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calm and sobriety.

appeal to racial animosity by either side and the trial scene is one of finances in the various courts

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SO THEY TELL ME

By C. BLYTHE ANDREWS

"The life that counts must hopeful be;
In darkest night make melody;
Must wait the dawn on bended knee—
This is the life that counts."

We hope it is not true, as so many tell us, that Dr. W. H. Gray, president of the Florida A. and M. college, in his address at the annual meeting of the Tampa Urban League, took occasion to slap the NAACP for its program of protest.

Dr. Gray, as every thoughtful citizen, knows that the NAACP is one of the most vital organizations within our race, equally as important as the Urban League, and doing a most effective job for the advancement of our people.

We expect some of our bigoted white friends who seek to deprive us of our legal rights, or who wish to keep us in benevolent peonage, to utter abuse against the NAACP, or to condemn its program. But we do not expect any Negro, no matter what his connections, to try to tell us that the NAACP is not rendering this race a fine service. It is too late for that kind of gospel, and he who preaches it is either an ignoramus or an Uncle Tom.

The record of the NAACP needs no defense from me, or from anybody else. It speaks for itself. It is one of courageous achievements—from civil liberties to equalization of teachers' salaries.

We hope that the reports of Dr. Gray's speech are false and that he did not say anything derogatory to the fine program of the NAACP.

A Negro preacher, Rev. R. A. Cromwell, pastor of a Pensacola Baptist church, aided by another Negro and a white attorney who had the courage of his convictions, should be hailed all over Florida for firing the first effective shot to register Negroes as Democrats.

Many of you know Rev. Cromwell and therefore are not surprised at his activities in Pensacola to open the door of political liberation for his people. He was for many years pastor at St. Petersburg and his civic work there remains as some of the most outstanding done by a minister of any connection.

The two Pensacola Negroes filed a suit to compel the county registration officer to register them as Democrats. Heretofore, as some of you know, to keep you out of the Democratic primary, where the ballots actually help to elect somebody, the registration officials, on the advice of the state and county democratic committees, have registered you either as Republican or as Independent. A vote as either a Republican or as an Independent is just so much time wasted, and every Negro who is not blinded by tradition or eaten up with personal ambitions knows it. The only place the ballot counts in Florida is in the Democratic primary.

Well, the two colored brethren were enlightened beyond many of their race who keep shouting about the glories of Father Abraham and the Republican party. They hired a good lawyer, a former legislator who would not bow to the political gods. Somebody tried to scare the lawyer. They threatened him over the phone. A rock, wrapped in a piece of paper with the word "Beware" written on it, was thrown into his home. But he is a big man who does not scare easily. He went before the circuit judge with his writ of mandamus. The judge granted it because it was based on justice, human rights, and the recent decision of the U. S. Supreme Court.

This decision is of state-wide importance and some say it is going to stand all over Florida. It will give the Negroes the right to cast votes in the coming April Democratic primary in Pensacola.

You ought to take a little time to read what Mr. John M. Coe, attorney for the Negroes, had to say. Here it is:

"I am descended from slave holding ancestors on both sides, and all of my people fought in the Confederate army in the Civil War and they have been in Pensacola since Spanish times (which ended in 1819) but this does not blind me to a consciousness of human rights, and to the fact that in the world, especially today human liberty is indivisible.

"No man with a sense of justice and a knowledge of the world's problems today can fail to see that as we fight abroad for the rights and liberties of all men of all races, we should make a special effort to root out from our own society discrimination and injustice. The proscription of minorities within the state is a hallmark of Fascism and a dishonor to Democracy. It is but a short step from denying civil rights to Negroes to a like denial and oppression directed at any other racial or religious minority. So long as any man is oppressed by the political or the economic state the liberties of all are imperiled and I regard it the duty of every citizen, lawyer or layman, to lift his hand and raise his voice against oppression wherever it shows itself within our country.

"The southern Negro is denied many rights. When he votes he will have a means of supporting those public officers who treat him with justice and opposing those who keep him down. He might even hold the balance of power in elections between a fair minded gentleman and a political opponent of the Gene Talmadge type. I do not think the Negro vote is going to be strong enough to elect many Negroes to office but it can be a powerful factor in securing fair dealing and decent consideration to their race before the political and economic law."

When Negroes secure the right to vote in Democratic primaries as surely they will as time rolls on, we must demonstrate our intelligence and our understanding by standing up for the highest ideals, and by voting for the ablest men.

Our votes must not be for sale for money, or to some demagogue who merely seeks to fatten himself at the public trough. We must not be anxious merely for the advancement of our own racial aims, but look beyond to the highest aims of the community and state.

Naturally, we want some improvements for our sections, such as sidewalk and street pavement, Negro police officers of intelligence and character, complete playground facilities, complete school facilities as money will permit, and complete sanitary conditions. In short, we must use our ballot to bring the standards of our community up to the general standards of the community, especially as they pertain to health, education and playground.

We say, as so many southern Negroes have said before, that we are not anxious about holding political office except as we must to give us a fair hearing. Of course we know, as all races know, that no man can speak knowingly and deeply for a race like a member of that race. However, we expect to help our white friends select the best man for such offices as governor, mayor, state cabinet member, supreme court justice, and the like.

We think, though, that no one should object to a Negro being on the Housing Authority to speak for the group which is most in need of housing. No one should object to a Negro being state agent for Negro schools, since this job concerns the colored schools. Such offices which concern purely Negro problems should be held by Negroes and I honestly believe the leading white citizens would accede to this type of program.

But our general aims must be submerged in the general aims of the community and we must act like first-class citizens by thinking and acting beyond race and creed. A Negro must be interested in all civic

problems, equally as much as our white friends, in such problems as the form of city government, and we should be capable of discussing them intelligently and helping to solve them. We should be ready to face all major problems of our city, state and nation and do so as an American citizen, rather than as a Negro.