

CORRECTIONS

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psychological.

NEWSLETTER FROM THE

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M. I. A.

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THE GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION IN ALABAMA - MAY 6, 1958

The political campaign for the election of the governor of Alabama ended with a run-off between Judge George C. Wallace, Circuit Judge of Mobile County, and Attorney General John Patterson.

The 50,000 qualified Negro voters of the state of Alabama were faced with the dilemma of casting a ballot for one of the two candidates, both of whom are segregationist. John Patterson might be styled a protagonist of segregation. As far as it has been verified, Judge Wallace might be styled an avowed segregationist. Apparently the Negroes who voted in the run-off made choice of Judge Wallace as their candidate.

As the campaign swung into the home-stretch it took on physiological proportions. The Montgomery Advertiser-Journal came out for Judge Wallace. They identified John Patterson with the KKK. The forces for John Patterson were quick to seize upon the opportunity to identify Wallace with the NAACP and the Montgomery Improvement Association. The effect this part of the struggle had upon the total results is any ones guess.

POLITICAL WORKERS ARRESTED

Mr. Rufus A. Lewis, chairman of the Committee on Registering and Voting of the Montgomery Improvement Association and three (3) of his workers were arrested. They were at the "polling places" checking the number of Negroes that turned out to vote. They were charged with violating Title 17, Section 144, Code of Alabama 1940. This code reads as follows, "all persons except the electors and the election officials must be not less than 30 feet from the polling place." The question here involved is whether or not the term "polling place" refers to the entrance of the building or whether it has reference to the actual spot at which the ballots are being cast. Mr. Lewis and his staff were arrested and fined twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) and cost. An appeal has been made and a hearing will be held in July.

WHAT SHOULD NEGROES EXPECT?

Attorney John Patterson is the governor of Alabama. His election is already being considered a victory for the KKK and pro-segregationist groups. What this will actually mean remains to be seen. Already, however, some Negroes have been told by law enforcement officers that now that Patterson is governor things will be different. We refuse to believe that we are in for a period of terrorism and lawlessness exceeding the usual pattern. John Patterson was catapulted into the political lime-light by tragic experiences of violent gansterism. It will be astoundingly paradoxical for him to even condone violence.

COME WHAT MAY - "WE HAVE COME TOO FAR TO TURN BACK"

COURT CASES PENDING

Case #1: CITY OF MONTGOMERY VS MOSE PLEASURE, JR.

On January 19, 1958, the Reverend Mose Pleasure, Jr., was returning to Montgomery by plane. He landed at Dannelly Field - a municipal airport of Montgomery, Alabama. The only transportation from the airport available was the airport limousine. The only seat available in the limousine was the one beside a white lady. She did not object to his sitting beside her and stated when he was arrested that she did not understand the arrest because the Reverend Pleasure acted the part of a perfect gentleman. Nevertheless, he was arrested, tried, and found guilty of disorderly conduct and fined one hundred dollars (\$100.00) and cost. His case was appealed and is now awaiting a hearing set for July.

Case #2:

In November 1957 robed night-riders invaded the Negro section of Lomax, Chilton County, Alabama. Lomax is near Clanton Alabama, which is forty miles from Montgomery. They had their guns and ammunition signifying a hunting expedition. But they soon started shooting into the homes of Negroes. The Negroes retaliated. In the shooting spree one Negro was shot to death. Eight Negroes were arrested. Four were charged with assault with intent to murder. Three of them have been acquitted. Mr. Willie Hunt was bound over to the grand jury. His case is to be heard in the fall term of court.

These cases have cost the MIA more than twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00).

!! FLASH !!

Judge Will O. Walton dissolves an injunction aimed at the Negro boycott of white merchants in Tuskegee, Alabama. He states in his ruling that Attorney General Patterson (who is now governor) had failed to prove the T. C. A. as an organization had taken any action to promote the trade boycott or had used any force to support it. This marks another milestone in the march to full citizenship.

MASS MEETINGS

After two years and six months the historic mass meeting still holds a unique place in the life of the city. This is the melting pot of the Cradle of the Confederacy. Here people meet to get their spirits lifted in a hard struggle toward a common goal. Here they come to get fresh directions. It is here they come to sing and pray in the old camp-meeting fashion. It is here they come to see the faces and hear the voices of Ralph D. Abernathy - a symbol of the true meaning of the mass meeting; Martin L. King, Jr., fresh from a crusading campaign across the country; Revs. H. H. Hubbard, a steady old oak; A. W. Wilson, small in stature but a giant in leadership; W. J. Powell, the first chairman of the committee for organizing transportation, B. D. Lambert, the number 1 mass meeting preacher; Revs. O. W. Lewis, G. Franklin Lewis, Burl Averhart, Father Robert E. DuBose, Jr., and many others among the faithful, like, Mr. Rufus A. Lewis, chairman of the Registering and Voting Committee of the MIA.

BOMBED CHURCHES

The repairing and rebuilding of the bombed churches is nearing completion. First Baptist, Bell Street and Hutchinson Street are beautiful. The bombing seems to have been a blessing in disguise. Through the MIA twenty-eight thousand (\$28,000.00) dollars was contributed to this cause.

The struggling Negro of America may differ on the techniques of approach to our common problem. He may differ as to the timing of the approach. But, there is a focused point at which all minds meet. Although, here and there the communication lines have been broken and, at present, no direct relationship is sustained, every segment of the struggle accepts in loyalty and in principle the NAACP headquarters as the headquarters of our struggle for justice, human dignity and the realization of the Christian and Democratic ideals.

We can thank God and all of the contributing forces for the beach-heads that have been established in the deep South. Montgomery, the Cradle of the Confederacy and the Heart of Dixie; New Orleans, one of the deepest of the deep southern fortresses; and Little Rock, a fringe of the heart of the struggle, are the beach-heads for which we can be justly proud.

At present, the struggle is engaged at Tallahassee, Florida, Reverend C. K. Steele, leader; Tuskegee Alabama, Dr. Gomillion, leader; Birmingham, Alabama, Reverend F. L. Shuttlesworth, leader; Mobile, Alabama, Reverend W. M. Smith, leader; and Atlanta, Ga. Down at Eufaula, Alabama, there is a significant engagement that should focus the attention of the nation. Negro home-owners are contesting the right of the city commissioners to condemn their homes and have them moved out into a section chosen by the commissioners. Attorney Fred D. Gray is representing the home-owners.

OUR SAGGING LINES

It is all but frustrating when we face the fact that a militant teacher can be fired just because he believes in justice and right, and will make it known; and another teacher can be hired in his place. A lump comes into one's throat when, reviewing the field, he discovers that the voice of a Negro minister has been silenced by hush-hush pressure from authorities over him and sometimes from members of his own local church.

The problem of economic security, stemming from the ranks of common labor, points out the lag in progress that must not be ignored. The white laborer is beginning to recognize the advantage of including Negroes in unionized labor. Much work, however, has to be done in educating the Negro, of some sections, so that he might recognize this advantage to him. This is an important responsibility that must be accepted in the total struggle for human decency.

NEW MINISTERS

In recent months the following ministers have joined our ranks: Reverend S. W. Schultz, Mt. Zion AME Zion Church, Reverend Felix James, Hall Street Baptist Church, Reverend Matthew Pettway, Ebenezer AME Zion Church and the Reverend A. L. Wilson, Oak Street AME Zion Church.

OFFICIAL ROSTER OF MIA - 1958

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