

AN ADDRESS  
TO THE  
AMERICAN NEGRO



BY THE NEGRO DEVELOPMENT AND  
EXPOSITION COMPANY OF THE U. S. A.  
528 EAST BROAD STREET, - RICHMOND, VA.



## ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN NEGRO.

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### NEGRO DEVELOPMENT AND EXPOSITION COMPANY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

*To the Ten Million Negroes of the United States—*

*Greeting—*

Whereas a large number of representative men and women of the race secured, under the laws of Virginia, a charter for the Negro Development and Exposition Company of the United States of America, on the 13th day of August, 1903, which company was organized for the purpose of holding a separate exhibit on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the landing of the first English speaking people of this country at Jamestown, Va., but before the incorporation of this company, there was organized and chartered the Jamestown Exposition Company, under the laws of Virginia, for the purpose of celebrating the said 300th anniversary, by holding a land and naval exhibition at or near Hampton Roads, Va. This last company is officered, owned and operated by the white people of this country.

The Negro felt that in as much as there was to be a celebration of the said event by the white race, it would be a fit and opportune time for the Negro to come upon the scenes and there present to the nations of the earth, the evidence of his thrift and progress, by putting upon exhibition the articles and things made and invented, created and produced by the race since its emancipation, and that in accordance with the uncertain and unsatisfactory conditions now existing as to the Negro in this country, that a creditable exhibit of his industrial capacities would result in untold good to the entire race, that the Negro question has been and is being discussed all over this country, some taking a favorable view of the situation, others taking different views, leaving him in an unsatisfactory position as to his relation to the government and the country in which he lives. A creditable exhibit would have a tendency to show just what the Negro can do, what he has done, and what he is doing in the solution of the much talked of question, or problem. That in this particular time, such an exhibit would be productive of great results from every point of view. The fact that the nations of the earth have been invited by the President of the United States to participate in the said exposition, is another evidence that such an exhibit would be of untold benefit to the Negro. It would also be stimulating to the Negro to see for himself what he can do, as

such an exhibit would bring together the entire race with its exhibits to be thus viewed, which under no other circumstances it could have done.

After the incorporation of the said Negro Development and Exposition Company, its executive officers conferred with the Jamestown Company and secured concessions to hold a separate and distinct exhibit on the occasion of the great national and international exposition to enable the Negro to produce the results above referred to. The concessions were in every way satisfactory and agreeable to both the Negro Development and Exposition Company and the Jamestown Exposition Company. After this concession, the said Negro Development and Exposition Company proceeded to present its claim for a special exhibit on account of the race to the American people regardless of race or color. Its first effort was for the endorsement of the National Negro Business League, of which Dr. Booker T. Washington is president. Its second effort was to secure the endorsement and support of the National Negro Baptist Convention at its session in the city of Chicago on the 27th day of October 1905, which endorsement was unanimously received. It received the endorsement of a number of the State Baptist Conventions, and of the State A. M. E. Conferences including that of Virginia. It received the endorsement of the State Baptist Conventions of North Carolina, South Carolina and a number of district and other conventions of the race in the various States of the Union. Among them were the Florida State Negro Business League, and the Mississippi State Negro Business League. We carried the cause from State to State. We have had resolutions adopted endorsing our efforts in nearly every State of the Union, where the race population justified the adoption of such resolutions. We have spoken and received the endorsement in mass meetings assembled in the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburg and other large cities in the North and West.

The company's authorized capital stock was fixed at \$800,000 at the par value of \$10.00 each. We saw that the money could not be raised in time to have the desired result by the sale of the capital stock among the members of our own race. We, therefore, appealed to the governors of the different States, where the colored people were in large numbers or the colored population justified it, asking that they recommend to their legislatures the appropriation of an amount of money, justified by the number of Negroes, to aid and assist the Negro of their respective States in uniting with their brethren in Virginia in making a creditable exhibit of their achievements from their said States. From them we received favorable response. A large number of the governors recommended such an appropriation, and in a number of States appropriations have been made for the said State's participation in the Jamestown Exposition. We have appealed to the State commissioners, appointed by their respective governors, asking that a portion of the appropriation thus made, be set apart to assist the Negro

of that State in the part he desires to take in connection with the Negro exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition. We have appeared before the committees of several legislatures. We have presented the cause of the Negroes and asked the legislatures to provide for them. Then, for fear that the States might not act as promptly as we hoped to or as satisfactorily as we hoped they would, we appealed to the president of the United States, and asked for the influence of his good office in securing an appropriation from the national government. The mere calling the President's attention to the situation secured his immediate endorsement and his pledge of support in our effort to get governmental aid in this laudable enterprise. To emphasize his position in the matter on the occasion of his visit in the South in passing through Richmond, Va., on the 18th day of October, 1905, President Roosevelt stopped the procession that was escorting him through the city of Richmond when it reached the head-quarters of the Negro Development and Exposition Company, and there called for Giles B. Jackson, the Director General of the said company, and addressing him, said in part; "Mr. Jackson, I congratulate you and your people on the magnificent showing you have made in your development. I am with you. I assure you and your people that you have my hearty support in the efforts you are making to have a creditable exhibit of the achievements of your race and I commend you in the effort you are making for the betterment of the condition of your race."

Having thus received the public commendation of the President of the United States, we proceeded to Washington with a bill in hand prepared with pains and asking for the appropriation of \$250,000 by the Congress of the United States to the Negro Development and Exposition Company, to aid him in his exhibit. This bill was referred to the committee on Industrial Arts and Expositions and after several meetings of the committee once in the city of Norfolk and on other occasions in the city of Washington, it was agreed to recommend the appropriation of \$100,000 in the aid of the Negro Development and Exposition Company. This bill was likewise reported by the committee in the senate, and on the 30th day of June, it passed both houses of congress and was signed by the president and there upon became the law of the land.

It is needless for us to say that we had quite a difficult task in getting this appropriation. We had to fight those whom we had expected would be our friends, and those whom we had expected to meet in compact in opposition to this appropriation, were those who came to our rescue. We mean the white men. We mean there was not a single white man in congress to raise his voice against us. It passed congress with only one vote against us and that was so faint one could not discover the one who said it. He did not mean it. If he had, he would have made himself heard and his identity known, therefore, we

regard it that the bill, appropriating this \$100,000 to aid the Negro, was passed without a single voice against it. But, strange as it may appear, there were those among our own race, who wrote letters to congress protesting against governmental aid of the Negro Development and Exposition Company, and these were men of learning, as we are told, but their effort was so preposterous that it made friends for us in congress. The white man saw that any Negro who opposed such an appropriation was an enemy to himself and his race, hence, the opposition of the few, simply made friends for us. We have not an unkind word to say against them or anybody else. The fact that the government has put its seal of approval upon the effort of the Negro Development and Exposition Company and its officers by making the appropriation to aid it in its work, is sufficient to commend the said company to the entire Negro race and to the American people. It does commend it, and in no uncertain tone, for when the government of the United States passes an act appropriating \$1000,000, it puts its commendation upon it. When the Congress of the United States passes an act appropriating \$1.00 to any cause, it carries with it its commendation to the world. The committee on Industrial Arts and Expositions investigated everything pertaining to the Negro Development and Exposition Company. They had meetings after meetings, and Negro after Negro appeared before them, either in writing or otherwise, and tried to throw cold water upon the efforts of the Negro in Virginia, but every step they made redounded to the benefit of the Negro Development and Exposition Company. The harder the Negro fought it the better faith the white man had in it, because the Negro could not make the argument sufficiently strong against the appropriation to convince an illiterate man, much less a member of congress, that the Negro exhibit was not the thing to be had.

The fact that there was a Negro department at the Atlanta Exposition, which was supported by governmental aid, and the fact that there was a Negro department at the Charleston Exposition, which was supported by governmental aid, and the fact that the Negro exhibit was gathered together by the authorities of the national government and carried to Paris, and there put upon exhibition, all three of which exhibitions were declared a success, have caused our opposers to abandon all opposition, and to unite with the Negro Development and Exposition Company to make the desired success of the exposition. They were the pride of the Negro race. This alone was argument in favor of the Negro exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition, and left no room for the opposers to make a stand.

Now that all of this has happened and the Negro Development and Exposition Company is still marching to the front with the aid of the government, and is planning to have a gigantic exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition, and that the government of the United States, by

its act has removed all doubt as to the success of the exhibit and has declared its faith in the management of the Negro Development and Exposition Company, the thing now to do is for the whole race, even those who differ with us, to unite as one and carry forward the great work of creating the gigantic exhibit on behalf of the Negro race of this country at the Jamestown Exposition.

The argument that the Negro exhibit was a jim crow affair, has been knocked out by the act of the government and by the act of the Negro Development and Exposition Company. The fact that the company is owned and officered by the Negro himself and was made and created on his motion, removed any taint of jim crowism. If the Negro Development and Exposition Company is a jim crow affair, then every institution of learning, owned and officered by Negroes, is likewise a jim crow affair, every church, in which Negroes worship and over which our bishops preside, is a jim crow affair. If one is a jim crow affair, then the other is. We say neither is. The Negro Development and Exposition Company, and the church, and the institution of learning, owned and operated by Negroes, each is a separate institution for the benefit of the Negro, and so will be the Negro exhibit at the Jamestown Exposition.

Argument has been produced against the exhibit because of the jim crow car laws, that exist in the Southern States. This we deplore, and our position is known. We were so much opposed to the law, that Giles B. Jackson, the Director General of this company, appeared before the legislative committee on roads and internal navigation of the Virginia legislature, and opposed the enactment of this law, with all his vim, oratory, force, and effect. He made it possible for a committee, that was headed by Dr. Atkins, of Hampton, Va., to appear before the said committee and enter a solemn protest, but after all the bill was enacted. It was only in keeping with all the Southern States. It is now the law, and as law-abiding citizens, we are compelled to bow in humble submission. If the State is insufficient to compel us to obey the law, the United States government, under the constitution, would have to intervene until we were subjected under the laws of the State. Then, too, is it not the proper thing for us to do to make the best terms we can with railroads since they have the power to give equal accommodation to both races, that being the law of different Southern States, that the races should be separated that no distinction should be made as to accommodation? It is incumbent upon the Negro to stop kicking and quarreling, and go to the law and to the heads of the authorities of the States and ask that the railroads be required to give equal accommodation for the colored passengers, and this will be done. But whether the citizens of the different States do it or not, the Negro Development and Exposition Company, having in charge the Negro exhibit at Jamestown, will see to it that equal and good accom-

modations will be afforded to the Negro travellers, to and from the exposition. The Negro Development and Exposition Company is making itself busy in looking after this part of the program. It will take up the matter with the heads of the railroad companies. In fact, it has already done so with some of the companies and they have pledged their word and honor that good, clean and satisfactory accommodations will be given to the Negro travelers from the North, South, East and West. That they shall have no reason to complain, other than the fact that they will not be riding with the white folks. They will be riding together in clean, decent and respectable cars with efficient service. Those travelling, who find any fault with the management, will please report the same to Giles B. Jackson, the Director General and the general counsel for the Negro Development and Exposition Company, of U. S. A., and he will take the matter up immediately with the railroad companies and see to it that there shall not be any other occasion for complaint. Col. Jackson is on good terms with the railroad companies, but if they fail to do their duty, the aid of the corporation commission, having charge of the overseeing of all the railroads of Virginia, will adjust matters. This commission was made and created under the constitution of Virginia for the purpose of enforcing the laws, and its aid will be invoked whenever the occasion requires, but it is hoped and believed that the occasion will not require it. The railroad and steamboat companies will make special effort to avoid any complaint from any travelers on all lines and roads.

We issue this address that the members of our race may thoroughly understand the true condition of affairs and that they may not be afraid to come to the exposition. The fact that there will be crowds of people coming from all over the country to the exposition will make it convenient for the reunion of families, that have been separated for ten, twenty, yes, thirty years. The opportunity will be afforded for the meeting of our friends, whom we have not seen since the war. The opportunity will be afforded for the meeting of our kin-folks and relatives, whom we have not seen since our emancipation. Every car coming will bring lots of our race, every boat will be loaded down. On every day there will be those who have not seen each other for years.

**RESTAURANT ACCOMMODATIONS.** Board and lodging will be the same as it is now. No one will be allowed to charge more than the usual price. Board and lodging can be secured in the families and hotels in Norfolk, Hampton, Phoebus, Newport News and the surrounding towns. . .

Ample accommodations will be made by which persons can reach the exposition grounds in twenty-five minutes. Street facilities and bus lines will be in abundance. The colored people in the city of Norfolk are now organizing a transportation line with the view of running carriages of all kinds and busses into the grounds.



The Jamestown Exposition Company will issue their proclamation calling upon the people to do justice between man and man. The authorities of Virginia will see to it that no man will be put to inconvenience or prosecuted unless he is proven guilty of violating the laws of the land. The law is not made to punish the just and law abiding citizens but it is made to punish the offenders of the law, and it is made to protect the just and those who come under its protection. There are those among both races whom the law was made to subdue. It will not allow them to predominate or to obstruct the law abiding members of any race, who shall come upon the soil of Virginia. The judges of our courts are conservative. We speak from our own knowledge of practice before the bar for twenty years. No man will be unfairly dealt with, but he must obey the law. We mean the rowdy and shiftless element that might drift among us. They will find the white and black men united to suppress them, if they commence to evade the law or hinder others in their pursuit of happiness. The Negro will have no complaint to make when he comes to the exposition. We vouch for it that the first car load that comes here will go back with such good news and glad tidings that many more will be anxious to come. This remains to be seen, that we understand the situation and predict this as the result of careful study of the situation.

Our head-quarters will be found at:

528 E. Broad street, Richmond, Va.

663 Church street, Norfolk, Va.

Corner 12th and U streets, N. W., Washington, D. C., at True Reformers' Hall; no one can miss it.

Anyone desiring information, in going to either one of these cities, it will be well to apply to the head-quarters and get such information that they desire, or write to Giles B. Jackson, 528 Broad street, Richmond, Va.

Head-quarters are open for exhibits. Please write for particulars. On some of the exhibits premiums will be declared by the executive board after the exposition.

Respectfully submitted,

**NEGRO DEVELOPMENT AND EXPOSITION CO.**

**W. ISAAC JOHNSON, President.**

**REV. A. BINGA, JR., Vice-President.**

**ROBERT KELSER, Secretary.**

**R. T. HILL, Treasurer.**

**REV. THOS. SHORTS, Sub-Treasurer.**

**J. R. HAWKINS, Auditor & Chief of Finance.**

**MRS. A. M. CURTIS, Organizer.**

**GILES B. JACKSON, Director General.**

## AN APPEAL FOR AID,

The fact that the Negro Development and Exposition Company was chartered under the laws of the State of Virginia, with an authorized capital stock of \$800,000, divided into shares of \$10 each, is sufficient in itself to show the purpose of the Company to raise the money from the individual members of the race by the sale of the stock, and since several of the States, through their Legislatures, have appropriated money in aid of the Exposition, and the Congress of the United States, having, on the 30th day of June 1906, appropriated \$100,000 in aid of the Negro Development and Exposition Company of the United States of America, it is incumbent upon every member of the race now to subscribe to at least one share of this stock for \$10, or two shares for \$20, or three shares for \$30, or four shares for \$40, or five shares for \$50, or six shares for \$60, or seven shares for \$70, or eight shares for \$80, or nine shares for \$90, ten shares for \$100. The Company promises to pay a dividend upon this stock, which we hope will not be less than 25 per cent., together with interest at 6 per cent. Then, from a business standpoint, it is encouraging for any member of the race to invest money for such a number of shares as he may feel disposed to. It is a paying investment.

Then, to subscribe to this stock you would first have made an investment of money that could not be made in any other enterprise. Second, you would aid the Company in raising money necessary to have a creditable exhibit on behalf of the race at the Jamestown Exposition, as a failure to have a creditable exhibit would be a failure of the race; but to make a gigantic exhibit as we propose, and as most assuredly will be made, it will be the success of the race; for the race will be judged according to the exhibit it makes at the Jamestown Exposition. If it makes a poor exhibit it will be so judged. If it makes a good and substantial exhibit it will put the race in a substantial position before the world.

Let every man, woman and child, send us \$10 for one share of stock, or as many more as they desire. Write for particulars to R. T. Hill, Cashier of True Reformers' Bank, 604 N. Second St., Richmond, Va., or to Giles B. Jackson, 528 E. Broad St., Richmond, Va.



