The story of the Niagara Movement and the N. A. A. C. P., 1945

Time line of the story of the Niagara movement and the N.A.A.C.P.

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The Story of the Niagara Movement and the N. A. A. C. P.

1. Boston. Monroe Trotter criticizes Booker T. Washington in public meeting and is put in jail. (Date ?)
2. June, 1905. I send out from Atlanta a Call to a few selected persons "for organized determination and aggressive action on the part of men who believe in Negro freedom and growth." I propose a conference during that summer "to oppose firmly present methods of strangling honest criticism, to organize intelligent and honest Negroes, and to support organs of news and public opinion."
3. Fifty-nine men from 17 different states signed a Call for a meeting near Buffalo, New York during the week of July 9, 1905.
4. I went to Buffalo and hired a little hotel on the Canada side of the river at Fort Erie and waited for the men to attend the meeting called for July 11, 12, 13 and 14. If sufficient men had not come to pay for the hotel, I should certainly been in bankruptcy and perhaps in jail, but as a matter of fact, 29 men, representing 14 states, came.
5. The Niagara Movement was organized January 31, 1905, and was incorporated in the District of Columbia with the following object:

"Its particular business and objects are to advocate and promote the following principles:
(a) Freedom of speech and criticism.
(b) An unfettered and unsubsidized press.
(c) Manhood suffrage.
(d) The abolition of all caste distinctions based simply on race and color.
(e) The recognition of the principles of human brotherhood as a practical present creed."
(f) The recognition of the highest and best human training as the monopoly of no class or race.

(g) A belief in the dignity of labor.

(h) United effort to realize these ideals under wise and courageous leadership.

6. The Movement grew. In August, 1906, we met at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. It was a great and significant meeting, and among the few white visitors was Mary White Ovington of New York.

7. 1907, the Niagara Movement met in Boston. There were internal difficulties of organization and we were subject to violent attack on the part of periodicals like the Outlook and the friends of Hampton and Tuskegee.

8. 1908. A lynching took place in the birthplace of Abraham Lincoln. William English Walling and his wife, Anna Strunsky visited Springfield. Walling wrote an article in the Independent and suggested that something must be done to finish the emancipation begun by Lincoln.

9. Mary White Ovington suggested to Walling and Oswald Garrison Villard that a conference be called in New York and that white friends of the Negro be invited and also those who had organized and were supporting the Niagara Movement.

10. 1909, June, the Conference met in New York.

11. 1910. The N. A. A. C. P. was organized out of this Conference and the Niagara Movement held no further meetings. There was no formal merger but seven of the charter members of the Niagara Movement went on the Board of Directors of the new organization and practically all of the membership was represented on the Advisory Committee.

12. John E. Milholland at a mass meeting in New York suggested that
the N. A. A. C. P. must not be merely an annual conference but must have an office and paid workers.

13. 1910, August. The office opens at 20 Vesey Street with a Secretary and myself as Director of Publications and Research.


[Note: "Five b-d papers"]