

GOVERNOR OF OHIO PROTECTS BLACK CITIZENS

Chief Executive of Buckeye State Forces Censor Board to Revoke Permit of Film Company Exhibiting Tom Dixon's Vicious Plays—Plans to Vilify Ohio Citizens Nipped in the Bud.

MUST NOT ABUSE RACE

Prompt Action of Governor Work of Editor Harry Smith of The Cleveland Gazette—A Telegram and Letter to Mr. Smith.

(Special to Chicago Defender.)

Columbus, O., April 16.—Gov. Frank B. Willis of this state forced the Bureau of State Censors to revoke their permit given for the photoplay the "Nigger," which had opened in Cleveland, and was preparing to open throughout the State. The Governor further assured Harry C. Smith, Editor of The Cleveland Gazette, and Ralph W. Tyler, who called to see him today in the matter, that under no circumstances would he permit "The Birth of the Nation," Dixon's revamped "Clansman," to show in this state. The "Nigger," on having its license revoked, attempted to secure a new permit under the title of "William Farnam," but this was blocked. The Governor absolutely will not stand for any plays tending to incite race hatred or prejudice.

Race Leaders at Work.

The first intimation that the obnoxious pictures had been forbidden became known when Hon. Harry C. Smith received the following telegram:

The Governor's Letter.

Columbus, O., Apr. 8, 1915.

Hon. Harry C. Smith,

Editor GAZETTE, Cleveland:

Film censors revoked certificate for objectionable film and telegrams sent out Tuesday; have written.

WILLIS.

STATE OF OHIO.

Executive Department.

Columbus, O., Apr. 8, 1915.

Hon. Harry C. Smith,

Editor of "The Gazette,"

Cleveland, O.

Dear Friend:

Upon receipt of your wire I replied at once. No doubt information has reached you before this time as to the action of the State Board of Film Censors. As soon as I heard from you I got in touch with the President of the Board. Upon further consideration the Board adopted a resolution rescinding the certificate which had been issued for the very objectionable film, "The Nigger." Notification was sent to the Fox Film Corporation at Cleveland, Cincinnati and New York. Also the authorities at Cleveland were notified.

Trusting this prompt action met with your approval, I am,

Yours very truly,

FRANK B. WILLIS.

Former Congressman F. B. Willis, now Governor of Ohio, was a member of the Ohio Legislature in 1900 and 1901, when Editor Smith was serving his third term as a member of that august body, and they have been good friends ever since.