

Sunday, October 28, 1973

# the Journal Times



The Rev. Charles H. Smith, center, member of the national NAACP Board of Directors and guest speaker at the 23rd Annual Racine NAACP Freedom Fund banquet Saturday, looked over the evening's program with Nancy L. Henry, co-chairman

of the event and interim director and associate director of the Racine Community Action Program, and Thomas E. White, state president of NAACP.

*Journal Times Photo by William Lizardas*

## Learn System, Blacks Urged

By Jane Pomeday

Journal Times Staff

"Understanding the white man's system is the only way we blacks will achieve the real freedom to which we have a right," said the Rev. Charles H. Smith, member of the national NAACP Board of Directors and minister of the First Baptist Church in Huntington, Va.

Speaking to a group of about

300 at the 23rd annual Racine NAACP Freedom Fund banquet Saturday night at the Clayton House, the Rev. Smith began by saying that the history of this country was formed much like putting together a tapestry of different cultures to make a flag.

"There are imperfections in the garment, however," he said. "If history would reveal itself today, those imperfections would not stay quiet."

He cited mistakes by the majority of people in their desire to achieve economic stability in the world.

"Too many things were prostituted," he claimed, adding that some of these things were rivers, air, the earth.

"But most important, human beings were prostituted," he went on, "and these human beings have been struggling to be free ever since."

Drawing a parallel between the blacks and Sullivan's "The Lost Chord," the Rev. Smith said that with each small victory, the blacks have felt that they found the lost chord, freedom.

"After each small battle," he said, "including the Emancipation Proclamation, the 13th Amendment, the 1954 segregation ruling, the 1964 civil rights act, the 1965 voting rights act 'we've had a tendency to sit back and say, 'Maybe we've made it.'"

Each time, however, accor-

ding to Rev. Smith, the blacks have let it slip away from them.

Dr. Martin Luther King, he said, started a movement that will now die if the current lull in the past two years within the black community continues.

"While were all out doing our own thing, teaching involvement, going out into the streets," he said, "the system is preparing to put us back in our places with the basic theme of law and order."

The day for one person to lead the black people is gone, according to Rev. Smith.

"The battle now," he said, "is mastering the system with our minds."

The NAACP has succeeded in this battle, he said, because it has stood firm when other black movement groups have dwindled.

There are three ways, he claimed, in dealing with the system.

"The first is public education," he said. "From 1954