

Dr. E. J. Scott Replies To Kelly Miller On New Deal Benefits

For two score years and more he who ventured to enter a tournament to tilt lances with the redoubtable Dean Kelly Miller usually found himself in a contest which tried his mettle to the utmost. This observation is made before seeking to reply to his recent news release commenting upon my recent designation by Chairman John Hamilton as one of the Publicity Directors and Advisors here at Republican National Committee Headquarters.

For more than thirty years I have enjoyed Dean Miller's warm, personal and affectionate friendship. He is one of the most beloved of Howard University's myriad group of Alumni, and I probably more affectionately regarded by the nearly 300 graduates who leave the institution each year, than any individual who has ever been connected with the institution during the 72 years of its educational history. He is also beloved by countless thousands of others, black and white who admire his scholarship his eloquence and his many and spirited defenses of his race.

He is probably our best known publicist and polemic writer. His sword has known no brother where the vital interests of his people were concerned.

For his kindly references to me personally I make due acknowledgment and express with due humility, my grateful thanks. There can be no quarrel between us, as we clearly and frankly understand each other's position with respect to present day political conditions.

The New Deal challenges Dean Miller's unrivaled panegyrics under all conditions and circumstances. None of the abuses, none of the brutal tactics employed to humiliate unfortunate colored people in the administration of the NRA, AAA, FSA, USHA, FHA, Resettlement, The Wage and Hour Law and other alphabetical agencies have challenged, or aroused, his resentment, or criticism.

With all of his high praise, I cannot accept Dean Miller's dictum that, while I have remained loyal to the ideals and traditions of the Republican Party "the majority of the most outstanding and influential members of the race have been enticed away from their political mooring by the allurements of the Democratic Party and the New Deal."

While it is true that a large number of colored men have been placed in executive relationship in Government agencies, it still remains true, in my opinion that many of these men, as well as thousands and thousands of others, outside of public office, have not been slow to recognize the fact that, despite such dramatic gestures as have been made, the race, itself, taken as a whole, actually has remained relatively outside the limits of New Deal

processes.

Whatever small gains have been made, have been more than overbalanced by swamps as it were, by the irreversibility of administration.

The Second National Conference on the Problems of the Negro and Negro Youth unsparringly called attention to glaring discriminations and mischievous tendencies in the administration of most of these agencies.

In the case of one of them the Conference noted a "tendency to use Federal funds for purposes of fixing residential patterns according to local prejudices, thereby establishing segregated areas and racial ghettos,"—reference being made to the Federal Housing Administration. Many similar instances of glaring discrimination were pointed out. Particularly, failure to appoint colored men to positions in administrative and policy-making bodies, where the greatest influence and wisdom are most necessary to safeguard minority rights.

There has been no effort made to integrate Negroes into private industry. The great masses of colored people still remain and lie "in the field of Relief Administration, the Second Conference on Negro Problems pointed out that "experience" has shown that Relief Administrators in many states and municipalities either lack sympathetic understanding of the problems of minority groups, or are desirous of preventing Negroes from equitably sharing the benefits of relief programs."

I cannot bring myself to believe that Dean Miller, in his fulsome praise of New Deal activities, is in agreement with these discriminatory techniques.

I need not point out, of course the most recent discriminatory action of the Secretary of War in refusing to set aside, sums of money to be made available that Negro Youth may take its proper place in the various armed services of the Government, at a time when the menace of war may be all but impending. Discrimination and segregation of Negro citizens in the armed forces of the Government are still rampant.

Allurements of New Deal Dean Miller places great reliance upon the "allurements" of the New Deal. Probably our fundamental difference is that I believe in the saving grace of the sanity of Negro Americans and that they are subject to the same educational processes of democratic government as other citizens of the Republic.

In their evaluation of so-called New Deal "benefits," I believe Negro Americans are cultivating a long range vision and that they are just as much apposed to centralized administrative machinery for partisan purposes as other groups of forward-looking citizens. The chief "allurement" upon

which the New Deal seems to be depending for Negro support is "relief."

I believe that Negro Americans believe and insist that relief should be administered for the need and not for politicians as has been so largely true in the past. If the Negro people are to have a solid, industrial foundation they cannot accept a philosophy which accepts relief as a cure for unemployment.

Further, I cannot believe that a mere subsistence level is what Americans without regard to race creed or color desire.

I insist that what Negro Americans need and desire are steady jobs with decent American wages. If these fail them, practically everything reverts placid acceptance of relief as a necessary palliative for unemployment.

It certainly remains true, as of this date, that with all of the billions spent during the last six and one-half years, the American economic machinery "has stalled on dead center," as the New Deal dominated Monopoly Committee has recently pointed out.

So much then for argument if argument be needed.

It is not necessary for me to characterize the failures of the New Deal Administration in so far as they relate to our colored population. I certainly can use no stronger words than those of a leading newspaper, The Pittsburg Courier which supported the New Deal in the 1932 and 1936 elections. Apparently in deep disappointment and disgust, The Courier said:

"The New Deal has done little to end color discrimination but a great deal to prolong it. Beginning with the NRA it bowed to the will of the reactionary South both inside and outside the South. It had a wonderful opportunity to show America how the Negro ought to be treated through cowardice and political opportunism. Most Americans would have approved a Square Deal Policy, but instead the Southern tail wagged the Democratic dog. For the Negro the New Deal has been the old Deal in new clothes. With powers almost as great as those of Hitler, Stalin and administration in NRA, FHA, Mussolini, the Democratic Ad-PWA, CCC, WPA and a dozen others alphabetical set-ups.

"Washington D. C. is as jim-crow as even, if not more so, but no single word from Mr. Roosevelt. He has expressed shock over the beating of the Jews abroad, but not over lynching of Negroes at home. Mr. Roosevelt could have at least deplored the fact that Negroes are pariahs within the shadow of the White House, but he preferred to make speeches condemning the dictators for doing the same thing to Jews, Catholics and others abroad.

"The president embarked enthusiastically upon an intra-party political campaign against Democrats refusing to endorse his New Deal politics, but evidently approves of Senators and Congressmen who endorse the Old Deal of flagrant color discrimination in relief and other New Deal set-ups.

"The President has a wonderful opportunity to teach America an object lesson in fair play toward a loyal minority. It this was impractical in the North, East and West, he could at least have said something. He chose to remain silent although supplied with documentary evidence of color discrimination in almost every New Deal set-up."

Says South Disappointed C. W. Rice, editor of the Negro Labor News, and president and manager of The Texas Negro Business and Laboring Men's Association, has just returned to his home after making a study of Negro labor conditions in practically all of the Northern and Eastern States. A summary of his findings follows:

"That Negroes, both in the North and in the South are disappointed with the New Deal. Economic and labor conditions are worse, fundamentally, than at any time since Emancipation. In the South, the New Deal crop control policy has thrown millions out of work, and evicted them from their cabins in the cotton fields, thereby causing privation and starvation, for which the Gov-

ernment provides only merger relief that barely holds body and soul together. "Now comes the Labor Union Movement, under the National Labor Relist on Act, which gives forty-one percent of the workers in a given plant the right to form a union, which becomes the sole bargaining agency for all the workers in said plant. Most of the labor unions have the color bar and discriminatory practices against Negroes. The closed shop agreement with employers is causing the wholesale replacement of Negroes on practically all jobs, including railroad, cotton industries, cafes and hotels in all sections of the country.

"I find that in Government employment, even at Washington, Negroes are being replaced as messengers, elevator operators, janitors, etc. Aside from dole jobs (WPA), about the biggest thing Negro Dealers are doing for Negro employment is the hiring of some few Negroes in strategic positions to travel over the country and picture Utopias to the working class of Negroes, if they will only continue to be loyal to the New Deal.

"I am thoroughly convinced that the great majority of Negroes even in the North, are disgusted with such promises which they failed to materialize. They are realizing that industrial conditions are going from bad to worse."

With these words from a prominent newspaper that helped elect the New Deal and from a leader of better labor conditions ringing in their ears, it rather occurs to me to say that thoughtful Colored Americans will keep in mind these strictures, and will in my opinion want to find their way back to a party of which it may be said, that, at least it has always stood for the basic principles of American democracy; and that not a single discriminatory, repressive or disfranchising law; not a single jim-crow; not a single peonage law; not a single Government regulation setting up regional wage differentials, has ever been passed by any state dominated by Republican public opinion, or by any Republican administration at Washington.

These things of which The Courier and Mr. Rice complain are of importance to us. They cannot be condoned, overlooked, or forgotten. Our first concern must ever be for the preservation of the basic guarantees of our civil equality before the law, and our right to fair consideration in all the pursuits of happiness.

It must still remain for the great masses of colored voters to decide by the votes whether the guarantees written into the Federal Constitution by the Republican Party shall be preserved by that party or whether will support that ancient opposition sought to abrogate and destroy them.

In all I have written, it is as a citizen of the Republic, deeply and seriously concerned with its institutions, and wish its National economy preserved, and its destiny along progressive lines assured, for what concerns the future of other Americans is of deep concern to them also.

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Pa. to Probe Condition of Its Negroes

Harrisburg, Pa. Sept. 21 (ANP)—A Lincoln university professor will be the executive director of the Governor's Temporary Commission on Negro conditions, according to the semi-official word here; otherwise there is much speculation as to who will be on the commission with its \$10,000 budget.

Dr. Laurence Foster, professor of history and education at Lincoln, and a graduate of both Lincoln and the University of Pennsylvania, is the person slated for the executive post. He will help the commission to "examine, report upon, and recommend measures to improve the economic, cultural, health and living conditions of the Urban Negro population of the state."

The bill to authorize the commission was introduced in the legislature by E. Washington Rhodes, member from Philadelphia. The legislature appropriated \$15,000 for the investigation, but Gov. Arthur H. James, slashed it to \$10,000. The commission is to consist of 15 members, six appointed each by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house and two by the governor.

It is certain that Assemblyman Rhodes will be named. Other Negroes mentioned are Rep. Homer Brown, Democrat of Pittsburgh, called one of the most capable men in the legislature; Mrs. Maude B. Coleman, Dauphin county Republican and one inter-racial consultant in the department of welfare; Atty. Joseph Givens, Pittsburgh; Bishop David H. Sims, of the A.M.E. church; Maurice Moss, Urban League head, Pittsburgh, and Mrs. S.

Willie Layten, head of the nation's Baptist women. White members will complete the commission, including, according to reports, Lewis G. Hines, secretary of labor and industry, and Richard P. Brown, director of the state department of commerce.

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