Benjamin Hooks Institute for Social Change Makes Available Newly Digitized Archive of Critical Material From Life of Civil Rights Leader

April 5, 2017 - An extensive digital archive, created from 397 boxes of documents, photographs, audio recordings and other material from the personal collection of Benjamin L. Hooks, has been painstakingly read, analyzed, scanned and catalogued in a joint collaboration between the Benjamin Hooks Institute for Social Change and the University of Memphis Libraries. Most of the collection focuses on Hooks' tenure as leader of the NAACP from 1977-1992. It represents the largest collection on a single topic at the University.

The archive can be found at memphis.edu/hookspapers/index.php.

Daphene McFerren, executive director of the Hooks Institute, said, "I am beyond thrilled to see the archive come to fruition. It will provide a vital resource and important destination for understanding this critical period in the history of civil rights. Benjamin Hooks was at the crossroads of change, along with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others struggling to create equality in America. This archive is a rich treasure trove of historical detail in the development of civil rights."

Now in its 20th year, the mission of the Hooks Institute is teaching, studying and promoting civil rights and social change. This is reflected in its programming, which includes funding faculty research and community service projects; hosting conferences, symposia and lectures; and promoting and recognizing local and national scholarship on civil and human rights.

Founded in 1996 by the late civil rights activist Dr. Benjamin Hooks in partnership with University officials, the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change is an interdisciplinary center at the University of Memphis. For information about the Hooks Institute, visit memphis.edu/benhooks.

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