

Wilkins-FBI Link Called 'Ridiculous'

By LEROY WILLIAMS JR.

The director of religious affairs for the national NAACP yesterday scolded "white folks" for linking the group's former executive director to FBI attempts to discredit Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In an address at Greenwood CME Church during a meeting of the Memphis chapter of the NAACP, Rev. Julius Caesar Hope called the attacks on Roy Wilkins "ridiculous."

Several newspapers in May had identified Wilkins as "the black leader" who in 1964 met with the FBI to discuss ways of

discrediting King and limiting his influence. FBI files made public in May documented a meeting between a "black leader" they did not identify and FBI agents to discredit King.

"White folks don't never give up," Hope said referring to the incident. "When white folks are out on the golf course they aren't shucking and jiving about nothing. They're talking business. They're trying to get us out of here."

The NAACP under Wilkins, Hope said, had led blacks "out of the Egypt of slavery

and into the wilderness of opportunity," but now needed the vision of his successor, Rev. Benjamin L. Hooks of Memphis, "to lead us to the promised land . . ."

"We can't use horse-and-buggy techniques to make it to the promised land. We need a man of vision. We have a man of vision in Rev. Hooks," Hope said.

"We (the NAACP) don't believe in burning buildings. We work within the system for change. . . Black folks don't have n any matches. We ain't manufacturing none. We ain't going to shoot our way out. We're going to run out of bullets."

Blacks, Hope said, have a "mighty long way to go" before they get to the promised land and quality education and criticized blacks who opposed busing.

"I've heard some black folks say they don't want busing . . . Don't you know that anywhere white folks don't want you that's where you should be, because that's where the getting is good."

The political arena, Hope said, was the most important area for blacks to make advancements. "That's where the action is. Politics makes the world turn. Every black should be a registered voter."

He cautioned the about 100 persons in the audience about black politicians who "turn white" after they're elected. "You have some (black politicians) who say they don't represent black people. They say, 'I'm representing everybody.' Well, everybody didn't put them down there. And when election time comes we should get him out."

"They're blacks and whites who are no good. And no good plus no good equals no good no matter what the color."

Hooks, who attended the meeting, praised Hope and also urged blacks to get out and vote in the Aug. 3 primary elections.

The Commercial Appeal, Memphis, Monday, June 26, 1978
