

*The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers*

In the past, I fear that the white people and the black people have talked too much about each other and not enough to each other. We can use this Congress as a means of appealing directly to the white people. There are certain things we want them to do. The simplest and most practical way is to go frankly to the white people of the South and ask for what we want.

In every county of the South the colored people should get hold of the city, county, and State officials and make it possible for them to see the better life of our race. It is most important that we get hold of the Governor, sheriffs, judges, and other officials and bring them into direct contact with the needs and conditions of our people. Our leaders can use this organization for making it easier for the liberal-minded white people who are desirous of helping us to come into contact with us in a manner that will not embarrass them.

We have friends among the Southern white people. You will hardly find a colored man in the South, no matter how humble, and no matter, I was going to say, how worthless, who has not some white friend to whom he is accustomed to go when he is in trouble. It is these friendships between individual white people and individual black people which form the basis for cooperation between the races.

We can use this organization to create a sentiment among our people throughout the South which will serve to stop so much crime. In spite of all that may be said in palliation, there is too much crime committed by our people in all parts of the country. We should let the world understand that we are not going to hide crime simply because it is committed by black people.

We can use this Congress, too, in a way to impress upon the white people throughout the South that education does not unfit us for the common labors and duties of life; but in proportion as we get education we will be more useful in field and shop, in kitchen and laundry, as teachers, and in every walk of life.

We can use this Congress to let the world understand that in proportion as the negro is educated he does not wish to intermingle with the white people in a purely social way; but in proportion as the negro gets intelligence he finds happiness and satisfaction in social intercourse with members of his own race.

We can use this Congress to impress the world with the idea that we are proud of being negroes, and this pride should increase in proportion as the negro goes forward in all the useful lines of our civilization.