

Mims, Florida
September 2, 1947

Mrs. Rosa Lee Fields
Rt. 1, box 455
Sanford, Florida

Dear Mrs. Fields :

Your letter of Aug. 27th came while we were holding our State Youth Conference here, and my hands were so full that I had little time for correspondence.

However, I went to Sanford on Aug. 28th, soon after I received your letter from Ocala. Unfortunately, you were out when we visited your home, but you probably received the message that we left there, advising you to see Rev. John Gray, president of the Sanford Branch of the NAACP.

As you know, Rev. Gray and other officers of the Sanford Branch had already talked with you and had made an investigation of your case. I also talked with some of your neighbors when I was there. The information gathered seems to indicate that you and your husband had an argument (and possibly a little fight) about some family affairs. You then went out and called an officer. When the officer came, Mr. Fields would not submit to arrest, but assaulted the officer and disarmed him. We understand that the officer came in cursing, but it seems that he made no direct attack on Mr. Fields. In other words, it appears that Mr. Fields is guilty of resisting arrest. It also appears that this trouble could have been avoided if you and Mr. Fields could have settled your argument without calling the law.

It is not the purpose of the NAACP to uphold our people in wrong-doing. We believe that all people should respect and obey the law. However, we believe that no citizen should suffer discrimination or undue punishment because of his race, creed, or color. Although Mr. Fields seems to be guilty of resisting arrest, it seems that the charge of "attempted murder" is too severe. There seems to be very little evidence to support a charge of "attempted murder". We understand that Mr. Fields had overpowered and disarmed the officer. Evidently, he could have killed the officer, had he so desired. This would be the only ground upon which the NAACP could come into this case.

Therefore, if the charge of "attempted murder" is not reduced, we are recommending that the Sanford Branch may lend you some assistance in securing a lawyer. I am sending a copy of this letter to Rev. Gray, and I suggest that you see him again.

Very truly yours,

Harry T. Moore, Executive Secretary
Florida State Conference, NAACP

cc :
Rev. J. N. Gray
738 Celery Ave.
Sanford, Florida

Mims, Florida
January 23, 1947

Dear Co-workers :

Notice is hereby given that the Progressive Voters' League of Florida, Inc., will hold a state-wide meeting at Mt. Olive A. M. E. Church on West Washington Street, Orlando, Saturday, February 1, at 11:00 A. M. All persons interested in the political welfare of Florida Negro citizens are cordially invited to attend this one-day meeting.

The Progressive Voters' League was organized primarily to help stimulate wholesome political activity among Negro citizens, and to help secure the unrestricted use of the ballot for all Florida citizens, without regard to race or creed. The Progressive Voters' League is not promoting any foreign "issue". We stand for American Democracy, pure and simple. We believe, like Patrick Henry, that "taxation without representation is tyranny". We believe, like Thomas Jefferson, "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed -". We believe in the Constitution of the United States - including the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. We believe that all citizens have a right to participate freely in the affairs of their government. We believe that inasmuch as American citizens of all colors and creeds have sacrificed freely to help win the recent struggle for democracy, all should share equally the fruits of victory.

Unfortunately, there are certain forces at work in Florida who would undermine the true principles of American Democracy, as expounded by Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln. These forces are preaching the doctrines of foreign "issues", whereby the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution would be ignored, and certain citizens would be restricted in their use of the ballot, just because of their racial origin. We must get together and devise plans to combat these evil forces. Liberal-minded citizens of all colors must co-operate in an effort to secure and maintain a more practical application of the democratic principles of "government of the people, for the people, and by the people".

Rev. H. McNeal Harris, 418 West Washington Street, is pastor of the local church and chaplain of the Progressive Voters' League. Mrs. Viola T. Hill, 626 West Washington Street, is vice president of the League.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore

Milton P. Rocks, President
1135 Pierce St., Clearwater

Harry T. Moore
Executive Secretary

Winter, Florida
January 28, 1937

Dear Mr. [Name]

Notice is hereby given that the Progressive Voters' League of Florida, Inc., will hold a state-wide meeting at the Hotel N. E. Brown on West Washington Street, Orlando, Saturday, February 1, 1937, at 8:00 P. M. All persons interested in the political welfare of Florida, Negro citizens are cordially invited to attend this one-day meeting.

The Progressive Voters' League was organized primarily to help stimulate wholesome political activity among Negro citizens and to help secure the unrestricted use of the ballot for all Florida citizens, without regard to race or creed. The Progressive Voters' League is not a party, nor does it stand for American Democracy, here and abroad. We believe that the best way to secure the franchise without restriction is to win the election, like Thomas Jefferson, that all men are created equal, that when they are created equal they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. We believe in the Constitution of the United States as amended by the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. We believe that all citizens have a right to participate freely in the affairs of their government. We believe that to secure an American citizen of all nations and creeds have equal rights in the law, for democracy, all should share equally the fruits of victory.

The principles of American Democracy, as expounded by Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and other leaders, have been and should be the doctrine of every citizen, and the foundation of our government. These principles would be ignored, and certain citizens would be restricted in their rights, just because of their racial origin. We must not forget that we are living in a time of great evil forces, and it is our duty to stand up for the principles of our government and to maintain a more practical application of the principle of "government of the people, for the people, and by the people."

Rev. H. William Harris, Pastor of the First Church and Christian Center, 1025 West Washington Street, Orlando, Florida, is the secretary of the Progressive Voters' League, Inc., 1025 West Washington Street, Orlando, Florida.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore

Harry T. Moore
Executive Secretary

William H. [Name]
1025 West Washington St., Orlando, Fla.

Alton, Florida
November 6, 1945

Dear Co-workers:

During the month of June, 1934, the Broward County Branch of the NAACP was organized with 50 members. For several years our membership remained small. Some years we had difficulty in securing enough members to hold in our annual apportionment. Sometimes we would drive long distances to hold a meeting and fail to find a quorum.

Although these early years brought many disappointments and discouragements, a few faithful workers struggled on to keep the organization together. We realized the importance of maintaining an active, county-wide organization under the aegis of Broward County. During 1943 and 1944 the Broward County Branch began to take on new life. Our membership got above the one hundred mark. This increase continued during 1945, and by 1946 Alton, Titusville, and Melbourne had enough members to have separate branches, if they had so desired. At the close of 1945 Broward County stood third among the branches of Florida, with 455 members. Alton led the county with 130 members, Titusville and Melbourne were next in line, with 100 and 100 members, respectively.

Our Branch has enjoyed an exciting growth in membership during 1945. This rapid growth has come this largely to the increased spirit manifested by you under the leadership of Mr. Dick Cook. I am now leading the County with over 400 members. It is our hope to register over 1000 members for the entire county this year.

Because of this increased membership, the Branch Executive Committee has accepted the recommendation that the various committees in the county be grouped into three divisions. The northern division will include Fort Hill, Alton, and Titusville. The Central Division will include City Point, Narverton, Cocoa, Rockledge, and Merritt. Our allies, Melbourne, and South Melbourne will make up the southern division. The members of each division are asked to meet and select a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurer, etc. You will then arrange to hold a meeting in your section once per month, if possible. We suggest that you rotate your meetings and that you try to select meeting dates other than the fourth Friday. Each division is asked to report memberships and other funds to the county once every two months. The divisions will operate under the general supervision of the Branch Executive Committee.

It is our opinion that this arrangement will give the various committees more freedom of action. Meetings can be held in the different communities more frequently, and in this way the work of the NAACP can be carried to the masses of our people. This arrangement also should result in more financial support for the militant program of this great organization. At the same time, it will enable us to still maintain ourselves as a big county organization, which we believe is so necessary for the general welfare of the Negro citizens of Broward County.

Please feel free to call on us for any additional information, or assistance, that you might need. We shall be very grateful for your hearty cooperation in this effort.

Sincerely yours,
Harry T. Moore, Secretary
Broward County Branch, NAACP

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on the night of February 2, 1946, during an investigation by deputy sheriffs of the operation of the "Blue Goose" near Pierson, Florida, one James Fuller was shot and killed, and

WHEREAS, a coroner's jury was impaneled in a District other than the Pierson District, and

WHEREAS, the coroner's jury in Deland investigated said incident and classed said shooting as "justifiable homicide", and

WHEREAS, the evidence offered to said coroner's jury covered the testimony of only a few witnesses, and

WHEREAS, several eye-witnesses to the incident have been discovered since said coroner's investigation, and

WHEREAS, it would be better for all parties concerned to have said situation again thoroughly investigated and openly considered,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the
a duly organized lodge of Pierson, Florida, that the Governor of Florida send a special investigator to re-open the case, consider the testimony of the newly discovered witnesses together with the records of the previous hearing and make any and all investigations herein that said investigator may deem necessary and to take such other and further steps as may be proper.

Lodge

Secretary

President

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Lodge

Secretary

President

Miss, Florida
March 16, 1946

Mr. E. B. Measer
General Board of Education
Methodist Church
Methodist Building
213 Broadway
Tallahassee 2, Tennessee

Dear Sir:

Some time ago we read about your question to Gov. Willard P. Caldwell, in which you asked about the murder of Jesse James Payne in Madison County, Fla., on Oct. 11, 1945. Gov. Caldwell published recently the full text of his letter to you. At the same time he announced his intention to sue Collier's Magazine for their editorial of Feb. 23rd.

We note that Gov. Caldwell still maintains that Payne's murder was not a lynching, because Payne was not taken from jail by a mob. Whether or not a mob was involved is not such an important question. The fact is that Payne was taken from the custody of the Sheriff and put to death. He was executed without due process of law. The Sheriff of Madison County is responsible for this horrible crime; yet Gov. Caldwell refuses to suspend the Sheriff for his carelessness. Payne's relatives say there was plenty of mob action when he was arrested last July. They say it was estimated that over 400 men from Madison and neighboring counties joined in the "mob hunt".

These are the facts in the case of Jesse Payne, an ex-service man, who has been executed without due process of law. Those who make this execution possible have not been punished. Payne's wife and his 11-month old child have been left without means of support. They had to rush away and leave all their crop to D. L. Gadsden, Payne's employer. Surely Payne, and others of both races who served in the armed forces, did fight for this type of democracy.

For your information we inclose a copy of the relatives' affidavit, also a copy of our letter to Collier's.

Very truly yours,

Harry S. Moore, President

Mims, Florida
November 11, 1945

Attorney General Tom Watson
Capitol Building
Tallahassee, Florida

Dear Sir :

We are disappointed to learn that Gov. Caldwell finds no cause for the removal of Sheriff Lemmie T. Davis from office, even though he admits that Sheriff Davis' "stupidity and ineptitude" are responsible for the lynching of Jesse James Payne on Oct. 10. Naturally, one is tempted to ask this question : Which is more important, a man's life or a man's job ? If Sheriff Davis was stupid and was inefficient in permitting the lynching of Jesse Payne, we doubt that his qualities have improved very much. This same thing could happen again before the expiration of Sheriff Davis' regular term of office. Then, why should the lives of other Negro prisoners be risked in the hands of a sheriff who already has proven his unfitness for the office ?

A careful reading of the sworn statements of the wife, the mother, and the sister of Jesse Payne makes one doubt that Sheriff Davis is absolutely innocent of any knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the lynching of Payne. According to these statements, the Sheriff's brother-in-law and two nephews "arrested" Payne on July 1 and carried him off into the woods. These statements also declare that Payne knew about certain irregular activities of Sheriff Davis and his brother-in-law that they were anxious to keep secret. And since the very idea of attempted rape of a five-year old girl seems ridiculous, one is tempted to wonder if the whole affair was not just a frame up.

For your convenience we are inclosing a signed copy of the same affidavit that we sent Gov. Caldwell a few days ago. You will note that Payne's wife and sister declare they saw B. J. Godwin and his two sons, Robert and David, take Jesse by force and carry him off on July 1. Were the Godwins legally deputized to make such an "arrest" ? If not, is there any provision in Florida law under which they can be prosecuted ? You will note also that Godwin has Payne's share of the various crops that had not been marketed. Is there any legal way by which Payne's widow and six-month old daughter can get possession of their share of these crops, or their part of the money therefrom ?

If there is any legal action that your office can take in these matters, we shall be very grateful.

Respectfully yours,

Harry T. Moore, President
Florida State Conference, NAACP

cc: Gov. Millard W. Caldwell

Copy

STATE OFFICERS

HARRY T. MOORE, PRESIDENT
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 DR. C. F. DUNCAN, VICE-PRESIDENT
 417 1/2 BROAD ST., JACKSONVILLE
 FRANK C. BURTS, VICE-PRESIDENT
 226 E. LAKE AVE., TAMPA
 CATRICE MCILIN, SECRETARY
 JACKSON ST., N. ST. PETERSBURG
 A. PICKETT, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
 2410 E. BUFFALO AVE., TAMPA
 REV. K. S. JOHNSON, TREASURER
 501 CYPRESS AVE., SANFORD

FLORIDA STATE CONFERENCE OF THE

National Association

FOR THE

Advancement of Colored People

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LEGAL COMMITTEE

ATTY. S. D. MCGILL
 ATTY. L. E. THOMAS
 EDWARD D. DAVIS

Miami, Florida
 July 6, 1948

Major J. A. Ansell
 Panama City, Florida

Dear Sir:

We take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude for the hearty welcome accorded us during our stay in your beautiful city last month. We feel confident that everything possible was done to make our visit a pleasant one. In fact, the very atmosphere seemed to be charged with the spirit of kindness and hospitality.

Our mission to Panama City was a noble one. We were there to plan and work for a program that seeks to secure justice and equality of opportunity for all American citizens, without regard to race, creed, or color. Our organization stands for a fuller measure of Americanism for all. We wish to join forces with all liberal elements in a combined effort to hasten the day when the principles of democracy as enunciated by Thomas Jefferson may prevail in practice, as well as in theory, and when the Constitution of the United States will be duly recognized by all as the supreme law of the land.

Respectfully yours,

Harry T. Moore
 Executive Secretary

cc: Mr. E. W. Edwards, President
 Bay County Branch, NAACP

STATE OFFICERS

HARRY T. MOORE, PRESIDENT
BOX 4, MIMS

DR. C. F. DUNCAN, VICE-PRESIDENT
22 1/2 BROAD ST., JACKSONVILLE

FRANK BURTS, VICE-PRESIDENT
LAKE AVE., TAMPA

O. PRICE MCLIN, SECRETARY
335 JACKSON ST., N. ST. PETERSBURG.

EMMA A. PICKETT, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
3410 E. BUFFALO AVE., TAMPA

REV. K. S. JOHNSON, TREASURER
801 CYPRESS AVE., SANFORD.

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C. M. VAUGHT

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D. DAVIS

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PENSACOLA
SOLOMON BROOKINS

POMPANO
JAMES H. GREEN, SR.

ST. PETERSBURG
F. A. DUNN

SEMINOLE COUNTY
A. L. JAMES
EARL E. WILLIAMS

SUWANNEE COUNTY
R. A. REDDICK

TAMPA
EARL E. BROUGHTON
ELDER M. G. STRACHAN

TARPON SPRINGS
W. E. JAMES

VERO BEACH
REV. J. W. WILLIAMS

VOLOSIA COUNTY
LEN L. ATTAWAY
W. HARRIS

WEST PALM BEACH
REV. E. J. JACKSON

N. W. Griffin Visiting Florida NAACP Branches

N. W. Griffin, West Coast regional secretary of the NAACP, is visiting a number of branches in Florida during the month of July. Officers of the Florida State Conference prepared Mr. Griffin's itinerary during the Annual Conference in Cincinnati, and Mr. Griffin came to Florida at the close of this meeting.

Mr. Griffin is by no means a stranger to Florida. He is a native of Columbia County and a graduate of the old Florida Baptist Academy. For a number of years he served as principal of schools in Tallahassee, Ft. Myers, and St. Petersburg. Because of his militant stand on the question of equal salaries for Negro teachers, Mr. Griffin was finally ousted from the public school system of this state. He was then elected full-time executive secretary of the Florida State Teachers' Association.

Mr. Griffin is an experienced NAACP worker. For several years he served as president of the St. Petersburg and Jacksonville Branches. He also helped to organize the Florida State Conference in 1939 and was elected the first president of that organization. For the past two years Mr. Griffin has been a member of the National Staff of the NAACP.

Among the branches listed on Mr. Griffin's tentative schedule are Fruitland Park, Seminole County, New Smyrna Beach, Winter Haven, Sebring, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Lee County, Miami, Boynton Beach, West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, and Brevard County. Mr. Griffin's many friends will welcome his coming to Florida.

Harry T. Mears
Executive Secretary
Florida State Conference, NAACP

LEGAL COMMITTEE

ATTY. S. D. MCGILL
ATTY. L. E. THOMAS
EDWARD D. DAVIS

Suggested Items for Republican Party Platform :

• Equal Rights for Minority Groups •

Our nation has successfully concluded a gigantic struggle against those who would have enslaved the freedom-loving peoples of the world. American citizens of all races, creeds, and colors sacrificed to help win this fight for world democracy. Therefore, the Republican Party of Florida believes that our country should grant a fuller measure of democracy to minority groups within its own borders. All American citizens are entitled to "the equal protection of the laws", as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

Several times during the past three years Florida's record has too been marred by the brutal lynching of its helpless Negro citizens. In neither case has anyone been punished by our Democratic state administrations. The Republican Party of Florida believes that sheriffs and other peace officers should be held strictly responsible for the adequate protection of prisoners entrusted to their care, and that officers who fail to provide such protection should be promptly suspended from office. We also believe that a federal law against lynching should be enacted.

The Republican Party of Florida maintains that the right of fair employment, without regard to race, color, or creed, is a fundamental principle of any true democracy. We hold that there should be no special jobs for Negroes or special jobs for Whites, but that every American citizen should be able to seek and find employment on the basis of his ability to do the job. We therefore favor the establishment of a permanent FEPC.

An educated and well-trained citizenry is essential to the general welfare and happiness of any nation. When one group is denied equal educational opportunities, the entire nation suffers. Florida's Democratic state and county governments have failed to respect that part of the State Constitution which says : "Although white and Negro children shall not be taught in the same schools, impartial provisions shall be made for both". The Republican Party of Florida believes that our Negro citizens should be provided with equal educational opportunities, with regard to school buildings, equipment, bus facilities, teachers' salaries, etc.

Submitted by :

Harry E. Moore
Miami, Florida

P. S. I also would suggest that delegates to Republican National Conventions be selected in state primaries, rather than in state conventions.

Mims, Florida
November 11, 1945

Attorney General Tom Entson
Capital Building
Tallahassee, Florida

Dear Sir :

We are disappointed to learn that Gov. Caldwell finds no cause for the removal of Sheriff Lemmie T. Davis from office, even though he admits that Sheriff Davis' "stupidity and ineptitude" are responsible for the lynching of Jesse James Payne on Oct. 10. Naturally, one is tempted to ask this question: Which is more important, a man's life or a man's job? If Sheriff Davis was stupid and inefficient in permitting the lynching of Jesse Payne, we doubt that his qualities have improved very much. This same thing could happen again before the expiration of Sheriff Davis' regular term of office. Then, why should the lives of other Negro prisoners be risked in the hands of a sheriff who already has proven his unfitness for the office?

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For your convenience we are inclosing a signed copy of the same affidavit that we sent Gov. Caldwell a few days ago. You will note that Payne's wife and sister declare they saw D. L. Goodwin and his two sons, Robert and David, take Jesse by force and carry him off on July 1. Were the Goodwins legally deputized to make such an "arrest"? If not, is there any provision in Florida law under which they can be prosecuted? You will note also that Goodwin has Payne's share of the various crops that had not been marketed. Is there any legal way by which Payne's widow and six-month old daughter can get possession of their share of these crops, or their part of the money therefrom?

If there is any legal action that your officious take in these matters, we shall be very grateful.

Respectfully yours,
Harry T. Moore

cc: Gov. Willard P. Caldwell

Open Letter

To Florida Negro Voters

Miami, Florida
November 15, 1945

Dear Co-workers:

As we go about trying to help organize local units of the Progressive Voters League, this important question often arises: "Should Negroes register as Republicans or Democrats?" This question sometimes precipitates heated arguments, because in practically every community you will find some staunch Republicans and some loyal Democrats.

In our attempt to clarify this question, we should like to ask a few other questions: Are Negro citizens of Florida suffering more from the discriminatory practices of local officials or of national officials? Who are more directly responsible for the inequalities in educational opportunities, the lynchings, the police brutality, and other injustices suffered by Negroes, our state and county officials or the Administration in Washington? All of these evils can be traced directly to the prejudiced attitude of local officials. Negro teachers are paid less than white teachers with the same qualifications because the county superintendents and school boards have so arranged it. James James Payne was lynched on Oct. 10 because the Madison County Sheriff permitted it. Do we control the election of these state and county officials, the Republicans or the Democrats? Regardless of our party beliefs, we must now face facts. The fact is that practically every city, county, and state official in Florida is selected in the Democratic primaries. Every Senator and Congressman from Florida now serving in Washington was selected in Democratic primaries. In order to help select these officials, Negroes must vote in Democratic primaries. In order to vote in Democratic primaries, Negroes must register as Democrats.

It is because of the great importance of the Democratic primaries that the NAACP has spent thousands of dollars to get them opened up for Negro voters in the South. We shall be waging a determined fight to win for Negro citizens the right to register as Democrats and vote in these primaries, and thus help to select those who are to have direct control over us. The prospects are bright. The Florida Supreme Court has handed down a unanimous decision that Negroes have a right to vote in Democratic primaries, and Attorney General Tom Watson has ruled that Negroes can register as Democrats.

If we are to reap the full benefit of these opportunities, we must forget our old party affiliations and register to vote in the election that really counts - the Democratic primary. Then come the general election campaigns, we can vote for the candidates of our choice. Let us remember the words of the poet Lowell:

Two occasions teach us wisdom,
They teach us when our heads are down,
They teach us when our feet are slushy,
They teach us when our backs are bent.

Sincerely yours,

Harry E. Moore, Executive Secretary
Progressive Voters League of Florida

502 W. Broadway
Ocala, Florida
May 27, 1946

Officers and Members
Florida NAACP Branches

Dear Co-workers :

All of us have witnessed the steady growth of the NAACP in Florida during the past five years. Whereas there were only nine branches in Florida in 1941, we can now boast of fifty-two chartered branches. This rapid development has been due, in a large measure, to the fearless leadership of our state president, Mr. Harry T. Moore.

During these years Mr. Moore has devoted much of his spare time to the work of the NAACP. But the organization has grown to such an extent that it is now almost physically impossible to take care of the work on a part-time basis. If the present standard of the work is to be maintained, and if the organization is to continue its growth, a full-time executive secretary must be employed. Mr. Moore is willing to serve the organization in this capacity.

We estimate that a budget of \$1,000.00 will be needed to finance this work for the first year. This will include office equipment, supplies, traveling expenses, salary, etc. We are appealing to the various business, fraternal, religious, and educational organizations to help us make up this budget for the first year. The Central Life Insurance Company has pledged \$500.00, and the Women's Auxiliary of the General Baptist State Convention has pledged \$100.00. But the NAACP branches in Florida must eventually assume the major responsibility of financing this work.

We hope to be sufficiently advanced with our budget to begin full-time operation on July 1, 1946. We therefore urge our branches to make the following special contributions in June :

Under 100 members	\$10.00
100 - 200 members	25.00
Over 200 members	50.00

We shall be grateful if you can report these contributions at our Annual Meeting in Panama City, June 7 - 9.

Sincerely yours,

Budget Committee :

Earl S. Droughton, Chairman

2512 - 25th Street, Tampa

Edward D. Davis, Secretary

502 W. Broadway, Ocala

G. D. Rogers, Treasurer

Central Life Ins. Co., Tampa

Mrs. Viola T. Hill

628 W. Washington Street, Orlando

Rev. R. H. Johnson

P. O. Box 509, Orlando

Mims, Florida
August 15, 1946

Atty. Thurgood Marshall
Special Counsel
20 W. 40th Street
New York 18, N. Y.

Dear Atty. Marshall:

We are submitting copies of letters and affidavits relative to the case of Larsey Bradwell, Negro veteran of Midway, Florida, who disappeared on January 7, 1945, while in the custody of Sheriff Edwards and Deputy Maple of Cassden County.

As you will note, we first tried to get appropriate action through the Governor's office. But, as usual, Gov. Caldwell is placing the matter in the hands of local officials. We therefore are appealing to the Department of Justice.

We shall be very grateful if you will use your influence with the Attorney General and press for an investigation of this case.

Bradwell's mother and sister were visiting in Ft. Lauderdale when I interviewed them, but they plan to live at the following address:

1215 E. Beaver Street
Jacksonville, Florida

We are glad to report that an FBI agent was here in Brevard County last week investigating our registration case.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore

Open Letter

To Florida Negro Voters

Dear Co-workers:

In most of you know, the State Democratic Committee has adopted a resolution which provides for the participation of Negro voters in the Democratic primaries in May. This, of course, is in keeping with recent rulings by the U. S. Supreme Court and the Florida Supreme Court. It also is in line with an opinion submitted last October by Attorney General Tom Watson.

It now appears that we stand on the threshold of golden political opportunities. For the first time Negro voters of Florida are recognized as members of the Democratic Party. Thus, if we are properly registered, we may now vote with the party that has held a virtual monopoly on the election of state and county officials during the past 50 years. In this way we may help to select those officials who have direct control of our everyday affairs.

In order to consider additional plans necessary to get our people prepared for the May primaries, the Progressive Voters League of Florida will hold a state meeting at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, E. Parkmore St., Orlando, on Feb. 10th. Members of the Board of Directors are asked to meet at 10:30 A. M. A public mass meeting will be held at 1:00 P. M. W. E. Wroughton, chairman of our Board of Directors, attended the recent meeting of the State Democratic Committee, and he will make a report of his observations. Heads of organizations, professional and lay leaders from over the state are urged to attend this meeting. Let us get our heads together and make take full advantage of this great opportunity that now presents itself.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore, Sec. 1st
Progressive Voters League of Florida
Tampa, Florida
January 1, 1945

Mims, Fla.
February 7, 1956

Atty. L. E. McIlrath
151 Graham Building
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Atty. McIlrath:

The registration books of Broward County were carried to the various precincts on Feb. 2, and they were declared open for registration on Monday, Feb. 4. On Feb. 5 a Negro voter here in Mims went to the man who has charge of our book and asked to have his affiliation changed from Republican to Democrat. The man told the colored man that he could not change it.

What is the law on this question? Can a voter change his affiliation while the books are out in the precincts, or does he have to wait until they are returned to the County office? Please let us know about this as early date, as we want to take advantage of every convenience while the books are in the precincts.

We have been anxiously waiting to hear from you in regards to the Titusville Case. As I stated when I was up there, it is my opinion that the filing of that suit now will make it easier for us in the present situation. As you know, some of these local officials are rather determined in their efforts to hold Negroes down. They do not want us to vote in Democratic primaries. Most of them did not recognize the decision of the U. S. Supreme Court; some hesitate to recognize the decision of the Florida Supreme Court; and I am afraid that some will be reluctant to abide by the resolution of the State Democratic Committee. In short, such officials do not respond to anything but pressure. That is why we are so anxious to get the Titusville Case started. Did you ever hear from Atty. Marshall?

Please let us hear from you at a very early date.

Sincerely yours,

Larry T. Moore

Office of The
ATTORNEY GENERAL
State Of Florida
Tallahassee

February 19, 1946

Mr. Harry T. Moore
Mims, Florida

Dear Moore :

In reply to your letter of February 17, you are entitled to register now while the books are in the hands of the clerks in the precincts, and this includes the right of changing former registration from Republican to Democrat.

You should re-register anyhow, and not be content with any former registration that you might have made. You may present this letter to the present clerk or to the supervisor of registration of Brevard county.

Very truly yours,

J. Tom Watson

Attorney General

Copy

Miami, Florida
January 25, 1948

Senator Dennis Chavez
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir :

We are pleased to note that you are leading the fight for the passage of S. 1011, and that Senator Alben W. Barkley, Majority Leader, is giving this bill his powerful support. We feel that a permanent FEPC is needed to insure a fuller measure of economic democracy for Negroes and other minority groups.

It is discouraging to note that few southern Senators have resorted to the filibuster in an effort to defeat the will of the majority. We realize, however, that these gentlemen are not accustomed to the democratic principle of "majority rule", because most of them were sent to the Senate by a minority of the potential voters of their respective states. That is why they can afford to use such undemocratic methods in their determination to defeat this piece of progressive legislation.

The Florida State Conference of the NAACP, representing 47 branches and over 10,000 members, expresses deep appreciation to you and to Senator Barkley for your earnest efforts to get this bill passed. Please keep up the fight. Vote for cloture, if necessary.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore, President

cc : Senator Alben W. Barkley
Majority Leader
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Telegram

Jan. 24, 1946

Florida State Conference NAACP, representing over 10,000 members, expresses deep appreciation for your efforts to secure passage of FEPC bill. Please urge Senators of your party to vote for cloture if necessary to break present filibuster.

Harry T. Moore, President
Florida State Conference, NAACP
Mims, Florida

Copy to :

1. Robert E. Hennegan, Chairman
Democratic National Committee
Mayflower Hotel
Washington, D. C.
2. Herbert Brownell, Chairman
Republican National Committee
1337 Connecticut Ave., N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Mims, Florida
March 11, 1946

Atty. R. K. McElrath
121 Graham Building
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Atty. McElrath :

Announcement of our suit against City Clerk Wilson was made in Thursday's issue of an Orlando daily paper. The people in Titusville, both white and colored, have the news now. As we expected, a certain amount of pressure is being put on Mr. Rogers, but nothing serious has happened so far.

Have you prepared a suit against Mr. Bailey yet? If possible, we would suggest that you use a client other than Rogers for this suit. We feel that it will be better to let the pressure be spread out and not let it concentrate on one or two persons. However, we do not wish to weaken our case. Rogers and Roy Burns are the only two who were able to make direct contact with Bailey. The rest of us made application through our precinct clerks. Would the case be just as wrong if one who was denied the right by a precinct clerk act as client in this suit? If so, I gladly offer the use of my name. In fact, I made several efforts to catch Mr. Bailey personally, but failed. I did get in touch with him by registered mail (You have copy of my letter). I think Elmer Sims, W. C. Stafford, B. H. McClain, Nick Ford, and Henry G. Strickland, Sr. also would make desirable clients. We are in this for a fight to the finish, and we are willing to put forth any effort possible to win our rights.

We shall expect to hear more from you in regards to the proposed suit against Mr. Bailey.

Sincerely yours,

Harry T. Moore

P. S. Does the law say that a change of party affiliation must be made 60 days prior to a primary?

Open Letter

To Florida Negro Veterans

Miami, Florida
February 4, 1948

Dear Co-workers :

As most of you know, the State Democratic Committee has adopted a resolution which provides for the participation of Negro veterans in the Democratic primaries in May. This, of course, is in keeping with recent rulings by the U. S. Supreme Court and the Florida State Supreme Court. It also is in line with an opinion submitted last October by Attorney General Tom Watson.

It now appears that we stand on the threshold of golden political opportunities. For the first time Negro veterans of Florida are recognized as members of the Democratic Party. Thus, if we are properly registered, we may now vote with the party that has held a virtual monopoly on the election of state and county officials during the past 50 years. In this way we may help to select those local officials who have direct control of our everyday affairs.

In order to consider additional plans necessary to get our people prepared for the May primaries, the Progressive Veterans' League of Florida will hold a state meeting at M. Pleasant Baptist Church, S. Parramore St., Orlando, on Feb. 10th. Members of the Board of Directors are asked to meet at 10:15 A. M. A public mass meeting will be held at 1:30 P. M. Mr. Carl C. Broughton, chairman of our Board of Directors, attended the recent meeting of the State Democratic Committee, and he will make a report of his observations. Hon. Lawson P. Thomas, prominent Negro attorney of Miami, has promised to be with us in both of these sessions. He will speak during the same meeting.

Leads of organizations, professional and lay leaders from over the state are urged to attend this meeting. Let us get our heads together and take full advantage of this great opportunity that now presents itself.

Sincerely yours,

Wilton P. Cooks, President

C. T. Williams, Local Chairman
405 S. Parramore St., Orlando

Harry T. Moore, Executive Sec.
Progressive Veterans' League

Office of The
ATTORNEY GENERAL
State of Florida
Tallahassee

February 19, 1946

Mr. Harry T. Moore
Mims, Florida

Dear Moore:

In reply to your letter of February 17, you are entitled to register now while the books are in the hands of the clerks in the precincts, and this includes the right of changing former registration from Republican to Democrat.

You should re-register anyhow, and not be content with any former registration that you might have made. You may present this letter to the present clerk or to the supervisor of registration of Brevard county.

Very truly yours,

J. Tom Watson
Attorney General

COPY

Office of The
ATTORNEY GENERAL
State of Florida
Tallahassee

February 26, 1946

Mr. Harry T. Moore
Executive Secretary
Progressive Voters League of Florida
Mims, Florida

Dear Moore:

I enclose herewith a copy of letter being sent to all Supervisors of Registration in this State, together with the opinion from this office referred to therein.

Sincerely yours,

J. Tom Watson
Attorney General

Tallahassee, Florida

February 26, 1946

To: All Supervisors of Registration of the Counties of Florida

Certain information has come to me, which may or may not be accurate, but if accurate, indicates that in some sections of the State, persons in charge of registration books or Supervisors thereof may be engaged in efforts to thwart the registration for the Democratic Primary by Negroes.

It is not my business to protect registration on the part of any voter as a personal or individual right of such voter and in the light of this letter I do not so undertake to do. However, I am sending to every Supervisor of Registration in the State a copy of the attached legal opinion relating to the right of Negroes to register for the coming Democratic Primary.

Sincerely yours,

J. Tom Watson
Attorney General

Copy

STATE OF FLORIDA

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

RECORDED

FEB 28 1946

FILED

attorney general of the state of florida
sent to all supervisors of registration
for the coming democratic primary
for the purpose of informing them of the
right of negroes to register

copy of this letter is being sent to
all supervisors of registration in the
state of florida for their information
and to advise them of the right of
negroes to register for the coming
democratic primary

J. Tom Watson

Attorney General

By: _____

RECORDED

FEB 28 1946

STATE OF FLORIDA

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Office of The
ATTORNEY GENERAL
State of Florida
Tallahassee

February 19, 1946

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Attorney General

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ATTORNEY GENERAL
State of Florida
Tallahassee

February 26, 1946

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Progressive Voters League of Florida
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J. Tom Watson
Attorney General

Copy

STATE OF FLORIDA
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE CLERK

LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE CLERK

LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
SUBJECT: [Illegible]

[Illegible text]

[Illegible text]

STATE OF FLORIDA
LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE CLERK

(Not printed at Government expense)



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 79th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Anti-Lynching Bill

SPEECH

OF

HON. D. LANE POWERS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 1945

Mr. POWERS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I place on the desk discharge petition No. 3 to discharge the Judiciary Committee from further consideration of H. R. 1698, a bill to assure persons within the jurisdiction of every State due process of law and equal protection of the laws, and to prevent the crime of lynching. This measure is popularly known as the antilynching bill. In our legislative program for the post-war period, the antilynching bill deserves high priority.

At this time I, therefore, wish to outline some of the more cogent reasons why the Seventy-ninth Congress should outlaw this heinous crime as speedily as possible. Five thousand one hundred and forty-four persons in the United States met death at the hands of the lynch mobs from 1889 through 1944. I do not need to point out that under mob law an individual needs only to be suspected or accused of an offense, not necessarily punishable by law, and without anything remotely resembling an opportunity to defend himself, is snatched up and put to death. Nor do I feel that it is necessary to go into all of the gory details of flogging, hanging, shooting, burning, and the other fiendish tortures by which the lynch sentence is executed. It is sufficient to say that these acts of unrestrained barbarism are committed in the greatest democracy in the world and, in the overwhelming majority of cases, by native white Americans.

Three thousand six hundred and eighty-eight victims of lynch mobs in the United States have been Negroes. Today every person who has made anything like a careful study of this problem agrees that as the yearly number of lynchings decline, more and more of its victims tend to be confined to members of the colored race. I, therefore, feel that it is incumbent to examine some of the facts known about lynching.

Mob violence is inconsistent with our laws of government and is indefensible regardless of the nature and gravity of the offense. It should be said that, however, that relatively few of the lynchings of Negroes resulted from accusations; well founded or not, that the lynched committed a felony like murder, robbery, rape, or arson.

My mind goes back to our experience with lynching immediately following World War No. 1. In 1917, according to the best available figures, 52 Negroes were murdered by the lynch mob; in 1918, the number increased to 63; and in 1919, lynching spiraled to 79. Ten of the lynchees in 1918 were soldiers or ex-soldiers and there is little question but that these men were slain simply because they had tasted a little freedom, a little travel, and had a little pride in the part they played in the Army that fought for democracy.

If 10 Negro soldiers or ex-soldiers were lynched in the first year they returned to this country after World War No. 1, what can we expect will be the fate of almost a million Negro soldiers and sailors who have had several years of service and have seen duty in many foreign countries after World War No. 2? Hundreds of thousands of these Negroes are from the South and will return there after the war.

We have some experience to guide us here. On April 3, 1941, Pvt. Felix Hall, a volunteer, was found hanging from a tree at Fort Benning, Ga. He was clad in the uniform of the United States Army. I have here a clipping from the Plaindealer, published in Kansas City, Kans., dated March 16, 1945, which states that on Tuesday, March 13, a group of civilian police in Jackson, Miss., severely beat with blackjacks a group of Negro overseas veterans because they were fraternizing with some white soldiers whom they met in the railroad station at Jackson. These men had fought together overseas and had congregated in the lobby of the station between the Negro and white waiting room. "The police, seeking to preserve southern custom," the article stated, "informed the men that they could not mingle together

in Mississippi." When they did not immediately break up the conversation, the story continued, civilian police, armed with sawed-off shotguns and tommy guns, beat the Negro soldiers about the head with blackjacks and forced them to immediately board their train en route to Camp Shelby. I do not wish to be pessimistic, but if this sort of thing can happen here in the midst of a war, it is only reasonable to assume that this is but a foretaste of what will come afterward. In connection with this general problem of civilian brutality against Negro members of the armed forces during the war, I think that it is significant that the War Department has been so moved by the gravity of the situation that, at its request, a bill, H. R. 1528, was introduced in the Seventy-ninth Congress to make unlawful an assault by a civilian on a member of the armed forces a Federal offense.

I am concerned about the violence that has been, and is being, perpetrated upon the Negro soldier and the Negro veteran. I am equally concerned about the wide-scale violence that we may reasonably expect after cessation of hostilities. There is no room in America for lynchings; there is no room in America for race riots. This must apply particularly to the post-war period. We as a Nation are preparing to take our rightful place of leadership in world democracy. That democracy for which men fought and died is not, and must not be a democracy labeled "for white Europeans and white North Americans—only." It must be a democracy for all of the nations and all of the peoples of the world. We will assume world leadership in the post-war era because we have won it. I ask this House then to make this democracy a real and meaningful thing to the millions of Negro servicemen and their families who have helped to make victory and leadership possible. I ask that this House take immediate steps to outlaw lynching by adopting H. R. 1698 so that when these boys come home, black and white alike, they will know that they have truly fought for—and won—a better America and a better world.

Tallahassee, Florida
January 31, 1945

Florida Delegation
United States Congress
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sirs:

On June 20, 1944, we mailed each of you a letter, in which we urged, among other things, your support of bills to create a permanent FEPC.

It is our belief that this legislation is urgently needed to safeguard the economic gains made by minority groups during the war. To feel that there should be no special jobs for Negroes, or special jobs for Whites, Americans without of all races, creed, and color sacrificed to help win this gigantic struggle for democracy abroad. It is only natural, therefore, that Negroes, and other minority groups, should expect to enjoy a fuller measure of democracy here at home. And the right of fair employment, without regard to color or creed, is a fundamental principle of any true democracy.

We note that certain Senators are leaning up to filibuster the FEPC bill that is now before the Senate. We hold that the filibuster is an undemocratic practice, in that it enables a small minority to defeat the will of the majority. We urge, therefore, that those of you who are members of the Senate will do everything possible to help break this filibuster, so that the bill may come up for a vote.

Your voters of Florida, and the nation, anxiously await favorable action on this progressive legislation.

Respectfully yours,

Harry S. Moore, President
Florida State Chamber of Commerce, 1945

copy

May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec
Year Total

STAPLES

Harry T. Moore,
Mims, Florida

Page 2.

no one has complained to his office about either the conduct of the inquest or the verdict of the Coroner's jury and no request had been made to him for a further investigation until I took up the matter with him. Further, no one appeared before or requested the Volusia County Grand Jury for the spring term, which was convened after Fuller's death, for further investigation of the case.

If you or anyone else has any new evidence, it should be called immediately to the attention of the State Attorney or Grand Jury in the county where the death occurred.

Sincerely,

Governor

MFC:50G