

Toward Freedom

WENDELL WILLKIE'S current series of newspaper articles on what "should be" G.O.P. policy do more than reveal his own political dilemma. They also emphasize why his bid for the presidential nomination was so decisively rejected by the reactionary leadership which dominates the Republican Party, and why that leadership, in turn, will be repudiated by Negro and other citizens in the November elections.

Four of Willkie's seven articles have appeared when his is written. Each proposes measures fundamental to the welfare of the Negro people and the nation. Each is a strong indictment of leadership and, perhaps unwittingly, a powerful argument for a Roosevelt Fourth Term. Even the unprincipled Thomas Dewey will be "tired" to fool many Negro voters.



FIRST, Willkie urges the Republican Party to abandon its advocacy of the doctrine of "states rights," the historical bulwark of reaction in its efforts to block progressive federal legislation. Southern Poll-Tax Democrats once had a virtual monopoly on "states' rights" demagoguery, using it to defeat bills designed to protect Negro democratic rights.

But all that is now changed. "States'

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rights" has become a main battle-cry of the congressional leaders and chief presidential aspirants of the Republican Party.

SECOND, Willkie urges that the "Republican Party in its platform and in the declarations of its candidates . . . commit itself unequivocally and specifically to Federal anti-poll tax and anti-lynching statutes." Federal legislation, he says, is "the only practical method by which the Negro's rights can be assured him."

This seems like futile advice to a party which is chiefly responsible for denying Negro schools the benefits of federal-aid-to-education, which is fresh from helping to defeat the Anti-Polltax Bill, and which conspires with southern congressmen even now to find a "safe" way to destroy FEPC.

Willkie will probably get some nice-sounding pro-Negro "declarations" in the Republican platform and from GOP candidates. Even the perfidious Thomas Dewey will be eager to oblige. But the Republican record is far too sullied for such demagogic "declarations" too fool man Negro voters.

THIRD, Willkie asks the Republican Party to sponsor a comprehensive federal program of social security measures, guaranteeing "protection against old age, illness and economic misfortune . . . for everyone."

Willkie's Dilemma Helps Clarify Negro Voters

This proposal is of especial concern to the economically proscribed masses of Negro people.

But Negro and other Americans know that the Roosevelt Administration has always had to fight stubborn Republican opposition in pushing forward our country's social security program to its present status. From the President's challenging "Economic Bill of Rights" message to Congress, calling for the extension of social security, they get far more assurance than is possible from the newspaper articles of the repudiated titular head of the Republican Party.

FOURTH, Willkie calls upon the Republican Party to take the lead in planning for post-war economic reconstruction. He urges "industry, labor and government" collaboration on measures to counteract depressions and "preserve a reasonably high level of employment." This, of course, is precisely the program of the Roosevelt Administration, embodied in a number of legislative proposals now before Congress. It is also precisely the program which the dominant Republican leadership seeks to scuttle behind its misleading smokescreen of "free enterprise."

Whatever his motivation, Willkie's articles make one distinct contribution: They clarify more than ever the reasons why the overwhelming masses of Negro and other voters will support Roosevelt for a fourth term as President.