



**Smithsonian Institution**

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

## **Pamphlet: Life Begins with Freedom**

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Our great country, labor, and progressive people, and lately the President, are coming forward with real progressive legislation. If adopted and carried through, this legislation will bring a new life in our country. It is our great task to see that this new life is really born.

The Tories of America last November had decided differently. If they had had their will, even this gathering in the city where the Constitution was adopted would be impossible. The Ku Klux Klan and lynching would oppress us more than in previous times. We would suffer here even as our brothers in Ethiopia, China, and Spain.

Today, it is glorious to be alive. The peoples throughout the world are no longer patiently submitting to tyranny and oppression. Our Chinese brothers - one-fourth of the population of the earth - are giving us an heroic example. A new hope pervades the world. We are uniting for the freedom and progress of our own people. But we are also concerned with the fate of the people of the entire world, because we are an integral part of them.

I am representing an organization which in program, ideals, and aspiration does not know or does not advocate racial discrimination. We Young Communists regard the peoples of all races and nations equally as brothers. We derive inspiration from the progressive creators of our country - Jefferson, John Brown, Lincoln, Frederick Douglass. We have no other interests than those of the young people, of all the young people. So long as any people in our country are denied privileges, the rest of the people will also be denied the opportunity of full human development. We know that we will finally achieve the equality and unity of

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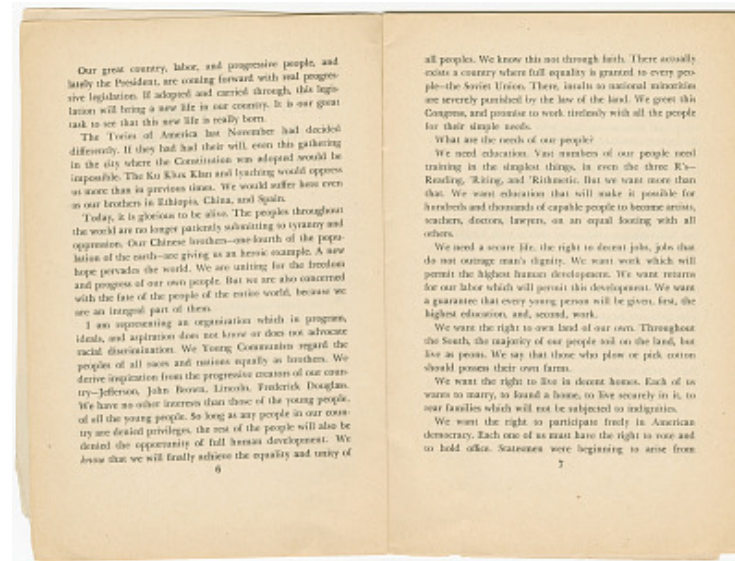
all peoples. We know this not through faith. There actually exists a country where full equality is granted to every people - the Soviet Union. There, insults to national minorities are severely punished by the law of the land. We greet this Congress, and promise to work tirelessly with all the people for their simple needs.

What are the needs of our people?

We need education. Vast numbers of our people need training in the simplest things, in even the three R's - Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic. But we want more than that. We want education that will make it possible for hundreds and thousands of capable people to become artists, teachers, doctors, lawyers, on an equal footing with all others.

We need a secure life, the right to decent jobs, jobs that do not outrage a man's dignity. We want work which will permit the highest human development. We want returns for our labor which will permit this development. We want a guarantee that every young person will be given, first, the highest education, and, second, work.

We want the right to own land of our own. Throughout the South, the majority of our people toil on the land, but live as peons. We say that



those who plow or pick cotton should possess their own farms.

We want the right to live in decent homes. Each of us wants to marry, to found a home, to live securely in it, to rear families which will not be subjected to indignities.

We want the right to participate freely in American democracy. Each one of us must have the right to vote and to hold office. Statesmen were beginning to arise from

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