

Michigan Chronicle

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OUR BRAVE BOYS

In a message of greetings to the Wartime Conference of the N.A.A.C.P. which is being held in Chicago this week, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Invasion Forces stated:

"Negro troops did their duty excellently under fire on Normandy's beaches in a zone of heavy combat and suffered substantial casualties. You may well be proud of the accomplishments of Negro troops. In conjunction with all our forces in the European liberation campaign they have made their full contribution to the initial success."

Here is a statement from an unassailable source which attests to the bravery and courage of our boys who are giving their all for this country. We are proud of their performance and we want all America to give these boys the tributes they justly deserve.

It has been reported that one of the public opinion polls disclosed that many whites believed that Negroes were not doing their part in this war. Because the daily press and the movie newsreels have not given a true factual picture of who is doing what in this war, these whites have concluded that our contributions have been negligible. We believe that the peculiar historical position of the Negro in America requires that extra efforts be made to correct the mistake impression gained by our white population. The time has come for Americans to divest themselves of the traditional myths and begin to learn some of the facts of life.

White America needs to know that black boys are fighting and fighting well in every major theater of war and that those who are not in actual combat are working under shellfire to build and back up combat troops. If the daily papers, the movie companies and broadcasters told the whole story without prejudice or favoritism, there would be a marked change in white opinion of the Negro. Further, these gallant brown Americans deserve every line of type that could be written about them.

We often hear important white leaders bemoan the prevalence of racial prejudices and ask what might be done to ease the tensions of this confused period in our history. We know of nothing that has greater merit than a campaign on the part of the agencies of public opinion to tell the whole truth regarding Negro contributions to this great war effort. The bare facts will knock the props from under the myths which operate so viciously against the welfare of the Negro people.

MR. WALLACE NEEDS SUPPORT

In smoke-filled hotel rooms and in the corners of dim-lit bars down in Washington, the arch-reactionaries are reported to be cooking up a deal for the Democratic convention by which Henry Wallace will be shelved as the Vice Presidential candidate of the party in 1944. The southern bourbons and some of the Democrats in the North have long expressed their distaste for the pronounced liberalism of our Vice President. His forthright denunciation of exploiters and his unequivocal stand on organized labor and minority groups have worried the tory crowd no little in the last two years.

The smear artists have tried to paint Mr. Wallace as some screwball visionary who is helpless in the practical work-a-day world of Washington. The Republican press led this campaign of abuse but the newspapers were abetted by many a Capitol Hill Democrat. Mr. Wallace was ridiculed for his goodwill tour of Latin America and accused of being a milkman to the Hottentots. His global views were all "globaloney" to the plutocrats.

Shortly before his mission to China, however, Mr. Wallace went on a nation-wide speaking tour which enhanced his reputation considerably and convinced many doubters that he was not only a high-minded idealist but also a practical politician who is ready to do battle for the principles which he espouses. The public response to his speeches was enthusiastic everywhere he spoke and it became clear that at least two powerful groups in American life were definitely on his side, organized labor and the Negro people.

From the point of view of so-called "practical politics" the candidate in 1944 who succeeds in getting support from these groups will stand an excellent chance of winning this election. The Democrats who sincerely want to keep the party in power in Washington cannot let their prejudices get the better of their political judgement. A new Vice Presidential candidate on the Democratic ticket will provide a new target for the GOP and if the candidate can

be identified with the reactionary Democratic bloc of the South, the Negro voters are certain to take a second look at the Dewey-Bricker banner.

We believe that Mr. Wallace is today an experienced leader of government and understands the needs and responsibilities of our government on both the domestic and foreign front. He has the courage and the imagination which the leadership of our country requires today if we hope to make an enduring peace and assure post-war prosperity. We should not permit a political conspiracy by a handful of disgruntled Tories break the combination of Roosevelt and Wallace.

SEEING THE LIGHT

Editorial themes in the Negro Press have irritated many whites who insist that nothing should be said or done about minority group injustices during this period of all-out prosecution of the war. They maintain that some sort of moratorium should be declared on Negro protest and that we should be lynched in silence, at least until Hitler is licked. Negroes have been accused of selfishly taking advantage of a crisis in order to improve their narrow light.

Such thinking results from the sad fact that only a few whites really understand the basic relationship between our protest over discrimination and a real democratic victory in this war. They do not know that Hitler can still win this war although Germany is decisively defeated on the field of battle. They do not know that our real enemy is fascism and wherever fascism raises its head our democracy is threatened.

It is very gratifying to us to learn that some of our important Americans are beginning to recognize the above facts. Last week we received the following release from the Writer's War Board which illustrates our point of view:

BIGOTRY MUST NOT WIN THE WAR

We are touched and moved these days by newspaper dispatches and newsreel scenes expressing the joy of the starved, beaten, fear-haunted people of Europe at being liberated after the long horror of German rule. Yes, we have a right to be pleased that America stands before these pathetic human beings in the soft light of generosity and heroism. We have been kind to the victims of aggression and life is again worth living for them. Once the outlook had seemed hopeless. Instinctively they knew that they could not find any happiness in a world of German domination because that world was based upon a fierce arrogance of race and a terrifying set of bigotries. The Germans had been systematically indoctrinated in intolerance against all other races, religions and political parties. Neither Catholic nor Protestant nor Jew nor liberal nor intellectual nor honest journalist could be happy in such a diseased environment.

It does us credit as a nation that we have consistently loathed and condemned those cruel, malicious, bigotry-inspired crimes and persecutions which were perpetrated by Germans over and beyond the needs of war and usually long after all organized resistance had been overcome. The Germans should have taught all of us the ultimate meaning of unchecked bigotry. And yet at this very moment in history we Americans must, if we are candid, admit that we are not innocent of fierce, cruel, ignorant bigotries. Indeed there is a terrible irony that race and religion tensions are so worrisome on the home front even as our fine American lads are rescuing Europe from the German brand of bigotry.

Surely we must see this thing for what it is. We cannot let race hatred at home make a mockery of our country's great role as liberator overseas. Our forthcoming victory cannot be suffocated in the poison gas of race hatred at home. Bigotry must not be the final victor.

BOOK NOTES

GERTRUDE SCOTT MARTIN

A Missionary in China HEAVEN BELOW by E. H. Clayton (Prentice-Hall, Inc.; 70 Fifth Avenue, 1944; \$2.75) is an account by a missionary of the thirty years he spent in China at mission schools in Huchow, Chekiang and Hangchow. It is a human interest story rather than an analytical account of the happenings of these years. In fact one wishes that Mr. Clayton had given a better idea of what was going on in the minds of the people among whom he lived for so many years. The reader becomes familiar with Mr. Clayton's impressions and reactions rather than with those of the Chinese. Mr. Clayton came to China in 1912 with his wife and there his five children were born. He notes the problems involved for foreigners in China and especially in rearing children yet the author's great good humor seems to have solved most of these successfully. Since there was a sufficiently large colony of foreigners near Hangchow they were able to form a colony at Mokanshan forty miles from Hangchow. Yet one wonders if this clanishness on the part of the foreigners may not have been resented by the Chinese among whom they worked. On "Foreign Imperialism" Mr. Clayton gives a vivid account of the fighting which swept through and around Hangchow during the early years of the Chinese civil wars, and the experiences of the people years later when the Japanese took over the city. His comments on "foreign imperialism" seem defensive of the foreign powers rather than based on the true facts. He accuses the Chinese of blaming much on foreign imperialism which was actually due to their own weaknesses. There is no doubt that extra-territoriality, the establishment of concessions, and economic foreign interference accentuated some of China's difficulties. In spite of my wholehearted sympathy and love for the Chinese people, however, I must say that, in my thirty years of life in China, I have failed to see evidence that those exalted privileges have been to any appreciable extent responsible for China's tardy development. "Heaven Below" will help to round out a picture of China in the years from 1912 to the 1940s if used as a supplement to more factual books on the subject. Reading it changed my mind about missionary life which I had usually pictured as drab, dull, and without the blessing of family life. Mr. Clayton's experience was none of these. Athlete, Physician, Author Dr. Binda Diamond, famous athlete at the University of Chicago from 1914-1917, and at present director of the Department of Physical Therapy at Harlem hospital in

NO GOING BACK

All this talk that is being bandied about, about putting me back in the places to which they belonged before the war, fills me with protesting doubts. Only the other day I was publishing a letter from an admirable British soldier, in hospital in the Middle East, a Zulu named Hope. His one passionate desire was that he should never be sent back to servitude and inferiority in South Africa. I believe there are hundreds of thousands of British soldiers who will be of the same mind. Back to the old road? No fear! They won't want to be put back. We haven't fought this war to be put back.—H. G. Wells. —The Call.

THE FACTS IN OUR NEWS

By HORACE A. WHITE

IT IS EDUCATIONAL TO CAMPAIGN—For the last month, your correspondent has been busy campaigning to be nominated on the Democratic ticket for the United States Congress. At the writing of this column, the results of that campaign are not known. The results of the campaign do not matter too much. What has been gained by your correspondent is tremendously important.

The Negro people in Detroit are very eager for organization that will permit them to act in their own behalf. In trying to set up precinct organizations for getting out the vote, it was very revealing how eager the people are for a task to do. In organizing some 78 precincts, people volunteered from all walks of life to take over the responsibility of convincing their neighbors to vote on primary day. They were not concerned about approaching the task from the negative point of view, that is, to spend their time vilifying and criticizing somebody else. They wanted the opportunity to work in a positive way for a program, and with individuals who would pledge themselves to carry that program out.

It is impossible to perfect an organization of the size necessary to cover the First Congressional District, in a few weeks. It is possible, however, to have an effective precinct and neighborhood organization that can get results for the people in the district. The natural leadership among the people, is surprising, and in many instances, amazing. The ability to influence the thinking and action of one's neighbor, is a good sign of leadership. As your correspondent moved through this district, inhabited for the most part by working people, he found there, more common sense, backed up by the will to exercise that common sense, than has been displayed by many of our top leadership.

The people understand the issues much more clearly than many people give them credit for understanding. They understand that the working people of a community must cooperate, if they are to enhance their position to any appreciable degree. The common people mean cooperation however. They do not want somebody handing them down a program, and saying that this is labor's program, because we planned it for you. Cooperation is a reciprocal thing in the minds of the common people. The reciprocal idea in cooperation, is becoming more manifest among the masses of people, than I have ever dreamed was true. Especially is this true of the Negro masses. They ask point-blank, "Is it going to be a labor program, why not let those of us who labor have something to say about it, because if we have something to say about it, it may be more nearly a program which we can understand."

In such thinking on the part of the masses, may be the key to the Negro leadership's right to lead. Today we are about to have superimposed upon the Negro masses, a list of "Labor Leaders" who call themselves "Labor Leaders" because they have been successful in securing an appointment by some top labor official. These people use this little appointment to frighten a whole lot of Negroes who hope to get an appointment into utterly untenable positions as far as the Negro masses are concerned. The Negro masses do not want to come to the place where they can't respect the leadership of those who are in labor. But, the Negro masses are willing to disregard the words of Negro leadership in labor, unless, these Negro labor leaders come to the point where they can understand something of the thinking and feeling of the Negro masses.

This experience of mine in this campaign, shows how easily Negro leadership can lose its following, by listening to the voice of some disinterested and self-centered white man who lives on the other side of town.

If one is concerned about the devotion of the masses, to a program for their betterment, all he has to do is to work among them. He won't get the impression of their devotion, very clearly, if he works at them, but he will be tremendously impressed if he works with them. There is no sacrifice too great for the masses of the Negroes to make for their own advancement, and they will make it, if properly worked with. But, the Negro masses are like all people, who have a sense of self-respect, self-dignity, and self-determination. They do not want someone else to be pulling the strings and have them jump.

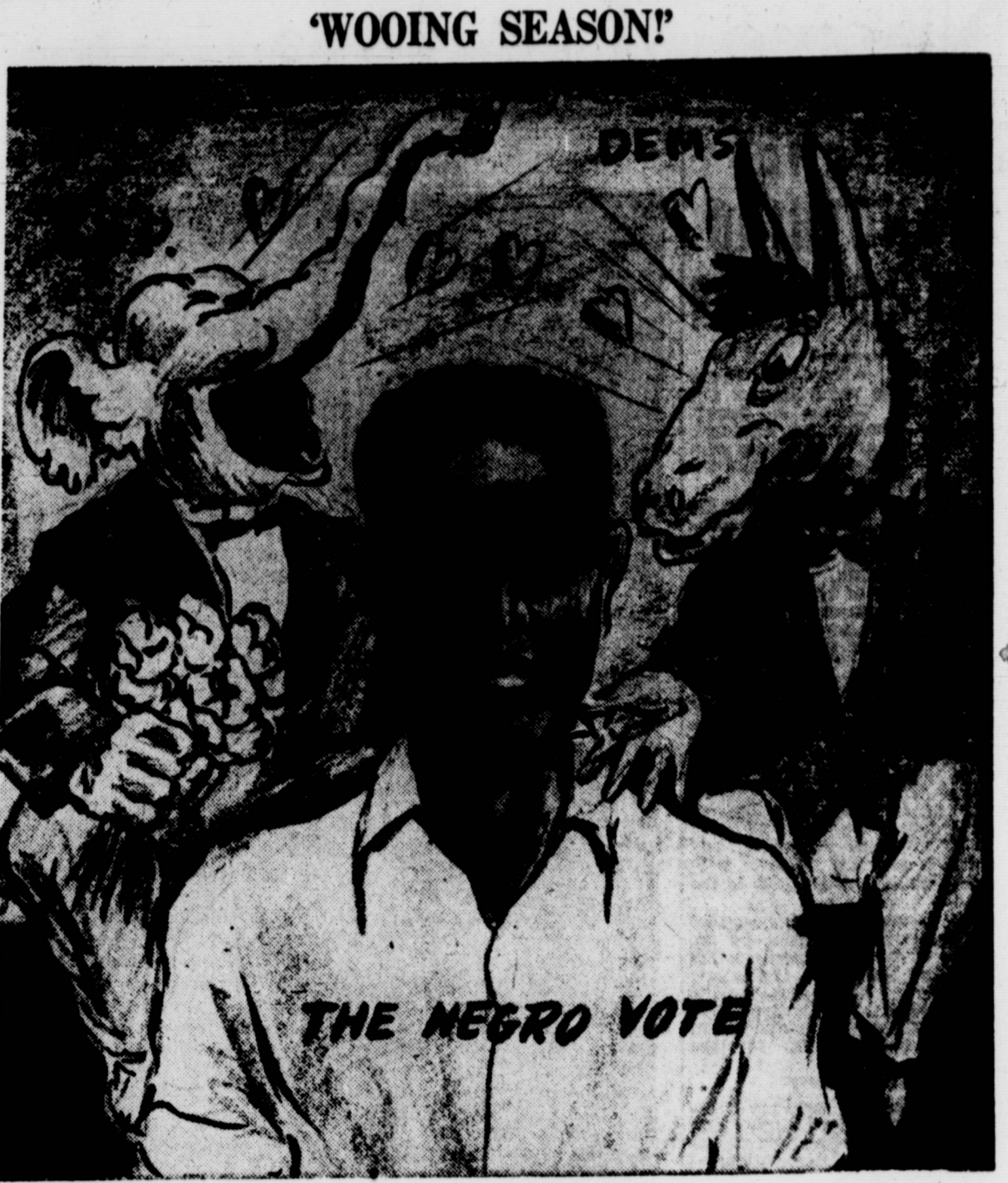
New York, has written a book of poems, WE WHO WOULD DIE (Wendell Mallett and Company; 209 West 125th street; New York City; 1944; \$2.00). Dr. Diamond's poems are strong, sincere and grow out of his every day living; his is no escapist writing.

The best of the poems in this collection are the Haitian vignettes and some of the protest poems. The author spent some time in Haiti at the time of the Duvalier massacre of 1937 and was made a Chevalier of the National Order of Honor and Merit of Haiti by the president of that country for his work at the time. His poems on Haiti reflect an appreciation and love for the country.

"We Who Would Die" One of the strongest and most effective of these poems is the title one: "We Who Would Die" in which the author depicts the soldier going forth to die. The closing lines are:

We leave this charge; we claim this due (That at our heads this legend stands: Here lie not Blacks; here lies not Jew; But here lie men who loved their land.)

Dr. Diamond's work is not finished in the classic sense but they are vigorous, thoughtful poems reflecting the sincerity of their writer. I thought him least successful in the poem called "Physician," "The Student Nurse" and "The Others of this Type." I shall look forward with interest to new poems by Dr. Diamond. There is a foreword by Arthur P. Davis who says in part: "We feel, somehow, that in spite of other motives present, Binda Diamond was forced to write primarily by strong and powerful feelings of protest—protest against the American race situation."



We, The Negro

BY WILLIAM L. SHERRILL

A NEW SOUTH IS INDEED COMING — and with it is coming a new America. This new South and new America is coming not alone because we have in the South today a small group of upstanding white liberals who have the courage to fight for right and justice for all Americans—but mainly because there is in the South a new Negro—a Negro who is "not scared of white-folks"—a Negro who realizes that the bulk of the fight for his rights under the constitution must be carried by himself. He waits no longer on the "good white folks," but tackles the job himself; he waits no longer on God to fight his battles, but helps God as God expects him to. "God helps those who help themselves." He is therefore gaining ground on every front and winning the respect of his fellow Americans who admire courage.

MOST ANYBODY CAN FIGHT for the rights of the Negro in the North but it takes courage to fight for the rights of Negroes in Walterboro, S. C., where white men like W. W. Smoak, state representative from Colleton county threaten harm to Negroes because they seek to win the franchise. Smoak, who is also editor of the Press and Standard, speaking before a race relations meeting said that the Negroes who are attempting to vote in South Carolina are doing a dangerous thing and heading for trouble. The Democratic Party," continued Smoak, "is a white man's organization and Negroes might as well accept the fact." Whatever you may think of Smoak—he is a member of the state legislature and editor of a weekly paper which gives him some influence and power in his community. To oppose such a man and fight him even in the North has its risks but to do this in the South takes courage. Yet the new Negro leadership in Walterboro is making this fight. "Why," they ask Mr. Smoak, "must the Negroes seeking for his rights, be so dangerous? This is the new type of leadership that is springing up all over the South. Leadership that is preparing to "beard the lion in his den."

IN ALABAMA, ARTHUR A. MADISON posts notices all over the state urging Negroes to register and become qualified voters. In Texas where the primary voting case was fought, Negroes now grid for the fight to see that the Supreme Court decision does not become an empty ruling. Anybody who knows anything about the South knows this Supreme Court ruling will be an empty thing, unless Negroes have the courage to face intimidation, insults, threats and open violence in an attempt to exercise the right it gives. This takes courage—and the new southern leadership seems to have what it takes.

Of course we yet have in the South representatives of that timid cautious leadership which serves to balance the equation—but this forward outpoken leadership seems in no mood to be held back by them, as was demonstrated last week in Florence and Bennettsville, S. C. When Rev. H. R. Butler, president of the State Baptist Association, warned his members to stay away from those who were organizing the Negro politically, else they might wake up one morning and find their house burned down he was roundly rebuked by the Florence County Progressive Democrats; and Rev. Gupple, pastor of the Methodist church at Bennettsville, faces ouster from an angry membership because of his refusal to let the church for a political meeting.

It appears that the Negro in his march toward political freedom in the South is prepared to fight those in the race as well as those outside the race who stand in his way. That he will win we have no doubt, for nothing stops a people that has determined to be free. The Negro in the North can help in this fight; the southern Negro is on courageously putting up, by throwing his political strength behind liberal candidates seeking seats in Congress and supporting all legislation which seeks to remove barriers to free exercise of the ballot. The Negro of the South stands in the front lines in this fight for a new America.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir: In the city's Fifth War Loan drive I (along with thousands of others) see that someone has hit upon the very special idea of showing in the downtown area large life-size pictures of some of our courageous and gallant boys who have fought and died for their beloved country. Which is a splendid way to drive home the fact that THE MOST we can do is very little compared with what our boys are doing. So I and thousands of other colored people would like to know why the colored soldier's picture has been omitted? Are they not dying, too?—Tessie O'Neal.

Somewhere in England, Having just finished reading your splendid paper, the Michigan Chronicle, which I always enjoy reading, and reading the letter written by T-S Thomason, with which I agree in every particular, I thought it my privilege as a soldier myself to convey to you, and to all who may read my letter, the way we, as Negro soldiers, feel about the way we are treated.

Knowing that we are playing an important part in this great struggle for human rights of which we as Negroes have been denied, nevertheless we carry on. I must say that if it were not for the splendid part played by your papers, Negro Americans would never know the part their sons are playing. We know that we should receive recognition for what we are doing, because we are Americans, too. But so many Americans have forgotten, or rather ignored, the rights of Negro Americans. They don't seem to realize that Negro soldiers have died so that America might live!

Again I must say in regards to the Negro press that it has certainly done its share in giving a true picture of the part being played by our troops. I realize what a problem it must be seeking this vital information, which means so much to us. May God be with you wherever you carry the fight for human rights. I remain, yours truly, Cpl. Fred Ivory, Co. C, 356 T.G.S. Regt., APO 368, co P.M., New York, N. Y.

HELPFUL CENSOR The Marines in one of the toughest outfits in the South Pacific were entertained by a notice posted on their bulletin board. It was a communication from the censor to one of the privates. It read: Holding your letter at mail desk. Name on envelope Sally. Name on letter Lucille. Check this, if O.K., mail. —Reader's Scope.