and I do think that the major point is if the majority of 25 million Black people become paranoid about this Administration, it almost paralyzes the chance of progress
on any front. Yes.

Q. It is the potential for jobs coming out of the Reagan Administra-
tion that I would like to comment on. First, is you have a strong
position in favor of nuclear energy and it would seem that the
Reagan Administration is going to go ahead ...

A. I do not have a strong position in favor of nuclear energy.
I want to correct that mistake. I have never ...

Q. The NAACP hasn't?

A. I do not think the NAACP has a strong position in favor of
nuclear energy. What the NAACP has said we investigate ... we are
in favor of investigating the possibility of all alternative forms
of energy including nuclear energy in a safe capacity. We have
not committed ourselves to it but we are not opposed to it. Now
I want to get that ... just want to stop and get that straight.
All right, now you may proceed.

Q. O. K. The press release statement said that the NAACP is
concerned about energy development because of the price of energy ...
couldn't hear the rest of question

A. That's right.

Q. Could not hear the question

A. That's right

Q. Could not hear the question

A. That's right, we didn't
Q. Again, couldn't hear question.

A. Yes, that is right.

Q. My point is the Reagan Administration people seem to be (can't make this part out) and there are many people who think that nuclear plants will make a great number of jobs and this might be a possible area for cooperation and number 2, the export/import bank. Senator Thorns is going to be the new chairman and the Senate Banking Committee has announced that he is going to seek eight billion dollars for exports which will be double the amount (could not make out this part) Now both of those seem like they would be areas where they would be increasing employment and increasing high technology employment and I wonder if you would comment on it if you think this would help Black employment or would be a potential for that.

A. Nuclear energy and high technology has absolutely nothing to do with Black unemployment in terms of employment in nuclear energy. That is why the NAACP's position has always been misunderstood. I could give a wrap less for what kind of energy you have if it is safe. What we are concerned about is that General Motors, where we have 100,000 Blacks employed and the steel industry and every other industry does not close down. We are concerned about the end result not employment in the industry itself but what it creates. And I do not understand why people cannot see that if there is no oil, no gas, no coal or nothing to fuel industry that they close down and we lose jobs. We are not saying that we have got jobs in ... if the nuclear industry only creates 1,000
jobs, it would be stupid to look for jobs there. We are not that crazy. But, we do know that it takes energy to run every plant in America. So, we are concerned about 100 million people who have to work. You cannot run a Sears and Roebuck or Montgomery Ward store unless there are goods produced and you cannot produce goods without energy. You have got to have lights and heat and air conditioning because we are so soft now, we are not going to shop in a store that is hot in the winter ... hot in the summer and cold in the winter. Jobs are what we are concerned about and we were concerned about energy to produce jobs, not necessarily jobs in that specific energy producing outfit. On the export/import bank, the export question you have got me a little over my head ... I do not quite know ... I do not pay much attention to what Mr. Gonz wants because I hope most of what he wants he does not get. So I do not have any comment on that.

Q. What did they indicate to you would the distribution of Blacks in the Reagan Administration?

A. Well, we were concerned about the fact whether or not there was a possibility that Blacks would be in cabinet positions and important positions. We were concerned about originally there seemed to be very few Blacks on the transition team. We were concerned about whether there would be Blacks in the White House on the personnel level and their thought is that there probably will be. And we were asking some questions so we could prepare a position paper to talk with Mr. Reagan and obviously what they think may or may not be true but we were concerned about
their thoughts. One other question now and I am going to close out. What was your question?

Q. Do you have any suggestions to the President-elect in the immediate future that would alleviate some of the hysteria.

A. Yes I do, I think the question I answered a moment ago ... I think that Mr. Reagan is obligated as soon as possible to make a statement, a public statement, hopefully, on all three networks since Presidents, and Presidents-elect seem to be able to get on there pretty easily, I would hope that all three networks (remembering that he appoints the FCC) would let him have a half hour or fifteen minutes (it may not take him but ten) and that in that statement he would deal with the fact that he recognizes that he is the President of all Americans, that he recognizes that he has a peculiar obligation to the Black community because of their perceived hysteria. It may even be that he would let me write the speech which he could edit, heavily, and I would ... I am sure that he would then say the things that would help us move forward.

NAACP will be wrapping up its sessions later on this evening. They will be putting together some policy position papers and the staff will be working in the next few weeks hoping to meet with the Reagan Administration.