

Carroll

Final 09/06/99 4pm
Josh Gottheimer

'99 SEP 7 AM 9:45

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR DINNER HONORING JAMES FARMER
WASHINGTON, DC
September 10, 1999**

It is a privilege to join you this evening in paying tribute to James Farmer. When Martin Luther King said, "Courage faces fear and thereby masters it, ~~he~~ must have had James Farmer in mind – for few Americans have faced a more fearsome task, or left a greater legacy of positive change.

Many men and women who fought for civil rights showed courage. But it took a special kind of bravery to be among the first to challenge the system. Back in the 1930s, years before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus, James Farmer was advocating the use of nonviolent mass movements to fight racism. Then, in 1942, at a Chicago diner, he took part in the *first* organized civil rights sit-in in American history. When later asked why he could not even consider violence as a means of protest, Farmer replied, "We are fighting back – we're only using new weapons."

James Farmer's work did not end that day at the Chicago lunch counter. As a founder of CORE, he went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading freedom rides, voter drives and marches – enduring repeated beatings and jailings along the way. Because of Farmer's leadership, and of others like him, "colored" and "white only" signs don't hang in cafeterias and restrooms as a sign of what we must overcome... they hang in museums of a sign of all we have overcome.

In the nearly forty years since the Freedom Rides, America has continued to march forward, ever forward, as Farmer urged us. We have stumbled along the way, but we have always gotten up. The path is not always as easy to see, but the goal of justice and equality has remained clear. We know that there are still too many places where opportunity is not equal and where people are not fully free to redeem the promise of America. But we know our nation is stronger because of the path we have taken – the path blazed by James Farmer. What he taught us transcends race. He taught us both to perceive and overcome our shortcomings; to challenge our nation to live up to its deepest ideals, and in so doing, to become stronger. Thank you and God bless you.

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Josh,

Nice work. Anything in *italics* is a cut.

Draft 09/03/99 11pm

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PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS FOR DINNER HONORING JAMES FARMER
WASHINGTON, DC
[Date TK]

It is a privilege to join you this evening in paying tribute to James Farmer. *As one of the forefathers of our nation's civil rights movement, Farmer spent a lifetime on the front lines of the struggle for justice - healing racial divisions ... celebrating our diversity ... working to build One America.* Martin Luther King once said, "Courage faces fear and thereby masters it." DR.KING MUST HAVE HAD James Farmer IN MIND WHEN HE WROTE THOSE WORDS, FOR FEW AMERICANS HAVE FACED A MORE FEARSOME TASK, OR LEFT A GREATER LEGACY OF POSITIVE CHANGE.

[JOSH, THIS NEXT SECTION IS A BIT TOO DISCURSIVE. YOU'RE CONVEYING INFO, RATHER THAN DECLARING TRUTHS] *is lesson at an early age - years before Dr. King led the March on Washington, or Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus.*

MANY MEN AND WOMEN WHO FOUGHT FOR CIVIL RIGHTS SHOWED COURAGE. BUT IT TOOK A SPECIAL KIND OF BRAVERY TO BE AMONG THE FIRST TO CHALLENGE THE SYSTEM. BACK THE 1930S, WHEN DR. KING AND ROSA PARKS WERE CHILDREN [CK], JAMES FARMER WAS [WHAT? WRITING ABOUT? ADVOCATING? HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING CONCRETE TILL '42, RIGHT?] the idea of using nonviolent mass movementS TO FIGHT RACISM. Then, in 1942, at a Chicago diner, Farmer took part in the first organized civil rights sit-in in American history. When later asked WHY HE DIDN'T FIGHT BACK AGAINST TK [SET UP QUOTE BETTER] *about the virtues of nonviolent protest*, he replied, "We are fighting back - we're only using new weapons."

[JOSH, PLEASE FIGURE OUT A WAY TO MAKE THIS GRAF SOUND LESS LIKE AN AN ENTRY IN AN ENCYCLOPEDIA, AND MORE LIKE A PRESIDENT SPEAKING. IF YOU THINK THIS INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT, SAY IT WITHIN SENTENCES THAT CONVEY A LARGER POINT ABOUT WHAT FARMER'S LONG AND DISTINGUISHED CAREER SAYS ABOUT HIM AND ABOUT AMERICA] James Farmer's work did not end at the Chicago lunch counter. As a founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, he led the first sit-ins and demonstrations to protest racial segregation in the American South. Farmer's leadership in voter registration efforts empowered hundreds of thousands of black people in

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It is a privilege to join you this evening in paying tribute to James Farmer. As one of the forefathers of our nation's civil rights movement, Farmer spent a lifetime on the front lines of the struggle for justice – healing racial divisions ... celebrating our diversity ... working to build One America.

“Courage,” Martin Luther King once said, “faces fear and thereby masters it.” James Farmer learned this lesson at an early age – years before Dr. King led the March on Washington, or Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus.

As a member of the NAACP in the 1930s, he pioneered the idea of using nonviolence in mass movement as a weapon against racism – a strategy that later became the foundation of the civil rights struggle. Then, in 1942, at a Chicago diner, Farmer took part in the first organized civil rights sit-in in American history. When later asked about the virtues of nonviolent protest, he replied, “We are fighting back – we’re only using new weapons.”

James Farmer’s work did not end at the Chicago lunch counter. As a founder of the Congress of Racial Equality, he led the first sit-ins and demonstrations to protest racial segregation in the American South. Farmer’s leadership in voter registration efforts empowered hundreds of thousands of black people in Mississippi. His influence on President Johnson shaped our government’s first affirmative action policies, and made literacy a primary component of the War on Poverty. And, because of Farmer’s organization of the Freedom Rides, the “colored” and “white only” signs which once hung in every bus terminal in the South are now a part of civil rights history.

In the nearly forty years since the Freedom Rides, America has continued to march forward, ever forward, as Farmer urged us. We know that the question of race is more complex and more important than ever. We know that there are still too many places where opportunity is not equal and where people are not fully free to redeem the promise of America.

But our nation is stronger for Farmer’s efforts and those of his brothers and sisters in the civil rights movement. What they taught me – and all of America – transcends race: it is our ability to perceive our shortcomings; to renew ourselves; to struggle without ceasing to make our ideals into reality. That is what makes America strong. That is what will make America ever stronger as we march together, boldly, into the 21st century.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

TO:

FROM: JOSH GOTTHEIMER
OFFICE OF SPEECHWRITING

✓ CARTON — top (gr)
✓ FARMER — top (gr)

Kimsey → Jeff

IS-BAL — gr [SUNDAY]
Sunny TEL-CIO — Paul to clerk

over →
out only.

NAT AMOR → onice

KATU

MAN — markup edit
out

GMF (GORGAN)

Draft 09/03/99 12:30pm
Josh Gottheimer

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

It is a privilege to join you this evening in paying tribute to James Farmer, one of the forefathers of our nation's civil rights struggle/movement.

As a young boy growing up in the American South, I, and so many of my peers, were inspired and impassioned by the scores of those who joined hands against the racism and bigotry prevalent in our country.

"Courage," Martin Luther King once said, "faces fear and thereby masters it." James Farmer learned this lesson at an early age – years before Dr. King led the March on Washington, or Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus.

As a member of the NAACP in the 1930s, Farmer pioneered the idea of using nonviolence in mass movement as a weapon against racism – an idea that later became the very foundation of the civil rights struggle. In 1942, with this strategy, Farmer took part in what has since been described as the first organized civil rights sit-in in American history. And when on the occasion black would question his use of nonviolence methods, he would often reply, "We are fighting back, we're only using new weapons." And when asked about the virtues of nonviolent protest, at a Chicago dinner, he replied, "The strategy is the idea of using nonviolence."

As the modern day civil rights movement came to life, Farmer stood on the front lines of the struggle for justice. As the leader of the Congress of Racial Equality, he embraced the principles of direct action and nonviolence. It was to CORE that the four Greensboro, NC students turned after tagging the first in the series of sit-ins that swept the South. It was CORE that forced the issue of desegregation in interstate transportation with the Freedom Rides of 1961. And it was CORE's James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, who became the first fatalities of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964. CORE served as the razor's edge of the movement.

– leading the to first sit-ins to protest racial segregation. Farmer's organization of the Freedom Rides of the 1960s, focused national attention on inequities in public accommodations and often put his life at risk. The changes he wrought are still with us to this day.

James Farmer labored to make these goals a reality. It is because of Farmer and the Freedom Rides he organized that the "colored" and "white only" signs that hung in every bus terminal and elsewhere in the South are down. Jim's leadership in voter registration efforts empowered hundreds of thousands of black people in Mississippi. His influence on President Johnson shaped our government's first affirmative action policies and made literacy a primary component of the War on Poverty.

Through a long career as an activist, public servant, and educator, he never lost sight of the shining goal of integration and racial equality. He never stopped working to build One America.

Thirty five years later, we know that the question of race is more complex and more important than ever. We know that there are still too many places where opportunity is not equal and where people are not fully free to redeem the promise of America.

James Farmer was a strategist, an activist and a visionary. He was a man who dreamed of a better America, and he worked everyday of his life to help create that America. In doing so, James Farmer helped liberate not just a people but an entire nation.

In the 25 years since the Freedom Rides, America has continued to march forward, ever forward, as Farmer urged us. Our nation is stronger for his efforts and those of his brothers and sisters in the civil rights movement. What they taught America, in so many respects, transcends race: it is our ability to perceive our on shortcomings; to renew ourselves; to struggle without ceasing to make our ideals into reality. That is what makes America strong. That is what will make America ever stronger as we march together, boldly, into the 21st century.

James Farmer was deeply committed to healing racial divisions in our country and celebrating the diversity that makes our nation great.

Farmer
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our diversity, that makes our nation great. He dedicated his life to building a better America.
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James Farmer was a pioneer. nonviolent tactitcs James Farmer was one fo the earliest pioneers of nonviolent boycotts and demonstartions. And during that time he authored a seminal document encouraging the use of the non-vionet

Under the direction of Mr. Farmer

honor for me to join Congressman Lewis and other [TK] in paying tribute to James Farmer – one of the “Big Six” leaders of the American civil rights movement. More than thirty-five years ago, in the streets and public spaces of our nation [XXX]. Millions were inspired and impassioned: by the courage of those who had come together; by the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.; by their dreams of a better nation, of one America.

“Courage,” Dr. King once said, “face fear and thereby masters it.”

For all of his life,
With his passionate conviction, committed activism, and unwavering dignity, James Farmer has inspired millions of Americans. As founder of CORE,

CORE became one of the leading organizations in the 1960s. Its members participated in a variety of activities ranging form sit-ins and voter registration to demonstrations and boycotts.

It’s the Freedom Rides that he’s best known.

At historic sit-ins, Freedom Rides, and countless picket lines, thousands of citizens risked their lives on behalf of basic rights. Their efforts changed America.

James Farmer and the other founders of the Congress of Racial Equality organized the nation’s first sit-in and launched an era of nonviolent protests for civil rights. He went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading freedom rides, voter drives and marches, enduring repeated beatings and jailing along the way.

In May 1961, not far from the White House, James Farmer began training an interracial group of thirteen young people in the Ghanaian principles of direct action and nonviolence. Three days later, they set out on a journey through the Deep South. There was violence all around them. They were beaten; and their buses were burned. But they never fought back and they never turned back. They were on a journey toward freedom.

Meeting with presidents, marching and mobilizing under constant threat of injury and death, Farmer.

It is a tremendous honor for me to join Congressman Lewis and other [TK] in paying tribute to James Farmer – one of the “Big Six” leaders of the American civil rights movement. More than thirty-five years ago, in the streets and public spaces of our nation [XXX]. Millions were inspired and impassioned: by the courage of those who had come together; by the speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.; by their dreams of a better nation, of one America.

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Thirty-five years later, we know that the question of race is more complex and more important than ever. We know that there are still too many places where opportunity is not equal and where people are not fully free to redeem the promise of America.

In the XX years since the Freedom Rides, America has continued to march forward, ever forward, as Farmer urged us. Our nation is stronger for his efforts and those of his brothers and sisters in the civil rights movement. What they taught America, in so many respects, transcends race: it is our ability to perceive our on shortcomings; to renew ourselves; to struggle without cease to make our ideals into reality. That is what makes America strong. That is what will make America ever stronger as we march together, boldly, into the 21st century.

For all of his life, James Farmer was deeply committed to healing racial divisions in our country and celebrating the diversity that makes our nation great. James Farmer labored to make these goals a reality. Under his leadership, we have come a long way. It is because of Farmer and the Freedom Rides he organized that the “colored” and “white only” signs that hung in every bus terminal and elsewhere in the South are down. Jim’s leadership in voter registration efforts empowered hundreds of thousands of black people in Mississippi. His influence on President Johnson shaped our government’s first affirmative action policies and made literacy a primary component of the War on Poverty.

With his passionate conviction, committed activism, and unwavering dignity, James Farmer has inspired millions of Americans. As founder of CORE, he embraced the principles of direct action and nonviolence, leading the first sit-ins to protest racial segregation. His organization of and the participation in the Freedom Rides of the 1960s, focused national attention on inequities in public accommodations and often put his life at risk. The changes he wrought are still with us to this day.

James Farmer was one of the pioneers of the movement. Many of his greatest contributions came long before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus in 1955. As a member of the NAACP, Farmer was an active participant in non-violent boycotts and demonstrations during the 1930s and 1940s. In fact, Farmer’s famous memorandum in which he explained the possible use of non-violent tactics in mass movement in the North and especially in the South. Written almost a decade before the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Farmer’s memorandum seemed to have foreshadowed the very foundation of the modern day non-violent protest as a part of the civil rights movement.

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Final 08/27/98 5:00pm
Jeff Shesol

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS ON THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON
OAK BLUFFS, MARTHA'S VINEYARD, MASSACHUSETTS
August 28, 1998

Acknowledgments: TK

It is a tremendous honor for me to join Congressman Lewis in marking this important anniversary. ^{over five years} Thirty-five years ago, in the streets and public spaces of our nation's ^{by the action} capital, hundreds of thousands of Americans marched together for jobs and freedom. Millions were moved by the March on Washington -- as was I, a 17-year-old boy in the American South. Millions were inspired and impassioned: by the courage of those who had come together; by the speeches of John Lewis and Martin Luther King, Jr.; by their dreams of a better nation, of one America.

It was a defining moment in the life of our nation and, to be sure, in the life of John Lewis. Of those who organized the March -- John Lewis, James Farmer, Martin Luther King, Jr., A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young -- John Lewis was the youngest. But he was already, at age 23, a veteran of many marches and sit-ins, of jailings and beatings, of the Freedom Rides. "Courage," Dr. King once said, "faces fear and thereby masters it." John Lewis mastered fear. His legendary courage, his bravery in the face of racist brutality, was emblematic of the movement he helped lead.

As a reminder, one need look no further than the back of John Lewis's remarkable book: a powerful photo taken on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, on a Sunday afternoon in 1965, at the moment of truth. On the left are state troopers, amassed in hard hats and gas masks, wielding clubs the size of baseball bats. On the right, a few feet away, are the marchers in their overcoats and suits, straight from church, ready to kneel in prayer. John Lewis is on the front line, and he is not afraid.

The March on Washington, thankfully, was more peaceful than the one that followed in Selma. And on that August afternoon 35 years ago, standing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, John Lewis called for the march to continue. It would not and should not end, he said, "until true freedom comes, until the revolution of 1776 is complete." The steps of those brave marchers brought us further down freedom's trail, further toward the promised land. But as we know today, America is not there yet. ^{Thirty-five years later, we know that the question of race is more complex and more important than ever. We know that there are still too many places where opportunity is not equal and where people are not fully free to redeem the promise of America.}

We also know that our schools and communities and lives can be turned around when we

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CORE As the leader of the Congress of Racial Equality, he stood on the front lines of the struggle for justice. At historic sit-ins, Freedom Rides, and countless picket lines, thousands of citizens risked their lives on behalf of basic rights, led by the inspiration of James Farmer. Their efforts changed America. Through a long career as an activist, public servant, and educator, he never lost sight of the shining goal of integration and racial equality. He never stopped working to build One America.

James Farmer and the other founders of the Congress of Racial Equality organized the nation's first sit-in and launched an era of nonviolent protests for civil rights. He went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading freedom rides, voter drives and marches, enduring repeated beatings and jailing along the way.

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Meeting with presidents, marching and mobilizing under constant threat of injury and death, Farmer.

The Baltimore Sun, July 10, 1999

Mr. Farmer risked his life in several demonstrations. In 1963, Louisiana state troopers armed with guns, cattle prods and tear gas hunted him door to door when he was trying to organize protests in the town of Plaquemine.

"I was meant to die that night," Mr. Farmer once said. "They were kicking open doors, beating up blacks in the streets, interrogating them with electric cattle prods." A funeral home director had Mr. Farmer "play dead" in the back of a hearse that carried him along back roads and out of town.

Mr. Farmer went to jail for "disturbing the peace" in Plaquemine and was behind bars Aug. 28, 1963, the day Dr. King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech as the climax of the March on Washington.

Mr. Farmer was a disciple of Mohandas Gandhi, and it was Gandhi's strategy of nonviolent direct action that was to become his weapon against discrimination. A fierce integrationist, he enlisted whites and blacks as CORE volunteers.

Some white liberals who generally approved of what Mr. Farmer was doing frequently advised him to be more patient with a recalcitrant society dominated by whites. They thought that the doctrine of nonviolence was radical in its use of picketing and sit-ins. Some thought it engendered bellicose responses from whites that did nothing to further amicable race relations.

On one tense occasion in the early 1960s, after a particularly vicious spate of violence, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy suggested that Mr. Farmer's followers postpone some of their "freedom rides" -- designed to desegregate the interstate bus system in the South -- so that everyone could "cool off."

Mr. Farmer refused, saying, "We have been cooling off for 350 years."

Why in occasion
As the turbulent decade of the 1960s unfolded, ~~some~~ *more* blacks who despaired that they would ever have an amicable relationship with the white majority and regarded nonviolence as more of a weakness than a strength, ~~on occasion~~ *asked* Mr. Farmer *question* "When are you going to fight back?" *use of nonviolence, fight for would not reply*

He would always reply, "We ~~are~~ *are* fighting back, we're only using new weapons."

"I lived in two worlds," he said late in life, recalling his role in the movement. "One was the volatile and explosive one of the new black Jacobins and the other was the sophisticated and genteel one of the white and black liberal establishment. As a bridge, I was called on by each side for help in contacting the other."

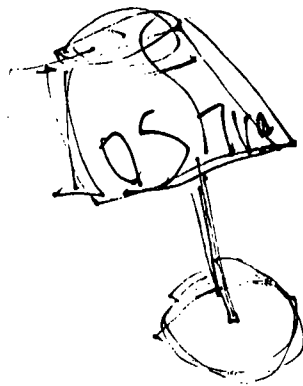
Mr. Farmer, the son of a minister and the grandson of a slave, came to feel that his generation of leaders had been all but forgotten in recent years. He was appalled to learn that in one survey of blacks taken in the 1990s, somebody said he thought that Dr. King's claim to fame was that he had "worked for Al Sharpton" and that many young blacks had never heard of Mr. Wilkins, Whitney Young and Mr. Farmer, or had only the vaguest notion of what they had stood for.

So when President Clinton awarded him a Presidential Medal of Freedom in January 1998, Mr. Farmer said he felt "vindication, an acknowledgment at long last."

work together, talk together and, indeed, when we walk together. John Lewis and those who marched with him swept away the legal barricades that separated one American from another. The barriers that remain are more subtle, but pervasive. And when they finally do fall away -- as they will, as they must -- it will not be because a law made it happen. It will be because the American people confronted and dispelled the myths that divide us.

Last June, I launched a national initiative on race, challenging America to talk, to act, to heal. Americans of all backgrounds have responded to that challenge, leaving me more confident than ever that we will not come apart but come together; that we will enter the 21st Century not as many nations but as one America, at once diverse and, as the Founders declared, indivisible.

In the 35 years since the March on Washington, America has continued to march forward, ever forward, as John Lewis urged us. Our nation is stronger for his efforts and those of his brothers and sisters in the civil rights movement. What they taught America, in so many respects, transcends race: it is our ability to perceive our own shortcomings; to renew ourselves; to struggle without cease to make our ideals into reality. That is what makes America strong. That is what will make America even stronger as we march together, boldly, into the 21st century.



Los Angeles Times July 10, 1999, Saturday,

'Obscene Laws and Unfair Customs'

The violence directed at the Freedom Riders ignited public outrage and built political momentum to finally end the legalized segregation of black and white citizens across the South.

"He was an authentic activist willing to challenge obscene laws and unfair customs through nonviolent direct action," said the Rev. Joseph Lowery, former head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

"He challenged injustice at its root," Lowery said. "He was willing to take to the streets and stimulate and precipitate. He was a catalyst."

In interviews in recent years, and in his 1985 autobiography, Farmer was candid about his fears during the height of the civil rights battle.

"Anyone who said he wasn't afraid during the civil rights movement was either a liar or without imagination," he said in 1991. "I think we were all scared. I was scared all the time. My hands didn't shake but inside I was shaking."

Born in Texas, Farmer was 14 when he entered Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, as a freshman on a full scholarship.

He later visited the White House with a group of students, where he respectfully engaged President Franklin D. Roosevelt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in debate.

He graduated from theological school at Howard University in 1941, and was a conscientious objector during World War II.

It was during his college years that he began to agonize over segregation.

In May 1942, Farmer took part in what he described as the "first organized civil rights sit-in in American history" at a "whites-only" coffeehouse in Chicago. The nonviolent demonstration forced the owners to change their policies and serve nonwhite customers.

Gay Sit-in

Division within CORE over leadership and direction led Farmer to resign in 1966, and he settled into a quieter life. He taught at Lincoln University and New York University.

He surprised some civil rights activists in 1969 by joining the Nixon administration as an assistant secretary in the old Department of Health, Education and Welfare. His presence helped persuade the administration to approve Head Start funds for Southern states.

Farmer moved to the Fredericksburg area in 1980 to teach and write his autobiography, "Lay Bare the Heart." The book charted his involvement in the integration struggle, and also his personal trials about gradually going blind.

He continued to teach regularly despite his infirmities and was revered on the Mary Washington campus as a living history of the nation's civil rights era.

Farmer took particular pride last year in receiving the Medal of Freedom, saying he had begun to feel ignored and forgotten.

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July 11, 1999, Sunday

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. A14

LENGTH: 990 words

HEADLINE: James Farmer Was Last Survivor of "Big Four" Civil Rights Leaders

BYLINE: By RICHARD SEVERO New York Times News Service

BODY:

James Farmer, who died Friday in Fredericksburg, Va., was the last survivor of the "Big Four" who shaped the civil-rights struggle in the United States in the mid-1950s and '60s.

Farmer, 79, was a principal founder of the Congress of Racial Equality. He had been in failing health for years, losing his sight and both his legs to severe diabetes.

Farmer's main colleagues in the civil rights movement were the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who was assassinated in 1968; Whitney Young of the Urban League, who died in 1971, and Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who died in 1981.

Although attention in recent years has focused on King's activities, Farmer played a towering role in the movement as a direct-action leader of the organization popularly known as CORE. Claude Sitton, who covered the South for The New York Times during the civil rights struggle, observed: "CORE under Mr. Farmer often served as the razor's edge of the movement. It was to CORE that the four Greensboro, N.C., students turned after staging the first in the series of sit-ins that swept the South in 1960. It was CORE that forced the issue of desegregation in interstate transportation with the Freedom Rides of 1961. It was CORE's James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner -- a black and two whites -- who became the first fatalities of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964." The three were murdered by a gang of Klansmen while they were investigating a church burning and promoting black voter registration.

Farmer himself risked his life in several demonstrations. In 1963, Louisiana state troopers armed with guns, cattle prods and tear gas hunted him door to door when he was trying to organize protests in the town of Plaquemine.

"I was meant to die that night," Farmer once said. "They were kicking open doors, beating up blacks in the streets, interrogating them with electric cattle prods." A funeral home director had Farmer "play dead" in the back of a hearse that carried him along back roads and out of town.

Farmer went to jail for "disturbing the peace" in Plaquemine, and was behind bars on Aug. 28, 1963, the day that King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech as the climax of the March on Washington. Farmer sent his own speech to the March on Washington, which was read by Floyd McKissick, an aide in CORE. "We will not stop," Farmer wrote, "until the dogs stop biting us in the South and

"Lay Back & Mout"

the rats stop biting us in the North."

Farmer was a disciple of Mohandas Gandhi, and it was Gandhi's strategy of nonviolent direct action that was to become Farmer's weapon against discrimination. A fierce integrationist, he enlisted both whites and blacks as CORE volunteers. CSN 6

Some white liberals who generally approved of what Farmer was doing frequently advised him to be more patient with a recalcitrant society dominated by whites. They thought that the doctrine of nonviolence was radical in its use of picketing and sit-ins. Some thought it engendered bellicose responses from whites that did nothing to further amicable race relations.

On one tense occasion in the early 1960s, after a particularly vicious spate of violence, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy suggested that Farmer's followers postpone some of their "freedom rides" -- designed to desegregate the interstate bus system in the South -- so that everyone could "cool off." Farmer refused, saying, "We have been cooling off for 350 years."

As the turbulent decade of the 1960s unfolded, some blacks who despaired that they would ever have an amicable relationship with the white majority and regarded nonviolence as more of a weakness than a strength, on occasion would ask Farmer, "When are you going to fight back?" Farmer would always reply, "We are fighting back, we're only using new weapons." Q1578

"I lived in two worlds," Farmer said late in life, recalling his role in the movement. "One was the volatile and explosive one of the new black Jacobins and the other was the sophisticated and genteel one of the white and black liberal establishment. As a bridge, I was called on by each side for help in contacting the other."

Farmer, the son of a minister and the grandson of a slave, came to feel that his generation of leaders had been all but forgotten in recent years. He was appalled to learn that in one survey of blacks taken in the 1990s, somebody said he thought that King's claim to fame was that he had "worked for Al Sharpton" and that many young blacks had never heard of Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young and Farmer or had only the vaguest notion of what they had stood for. And so when President Clinton awarded him a Presidential Medal of Freedom in January 1998, Farmer said he felt "vindication, an acknowledgment at long last." fever

In writing an approving review for The New York Times of Farmer's memoir, "Lay Bare the Heart," which was published in 1985, Claude Sitton said that Farmer "more than any other civil rights leader" had fought against racism and had "attempted to hold the movement true to its purpose."

Farmer's brief first marriage ended in divorce. He married Lula A. Peterson, whom he met in 1949 when she was a graduate student in economics at Northwestern University and a white member of the CORE chapter in Evanston, Ill. She died in 1977.

They had two daughters, Tami and Abbey.

In his last years, Farmer lived alone in a remote house near Fredericksburg, confined to a wheelchair and often in need of an oxygen tent. When visitors came, he would joke about the times he had come close to death. Asked by a

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The Providence Journal-Bulletin

July 10, 1999, Saturday, EDITION

SECTION: NEWS, Pg. 9A

LENGTH: 261 words

HEADLINE: Civil-rights pioneer Farmer; led the 1961 Freedom Rides

BODY:

NOTE: This page may contain multiple obituaries for the date you've specified.

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (AP) - James S. Farmer, 79, a civil-rights pioneer who pushed for nonviolent protest to dismantle segregation and served alongside Martin Luther King Jr., died yesterday.

Farmer, who had been in ill health in recent years, died at a hospital, according to Ron Singleton, a spokesman for Mary Washington College, where Farmer was a professor. No further details were available.

As one of the founders of the Congress of Racial Equality in 1942, Farmer was called one of the Big Four civil-rights leaders in the 1960s, with King, NAACP chief Roy Wilkins and Urban League head Whitney Young. Farmer was the last surviving member of the group.

Farmer's most celebrated accomplishment as head of CORE was to lead the 1961 Freedom Rides, a nonviolent effort to desegregate interstate buses and terminals. However, participants encountered violence.

"Anyone who said he wasn't afraid during the civil-rights movement was either a liar or without imagination," he said in a 1991 interview. "I think we were all scared. I was scared all the time. My hands didn't shake, but inside I was shaking."

President Clinton last year presented Farmer with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

"It's a high honor, and I'm grateful it came before I died," Farmer said when he learned of the award. "It's a vindication. I certainly was ignored and forgotten."

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Chattanooga Times and Free Press, July 11, 1999

friend if he had ever seen a tunnel, Farmer acknowledged that he had, but instead of seeing St. Peter at the end of it, he saw the devil. "And he (the devil) said, "Oh, my God, don't let this nigger in!" " Farmer recounted. " "He'll organize a resistance movement and try to put out my fire." "

GRAPHIC: The Associated Press President Lyndon B. Johnson talks with civil rights leaders in his White House office in this 1964 file photo. from left are Roy Wilkins of the NAACP; James Farmer of the Congress for Racial Equality, who died Friday; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and Whitney Young of the Urban League.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 1999

53RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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THE BALTIMORE SUN

July 10, 1999, Saturday ,FINAL

SECTION: TELEGRAPH ,6A

LENGTH: 883 words

HEADLINE: Early civil rights leader James Farmer, 79, dies; Founder of CORE
espoused nonviolence adopted by movement

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

BODY:

James S. Farmer, a principal founder of the Congress of Racial Equality and the last survivor of the "Big Four" who shaped the civil rights struggle in the United States in the mid-1950s and '60s, died yesterday at Mary Washington Hospital in Fredericksburg, Va., where he lived. He was 79.

Mr. Farmer had been in failing health for years, losing his sight and his legs to severe diabetes.

"He was an authentic activist willing to challenge obscene laws and unfair customs through nonviolent direct action," said the Rev. Joseph Lowery, former head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

"He challenged injustice at its root. He was willing to take to the streets and stimulate and precipitate. He was a catalyst."

Mr. Farmer's main colleagues in the civil rights movement were the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who was assassinated in 1968; Whitney Young of the Urban League, who died in 1971; and Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who died in 1981.

Although attention in recent years has focused on Dr. King, Mr. Farmer played a towering role in the movement as a direct-action leader of the organization popularly known as CORE.

Claude Sitton, who covered the South for the New York Times during the civil rights struggle, observed: "CORE under Mr. Farmer often served as the razor's edge of the movement. It was to CORE that the four Greensboro, N.C., students turned after staging the first in the series of sit-ins that swept the South in 1960.

"It was CORE that forced the issue of desegregation in interstate transportation with the Freedom Rides of 1961. It was CORE's James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner -- a black and two whites -- who became the first fatalities of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964."

The three were murdered by Klansmen while they were investigating a church burning and promoting black voter registration.

The Baltimore Sun, July 10, 1999

Mr. Farmer's wife, Lula, died in 1976 of Hodgkin's disease, leaving him to raise their two young daughters. He never remarried.

He is survived by the daughters, Tami Farmer Gonzales, who also lives near Fredericksburg, and Abbey Farmer Levin of Potomac; and a granddaughter.

. LOAD-DATE: July 12, 1999

71ST STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 Times Mirror Company
Los Angeles Times

July 10, 1999, Saturday, Home Edition

SECTION: Part A; Page 15; Metro Desk

LENGTH: 754 words

HEADLINE: OBITUARY;
JAMES S. FARMER; WAS TOP CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

BYLINE: RICH CONNELL, TIMES STAFF WRITER

BODY:

James S. Farmer, the last surviving member of the so-called Big Four civil rights giants of the 1950s and 1960s, died Friday in Virginia after years of illness. He was 79.

The son of a preacher raised in Mississippi, Farmer helped found the Congress of Racial Equality in the early 1940s. He was considered one of the pillars of the early civil rights movement, along with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Roy Wilkins of the National Assn. for the Advancement of Colored People, and Urban League head Whitney Young.

"James Farmer helped to make America a better nation," President Clinton said in a statement Friday.

Clinton last year presented Farmer with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

Farmer had been hospitalized at the time of his death, said a spokesman at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, where Farmer was a professor. No other details were immediately available.

For several years, Farmer had battled the complications of diabetes, including blindness and leg amputations. Last year, he underwent brain surgery to remove a blood clot.

Farmer was perhaps best known as a leader of the historic, CORE-sponsored Freedom Rides of the 1960s, which sought to integrate bus systems across the South.

Though he was a pacifist, inspired by the ideals of Mohandas K. Gandhi, Farmer encountered repeated violence in his campaigns against segregation. He was frequently threatened, and once escaped a Louisiana mob by hiding in a hearse.

Three of the Freedom Riders he recruited, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, were murdered in Mississippi in 1964. The 1988 movie "Mississippi Burning" is based on the slayings.

Los Angeles Times July 10, 1999, Saturday,

"It's a high honor, and I'm grateful it came before I died," Farmer said then. "It's a vindication."

*

Times wire services contributed to this report.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO: James S. Farmer just behind the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., right. PHOTOGRAPHER: Associated Press PHOTO: (A1) Civil Rights Leader Dies: James S. Farmer, the last surviving member of the so-called Big Four civil rights giants of the 1950s and 1960s, died Friday in Virginia. The co-founder of the Congress of Racial Equality was 79. A15

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 1999

83RD STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

Copyright 1999 The New York Times Company
The New York Times

July 10, 1999, Saturday, Late Edition - Final
Correction Appended

NAME: James Farmer

SECTION: Section A;Page 1;Column 5;National Desk

LENGTH: 3110 words

HEADLINE: James Farmer, Civil Rights Giant In the 50's and 60's, Is Dead at 79

BYLINE: By RICHARD SEVERO

BODY:

James Farmer, a principal founder of the Congress of Racial Equality and the last survivor of the "Big Four" who shaped the civil-rights struggle in the United States in the mid-1950's and 60's, died yesterday at Mary Washington Hospital, in Fredericksburg, Va., where he lived. He was 79.

Mr. Farmer had been in failing health for years, losing his sight and both his legs to severe diabetes.

Mr. Farmer's main colleagues in the civil rights movement were the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who was assassinated in 1968; Whitney Young of the Urban League, who died in 1971; and Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who died in 1981.

Although attention in recent years has focused on Dr. King's activities, Mr. Farmer played a towering role in the movement as a direct-action leader of the organization popularly known as CORE. Claude Sitton, who covered the South for The New York Times during the civil rights struggle, observed: "CORE under Mr. Farmer often served as the razor's edge of the movement. It was to CORE that the four Greensboro, N.C., students turned after staging the first in the series of sit-ins that swept the South in 1960. It was CORE that forced the issue of desegregation in interstate transportation with the Freedom Rides of 1961. It was CORE's James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner -- a black and two whites -- who became the first fatalities of the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964." The three were murdered by a gang of Klansmen and buried beneath an earthen dam near the town of Philadelphia. The CORE workers were investigating a church burning and promoting black voter registration.

Mr. Farmer himself risked his life in several demonstrations. In 1963, Louisiana state troopers armed with guns, cattle prods and tear gas, hunted him door to door when he was trying to organize protests in the town of Plaquemine.

"I was meant to die that night," Mr. Farmer once said. "They were kicking open doors, beating up blacks in the streets, interrogating them with electric cattle prods." A funeral home director had Mr. Farmer "play dead" in the back of a hearse that carried him along back roads and out of town.

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

Mr. Farmer went to jail for "disturbing the peace" in Plaquemine, and was behind bars on Aug. 28, 1963, the day that Dr. King delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech as the climax of the March on Washington. Mr. Farmer sent his own speech to the March on Washington, which was read by Floyd McKissick, an aide in CORE. "We will not stop," Mr. Farmer wrote, "until the dogs stop biting us in the South and the rats stop biting us in the North."

At one point, a friendly F.B.I. agent told Mr. Farmer that an informant had infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in Louisiana, and had reported that the Klan had voted to kill Mr. Farmer the next time he set foot in Bogalusa. "Tell me," Mr. Farmer said to the agent, "were there any dissenting votes?"

Using Nonviolence As the Weapon

Mr. Farmer was a disciple of Mohandas Gandhi, and it was Gandhi's strategy of nonviolent direct action that was to become Mr. Farmer's weapon against discrimination. A fierce integrationist, he enlisted both whites and blacks as CORE volunteers.

Some white liberals who generally approved of what Mr. Farmer was doing frequently advised him to be more patient with a recalcitrant society dominated by whites. They thought that the doctrine of nonviolence was radical in its use of picketing and sit-ins. Some thought it engendered bellicose responses from whites that did nothing to further amicable race relations.

On one tense occasion in the early 1960's, after a particularly vicious spate of violence, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy suggested that Mr. Farmer's followers postpone some of their Freedom Rides -- designed to desegregate the interstate bus system in the South -- so that everyone could "cool off." Mr. Farmer refused, saying, "We have been cooling off for 350 years."

As the turbulent decade of the 1960's unfolded, some blacks who despaired that they would ever have an amicable relationship with the white majority and regarded nonviolence as more of a weakness than a strength, on occasion would ask Mr. Farmer, "When are you going to fight back?" Mr. Farmer would always reply, "We are fighting back, we're only using new weapons."

"I lived in two worlds," Mr. Farmer said late in life, recalling his role in the movement. "One was the volatile and explosive one of the new black Jacobins and the other was the sophisticated and genteel one of the white and black liberal establishment. As a bridge, I was called on by each side for help in contacting the other."

Mr. Farmer, the son of a minister and the grandson of a slave, came to feel that his generation of leaders had been all but forgotten in recent years, with the exception of Dr. King because of television's use of film clips replaying his "I Have a Dream Speech."

Mr. Farmer was appalled to learn that in one survey of blacks taken in the 1990's, somebody said he thought that Dr. King's claim to fame was that he had "worked for Al Sharpton" and that many young blacks had never heard of Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young and Mr. Farmer or had only the vaguest notion of what they had stood for. And so when President Clinton awarded him a Presidential Medal of Freedom in January, 1998, Mr. Farmer said he felt "vindication, an acknowledgment at long last."

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

Mr. Farmer was proud of his role in founding CORE and guiding it to becoming one of the most effective civil rights organizations of the 1960's. The motivation for CORE came on a bright spring afternoon in Chicago in 1942 when Mr. Farmer, then just a year out of theology school, was walking with a white friend, George Houser. The two decided to stop for coffee and doughnuts in Jack Spratt's Coffee Shop on the South Side.

The counterman made them wait even though there was almost nobody in the restaurant, then tried to charge them a dollar apiece for doughnuts that were going for a nickel. Finally he ordered them out and threw their money on the floor.

"We felt he had a problem about race," Mr. Farmer said later, recalling the incident with typical understatement. Mr. Farmer, Mr. Houser and a few others staged a successful sit-in demonstration at Jack Spratt's. It was the first direct action of an organization they formed, called at the time the Committee on Racial Equality.

Within a year, CORE had a national membership, and within a few years a roster of more than 60,000 members in more than 70 chapters, coast to coast. In its heyday in the 1960's, it claimed a membership of 82,000 in 114 local groups.

Mr. Farmer was equally proud of the work he did in 1961, when he organized the Freedom Rides in the Deep South, a perilous effort in which many black and white supporters were attacked and injured by white segregationists.

James Leonard Farmer was born on Jan. 20, 1920, in Marshall, Tex. His father was James Leonard Farmer Sr., the son of a slave, a minister-scholar who became a college professor and who delighted in teaching literature in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. He was believed to be the first black man from Texas ever to earn a doctorate, which he did at Boston University. Mr. Farmer's mother was the former Pearl Marion Houston, a teacher.

A Childhood Away From Racism

As a boy, Mr. Farmer was shielded from the worst aspects of racism. He used to say that as a "faculty brat" he spent most of his time on the campuses of black colleges in the South where racial incidents would not ordinarily happen. The houses he lived in were filled with books and the conversation frequently was about the ideas in those books, most of them about ancient cultures. They did not ordinarily speak of the bleak, segregated world that existed outside the campus.

Mr. Farmer told Gay Talese of The New York Times in 1961 that his first awareness of race came when he was 3 or 4 years old, living in Holly Springs, Miss., where his father was on the faculty of Rust College. One very hot day, young James went shopping with his mother and asked her to buy him a soft drink. His mother told him he would have to wait until they got home. He saw a white child go into a drug store, and it was not until he got home that his mother explained to him why he could not do the same thing.

"Until then, I had not realized that I was colored," Mr. Farmer said. "I had lived a sheltered life on campus. My mother fell across the bed and cried." Mr. Farmer said it did not make him bitter, but, over the years, he became "determined to do something about it."

*And he was
"well
educated
man -
first attorney
+ now X*

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

His determination was strengthened between 1934 and 1938, when he was an undergraduate at Wiley College in Marshall, Tex. He would go to movies in Marshall, and was made to sit in the "buzzard's roost," the balcony set aside for black people. During the same period, he got a job as a caddy, but found himself segregated even in the caddy yard.

Years later, when he looked back at his youth in the South, he sometimes remembered the times when black children and white children played peacefully together. The real separation between the races came at puberty, he recalled, when white parents reinforced in their children that they were white and that blacks were something else. He recalled that when he was in his teens, the friends he had known as a little boy "would only look away" when they saw him in the street.

Mr. Farmer considered both medicine and the ministry as vocations during his undergraduate days. He discovered that he could not stand the sight of blood and so in 1938, after he completed his baccalaureate work at Wiley, he enrolled in Howard University's School of Religion. It was at Howard that he was introduced to the philosophy of Gandhi.

With his commanding frame, booming bass-baritone voice and decisive way of speaking, everyone thought he would be a fine preacher. But to the dismay of his father, Mr. Farmer decided against becoming a Methodist minister because, in those days, the Methodist church in the South was segregated. "I didn't see how I could honestly preach the Gospel of Christ in a church that practiced discrimination," he said. He was quick to assure his father that his turning away from Methodism did not represent any lessening of his belief in Jesus.

After World War II started, Mr. Farmer, a conscientious objector, served as race relations secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a pacifist organization. He subsequently also worked as an organizer in the South for the Upholsterer's International Union and later for the State, County and Municipal Employees Union.

In the late 1940's, before giving CORE his full attention, he was also a program director for the N.A.A.C.P. and wrote radio and television scripts as well as magazine articles on race relations for Crisis, Fellowship, World Frontier and the Hadassah News.

During the 1950's, he worked assiduously to bring an end to segregation in Southern schools. He planned and organized CORE projects, including a Pilgrimage of Prayer in 1959 to protest the closing of public schools in Richmond, Va., to avoid complying with the 1954 Supreme Court decision outlawing segregation in the public schools.

Freedom Rides Drew Assaults

Throughout the 1960's, CORE's black volunteers, under Mr. Farmer's personal direction, stood peacefully in lines all over the South, insisting on the right to enter theaters, coffee shops, swimming pools, bowling alleys and other segregated public places from which they had always been barred.

Mr. Farmer did not become the \$11,500-a-year salaried national director of CORE until February 1961, just before he initiated his first Freedom Ride. His father, by then retired and living in Washington, died just as Mr. Farmer was

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

getting this effort started.

CORE and another civil rights group, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, held a Freedom Ride in 1947. A year earlier, the United States Supreme Court had ruled that segregated seating of interstate bus passengers was unconstitutional, but the ruling was virtually ignored in the South. An integrated group was sent to call attention to that injustice. Some were arrested and served on a chain gang in North Carolina.

In 1961, CORE decided to try again. Its bus riders were assaulted when using restrooms and lunchrooms in terminals in Virginia and the Carolinas.

In Alabama, their bus was firebombed in the town of Anniston and the riders stoned. In Birmingham, a mob attacked the riders and one of them, William Barbee, was paralyzed for life. They were savagely beaten again in Montgomery.

Everyone expected more violence when a small band of young blacks and whites from CORE and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee boarded buses for the last leg of the Freedom Ride, from Montgomery to Jackson, Miss. Dr. King, on probation for his arrest during sit-ins in Atlanta, decided not to go and was criticized for his decision. When a follower asked Mr. Farmer if he was going, Mr. Farmer climbed aboard the bus though quaking with fear. But the journey was completed without further violence because of a deal worked out between Attorney General Kennedy and James O. Eastland, the segregationist Senator from Mississippi. But Mr. Farmer was arrested in Jackson for disturbing the peace and spent 40 days in Mississippi jails.

If the Freedom Rides stiffened opposition to desegregation in some quarters in the South, the courage of Mr. Farmer's CORE volunteers captured the imagination of blacks throughout the country, who decided to join the civil rights struggle. It also aroused the conscience of many whites both in America and abroad.

"In the end, it was a success," Mr. Farmer said of the Freedom Rides, "because Bobby Kennedy had the Interstate Commerce Commission issue an order, with teeth in it, that he could enforce, banning segregation in interstate travel. That was my proudest achievement."

Subsequently, Mr. Farmer turned his attention to the lack of employment opportunities for blacks. He sought no quotas because he said he was convinced that if blacks were given a fair chance they would do just fine, but he made it clear that he wanted to see some black faces at construction sites, especially those financed with public money. He ordered sit-ins in the early 1960's at the New York offices of Mayor Robert F. Wagner and Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller. He also organized picketing at White Castle hamburger stands in New York City, accusing the chain of refusing to hire black workers.

"We are not pressing toward the brink of violence, but for the peak of freedom," he said.

Mr. Farmer kept CORE focused on integration. When, in 1965, CORE officials called for a pullout of American troops from Vietnam, Mr. Farmer insisted that the organization reverse itself. He did not approve of the war, but thought that CORE should not express itself on American foreign policy.

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

He resigned his CORE director's job the same year to head what he hoped would be an intensive literacy project financed by the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson. The project failed to materialize, and there was an open break between Mr. Farmer and R. Sargent Shriver, the director of the Federal antipoverty agency, the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Mr. Farmer did several things in the late 1960's. He taught at Lincoln University, a black institution in Oxford, Pa., about 45 miles southwest of Philadelphia, advised the State of New Jersey on problems of illiteracy, and, in 1968, ran for Congress. A Liberal candidate, backed by Republicans, in Brooklyn's 12th Congressional District, he lost to the Democrat, Shirley Chisholm. Also in 1968, he supported the re-election of Senator Jacob K. Javits, a liberal Republican, who was jeered at a campaign rally in Bedford-Stuyvesant. "Jake Javits may be white on the outside but he's black on the inside," Mr. Farmer said, calming the crowd. That same year he backed Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey in his run for the Presidency.

It had always been Mr. Farmer's position that blacks, no matter how they felt, should be a part of government, and so he readily accepted an invitation from President Richard M. Nixon in 1969 to become an Assistant Secretary in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Mr. Farmer was immediately attacked by some militant civil rights advocates, who wanted nothing to do with Nixon. But Roger Wilkins and Whitney Young refrained from criticizing Mr. Farmer because they agreed with him that blacks needed such involvement if they were ever to have anything to say about shaping national policy on race.

At first, Mr. Farmer defended Nixon's racial policies, but in 1970 he quit his post, complaining that the Washington bureaucracy moved too slowly and saying that he felt he was more effective outside it. Somewhat later, he complained that Nixon had virtually no contact with blacks and instead relied on Leonard Garment, a white aide, to explain black problems to him.

In 1975, Mr. Farmer broke with CORE over what he regarded as CORE's excessively pro-leftist position that sided with the Marxist faction in Angola's civil war. He resigned from the group he had founded the next year. In 1978, he lent his name to a lawsuit that attempted to unseat CORE's director, Roy Innis.

In the mid-1980's, Mr. Farmer worked hard on his memoir, "Lay Bare the Heart," which was published in 1985. Claude Sitton, reviewing the book approvingly for The New York Times, said that Mr. Farmer, "more than any other civil rights leader, fought against (racism) and attempted to hold the movement true to its purpose."

Among Mr. Farmer's other writings was "Freedom -- When?" a book published in 1966. Before his health failed he taught for several years at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg.

Mr. Farmer's brief first marriage ended in divorce. He married Lula A. Peterson, whom he met in 1949 when she was a graduate student in economics at Northwestern University and a member of the CORE chapter in Evanston, Ill. She died in 1977.

They had two daughters, Tami and Abbey.

The New York Times, July 10, 1999

In his last years, Mr. Farmer lived alone in a remote house near Fredericksburg, confined to a wheelchair and often in need of an oxygen tent. When visitors came, he would joke about the times he had come close to death. Asked by a friend if he had ever seen a tunnel, Mr. Farmer acknowledged that he had, but instead of seeing St. Peter at the end of it, he saw the Devil, who said not to let Mr. Farmer in: "He'll organize a resistance movement and try to put out my fire." "

CORRECTION-DATE: July 21, 1999, Wednesday

CORRECTION:

An obituary of the civil rights leader James Farmer on July 10 referred incorrectly to the locations of school closings that resulted in a protest march he led in 1959. The march was called after schools in several Virginia communities were closed to avoid court-ordered integration. Schools in Richmond were not closed.

The article also misidentified the protester who was seriously injured by a mob in Birmingham, Ala., while trying to integrate interstate buses. He was Walter Bergman, not William Barbee.

In addition, the article misstated the affiliation of one of three civil rights workers who were killed in Mississippi in 1964. While Michael Schwerner and James Chaney worked with Mr. Farmer's organization, the Congress of Racial Equality, Andrew Goodman did not.

The obituary also misidentified a civil rights figure who refrained from criticizing Mr. Farmer's acceptance of a position in the Nixon Administration. It was Roy Wilkins, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. (Roger Wilkins, a journalist and scholar, is his nephew.)

GRAPHIC: Photos: Police officers carried James Farmer from the front of the New York City pavilion at the New York World's Fair on April 22, 1964, where he was participating in a sit-in protesting alleged civil rights abuses in the city. (Associated Press) (pg. A16); James Farmer speaking in New York in September 1963. (United Press International) (pg. A1)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 1999

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The Freedom Rides

In the Spring of 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) began the freedom rides. It was an effort to desegregate southern interstate bus services. The Supreme Court had already ruled that desegregation of interstate travel was unconstitutional. However, most of the southern interstate bus stations and transportation were segregated. James Farmer, national director of CORE, contacted Martin Luther King and told him of their plans.

On May 1, 1961, the buses rolled from Washington DC. The authorities were told what the students were attempting and when they arrived in Alabama, the Klan was waiting for them. In Anniston, Alabama, the two buses were stopped and burned. This didn't stop the students. They travel to Birmingham, Alabama and boarded another bus. The bus was again stopped and eight White men boarded the bus. They savagely beat the students with sticks and chains. One of the White students, James Peck, had to have fifty stitches in his head. King and then Attorney General Robert Kennedy tried to get the students to stop.

President Kennedy sent an aid to observe the events. When he arrived, he was beaten to the point of losing consciousness. Robert Kennedy then sent the FBI in to investigate the violence against the students. U.S. Marshals were also sent in to protect the students from further violence. King again attempted to get the students to stop, but they refused. Both CORE and SNCC agreed to continue the bus rides. In November of 1961, the Interstate Commerce Commission issued regulations that ended segregation at interstate bus stations.

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Author: Kevin Hollaway

Last updated December 13, 1996

The Freedom Rides

In the Spring of 1961, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) began the freedom rides. It was an effort to desegregate southern interstate bus services. The Supreme Court had already ruled that desegregation of interstate travel was unconstitutional. However, most of the southern interstate bus stations and transportation were segregated. James Farmer, national director of CORE, contacted Martin Luther King and told him of their plans.

On May 1, 1961, the buses rolled from Washington DC. The authorities were told what the students were attempting and when they arrived in Alabama, the Klan was waiting for them. In Anniston, Alabama, the two buses were stopped and burned. This didn't stop the students. They travel to Birmingham, Alabama and boarded another bus. The bus was again stopped and eight White men boarded the bus. They savagely beat the students with sticks and chains. One of the White students, James Peck, had to have fifty stitches in his head. King and then Attorney General Robert Kennedy tried to get the students to stop.

President Kennedy sent an aid to observe the events. When he arrived, he was beaten to the point of losing consciousness. Robert Kennedy then sent the FBI in to investigate the violence against the students. U.S. Marshals were also sent in to protect the students from further violence. King again attempted to get the students to stop, but they refused. Both CORE and SNCC agreed to continue the bus rides. In November of 1961, the Interstate Commerce Commission issued regulations that ended segregation at interstate bus stations.

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Author: Kevin Hollaway

Last updated December 13, 1996

Greensboro Sit-Ins: Launch of a Civil Rights Movement

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Greensboro Public Library

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PRINT DOC REQUESTED: SEPTEMBER 2, 1999
4 DOCUMENTS PRINTED
17 PRINTED PAGES

100G7P

SEND TO: GOTTHEIMER, JOSH
WHO - COMMUNICATIONS
ROOM 308
OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA 20502

*****00733*****

DATE: SEPTEMBER 2, 1999

CLIENT:
LIBRARY: NEWS
FILE: ALLNWS

YOUR SEARCH REQUEST IS:

JAMES W/2 FARMER AND DATE AFT JULY 9, 1999 AND DATE BEF JULY 12, 1999

NUMBER OF STORIES FOUND WITH YOUR REQUEST THROUGH:

LEVEL 1... 106

SCHEDULING PROPOSAL

DATE: August 25, 1999

✓
9/1

Accept

____ Regret

____ Pending
~~99 AUG 24~~ P 3:16

TO: Stephanie Streett
Assistant to the President and Director of
Scheduling

FROM: Thurgood Marshall, Jr. *T.M.*
Assistant to the President and
Director of Cabinet Affairs

Larry Stein *235*
Assistant to the President and
Director of Legislative Affairs

Minyon Moore *(m)*
Assistant to the President and
Director of Political Affairs

REQUEST: To prepare a videotape address in honor of
the late civil rights leader James Farmer at
the request of Representative John Lewis (D-
GA).

BACKGROUND: On September 10, 1999 there will be a special
tribute to James Farmer at The Kennedy
Center. Because the President will be on
foreign travel and unable to attend the
ceremony, Representative Lewis has requested
that the President prepare a video tribute
for the event. Farmer was the founder of the
Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), organizer
of the freedom rides, and considered one of
the big six leaders of the movement. He
passed away in July of this year.

(JL) JON LEWIS *(R)*

DATE AND TIME: Taped prior to September 10, 1999.

DURATION: TBD.

PARTICIPANTS: The President.

OUTLINE OF EVENTS: TBD.

REMARKS: Yes.

RECOMMENDED BY: Representative John Lewis (D-GA)

CONTACT: Janelle Erickson x62092



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515



August 11, 1999

The Honorable William J. Clinton
The President of The United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to invite you to participate in a special tribute to civil rights pioneer James Farmer to be held at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Opera House on Friday, September 10, 1999 at 11:00 a.m. As you know, Mr. Farmer passed away in July of this year.

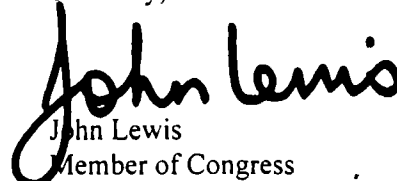
James Farmer was the founder of the Congress Of Racial Equality (CORE). He was the organizer of the "freedom rides" and one of the "big six" leaders of the civil rights movement. As a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, I know that you recognize the great contributions made to our nation by James Farmer.

A group of Mr. Farmer's friends and family have formed the James L. Farmer Tribute Committee to organize this event and pay a fitting tribute to this man and his contributions. I am serving as the honorary chairman of the committee. We anticipate approximately 1200 people attending the event.

I am hopeful that you will be able to join us and lend your eloquent voice to those honoring Mr. Farmer. Should you or your staff have questions regarding the tribute, please contact Loretta Hill in my office at (202) 225-3801.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Your presence would make what I know will be a memorable event even more special.

Sincerely,


John Lewis
Member of Congress

NICE  leg affairs
william

10/15/707 TD
@ John Lewis

Draft
James Farmer Tribute

Thank you very much for that warm introduction. I am ~~very pleased and~~ delighted to be here in this heartfelt tribute to my friend and brother Mr. James Farmer. I am ~~very honored to be in the company of the Farmer family,~~ my ~~distinguished colleagues, and friends and~~ admirers of the late James Farmer. You are lucky. You are more than lucky. You have been blessed to have been products of the life works of James Farmer.

38 years ago when I first came to Washington to

participate in something called the freedom rides.

13 of us were recruited 7 whites and 6 Blacks to test the decision of the United States Supreme Court banning discrimination in interstate bus travel.

Indeed, the freedom rides were more dangerous. We actually did not know if we would return. We had been warned that we would not make it to the end of our destination. People thought we would surely die. The night before we began the rides we ate at a Chinese restaurant here in downtown Washington.

One of the participants said that we should eat well, because this may be like the last supper. We were

met by mobs and beaten bloody. The bus was burned and many of us ultimately found ourselves in prison at Parchmen penitentiary in Mississippi. Such was the price paid for freedom and equality in the 1960's.

The man who conceived the freedom rides and went to jail with us was James Farmer, the founder of the Congress of Racial Equality. The Freedom Rides was above all the most daring accomplishments of the non-violent actions taken by Mr. Farmer.

James Farmer was a powerful man. He carried a

Baritone voice that could shake heavens gates. I remember when he used to sing those old Negro spirituals and labor songs. His ability to improvise those old freedom songs lifted the spirits of all around. I can still hear that voice shaking the cell doors in Parchmen when he sang, *Which Side Are You On*. I can still hear him now, "Which side are you on Boy, which side are you on." I could never match the powerful voice or sing as he could.

Mr. Farmer was a wonderful man. Jim had a great sense of humor, he loved to crack jokes on everybody, and with the spirit of the movement he

would crack them on himself also.

James Farmer was a follower and believer in the philosophy and discipline of nonviolence long before it became fashionable. Jim Farmer was sitting-in and protesting during the 1940's and 1950's long before Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus in 1955. James Farmer was truly one of the founding fathers of what I like to call the "New America". He was one of what was called the "Big Six" leaders of the civil rights movement.

James Farmer was not just a leader of the

movement for equal rights and equal liberties in this country. He was a strategist, an activist and a visionary. He was a man who dreamed of a better America, and he worked everyday of his life to help create that America. In doing do so, James Farmer helped liberate not just a people but an entire nation.

Throughout his life, even in his later years and in poor health, James Farmer never stopped preaching the Gospel of tolerance. He never stopped believing in the idea of an inter-racial democracy and he never stopped working to build the beloved community.

Handwritten signature and initials, possibly "J. Farmer" and "C. L. Lewis".

Schopenhauer once said, "All thrust passes in three stages: First, it is ridiculed, Second, it is violently opposed, third, it is accepted as being self-evident." The life work of James Farmer is a clear indication that freedom, and equal rights for all humankind is universal.



It was Horace Mann who said, "we should be ashamed to leave this Earth before having made a contribution to it." Of James Farmer it can only be said he had nothing to be ashamed of, His daring, his vision and his action changed America forever. As a Nation and a people, we mourn the loss of this

great man. And so it is fitting and appropriate that we from the movement and lovers of freedom everywhere are here joining together today to pay tribute to this great American. Jim past not long ago, but the impact he made on our nation and the lives of millions of Americans will be felt forever.

James Farmer changed the way Americans look and

deal with the issue of race. He worked to destroy the

divided house created by bigotry and racism and has

helped rebuild this old House...our House, One

Housethe American house.

Just as Jim along with others in the movement

would say, "Don't give up...don't give in... keep the
Faith, and keep your eyes on the Prize."

ME

25707
ME

COPY
from ORM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 17, 1998

The Honorable John Lewis
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John:

Congratulations on receiving the key to the City of Selma. This honor is a welcome and encouraging sign of how far we have come since the march there more than 30 years ago.

The America we live in today is, fortunately, different than it was when you and so many others took a stand for justice and equality. Although I recognize that we all still have work to do, I want you to know how grateful I am for your legacy of advancing civil rights in our nation. In part because of your efforts, we now enjoy a more open and tolerant America.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

980318

March 17, 1998

The Honorable John Lewis
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John:

Congratulations on receiving the key to the City of Selma. This honor is a welcome and encouraging sign of how far we have come since the march there more than 30 years ago.

The America we live in today is, fortunately, different than it was when you and so many others took a stand for justice and equality. Although I recognize that we all still have work to do, I want you to know how grateful I am for your legacy of advancing civil rights in our nation. In part because of your efforts, we now enjoy a more open and tolerant America.

Sincerely, **BILL CLINTON**

BC/KMB/RSM/DWB/emu-efr-ws-ckb
(Corres. #3878348) (3.lewis.j)

~~cc:~~ Legislative Affairs
~~cc:~~ Stacie Spector, 173 OEOB
~~cc:~~ Ben Johnson, 122 OEOB
~~cc:~~ Kevin Moran, 192 OEOB

Xeroxed copy of personally signed original to NH
through Phil Caplan

CLEAR THRU PHIL CAPLAN

PRESIDENT TO SIGN

980318



Reuben L. Musgrave Jr.
03/09/98 01:07:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Kyle M. Baker
cc: R. Scott Michaud @ EOP@LNGTWY@LNGTWY, Woyneab M. Wondwossen @
EOP@LNGTWY@LNGTWY
Subject: POTUS Letter Request

Message Creation Date was at 9-MAR-1998 13:07:00

Kyle, please get this in the works -- you can coordinate directly with Kevin.
There's no actual, physical green dot, so I don't see this as a tracked letter,
but I wanted Scott and Woyneab to know about it for future reference. Thanks.

----- Forwarded by Reuben L. Musgrave Jr./WHO/EOP on 03/09/98
01:00 PM -----

Kevin S. Moran
03/09/98 12:04:03 PM
Record Type: Record

To: Reuben L. Musgrave Jr./WHO/EOP
cc:
Subject: POTUS Letter Request

Yesterday, Rep. John Lewis was honored and presented with the key to the city
in Selma, Alabama for his participation in the aborted Selma-to-Montgomery
voting rights march in 1965. Mayor Joe Smitherman, who opposed Lewis' presence
in Selma in 1965, lauded Rep. Lewis at the ceremony and said, "Back then I
called him a rabble-rouser. Today, I call him one of the most courageous
people I ever met."

Stacie Spector, Phil Caplan and Ben Johnson agreed at this morning's senior
staff meeting that we should send a letter congratulating Rep. Lewis from the
President. Can I work with you to make sure this is done? There was a nice
article in this morning's New York Times providing a few more details on the
event.

Rep. Lewis' office address is:

✱ 229 Cannon House Office Building

DRAFT OF BC LETTER

INITIALS: BC / kmb / *FWW 3/13*

DOCUMENT TITLE: /slr/p/lewis.j

DRAFT DATE / LETTER DATE: Mar 12 1998 /

CORRESPONDENCE #: 387834

CLEAR WITH:

WHCC:

CC: Stacie Spector, 173
Phil Caplan, WW
Ben Johnson, 122
Kevin Moran, 192

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSED TO:

APPROVAL/ENCLOSURES/SPECIALINSTR:

The Honorable John Lewis
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John:

I wanted to congratulate you on receiving the key to the city of Selma. You deserve to be truly proud of your lifetime of advocacy for civil rights. The America we live in today is different than it was when you and so many others stood your ground for justice and equality. *EA* Thanks to you and to the men and women who fought for their right to vote over thirty years ago, we now enjoy a more open and tolerant nation. Your legacy reminds us just how precious the right to vote is.

Again, congratulations for all that you've done and continue to do in the name of civil rights.

You have my best wishes

MAR 13 1998

DRAFT OF BC LETTER

INITIALS: BC / kmb /

DOCUMENT TITLE: /slr/p/lewis.j

DRAFT DATE / LETTER DATE: Mar 11 1998 /

CORRESPONDENCE #: 387834

CLEAR WITH:

WHCC:

CC: Stacie Spector, 173
Phil Caplan, WW
Ben Johnson, 122
Kevin Moran, 192

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESSED TO:

The Honorable John Lewis
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

APPROVAL/ENCLOSURES/SPECIALINSTR:

Ben Johnson app. 3/11

Dear John:

~~I wanted to congratulate you on receiving~~
~~I heard that you recently received the key to the city of Selma, Alabama,~~
~~and I want to add my personal congratulations for your lifetime of~~
~~advocacy for civil rights.~~
You ^{deserve to} be truly proud of

We live in a different America than we did when you and so many ~~brave~~ ^{others}
~~marchers~~ boldly stood your ground at ~~Edmund Pettus Bridge~~. ~~Today, the~~
~~millions of African Americans who can freely vote, and, indeed, all~~
~~people who value democracy, owe a debt of gratitude to you and to the~~
~~men and women who fought for their right to vote over thirty years ago,~~
~~Risking humiliation, brutality, and even death, you secured a brighter~~ ^{for justice and equality} ~~future and a more tolerant world for the generations to come.~~ ^{we now ~~enjoy~~ enjoy} ~~Your~~
~~legacy reminds us just how precious the right to vote is.~~ ^{Thanks to}

Again, congratulations for all that you've done and continue to do in the
name of ^{civil rights} ~~justice and equality.~~

Kyle M. Baker

03/11/98

04:11:55 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Kevin S. Moran/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Rep. Lewis letter

Kevin-

Does this sound OK for the letter you emailed Reuben Musgrave about?

I heard that you recently received the key to the city of Selma, Alabama, and I want to add my personal congratulations for your lifetime of advocacy for civil rights.

We live in a different America than we did when you and so many brave marchers boldly stood your ground at Edmund Pettus Bridge. Today, the millions of African Americans who can freely vote, and, indeed, all people who value democracy, owe a debt of gratitude to you and to the men and women who fought for their right to vote over thirty years ago. Risking humiliation, brutality, and even death, you secured a brighter future and a more tolerant world for the generations to come. Your legacy reminds us just how precious the right to vote is.

Again, congratulations for all that you've done and continue to do in the name of justice and equality.



Kevin S. Moran
03/11/98 04:25:41 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: Rep. Lewis letter 

Ben Johnson said "Excellent letter!" Sounds like we should go ahead and send it out. Thanks a lot.
k



Kevin S. Moran
03/12/98 09:42:53 AM

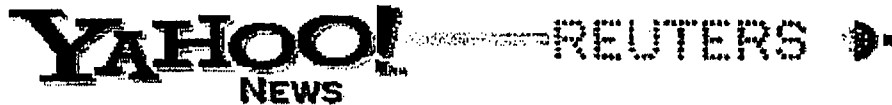
Record Type: Record

To: Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Thanks again, Kyle. k

Too formal. This is a simple handwritten or short note of congratulations, this is a very educated civil rights leader, we do not have anything to teach him or remind him of. Just keep it simple, caring, admiring, and supportive.



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Next Story: [New Problems Confront Independent Counsel](#)

Sunday March 8 2:49 PM EST

Civil Rights Leaders Re-Enact Protest March

By June Preston

SELMA, Ala. (Reuters) - The vanguard of the civil rights movement three decades ago met Sunday to remember the moment of bloody defiance at the Edmund Pettus Bridge that galvanized Americans behind giving millions of blacks the right to vote.

With children, grandchildren and contemporaries gathered at their sides, John Lewis, Evelyn Lowery, John Nettles, Alfred Turner, Earl Hilliard, James Orange and other civil rights pioneers returned to Selma, where 33 years earlier state troopers bludgeoned voting-rights marchers in an act so brutal that it became known as "Bloody Sunday."

"It was a terrible thing, what we had to go through," said Lewis, now a congressman from Georgia and then the 25-year-old president of the Southern Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. "But we had to suffer to get where we are today."

"In America," he said, "people have a right to protest, people have a right to vote, people have a right to petition the government. We have come a great distance since that time."

Lewis spoke Saturday while leading nine other members of Congress on a tour of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, where four young girls were killed by a bomb in 1963.

That bombing shocked the nation, which was becoming increasingly riveted to the movement by blacks to gain their civil rights.

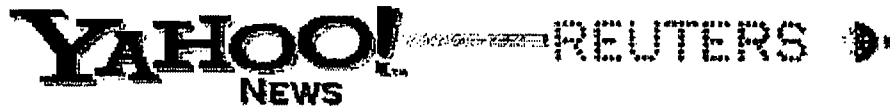
Over the next two years, blacks in the South boldly staged lunch-counter sit-ins and other demonstrations to demand equal rights under the law. Supporters from the North rode buses to the South on "Freedom Rides" that often ended in violence, including a beating that left Lewis with permanent damage.

In central Alabama, blacks led by Martin Luther King Jr. went about the business of trying to register to vote in the face of strong opposition from the white power structure. King was organizing a 54-mile march to the state capital in Montgomery to protest the lack of voting rights.

On March 7, 1965, demonstrators for voting rights gathered in Selma and marched over the Edmund Pettus Bridge that led out of town.

"We went across that bridge that Sunday, and that Sunday was the day that got folks the right to vote," Turner said.

The law then said blacks could not congregate outside in groups of more than two, so when the 500



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Next Story: [Clinton Pressures Congress on Tobacco Deal](#)

Sunday March 8 5:26 AM EST

U.S. Civil Rights Pioneers Tour Historic Sites

By June Preston

BIRMINGHAM (Reuters) - Pioneers of the U.S. civil rights movement traveled Saturday to Selma, Alabama, where more than 30 years ago many were bludgeoned by state troopers during a voting-rights march.

Among those in the group was Evelyn Lowery, who has been part of the civil rights movement from its inception. She led two busloads of college students who left Atlanta before dawn for a tour of Alabama's historic civil rights sites in Anniston, Birmingham, Marion, Montgomery and Selma.

Her husband, the Rev. Joseph Lowery, was a top lieutenant of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

In Birmingham, Evelyn Lowery locked horns with Georgia Congressman John Lewis, who led a 10-member congressional delegation that toured civil rights sites on Saturday.

Lowery approached Lewis during a staged photo opportunity at the 16th Street Baptist Church to see whether her group and his could coordinate their schedules.

But she said instead of talking to her, Lewis told Lowery to join his group while he continued to smile for the cameras. "I said 'I don't want to join your group. I've been doing this for 11 years,'" Lowery told Reuters.

"He doesn't want to mess with us. He has to be re-elected. He can't re-elect himself," Lowery said.

In Selma on March 7, 1965, a day that would become known as "Bloody Sunday," the Lowerys were traveling across Alabama with King trying to register blacks to vote when they heard that 500 marchers had been brutally beaten.

"There were these young bucks who were part of SNCC (the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) and they just decided not to wait until Dr. King got there," Evelyn Lowery said. "They just marched over that bridge and there they were facing this incredible force."

By 1965, the civil rights movement, begun more than a decade earlier, had acquired an overwhelming momentum though stalwart segregationists like Alabama Governor George Wallace thought it could still be resisted.

Wallace heard there was a voting-rights march being organized from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery and sent hundreds of state troopers to stop it.

When the marchers reached the Selma city limits and started across the Edmund Pettus Bridge over the Alabama River they faced a sea of mounted state troopers wielding billy clubs.

"You've got three minutes to turn back," one of the troopers shouted. A minute later, as the marchers continued forward, the troopers charged, beating many marchers senseless, including then-SNCC president John Lewis.

Lewis said the concussion he suffered that day was a defining moment in his life. "I saw death," he said.

Evelyn Lowery, who grew up in Birmingham, said in the 1960s the city was known as "Bombingham" because it was where four young girls were killed in a Ku Klux Klan bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

She said the church was bombed in retaliation for a civil rights demonstration.

"'Bull' Connor was sheriff of Birmingham back then and he was very despotic," Lowery said. "He ordered fire hoses turned on the people, knocking them down. Then he turned dogs loose on them. That's why the church was bombed."

The Rev. Joseph Nettles, who was beaten at Selma, said racism is still alive across the South, especially in Alabama. "I can assure you," he said, "although we have been struggling to create a new heart in Dixie, we are still catching hell in Alabama." ^REUTERS@

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Questions or Comments

ME

2570,
MECC

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 17, 1998

The Honorable John Lewis
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John:

Congratulations on receiving the key to the City of Selma. It's such a fitting honor for your many years at the forefront of the fight for civil rights.

The America we live in today is, fortunately, different than it was when you and so many others took a stand for justice and equality. We all still have work to do, but I want you to know how grateful I am for your legacy of advancing civil rights in our nation. In part because of your efforts, we now enjoy a more open and tolerant America.

Sincerely,

3/17/98

Den-

Opening Gt is not quite right. He got the key to Selma because of the March

PM

interstate Commerce Commission that gave teeth to the enforcement of the Supreme Courts Decision. This victory emboldened Freedom Fighters everywhere. For the ext three years, Farmer presided over a movement that sprawled over 150 CORE chapters all over the country.

Meeting with Presidents, marching and mobilizing under constant threat of injury and death, Farmer and the movements soldiers challenged the beast in its lair. Jim was particularly feared and despised in Louisiana. In 1963 he was the target of a house to house search in Plaquemine, Louisiana by state troopers working in connection with an enraged Klan mob. Prepared to surrender to save the families protecting him he was forced into a hearse to escape death. Arrested for protesting police brutality, he remained in jail in Donaldson, Louisiana during the March on Washington.

James Farmer received 26 honorary degrees and numerous awards and citations for his service to humanity. On January 15, 1998 he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In his wheelchair he kissed the Medal and said, "It's been a long time coming. A long time"

The life of his great man, this extraordinary humanist, educator, motivator, labor activist, and incomparable civil rights leader, is cherished and remembered by his two daughters, Tami Farmer Gonzalez, and Abbey Farm, his granddaughter, Abigale and countless freedom fighters, friends and admirers around the nation and the world.

James Farmer Tribute Talking Points

Today we celebrate James Farmer, author of the American Civil Rights movement, whose life's work has changed us all forever. This tribute is a long delayed affirmation of his magnificent contributions which have shaped the substance of our nation.

James Leonard Farmer, Jr. was born in Marshall, Texas on January 12, 1920. Blessed with a superior intellect, Jim Farmer graduated from Wiley College, then also graduating from Howard University. He guided his theological passion to learn the non-violent Ghandian Philosophy.

In 1942, he founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), an organization committed to ending racial segregation, embodying the Ghandian principles of nonviolent direct action, civil disobedience and non-cooperation with segregation.

CORE moved on to sit-ins, stand-ins, and other demonstrations in Chicago, and subsequently chapters undertook direct action in several Northern cities. Thus, CORE pioneered the civil rights protest tactics that were employed in the 1950's and gained national attention in the 1960's.

During the 40's and 50's, Jim also worked as a union organizer for the Upholsters International Union of North America and AFSCME. His work in the labor movement in the late 1970's and continued until the early 1980's when Jim served as first associate Director of the Coalition of American Public Employees.

In 1959, Jim Farmer joined the staff of the NAACP as its Program Director. On February 1, 1960, four black collegians sat down at a segregated Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro, NC. CORE, having slowly expanded in the late 50's under the leadership of devoted members including his second wife, Lula Patterson Farmer, was well poised to this new challenge.

Jim initiated, organized and led the 1961 freedom rides to integrate interstate travel. His goal to test the 1960's Supreme Court decision, *Boynton v. Virginia*, which allowed the segregation of facilities used by passengers in interstate transportation-a law that was blatantly defied throughout the American South.

Launched in May of 1961, the Freedom rides shocked the nation with pictures of savage beatings and burning buses. Soon thousands of Freedom Rides were filling southern jails. Farmer boosted the morale of his companions in Parchman Prison near Jackson, Mississippi--singing the old labor ballad, "Which side are you on". When word was received that Attorney Gen. Robert Kennedy had requested a "cooling-off" period, Jim consulted with other "front-line" warriors and then gave this response: "Please tell the attorney general that we have been cooling off for 350 years. If we cool off any more, we will be in a deep freeze. The Freedom Rides will go on."

The Freedom Rides continued and succeeded, culminating in a ruling on Sept. 22, 1961 by the

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Los Angeles, California)

For Immediate Release

July 10, 1999

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Hillary and I were greatly saddened to learn of the death of James Farmer, one of this century's pioneers for freedom. As ~~the leader of~~ the Congress of Racial Equality, he stood on the front lines of the struggle for justice. At historic sit-ins, Freedom Rides, and countless picket lines, ~~thousands of citizens risked their lives on behalf of~~ basic rights, led by the inspiration of James Farmer. Their effort changed America. Through a long career as an activist, public servant, and educator, ~~he never lost sight of the shining goal of integration and~~ racial equality. He never stopped working to build One America. I was privileged to award him the Presidential Medal of Freedom last year. James Farmer helped to make America a better nation. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and many friends.

###

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release January 15, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT MEDALS OF FREEDOM PRESENTATION

The East Room

10:00 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I want to begin with a warm welcome to all of our guests here, our honorees and their family members, members of the administration, members of Congress, other distinguished officials. It is fitting that today this ceremony occurs on the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who, 21 years ago, was granted this award by President

Carter posthumously, to ensure that his legacy would live on. Until every child has the opportunity to live up to his or her God-given potential, free from want in a world at peace, Dr. King's work and our work is not yet done. He once said that, "No social advance rolls on the wheels of inevitability." After five years in Washington, I know that is true. Humanity makes progress through decades of sweat and toil by dedicated individuals who give freely of themselves and who inspire others to do the same -- the kind of heroic men and women we honor today. All of our honorees have helped America to widen the circle of democracy -- by fighting for human rights, by righting social wrongs, by empowering others to achieve, by preserving our precious environment, by extending peace around the world. Every person here has done so by rising in remarkable ways to America's highest calling, the calling, as the First Lady said, of active citizenship. On behalf of a grateful nation, I would like to bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom on these courageous citizens. Let me say, as I begin, that I am grateful to all of them who are here and those who are not.

(Commander Huey reads the citation.) THE PRESIDENT: In the spring of 1942, a man fresh out of theology school sat down at the counter of Chicago's Jack Spratt Coffee Shop and ordered a doughnut. Because he was black, he was refused. Because his name was James Farmer, he did not give in. He and the other founders of the Congress of Racial Equality organized the nation's first sit-in and launched an era of nonviolent protests for civil rights. He went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading freedom rides, voter drives and marches, enduring repeated beatings and jailings along the way. He has never sought the limelight and until today, I, frankly, think he's never gotten the credit he deserves for the contribution he has made to the freedom of African Americans and other minorities and their equals opportunities in America. But today, he can't avoid the limelight, and his long overdue recognition has come to pass. Read the citation, Commander. (Commander Huey reads the citation.)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release January 8, 1998

Statement by the Press Secretary

President Clinton announced today that he will award the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor, to 15 distinguished Americans. The President will bestow the medals at a White House ceremony on January 15, 1998.

James Farmer. One of our Nation's most influential civil rights leaders, James Farmer formed the Congress of Racial Equality in 1942, which became a catalyst of the civil rights movement. As the director of CORE, Farmer introduced nonviolent resistance against segregation and discrimination through such activities as sit-ins, standing lines, and the famous Freedom Rides. He is currently a professor at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA.

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

217618

April 15, 1997

COPY

Honorable William Clinton
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Fifty-five years ago this month, the first sit-in took place. It was at the Jack Spratt Coffee Shop in Chicago, Illinois. It was conceived, organized and led by James Farmer. APR 18 PM 12:00

Fifty years ago, ~~in 1947, in follow-up to the 1946 Supreme Court ruling that blacks could not be forced to sit in the back of buses traveling interstate,~~ ^{Just} Farmer led CORE members in a challenge to the practice of segregated seating. They traveled through Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and West Virginia. Some members of that group, including Bayard Rustin, were arrested and served thirty days on a chain gang in North Carolina for having violated local segregation laws.

These are among the little known but critical events on the road to equal rights and equal protection under the law. Better known are the Freedom Rides. James Farmer orchestrated them, too.

On May 1, 1961, in Washington, D.C., James Farmer began training an interracial group of thirteen young people in the Gandhian principles of direct action and nonviolence. Three days later, they set out on a journey through the Deep South. There was violence all around them. They were beaten; and their buses were burned. But, they never fought back and they never turned back. They were on a journey toward freedom.

The Freedom Rides catapulted Birmingham police commissioner, Bull Connor, onto the front page of major newspapers around the world. The Freedom Rides opened Bobby Kennedy's eyes to the intransigence of Southern segregationists and the need for the federal government to intervene in the struggle for civil rights. And, the Freedom Rides brought down the "white only" and "colored" signs that were hung over every bus seat, terminal bench, toilet and water fountain in the South.

Referred to as a "young Negro aristocrat," Farmer was born in Texas, where his father was the first black person to earn a Ph.D. degree. Today, he is seventy-seven years old. He is blind. He has lost the use of both of his legs. He is not in good health.

He is still teaching at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he is Distinguished Professor of History and American Studies. He continues to inspire his

students and all those who come in contact with him to set goals, direct their actions, be creative, have vision and keep the faith.

We urge you to recognize the especially meritorious contributions to our society which have been made by James Farmer by awarding him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. No one is more deserving of this honor.

Sincerely,

John Lewis
John Lewis
Member of Congress

D/GA
12-2-68

Coretta Scott King
Coretta Scott King

Thurgood Marshall
Thurgood Marshall

Alfred H. Hayes
Alfred H. Hayes

Paul Jackson
Paul Jackson

Eliza E. Cummings
Eliza E. Cummings

Babette L. Parson
Babette L. Parson

Samuel H. Davis
Samuel H. Davis

Dee C. C.
Dee C. C.

James H. Bevel
James H. Bevel
Rep. Harold Ford Jr.

Earl S. Williams
Earl S. Williams

EF

Draft 1/15/98 8:30am

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THE PRESIDENT WAS SEEN

1-15-98

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON

REMARKS AT PRESIDENTIAL MEDALS OF

FREEDOM AWARD CEREMONY

THE WHITE HOUSE

January 15, 1998

COPY

In the spring of 1942, a man fresh out of theology school sat down at the counter of Chicago's Jack Spratt Coffee Shop and ordered a doughnut. Because that man was black, he was refused. Because that man was James Farmer, he did not give in. He and the other founders of the Congress of Racial Equality organized the nation's first sit-in and launched an era of non-violent protest for civil rights.

Mr. Farmer went on to help bring down Jim Crow by leading Freedom Rides, voter drives, and marches -- enduring repeated beatings and jailings along the way. Mr. Farmer has never sought the limelight. But today, we won't let him avoid it -- for national recognition is long past due.

[Cmdr. Huey, please read the citation.]

COPY

Duke University
DURHAM
NORTH CAROLINA
27708-0719

MOFz
James Farmer

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
226 CARR BUILDING

March 25, 1997

BOX 90719
TELEPHONE (919) 684-3014
FAX (919) 681-7670

Mr. James Dorskin
Director of Presidential Correspondence
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

3454501

Dear Mr. Dorskin:

I write to you to recommend that James Farmer receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. As a historian of the United States and a civil rights advocate, I have been a close student of the life and role of James Farmer.

It is almost impossible to list the many contributions of James Farmer to American History. As a member of the NAACP and the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), Farmer was an active participant in civil rights activities in the 1930s and 40s, a period which is least known for non-violent protest. Yet, Farmer staged several non-violent boycotts, demonstrations and sit-ins to protest segregation and discrimination in the North. Indeed, Farmer's initial strategies were the basis of his famous memorandum to the leaders of FOR in which he explained the possible use of non-violent tactics in a mass movement in the North, and especially in the South. Written almost a decade before the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Farmer's memorandum seemed to have foreshadowed the very foundation of the modern day non-violent protest as a part of the civil rights movement.

Farmer is best known, however, as the founder and first director of the Congress of Racial Equality. Founded in 1942, CORE membership was restricted to Northern cities and small local protests. As the modern day civil rights movement increased, CORE became one of the leading organizations in the 1960s. Its members participated in a variety of activities ranging from sit-ins and voter registration to demonstrations and boycotts. But, it is the "Freedom Rides" for which it is best known.

In 1961, CORE members participated in a demonstration against segregation on interstate bus transportation known as the "Freedom Rides." It gained national attention when segregationists began to attack the buses in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama. However, this was not the only incident. A bus of freedom riders was later fire-bombed in Montgomery while other riders were beaten and arrested in various cities in both Alabama and Mississippi. But, it was their work and that of James Farmer that led the Interstate Commerce Commission to end racial segregation on interstate transportation. I can think of no person more deserving to receive this national distinction than James Farmer.

Sincerely yours,

John Hope Franklin

John Hope Franklin
James B. Duke Professor of History Emeritus

JOHN LEWIS
5TH DISTRICT, GEORGIA
CHIEF DEPUTY DEMOCRATIC WHIP
COMMITTEE:
WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE:
HEALTH



224154

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1005

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
229 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1005
(202) 225-3801
Fax (202) 225-0351
DISTRICT OFFICE:
THE EQUITABLE BUILDING
100 PEACHTREE STREET, N.W.
SUITE # 1920
ATLANTA, GA 30303
(404) 659-0116
Fax (404) 331-0947

June 3, 1997

JUN 5 AM 11:49

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20501

Dear Mr. President:

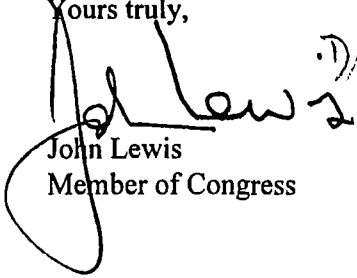
I write to reiterate my interest in having the Presidential Medal of Freedom awarded to James Farmer. Hundreds of people familiar with Jim Farmer, his life and his work have joined me in making this request, including John Zippert, a young, white student from New York who came South with Farmer in the summer of 1965 to test enforcement of the Civil Rights Act. Zippert never left the South and the work and community he came to love. (A copy of John Zippert's letter is enclosed.)

I know that you are deeply committed to healing racial divisions in our country and celebrating the diversity that makes our nation great. This would be the most important legacy any president could leave. I applaud your commitment; and I look forward to working with you to achieve these goals.

For all of his life -- more than seventy-seven years -- Jim Farmer has labored to make these goals a reality. Under his leadership, we have come a long way. It is because of Jim Farmer and the Freedom Rides he organized that the "colored" and "white only" signs that hung in every bus terminal and elsewhere in the South are down. Jim's leadership in voter registration efforts empowered hundreds of thousands of black people in Mississippi. His influence on President Johnson shaped our government's first affirmative action policies and made literacy a primary component of the War on Poverty. Despite his failing health today, Jim Farmer continues to encourage and inspire all of us to set goals, employ nonviolent techniques, be creative, have vision and keep faith.

It is my hope that you will recognize Jim Farmer for his inimitable service to our nation by awarding him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

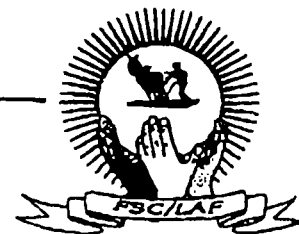
Yours truly,


John Lewis
Member of Congress

COPY

**The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/
Land Assistance Fund**

Rural Training and Research Center
Post Office Box 95
Epes, Alabama 35460



**RALPH PAIGE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

May 19, 1997

TELEPHONE (205) 652-9676

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Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 524-6882**

**President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500**

**Attn: Mr. James Dorskin
Director of Presidential Correspondence**

Dear President Clinton:

My letter comes today to endorse the proposal and efforts to nominate **Dr. James Farmer**, founder and former National Director of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) for The **Presidential Medal of Freedom**.

I feel it would be fair to say that Jim Farmer and CORE significantly changed my life and more importantly the lives of so many of our citizens, Black and White, across the South and throughout our nation.

In the summer of 1965, as a white, third year student at the City College of New York, I volunteered to work for the summer with the Congress of Racial Equality in Louisiana. While I had been a member of the New York CORE chapter for several years, my participation in the summer project allowed me learn and participate directly in the "civil rights movement" in the South, which was the single greatest experience and influence in my life.

Most of the time that summer was spent in voter registration and education; testing public accommodations under the 1964 Civil Rights Act; and meeting the people of St. Landry Parish and southwest Louisiana. Many of the people I met were small Black farmers and sharecroppers engaged in sweet potato, cotton and vegetable farming operations.

Page 2

At the end of the summer, CORE asked me to join their field staff, at the salary of \$25 per week, to work on community organizing and development in southwest Louisiana. I agreed to continue working/volunteering with CORE for two years from the Fall of 1965 to the Fall of 1967.

Out of my work with CORE, thousands of people were registered to vote in southwest Louisiana. In several of these communities, as a result, today there are significant numbers of African-American public officials. Our greatest accomplishment was the organization of several agricultural and consumer cooperatives and credit unions across southwest Louisiana. These fledgling cooperatives and credit unions came together with others in the South to form the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in 1967. For the past thirty years, I have worked for the Federation seeking justice for Black family farmers and other low income rural people in the South.

Most of the time I worked for CORE, it was under the leadership and direction of James Farmer. I remember attending several fieldstaff meetings in the South, in that period of the mid 1960's, when he was present, often at great risk to his personal security, to give guidance, inspiration and encouragement to the staff. James Farmer provided resolute but also caring leadership to the organization, the people in it and the greater masses of Black and poor people we were serving in communities across the South and the nation.

James Farmer had a broad and clear vision for America from the very beginning of CORE in 1942, but when I met him a generation later he was still pursuing that vision and enhanced mission to make the promises of freedom, the dreams of justice and the simple elements of the pursuit of happiness available to all Americans, especially Black Americans, who had been denied these basic freedoms and benefits. James Farmer taught me alot about what freedom and America is supposed to be all about.

Page 3

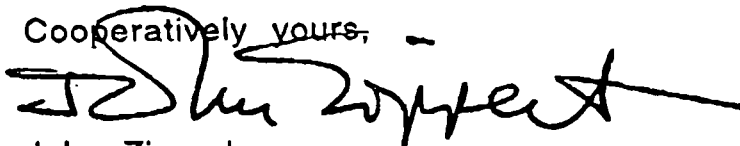
He also taught me that sometimes you have to sit down or sit-in, as a protest, to make America stand up for what it really believes in. Farmer is an important voice and symbol of the importance of non-violent protest in making America live up to its promises and ideals...

I have remained in contact with James Farmer over the years and still consider him to be an inspiration for our work in the Federation of Southern Cooperatives. We were in contact with him during his government service and his work in academia. I spoke with him at the 30th. Anniversary of the Freedom Rides at Tougaloo, Mississippi several years ago.

We strongly support the proposal to recognize Dr. James Farmer with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. This would not only be a tribute for his individual contributions to the nation but it would recognize the larger work of hundreds of local community leaders, students and participants in the Civil Rights Movement.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you award this important recognition to Dr. Farmer. Please contact me if I can be of any further assistance in this matter.

Cooperatively yours,



John Zippert
Director of Program Operations



The President of the United States of America

Awards this

Presidential Medal of Freedom

to

*1782
Le...
me...*
James Farmer

COPY

SM
Visionary civil rights hero, James Farmer has inspired millions of Americans with his passionate convictions, committed activism, and unwavering dignity. As founder more than 50 years ago of the Congress of Racial Equality, he embraced the principles of direct action and nonviolence, leading the first sit-ins to protest racial segregation. His organization of and the participation in the Freedom Rides of the 1960s, focused national attention on inequities in public accommodations and often put his life at risk. The changes he wrought are with us to this day. Our Nation proudly salutes James Farmer for his extraordinary work to combat discrimination and bring racial harmony and healing to our land.

*The White House
Washington, D.C.
January 15, 1998*

William L. Clinton

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release January 15, 1998

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President today awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to 15 individuals.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom was established by President Kennedy by Executive Order on February 22, 1963. It is the highest civilian award of our Government. The Medal is awarded only by the President to those persons whom he deems to have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. The Medal may be awarded to citizens of other nations and may be awarded posthumously. President Kennedy announced the first Presidential Medal of Freedom awards in 1963. However, President Johnson made the first presentations of the Medal in a ceremony at the White House on December 6, 1963. Recipients receive a medal and a citation signed by the President.

The text of the citations awarded today read as follows:

JAMES FARMER

Visionary civil rights hero, James Farmer has inspired millions of Americans with his passionate convictions, committed activism, and unwavering dignity. As founder more than 50 years ago of the Congress of Racial Equality, he embraced the principles of direct action and nonviolence, leading the first sit-ins to protest racial segregation. His organization of and participation in the Freedom Rides of the 1960s focused national attention on inequities in public accommodations and often put his life at risk. The changes he wrought are with us to this day. Our Nation proudly salutes James Farmer for his extraordinary work to combat discrimination and bring racial harmony and healing to our land.