

Blacks Decry 'Neglect' by White House

Leaders Seeking To Revive 1960s Rights Coalition

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By Lee Lescaze

Washington Post Staff Writer

NEW YORK, Aug. 29 — National black leaders, at the first of a series of meetings they hope will revive the solid civil rights coalition of the 1960s, today launched a "counterattack" on the Carter administration's "callous neglect of blacks, the poor and America's cities."

National Urban League executive director Vernon Jordan called the meeting following his exchange of criticism with President Carter last July that began when Jordan accused the administration of ignoring blacks and poor people despite the overwhelming support they gave him in last year's presidential election.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson said participants at today's meeting agreed upon a "loose coalition" to fight against "being victimized by the callous neglect of this administration."

He said that under President Nixon "it was benign neglect" but blacks didn't put Nixon in office. However, "we put President Carter in office and from him we will not settle for callous neglect."

Jackson, the head of Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) was the only leader to speak to reporters at any length as he left the meeting.

He noted that it is 14 years since a coalition of civil rights groups organized the March on Washington led by the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Jackson said today's challenge "is to fulfill that march's dream of economic parity and development."

The black leaders agreed on the need to push the Carter administration to take steps toward full employment, welfare reform with enough money to be meaningful, and rebuilding of the

cities, Jackson said.

The other 14 participants, including Jordan, who called for the meeting in July, declined to discuss its substance with reporters. They wrestled with the drafting of their brief, formal statement for several hours and agreed among themselves not to make details of their meeting public.

It appeared that there were several disagreements among them. Not all the black leaders are as willing as Jackson and Jordan have been to challenge Carter personally. Their formal statement used the phrase "callous neglect" but did not apply it to Carter personally. The President responded to Jordan's criticism by calling it "demagogic" last month.

However, the black leaders are groping for ways to coalesce as civil rights organizations have not done since the '60s. There is strength in

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numbers and black leaders are hoping that their present efforts will get their message through to Carter.

Jackson said a number of the participants are concerned over the erosion of some black gains made in the '60s. He said the pending case of a California white male who was denied admission to medical school because of a California state university's "affirmative action" program is of great concern.

Jackson also said members of the group are concerned that there is no black in "the White House palace guard."

As another example of erosion, Jackson said there are fewer than half as many blacks in medical schools as there were 10 years ago.

In addition to Jackson and Jordan, participants in the meeting included Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King Jr.; Benjamin Hooks, executive director of the

NAACP; Rep. Parren Mitchell (D-Md.), the head of the Congressional Black Caucus; Richard Hatcher, mayor of Gary, Ind., and Bayard Rustin of the A. Philip Randolph Institute.

The makeup of the meeting closely resembled the kind of leadership that would have been called together in the 1960s. Now there are far more small black organizations working in urban and rural areas as well as black elected officials, and prominent black businessmen.

One small student group came to the National Urban League Headquarters today to protest its exclusion and what it said was the exclusion of all black youth groups from the meeting. Tony Austin, national coordinator of the National Student Coalition Against Racism, was denied entry to the meeting and waited downstairs in the Urban League's lobby with reporters for several hours.