Walter White, Crusader For the Negro to Talk
In Huntington Hall Today

Walter White, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, who will speak here on Tuesday, April 30th, has devoted his life to the fight for human, and particularly for Negro rights. He is an active member of the Committee on Human Rights, of the American Civil Liberties Union, and of the War Resisters League.

This militant crusader has been recognized as an official capacity since 1918. Up to that time he lived in the South, having been born in Atlanta, Georgia, and educated at Atlanta University. He did postgraduate work in economics and sociology at the College of the City of New York.

As an official of the NAACP—of which he has been Executive Secretary since 1921—Walter White has made personal investigations of forty-one lynchings and eight race riots; he has traveled more than 2,900,000 miles in the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific. He has been on extended trips in six of the Federal government schools, in educational and community leadership, and for his achievements he has been accorded honorary degrees from three colleges. The Republic of Haiti conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws on Mr. White in 1949.

Compton

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intervened to show me around on the checkboard at times when any or a number of moves might have been made. This recalls a quotation from Margot Bennett's amusing detective story, "Time to Change Hats":

"The usual story about Napoleon. When an officer was recommended to him for promotion, his first question was: 'Is he lucky?" If the answer was no, if the candidate was one of those who were always at work, they always trained at the most important time, whose guides always turned out to be traitors and whose key men caught measles, then the application was turned down. If the answer was yes, then he became a facade of knowledge, technical ability and qualities as a leader."

It will be quite evident from this bit of personal history, that I must testify to the large role played by luck, or fortune in determining the jobs in which I have found myself. Yet I would not imply that one's own intervention is not very important. I shall try to tie these two factors, luck and initiative, together.

Any occurrence is the result of many antecedent influences. Some of these may be wholly under a person's control, others may be partially under control, and still others may be dependent on factors entirely removed from the event in question.

All that one can do to control his "luck" is to exercise control over those factors of which he has some cognizance. These factors may or may not be the ones which dominate the final conclusion, but we can certainly say that favorable handling of those factors will increase the probability of a favorable result. Let me illustrate again from the personal incidents which I have related.

It is clear that the presence of Dr. Caldwell in my home in 1909, or the bequest by Mr. Reed to found Reed College in Oregon with a need of a physics teacher in 1913, or the requirement of Dr. Straton from the presidency of M.I.T. in 1940 for me to head the Institute of Advanced Study, are all independent and independent of each other. It is also quite probable that the individual personal factors of the persons whom I supervised were not at all involved in the final outcome. It is in this sense that I mean by 'control'.

As a matter of comparison Tech personnel has often been free to choose, within the limits set by the personal characteristics of their own or by the particular atmosphere of any one's personal life, to accept or reject something, to make a decision, to take a chance or to not take a chance. These factors may or may not be the ones by which I judged the final conclusion, but we can certainly say that those factors of which he has some cognizance. These factors may or may not be the ones which dominate the final conclusion, but we can certainly say that favorable handling of those factors will increase the probability of a favorable result. Let me illustrate again from the personal incidents which I have related.

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In the final installment, to be published on Friday, Dr. Compton will continue the question "When and how to choose a career?"