NEGROES FOR BRYAN AND STEVENSON

THE NEGRO NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC LEAGUE, AT ITS RECENT SIXTH
BIENNIAL SESSION IN KANSAS CITY, MO, ISSUED THE FOLLOWING
ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC

(Official Publication)

We, the chosen representative of the Negroes of the United States, who are
opposed to the re-election of President William McKinney and the republican nominee
for vice president, Theodore Roosevelt, in national convention assembled, appealing to
the intelligence, good reason and sober judgment of the Negroes of the country, do
declare and set forth the following:

Republican’s Arraigned

Since the emancipation the Negro has been counted in all the states as an ally to
the republican party, who owed it such faith and devotion that whatever the issues
presented between the parties, or what ever treatment he received at the hands of those
having the management of political, national and party affairs, he had no right and was counted an ingrate to refuse to vote the party ticket. His duty has been during all the time to fight the issues of the war again while the republican party has been engaged in exerting its every effort to forget, forgive and shake hands across the bloody chasm. Indeed, the white republican never mentions the ‘late unpleasantness’ except when he wishes to appeal to the Negro to remain loyal to the party. If it be the good of the white republican to forgive and forget it is doubly so for the Negro.

Office should never be the inducement to party support but the distribution of office has been made a part of practical politics. No republican president since the election of Grant, in 1868 could have been elected without the vote of the Negro in the pivotal states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey or New York. Yet the republican party has never given any fitting recognition to the Negroes in these states.

Advice to Negroes

The citizen is of right entitled to the full enjoyment of all the rights, privileges and protection guaranteed by our constitution and its amendments. But the enforcement of these rights the protection of life and property republican officials charged with that duty have repeated declared was a matter exclusively in the keeping of the several states of the Union. A denial of either had no federal aspect is the answer given to the repeated appeals to the federal authority and until this position is receded from, the Negro must turn to the sovereign states it is therefore to use the words of Prof. Booker T. Washington “The plain duty of the Negro [is] to make friends of the southern white men. If peace and good will we would have we will get it only upon the terms agreeable to and acceptable
by the southern white men. If we would have these terms agreeable and acceptable to ourselves we must enter upon such friendly relations as we can treat with him. This we can only do by showing that we are not unfriendly to his aims and purposes.

Loyalty of Democrats

Democrats are not natural enemies of the Negro the assertion that republicans told the Negro is not wholly true. There was not in the country 600 able bodied republicans when the call to arms to defend the union was issued and more than 60 per cent of the soldiers that enlisted in this first call were loyal democrats.

A Division of the Negro Vote

The intelligence of the country republicans whose party loyalty cannot be doubted, agree that division of the Negro vote is a thing to be desired and will work good for the nation and race. It is the Negro partisan alone who insists upon a blind adhesion to party without regard to the issues. The white republican renounces his faith and very quickly cancels his adhesion to the party. When will the Negro be able to balance his?

President McKinley Denounced

The record of President McKinley’s administration has but little if anything, to commend it to the Negro or upon which it can make any claim for his support. The administration at Washington is expressly opposed to the appointment of Negroes as commissioned officers in the army, though, President McKinley on account of dauntless courage and heroic bravery reluctantly commissioned nine Negroes second lieutenants.
He nevertheless at his earliest convenient time gave them the option of being mustered out or returning to their companies as privates and as to emphasize his determination not to have the Negro placed on equal footing with the white soldier, refused to commission Negroes to office in the black regiments, enlisted for service in the Philippines higher than that of captain and this is but in keeping with President McKinley’s advice to our race at Tuskegee that “the Negro youth should not aspire to the unattainable.”

Patriotism and Loyalty of the Negro

The glorious and untarnished record of the Negro soldiers, in all the wars of the country has been a source of pride to the race, and it remains for Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, now candidate for vice president on the republican ticket to first reflect upon the bravery and heroism, first to slander the men and the race to which they belong, who saved the day at Ft. Caney, San Juan hill and gave to him the opportunity to pose as he does, as the hero of the land forces in the Spanish-American war.

Must Study the Issues

We respectfully invite the men of our race to an earnest consideration of the issues to be determined in this campaign.

We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and leans toward the destruction of government by the people themselves. We insist that the subjugation of any people is “criminal aggression” and is a pronounced departure from the just principles taught and declared by Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, and all the great statesmen who have guided the country through as many dangers of the past.
Whether the people who will be affected by such policy be or consider themselves Negroes not yet because the majority of them are black, is of but little moment. They are by nature entitled to liberty and freedom. We being an oppressed people to use the words of Daniel O’Connell, should be “the loudest in our protestations against the oppression of others.” It may be that our government can and will govern the people of the Philippines and Porto Rico better than they can govern themselves but with equal force can it be said that the white men of the south can govern the localities in which the Negro is in a majority better than they can govern themselves and if we are prepared to support an administration that is engaged in suppressing liberty and freedom in our so called possessions why not be consistent and cease to complain of the same thing being done in any part of our own land? A nation cannot oppress a people without the borders of the country without sooner or later introducing some such oppression

Condemnation of Gold Standard

We declare that congress can be the money of the land and whatever ratio it fixes that will be the money. The Negro is not an investor of capital. Those who insist that gold alone shall be the money of the land give no employment to the Negro though employing thousands of laborers. He is not affected by the money market the more the volume of money in the country the more he will have and gold will always be controlled by the few.

The control of the commodities and necessities of the country on the aggregation concentration and combination of capital commonly called trusts threatens the life of the business and industries of the country making a vast army of unemployed to make room
for which the Negro will find himself pushed aside in those avenues in which he now has but small representation and into which he may seek entrance and in the avenues where we are already shut out and discriminated against our opportunities of entering are lessened and our ventures hampered by the direct influence of the trusts.

Endorse Democratic Principles and Ticket

To the end that our country its constitution and its government as established by the fathers be maintained that the declaration of independence remain intact that the constitution and its amendments be not construed away that the Negro take his place among the people that compose our citizenship thinking out the issues and acting upon them that high intelligence that characterizes the highest type of American citizenship that the rights of the common people be given as much sober thought as the right of capital that a bond of friendship be welded between the Negro and the white men among whom he lives thus insuring protection to life and property and the enjoyment of all the rights guaranteed in the constitution that hypocrisy be defeated we urge that our race support the democratic party in the coming election of that great commoner of the plain people the tribune of the rights of man as against money – William Jennings Bryan and Adlai P. Stevenson.

R. L. McGhee, Chairman Committee on Addresses

Geo. E. Taylor, President of League

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