

General Race News

CONGRESS ON CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS.

Preliminary Call

Hillburn, N. Y., July 15, 1916.
Fellow Comrades and Fellow Citizens of Color:

By the authority vested in me as president of the National Equal Rights League I hereby issue this preliminary call for the ninth annual convention of said league.

The matter of the exact date and place for the convention is not yet quite settled, but it is very timely and proper that there be no further delay in inviting public attention to the fact that such a convention is to be held, and within the next sixty days.

National Race Congress.

It has been wisely suggested in view of existing unfavorable social, civic and political conditions confronting us as a people, that the National Equal Rights League invite and urge all of our people in all sections of the country, to unite in a great "National Congress of Colored Americans," and for the special purpose of voicing the feelings and opinions of the race on those unfavorable conditions now surrounding us in this country; and also to decide upon the wisest and best methods for combating color segregation and all other forms of discrimination.

Extraordinary Wrongs Suffered.

After fifty years of so-called freedom in this country, what is the prevailing condition of our Colored-American population? Briefly stated it is this: Our civil rights have been rendered almost futile; we are shamefully curtailed politically; we are denied equality before the law; we are not allowed equal industrial opportunities; our property and our very lives are not at all secure; and "the black horrors of lynching" innocent Colored Americans continue unabated. While our Federal Government's indifference towards all these injustices is but little less than the nullification of our great war amendments. Throughout the southland, and to more or less extent in the north, the increasing millions of our fellow Colored Americans are being more and more reduced to the pitiable condition of political serfs and social outcasts.

Can We Be Unmoved?

If such conditions do not stir our souls and our blood what under heaven can do it? Do not the industrial opportunities denied us, the freedom of speech and of the press not allowed, the civic and political rights taken from us, and the insecurity of property and life that surrounds us, give sufficient ground and reason for the calling of such a National Congress of Colored Americans as is herein suggested? "In this fierce era of controversy and bloodshed," can we be unmoved? While the whole world is wide awake socially and politically, shall we sleep? While all other classes and races are on the verge of social and political revolutions, shall we be indifferent? Since all other groups of oppressed people are in the stir and rush of agitation, is it not high time that we should at least begin to get on the move?

The south is still in the saddle at our national capital, rushing headlong with a most reckless disregard

for the feelings and rights of ten millions of loyal, but oppressed Colored Americans.

Fling Our Standard.

Therefore let us get together in a great national congress, and fling to the whole wide world the full story of our grievances and of our earnest demands for justice and fair play.

Get Ready.

Let all our religious, educational, social and political leaders among us heed this call. Let all of our great religious organizations and lodges and benevolent societies begin now to plan to be represented in this proposed congress. By so doing we cannot fail to produce a powerful effect on the public mind that will greatly help us in our struggles for justice and freedom.

This congress will be independent and wider than any present organization. Its deliberations will not be under the Equal Rights League, which will meet in conjunction.

Faithfully yours,

BYRON GUNNER,

President of the National Equal Rights League.

JACK JOHNSON IS REPORTED BROKE

Madrid, Aug. 4.—Only the diamonds this his wife is wearing stand between Jack Johnson and poverty. This is the general impression of Americans who have observed the former world's champion in his desperate efforts to make money in Spain.

Some months ago Johnson turned up in Spain with his wife, an English boxer trainer and a Colored boxer, and took a suite of rooms at a palatial hotel. He attempted to book passage for Brazil, but learned that he was not permitted to leave Spain without a passport. The American embassy refused to issue him a passport under instructions from Washington because he fled from Chicago during his prosecution for white slavery.

Johnson went to Barcelona and staged a prize fight between himself and another Negro. The \$1,000 Johnson earned at that fight soon ran out and he is having a hard time coaxing promoters to stage another affair.

COLORED MEN ARE HEROES OF FLOOD

Charlotte, N. C., Aug. 4.—The skill and strength of two unknown Colored men in a flat boat were the means of saving six persons July 25, when twenty persons were thrown into the swollen Catawba river by the collapse of the Southern Railway bridge at Belmont. Four white employees of the Western Union Telegraph Co. made an attempt to man another rescue boat but were tossed into the river and had to be taken from the tree-tops.

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION MEETS

Pasadena, Cal., Aug. 4.—The tenth annual convention of the California State Federation of Colored Woman's Clubs, which met here last week at the Metropolitan Baptist Church, had a large and representative attendance. The papers and discussions showed the women to be alert to questions of the day. Mrs. Elizabeth Brown, state president, presided.

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