

# Women Leaders Feeling Mixed On Plea For Rights Support

WASHINGTON — (NNPA). — In his attempt last Tuesday to enlist the support of the nation's women in the current civil rights fight, President Kennedy ran into some fine support and some unexpected opposition.

The Chief Executive invited about 300 leaders of about 100 women's organizations to meet with him in the East Room of the White House.

Collectively, they held a direct line to the ears of about 50 million women, since the majority represented organizations with 100,000 or more members.

The organizations ranged from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

## FIVE POINT PROGRAM

Mr. Kennedy urged the women to adopt a five-point program in which they would:

1. Support the Administration's civil rights program, especially that part of it that would open public places such as hotels, theaters, restaurants and stores to all citizens regardless of race, creed or color.

2. Support the establishment of

leadership training courses for women of all races.

3. Take an active part in getting school dropouts back on the classroom register.

4. Take the lead in setting up bi-racial and human relations programs that would lead to closer communication between responsible white and Negro members of the various communities.

5. Drop the color bar in all women's organizations.

At one point, Mr. Kennedy asked the women to express their feelings frankly and freely.

Mrs. Diane Nash Bevels, of Atlanta, Ga., who represented the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, told the President: "It is difficult to participate on bi-racial committees when you must demonstrate and go to jail."

She asked Mr. Kennedy if he had "any suggestions for us in the deep South? Would you come to Mississippi and talk to Negro leaders there?"

## PROGRAM "SHOT DOWN"

The President did not answer her question, but he drew smiles when he replied that his program in the South had "been shot down", especially in Mississippi, where "we have a long way to go."

"It has taken two divisions of troops, two deaths, and a good many wounded to get one student into the University of Mississippi. There are still 400 troops there." This answer did not satisfy Mrs.

Bevels, who had a child born in jail. After the conference was over, and the women broke up into small groups, she expressed critical concern over a number of Mr. Kennedy's policies and actions.

Her views coincided with those of Mrs. Gloria Richardson, a leader in the recent demonstrations at Cambridge, Md. Both women joined by other colored leaders in their outspoken appraisal of the accomplishments of the New Frontier.

They were especially critical of the work of some of Mr. Kennedy's colored advisers, saying that some were "unreachable" while others were not "in tune with the times."

Mrs. Richardson thought the meeting itself "was not particularly worthwhile." Mrs. Grace Hamilton, of Atlanta, said the subject of the meeting was an important one, but "Albeit, a little late."

## DR. ROSA L. GRAGG

Dr. Rosa L. Gragg, of Detroit, president of the 100,000-member National Association of Colored Women's Club, stood out almost alone among Negro women in her enthusiastic support of the conference.

She said the President had given "this country leadership that has never been given since the days of Lincoln."

Dr. Gragg told reporters that it was she who first suggested Kennedy during his June 22 conference with a group of Negro leaders. Brief remarks were made to the

women by Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. Later, at a meeting in the Interdepartmental Auditorium called by Mrs. Mildred McAfee Hinton of Atlanta, who was chosen to head the group, they heard from Assistant Secretary of State Esther Peterson.

Among other women who took part in the White House conference were: Dr. Sarah Bateman, Mental Health Service, Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Dollie Robinson, former assistant to Mrs. Peterson and now officer in the Hotel Service Union, New York; Mrs. Harriet I. Pickens, New York Commission on Human Rights.

Mrs. Patricia Harris, assistant to Mrs. Peterson; Mrs. Maida Springer, AFL-CIO, Washington; Dr. Jean Noble, national president, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, New York; Mrs. Christine Ray Davis, staff director, House Committee on Government Operations, Washington; Mrs. Ethel Payne Women's Division, Democratic National Committee.

Mrs. Julia Porter, Girls Friendly Society; Mrs. Mable Staupers, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Velma McEwen Strode, Washington Urban League; Mrs. Verda Welcome, Baltimore, Md.; Mrs. Katie Whickham, president, National Beauty Culturists League, New Orleans.

Dr. Helen Edmonds, North Carolina College, Durham; Mrs. Cernoria Johnson, Washington bureau, National Urban League; Mrs. Erma Dixon, Maryland House of Delegates Baltimore; Mrs. Marjorie McKenzie Lawson, municipal judge, Washington; Mrs. Juanita Mitchell, attorney, Baltimore.

Mrs. Esther LaMarr, Detroit; Mrs. Theresa Lindsay, Los Angeles; Mrs. Louis Martin, Washington; Mrs. Lillian McDaniel, National Association of College Women, Richmond, Va.; Mrs. Fannie Allen, AFL-CIO, Montgomery, Ala.

Mrs. Thomasina Johnson Norford, New York City; Mrs. Vel Phillips, Milwaukee, Wis.; Mrs. Ruth Jackson, Southern Beauty League, Birmingham, Ala.; Mrs. Kelsey Beshears, St. Joseph, Mo.; Mrs. Edith Sampson, municipal judge, Chicago; Mrs. Jeanne Dolan Dago, Chicago.

# Sanders to Testify Against Rights Bill

Gov. Carl Sanders will testify in late July against President John F. Kennedy's civil rights program, The Constitution learned Tuesday.

Sanders will accept an invitation from Sen. Strom Thurmond to give his testimony before the Senate committee now considering the bills.

A source close to the governor said the testimony will be firmly against the proposals "but won't go into all the Communist, socialist talk that other witnesses have used."

Instead, Sanders plans to argue against the proposal on legal precedents, the aide said.

Several other Southern governors have testified, including Govs. Ross Barnett of Mississippi and George Wallace of Alabama.

Sanders' appearance likely will be on either July 28 or 29. He had not decided until early this week whether to testify.

Capitol observers said his decision to testify reflects strong sentiment in the state against the rights bills which have stirred a storm in Washington and deadlocked many other pieces of legislation.

His appearance will be delayed until late July by his attendance at the National Governors Conference in Miami next week and the National Association of County Officers in Denver the following week.