

March 9, 1983

PRESIDENT MCGINLEY PRESIDING

PRESIDENT: This morning we have with us Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Lincoln, and I present to you now the Reverend Stanley Eckland.

REVEREND ECKLAND: (Prayer offered.)

PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Roll call. Members please record their presence. Members please record their presence. The Clerk will record the roll.

CLERK: There is a quorum present, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: In our continued recognition of Women's History Week, we now hear this morning from our esteemed colleague, Senator Bernice Labedz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you. It is a pleasure for me to read this morning about a famous woman in Women's History that have to be very active in South Omaha. Lenore Dennis Gray wrote a poem in the early part of the century. Today the message of her call to women is heard throughout the world. "Arise ye women, there is work for you to do". She gave the Nebraska Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, now the Nebraska Association of Colored Women's Clubs, its motto: "Sowing for others to reap". A member since 1905, she worked continuously with the organization for more than 50 years holding every office and organizing several clubs. Some of them are the Eureka Art Club, the Southside Civic Club, Mary McLeod Bethune Club and Civic Matrons Club. A scholarship fund is named after her and in 1943 she was voted Trustee of the Association. An Omaha resident since 1889, she had come to Nebraska from Kansas when she was 16. Between 1918 and 1921 when Father Flanagan had his Boys Home in the old German-American Club on South 13th Mrs. Gray catered for them free of charge. A great advocator of education for youth, she worked with the Woodson Center in South Omaha in arts and crafts, rug braiding, needlework and refinishing furniture. Mrs. Gray was also concerned about the aged. Through her hard work and leadership the Nebraska Federation of Colored Women's Clubs in 1920 purchased a home for the aged in Lincoln. It was named The Old Folks Home and became the Federated Home in 1947. A deeply religious woman, she was active in the Zion Baptist Church as a Sunday School teacher and member of the Mission Society and Welcome Circle. She was a Charter Member of the Colored Women's Church Council and served as historian until 1950-51. She was also a member of the Ernest Evans Chapter #8 of the American War Mothers. Lenora Dennis Gray, black feminist leader, civic organizer, poetess, and mother