

## Between The Lines

BY GORDON B. HANCOCK

### A FIGHT FALLACY

Recently we listened to a young Negro unbosom himself on matters of racial concern. He claimed to be a "New Negro" and desired most of all to "die for his rights"! Those Negroes who held out hope for amicable adjustments in race matters he termed "Uncle Toms", those who sought to cooperate with the friendly disposed whites were called "boot-licks", those who felt the need of religion as a solace in times of distress and disappointment were called "old fogies and numbskulls". This "New Negro" had a raw disposition and evidently felt "evil", generally! It is true that generally such a character does but little harm, but occasionally his "line" fires the imagination of the unsophisticated youth and lays the foundation of a lot of false conceptions and future troubles. The main trouble lies not in direct harm done but in its counteracting influence on constructive policies and programs. The Negro has a grievance—all submerged groups have—and these "free lance" talkers and "martyrs-by-proxy" would capitalize—and in some cases commercialize—this grievance for the attainment of personal ends and for the elevation of an accentuated egoism! The times in which we live are of such that whosoever has a chip-on-the-shoulder will have little trouble getting said chip knocked off, or getting the shoulder knocked from under the chip. The opportunities for martyrdom are so numerous and prolific that he who reaches the age of majority whole-limbed and "well-appetited" proves that he is no braver than the rest, and that his pretenses of being desirous of "dying for his rights" are nothing but hypocrisy and bombast superinduced by a popularity complex! Ofttimes this breed of agitators has less manhood "per square mouth" than some they call cowards! Let the race beware of these trouble-makers and program-wreckers. They can undo more good in ten minutes than the brains and the soul of the race can do in ten years!

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There is no Negro living who does not want to be a man like other men. To deny such longing is hypocritical, if not downright diabolical. He who possesses untrammelled manhood possesses power and the story of human struggles for power dates from ancient days. There are ways to fight for this power, and there are "more excellent ways". Not everyone saying unto Christ, "Lord Lord"! shall enter the kingdom. Not everyone saying "fight, fight"! is really willing and capable of making the fight the Negro's plight calls for. There is one thing certain and that is, the Negro cannot hope to free himself from spiritual bondage by the fight of force. The Negro has much to lose as a race by an appeal to force and little, precious little, to gain. But there is a way of fighting that is open to the Negro and in this fight every Negro should be enlisted. It is the fight of character and efficiency! A white employer told me the other day that he had had a Negro employe in his publishing business for twenty years and he would not let him go for any man regardless of his color. That Negro is fighting! The Pittsburgh Negro who found ten thousand dollars and saw that it was returned to its rightful owner was really and truly fighting! The Richmond Negro who found \$40,000 worth of jewelry and returned it and receiving \$2,000 reward was fighting! The Negro who attends to his job so well that when he leaves another Negro will succeed him is fighting! The Negro who had worked efficiently for a white employer for fifteen years and was recently dismissed for a white man, and who has been recently recalled to his old job has been fighting! The Negro professionals who are spending and being spent in the service of their people are really fighting! Negro business persons like C. C. Spaulding and Mrs. Maggie L. Walker are also fighting! Loud-mouthed proclamations of bravery from these "martyrs-by-proxy" in the long run lack conviction. Gandhi is fighting! Had he resorted to force his stroke for freedom would be a joke mingled with tragedy; as it is, Gandhi has become a problem the solution of which taxes the most astute statesmanship of the mightiest empire known to history. "Talk" fighting may be spectacular, but the fight of principle is for more enduring and in the end victory is inevitable!

### AND SO FORTH

Dispatches have it that in an altercation a Negro named "Al Smith" was given an almost mortal blow on the head. Whether the Negro who struck him was named "Herb Hoover" was not made clear!

A few days ago we were passing through a market and saw a white man buying a chicken. He told the poultryman that he did not want a black one. If the color line extends to the poultry yard the chickens had better get their heads together! Had better hold their jobs!

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What this country needs is a widespread conviction among the so-called "educated" that "I Do" is more important than the "I Q"! Negroes need to bear this in mind; it offers some consolation!

What this country needs is some looking as to when Mr. Hoover's commissions are going to "conish"!