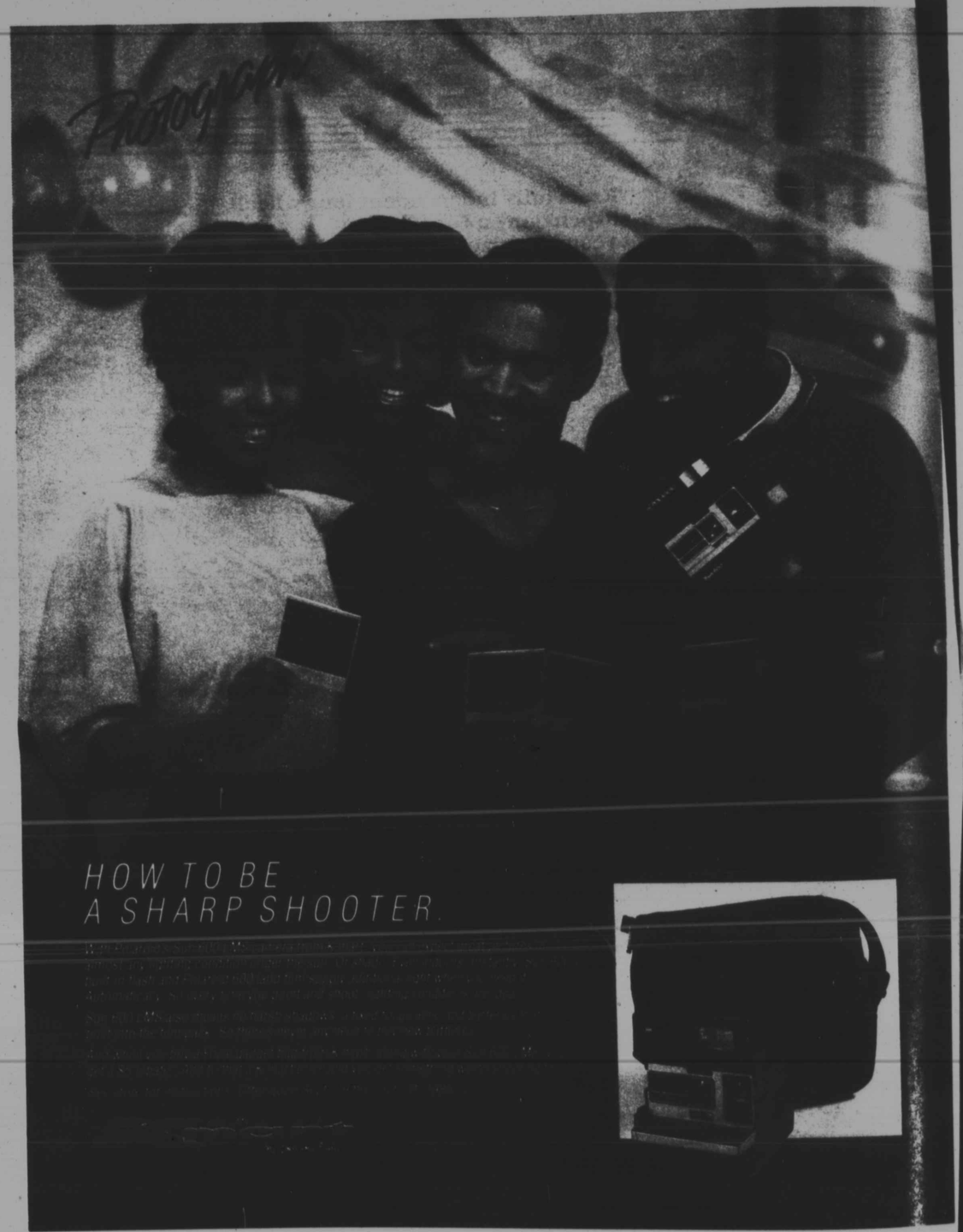

NATIONAL ROUNDUP

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The 15th annual Congressional Black Caucus Legislative Weekend (Sept. 25-28), has come and gone and it is evident that supporters of the week-long Black Leadership "Bash" are still focusing on the Man instead of the Plan, as author-actor Ossie Davis urged in 1972 at the first CBC dinner.

Only, in the future, the CBC political leaders may be focusing on the Woman instead of The Man. Amelia Parker, former director of Minority Affairs for the Democratic National Committee, is the new CBC executive director with a reputation for implementing projects (getting things done instead of just planning).

However, the Legislative Weekend was sponsored by the CBC Foundation, headed by Dr. Frank I. Morris, as executive director in charge of research and fundraising. And, dynamic Atty. Willie Faye Garrett has replaced affable Gary Rivers as director of development for the Foundation as she directs an aggressive, predominantly female staff.

Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) is still president of the CBCF board of directors with Rep. William H. Gray, III. (D-Phil.), serving as chairman of the Legislative Weekend. Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Texas) is the active chairman of the political Caucus, whose office and responsibilities are separate from the Foundation.

Instead of scheduling all activities during the "Black Summit", some organizations sponsored events the week before, such as Mrs. Coretta Scott King's appearance before the National Press Club the week before Awards Dinner and Bill Cosby's appearance at the Kennedy Center in direct competition with some CBCF sessions.

The Foundation officials debated long and heard on whether to invite President Ronald Reagan and South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu to appear together at the historic occasion to emphasize the explosive international crisis.

"Time is running out" for peaceful change to eliminate racist apartheid in South Africa Bishop Tutu warned over a year ago in his first U.S. appearance at Howard University. After months of demonstrations in Washington by the TransAfrica led American lobby sparked increased African resistance against the all white government, black and White supporters realize violence may be inevitable in the struggle. While a few reactionary Americans call for "hanging" and "defrocking" Bishop Tutu, an increasing number of U.S. citizens openly urge the use of mercenary forces or guerrilla tactics as the debate rages.

Ironically, Afro Americann may find History repeating itself, again, as they focus on the problems of racism and poverty in Africa. Because back in the "good 'ole USA," the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which provided increased political power of black citizens in many parts of the country, now face extinction according to the required renewal of the 20 year law; the Civil Rights Restoration Act must be passed by an increasingly conservative Congress; apparently misguided blacks are joining former Liberals and active bigots in blocking affirmative action to eliminate past racial injustices; Title Three Equal Opportunity and Minority Development programs to improve and equalize previously deprived black institutions are being eroded by expanding "minorities" and less financial support and the increased political and economic clout of black Americans are being diluted by "gentrification" and the "new Mainstream Movement."

Bishop Desmond Tutu

All is not lost, however. In another 50 years or so, some South Africans may be coming to the aid of U.S. citizens. To paraphrase Bishop Tutu "We shall not only overcome...We shall remember our Friends..." As all Americans continue to ask "which side are you on?" in regard to Africa...and Afro Americans, members of the American Sociological Association reviewed the success---and failures of U.S. civil rights techniques at the ASA convention here....Dr. Joyce Ladner of Howard U., headed a panel including Dr. Aldon Morris, University of Michigan; Clay Carson, Martin Luther King Center; Dr. Jean Wheeler Smith, Rev. Bernard Lee and James Foreman, former Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee executive director, all "Movement" activists and scholars.

The panelists agreed that some tactics used by the young black leaders of 25 years ago were borrowed from the labor movement and they wre later co-oopted by the Student, Anti-War and Women's "Movements" but the non-Violent approach in the U.S. was not necessarily applicable to eliminating South African apartheid. Participants constantly pointed out that blacks are a minority population here, instead of a majority. But, the Mahatma Ghandi inspired, non-violent movement led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was most successful in India where the Hindus were a vast majority, although Ghandi's tactics failed earlier in South Africa...

And keeping in mind that "past is prologue," black and colored Africans once had the right to vote in the Capetown area of South Africa until fearful Whites began legislating away their Civil Rights in 1928 which led to the final enforcement of strict, segregationist laws in 1948, with the help of U.S. political and economic policies following the great World War II to spread Democracy throughout the "Free World."

Participants at the ASA conference noted that it was the rise of "militant" Black Power demands for equal political and economic power which led to the White Backlash and current conservative attitude to continued Civil Rights legislation for Afro Americans.

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The link between African Development and continued African poverty was scheduled for discussion at the International Symposium on Drought and Decertification at Howard University in October. His Excellency, Abdou Diouf, president of Senegal was scheduled to keynote the sessions sponsored by the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations In Africa and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, headed by Bertin Borna, director.

One major aspect of the conference is the effort to emphasize continuing media coverage of conditions and activities in Africa by U.S. media, instead of just focusing on crisis conditions. Americans continuing awareness of African efforts to address their problems will help provide a background for constructive improvement and aid, United Nations officials believe.

Top American and international journalists invited to participate in the symposium included Ken Walker, ABC-News; Terry Johnson, Philadelphia Inquirer; Wilber Tutum, Editor, New York Amsterdam News; James Hicks, editor, New York Voice; Robert Maynard, editor, Oakland Tribune; and Cheryl Greene, Essence magazine.

By Larry Still and Art Carter