

Chicago Ill. Jan. 28, 1904

Dear Sir: It has been my intention for sometime, to write you a letter relative to your standing in Chicago among colored people: but a heavy press of business has prevented my doing so. Recently word reached me through Dr. A. J. Carey, that you will be here next month, that decided me. A longer delay is not consistent with my endorsement of and my proclaimed friendship for you. I wish to set before you certain facts concerning our people in Chicago, which I think you do not know, that you may determine how best to handle the situation upon your next appearance here. Chicago is slipping from you and I feel that you cannot afford to let her go.

The situation, Mr. Washington, is this: in Chicago your followers may be equal in number to those arrayed against you, but they are far out classed by brain, tact, and influence: the opposing faction has the ear of the public and the courtesy of the press while we have neither.

Not long since "The Equal Opportunity Association" had an over-flow meeting at which you were severely criticised, abused and condemned. Every paper in this city had a reporter present and the next morning every speech made was read by the public. Hoping to off set this The Business League had a meeting at Quinn Chapel. Mr. Baldwin of the Associated Press, promised to have a reporter present and assured us that if the speeches were not too long and too bitter, they should be published in their entirety. The meeting was well advertised. The speeches on that occasion were short, Strong and to the point. No reporter appeared and the next day the daily papers did not even mention that the meeting had been held. The attendance was very small. A street car strike was in progress at the time and it was claimed that was responsible for the slim attendance. But all lines of transportation were not affected by the strike, yet the fact remains the people were not at that meeting.

The one colored paper supporting you and some of your endorsers claim that the opposing faction is composed of "bums, wardheelers, cheap politicians, grafters, and envious men." This is not true. They are some of our brainiest lawyers, best physicians, dentists, druggists, clerks, teachers and good moral citizens: men and women whose influence is felt, who sway and largely control public opinion. This, Mr. Washington, does not reflect upon those who endorse you. Your followers are good, honest men and women in various walks of life, some are brainy and have influence where they are known. Unfortunately we have not the public ear and the press.

Now a word regarding The Business League of this city. The President, Secretary and Treasurer, with several floor members joined the opposing faction. To prevent complete surrender or dissolution we were forced to reorganize, and with all my business cares and responsibilities I was obliged to accept the presidency. Much of the dissatisfaction lies in the fact that our men are accustomed to *secret orders*, in which the Grand-head never appears in the city without first notifying the order. They complain here, that the National President of The Business League never communicates with the League save at the call for the annual session. There is dissatisfaction even since the reorganization. The only information the League has of your intended visit is through Rev. A. J. Carey. Our Secretary, S. Laing Williams, informed us that you "wish the League to join or seem to join with Dr. Carey in arranging for a demonstration in February." Now, being the President, I appointed a committee to wait upon Dr. Carey and

ascertain if he will permit the League to join with him in arranging for your reception, but the men are chagrined to that extent that the committee has not even convened. If anything is done along that line it will be through the effort of Mr. Williams or myself. The claim of your opponents that "Mr. Washington is not in touch with the colored people and gives no recognition to his colored friends," is readily believed and under such circumstances hard to disprove; it in no measure aids us in obtaining public or press recognition when we announce a Washington meeting.

This is the situation and I feel that you should know it and thereby be enabled to meet the issue and win over the opposers. Knowing the personnel of the other faction you may better judge wherein they find grounds for their opposition. Hence, if you see fit, when you come to Chicago in February you will be able to overcome much of their opposition. I firmly believe that this constantly criticising so severely, a man who has risen from our own ranks to your point of prominence must redound to the race's detriment, I would be glad to see harmony, as near absolute harmony as can exist, between all lovers of the race.

Trusting that I have made myself perfectly clear to you and that your next visit to this city will be a great success, I am, Yours Resp'tfully.

Theodore W. Jones