

# THINGS TO REMEMBER

By WILLARD MERRY

IT HAS BEEN SAID that within recent years a "new" Negro has developed in the United States. It is said that this "new" Negro is developing a race pride which refuses to be apologetic about the color of his skin and that he is building up a group consciousness which can drive sharp bargains to the advantage of the race and that in general he is on the road to a new Promised Land. There is evidence to prove this.

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WHEN ABRAHAM LINCOLN SIGNED THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION less than ten per cent of the Negroes could even read or write. Today less than ten per cent of the Negroes are unable to read or write. Each year nearly four thousand Negro graduates in caps and gowns receive their Bachelor's degrees while thirty-eight thousand more are enrolled in the 110 Negro institutions of higher learning not to mention the hundred and fifty thousand high school students.

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WHEN THE CIVIL WAR ENDED, the Negro owned little property in this country. Today he has accumulated wealth to the value of two

thousand, five hundred million dollars and has demonstrated through twenty-five thousand independent business enterprises that he is capable of mastering the intricacies of an economy so long turned against him. A century ago the United States Supreme Court ruled that the Negro had no rights which needed to be respected. Today the Supreme Court is rendering decisions in favor of Negro rights. Today there are signs everywhere that a "new" Negro is coming into his own.

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IF THIS MEANS that the Negro is coming of age and is ready to take his rightful place in our Democracy it is highly encouraging. It is worthy of rejoicing if it means that the Negro is now able to accept a man's share of burdens and responsibilities in the world. It is worthy of race pride if the Negro group can stand shoulder to shoulder with the rest of the nation and work for the common wealth of the whole. It is worthy of group consciousness if the 12 million Negroes can wield themselves together to fight for their God-given rights and the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States.