

THE NATCHEZ AGREEMENT

On December 3, 1965, Mayor John J. Nossier of Natchez, Miss., and Charles Evers, NAACP Field Director for Mississippi, jointly announced the agreement below in settlement of a three-month boycott of downtown merchants under leadership of the Natchez NAACP Branch. The protest was precipitated by the attempted assassination, Aug. 27, of George Metcalf, president of the Natchez Branch. The agreement represents an upgrading of the status of the Negro community unparalleled in the settlement of any similar protest in a southern city.

ALL parties to this agreement are strongly opposed to violence, intimidation, lawlessness and reprisals against any person and to any and all groups which advocate or encourage violence, hatred, discord and racial or religious prejudice. All citizens are urged to obey the laws and to respect the rights of all other citizens regardless of race, color or creed. Law violators, irrespective of race and regardless of group affiliation, are to be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

To provide for better law enforcement, the City of Natchez has employed six Negro policemen, four of whom are serving as trainees. The number of Negro auxiliary police officers has been increased from two to six. These police officers, trainees and auxiliary policemen have been assigned a squad car. As patrolmen

they are vested with authority to patrol any area of the City and to arrest any person guilty of violating State laws and City ordinances.

All police officers are authorized to use whatever force is necessary to subdue any law violator who resists arrest, but no member of the Police Department is to use undue force, verbal abuse or brutality in discharging his duties.

Appropriate arrangements have been made with the Chief of Police for a police escort for all funeral processions.

All City-operated public facilities are now open to persons of all races, and all citizens will be protected while exercising their rights to these accommodations.

A 3-man advisory committee, to be composed of representatives of both races, will be appointed to serve in an advisory capacity to the City



John Nossier, Mayor of Natchez, Miss., and Charles Evers; NAACP Mississippi field director, last month announced an unprecedented agreement aimed at correcting injustices suffered by Negro citizens of that Deep South city. The settlement, ending a three-month boycott of downtown stores by Negroes, pledged jobs, heretofore denied Negroes, in public employment and private industry; equality of courtesy among citizens regardless of race; desegregation of public accommodations and facilities, including the public school system. (WIDE WORLD PHOTO)

governing authorities with respect to the housing code which the City will adopt on or before January 1, 1966. This committee will also investigate ways and means of acquiring available funds for any needed housing projects and consult with the Mayor and Board of Aldermen about this matter from time to time.

A \$2,500,000 Capital Improvement Program designed to modernize and beautify the City will be submitted to the voters at an early date. Included in this program are street sanitation and other projects which will materially benefit predominantly Negro areas in the City. Street cleaning is to be expanded on a non-discriminatory basis as soon as financial conditions permit.

All municipal employees have been reminded of the City's policy that all persons, of whatever race, color or creed, who transact business with several City offices and agencies are to be accorded fair, courteous

and polite treatment at all times, and that no person is to be referred to in any manner or by any title which is offensive, such as "uncle," "auntie," "boy," "hoss," etc.

The hiring of all public employees and the filling of any vacancies which occur on any public board, commission or agency is to be done on the basis of merit and qualification and without regard to race, color or creed.

IN view of the fact that more than fifty per cent of the pupils attending the local public schools are members of the Negro race, it is considered fair and equitable that this majority be represented by a qualified Negro on that Board.

The local Hill-Burton hospital has taken steps to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and will be in full compliance with the provisions thereof by December 31, 1965.

A plan which calls for the desegregation of six grades in September,

1966, and the remaining six grades in September, 1967, has been submitted by the Board of Trustees of the local school system.

The local Economic Opportunity Program is being expanded to include both Adams and Jefferson counties. The Board of Directors of this program will contain an equal number of white and Negro citizens from each of these counties, and the program will move forward without further delay.

Negroes have been employed or upgraded to serve as sales persons and clerks without pay differential and without restriction as to authority to serve any customer by at least twenty-three local business retail establishments. Management of these 23 stores, as well as numerous other businesses, have instructed their employees to treat all customers fairly, courteously and respectfully and not to address any person by any term which may be offensive.

Two Negroes have been employed by, and are now working in the offices of, the Social Security Agency in Natchez. Negro salesmen-trainees have been employed by

several large local bottlers and bakeries.

All parties to this agreement, and many other interested groups and citizens, have worked diligently in a good-faith effort to resolve all of our problems. These parties regard the maintenance of communication between the white and Negro races as essential. To insure that there will be no breakdown in such communications in the future and in order to promote better understanding and good-will among all citizens of our community, to provide orderly procedures for dealing with grievances, to reduce tension and prevent violence and to provide better opportunities for all of our citizens to enjoy a better life, appropriate steps have been taken to implement on-going discussions to meet community problems as they arise.

Furthermore, a meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen and the Negro Citizens Committee will be held at the request of either group at any and all reasonable times and whenever conditions warrant.

JFK AT HARVARD

The closest President Kennedy every came to winning a varsity letter in athletics was during his sophomore year at Harvard. During the time trials in swimming, the Catholic Digest explains, he was edged out by Richard (*Guadalcanal Diary*) Tregaskis.

HINT FOR HOUSEWIVES

One of the best ways a harried housewife can keep her perspective and rise above housework, the Catholic Digest points out, is to dress up for work. Smart-looking work clothes and an early freshening up are practical guarantees to improve family morale and overall efficiency.