

Willie Brown speaks at award presentation

By Paul McCoy

On the evening of May 15th, the National Conference of Christians and Jews held its 31st annual Human Relations Awards Banquet. The event was held at the Sheraton Hotel near the Lloyd Center.

Gerry Pratt, a familiar name, was the master of ceremonies. Honored were the Rev. Royald V. Caldwell, Rev. John Jackson, Fred M. Rosenbaum and a guest speaker.

A non-profit human relations organization, the NCCJ founded in 1928 seeks to "build bridges of understanding among all groups, to bring the forces of enlightenment and education to bear upon racial and religious prejudice, and to achieve implementation of the moral law."

As the three receive their awards they were cited for their outstanding contributions to the community, city, state and country. The three men honored were short on words but long on applause. Rev. Caldwell, called "Mr. Goodwill," for his outstanding job while active director of Goodwill Industries, thanked his doctors, an Arab and a Jew, stating "because if it were not for them, this Christian Protestant would not be here." The Rev. told of a conference he attended with some 2,000 persons from every place in the world. At this time he was "converted to the realization there is one universal God and a universal oneness of his love all people share."

Rev. Jackson, who is involved in many community and civic organizations, received a standing



REVEREND JOHN JACKSON

round of applause as he came before the crowd. "This is indeed a great moment in my life." He explained that he at one time felt change was impossible. He was quick to add that "you must get into it to see why it hasn't changed, then try to change it." Rev. Jackson concluded by saying, "Even though things change slowly, you do what you can in your life time and leave the rest to the people that follow."

Mr. Fred M. Rosenbaum, an insurance man, was noted for his vast contributions in the area of housing. He is presently chairman of the board for Portland Housing

Authority. "Providing reasonably priced housing for the citizens of Portland is my main concern." His voice is a familiar one when the discussion involves low-income housing and housing for the elderly. "I would like to thank all those people who let me lead, but who also let me follow."

The speaker, some paid one hundred dollars to see, did not show up. His name, Ted Kennedy. Willie Brown was on hand to speak. Brown started his career in politics during the 60s when he was a civil rights activist. This activity landed him in jail on several occasions. Presently, he is a California legislator on the Democratic side. He stated at the beginning of his talk, that he would try and stay away from politics but politics were the bottom line.

Brown spoke of the social climate in this country today. "There has been a social revolution in this country, you (Blacks) can now vote, you can join us, we will not kill you or lynch you. But, in Butte County California, there is a man running for congress who makes no bones about being an of-

ficial of the Ku Klux Klan. He makes no bones while voicing his attitude concerning Blacks and other non-whites." Brown stated that Black people tolerate too much. He pointed at unemployment statistics for Blacks, "It is unjust and unfair but we tolerate it." On the subject of desegregation, "today there are more segregated schools than in 1954. We obviously have not come a long way."

What Willie Brown would like to see in his life time are "Better living conditions and not the need for special laws to make sure I receive my equal rights, I will already have them." In his closing statement, this intelligent, articulate man asked the Lord to "grant me the courage and wisdom to do as much as I can for people, and further God, grant them the courage and wisdom not to hate me for doing this. Let us all sit down and reason."

Some 450 people attended the banquet, about 25 were Black. The meal, by this reporter's standards, was excellent. The evening was smooth and well planned and enjoyed by all who attended.

Counseling youth

By Ray A. Thomas

Lance Thomas Sparks is a very dedicated and devoted man. During his early life extreme mobility was necessary because his father, a naval officer, was often transferred to different states. He lived in states ranging from the east coast, to the west coast, and even travelled abroad to Morocco. These experiences "satisfied a lot of curiosities."

From these experiences Lance gained great knowledge about the way the world was structured. He left home at the age of sixteen, never to return again. At that time, he lived in Reno, Nevada where he was completely supporting himself. As he grew older, he recalled some of his bitter and confusing racial situations he encountered, especially in the South. He recalls being able to look down one block, and see white families with the best of houses, cars, and living happy and prosperous lives. Looking down the other block, he could see Black families poverty stricken, and suffering, trying to make it any way they could. Witnessing this tremendous disparity of the black neighborhood, and the so-called high life of the white neighborhood convinced him that something was wrong.

Disturbed by these problems, he developed his ideas about being of service to people. Lance felt that there was so much injustice being done, that he designated himself to fight against the cause in anyway possible. His assistance came in the form of non violent protest, and is presently helping the poor, the unfortunate, and socially deprived with their educational needs.

While still in Reno, young Lance marched for the civil rights cause. During the 60's, he participated in many of the demonstrations staged by Blacks; peaceful protest against segregation and racism. He marched in the San Francisco peace march in 1967, where there were Blacks, whites, and many other groups of people marching side by side for the same cause. He protested along with Blacks at the University of Nevada, where he attended school. "Discrimination was very openly practiced there, not only at the University of Nevada, but universities that were structured to discriminate against Blacks. Due to this higher educational system, Blacks weren't able to enter white universities. Whites became afraid of the threat of Black Power and this caused an almost forced modification of the system," Lance

said.

Lance was greatly influenced by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Eldridge Cleaver. After seeing Martin, Kennedy and Malcolm go down, he said "I was convinced that gathering in the streets wouldn't really work, but that it would take a long and hard struggle over a period of time. What little success there is, is just a drop in the bucket, and there's more work to be done now than in the beginning. There has been a backslide; a prime example is Black unemployment. Things do kind of seem to be tranquil now with Black progression, even more so than in the later 60's when there was continuous national advancement."

Lance attended the University of Nevada in 1960. In 1966, he graduated with honors and obtained a B.A. degree in the study of English. At the present time, he also holds a Doctor of Arts degree from the University of Oregon which he received in 1976. This new degree program at the University of Oregon encompasses the Masters degree.

He is currently an instructor, counselor and the tutorial coordinator for the Educational Opportunity Program at Portland State University. He thoroughly enjoys his job. Working as a tutor for his program for the last two terms allowed me to realize how important his position is to him. For him, "more individual success is not satisfying, it is much more fulfilling to help others reach their potentials." The tutorial program is going to grow by next year. Lance says that "it's going to reach beyond Portland State to the City. Assistance will be given to high schools, elderly people, veterans, students in the upward bound program, and others, but it will not lose its minority focus." He sees a bright future for continued and better services to people.

The EOP Program will be having its first class to graduate from Portland State this spring. There will be thirty graduates and Lance is very proud of them all. Lance feels that the tutorial program he heads, contributes greatly to the entire program. He said, "if anybody thinks he's done anything good, wait until you see the students I work with. They are going to knock you out! Like the story "Billy Goat Gruff" wait until you see my older brother. The young people are more dedicated and determined. The struggle is not over, it has only just began."

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