REMARKS BY COMMISSIONER BENJAMIN L. HOOKS AT
SWEARING-IN CEREMONY JULY 5 1972

Judge Bryant fellow Commissioners and honored guests.

I thank you all for your attendance today at this happy occasion in my life. I would hope that the fact that this event's occurrence on the day after the anniversary of the genesis of this country is more prophetic than fortuitous and would like to believe that my appointment—that is the appointment of the first black F.C.C. Commissioner—is no less the result of an irresistible force acting on "the course of human events."

As I assume this honorable office my highest aspirations will be to represent both the people who are looking to me to help effect new initiatives in the area of communications and the federal government with an open mind with equity and dignity. In this connection my profound regret is that this chapter in the history of Black Americans comes so so late in the text and I shall strive to make up some of that lost time.

Not very long ago I had the privilege of partaking regularly in a television series in Memphis called "Dialogues in Black and White" and now that I am on so to speak the other side of the regulatory fence I have every intention of continuing those dialogues. The participants may be altered but many of the issues will be similar. Where there are differences let them be differences of
of substance and not of ultimate goals: let them be discussed in the spirit of constructive debate and not personal acrimony.

I come today into a new community with a deep desire to draw from the wellspings of the specialized knowledge that flow through this community and to learn. And, if the good Lord instills in me the wisdom, perhaps to teach about those matters wherein I might have special knowledge.

As I have invoked His name I would close with a quotation from His Book and shall endeavor to permit the words to establish the tone of my tenure:

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Micah Chapter 6