the National Office immediately wrote to the editors of newspapers in both cities expressing the hope "that a crime committed by a degenerate or a mental defective will not be visited upon law-abiding citizens of the same race." The letter had the desired effect.

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IX. THE TWENTY-FOURTH INFANTRY

In the Fourteenth Annual Report mention was made of the Petition for the release of the men of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, imprisoned since 1917 at Leavenworth, Kansas. On Thursday, February 7, 1924, at noon, President Coolidge received at the White House a delegation of representative colored citizens of the United States who presented to him a petition signed by more than 120,000 people of both races, asking for pardon for the men of the Twenty-fourth. The delegation consisted of fourteen persons headed by James Weldon Johnson, Secretary of the N. A. A. C. P., who acted as spokesman. The members of the delegation were:

S. S. Booker, of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, representing 3,000 college graduates.

Rev. L. K. Williams, of the National Baptist Convention, representing 2,938,579 Baptists.

Nahum D. Brascher, of the Associated Negro Press.

A. Philip Randolph, Editor of The Messenger and representing The Friends of Negro Freedom.

Archibald H. Grimké, of Washington, D. C., distinguished American, former U. S. Minister to Santo Domingo and Spingarn Medalist.

Mrs. Gabrielle Pelham, of the National Race Congress.

Mrs. Daisy Lampkin, of the National Association of Colored Women.

J. E. Mitchell, Editor St. Louis Argus, representing National Negro Press Association.

Robert S. Abbott, Editor Chicago Defender.

Bishop J. S. Caldwell, of Philadelphia, representing the A. M. E. Z. Church.

Channing H. Tobias, New York City, of the Y. M. C. A. Robert L. Vann, Editor Pittsburgh Courier.

Carl Murphy, Editor Baltimore Afro-American.

Cyril V. Briggs, Head of Crusader News Service, representing African Blood Brotherhood.

Bishop John Hurst, of the A. M. E. Church, who was also invited to serve as a member of the delegation, could not be in Washington to attend the ceremony but he authorized the use of his name and that of his church with its 548,355 members in connection with the delegation, as did also Mr. B. J. Davis, Editor of the Atlanta Independent, who was invited as a representative of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows. There was also attached to the petition a memorial signed by a committee of fifty composed of cooperating organizations and individuals.

The National Equal Rights League, through William Monroe Trotter, its Secretary, was represented by its own delegation of four members which, according to a telegram from Mr. Trotter to the N. A. A. C. P., came to endorse the petition gathered and presented under the auspices of the N. A. A. C. P.

In presenting the petition, Mr. Johnson said:

Mr. President:

We come as a delegation representing the 120,000 signers of a Petition asking you to exercise the power of executive elemency and pardon the former members of the United States Twenty-fourth Infantry now confined in Leavenworth Prison convicted on charges of rioting at Houston, Texas, in August, 1917. And we come as the representatives not only of those who sign this Petition, but we are the spokesmen of the sentiments, the hopes, the sorrows, too, of the more than ten million colored citizens of the United States.

The Petition asks for the pardon of these men on four grounds:

1. The excellent previous record for discipline, service and soldierly conduct of the Twenty-fourth Infantry.

2. The provocation of local animosity against these men because of their race and color, which was manifested in insults, threats and acts of violence against these colored soldiers wearing the uniform of the United States Army and waiting to be sent to France to fight.

3. The heavy punishment meted out to members of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, of whom nineteen were hanged, thirteen of them summarily and without right of appeal to the Secretary of War or to the President, their Commander-in-Chief.

4. The exemplary conduct of the men as prisoners.

The record for bravery and loyalty of colored soldiers in every crisis of the nation is too well known to be called to your attention here, and the long history of the Twenty-fourth Infantry is a part of that record. But we do wish to call your attention to the conditions which immediately preceded the riots of August, 1917, in Houston, Texas.

Contrary to all precedent, the provost guard of this colored regiment had