

LILY WHITES KEPT TICKET OFF BALLOT

Negroes Charge Republican Bosses Defeat Purpose of Independents.

MAKE APPEAL TO VOTERS

James R. Norrell, M. D., and G. N. T. Gray have issued a statement relative to the affairs of the Independent Republican party.

The statement follows:

Men and women of the negro race: We have just emerged from one of the most remarkable suits ever waged in the courts on behalf of our people.

We lost because the lily white bosses of the Republican party have decreed that negroes shall only vote for white candidates; that negro Republicans shall not aspire to be candidates for elective offices in Marion County as long as these bosses are in power.

The Independent Republican party, in its conception, was intended to force the present-day bosses of the Republican party to give to negroes the square deal that Abraham Lincoln and the founders of the grand old party intended negroes should have.

With that end in view an Independent Republican ticket was filed with the election board, as by law required, and said board did place that ticket upon the ballot, with such modifications as the law permitted and ten thousand or more ballots were printed with our ticket on them.

Later on our ticket was ordered stricken from the ballot by the Republican members of the election board at the command of Lily White Boss Harry Hendrickson, chairman of the Marion County Republican committee, the same boss who ordered the Republican county

commissioners to refuse to appoint a negro justice of the peace in violation of a written promise and who is head of the political machine that counted out Doctors Norrell and Williams in two primaries.

HIGH-HANDED TREATMENT.

Finding ourselves treated in such a high-handed and illegal manner by the election board and its boss, we decided to mandate the board of election commissioners and compel them to place our ticket upon the ballot.

The lily white boss at once employed the Hon. James A. Bingham, former attorney general of Indiana; the Hon. Henry M. Downing, corporation lawyer and professor in the Indiana Law School of Indiana University; and the Hon. Charles O. Roemler, another corporation lawyer, to use their combined talent to prevent our ticket from being placed upon the ballot to be voted for on Nov. 2, 1920, and for three days the legal battle was waged against one negro lawyer.

So difficult was the problem presented that the court said, in substance, after the trial, that this case had caused him more mental worry than any case that had come before him.

We only know we were kept off the ticket.

And so ended the first attempt of negroes in the North to place an Independent Republican ticket in the field. The ballot carries five tickets and three of them were filed under the same law and in the same manner that the Independent Republican ticket was filed.

The lily white Republicans allowed those tickets to go upon the ballot for the white constituents of those parties to vote upon, law or no law; but negroes, with their unbroken record of loyalty to the party of the bosses; negroes, who have lost all chance of consideration at the hands of other parties, on account of their loyalty to the Republican party; negroes, who have swallowed promises made and broken by their white Republican bosses for fifty years; those negroes may not have a chance to vote for members of their own race; those negroes must be sandwiched into submission to the dictates of their bosses.

Compare this boss's actions with the action of the authorities in Arkansas,

who allow a negro's name to be balloted on for Governor of Arkansas.

Ben Tillman once said: "If negro men were as courageous as negro women the whites of the South would not be able to humble them as they do."

Will negro women of Marion County vote for men who deny them and their boys and girls their place in the sun? Will they vote for rulers who ravish the race of that which is as dear as virtue—the sacred right to the ballot for their kind?

Negro men and negro women must hear the truth, that our movement has not been connected with the Democratic party and has had no financial backing, the expense being borne by two members of the committee signing this; that our ticket was not ruled out because of a lack of legal signers or because it failed to comply with the law in any respect. It was thrown out at the command of a lily white boss, and the court refused to interfere because of a technicality so fine that we can't see it.

Right here we wish to read into the record our most respectful and fervid criticism of the court's gratuitous effort to read us out of the Republican party and brand us as trying to set up a new party—this is in the face of the fact that we went with pride to a lifetime of loyalty to the Republican party, and in face of the fact that we are supporting all of the Republican ticket, except the candidates of the Marion County Republican organization, which organization is opposed to a square deal for every one.

It matters not if negroes are too ignorant or too selfish or too cowardly to acknowledge it, one fact is paramount, namely: negroes owe it to themselves and their posterity to vote for Republican presidential electors, for the Republican candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives, for the Republican candidates for Governor and State officers, then scratch, scratch, scratch the Republican county ticket, the sponsors for which ravish negroes of the right to realize their worthy ambition to be men and women in the highest and best meaning of those words.

Respectfully,

(Signed) JAMES R. NORRELL, M. D., G. N. T. GRAY, for the Committee.

Didn't Mind Jail, but He Missed Harmonica

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