An Appeal to America

the Presidential campaign of 1928. It deserves to be re-read and preserved.

The persons whose names are signed beneath are alike in the fact that we all have Negro slaves among our ancestors. In other respects, we differ widely; in descent, in dwelling place, in age and occupation, and, to some extent, in our approach to what is known as the Negro problem.

More especially we differ in political thought and allegiance: some of us are Republicans by inheritance and long custom; others are Democrats, by affiliation and party membership; still others are Socialists.

But all of us are at this moment united in the solemn conviction that in the presidential campaign of 1928, more than in previous campaigns since the Civil War, the American Negro was treated in a manner which is unfair and discouraging.

We accuse the political leaders of this campaign of permitting without protest, public and repeated assertions on the platform, in the press, and by word of mouth, that color and race constitute in themselves an imputation of guilt and

It has been said, North and South, East and West, and by partisans of the leading candidates:

1. That Negro voters should not be appealed to, or their support welcomed by the advocates of just causes.

2. That colored persons should not hold public office, no matter what their character may be nor how well they do their work nor how competently they satisfy their constituents.

3. That the contact of white people and black people in government, in business, and in daily life, in common effort and co-operation, calls for explanation and apology.

4. That the honesty and integrity of party organization depend on the complete removal of all Negroes from voice and authority.

5. That the appointment of a public official is an act which concerns only white citizens, and that colored citizens should have neither voice nor considera- and the increase of co-operation can be skinned? tion in such appointments.

embellishment, have appeared as full- North or South believe in the necessity paged advertisements in the public press, or the truth of the assertions current in JOHN HOPE, President of Morehouse as the subject of leading editorials, and as this campaign; but we are astonished to displayed news stories; they have been re- see the number of persons who are peated on the public platform in open de- whipped to silence in the presence of such bate and over the radio by both Repub- obvious and ancient political trickery. lican and Democratic speakers, and they You cannot set the requirements of have been received by the nation and by political honesty and intelligence too high the adherents of these and other parties to gain our consent. We have absolutely in almost complete silence. A few per- no quarrel with standards of ability and sons have deprecated this gratuitous lug- character which will bring to public ofging in of the race problem, but for the fice in America the very highest type of most part, this astonishing campaign of public servant. We are more troubled National Association of Colored Women, public insult toward one-tenth of the na- over political dishonesty among black folk (Will you please turn to page 428)

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HE following historic document tion has evoked no word of protest from than you are among white. We are not was issued in the closing weeks of the leading party candidates or from seeking political domination. But, on the social reformer.

> danger in a republic like ours of making sincere religious belief a matter of political controversy and of diverting public attack in this case. It is its subtle and ous hatred and evil personal gossip are, few care, few protest, few answer. Has they have not the seeds of evil and dis- not the time come when as a nation, aster that lie in continued, unlimited and North and South, black and white, we unrestrained appeal to race prejudice. can stop this tragic fooling and demand, hatred which was made in this cam- groes might wish, nor all that some white paign is an appeal to the lowest and most people might prefer, but a certain balance primitive of human motives, and as long of decency and logic in the discussion of as this appeal can successfully be made, race? Can we not as a nation assert there is for this land no real peace, no that the Constitution is the law of the sincere religion, no national unity, no land and that the 13th, 14th, 15th and social progress, even in matters far re- 19th Amendments as well as the 18th are moved from racial controversy.

> marriage between the races. We frankly not in his color; that in this modern must involve long years of poverty, crime contact it is inevitable that persons of and contempt; for all of this that the past different race work together in private have paid in good temper, quiet work not wrong unless, the persons are unable and unfaltering faith. But we do sol- to do their work properly or unless their emnly affirm that in a civilized land and helpful co-operation is proven impossiin a Christian culture and among in- ble? creasingly intelligent people, somewhere - We are asking, therefore, in this apand sometime, limits must be put to race peal, for a public repudiation of this disparagement and separation and to campaign of racial hatred. Silence and campaigns of racial calumny which seek whispering in this case are worse than to set twelve million human beings out- in matters of personal character and re-

part of it must come to admit that the to remain silent? Will the Church say gradual disappearance of inequalities be- nothing? Is there in truth any issue tween racial groups and the gradual in this campaign, either religious tolersoftening of prejudice and hatred, is a ance, liquor, water-power, tariff or farm sign of advance and not of retrogression relief, that touches, in weight the transand should be hailed as such by all de- cendent and fundamental question of the cent folk and we think it monstrous to open, loyal and unchallenged recognition wage a political campaign in which the of the essential humanity of twelve milfading and softening of racial animosity lion Americans who happen to be darkheld up to the nation as a fault and not R. R. MOTON, Principal of Tuskegee These assertions, which sound bald and as a virtue. We do not believe that the

their official spokesmen; and from few re- other hand, it is too late for us to subligious ministers, Protestant or Catholic, mit to political slavery and we most or Jewish, and from almost no leading earnestly protest against the unchallenged assumption that every American Negro Much has been said and rightly of the is dishonest and incompetent and that color in itself is a crime.

It is not so much the virulence of the attention from great questions of public complacent character and the assenting policy to petty matters of private life. silence in which it is received. Gravely But, Citizens of America, bad as religi- and openly these assertions are made and The emphasis of racial contempt and not to be sure, everything that all Nestill valid; that it is no crime for a col-Do not misunderstand us: we are not ored man to vote if he meets the legal asking equality where there is no equal- requirements; that it is not a crime to ity. We are not demanding or even dis- appoint a colored man to office unless he cussing purely social intermingling. We is incompetent; and if he is incompetent, have not the slightest desire for inter- the crime lies in his incompetency and recognize that the aftermath of slavery world of necessarily increasing human has brought and the present gives we and public service; that this contact is

side the pale of ordinary humanity. ligion. Will white America make no We believe that this nation and every protest? Will the candidates continue

Institute, Tuskegee, Alabama. almost unbelievable when stated without majority of the white people whether W. E. B. DU BOIS, Editor, CRISIS Magazine, New York.

> College, Atlanta, Ga. MORDECAI W. JOHNSON, President, Howard University, Washington,

> D. C. HARRY E. DAVIS, Civil Service Commissioner, City of Cleveland, Ohio GEORGE C. CLEMENT, Bishop, A. M. E. Zion Church, Louisville,

> Kentucky. SALLIE W. STEWART, President,

> > THE CRISIS

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ND He said: A certain man had him anything else because they had two sons.

And the younger of them said to his father: "Father give me the portion of your property that is coming to me. You and brother can settle the Negro problem and uplift the race and contribute to the Church and the N. A. A. C. P. But as for me, I'm going to make money and spend it on Me." And the father divided his savings between the boys.

And not many days afterward, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey to New York where he went into business and soon was making a good income; and he became not only comfortably clothed and wellfed, but he began to waste his substance in a showy house, rich and elegant furniture, a Lincoln limousine with a chauffeur and a Packard runabout, and an expensive wife, too young to have any sense, and a host of new friends whose first business seemed to be to see which could outspend the other.

And when he was spending all he could earn on himself and his wife and his pleasures, and was tired out by hard work all day and staying up all night, there arose a mighty famine in both his body and his soul. His head ached; his heart was weak; his lungs were congested; his stomach would not digest his food. In fact he seemed to have lost his capacity to enjoy life. And he began to be in want of something which he did not have and could not seem to get.

citizen next door who seemed to be me and mother. I'll send and have having a wild time. This citizen led brother and our friends in. It's a long him around to cabarets and gambling time since you've been home. We're houses two or three times a week, to powerful glad to see you." feed with the swine.

And he would fain have filled his was ready and the father repeated: belly with the husks that these white and black swine ate, but somehow he is alive again. He was lost and is to learn. He is awakening. You have could not digest mere filth, and the found." And they began to be merry. bad liquor and bad air made him sick. He tried to enjoy the loud and vulgar and as he came and drew nigh to the harlots but he only caught filthy dis- house he heard the laughing and talkeases that made him ashamed to meet ing. his wife. And no man there offered

THE PRODIGAL SON St. Luke, XV, 1-32.

nothing else to offer.

A ND when he came to himself, he said: "What is wrong with me? My father and my brother have not near the income I have. Brother has an old Ford and father walks. They live in a small town and an old-fashioned home and neither mother nor sister ever owned a fur coat. And yet \ \ ND he answering said to his somehow they seem interested in life A father: "You know how John has and satisfied. They keep well and been neglecting us and going the pace. strong. They apparently have enough Too high-toned to visit us, too busy to and to spare of what makes Life worth write, too much of a spendthrift to

and before you. "'And I am no more worthy to be called your son. Advise me and tell me what's wrong."

And he arose and took the train home. But before he had opened the of a fuss!"

gate his father had seen him and ran out and gripped his hand and led him And the son said unto him: "Father,

have sinned against myself and against you, and I am no more worthy to be called your son. Let me come home and work for you."

But the father said: "O come now! You're all right, Son; you've got good stuff in you. You've worked hard and built up a good business. You are young enough to learn. But never mind your troubles. You just don't feel well and you need sleep. Come in! We've got some roast pork and cab-And he went and joined himself to a bage; come and have a good talk with

The neighbors dropped in. Dinner

"For this my son was dead and he Now his elder son was in the field

And he called one of his friends and

asked him what these things meant. And he said unto him: "Your brother has come home and your father has roasted a young pig because he has received him safe and sound."

And he was angry and did not go in. Therefore came his father out and entreated him.

living, while I perish with too much. give us a helping hand, and too much My soul is hungry. I will arise and go of a fool about women to be a man. to my father and will say unto him: Yet he got as much of your hard-'Father, I have sinned against myself earned savings as I did and hasn't given back a cent. I stayed at home and worked on the place and you never threw a party for me. But as soon as this son has come, who squanders his money with harlots, you make a hell

And he said unto him: "Son, you are ever with me and all that I have is yours. From me you have learned to live. You have listened to my experience and have come to realize that a big city and a big house and a big car do not make happiness and that as long as most of our people are poor and ignorant, we who are better off can't succeed by forgetting them and working and spending selfishly just for ourselves. You and I, Son, working together in talk and silence, have learned the secret of real living: you can't enjoy food if you eat too much; you can't work if you don't rest; you can't get drunk and be sober; and you can't chase harlots and enjoy your wife. Above all, you can't work for yourself unless you work for others. All this, Son, which Life taught me long since, is yours. You have learned it.

"But now this poor boy is beginning never been dead like your brother.

"Don't you see, Son, that we should make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found!"





