

SOUTHERN DEMOCRATS REFUSE TO LIFT BAN ON RACE VOTERS

[TRANSCRIPTION]

"We don't want Negroes participating in our elections. The rules strictly forbid it." This was the verdict handed down by party leaders in South Carolina and Arkansas this week when quizzed about the participation of members of the Race in the Democratic primaries.

In four large Tennessee cities - Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville - Race citizens organized and asked that they be permitted to cast ballots in the primary set for August 4.

Ask Rule Change

The anxiety on the part of Race citizens in Chattanooga to vote August 9 was attributed to the fact that Robert Buckner, a barber, is seeking the Democratic nomination to the state senate.

The question of voting in Arkansas was raised by J.M. Robinson, president of the Arkansas Negro Democratic Association. He made his plea for suffrage in the form of a request for a change in the party rule providing that "all known white democrats" may vote. He asked that the rule be changed to read "all known Democrats."

Blease Raises Question

Race-baiter Cole L. Blease, former governor and senator, raised the question of members of the Race voting in the South Carolina primary on August 30.

Seeking the governorship again, Blease said he was informed that 8,000 Race members had enrolled in the Democratic Party over the state. "Are the colored people who are enrolling on the Democratic club rolls going to be allowed to vote in the Democratic primary?" Blease asked the state executive committee.

Lane L. Bonner, secretary, replied that party rules provided that no Race member could belong to the party and none would be allowed to enroll and "if any Negroes have enrolled, their names are on the books illegally and they will not be allowed to vote."

Source: "Southern Democrats Refuse to Lift Ban on Race Voters," *The Chicago Defender*, August 6, 1938: 5.