NEGROES SEEK RECOGNITION.

Hold the balance of power, says ex-candidate Taylor.

Aims of the Party That Nominated Him for President. He thinks there are 5,000,000 more Negroes in the country than the census reported.

The night before election, one of the Presidential candidates sat in the little office of a Sixth avenue saloon in the heart of the Tenderloin negro colony. Few persons knew of his presence in the city. Though he had been regularly nominated by his party, any one voting for him had to use the free-for-all column on the extreme right hand side of the ballot.

The candidate was George E. Taylor of the National Negro Liberty party. After election day he spoke of the aims and hopes of his supporters.

“Yes, I know most white folks take me as a joke,” said Mr. Taylor. “Frequently when I was introduced as one of the Presidential candidates, I saw people pass the wink around. They didn’t think I saw it, but I want to tell you the colored man is beginning to see a lot of things that the white folks do not give him credit for seeing. He’s beginning to see that he has got to take care of his own interests, and what’s more, that he has the power to do it.
“There are few people that know just what the negroes’ power is. In spite of the census, even their numerical strength is not known. The special bulletin on the negro issued this year by the census bureau credits the colored man with being a little over nine million strong. If the census-takers had added about five million more to that number they would have been nearer the truth.

“Those are startling figures, but they are based on facts that are hard to get around. When I started the Negro Solicitor in Oskaloosa, Ia., a few years ago, I wanted to find out for advertising and publishing reasons the exact number of negroes in each town and country district of Iowa and the surrounding States.

“Intelligent negroes were picked out in each district, and they made a personal canvass for me. The returns showed a negro population 50 per cent, in excess of that returned in the official United States census.

“Two explanations may be given for this tremendous discrepancy. One is that the authorities do not want to let the negro know his numerical strength. The other reason, and the one I think by the far the more likely, is that the negro is one of the hardest of people to get census information from

“A black mammy can’t understand why any one, particularly a white stranger, should want to know how many children she has. If any reason at all comes into her head it is that the authorities want to find out if she is sending all her children to school. She knows that she can be arrested if she isn’t. So in nine cases out of ten she will lie as to the size of her family.

“If this lack of accuracy existed in the census returns from Northern States like Iowa, it is more than likely that it extended to the returns from the Southern States,
where the negroes are not so well educated and where as a consequence they are more distrustful and uncommunicative.

“Fourteen millions of people make a mass that would cause some serious reckoning if once it were awakened to activity. In the south to-day there are places where in spite of disfranchisement the negro has a sufficient vote to elect local officers of his own race. There are even districts where he could send his own representatives to Congress. In the North there are some districts where he has a similar power.

“But by being scattered in large colonies throughout the Union the negroes have something more than the mere power of numbers. An examination of the census and of the election returns will reveal a surprising number of places in which the negro holds the balance of power.

“There are districts, counties and even States where the negro vote is largely in excess of the normal Republican or Democratic plurality. Now, if this negro vote were controlled by an independent party organization so that it could be swung into the Democratic or the Republican line, the negro vote could be made to determine who would fill many our public offices. Except in the event of a landslide, that vote could even determine the Presidential election.

“To get the negroes into an independent party of this kind is the end toward which I am now working. It was for that purpose that the National Negro Liberty party was organized.
“We may not have done much this election, but the party is only in its infancy. At the election next year we expect to run a number of candidates for local offices through the country.

“When the party managers see colored men getting into office they will wake up to the fact that the negro vote is a new factor in national politics. Each party will be striving to secure the balance of power held by the colored man. Then we will have what we never had before from any party – consideration of the rights of the colored man, concessions, inducements.

“It is not going to be as difficult to organize this independent party as some may think. The negro is beginning to see that his present political attitude brings him nothing. The Republicans think that to vote the Republican ticket is one of the tenets of the negro’s religion, so they do not think it necessary to offer any inducements. The Democrats think that the negro is inseparably linked to the Republican party; so, expecting nothing, they give nothing.

“When the negro sees what the Republicanism is allowing Democracy, or rather rebelism, to do in the South, he asks himself why he should continue to make his cross under the eagle.

“Roosevelt asked a negro to dine with him, and from the fuss made over it one would have thought that had done a great thing. But the negro cannot see it that way. He cannot see why a mere difference in complexion should make the colored man an outcast race. Had the White House guest been a Jew or an Italian nothing would have been said about it.
“Any ignorant foreigner can come to this country and he has an even chance with the white man, but ‘the nigger must be kept down.’ He’s all right so long as he’s a laborer; but let him get a little education, a little money, a little success in his community, and he’s all wrong. White folks whom he has passed industrially, financially, will say:

“‘That nigger begins to think he’s better than white people. He ought to be kept down.’

“I know what the keeping-down process is. I’ve been through it.

“When I started the Negro Solicitor in Oskaloosa I had very little money. I had to secure advertisements, boom circulation, write articles and do some of the printing. I had to put in sixteen or eighteen hours a day.

“But I was working like a nigger, and I was all right. White folks bought my paper and gave me their advertisements.

“As the paper was gradually made to pay, I was able to begin to take things easier. I began to secure such comforts as a white man in my position would have done.

“I added a story to my house, put in bath tubs, and cooked on a gas stove. Then I got a horse and a rubber-tired trap. When I was buying a horse I thought I might as well get a good one. I bought a horse that could pass anything in town.

“My wife got hats and silk dresses and we used to drive out in the afternoons. When our friends visited us we would take them to the best restaurants in town.

“Then my advertisements and circulation began to fall off. The paper was soon run at a loss. I went to a white man who was a friend of mine and asked what was the trouble.
“‘Well, if you want me to tell you,' he said, ‘people think that you are putting on too many airs for a nigger. They think that if you have so much money you can do without theirs.’

“The end was that I had to sell out my paper at a loss. I had been kept down.

“Booker Washington and his plans are good enough in their way, but they will never secure the redemption of the negro race. The negro must do that himself at the polls. When the negro by an independent party organization proves and secures his equality at the polls, then perhaps there will not be so much talk about ‘keeping the nigger down.’

“There is one important fact that the white man must keep in mind when he calculates our fighting chance at the polls in the future. The white race is standing still while the black is growing.

“The whites no longer have large families, but the blacks are breeding fast. To be sure, the census shows that there has been a greater increase in the number of whites than the blacks. But there are two facts that discount that showing:

“One is that the negro conceals his numbers, as I have already said. The other is that the whites are receiving immense yearly accessions from Europe, while the colored race is growing only through its birth rate.”