

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY HALL

DAVID ROBINSON, CHAIRMAN
502 PACIFIC BUILDING
PORTLAND 4, OREGON



N.A.A.C.P.
COMMISSION ON
INTER-GROUP RELATIONS

CITY OF PORTLAND
OREGON

November 29, 1955

Hon. Fred L. Peterson
Mayor
City of Portland
Office of the Mayor
City Hall
Portland, Oregon

RECEIVED
NOV 30 1955
MAYOR'S OFFICE

Dear Mayor Peterson:

In accordance with your instructions the City of Portland Commission on Intergroup Relations submits its report for the calendar year 1955.

The duties of the Commission as set forth in Section 3-1002 of City Ordinance No. 91286 are as follows:

"It shall be the duty of the Inter-group Relations Commission to study and investigate problems arising between groups in the City of Portland which may result in tensions or discrimination on account of race, color, religion, or national origin or descent; to formulate and carry out a program of public education with the object of decreasing and eliminating any such tension and discrimination filed with or referred to said commission so as to obtain the greatest possible cooperation from all persons or groups in eliminating such discrimination, which investigation shall be available to any commissioner with whom is lodged such complaint and to the municipal court in the event any municipal judge requests such investigation and report; to recommend to the City Council any changes of law which the commission deems beneficial and to cooperate with and secure the cooperation of other organizations or civic or fraternal or other groups within the City, and in general to promote tolerance and understanding among all groups within the City."

No formal complaints of individual cases of discrimination have been filed with the Commission or referred to it during the period covered by this report.

The Commission has held meetings during the year and has studied conditions which tend to create tensions.

On May 13, this Commission held a public conference in the City Hall Council Chambers to inquire into charges that tensions are being created because non-white purchasers are discriminated against in the matter of purchasing housing. Witnesses stated that Negroes and other non-whites

were denied a free market in which to negotiate for housing and were restricted to the Williams Avenue area.

Representatives of real estate brokers and builders organizations appeared at this hearing and, after disclaiming personal prejudice, alleged that occupancy by Negroes in an all-white block has a tendency to depress property values.

This statement was countered with arguments "that the depressed prices were due not to the occupancy of property by non-whites but to the senseless panic of white owners who sacrificed their properties. That after the sale, prices generally recovered to their actual value and were stabilized there."

At the May 18 meeting which followed the public conference, the Commission on Intergroup Relations adopted the following motion:

"The Commission recognizes the seriousness of the housing situation in Portland; that the Commission is conscious much of the difficulty of non-white citizens in obtaining housing in the City of Portland and the correlation of enmity of landlords, real estate brokers and many property owners is due to the belief that such occupancy would result in diminished values of other property in such areas. It is the opinion of the Commission that at this time the problem is not one which can be banished solely by adoption of resolution or of legislation, because no legislation, lacking public support, will be enforced. It is the Commission's opinion and sincere belief that the prejudicial attitude of many people is due to lack of information or of possession of inadequate information about their fellow citizens of non-white origin. The Commission believes that much of the problem can be overcome by an adequate educational program. Realizing this, the Commission will undertake the stimulation by church, educational and civic organizations of the formation of study clubs whereby their members may have access to further information and an opportunity for discussion. The Commission believes that as the public becomes informed all the problems of religious and racial prejudice will correspondingly diminish. The Chairman, Mr. Robinson, is authorized to assign to members of the Commission on Inter-Group Relations the duty of contacting different organizations and groups in the Portland community to encourage the setting up of such study groups."

Limited as is this Commission, having neither staff nor funds, we are endeavoring to implement this motion by urging all agencies in Portland to undertake programs of education in human relations.

Respectfully submitted,



David Robinson, Chairman

Sunday
5-22-55
JLH

May 20, 1955

Mrs. Lorna J. Marple, President
Portland Branch
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
4133 N. E. 20th Avenue
Portland 11, Oregon

Dear Mrs. Marple:

Thank you for your letter of the 17th. It was a pleasure to issue the proclamation on Freedom Week.

Thank you also for the invitation to attend the program at the First Congregational Church, Sunday evening at 7:30. I am indeed sorry that a prior long time commitment precludes the possibility of my attendance.

However, I have asked Mr. Hubert A. Goode, my Executive Assistant, to represent me.

I am very much interested in the statement in your letter that is underlined. You may be sure we have always and will always treat everyone with like consideration. I believe in my fellow man.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

M A Y O R

FLP.y



NATIONAL OFFICERS: President, ARTHUR B. SPINGARN - Chairman of the Board, CHANNING H. TOBIAS - Vice Chairman of the Board, ROBERT C. LEAVER - Treasurer, DR. ALLEN KNIGHT CHALMERS - Assistant Treasurer, THEODORE SPAULDING.
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS: ROY WILKINS, Administrator - THURGOOD MARSHALL, Special Counsel - HENRY LEE MOON, Director, Public Relations - GLOSTER B. CURRENT, Director, Branches - EDWARD R. DUDLEY, Special Assistant - ROBERT L. CARTER, Assistant Special Counsel - LUCILLE BLACK, Membership Secretary - HERBERT L. WRIGHT, Youth Secretary - CLARENCE MITCHELL, Director, Washington Bureau - HERBERT HILL, Labor Relations Assistant - FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS, West Coast Regional Director - WILLIAM H. UNDERWOOD, President Northwest Area. OFFICIAL ORGAN: THE CRISIS, JAMES B. IVY, Editor.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

PORTLAND BRANCH: 4133 N. E. 20TH AVENUE, PORTLAND 11, OREGON - - - - - TELEPHONE: Garfield 2466
 NORTHWEST AREA: 212 East 54th Loop, Vancouver, Washington

NATIONAL OFFICE: 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, New York

WEST COAST REGIONAL OFFICE: Suite 322, 690 Market St., San Francisco 4, Calif.

+ 41st Year 1914-1955
 Portland Branch
 NAACP +

1863 -- FULL FREEDOM BY -- 1963

May 17, 1955

RECEIVED
 MAY 18 1955
MAYOR'S OFFICE

The Honorable Fred L. Peterson
 Mayor of the City of Portland
 City Hall
 Portland, Oregon

My dear Mr. Peterson:

On behalf of the Executive Committee of this Branch, and of myself, we wish to thank you for the proclamation on Freedom Week. We hope that you, or a representative, will be able to attend the program at the First Congregational Church Sunday evening at 7:30. Please ask whoever may be coming to give his card or name to one of the ushers, and ask the usher to tell Mr. Underwood, who will introduce our guests.

We enclose a copy of FREEDOM FRONTIERS, the West Coast Regional Publication, and we call attention to the sections on "Housing" and "Legal Discrimination". "At the present time Portland's police department seems to be free of instances of police brutality due to prejudice, and we in Oregon are happy that this is so and hope that we can continue this even policy towards all,"

Very truly yours,

Lorna Marple

(Mrs. W. H. Marple)
 PRESIDENT

PORTLAND BRANCH OFFICERS: President, MRS. LORNA J. MARPLE - Vice President, ULYSSES H. LEVERETT - Second Vice President, WILLIAM MITCHELL - Treasurer, MRS. MARIE SMITH - Secretary, MINNIE HARRIS - Chairman of Legal Redress, REV. J. J. CLOW - Counsel to Branch, DON WILLNER - Chairman, Labor & Industries Committee, OTTO G. RUTHERFORD - Chairman, Housing Committee, WILLIAM THOMPSON, JR.
MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: PHIL REYNOLDS, General Chairman, Fillmore 3082, HERMAN BAKER, RAYMOND WILSON, L. C. ELLISON, WILLIAM MITCHELL, HERMAN PLUMMER, MRS. RUTH FLOWERS, MRS. A. L. KINDRICK, MRS. RACHEL BARNO, MRS. THOMAS VICKERS, J. C. DANCEY, ROBERT BIRD, MISS MABEL DOWNS, HARRY PAYTON, J. L. MECHEAUX, MRS. EVELYN ROBERTS, Publicity, TR 4744. **LIFE MEMBERSHIPS:** MISS RUTH HAEFNER, EDGAR WILLIAMS.

PROCLAMATION

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored people in Oregon have set aside for special programs May 15th - May 22nd, 1955, as "Freedom Week" in Oregon, and

WHEREAS, May 15th will be observed nationally as Freedom Day, and

WHEREAS, national publicity is planned wherein the churches will participate in these programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Fred L. Peterson, Mayor of the City of Portland, the "City of Roses," do hereby proclaim the week of May 15th - 22nd, 1955, as

FREEDOM WEEK

in Portland, Oregon, and urge our people to participate wherever possible in this worthy effort.

MAYOR

COPY

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NAACP

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MAYOR

*Cook
Mr. Moore*

May 5, 1955

Mrs. Warren H. Marple, President
National Assoc. for the Advancement of Colored People
4133 N. E. 20th Avenue
Portland 11, Oregon

Dear Mrs. Marple:

Thank you for your letter of May 2nd advising me that the week of May 15th to 22nd has been designated as Freedom Week.

I was very glad to issue a proclamation and am enclosing two copies for your use.

Yours sincerely,

M A Y O R

FLP:s
Enc.

NATIONAL OFFICE: President, ARTHUR B. SPINGARN - Chairman of the Board, ROBERT L. WEAVER - Treasurer, DR. ALLEN KNIGHT CHALMERS - Assistant Treasurer, THEODORE SPAULDING. CHANNING H. TOBIAS - Vice Chairman of the Board, ROBERT L. WEAVER - Treasurer, DR. ALLEN KNIGHT CHALMERS - Assistant Treasurer, THEODORE SPAULDING. CHANNING H. TOBIAS - Vice Chairman of the Board, ROBERT L. WEAVER - Treasurer, DR. ALLEN KNIGHT CHALMERS - Assistant Treasurer, THEODORE SPAULDING.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

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+ 41st Year 1914-1955 Portland Branch NAACP +

May 2, 1955

RECEIVED
 MAY 5 1955
 MAYOR'S OFFICE

The Honorable Mayor Fred Peterson
 Mayor of the City of Portland
 City Hall
 Portland, Oregon

My dear Mayor Peterson:

We have written to Governor Patterson asking him to proclaim May 15 to May 22 FREEDOM WEEK in Oregon. May 15 will be observed nationally as FREEDOM DAY, this being the Sunday nearest the anniversary of the May 17 U. S. Supreme Court Decision desegregating the nation's schools. The week of May 15-May 22 will be proclaimed Freedom Week by President Eisenhower, and there will be nation-wide publicity during that week. The churches will cooperate on FREEDOM DAY May 15. The Portland Branch NAACP will terminate Freedom Week with a memorial service for the late Walter White, Executive Secretary of NAACP for thirty years, who died March 21. This program will be held at the First Congregational Church in Portland, Sunday May 22 at 7:30 P.M.

We of the Portland Branch NAACP would deem it an honor if you would also proclaim May 15-May 22 FREEDOM WEEK in Portland and will plan to attend the services which will be held May 22 at the First Congregational Church on S.W. Park Avenue at 7:30. Walter White, perhaps more than any other man of our times, symbolized the work of this great organization which he devotedly served for thirty years. As the Baltimore Sun has said: "He sought. . . to have the principle that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights accepted in practice as well as theory." President Eisenhower said: "In the death of Walter White there has passed from the contemporary scene a vigorous champion of justice and equality for all our citizens. His devoted service to his race over a period of forty years was tireless and effective."

Many organizations will cooperate with us nationally and locally in the observance of FREEDOM WEEK. It would be very helpful to us and altogether fitting for Portland if you would make this proclamation. Our theme will be "this Nation under God shall have a New Birth of Freedom".

Very sincerely yours,

Lorna Marple

Encs. (NAACP material)

(Mrs. Warren H. Marple) P R E S I D E N T

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1863 -- FULL FREEDOM BY -- 1963

and objectives
its program

NAACP

the
story
of the

NAACP

is a story of progress in American civilization. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People began in 1909 when fifty-three Americans with a fierce devotion to democracy and humane race relations banded together in an attempt to right some of the shocking wrongs being inflicted upon a group of fellow citizens. Since that time, the Association has expanded steadily, as Americans increasingly have joined this force striving for racial justice. The NAACP has won victory after victory — accomplishing the seemingly impossible in its unflinching struggle against race hate, bigotry and violence.

NAACP

covers the country



Join Today

THE NAACP NEEDS YOU

The wide range of activities in which the NAACP engages and notable successes it has enjoyed have earned for the Association the respect of its friends and the even deeper fear of its enemies. For almost a half-century, the Association has been in the forefront of the civil rights fight and has been responsible for destroying many of the barriers depriving Negro Americans of equality of opportunity.

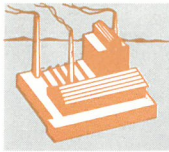
This progress costs money. Further progress will cost more money. With the eyes of the world upon America for democratic leadership, the task ahead is gigantic. The United States must prove her sincerity to those who mistrust this country because of mistreatment of minority groups. Every vestige of race bigotry and segregation must be rapidly eliminated from American life. The NAACP needs the moral and financial support of every democratic-minded individual and group if this goal is to be achieved.

and the Association's strength lies in its membership — a quarter of a million strong in forty-five states, the District of Columbia and the Territory of Alaska. NAACP members, of all races and religions, are organized into more than a thousand branches, which in turn form thirty state conferences and several regional conferences. The national office staff covers the country, too. With headquarters in New York, the Association maintains a Washington Bureau (in which most of the legislative activity is centered) and three regional offices: in Birmingham, Dallas and San Francisco. Local and state offices are maintained by constituent NAACP units. Field workers are sent wherever they are needed. The Association is truly a crisis organization, constantly on the alert to combat unfair race practices wherever they occur.

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N.A.A.C.P.
20 West 40th Street, New York 18, N. Y.
SECRETARY, PORTLAND BRANCH
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
4133 N. E. 20th, PORTLAND 11, OREGON
I wish to become a member and enclose \$.....
I enclose \$..... as a contribution.
Name.....
Address.....
City and State.....

Annual Membership \$2.00, \$3.50, \$5.00, \$10.00 & up. Youth Membership (under 17), \$.50; (17-21), \$1.00. Life Membership \$500. Memberships of \$3.50 and up include a year's subscription to the Crisis magazine at \$1.50.

February, 1955 Life Membership \$500.00

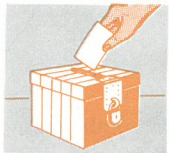


THE RIGHT TO WORK IS BASIC

Man must work if he is to eat. Denying a man a decent job because of his race is denying him the basis of his existence. Largely through the efforts of NAACP branches, fair employment laws have been passed in eleven states — but *thirty-seven* states still have refused to do anything about bias in employment. For this reason, the NAACP believes that an FEPC — to guarantee citizens an opportunity to secure jobs on the basis of merit, not color or religion — is the keystone of the federal civil rights program. The entire resources of the Association are pledged to the campaign for establishment of a Federal Fair Employment Practices Commission with full enforcement powers.

THE NEW LYNCH LAW

The mob, which in years gone by would string its victims to the nearest tree or tie a hapless Negro to the stake for a public burning, is now obsolete thanks to years of effort by the NAACP. With the decline of lynchings, however, the number of unpunished bombings, floggings and shootings has increased in many sections of the country. Also, economic pressure, the denial of jobs and the withholding of credit from Negro homeowners, farmers and business and professional men has been used increasingly to replace the cruder and bloodier forms of intimidation and terror. The NAACP has marshalled all of its resources to meet the challenge of the new lynch law.



THE BALLOT: DEMOCRACY'S TEST

Recognizing that Negro Americans, voting in free elections, could contribute to winning the rights and privileges guaranteed to them under our Constitution, the South for many years disfranchised the Negro voter through "white primaries," the poll tax and other subterfuges — and violence. Now, the NAACP legal staff has cleared the way for Negro voting in the South with Supreme Court victories outlawing "white primaries" and other chicanery. Under constant attack of the NAACP and others, the poll tax is now required in only five states.

The Association, too, has geared its legal, legislative and educational programs toward a vast expansion of the Negro vote and has undertaken an ambitious educational campaign to increase awareness among Negro citizens of the value of their vote, and to encourage these citizens to exercise this basic American right and duty.

On the legislative front, the Association is pressing for a federal anti-poll tax law, elimination of unfair registration requirements, and protection for Negro citizens against intimidation in polling places.



OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

The United States Supreme Court has declared—in its historic May 17, 1954, decision — that segregated education, by impairing the ability of Negro children to learn and to function as responsible citizens, deprives them of their rights under the Fourteenth

Amendment and is, accordingly, unconstitutional. The NAACP has pledged its total resources to a community action program, supplementing legal action, designed to level the barriers in every American community where school segregation still exists. Just as in the Association's successful drive to curb segregation in state-supported graduate and professional schools, countless hours of work and dollars must go into this historic struggle to bring racial democracy to our elementary and secondary public schools.

THE END OF MILITARY JIM CROW

In August, 1954, the Department of Defense reported that "throughout the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, fully integrated units have replaced the all-Negro units which, until recent years, formed the only channel of military service for Negro enlistees and draftees." Negroes in the armed forces, the report added, are "now utilized on the basis of individual merit and proficiency in meeting the needs of the services."

This was the culmination of a long fight during which the NAACP insisted that military Jim Crow should be abolished not only as a matter of democratic principle but also for the practical reason that segregation prevented the optimum use of manpower. The Defense Department report vindicates the NAACP contention both as to morale and to the effective use of personnel.



HOUSING: ROOT OF THE EVIL

The ghetto pattern in housing is directly responsible for an evil overcrowding in which disease and crime flourish. The ghetto is a pivotal factor, too, in maintaining segregated education despite the Supreme Court ruling banning such segregation. Even in

states which have long forbidden separate schools, segregation in housing fosters Jim Crow schools and many other disadvantages which befall minority groups. Despite legal victories invalidating restrictive covenants and city residential ordinances, private builders (even though federal funds make their projects possible) still discriminate against Negro families. In addition, the hate-bomb has been widely used by bigots to maintain the "lily-white" complexion of residential areas. A major task ahead of the NAACP is the elimination of the ghetto and the securing of the right of every citizen to live in the home of his choice in accordance with his means.



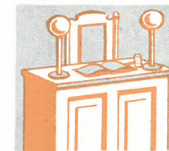
THE TRAVEL NUISANCE

The Association has made history in the courts with legal cases which in effect outlaw segregation in interstate travel — but a crazy-quilt pattern of Jim Crow in public transportation still plagues travelers. Segregated waiting rooms, sanitary facilities

and eating places at airports and terminals cause discomfort, inconvenience and humiliation to the Negro passenger. These practices cause severe embarrassment to our country when foreign visitors who happen not to be white are segregated. The NAACP is working for enactment of federal legislation to ban Jim Crow travel and is continuing to fight this unfair practice in the courts and the Interstate Commerce Commission. In December, 1953, the NAACP filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission a comprehensive complaint against 11 railroads and a terminal restaurant charging racial discrimination and segregation. The Commission had not, by the beginning of 1955, handed down a final ruling in response to the NAACP complaint.

RECREATION AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

Jim Crow in recreational facilities and places of public accommodation thus far has not been sufficiently challenged. Hotels, restaurants, theatres, parks, playgrounds, beaches, swimming pools, and golf courses draw the color line almost wherever and whenever they choose. A new precedent was set at the NAACP's 43rd Annual Convention in Oklahoma City, with the announcement of a full-scale attack against segregation in intra-state transportation and recreational facilities. Branches in states with civil rights statutes are encouraged to invoke those laws whenever violated. In other states, test cases are recommended in instances involving discrimination at publicly financed facilities.



EQUAL TREATMENT IN THE COURTS

Much progress has been made in securing the right of every citizen to a fair trial and equal treatment by the courts, but regrettably recent events have shown that a sheriff still can shoot handcuffed Negro prisoners and escape with impunity by claiming "self-defense," a Negro can be tried for "assault" for looking at a white girl 75 feet away, and a Negro can be put to death for a crime for which no white man pays a similar penalty. In all sections of the country a Negro accused of crime against a white person is subject to severer penalties than a white person so accused. On the other hand, a white person guilty of an offense against a Negro usually escapes with a light penalty.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE, Portland Branch

Lorna Marple, President, 4133 N. E. 20th Avenue GA 2466

FACTS ABOUT NAACP

1909. Founded by a group of distinguished U.S. citizens seeking a means to end abuse of minority groups, particularly Negroes, whose rights curtailed following successive laws of repression, both nationally and in citizenship the Southern states was causing race riots, lynchings, economic sanctions and many other abuses too numerous to list. The organization's national board and subsequently local branch boards, have been interracial from the beginning.

1914. Portland started its Branch, and has been continuously chartered since.

NOT A LEGAL AID SOCIETY. NAACP does not act as a legal aid group but as a LEGAL REDRESS GROUP, taking only those cases which will lead, through precedent in the courts, to affect the laws, and the enforcement thereof, in respect to civil rights. Hence such cases before the Supreme Court as those ending "white" primaries, the rights of Negroes to vote, the right to attend graduate schools which are state tax-supported, and many other cases affecting particularly the interpretation of the 14th and 15th amendment--finally ending with the overturn of the "separate but equal" doctrine in the decision of last May 17th.

A VOLUNTEER GROUP--NAACP is a volunteer organization based on the "mass membership" idea. At the present time we have about 500,000 members, in some 1600 branches throughout the country. This is a very small membership considering the great work and prestige of the organization. But like going to church--many believe in church, and turn to church when in trouble, but few are members.

A POLITICAL ACTION ORGANIZATION--Not a social agency. We are incorporated and maintain a Washington Bureau, and are registered as lobbyists. We have no special endowments for our regular branch work--over 80% of our income comes from \$2.00 memberships. (One dollar to National, one dime for the region and area and 90 cents in the local Branch). We have a Legal Defense and Education Fund which is a special Fund, not incorporated, and tax free which is used solely for financing legal cases before the Supreme Court., and state courts, although these are also financed sometimes through local branch activity and special contributions. We publish the records of candidates for office, and lobby for legislative measures, as in Oregon we sponsored civil rights legislation every session of the legislature but one from about 1930.

PAID PERSONNEL. Very few. None in the Northwest. We have a Secretary Counsel, Franklin H. Williams, in San Francisco, headquarters of the Western Region. We have two field directors, service seven Western states and one office girl in San Francisco. The rest of our workers are devoted volunteers. Yet when it is necessary for NAACP to call upon experts, whether for legislation or for redress or for matters of social need, we can and do command the services of the best in the country, and our organization has been exceptionally successful in pooling its knowledge and resources.