

Coming Stories by
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The Advocate

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BLUE RIBBON FICTION IS FOUND EVERY WEEK IN
THE FEATURE SECTION

Will United States Erase the Color Line?

Joel Spingarn, Jewish President of the N.A.A.C.P., Declares that in Spirit, the True Black American of the Future Must be a Half White Man. The Catholic Must be Half Protestant; the Jew Must be Half a Christian; the German or Italian Half Englishman.

WHITES WHOSE NAMES ARE NOT ENGLISH, FEEL A LITTLE BIT INFERIOR

Rome, Jerusalem, the Confederacy, Germany Fell Because of Race Superiority Buncombe. America of Future will Grant all Races, Black and White, Full Racial or Social Equality.

ADDRESS (in part) on "Race and Social Equality," delivered by Joel Spingarn, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, at its annual meeting in Washington recently.

In this period of depression and economic catastrophe, our first thought should be of the economic situation of the American Negro. He has been harder hit than any other element in our population. I need not tell you, for you know already, that he is always the first to be laid off and the last to be taken on that he is the lowest paid and most exploited of all our workers and the one who, at all gets a square deal. Worst of all in this depression colored men and women are being laid off in order to find positions for unemployed whites; the noble white man proves his superiority by stealing jobs from the poor black man.

White men have rioted to oust colored truck drivers from jobs in Florida; Negro firemen and trainmen have been shot to death and wounded in Mississippi; and on the government job Boulder Dam has a single Negro employed, or is he allowed to live on the reservation. The Negro has suffered most and complained least in this depression; and the patience and fortitude with which he bears his troubles are more arousing our profound sympathy and our admiration.

Everybody Must Vote

Our first duty must be to take action toward alleviating his economic distress. He is the "forgotten man" of whom some of our politicians speak, especially those politicians who never give any thought to the Negro at all. It is the duty of this association to make such politicians think of the colored race to work day and night unremittently until they think about it. Our first duty, then, is to use every means of increasing the power of the Negro to win his economic emancipation. His political emancipation has begun; we have fought for it for 12 years, and shall continue to fight for it as many years more. But it has to a certain extent been achieved, and so furnishes us with a lever for our next task, which is his economic emancipation. That is his job for the next few years; that is our job, in so far as this association represents the twelve million colored people in this country. We are framing an economic program for the association, and we hope to

carry it through side by side with our program for his civil rights. The world has learned that the political and the economic struggle must go hand in hand.

Racial Equality

But there is a larger struggle than any of these, whether political or cultural and educational or economic. It is the struggle for social emancipation. I am convinced that this is the most important of all the struggles, and one that includes all the others. I am convinced, as the Negro cannot gain his rightful place in the sun of American life until he has won the battle for RACIAL EQUALITY. I know he there are purblind doctrinaires who believe that economic emancipation solves all the problems of humanity; but in almost every civilization there have been groups and races that have won economic emancipation and have not won social and racial equality, or have not won it without further struggle. The economic problem is today more immediate and pressing; faced by the many of millions of men, by the heartless few, can deny that the economic problem is vital; but how easily solved compared with the questions I am raising. For my subject tonight is racial equality, which I prefer to the vaguer and more equivocal phrase, "social equality," though rightly understood the two phrases mean the same thing.

The Fight for racial equality for the Negro does not mean that he wishes to do whatever his individu-

al whim may dictate, but that he asks for equal and unrestricted admission to the duties and discipline of American life. Speaking only for myself, I hope to dedicate this association more than ever to the battle for racial equality.

Political and Social Ideals

I hold that racial equality is an ideal in exactly the same way that political equality is an ideal, that American equality of opportunity is an ideal. Not that we can get it all right away but that we shall always hold it as a cardinal principle in every discussion, that we shall fight to make it come true, that as we develop a racial equality system it will come true. I open the new "Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences," turn to the article on "Equality" by a Harvard professor, and read: "In practice it is still almost universally assumed that the Negro is an inferior, and the laws of the Southern states make this inequality explicit." This is the theory and practice against which we unequivocally set our faces. We refuse to believe that any race is inherent inferior, or to subscribe to any theory of government by a "superior" or dominant race.

All Causes Are One

For in this discussion I am not referring exclusively to the black race, but would tie up their cause with the cause of all the races in America. I am not referring merely to what are usually called racial minorities or to the races of Eastern and Southern Europe. The fact is that in the America of today not only does every person who has not a white skin feel a little inferior but altogether too many white men who have not English names seem to feel, if not a little inferior, at least a little self-conscious about it.

I have noticed men who bore aristocratic German names or musical Irish names or picturesque Swedish or Italian names appear a little self-conscious in this way in a company made up of people who bore the most plebeian of English names. This is an absurd state of affairs; it is why in this fight for racial equality you should have behind you men of all races in America who look forward to a more equitable and a more truly unified nation. Every race that has been permitted to come to America at all must be regarded, not only in law, but in popular opinion, in American tradition, as an equal race.

All Races Contributed to U.S.

The original basis of our government and our institutions is English. Other races contributed something including the colored race, which formed nearly one-fifth of the original population of the country when the first census was taken in 1790; but the main foundations

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Race Equality Means that One Group will Not be Shut off from All Work Except Menial Tasks



The American tradition is that the lowliest citizen can aspire even to the White House. But in Baltimore, a Negro cannot drive a smelly garbage cart, walk a flatfoot's beat, or tap a typewriter in the City Hall. Race equality means that black people would not be the last hired and the first fired. "The noble white man," says Mr. Spingarn, "proves his superiority by stealing jobs from lowly Negroes."

were English, that is white and Protestant. No one can change this fundamental fact; all those who have come later, whatever additions and improvements they have brought or may bring, must imbibe something of this original spirit to be real Americans.

America has developed since and developed with the aid of races that are not English at all. A great President, Theodore Roosevelt, spoke of himself as "an American not an English descent"; and in a sense no American can be spiritually of pure English descent and be a true American.

Speaking wholly in terms of the spirit, the black man, to be a true American, must be half a white man; the Catholic must be half a Protestant; the Jew must be half a Christian; the German or the Italian must be half an Englishman. But the American of English descent can be only half English too, if he wishes to be a true American; he must carry with him as the other half something that

The Southern white speaks of himself as the most purely Anglo-Saxon element in the country; but the exact opposite is true. Spiritually he has been more modified by non-English elements than any other element in the country. Every act of his American life for nearly two centuries has been modified by the presence of millions of men and women of African descent, who

Race Equality Means that All People would be Eligible for Jury Service



Yet Judge Duncan, of Towson, Maryland, testified in the Euel Lee (Orphan Jones) case that for 26 years he had never considered a Negro for jury service in Baltimore County. In Mississippi or Arkansas, it would be worth a black man's life to demand jury service. Joel Spingarn dedicates the N.A.A.C.P. to the fight for racial equality.