ROCHESTER'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL CHARACTER

HOWARD W. COLES: Born at Belcoda, New York, was graduated from East High School and later was a Sociology Major at the University School of the University of Rochester. He studied journalism in New York City. Came to Rochester in 1914 and founded the Frederick Douglass Voice Newspaper. In 1940, he was appointed by the Mayor of Rochester to represent the City at the American Negro Exposition in Chicago, and in 1942 was recommended for the Spingarn Medal for his contribution to the community in the field of social and civic work, by Dr. John Lowe, former Director of the Rochester Public Library system.

In 1941, he was historian and publicity director for the City of Rochester when it sponsored the transfer of the Douglass Monument from Central Avenue to Highland Park Bowl. His magnificent expose "Nomads from the South" which ran serially in the Voice was responsible for interest in the condition of the migrant worker and subsequent State-wide clean-up of Labor Camps. He is also credited by the New York State Legislature with making the first housing survey in the City of Rochester (1937) and was a member of the city-wide Housing Committee of the City of Rochester for 4 years. For 8 years, he was property manager for the Monroe County Savings Bank.

The original Housing Survey compiled by Coles was published in 1939 by the New York State Temporary Commission on the Condition of the Urban Colored Population - To the Legislature of the State of New York - Legislative Document (1939) Number 69. Here is a quote from the Commission's Report: "Although Rochester is a very highly organized community in relation to matters concerning social work, social and economic research, etc., it is somewhat backward when viewed in terms of recent trends in programs for adequately housing and population. It was not until very recently that it (was) manifested an interest in studying the housing conditions of its population. This interest was undoubtedly given impetus by a survey of housing conditions among Rochester Negroes, conducted in 1938 by the Voice Newspaper and its editor, Howard W. Coles."

He was also appointed by the Commissioner of the New York State Legislature in 1939 as Co-Chairman with Miss Elizabeth Langford of a Special Committee to investigate and Study Public Welfare Services in Rochester, New York, and in this capacity was instrumental in requesting the appointment of several Negro welfare workers.

In 1940, he authored "The Cradle of Freedom," a history of the Negro people in Rochester and Western New York. He has contributed to OPPORTUNITY and CRISIS Magazines, written a special series of six articles on the Negro Family for the Democrat and Chronicle (1946), as well as having contributed to the Rochester Times-Union, the Rochester Evening News and the Syracuse Herald-American. He was at one time, local representative of the Pittsburgh Courier, the Chicago Defender, the Afro-American and the American News. His book may be found on the bookshelves of many of the nation's leading colleges, universities and libraries as well as in all Rochester public schools. Outside of Rochester, it may be found at Howard, Yae, Harvard, Duke, Vanderbilt, Princeton, New York, Columbia, City College, Boston, Atlanta, Cornell, Fisk, Tuskegee, Syracuse, Colgate Chicago and Temple Universities where it is used for research purposes.

Coles served for 5 years as a member of the Public Relations Bureau of the City of Rochester. For the past 12 years, he has been a member of the Advertising Staff and Production Department of radio station WSAV. He is currently the Director and Producer of 6 special programs for some 10 different sponsors. For two and a half years, he served as a Compensation Claims Investigator with the State Insurance Fund and is presently serving as a Court Attendant assigned to the Civil and Criminal Courts of the City of Rochester.
CATHOLIC VIEWPOINT
ON RACIAL EQUALITY

GUEST EDITORIAL

by Connie Bach

Racism was characterized as the nation's most serious domestic evil in a presentation of conscience issued by religious leaders at the first Great Newark Conference on Religion and Race. This is basically a religious problem. Individual Catholics must know and practice the truths taught by the Church. "The most crucial test of love of God is love of neighbor," Discrimination based on the accidental fact of race or color and as such injustices of human rights, regardless of personal qualities or achievements, cannot be reconciled with the truth that God has created all men with equal rights and equal dignity. Segregation implies that people of one race are not fit to associate with another "by sole fact of race and regardless of individual qualities." We cannot reconcile such a judgment with the Christian view of man's nature and rights. It is our strict duty is conscience to respect the basic human rights of every person. Our beloved Pontiff of blessed memory, Pope John XXIII, stated that 'in human society, to one man's rights there corresponds a duty in other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question. He not only condemns racial discrimination but assailed that 'he who possesses certain rights has likewise the duty to claim those rights as marks of his dignity. Since men are social by nature, they are meant to live with others and to work for one another's welfare. A well ordered human society requires that men recognize and observe their mutual rights and duties. It also demands that each contribute generously to the establishment of a civic order in which rights and duties are ever more sincerely and effectively acknowledged and fulfilled. These truths being understood, no Catholic with a good Christian conscience can fail to recognize the rights of all to vote. Moreover, we must provide for all, equal opportunities for employment, full participation in our public and private educational facilities, proper housing, adequate welfare assistance when needed. More than justice is involved. There is also the divine command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". Our present Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, at the beginning of his pontificate reminded us that "Our relation teaches us to love all men, whatever their condition, for they have all been redeemed by the same Savior, and it obliges us to offer to those, who have least, the means of arriving in dignity at a more human life. There have been so instances in which justice and charity have been ignored, twisted or rejected that we can no longer tolerate even the suspicion or inactivity and still call ourselves followers of the savior who shed His Blood for all men. It is clear that the racial question confronts the conscience of every man, no matter what his degree or direct or indirect involvement. Indeed, the conscience of the nation is on trial. In the words of the ancient Apostle: "If anyone says 'I love God' and hates his brother, he is a liar. For how can he who does not love his brother whom he sees, love God whom he cannot see?" We can show our Christian charity by a quiet and courageous determination to make the quest for racial harmony a matter of personal involvement. We must go beyond slogans and generalization about color and realize that all of us are human beings, men and women, children, all sharing the same human dignity and right with the one another, for this is the law of God!" United, as men and women of every faith and race, we can heal the ancient wounds of division. Thus, our nation will reflect its true greatness, a greatness founded on the moral principles that all men are free and equal under God. In all these endeavors, we must remember that "they labor in vain, who seek to work without Almighty God!" Our daily prayer for guidance will give us the confidence and courage we need to seek racial justice and harmony in our land. Above all, it is in prayer that the love of God may infuse our thoughts and actions, so that we may reverse in every man the image of God. The time presents us with opportunities in both the spiritual and civic realm, to make amends for the past and build for the future. Either all are free or none of us are free. Either we love or we perish in the strife that racial hatred inevitably brings with it.

Connie Bach, youthful Guest Editor of the Week, previously to the passage of the Civil Rights Bill. For this outstanding literary piece she was awarded an "A+"
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- 57 Lewis Street 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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Mr. Speaker, I salute Howard W. Coles and the Frederick Douglass League. In recent years, he has continued the Douglass tradition of publishing efforts honoring Frederick Douglass. At the time of his introduction, I pointed out my special interest in such a commemorative stamp related to the 150 years—1818-64—which Mr. Douglass spent in my home community of Rochester, N.Y., as publisher of the North Star, an anti-slavery newspaper.

It was with great pride that Mr. Coles, that encouragement and support were not at that time strong enough to change the fact that his name was continued the Douglass tradition of publishing efforts honoring Frederick Douglass. At the time of his introduction, I pointed out my special interest in such a commemorative stamp related to the 150 years—1818-64—which Mr. Douglass spent in my home community of Rochester, N.Y., as publisher of the North Star, an anti-slavery newspaper.

In 1941 the Oxford Press published his History of the Negro in Rochester, Western New York, and Canada under the title, "The Cradle of Freedom." A number of his chapters are devoted to Frederick Douglass. In this volume Mr. Coles details the history of the Douglass publishing efforts and also presents a number of other historical facts about Mr. Douglass that are worthy of note. Among these is a description of Mr. Douglass' underground railroad activity. To further the appreciation of Mr. Douglass' underground railroad activity. To further the appreciation of Mr. Douglass' underground railroad activity. To further the appreciation of Mr. Douglass' underground railroad activity. To further the appreciation of Mr. Douglass' underground railroad activity. To further the appreciati...
April 4, 1964

Dear Sir:

The Executive Committee of the Frederick Douglass League wishes to commend your station for the forthright manner in which you have dealt with "the story of integration" in the past. The television stations of Rochester have done a great deal to promote understanding in the area of race relations.

It is now an historical fact that racial relations were great generators of news in 1963. An awakened and aroused people had decided to become free in fact as well as in theory. Hardly a day passed without a new story about this phenomenon.

Our own Monroe County area was also the scene of a great many happenings as the Rochester Negro joined in the making of history. The big stories might include: 1) the Police Advisory Board; 2) the school transfer; 3) the controversy over the Black Muslim Trial. These events caught the attention of everyone.

But as often happens, the "big stories" tended to obscure deeper, fundamental occurrences in this area. Perhaps nothing is of more real importance to the Negro than his growing freedom from economic bondage. Negroes today are working in places where they have never worked before and in increasing numbers. In relative significance, this is the true "big news" of the past year.

As with the case of the new jobs for Negroes, many other aspects of the racial question are undramatic but important. We of the Frederick Douglass League would like the opportunity to tell the people of the Rochester area the truly significant facts about Rochester's changing racial patterns. We feel especially qualified to do this since our group is of Rochester origin and especially concerned with local questions. We feel the story we could bring is of importance to all people of this area. We request, for this reason, time each month on your station to tell about the "Changing Racial Picture in Rochester."

We thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT E. JOHNSON
HOWARD W. COLES
WILLIE CAMPBELL
Co-chairmen

Originals of this letter also sent to WRGC TV and WORK TV.

"ORGANIZE THE UNORGANIZED"
ROCHESTER DECLARATION OF DEMOCRACY

The right to full enjoyment of all public facilities and prerogatives is an inherent right of all American citizens, sanctioned by our laws and by the highest principles of our democratic society. It must, therefore, be granted and enforced not only by constituted authorities, but by the daily acts of all Rochester citizens.

We, therefore, pledge ourselves, that by our personal acts and through our respective organizations -- from pulpits and pews, labor halls, classrooms, business institutions and offices of government -- we will do everything within our power which will establish these principles as the way of life in Rochester.

In our daily lives, we pledge ourselves to work vigorously to demonstrate that Rochester wants no race-inspired violence, but rather, that Rochester is determined to be a city of decency and democracy, where all citizens, regardless of race, creed, or color, may walk with heads high, in peace and dignity, with complete security, no matter where they work, play, live, pray, or go. This is our firm and fervent belief and our open declaration of action. We invite all Rochesterians to join with us in making these principles a firm controlling force in the life of our city.

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"NO GREATER LOVE THAN THIS — THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS." A newspaper man is bred in the tradition that the basics of any item should include the what, when, where and who.

The end of July in Rochester brought the kind of chaos which makes difficult the unraveling of the contributing factors.

But the editors of this newspaper when the evidence has been sorted and sifted, shall meet the next issue, and bring you their analysis of the recent civil uprising—"the what, the when, and the where, based on truth."

Howard W. Coles
Editor and Publisher