

## "Black Bourgeoisie"

# *Author's Analysis of Book "Shakes Up" Collegians*

### **Special to Journal and Guide**

BALTIMORE, Md. — Writing or talking about the "new Negro middle class" and the way these "half-peasant, half-gentleman, mixed-up" Americans act, sociologist E. Franklin Frazier shakes you up — one way or the other.

He did here again Tuesday

when he told the Morgan State College faculty about his book, "The Black Bourgeoisie," which has raised a storm on at least two continents and brought its author prize-winning praise and scorching condemnation alike.

**RINGING** aughter, heated  
(See **AUTHOR'S**, Page 2)

# Author's Analysis of Book

## "Shakes Up" Collegians

(Continued from Page 1)

indignation, thundering applause, and cold, critical dissection of the sociologist's "sweeping generalities" and "unscientific methodology" were the more evident reactions that greeted Dr. Frazier's explanation of the "social analysis" he claims he made of the behavior of America's rising colored middle class.

The Frazier analysis, which he says was made to describe a "social process, not to expose any secrets", essentially is this:

(1) There is a new Negro middle class, unlike any other middle class, that has come about by the "rapid differentiation of the Negro population caused by migration to cities." This middle class constitutes about 25 per cent of the Northern and Western colored population and about 12 per cent of the Southern colored population.

(2) This new class is a "bastard class", the queer mixture of the "peasant and the gentleman," which is "one of the worst mixtures you can get."

(3) This class has no basis upon which middle classes are generally based, and it is characterized by "a lot of confused behavior." Someone has said "this class behaves the way it does because it lacks the Protestant ethic." Middle classes generally, for example, are thrifty; they save money. "We don't. The Negro never has had any money to save," Dr. Frazier declares.

(4) The Negro middle class lives in two worlds, "the world of reality and the world of make believe," for there is a certain "inauthenticity" about Negro life, brought about by the ghetto kind of caste system in which the colored American has lived.

5) As a reaction perhaps to the ghetto life, the Negro has to "do some things to keep from going crazy. Consequently, when the colored American

gets some money he doesn't know what to do with it." So these new middle class Negroes "buy gold doorknobs and other things and engage in all forms of conspicuous consumption."

6) The Negro middle class is growing up "without any minds." This colored American believes "there's something negative about being a Negro; he's supposed to escape from being colored." Hence he has a "feeling of insecurity and inferiority because he's striving to be so much."

7) This class has lost its religion... "running from the Baptist Church, to the Congregationalist Church to the Bahai trying to find some place where people don't know they're colored." With no religion of his own, this colored American has gone "from church to chance. Poker has taken the place of religion."

8.) "The middle class Negro has no philosophy except perhaps the philosophy of opportunism."

**ELABORATING** on all these points, Dr. Frazier said he simply presented in "The Black Bourgeoisie" an "essay in social analysis."

"If I had known about Eskimos, I would have written about them. I didn't know about Eskimoes. I did know about Negroes. So I wrote about them."

**CONTRARY TO** criticism which he admits has been heaped upon him, Dr. Frazier said he didn't write to give our "secrets" away. "Negroes don't have any secrets any way. We didn't invent crime and we didn't invent sin."