

# CONFIDENTIAL

By STANLEY ROBERTSON

## IS OUR 'NEW CLASS' FAT AND COMPLACENT?

For a number of years, I have contended privately and in print, that Los Angeles' fast-growing Negro "Middle Class" becomes fat and complacent as its economic status grows.

It's my contention that this new class of Negroes—which has only been a large enough one to matter since the end of World War II—tries hard to lose its identity with the Negro community.

I'm of the opinion that the new "Negro Middle Class" feels that its economic ties with the corresponding Caucasian class are stronger than its racial ties with other Negroes.

My beliefs were strongly upheld during the past week when several members of a committee for J. Edward Atkinson began passing out campaign literature in precincts of the 10th Councilmanic District.

"It made us sick at the stomach to approach the luxury-type homes of Negroes in nice residential areas and have them virtually slam their doors in our faces when we attempted to pass out our literature," one of the group of young women told me.

"The really maddening part of the experience, however, was that Caucasians and Orientals in the same area politely and courteously accepted our literature. There's no way of telling whether they'll vote for Mr. Atkinson or not, but at least, they did show us the courtesy of allowing us to state our candidate's case," the young woman continued.

Conversely, the clubbers reported that they were treated courteously by Negroes in the lower income neighborhoods.

Characteristically, it has been the new Negro "Middle Class" which has ridiculed, laughed at, and looked down its nose at those Negroes lower on the economic and social ladders.

"The great unwashed Dark Cloud," "The slick-headed cotton-pickers" and other such degrading terms I have heard members of this new "Middle Class" saddle on Negroes not as fortunate as they.

Some of the barbs hurled have been as insulting as one might expect from the lips of a dyed-in-the-wool segregationist.

The incidents surrounding the Atkinson party workers have occurred in other areas in which Negroes are running for the City Council. A young schoolteacher on Rev. Clayton D. Russell's campaign committee told me:

"We have found in our precinct work an alarming number of people who have not registered and who need to be educated to the fact that a Negro is a candidate for an office in their district. However, once we contact these people, they are, in a great majority of cases, ready and willing to do anything they can to help. However, we have received our greatest apathy from people of the so called 'educated class'."

It's a too-well-known fact that it is from the "Middle Class" or, if you choose, "Educated Class," to which the Negro masses look for leadership.

It's a well known fact that it is from these classes that government bureaus, civic groups, and business organizations select men and women to "represent the Negro."

As we pointed out in a series of articles for the SENTINEL a year or so ago: one cannot but help wondering about the Negro leadership in Los Angeles when it originates from a class which, we charge, has become fat, complacent, and self-satisfied.

What the new Negro "Middle Class" fails to realize is this: no matter how much money you make, no matter how much education you receive, no matter how luxurious your home is, and no matter how expensive are the clothes you wear, you're still a Negro. And, as such, anything which affects other Negroes affects you, too.

## DID YOU READ OR SEE?

The article in the new Saturday Evening Post entitled: "What Happens When A Negro Moves Next Door?" The tone concerns what happened in a nice residential section of Baltimore when Negroes began moving in. Through some very intelligent actions, white property owners in the area welcomed their new neighbors and persuaded other Caucasians in the area not to become hysterical and sell for fear of the decrease in property values. Article points out that the problem of "changing neighborhoods" (i. e. Negroes moving into previously all-white areas) is as vital to equality in the North as desegregation of the schools is to equality in the South . . . The parade along Wilshire boulevard in Beverly Hills Easter Sunday for the benefit of the Cripple Children's Society? Congratulations to sponsors of the affair who used handicapped children of all racial groups (Caucasian, Oriental, Negro) as "models" to ride in the parade along with some of the great names of the entertainment world. It emphasized a fact which none of us should forget: these crippling diseases effect children of all races, religions, and backgrounds and deserve the support of us all.

## FACES IN THE CROWD . . .

JOE ADAMS, the former "Mayor of Melody" on KDAY, closes his long run in the Broadway musical, "Jamaica," on April 11 (his birthday) and will be back in our midst as soon as the "jet-stream" will get him here. I hear he's eyeing a real fabulous deal . . . JOHN ANDERSON, the great local trumpeter who records with some of the biggest names in music when they're in town, has been asked by Count Basie to join his great aggregation as the band's first trumpeter . . . CAMILLE HOWARD, the famed pianist-singer, started me to thinking the other day when I saw her coming out of Johnson's bathhouse over on Western (she's only one of the many celebs who keep young by patronizing the place) as to what happened to Roy Milton? When Milton and Miss Howard were a team back in the 1940's, they were one of the biggest things in show business with more bookings than they could manage. Since leaving the band, Miss Howard has traveled all over the world and has packed them in from Sydney, Australia, to Phoenix, Ariz. But, one never hears of Milton these days. What happened?

## 'MISS BRONZE CALIFORNIA' JUNE 29 . . .

Photographer-promoter Howard Morehead is announcing this week that the first annual "Miss Bronze California" Contest and pageant will be held June 29th at the Hollywood Moulin Rouge.

The contest is an outgrowth of the old "Miss Bronze L.A." fete which last year, I think, was the finest Negro beauty event ever held in the U.S., judging by the comments and opinions of people who have seen all the major affairs of this kind from coast to coast.

"This year, we'll have contestants from all over the state," says Morehead. "Last year, we had so many girls from places like San Francisco and San Diego who wanted to enter the 'Bronze L.A.' contest but who were not eligible that we decided to open it up to the entire state," the photographer says.

I would advise all dolls interested to start getting in "shape" now because there's already a long list of prospective applicants.

More info later.

## THE FINAL REEL . . .

If they gave out "Oscars" at this coming Monday's Academy Awards presentation for Hollywood's top "publicist for a single motion picture," I'm sure the SENTINEL's A. S. "Doc" Young would grab the honors for his excellent work on "The Defiant Ones." Young has been responsible for a great deal of the comment which the film has caused throughout the world.