

1841. Call To Negro Teachers' Meeting (Aptheker 211-212)

The great interest of the Negro people in educational opportunities has already been demonstrated in several documents. It is certain that at least as early as 1841, an Association of Colored Teachers existed in New York and that this group had its own organ, called the *New York Journal of Education and Weekly Messenger*. Meetings devoted to their own particular problems were held, as is clear from the following call issued in November, 1841 and signed by sixteen Negro teachers including Samuel V. Berry, Jonathan Mingo, Richard Lustus and W. J. Hodges:

A Call

To the Colored Freeman of Long Island, for a convention to be held at Jamaica, Queen's County, November 25th, 1841, at 10 o'clock, A.M., for devising means more effectually to advance the cause of education and temperance, and also for co-operating with our disfranchised brethren throughout the State, in petitioning for the right of suffrage.

Brethren, come! The cause of Education calls loudly upon you to come. Hundreds of children that are now shut out from the blessings of Education, call loudly upon you to come. If there ever was a time that called for united action, it is now. If there ever was a time for colored freemen to show their love of liberty, their hatred of ignorance, and determination to be free and enlightened, it is now! We want *union* and *action*. The man who draws back, and refuses to give heed to a call for such noble purposes, plainly shows himself to be an enemy to the greatest earthly blessings conferred by the Creator on his creatures. Come, brethren, refuse not the voice that calls you together for such noble purposes. It is the voice of Liberty, of Education, and of Temperance. Inactivity is criminal! Come from old Suffolk! Our noble, active and enterprising brethren of Kings, they must come! They of Queens must not stay at home! Come from the borders of the blue waters of the Atlantic—from the shores of the Long Island Sound! Let a general rally be made, and let there be a delegate from every town and village, and from every society in the Island. Remember that the first county convention held in this State was held on the Island, and the first State convention was appointed by the freemen of the Island; and now let us give an impetus to the cause of Education! Again we say, come! Let none refuse but those who are enemies to the prosperity and happiness of their people.

The Liberator, November 26 1841.