

College President Forced to Resign

(Continued from Page 1)

missals during Dr. Gray's administration; another referred to Dr. Gray's political alliances.

"ALUMNI VICTIM"

On the other side, one school official stated that, "Dr. Gray is the victim of a vindictive campaign by some of Florida A. and M.'s own alumni." Another made much of the fact that as recently as this June the school was granted a \$1,599,000 State appropriation, as against the \$208,000 appropriation allotted five years ago when Dr. Gray was made president; the current \$6,300 maximum teachers' salary that was \$2,500 when Dr. Gray took over.

Both sides agreed, however, that there is a grave possibility that more "resignations" by faculty members are forthcoming.

KLAN WARNING

The joint meeting of the State Board of Education and the State Board of Control followed closely behind a directive from the local Ku Klux Klan to Dr. Gray, who said members of the group attempted to intimidate him after some of the students from his school were seen dancing with

white girls from a neighboring school in a small club about six blocks from the college.

The club, an eatery-soft drink-juke box place, is owned by a teacher at the school. Dr. Gray said the Klan warned him that the dancing would have to stop or else he might have to leave town.

Another incident, Dr. Gray reported, concerned one of his instructors, holder of a Ph. D. degree, who had expressed resentment in one of the local stores over being addressed by her first name. She was ordered out of the store and students moved to boycott the store.

PRESSURE BROUGHT

Dr. Gray said that pressure was brought on him to dismiss the teacher and to remove the boycott. Dr. Gray said he refused to dismiss the instructor.

Dr. Gray also reported that local police tore down signs on the campus put up by students protesting his "dismissal."

BACKGROUND OF PROBLEM

According to sources close to the situation, ever since Dr. Gray took office some five years ago he has been involved in a feud with a group of alumni who opposed what they called his policies of "buttering up" State officials and legislators to obtain more financial aid for the college.

Some of this opposition, it is reported, was the product of a faction who wanted to see Florida A. and M. get as little as possible to provide more fuel for propaganda that Negroes were being discriminated against.

At the same time, Dr. Gray is said to have incurred the enmity of many persons working at Florida A. and M. under his predecessor, whom he weeded out during his administration.

NEGRO VOTE

This anti-Gray faction is said to have appealed to a couple of Florida legislators in whose county the Negro vote is an important factor in elections, to help bring pressure for Dr. Gray's removal.

The State Board of Control at one point made its own investigation of charges of misconduct against Dr. Gray. Its decision was to back up the president and tell him to fire anyone at the college who was inefficient or non-cooperative.

But further pressure and the insistence of the legislators caused Governor Warren to assign one of his special investigators, J. J. Elliott, for a checkup, it is reported.

FUND LOOSENESS

State Auditor Bryan Willis, who made a special audit, reported that while there was much looseness in handling of funds at the college, there was no proof Dr. Gray was responsible.

The State boards agreed it would be better to accept Dr. Gray's resignation than have the charges come up before a grand jury.

Although State officials said they doubted the charges could be proved, they felt that public charges and trial, even though followed

by an acquittal, would ruin Gray's value as head of the college.

"GROWING FACTIONALISM"

Dr. Gray said he resigned in an effort to "reduce to a minimum the growing factionalism" in the institution.

"My resignation as president of the institution was submitted to an extent because of my belief that the termination of my services would reduce to a minimum the growing factionalism which has been recognized and which factionalism I felt would ultimately impair the effectiveness of the instructional program of the college and the educational and spiritual life of the students."

"NOT GUILTY"

"I am sure that the many hundreds of fine white and Negro leaders with whom I have worked during my years of service to the State of Florida, and the 5,000 or more students who have been under my guidance, will testify to my integrity and character. I have not been guilty of any misconduct or dishonesty in administering the affairs of Florida A. and M. College."

Present at the meeting of the State Board of Education and the State Board of Control were State Auditor Willis, Special Investigator Elliott, State Representative John Ward Henderson of Tallahassee, Bryan Patton, member of the legislative committee investigating possible Communist activities in State schools; Assistant Attorney General James Toney and J. B. E. Lee, business manager of the college.

Dr. Gray is son of a Baptist minister and holder of a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Some dailies in the State played up the situation at Florida A. and M. as one of the biggest scandals the State of Florida had ever witnessed. The dailies reported that Dr. Gray's resignation followed "grave and fantastic" charges... including fifty-three allegations ranging from seduction and fraud to complaints against Dr. Gray's public statements.

A legislative committee probing alleged Communist activities at the college revealed no evidence of such activities.

— READ IT FIRST IN THE COURIER —

Sees South's Schools Better Than Pictured

NASHVILLE—Conditions in the South, particularly as related to educational facilities for both white people and Negroes, are far better than pictured by Easterners, Frederick V. Checkfield of London, Eng., said here last week.

Checkfield is a teacher in the Mamaroneck, N. Y., high school under the teacher exchange plan between the two nations and is visiting here because he is "more

Va. Educ With Si

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uel L. Gandy and the Re L. Johns.

The simple ceremony, tinged by music and readings chosen by the ident Foster himself.

MENTION SUCCESSOR

Most prominently men successor to Dr. Foster, came president of Virginia College in April, 1943, is J. ton, vice president and d college. A source close to of Education, which will name a successor, discl Dr. Johnston had been act until a successor named.

In attendance were m the Negro Land Grant C sation, of which Mr. I chairman of the executi tee at the time of his college and university from every section. Ar were.

Dr. John W. Davis, pr West Virginia State Colle Atwood, president of Ker College; Alonzo G. Moron of Hampton Institute; fford, president of A. a lege; and H. W. Crawf sending W. F. Whitaker of South Carolina State

OTHER COLLEGE HE

Other college presiden ing the rites were R. Shaw University; W. A. Morris Brown College; I erson, Bluefield State College; W. M. Whitehea State School of the Bl D. Jones Jr., representi College in the absence of S. D. Williams, Fayette Teachers College; Dahn caster, Longwood Colle Clark, representing Ho versity; Dr. J. Alvin Ru Paul; Dean Tom Hende; senting Union Universit brose Caliver of the U. ment of Education.

Sitting with the fa James H. McGrew, Mr. Truman Gibson Sr., W. Meritt O. Poole, Mrs Gandy, Dr. Oscar Johns J. B. Darden.

Serving as active were J. L. Lockett, J. L. P. Jackson, W. N. R Vaughn, F. T. Greene, A. A. G. Macklin; and ho bearers, student rep Harry T. Burleigh I Archer, Arthur Bowles Willis, Chauncey A. Warren Yates, William and Vernal B. Butler; orary pallbearers were den, O. R. Johnson, G. W. A. Rogers and J. I SURVIVORS

Dr. Foster was surv widow, Mrs. Daisy Oc Foster; a son, Luther Jr., secretary-treasurer gee Institute; two dau Virginia Poole Hendri Va., and Miss Mary A of Petersburg, and thre dren.

Dr. Foster, born May Halifax County, Va., a county public schools ued his education at St technic Institute where

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