

Growth Of New Negro In Deep South Seen In Significant NAACP Parley

By JOHN LEFLORE
(Defender Staff Correspondent)

ATLANTA, Ga.—An encouraging sign that a new Negro is developing in the South was manifested by the serious mien of Negro leaders from five southern states who gathered here the past week-end to attend a rather unusual kind of school—a school offering no degrees but perhaps something infinitely more important—race leadership training. Negro Atlanta was host to this different kind of an "intellectual" meeting, projected as a far-sighted step to prepare southern Negroes to meet wisely and sanely the problems which may develop affecting the struggle of the Negro to attain full citizenship rights.

Leadership training courses to cover all sections of the nation were designed by the national office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in New York. Such courses have been offered in recent weeks in New York City, San Francisco, Cleveland, Indianapolis and Kansas City as regional meetings. But because of the more acute nature of the Negro's problems in the South and the fact that about three-fourths of the group live below the Mason-Dixon line, the southern meeting afforded a deeper significance.

Discuss Techniques

Hard-working and dynamic Director of Branches Ella J. Baker, and Special Counsel Thurgood Marshall, spearheaded the discussions. Others from the national office were Mrs. Irvine Ming, and Donald Jones, assistant field secretaries, and Miss Lucille Black of the department of branches.

Col. A. T. Walden, prominent Atlanta attorney, opened the meeting last Saturday morning at the Butler Street Y.M.C.A., with an address of welcome from the citizens of the community. Miss Baker immediately thereafter launched into the business of the

two-day session—a discussion of the Negro's problems and how to meet them.

She first explained the techniques and strategies of minority group action, and advised that the NAACP is a mass organization, fighting for the common rights of citizenship or all the Negro people of the nation, regardless of station in life.

On the subject of political pressure she cautioned Negroes to cast overboard party emblems and vote for men who indicate a stand for justice and right for Negroes. The N.A.A.C.P. director of branches also told her audience that "Negroes need to be instructed on how to register and vote, and what, to do and when to do it." She urged that Negro newspapers and magazines, as well as the daily press and other periodicals be read "to keep informed."

Miss Baker added that collaboration with whites whenever possible should be sought in the effort to mitigate the problems of the Negro.

Discuss Voting Curbs

The Saturday afternoon session was devoted to discussions on educational inequalities and voting restrictions. Discussion leaders were Mrs. Grace Hamilton, executive secretary of the Atlanta Urban League, and Emory Jackson, Birmingham newspaperman and executive secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. branch there.

John Hope III, a representative of the Southern regional office of the Fair Employment Practices Committee, and Mrs. R. Hall of the Atlanta office of the Office of Price Administration also spoke.

Mrs. Hamilton suggested use of one of the three methods, arousing of public opinion, political action, or court procedure, in the effort to seek better schools and other civic improvements for Negroes. She revealed that Atlanta has provided throughout the years only one-sixth as much money for Negro education as has been given for education of whites, although Negroes have consistently comprised about one-third of the population. She said that despite "the disadvantages and difficulties surrounding the Negro child's struggle to get an education, ten per cent more Negro children stay in school throughout the year than whites."

Jackson spoke of the voting sit-

uation confronting Negroes throughout the South. He said that the greatest obstacles to Negro voting in the Deep South are the Board of Registrars and the white primary. He urged a new determination upon the part of Negroes to attack through legal procedure the "vicious" and "unlawful" methods used by Boards of Registrars to prevent colored people from registering as voters.

Tells of Intimidation

The effort of Jefferson county deputies to intimidate him and those he had carried to the Board of Registrars' office to register was related by the militant Jackson. He told of how the officers came into the office and brandished their pistols in an unsuccessful attempt to frighten the colored people from the place.

The Saturday night session and banquet held in the auditorium of the Savoy Hotel was all Thurgood Marshall's. The brilliant N.A.A.C.P. special counsel outlined steps to be taken to prepare cases of discrimination for court action. He explained in detail the necessity of court action in combating police brutality, discrimination in public facilities, city parks, and playgrounds. He also scored segregation and discrimination in inter-state travel, and outlined procedure to be followed in fighting job discrimination.

Delegates present represented the states of South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia.