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Series/Staff Member: Terry Edmonds

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UCSD [University of California at San Diego] - Comments/Reviews

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June 10, 1997

Mr. Terry Edmonds
Office of Presidential Speechwriting
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Edmonds,

I read with great interest the recent Wall Street Journal article about you, and I will continue to follow closely President Clinton's statements on race relations. While Promise Keepers (PK) has no political agenda, we are deeply concerned about the state of race relations in the United States.

I am writing to acquaint you with PK because we are committed to reaching beyond any racial barrier. Thus, I would like to offer myself specifically, and the PK organization generally, as a resource of information to you. Here are some facts about the ministry of PK for you to consider:

- 34 percent of PK's more than 400 staff members are non-white.
- 4 out of our 17 Board members, including the Chairman, Bishop Phillip Porter, are men of color.
- Last year, 1.1 million men attended PK's stadium conferences, where we emphasized racial reconciliation under the theme "Break Down the Walls."
- In February 1996, 39,024 pastors attended PK's Clergy Conference, the largest such gathering in history. Again, we stressed racial reconciliation.

The national media has begun to recognize our commitment to racial reconciliation. Some recent headlines underscore this recognition:

- "Men of Color, Men of Promise"
(Kansas City Star, May 27, 1997)
- "Christian Men's Movement Works for Racial Harmony"
(Atlanta Journal Constitution, May 26, 1996)
- "Promise Keepers Rally Around Racial Reconciliation"
(Minneapolis Star Tribune, January 18, 1997)

Mr. Terry Edmonds

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In his new book, The Coming Race War in America, Carl Rowan predicts angry racial confrontation ahead because our nation is unprepared for the dramatic demographic shifts in the years ahead. As a ministry, we strive every day to help men pursue genuine racial reconciliation as an expression of their faith.

You and the President remain in my prayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Chavis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" being more prominent than the last name "Chavis".

Steve Chavis

National Spokesperson

PS. If you are interested in anecdotes where church leaders and other individuals have crossed historic divides to achieve racial reconciliation, I would be pleased to share some powerful ones with you.

Cheryl D. Mills

 06/02/97 04:08:24 PM

Record Type: Record

To: James T. Edmonds/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Speech

So I don't know anything about speechwriting, but since you solicited comments, I thought I'd offer my two scents (or less).

I think it would be nice if the POTUS ends his speech -- to the extent that he lays out a vision of "One America" -- with the following quotation by Martin Niemöller:

"In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews; and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up."

I want my child and all of tomorrow's children to grow up in an America where they believe to the very core of their being that when they come for One, they come for all. That's my vision for One America.

Just some thoughts . . .