

black in Baltimore City, Somerset County too. Everybody recognizes that government is the art of the possible, the great exponent of which now sits in our White House, but we also recognize that when problems become acute we give them special recognition and attention. I took the Governor's invitation to mean that he was inclined to recognize this as a problem which requires special attention. It was not designed for this conference to bring out concrete representation as to what should be done in the State of Maryland. I don't pose to be an expert. I leave that to Mrs. Mitchell. She is an expert on every furrow and cranny in the State of Maryland. This conference means simply that the Governor felt that with all the stresses and strains and pressures on him on other problems, and recognizing what comes out must be the art of the possible, he still wanted to give this special attention and special recognition. What will come out of it I don't know. It could be either that the Governor or the Legislature, or the business community, or financial community, or the farming community, or a dozen other specialized groups will bring their pressures to bear to minimize the gains. I don't regard that as any indictment of Governor Agnew's intentions in this matter.

QUESTION: Mr. Wilkins, some of the younger civil rights organizations seem to be disowning white membership. Is this a bad development?

MR. WILKINS:

I don't want to comment on their determinations. I only want to say that the NAACP started out as an interracial organization in 1909 and expects to continue as one. We don't think that freedom is "black freedom" or freedom is "white freedom." We think that freedom belongs to everybody, and everybody who believes this should fight for it.

QUESTION: Would it be better if all of them were interracial?

MR. WILKINS:

Here again, I don't want to pass judgment on someone else's policy. They had a meeting, they adopted a rule, and they said that this is the rule for the people in the room. They voted 322 or 92 to 6 or 52 to 1, or whatever was there, and said this is our policy. I just feel that our policy, the NAACP policy, is the best policy. Our policy is interracial activity in a multiracial society. How can you proceed in a multiracial society on a racial basis? This is sort of self-defeating.