

James Lawson-LA TIMES Timeline

Assembled by Adam Nolan

June 27, 2014

1976

March 3- “Board’s Antibusing Pledge Angers Black Leaders”

Community Task Force for Better Education

In response to the Board of Education’s resolution pledging “no compulsory busing of students” to desegregate LA schools, Lawson then chairman of the NAACP’s (LA Branch?) education committee, said “...That’s what the public often receives from the hands of those who are politically ambitious but not politically principled.”

April 4- “DATEBOOK: Discussion on Integration”

Lawson, a member of the committee of Church and Society for World Council of Churches will give a speech on April 8 for Valley chapter of Women for Legislative Action titled “Integration-Is Busing the Real Issue?”

July 31- “Interfaith Group Tells Support for Humphrey-Hawkins Jobs Measure”

Lawson a part of Ad Hoc Committee of Clergy and Laity for Full Employment expressing support for the bill.

September 19- “Churches Plan Forum on School Integration”

Lawson a forum panelist

1977

January 15- “School Board Plan for Integration Protested: Judge Withdraws From Case; ACLU’s Attorney Quits; Rights Group Upset”

Lawson, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee on School Integration and official of the NAACP, said “the board is copping out.” Their plan “will not reduce significantly racial isolation in the schools. Worse than that, they do not call for the kind of major educational reform that can be started in the Los Angeles district toward quality education for everyone.”

January 19- “Court Will Receive 3 Integration Plans: Counterproposals to Board Measure Will Be Submitted”

Lawson, very critical of integration plans being considered by the school board, maintained that the majority of school board members are supporting racism. “Racists of various shades and colorings are saying, ‘Leave things as they are, we’re content with them,’” Lawson contended. “I would say the majority of the school board is catering to that opinion, so it must mean a majority of the school board must think in that fashion.” Lawson said the NAACP would oppose the board’s plan in court. More detailed information is available in the story.

January 28- “75 to 100 Integrated Pupil Learning Centers Planned”

Lawson is a member of the integration planning team’s steering committee.

April 4- “Pick of the Preachers”

Lawson is mentioned in this short compiled list of some local ministers who have a reputation as outstanding preachers.

April 9- “Death Penalty Foes Recall Crucifixion”

Lawson one of 120 Southern California religious figures to sign statement opposing legislative reenactment of California’s death penalty.

May 25- “Campaign Heating Up in 3 Board of Education Races”

Lawson, a strong proponent of integration, weighs in on the race. Lawson represented the NAACP on the Citizens Advisory Committee on Student Integration that recommended to the school board a city school desegregation plan using extensive mandatory busing.

October 7- “Children’s Home Mansion Faces Ax: Lullaby Guild Fights Plans to Raze Building”

Lawson weighs in on dispute among residents concerning an alternative school and use of a building.

1978

May 10- “Northrop Hikes Dividend; Predicts Higher Profit in ‘78”

At an annual Northrup Corps. shareholder’s meeting, Rev. James Lawson, representing the Roman Catholic order of Dominican Sisters, requested that Northrup provide shareholders with information on the categories of military equipment exported, foreign countries receiving the equipment, and a description of procedures used to promote foreign-military sales. Only 4% of shareholders voted in favor of the proposition.

June 16- “Display Ad 226”

Lawson participated in a post performance discussion that followed Michael Christofer’s “Black Angel” further described as “The Black Angel is a Nazi War Criminal. Can Judgment Include Forgiveness?”

September 11- “Display Ad 26—No Title” ?

“Please Read This Message If You Have Children In the Los Angeles Unified School District”

The Council for Peace and Equality in Education—Lawson is a part this coalition

*****October 10-** “Ex-King Aid to Officiate: Ray to Be Wed in Prison”

Lawson talked about his agreeing to officiate James Earl Ray’s wedding. Some good quotes about MLK, love, and thoughts of Ray’s innocence in this article.

October 14- “James Earl Ray Wed to Artist in Prison”

Lawson conducted the wedding ceremony at Brushy Mountain Penitentiary in Tennessee.

1979

January 14- “Rights Leaders Make Plea for Dederich”

Lawson joins Cesar Chavez, Ralph Abernathy, and a few other leaders in a public appeal to California Governor Brown to withdraw a governor’s warrant preventing Charles Dederich’s release on bail as long as he remains in Arizona. Dederich, founder of Synanon, was charged with conspiring to commit murder. Chavez and Abernathy urged that Dederich be moved from a guarded hospital room to his home in Arizona until he is “well enough” to stand trial in California.

March 15- “NAACP Installation Dinner”

Lawson speaks at NAACP dinner installing Jose De Sosa as president of the Valley Branch NAACP.

May 7- “Black Ministers in Political Move: 169 Form L.A. Group to Broaden Influence”

The Gathering was a group of 169 ministers and in the wake of a death in the community related to police brutality they demanded that local officials “immediately curb alleged police abuse or suffer the loss of ministerial support.” Lawson comments on the black church as being the “center of the dream” and “most often, it has been the center for encouraging, supporting and promoting change.” He also illustrates how the black church’s role and influence has changed--More quotes concerning this.

June 16- “Methodists Fail to Resolve Homes Issues: Conference Delegates Reject Bigger Legal Defense Outlays”

The Pacific and Southwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church failed to reach an “overall solution” to the bankruptcy and lawsuit problems of the church-related Pacific Homes retirement facilities. Lawson was one of the few delegates present that asked probing questions said: “We are moving away from the spiritual tasks of the local churches and ministries” to the conference’s detriment.

July 24- “Display Ad 12”

This is an advertisement appeal on behalf of the 300 United Electrical, Radio & Machine Worker members (UE) on strike against Kraco Enterprises of Compton. The appeal lists the grievances and aggressive steps made by the company. Lawson is one of many listed that endorses the message.

*****August 10-** “U.S. Clears 2 Officers in Love Death: Justice Dept. Finds No Violations of Civil Rights Laws in Shooting”

The Justice Dept. said there was “insufficient evidence” to prove that two officers who shot and killed Mrs. Eulia Love had intent to deprive her of her federally protected civil rights at the time of her shooting. The black community voiced their anger with several community leaders weighing in. Lawson said that the decision “shows how inadequate federal law is.” He continued: “If a police force becomes corrupt and deprives citizens of their life, the federal government cannot protect the community. That has been the history of black people in America.”

U.S. Attorney Sheridan Ordin said that the Love investigation was given priority over approximately 25 other alleged police brutality investigations that the Justice Dept. is conducting on the LAPD and the county Sheriff’s Department.

August 11- “Police Secretly Took Pictures of Love Protest”

LAPD Police Chief Daryl Gates acknowledged and told Rev. M.M. Merriweather (a leader of The Gathering) that his officers took photographs of participants in the March 29 march protesting the police shooting of Eulia Love. The Gathering, and organization of black ministers that Lawson is involved with, organized, supported, and sponsored the protest. Lawson made a brief comment indicating that it had been no accident the LAPD conducted surveillance on the protest initiated by The Gathering.

August 25- “Old Comrades Meet in Crisis: Blacks, Jews Ease Tensions”

Leaders of black and Jewish communities meet and address relations, cooperation, issues, and tensions between their communities.

Lawson talked about the Jewish commitment to Israel and wondered that, with their concern with Israel, that they have forgotten traditional Jewish commitment to social justice in America.

September 22- Display Ad 43-No Title

“Pacific Regional Conference of Partners in Ecumenism”

More than 300 Black pastors and religious leaders expected for conference to be held September 27-28. The purpose was to draw black spiritual leaders together to identify the most pressing social and political issues of the decade and to implement a strategy for the Black church to address the issues.

Lawson’s name listed among those playing leading roles in the conference.

October 9- “1,000 Officers Rap Report on Eulia Love: Sign Petitions of ‘No Confidence’ in Police Commission”

Lawson and Rev. M.M. Merriweather, representing The Gathering, demanded that L.A. Police Chief Daryl Gates restructure the police department or resign in light of “new information” concerning the police shooting of Eulia Love. Turns out that the information was not new, but the two leaders did not back down on their demands.

Meanwhile, over 1,000 L.A. police officers sign a petition in opposition to the Police Commission findings in the Love case.

October 13- “Weekend TV: Networks Vs. Audience, Again”

Television schedule?-James Lawson of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference is “At One With” Keith Berwick.

November 19- “L.A. Group to Tackle Black, Jewish Issues: Dialogue Fears Busing, PLO, Israel, Affirmative Action May Threaten Unity”

A 45-member group known as the Black-Jewish Dialogue will meet to attempt to reach agreement on four major issues of dividing their respective communities-busing, Israel, affirmative action, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Lawson, a member of the Dialogue makes a few comments including: “There is too much of a tendency for Jewish figures to equate criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism” and “We are in far greater agreement than we are in disagreement, because we come from a common biblical heritage.”

November 29- “Blacks, Jews Reach Accord on Key Issues: But Remain Divided on Some Questions After Three-Month Dialogue”

Leaders of black and Jewish communities in L.A. complete a “Joint Statement on Black and Jewish Issues.”

Lawson has serious reservations about unresolved disagreements especially concerning Jewish support for flexible goals and timetables on affirmative action; black leaders believed quotas were essential to guarantee affirmative action progress.

December 29- “Religion Notes: Black Ministers’ Coalition to Celebrate”

The Gathering, a coalition of black ministers, was set to celebrate its varied spiritual heritages and Lawson was one of the leaders that presided over the event.

1980

March 23- “L.A. Rally Draws Signs of Times”

A rally with 1500 in attendance was held at L.A.’s Mac-Arthur Park to protest President Carter’s proposal to register youth for the draft. Vietnam veteran Ron Kovic, labor leader Paul Perlin (ILWU), and James Lawson spoke at the rally. Lawson, Western region president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said he opposed the draft on moral grounds. Lawson said that “the first right of any human being is the right to life” and “anything that is opposed to life is wrong and immoral.”

May 20- “Other 71—No Title”

The “Brunch and Survival Sunday III” at the Hollywood Bowl is a rally with entertainers and speakers against nuclear energy. Paid admittance with brunch tickets offering a chance to meet supporters of the Alliance for Survival, including James Lawson.

October 2- "Valley Variety"

On Tuesday, October 7 Lawson was scheduled to speak to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom on "The Coming Elections: What Impact on Peace and Justice."

November 18- "Church Pastor to Speak to Ex-Teachers"

Lawson was scheduled to speak on November 18 to the Association of Retired Teachers concerning the impact of the election.

1981

January 8- "Group Seeks to Deal With Riot Causes"

A joint task force was put together to continue what the McCone Commission set out to do fifteen years earlier in dealing with problems that led to the Watts riot. The task force included 18 officials and members of local chapter of the Urban League, the American Jewish Committee, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The task force recognized that "despite various governmental and private efforts, living conditions have changed very little" since the 1965 riots.

Lawson was a part of the task force as a member of the Urban League.

January 13- "Clerics Ask U.S. to End El Salvador Aid"

Roman Catholic Bishop Juan Arzube of L.A. and 18 other Southern California religious leaders urged that U.S. military and economic aid to El Salvador be ended and that Salvadoran refugees be granted political asylum in the U.S. Roman Catholic officials increasingly opposed the junta after the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Anulfo Romero and the December 2, 1980 killings of four American women (3 nuns) in El Salvador.

Religious leaders met with the acting director of the L.A. immigration office, Omer G. Sewell, and stressed humanitarian reasons urging him to suspend deportations of Salvadorans illegally in the U.S.

Lawson was one of the religious leaders who signed the statement regarding these issues.

***** January 14-** "'Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered': Black Leaders Tell Fears About Reagan"

Local black leaders expressed fears about Reagan's presidency and how it will affect the nation's minorities. Lawson said that in looking at the incoming Reagan administration "we are bewitched, bothered and bewildered." Lawson said: "If American business can go to Taiwan and Haiti and teach illiterate people how to build plants and equipment it can be done here." The article includes a draft policy statement of the NAACP intended for the Reagan administration.

January 17- "Religious Leaders Voice Human Rights Concern"

This is a reiteration of the January 13 story, but with a little more information and clarification. The L.A. statement signed by the religious leaders was delivered to President Ronald Reagan's residence. Efforts were also made in other locales in America with a few noted (Cleveland and San Francisco). A delegation of American clergy also delivered a petition signed by 400 clergy to the Israeli Embassy in Washington calling for talks between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and a reduction of U.S. aid to Israel.

June 7- "Display Ad 454 – No Title"

"Help America Survive: A Celebration of Life for a Nuclear Free Future"

This is an advertisement for Survival Sunday 4 to be held at the Hollywood Bowl on Sunday, June 14. The event is paid admission with funds raised going to the Southern California Alliance for Survival. Several big name performers are noted and guest speakers include James Lawson, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., and more.

June 16- "Survival Sunday: Music Fans Meet 'No Nuke' Activists"

Lawson gave a nod to both music fans and activists at Survival Sunday saying "you are not on an ordinary trip; your life is no ordinary trip; you must be willing to tell the nation that never again will you accept racism, sexism, poverty, and violence in the streets or at home."

***** July 29-** "L.A. County Warned of Massive Protests: Black Leaders Plan to Organize Demonstrations in Response to Reductions in Health Programs"

Lawson told the L.A. County Board of Supervisors that "we expect to organize a massive civil disobedience campaign" to protest cuts in county healthcare. Lawson issues more fiery warnings and quotes and there is more background on the cuts.

***** July 29-** "County Jumps Gun on Deadline for Cuts, Shuts 8 Health Centers"

L.A. County health officials jumped the gun and closed eight neighborhood health centers and reduced services at six hospitals and 45 remaining health centers. Lawson is part of a protest organized by the County Health Alliance and he issues warnings that the board can expect a "massive civil disobedience campaign" in response to the cuts.

August 11- "Coalition Issues Demands on Health: Group Seeks Restoration of County Budget Reductions"

Health Care Campaign, a coalition of church, labor, and community leaders, announced a campaign to restore \$56 million in healthcare services in L.A. County.

Lawson announced the campaign's eight demands and indicated that "creative, nonviolent action" and civil disobedience, "one of the time-honored methods" of achieving social change, would potentially be used.

August 19- "State Joins Challenge to County Health Cuts: Enters Suit by Low-Income Residents Charging That \$75 Million Reduction Violates State Law"

The California Department of Health Services joined a lawsuit alleging that the Board of Supervisors violated state law by cutting \$75 million in L.A. County health care programs. The County Health Alliance, a coalition of low-income groups, also sent about dozen representatives to the board meeting. After the meeting, Lawson said his group would “have to go ahead and stir things up” and that he believed that they would be back for the next week’s meeting.

September 12- “L.A. Minister Declines Top Rights Unit Job”

Fundamentalist minister Rev. Edward V. Hill declined a White House offer to become the first black to chair the U.S. Civil Rights Commission primarily based on his opposition to homosexuality and the Equal Rights Amendment. Commenting on Hill, Lawson said “I have very serious problems with his theology.”

October 10- “Religion Notes: Homosexual Group Bids to Join Church Council”

This article talks about several religion issues and viewpoints. Lawson goes against Reagan’s budget cutting measures and urging that the government should seek to insure a basic standard of life for the least or weakest in U.S. society.

October 31- “Religion Notes: Buddhists Begin Walk for Peace”

Members of the Nipponzan Myohoji Japanese Buddhist sect led a world peace march intended to go through Southern California and meet up with another Buddhist party in time for the start of the United Nations Second Special Session on Disarmament in May 1982. Lawson and United Methodist Bishop Jack Tuell both walked about a mile with the monks through Pomona.

November 4- “Jackson Appeal: Effort Seeks Corporate Aid for L.A. Blacks”

The Rev. Jesse Jackson held three days of meetings with 150 black ministers (from the Baptist Ministers Conference and The Gathering) in the L.A. area to drum up support for a campaign to force corporations to direct more money into L.A.’s black community. Jackson’s “Economic Reciprocity Program” had already experience success in winning a \$34-million pledge and other promises from Coca-Cola after eight months of negotiation and a three-week boycott with the Atlanta-based company.

James Lawson viewed the plan as a return to the activism of the 1960s and saying that “this is Operation Breadbasket all over again” and noting that the “pact with Coke proves that this strategy was abandoned prematurely” and “that if the black community wants to use it, this is a viable tool” representing “a creative, nonviolent strategy that could mean real change.”

February 4- Picture and Caption attached, but unrelated to story “Anti-Growth Initiatives Filed in Monterey Park”

The picture is of anti-nuclear activist Rev. William Sloane Coffin hugging Rev. James Lawson with Rev. George Regas looks on.

April 3- “A Look at Legacy of Rights Movement: UCSD Conference Attracting Leading Figures of Turbulent Era”

A two-day conference examining the historical legacy of the civil rights movement announced to be held April 16-17 at UC San Diego. A number of panelists from different backgrounds were invited as panelists including James Lawson.

April 18- “Civil Rights Talks Depress Those Who See Little Progress”

The keynote speaker Kenneth Clark talks about the general feelings and progress from the two-day UCSD conference on the historical legacy of the civil rights. According to Clark, the conference him as much too ominous and if Martin Luther King had been there “he would think that nothing had been accomplished.” Clark talked the emergence of Reagan conservatism with a racial backlash leading to economic backlash. Clark says that the battle lines for the next wave of civil rights issues, economic survival being the most important, will be drawn “as it increasingly becomes clear what the new right is trying to do.” James Lawson said that one thing that has hurt the civil rights movement has been the complacency of the black middle class who he says are too comfortable and are unwilling to risk what they have “because they feel that they have made it in American society.” Lawson agreed with Clark that much of the conference’s focus reverted to the same issues that civil rights leaders grappled with in the 1960s noting “that only says that the struggle is not over.”

May 2- “Display Ad 515 – No Title”

“Peace Sunday”

Announcement/advertisement of the June 6 Rose Bowl event featuring several big name music acts and speakers including James Lawson.

*****August 29-** “Display Ad 251”

Lawson is scheduled to be the guest for the October 24th episode of “Potentials: Creators and Innovators of Our Time.” “Potentials” is a 14-part, half-hour, weekly television series presenting outstanding thinkers and innovators of the time. Try and find.

November 25- “Action: Nuclear-Freeze Supporters Focus on Their Next Step”

James Lawson took part in a nuclear-freeze initiative campaign conference sponsored by the Interfaith Center to Reverse the Arms Race.

1983

January 29- “As Doctrine Begins to Unify Churches, Service May Divide Them”

Lawson is one of six delegates selected from the Southern California Ecumenical Council to go to the Sixth World Council of Churches assembly in Vancouver, British Columbia. There have been charges that the World and National Councils of Churches are aiding leftist and revolutionary causes as illustrated through CBS-TV's "Sixty Minutes" and Reader's Digest coverage.

December 15- "Compton Meeting Focuses on Pain of Minority Unemployment"
At conference held at Compton Community College, many participants speculated that unemployment for minority youths stands at more than 50% in Compton and other Southeast area cities with large minority populations. James Lawson said "our economy goes up, down and sideways, but what remains constant is unemployment, especially among blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans."

December 22- "USC Sets Course on Examining Goals of Martin Luther King Jr."
This is an announcement that James Lawson will head a 15-week course (beginning January 10, 2014) at USC that examines the goals for justice and equality of MLK.

1984

January 16- "Life Style: Recollections of Martin Luther King Jr. on a National Holiday"

In this story, several Southern Californians reflect about MLK and their role in the movement. The author provides a brief and informative background of Lawson and his relationship with MLK and the movement. Lawson said "my relationship with Dr. King is more mystical than almost anyone else's" in the sense that King fulfilled his hopes for a movement for human dignity. Lawson said he saw the Montgomery bus boycott, beginning December 5, 1955, "as an answer to a prayer" and in reading of the boycott "my reaction was to start shouting for joy, for glee.... look, I've been hoping and praying for this moment of my life and it's happening."

In 1957, MLK met Lawson and urged him to "to move South immediately" telling him, "don't delay it. Do it as fast as you can." Lawson became "the teacher of the movement" and demonstrated "how nonviolence was rooted in the Bible." Lawson says that left as a legacy in the South are "enclaves of people with a new understanding of the society and the issues."

Lawson raised the issue of performing the James Earl Ray's wedding ceremony to his son John who replied: "If you believe all the things you've been preaching, you'd do it."

Recalling the overlapping of domestic and foreign activism in the 1950s and 1960s, Lawson says "I don't remember us calling ourselves the civil-rights movement . . . the fundamental issue was human dignity and human rights." When Lawson brought MLK to speak in the midst of the Memphis Sanitation Strike on March 18, 1968 to 25,000 people, he said, "Martin had never spoken in

the South to that large a meeting. He was moved, and told me: 'You are doing here what I hope to do in the Poor People's Campaign.'"

March 25- "College Offers Series on Nuclear Awareness"

"Nuclear Awareness/Taking Care: An Educational Program" is a series of programs on nuclear awareness to be held at El Camino College. Lawson will moderate a panel discussion on Wednesday evening titled "Economics and Values in the Nuclear Age."

*****May 2-** "Conference at USC: Renewing Commitments of Martin Luther King Jr."

****A lot of direct quotes from Lawson about King and what is needed to move forward.****

May 20- "Hospital Closings Called Evidence of Health Care Crisis for Blacks, Poor"

Since the decade began, three hospitals in mostly black L.A. neighborhoods have closed. "The issue of health care for black people and the poor increases in urgency," said Lawson. "Recent statistics point to an alarming health situation in this country for minorities and poor people." Lawson and other social activists and health care professionals assembled by the national Southern Christian Leadership Conference took testimony at the King-Drew Medical Center in South-Central L.A.

September 25- "Actors Join Plaintiffs in New Lawsuit Over Surveillance by LAPD"

Nearly 20 individuals and two organizations sued the City of L.A., its Police Commission, and top-ranking police officers seeking an end to alleged police surveillance of noncriminal activity and repayment of public funds spent on illegal spying. Last February the city settled similar complaints by 131 individuals and organizations represented by the American Civil Liberties Union. Rev. James Lawson was among many (many others listed) who claimed they had been spied upon without justification.

December 13- "Blacks Plan Civil Disobedience and L.A. Picketing Against Apartheid"

Jesse Jackson and a group of other L.A. black leaders were turned away a second time in a week from meeting with South African consular officials and vowed to escalate their protest against apartheid through civil disobedience and picketing of banks and other firms doing business with South Africa. James Lawson took part in the protests and civil disobedience.

1985

April 4- "Commemorative Service for Rev. King Scheduled Tonight"

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference held a service for MLK, Jr. at Holman United Methodist Church and Lawson said the theme is the church's response to the "crisis of apartheid in South Africa."

October 11- "On the Circuit: Aftermath of Farrakhan Visit: Blacks, Jews Enter Dialogue"

Rev. James Lawson called a meeting at his home between leaders of the black and Jewish communities in an attempt to deal with the rift that followed black Muslim Louis Farrakhan's recent visit to L.A.

November 28- "Coalition for Peace Sponsors Week of Events and Speakers" Lawson was scheduled to speak on "South Africa Day Monday" at the Peace With Justice Week (December 2-6) sponsored by the Santa Monica Coalition for Peace With Justice.

1986

May 16- "Religious Leaders' Networks Will Set a Common Agenda for Peace" Lawson and others took part in a dialogue with Archbishop Roger Mahony in conjunction with a large meeting announcing associated religious leader's support for a moratorium on nuclear testing and a test ban treaty.

June 20- "Families Asked His Help: Judge Oks Release of 3 Suspects Without Bail"

Lawson asked an L.A. Municipal Court Judge to intercede and release his son and two other suspects being held on charges of attacking an elderly woman. With Lawson's appeal, Curtis Lawson, 18, and the two others were released.

July 23- "Hayden Group Renamed, Gets Broader Goals"

Tom Hayden changed the name of his 10-year-old political organization Campaign for Economic Democracy to Campaign California. The immediate goal of the organization is to help push the toxic-discharge initiative, Proposition 65, on the November ballot. Lawson is one of five noted activists joining Hayden.

November 2- "Thousands Protest U.S. Support of the Contras"

L.A. police estimated 5,000 to 8,000 participants (church, labor, political organizations, and more) in a protest march through downtown L.A. in opposition to U.S. military intervention in Central America.

James Lawson told the crowd that the Reagan Administration "is still trying to keep Central America as our plantation, rather than recognize the people there as people who want dignity and freedom, now."

1987

January 20- “King Day: Spirit Lives On in L.A.: Group Gathers Food, Clothing for Homeless, Decries Arms Spending”

About 200 volunteers helped fill Holman United Methodist Church’s lobby with bags of clothing, blankets, and food to be distributed at eight community centers and places of worship in L.A. County. The effort was organized by four groups: the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), Jobs With Peace, and the Southern California Freeze Campaign. The volunteers also delivered a message about “the mathematics of poverty and militarism.”

In a rally for the volunteers, Lawson said King’s goal was “to get the United States to live up to its own best self, not its worst self” and that King hoped “to export from this nation not bombs that kill women and children in Vietnam and Central America and Southern Africa but a vision (sic) of justice.”

April 3- “In King’s Name, Homelessness Linked to Global Issues”

A coalition called the Southern California Ecumenical Council and Interfaith Taskforce on Central America is using King’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech and his radical critique of American society to rally Southern Californians around issues of homelessness and its links with U.S. foreign policy.

Lawson says that “the homelessness question is some thing we don’t see as apart from what’s going on in Central America (and South America).”

Lawson adds: “They are all instances in which you have violent structures that oppress ordinary people.”

He continues: “They are what we call, in non-violent language, ‘cold violence.’ By cold violence we mean when people are tortured, brutalized, deprived, crippled in their human potential because of institutional forms - city or nation structures - that prevent them, from the beginning of their lives, from tapping into the opportunities that are available and from tapping the potential that’s within them. So in the case of the United States, homelessness is not an accident, nor is it because certain people on the streets are immoral or drug addicts.”

Lawson says that instead it is the result of economic and social injustice: “From the beginning in the United States, our economic structures have promoted slavery . . . poverty, people unemployed, people employed but who get very, very poor wages – the underemployed.” Instead of trying to eliminate these economic imbalances, Lawson says that economists try to accommodate it by “talking about certain levels of unemployment and underemployment being all right.”

Lawson says that the movement King led was always toward “institutional change” and that “had King lived, there is no doubt in my mind but that the struggle would have gone on in intense ways toward restructuring” of American society.

Lawson reflects that King said, “Jim, what you are doing in Memphis is what I expect to do with the poor people’s campaign, namely, link the economic question with the struggle for social change; concretely, go after the poverty issue.”

April 4- “Southern California File”

Bishop Charles E. Blake joined 15 other regional religious leaders, including Lawson, in signing a statement “opposing the Reagan Administration’s policies toward South Africa and Central America.” The statement said the U.S. “betrayal of human dignity and justice’ in those regions demonstrates the need for ‘a spiritual revolution’ much like the late Martin Luther King Jr.”

July 21- “Bradley Assails Anti-Semitic Vandalism”

Lawson is pictured with Mayor Tom Bradley and other religious and civil rights leaders. Bradley announced that he would push for a \$5000 reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for vandalizing three North Hollywood synagogues the previous week.

August 3- “A-Bomb Victims to Be Remembered”

James Lawson participated in the annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki Commemoration to honor the memory of the victims of the atomic bombs dropped on those cities on August 6 and August 9, 1945. The commemoration was set to be held at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Little Tokyo.

1988

April 5- “Thousands Mark Death of Dr. King”

Marking the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. King, about 100 L.A. County home care workers marched from a union hall to a memorial service in King’s honor. Lawson expected as many as 15,000 would join the march themed “human care, not warfare.” Marchers will be asked to sign up to become precinct workers for the upcoming presidential election to help counter the attitudes that Democratic hopeful Jesse Jacks is “too radical, outside the mainstream.” Lawson said: “We must change that mainstream. If that mainstream is war, we must say it becomes peace. If it is 30 million to 40 million people in poverty, then we must say that mainstream must be transformed. If it’s drug abuse, we must say the mainstream is rotten and it must be turned inside and out.”

April 9- “Bradley Will Greet King Marchers”

L.A. Mayor Tom Bradley committed to participate in a march to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. although several local religious leaders decided to pull out of the march because a “progressive agenda” printed by the coalition included support for abortion, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and other controversial issues.

Lawson said the defections would not affect the coalition as many other bishops and church leaders are not pulling out.

April 19- “Organizing Effort by Union Targets Home Care Aides”

SEIU is in a battle to recruit 40,000 L.A. area home health care and domestic workers and are grass-roots techniques and are aided by ministers. The county has refused to recognize the union. More details in the news story.

Lawson told a rally that “this is Memphis all over again.”

April 21- “Leaders Oppose Right-to-Die Initiative”

A proposed initiative to permit doctor-assisted mercy killings is opposed by L.A. Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders in a joint statement. Lawson said that the proposed measure would intensify problems in a nation “already addicted to violence.”

June 25- “Southern California File”

Lawson and Rev. Richard Cain have been nominated by Southern California United Methodists for an upcoming vacancy of western bishops.

July 19- “The State: Show Helps Snare Fugitive”

Rev. William W. Dew Jr. wins bishop spot with James Lawson being his closest rival.

1989

January 24- “Blacks Seek Role With Latinos in Redistributing Case”

The L.A. County NAACP, Urban League, and Southern Christian Leadership Conference join a legal battle over redrawing supervisorial district lines, how this discriminated against Latinos, and how that could also possibly affect black districts.

Lawson called Latinos and blacks “allies” in the reapportionment fight but added: “We have five supervisors who are lily white . . . We want to see the best possible democratic process working at a local level, and that means not only fair Latino but also black representation.”

April 9- “Display Ad 586 - - No Title”

Lawson is among many who are listed as supporting Mayor Tom Bradley in the 1989 mayoral election.

May 20- “Southern California File”

Lawson took part in an invitation-only prayer breakfast for over 300 clergy that is part of a national campaign to intensify pressure on Congress to pass a bill that extends existing U.S. economic sanctions against South Africa in response to that nation’s continued apartheid policies.

June 10- “Southern California File”

The Southern California United Methodists announced their annual conference and James Lawson is only one of three prominent ministers set to handle pulpit duties.

June 30- “James Lawson Maintains Struggle for Civil Rights”

In L.A., Lawson continued to demonstrate goodwill in his efforts to provide sanctuary for Salvadoran refugees and to secure food and shelter for the

homeless. Lawson has also been involved in several interfaith coalitions such as Coalition '88 and the Interfaith Center to Reverse the Arms Race.

As a young man Lawson thought that blacks were “progressing too slowly” because they “were not adopting the proper methods” for social change.

As the southern secretary for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Lawson traveled extensively throughout the South speaking and conducting workshops in an attempt to “motivate religionists to get involved in these issues.”

Mark Ridley-Thomas says of Lawson: “His life is a testimony to nonviolence, and he is one of the most progressive religious leaders our nation has ever produced.

He addresses all of the issues – international relations, human sexuality, housing, employment – giving new light into the nation’s progressive politics.”

Lawson said that media coverage of the civil rights movement was both a benefit and an obstruction; “showing demonstrators combating police dogs and fire hoses did much to open the eyes of the American public,” he said, “but those were limited images. How can you grasp social change in your country in 20-second bites each night on TV?” He continues: “We were constantly shown in a militant posture . . . always with our mouths wide open or fists clenched. That gives people the impression of anger. We were never shown in planning sessions, in our congregations or with our families. I think that type of coverage was deliberate.”

November 4- “Southern California File”

An announcement that Evangelical social activist and editor of Sojourners magazine Jim Wallis will preach on social justice themes at Holman United Methodist with Lawson also participating.

November 23- “Actor, Clergymen Arrested in Protest of Salvador Policy”

Over 300 demonstrators staged a mock funeral in honor of six Jesuit priests executed in El Salvador and others chained themselves to the L.A. Federal Building. 64 people were arrested including Martin Sheen (has been arrested at least 18 times for civil disobedience) and James Lawson. The protestors were attacking what they called “the war-making policies” of the U.S. in El Salvador and they demanded an end to military aid to the country.

November 30- “36 Arrested in L.A. Protest Over El Salvador”

The protest, opposing U.S. support for the government of El Salvador, took place at the L.A. Federal Building with Martin Sheen and James Lawson again among those arrested. Workers at the Central American Refugee Center and priests at La Placita Church also received death threat letters.

December 16- “Southern California File”

Lawson was arrested for a fourth time for participation in non-violent protest action against U.S. support of the El Salvador government. He recently received the National Conference of Christian and Jews’ second annual Human Rights Award. Lawson has a few quotes related to the issue.

1990

March 12- “Photo Standalone – No Title”

James Lawson was presented a Corita Kent Peace Award at the Beverly Hilton.

April 22- “Other 34 - - No Title”

James Lawson was honored at an awards dinner sponsored by the Central American Refugee Center.

May 14- “Tutu Calls U.S. Rights Struggle Inspiring”

Desmond Tutu visited L.A. and Lawson said he hoped that his visit would inspire the African-American community to contribute to South Africa and the African continent’s development.

October 20- “Mandela’s Appeal Seen in Methodist Help for Fund”

The United Methodist Church’s missions agency made a \$20,000 donation to the Nelson Mandela Freedom Fund after James Lawson and others spoke in favor of the donation. Lawson chaired a committee called the African National Congress that made the recommendations.

1991

April 8- “Candidates Go To Church in Search of Votes”

James Lawson on politics: “Politics is not just about getting people elected. It’s about getting people in office who can use their experience to help us live up to some of the highest aspirations of the land.”

April 11- “Firing by Jewish Group Protested Labor: Local 800 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees is Charging its President was Dismissed in an Attempt to Disrupt the Union”

The union representing 750 community workers ranging from custodians to rabbis believes that their president was fired in an attempt to disrupt the union on the eve of talks for a new contract. Beryl Stoker, the individual fired, said the union’s effort to win MLK Day as a paid holiday (dating to failed effort in 1988 negotiations) is one reason for the firing.

Lawson (and others) asked the federation to reconsider and threatened to picket the Jewish Federation’s headquarters.

April 11- “Days Are Numbered for Historic Mansion That Sparked Racial Politics”

Lawson takes some fire, but stands his ground in a battle over preserving the mansion of George Pepperdine. Lawson blasted a white family and other members of the West Adams Heritage Association (WAHA) for their ugly history of racially excluding blacks from the neighborhood. As the community is now predominantly black, Lawson views WAHA as a re-gentrification group, not a

diversification group. Holman United Methodist Church owns the mansion and says it stands in the way of planned church expansion.

1992

January 11- “King Festival Speakers Assail Racism”

The speakers at the kickoff rally of the 15th annual MLK Week Festival denounced the perceived resurgence of racism, violence, and police brutality. Lawson said: “The mean spirit of lynching in the United States has not yet ended” and “America has become more racist than ever.”

“Our society has become more violent than ever before” because of U.S. policy of reacting with force around the world and media’s failure to teach children that violence is wrong.

“Martin Luther King and his movement once changed America,” Lawson said, “but his . . . philosophy of nonviolence . . . now needs to be restored and reinvigorated.”

March 4- “Anniversary Noted by Vigils, Rallies, Forums”

Activists marked the first anniversary of the Rodney King beating by L.A. police by urging residents to speed up reforms in law enforcement using grass-roots organizing, political pressure, and the ballot.

Lawson said “we have a slow stem” and commented that “nothing has changed in the Police Department, the beatings go on, the killings go on; the k-9 dogs are still being used against blacks and Hispanics.”

April 4- “Methodist Group Issues Rebuttal to Statement Dwelling on Sexual Sins”

Lawson was part of a group of Methodists from California that issued a statement (“Our Calling to Fulfill”) that urges tolerance on matters of sexuality and cautions against relying on tradition-bound norms of behavior that could prevent “free discussion of the new challenges that arise as time passes.”

May 9- “Methodist Leadership Holds Special Session on Racism, L.A. Riots”

At a governing General Conference, 998 United Methodist church representatives held a three-hour special session on the L.A. riots prompted by the not guilty verdicts returned against four LAPD officers in the beating of Rodney King. Lawson said: “It’s not only a disease in the black community but a disease in America.”

Lawson: “The great pain cuts across all categories.”

“It’s teaching millions that life must be worthless.”

October 10- “Los Angeles County Human Relations Panel Hands Out Ford Awards”

Lawson was among 11 individuals honored with John Anson Ford Awards by the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission for contributions to human relations.

1993

January 18-“Passing the Torch King Colleague and SCLC Leader Recalls Civil Rights Struggle”

Lawson steps down as president of the L.A. chapter of SCLC after 14 years in the position. In the story it is noted that Lawson has been arrested dozens of times in protests against government-sponsored violence in El Salvador, has marched against apartheid, spoken out against the Gulf War, and has been an important coalition builder bringing together different ethnic communities (African Americans with Jewish and Korean Americans, and black ministers with Muslims) in times of tension.

“We are a very racist and insulated society, but the realism of our time does not permit our being disheartened with coalitions,” Lawson said. “I don’t see going it alone as a viable option for change in America.”

Lawson: “We see ourselves trying to educate people about the many faces of violence . . . its outer manifestations and its inner manifestations. We think poverty is a form of economic violence. The poverty of people who work long hours and sometimes six or seven days a week. Racism and sexism are both inner manifestations of violence in that both depreciate and violate the sanctity of human life.”

“This country did not understand Martin King or Gandhi . . . all because of its inhumanity. I have great fears about the future of this country. If a better spirit does not develop among the white leadership, they are going to carry this country through a path of great, great suffering and this country is going to collapse.”

“I’ve seen what the obstacles are,” he said. “Obstacles are things to be overcome. They are not barriers.”

Lawson shares a little more information about his background, relationship with King, and nonviolence. There are also a few quotes from others who have worked with Lawson.

January 19- “King’s Legacy Cannot Be Dampened Holiday”

Organizers estimated that 7,000 people participated in the eighth annual Kingdom Day Parade honoring Dr. King. At a King day celebration at Santa Monica Community College, Lawson blasted President Bush for bombing Iraq, especially on the eve of a national holiday for a man who stood for nonviolence.

March 20- “Father Luis Olivares, Voice for the Poor, Dies of AIDS”

“Luis recognized that a pastor’s task wasn’t just to lead his people in the Mass and worship,” Lawson said. “He was also prepared to lead them in that journey to change their environment and to challenge and to confront their environment when it was unjust.”

June 6- “Rain and Storm Clouds Over the Woo Campaign”

Lawson worked with Coalition '93, a community group trying to build up the vote in South-Central L.A., and he supported Woo, sometimes going door-to-door encouraging people to vote.

June 9- “Massive Post-Riot Efforts Have Fallen Short, Clergy Say Rebuilding: Churches Have Raised Millions of Dollars to Assist Poor People Since the Unrest. But Religious Leaders fear that they have only scratched the surface of the inner city’s needs.”

“We see churches feeding more people now than they were feeding 10 and 20 years ago, “ said Lawson. “That tells us that no one is dealing with the systematic cause of hunger.” He said the same could be said for homelessness, joblessness, discrimination, and racism.

July 16- “CHIME Rings Up \$200,000 at Knott’s to Aid Hospital”

Lawson and others were honored at the ACLU Foundation of Southern California’s 34th annual garden party.

October 9- “Farewell for Task Force on Central America Is Set Activism”

The Southern California Ecumenical Council closed its Interfaith Task Force on Central America due to declining contributions from religious organizations and foundations, and declining interest in Central American affairs. The task force existed for 14 years. Lawson, a member of the task force council, gave other reasons for the closure, but also said: “The Central American situation is not now more stable or less vulnerable or dangerous. The people are still being killed and the failure of American policies are still a central source of the disorders.”

December 18- “Executive Sentenced to Life Term in 1963 Slaying Courts: New Computer Technology Linked Vernon Robinson to Fingerprints at the Scene of Hollywood Clerk’s Murder”

Robinson’s family was members of Lawson’s church. Lawson believed that Robinson was convicted because he had an ineffective defense.

“I understand why he was convicted, but I still have serious doubts about it,” Lawson said. “It’s a question of having the money you need to put on the kind of defense you must have to counter the state’s case.”

1994

January 15- “King Observances”

Lawson set to deliver a speech on “Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community” as part of Caltech’s King Day Observance.

January 16- “Council Vows to Block Privatization Jobs”

Eight members of the L.A. City Council promised a rally of more than 500 people that they would block attempts by Mayor Richard Riordan to privatize thousands of municipal employees’ jobs. Lawson was the keynote speaker at the rally.

March 6- “WEST ADAMS Group to Aid Cuba Despite Embargo”

At a press conference at Holman United Methodist Church, eight members of Pediatricians and Parents for Peace, Casey Kasem, and Rev. Lawson spoke out against the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba. The group announced plans to travel through the Southwest, then to Mexico, and on to Cuba.

Lawson, acting as an advisor to the organization, said Pediatricians and Parents for Peace is “quite a remarkable group. What they do is a kind of symbolic action that demonstrates to people the need to get involved in changing public policies. (The U.S. embargo) is hurting kids, and it doesn’t matter if it’s in Cuba or here, it’s got to change.”

April 16- “Southern California File”

Lawson will induct the late Rev. Glenn E. Smiley into the Hall of Honor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolence.

August 7- “Harry Belafonte: Humanitarian, Singer, Writer, Producer”

Belafonte, feeling the urge to form a new social movement, invited 70 community leaders from across the nation to a closed-door meeting at Highlander Folk School in May 1993. Civil rights leaders such as James Lawson, Roger Wilkins, and Bob Moses met with black and Latino gang members.

September 24- “The Killing of Dr. King Revisited”

This article opens up different viewpoints on who assassinated Dr. King. Is James Earl Ray innocent, an accessory, or are other people responsible for the assassination? Did the FBI play a role? Different perspectives are presented with people coming forward providing a different narrative to what happened. Civil rights leaders also weigh in. A pretty interesting story.

Lawson said: “If Dr. King were alive and you had the same circumstances, King would be as concerned for the incarceration of a poor thief for a crime he did not do as he would be for unpacking the truth about the killing.”

December 31- “Religion Notes”

Lawson is conducting a two-part nonviolence seminar on “the practical application of creative nonviolence” to achieve social justice goals.

1995

January 20- “RSVP Elders Hasn’t Lost Thunder”

Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, celebrating the organization’s 30 years of service, honored the recently fired U.S. Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders. James Lawson may have been a board member for PPLA.

August 26- “Central Los Angeles Drive Against Affirmative Action Foes Begun”

The South L.A. Affirmative Action Organizing Project, a coalition of community, religious, business, and political leaders, announced their campaign to defeat a proposed ballot initiative outlawing state affirmative action policies. Lawson participated in a panel discussion organized by the organization and held at USC.

December 18- “A Trial By Fire in the ‘60s: Civil Rights and Vietnam Tested the Conservative Ideals of Dole, Gramm, Alexander, and Buchanan”

This story is about these conservative politicians all apparently running for president in 1996.

In February 1985, Lamar Alexander, (?) Sargent, and Roy Blount sat with James Lawson before an audience at Vanderbilt to recall events, names, and deeds from the 60’s.

1996

January 11- “Speakers Launch King Observance”

Hundreds of L.A. residents attended an interfaith prayer breakfast held at Holman United Methodist Church to kick off the weeklong celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday.

Lawson told the crowd he did not believe that James Earl Ray killed Dr. King and cited the book “Orders to Kill: The Truth Behind the Murder of Martin Luther King Jr.” by William Pepper.

Lawson said he like to remember King “for his tremendous humanity, good cheer and good humor, his gentle strength and his intelligent ability.”

March 9- “Political Violence Comes to America, Following Those Escaping It”

Lawson writes a small piece headlined ‘Democracy is Never Won Easily’ that is worthy of review. He talks about immigrants’ and American responsibilities to immigrants and challenges to democracy. Lawson says: “Democracy is precious. Wherever it exists it must be protected by all of us.”

More here...

1997

January 5- “Ray’s Ill Health Gives Urgency to King Assassination Doubts”

James Earl Ray’s health is failing quickly. There are still efforts to reopen the case. This article provides information about the different views on Ray’s guilt and who may have been involved. Lawson said: “There were problems with the case from the beginning - - questions that didn’t get answered by the FBI.”

January 18- “Ceremonies to Honor Life of Rev. King”

Members of the L.A.-based Progressive Religious Alliance (year-old and termed itself as a response to the religious right) planned to watch the presidential

inauguration at Holman United Methodist Church and then hold a two-hour forum on what President Clinton should do in his second term. A six-point letter outlined the group's stances, many of them at odds with the president's including on campaign finance reform, welfare, civil rights, health care, religious pluralism, and abortion rights. The group will send copies of the letter to the White House and Congress. Lawson hosted and spoke at the forum.

January 19- "James Lawson: Standing Up for Rev. King's Beliefs - - and His Convicted Killer"

This is an interview done with Lawson and the "living wage," the Clinton Administration, the anti-209 campaign, the killing of Dr. King, King's legacy, and Lawson's history is briefly discussed. Some potential quotes about King.

February 23- "2 Campaigns - - and 2 Larger Quests"

This story is about Mayor Riordan, a lifelong Catholic, and some of his stances that are not easily defined. Concerning Riordan's stance on the "living wage" debate, Lawson says: "The biblical faith requirement of community life is measuring your success by what's going on with the poor and the marginalized. That's clearly a test of the prophets . . . The king must be just."

June 7- "Billy Graham Recalls Help From Hearst"

The National Lawyers Guild, a 60-year-old organization of human rights attorneys and legal workers, will honor James Lawson.

1998

January 31- "Clergy Urges Support for March Highlighting Array of Social Causes"

On February 23, members of L.A.'s religious community will participate in a march to protest different social ills, including the assault on affirmative action (Proposition 209). Lawson is a co-sponsor of the march.

March 22- Review of Halberstam's *The Children*

March 30- "Perspective on Africa: Clinton's Gesture Falls Short of What Justice Demands"

James Lawson and Madison Shockley II provide this commentary on Clinton's position on Africa, the legacy of slavery, and European and American participation.

April 3- "Commentary: We 'Honor' a Prophet by Turning Our Back"

This is Lawson's commentary on America and the indifference towards Dr. King's vision, deeds, and gifts. This is a short piece worth looking at.

April 4- "Several Faiths Prepare to Mark Holidays"

The Jewish Labor Committee and several other religious leaders, including James Lawson, plan to gather soon to discuss the contract dispute and upcoming contract expiration of Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union Local 11 working in Beverly Hills.

April 4- “Kings Followers Reaffirm His Message of Nonviolence”

Commenting on the civil rights movement, Lawson says: “We saw ourselves as the liberation movement, the freedom movement, a justice movement, a movement that wanted to transform America.”

April 24- “King Assassin Ray Dies, Taking Truth to Grave”

In the story it is mentioned that Lawson performed Rays wedding ceremony in 1978 and also started a fund to help pay for Ray’s defense.

August 28- “Putting Faith in Labor”

The Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) is an interfaith coalition that is working with labor groups to improve pay and conditions for low-wage workers in L.A. Lawson is a member of CLUE. There is a fair amount of information about CLUE and the hotel workers campaign is also briefly discussed.

September 3- “Students, Clergy March to Support USC Workers’ Contract Demands”

About 70 students and clergy members protested on USC campus in support of unionized food service and housing workers that are in a contract dispute with the university.

1999

May 25- “Fasting to Right Worker Injustices”

This commentary is written by Maria Elena Durazo. Durazo and about 40 others fasted “to show USC we were willing to make a physical sacrifice in our quest for justice for the 350 men and women who cook, serve and clean at the university.” When the general fast ended May 14, Lawson and other religious leaders were present to bless and lead participants in prayer.

December 18- “Religion: Southern California File”

A vigil and teach-in on U.S. sanctions against Iraq is scheduled this day at the Federal Building in Westwood. James Lawson is one of the expected speakers.

2000

January 10- “Rose Bird Eulogized for Compassion, Strength”

A memorial was held for former California Chief Justice Rose Bird and James Lawson was one of the speakers who praised Bird's work.

January 22- "Religion: Southern California File"

Lawson was expected to attend a multi-faith religious coalition "teach-in" about the Limit on Marriage Initiative, or Proposition 22 that would ban same-sex marriages in California.

May 3- "Perspective on Racial Profiling"

Senate Bill 1389 before the CA state legislature would outlaw "driving while black" stops. It is noted in the story that Lawson filed suite against former Police Chief Daryl F. Gates in Lawson vs. Gates.

August 6- "Religious Groups Join for Protests"

Religious groups across Southern California are planning interfaith protests (police brutality, juvenile justice, immigrant rights, the death penalty, and more) while the Democratic National Convention is held in L.A. Lawson is expected to participate.

November 22- "Group Calls for a Moratorium on Federal Executions"

Citizens for a Moratorium on Federal Executions has sent a letter urging President Clinton to declare a moratorium on federal executions. Lawson was one of 38 who signed the letter.

December 25- "Southland Muslims Seek to Ease U.S.-Led Embargo on Iraq"

Members of different religious groups are engaging in petitioning, protests, and prayer meetings in opposition of the ten years of United Nations-imposed economic and military sanctions placed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. "We will intensify our opposition to this morally bankrupt policy," said Lawson. "I am simply shamed that my government is . . . making the innocent suffer. There must be a better way to demonstrate opposition to Saddam Hussein than killing children."

2001

October 28- "Hundreds March to Protest War"

Hundreds of people participated in a peaceful march and demonstration against the U.S. war in Afghanistan organized by the LA/Orange County Coalition to Stop the War and the Coalition for World Peace. James Lawson spoke at the event saying: "The end will be when we have millions of people on the streets who demand . . . no war by justice."

2002

September 16- “Men of God, Warriors for Peace, Enemies of War”

James Lawson is one of the founding members of the Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace.

2003

April 5- “War With Iraq: To Activists, Real Battles Are on Home Front”

“We must mobilize ourselves by the tens of millions,” said James Lawson at a recent forum. “The struggle must be for health care, no warfare. It must be a demand for the end of racism, poverty and homelessness.” Lawson also told the forum that racism and violence, militarism and greed are “connected to each other.”

September 21- “Hundreds Rally on Behalf of Immigrants”

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride will send out 18 buses from nine different cities to Washington, D.C. with supporters calling for legalization for the nation’s estimated 10 million illegal immigrants. Maria Elena Durazo is the ride’s national coordinator. Lawson spoke at a rally of immigrants and supporters in L.A.

September 21- “Migrant Rights on the Move”

Lawson sees his participation on behalf of immigrant workers as a continuation of the struggle he and others participated in with the original Freedom Rides.

October 5- “2003 Freedom Ride Ends With New York Rally”

Tens of thousands of demonstrators are present at a rally in New York City marking the culmination of bus journeys to raise awareness urging stronger rights for immigrants. Lawson said: “No human being is illegal” and “No human being in the sight of God is undocumented.”

Lawson, the closing speaker, said: “Every boy and every girl and every man and every woman, no matter from what country, what creed, what language, what culture, what color - - every man and every woman has a right for jobs with dignity, for safety at work, for families being united and able to support themselves and sustain themselves in a living and meaningful fashion.”

December 17- “The Supermarket Strike”

Several thousand striking and locked-out supermarket workers and supporters marched to a Pavilions store in Beverly Hills in the largest demonstrations since the regional walkout began on October 11. The chains are seeking cuts in health benefits and lower pay scale for new hires.

Lawson was one of the speakers and the nudged the union to use more militant tactics saying: “I’ve been arrested many times, and if this moves to civil disobedience, I will be there.”

2004

January 19- “Civil Rights Advocate Stays Focused on King’s Dream”

This story tracks some of Lawson’s work and includes some quotes from Lawson about different issues. *Look at this*

January 24- “Letters to the Times: Teaching Nonviolence”

The letter’s author notes that one Saturday a month, Lawson welcomes all comers to Holman United Methodist Church to study the theory and strategies of nonviolence.

2005

October 25- “Execution Closer for ‘a Model of Humanity”

Lawyers and religious leaders launched a campaign to save the life of Stanley “Tookie” Williams, the co-founder of the Crips street gang, after a judge set his execution date for December 13. Williams was convicted 24 years ago of four L.A. murders and some believe he has been rehabilitated while in prison. James Lawson supported Williams’ bid for life.

2006

July 22- “Black Clergy Pass the Mantle of Social Consciousness”

Black ministers across L.A. are gathering at USC to ponder what role they should play in their community today. A program with 40 students has been set up and black clergy will provide guidance in charge leadership strategies, community organizing, and economic development. James Lawson is one minister participating and acting as a mentor.

September 12- “Plans to Honor L.A. Muslim Leader Bring Out Animosity”

Maher Hathout, chairman of the Islamic Center of Southern California, is the first Muslim chosen for a prestigious humanitarian award from the L.A. County Human Relations Commission. Nearly four-dozen religious, ethnic, and civil rights activists spoke out on whether he should be receive the award because he has expressed some views critical of Israel. Lawson, originally chosen for the award, could not accept it because he is teaching in Nashville. Lawson weighed in on the controversy expressing unwavering support for Hathout.

2009

December 12- “A New Battle for Antiwar Activists”

The antiwar movement is struggling. Lawson says: “The so-called antiwar movement has been a colossal failure. The whole thing has failed. We have not prevented the United States from becoming the most militarized society in the world. We have not stopped our tax dollars from going toward military and war.”