

**HERE ARE THE FACTS.**

The following letter was received from the National Office of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and is published by request:

October 26th, 1921.

Mr. Charles Sumner Smith,  
Editor, The Minneapolis Messenger,  
1317 Sixth Ave. No., Minneapolis, Minn.

My dear Mr. Smith:

My attention has been called to an editorial appearing in the Minneapolis Messenger of October 22nd, under the heading, "May Lose Duluth Rape Case," in which you state that:

"It is reported that the national office of the N. A. A. C. P. will not advance funds for the brief, which amounts to \$200. This is deplorable and it is about time that those who collect moneys for such purposes would see that enough is appropriated for the entire procedure in reaching the last courts and that due notice be given for the solicitation of more funds before it is too late. It is the duty of the N. A. A. C. P. to support this appeal, or give good reasons why."

It is for the purpose of giving you, and to the readers of the Minneapolis Messenger through you, the facts in this and other cases which the N. A. A. C. P. is handling, that this letter is written. In view of the interest you have taken in the work of the Association and the co-operation which you have rendered, I feel sure that you would not have made the statement quoted above if you had been in possession of the facts. I am, therefore, requesting that you give to this statement the same prominence in your next issue that you gave to the editorial in your issue of the 22nd.

First, may I detail the steps which have been taken in defending the 13 colored men who were arrested and indicted following the Duluth lynchings in June, 1920. The Duluth branch of the N. A. A. C. P. was organized immediately following the lynchings and in a letter from Mr. George H. Adams, president of the Duluth Branch, to this office, dated May 14th, he stated that the branch had received and expended \$1,152.00 for attorneys' fees; that it has paid \$350.00 for the briefs in the Max Mason case and had a small balance in the treasury. Prior to this time an appeal had been made to the national office for assistance and two steps were taken. First, \$100.00 was given by the national office, and second, an appeal was made to eighteen branches in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin and Kansas. These branches responded as liberally as they could.

The national office has rendered every assistance to the Duluth Branch in these cases that funds at its disposal would allow. I am sure that you and the readers of the Messenger must realize that the Duluth cases are but one of a number which we are handling. For example, we have defended since October, 1919, twelve men sentenced to death and sixty-seven to long prison terms in connection with the Arkansas riots. We have expended to date in these cases \$10,749.39, and are at present definitely obligated to spend \$3,000.00 more. This has been a fight against the most vicious race prejudice imaginable and we have had to go up single-handed against the entire state of Arkansas in our efforts not only to save the lives of these men but in a fight to end the vicious exploitation of colored people under the peonage system of the South.

Further, these seventy-nine men in Arkansas are in an almost helpless condition, confronted as they are with bitter race prejudice and with the opposition of the entire economic system of the state, which is based largely on the share-cropping system. But the people of Minnesota have neither of these handicaps to any great extent, and are in a position where they can fight for themselves.

Finally, with regard to your statement referring to organizations that collect money for such purposes, I wish to state that every cent that was contributed for this purpose has been used for the purpose raised, and that the books of the Association are always open for inspection, in addition to the financial statements we publish regularly of all money collected and disbursed.

Very truly yours,

WALTER F. WHITE, Assistant Secretary.

WFW:LGP.

**THE FACTS—WITHOUT ANY APOLOGIES.**

The editorial, "May Lose the Duluth Case," appeared in The Messenger, after a personal call from Atty. McCullough and the receipt of a special letter from him stating the necessity of having funds to release the copy for the briefs, which were in the hands of a printer who required the payment of \$200.00 in advance. Atty. Francis, of St. Paul, received a copy of same letter. They were turned over to the executive committees of the Twin City branches. About six days remained to secure the money, and it appeared certain that another extension of time would not be given to file the brief.

We are glad to get "the facts," even though they show some financial irregularities in the Duluth case. Our statement was made on possession of records on file in this office, which we will publish, if necessary. There are many unpleasant things said and done, in these cases, which the public need not know, but it is very important that an accurate account be given by "those who collect moneys for such purposes," especially when an appeal is made at the eleventh hour.

The Messenger makes no apologies or excuses for the quoted paragraph. It is our desire to assist the N. A. A. C. P. and to give the best information on all public questions. It appears that the National Office believed that the briefs had been paid for long ago. The Duluth Branch was of the same opinion. They should have known. Many were surprised to hear this, as the Minneapolis branch sent \$114.50 to New York on the request of Atty. F. L. Barnett, who solicited funds for that specific purpose, and the St. Paul Branch raised almost as much. These are facts.

The fact that the National Office accounts for every cent collected and disbursed, does not prove that all of the local branches do likewise. Many of them do not use business methods to give information to the National Office, or protection to their branch. Generally, too much is taken for granted on "suppositions" and moneys are paid out without receipts or records. One of the best ways to obtain and to secure public confidence, is to be ready, at times, to give a public report on finance. The Minneapolis Branch is doing nicely now, and it has profited by past experiences.

While president of the Minneapolis Branch, it was my privilege to organize the Duluth Branch, during the excitement of the lynching. Since that time I had no direct knowledge of its activities—knowing that the people of Duluth were in touch with the National Office and were responding very liberally to every call for finance, as shown by the records; also that the attorneys were doing their best to protect the men accused of the crime. I was informed by President Adams that the branch released itself from all further responsibilities on July 11th last. They had been burdened by many unpleasant responsibilities caused by the men acquitted and felt that they had done their duty.

Now that the time has been extended again to file briefs and the case will be heard by the supreme court, it is hoped that The Messenger will not have the unpleasant duty of giving its readers such "deplorable" facts in subsequent cases, but shall have reason to encourage them to support such worthy agencies for race welfare as the N. A. A. C. P. and all other organizations

for the advancement of human justice for all people. We wish to continue to take interest in the work of the N. A. A. C. P., but we shall stick to our policy of constructive criticism, not as a privilege, but as a duty.—Chas. Sumner Smith.