

SOAPBOX •• by Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

(Editor Powell's regular Soapbox Column will be omitted for the next four issues beginning with this. In its place he will write a larger column based up his recent eight thousand mile cross-country tour.)



POWELL

IT IS MY profound conviction a new America is in the making. The mold for this new America is being cast in the far West and Mid-west; specifically, in the Los Angeles and Detroit section. The shape of post-war America will largely depend on what happens in these two towns. In the midst of this World War, a bloodless battle is being fought on the home front. While the final battle lines have not yet been clearly defined, one can safely label the present conflicting forces THE NEW NEGRO and SOUTHERNISM.

Southernism is by no means subscribed to by the majority of white workers. It is a last minute effort on the part of the un-American minority of the South to keep the Negro in his place. It is a movement among the ruling clique that is no longer sectional but it is striving for place as the dominant national philosophy of America. IF SOUTHERNISM SUCCEEDS, THEN AMERICA WILL GO FASCIST. IF SOUTHERNISM IS DEFEATED THE BLUEPRINT DEMOCRACY OF JEFFERSON—LINCOLN—ROOSEVELT WILL BEGIN TO BE A REALITY FOR ALL PEOPLE AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The NEW NEGRO is a label for all those forces of America, not only black but white as well, who recognize that there can be no Democracy until the black man is included on the basis of full equality. The Negro today is the yardstick of Democracy. The success or failure of Democracy in the eyes of the world will depend on the treatment of the black man in America. THE ENTIRE DESTINY OF THE WORLD IS TIED UP WITH THE PRESENT TREATMENT OF AND THE FUTURE PLANNING FOR MY FIFTEEN MILLION SECOND CLASS CITIZENS.

Under the label of NEW NEGRO we find grouping together such widely divergent groups as the Southern Conference of one hundred leading whites and the CIO Council of Detroit. Protestants, liberal Catholics, Jews, Trade Unionists, racketeers, employers, whites in the armed forces—all the varied individuals and groups which go to make up America.

THE NEW NEGRO WAS BORN IN HARLEM LONG BEFORE PEARL HARBOR. His roots go back to the depressing thirties. He grew strong nationally when the war broke out. He came of age in Los Angeles. Here he organized the Negro Victory Committee. He cast off "swaddling clothes"

at the Durham, North Carolina Conference. He reached full maturity during the Sojourner Truth Housing Riot in Detroit. There he realized that the poor white worker would fight by his side any unAmerican, even though he be white. The black worker knows today that the white worker can't win without him. The white worker recognizes this too. THE NEW NEGRO is joining forces with the new white man.

SOUTHERNISM DOES NOT SPRING FROM THE NEEDS AND DESIRES OF A PEOPLE. SOUTHERNISM IS THE ARTIFICIAL FRANKENSTEIN OF AMERICAN FASCISM. IT WAS CREATED TO KEEP THE NEGRO IN HIS PLACE AND, THEREBY, KEEP THE POOR WHITE DOWN AS WELL. UNLESS SOUTHERNISM IS DEFEATED, AMERICAN DEMOCRACY IS FINISHED FOR THE NEXT ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

Southernism is a twentieth century Hitlerized Klan. It is willing to play ball with any force in our American life that will help it achieve its desired goal. It has missionaries of racial hate in every war center of America. There is not a plant engaged in production that does not have within its walls an agitator. This doctrine has pervaded the armed forces of our nation. It has seeped into the bars along the San Pedro waterfront. It sits behind mahogany desks in the capital of our nation. Always blessed by Protestant preachers of the Southern white church it is now beginning to seek a formal alliance with the many unAmerican members of the Catholic church. This is an amazing trend. The Klux Klan was always against Catholics, Jews, and Negroes. Today it no longer is. SOUTHERNISM—KLU KLUX KLAN 1943 STYLE—IS ONLY AGAINST THOSE WHO WILL GIVE THE NEGRO HIS DUE RIGHTS.

Southernism is specifically aimed at all those who are helping the new Negro. It is against Trade Union movements especially the CIO, liberal churchmen of all faiths, the Jew and the black man.

I have seen Southernism and the New Negro come face to face in a housing project on the West Coast; on Blueberry Hill in Hollywood; on the lots of the motion picture companies, and in war plants. I have seen these two forces encounter each other as black and white men of the armed forces met on the cross country trains of our nation. I saw them in Packard of Detroit, and during the CIO elections in the Ford plant. I saw them face to face in Atlanta, Georgia last Friday as the leaders of the Southland met to consider the New Negro. I WISH TO REPORT TO THE NATION THAT THE NEW NEGRO HASN'T LOST IN ANY OF THESE ENCOUNTERS.

(NEXT WEEK—The New Negro vs. Southernism in Los Angeles and Hollywood.)

Send FDR Resolution:

White Seamen Protest Jimcra of Negro Mates

The white members of the crew of the ——— of the American Merchant Marine, a ship of the National Maritime Service, incensed at the discriminatory treatment of Negro shipmates in an Australian port, have sent a resolution to President Roosevelt as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, asking him to investigate the conditions, which, according to the statement, have been ordered by American naval and military authorities.

Vincent Santilli, member of the crew, brought a copy of the resolution to PV last week. Santilli, 22 years old, well-dressed, and the type of good-looking clean-cut American kid this country needs more of, stated the facts.

AUSTRALIANS OKAY

"I've been with the merchant marine two years, and I've never seen this happen before. The Australian people are very friendly and as far as I've seen, haven't any prejudices. At least it was like that before the war and for awhile afterwards."

Vincent said on his last trip he went ashore, along with some of his Negro shipmates, to attend a nightclub. The manager told the boys at the door that Vincent would be admitted, but not the Negro seamen.

"He told us that he didn't have any objections to the colored fellows, but he was under orders, and if he didn't comply the military authorities would close the place. There was one night club in port for Negroes, but they closed it up."

Vincent said that when the manager refused his friends, he turned to the fellows and said:



VINCENT SANTILLI

Vincent Santilli, 22-year-old seaman brought an interesting story to PV. The white members of his merchant marine ship (NMU) have sent a resolution to President Roosevelt protesting discrimination against their Negro shipmates in Australia.—M. Smith photo

"They even discriminate here, now."

NO TROUBLE AT ALL

There were seven Negro seamen

in the ship's crew, and according to Vin, they got along fine with the white boys. In fact, when the resolution was adopted at a ship's meeting, it was a unanimous measure—and there were plenty of white fellows from the south in the group!

"We think such things are putting an obstacle in the way of winning the war. Here we are delivering the goods, keeping 'em sailing, risking our lives, and pull into a port after a long trip to face that kind of stuff! It's not fair to us nor to any of the other fellows in the merchant marine."

Vin is pretty mad about the whole thing. He'll be sailing soon again. Scared?

"Nope, not yet," Vin says. He sails from California and there's a freshly-scrubbed, healthy look about him. He says his mother worries, but "she wants me to keep 'em sailing!"

The Negro soldiers he talked to in Australia were very unhappy about the discrimination brought upon them by the very country they are fighting for, but they manage somehow. There's the Eureka Youth Center, a recreational pub sponsored by the Communist Party where soldiers of all races are welcomed, but according to Vin:

"Some American white soldiers even came in there and tried to start trouble, but they were told if they didn't like the set-up they could get out."

Haitians Train at Tuskegee

TUSKEGEE, Ala.—Lt. Phillippe Celestin, Lt. Alix Pasquet and Sgt. Raymond Cassagne, three soldiers from Port au Prince (Haitian city) recently arrived at Tuskegee Institute here to learn to fly the USA way via the 66th Army Air Force Flying Training Detachment.

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