



PHOTO BY JOSEPH JANNEY STEINMETZ

"IT'S OUR COUNTRY, TOO"

The Negro Demands the Right to be Allowed to Fight for It

By Walter White

Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

FROM the man-power angle, the largest defense headache ahead of the United States Government is likely to be the status of that 10 per cent of our population which is Negro. The Negro insists upon doing his part, and the Army and Navy want none of him.

Charging wholesale discriminations in both the military and industrial defense services, the 250 papers which make up the nation's Negro press have been clamoring more loudly and with greater unanimity than at any time since the Scottsboro case. National Negro organizations, like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, have accumulated files full of case records and put the problem in the No. 1 position on their fighting agenda. For several months the War and Navy departments and the Advisory National Defense Commission have been on the receiving end of a considerable outpouring of Negro complaints, suggestions and indignant resolutions. Mr. Roosevelt has given ear to the problem in conference with Negro leaders at the White House. In the late August debates on the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill the matter was brought to the floor of the United States Senate and given a gingerly airing.

The issue got to the Senate through the efforts of senators Wagner and Barbour—sure-fire friends of Negro causes. Senator Wagner offered an amendment to that portion of the bill which had to do with voluntary enlistments. His amendment proposed that the opportunity to volunteer in the land or naval forces should be offered "regardless of race or color." After seven Congressional Record pages of debate, the phrase was accepted, 53 to 21.

Although through the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People I had something to do with this amendment, its adoption appears to have left

Negro opinion and the military and defense status of the Negroes about where they were. The good intentions expressed by its mollifying phrase are pretty well nullified in the next sentence of the bill. That sentence provides "that no man shall be inducted for training and service under this act unless and until he is acceptable to the land or naval forces. . . ."

After considerable research, it seems clear to me that the land and naval forces have not managed to find a way by which Negroes can be "acceptably" inducted. The bars likewise appear to be up in many of the industrial establishments engaged on defense orders.

As far as the Army is concerned, it is possible that this situation will be helped by Mr. Roosevelt's recent proposal to utilize Negro troops "on a fair and equitable basis" in the various branches of the Army service. The results of that declaration remain to be seen. Meanwhile, the Negroes' fight for the right to fight has only started. It will continue till, all along the line, Negroes receive their fair share in the task of national defense.

Of the wartime loyalty of Negroes and the value of Negro troops, I do not believe that there is any longer much question. There is no known case of Negro treason or sabotage against the United States. No minority group in the country has been freer from Fifth Columnist suspicions. In the numerous photographs of those companies of young men who lately flocked to the marriage-license bureaus hoping to escape the draft, I have yet to find a Negro.

Negroes have fought in every war in our history and have been lauded for their bravery by commanding generals from Andrew Jackson to John J. Pershing. Two Negro regiments—the 9th and 10th Cavalry—saved the day for Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders at San Juan Hill. In the World War, another Negro Regiment—Harlem's

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"You shore won't git it!" Ben told them.

"Ain't no use argufying with him. Put him under, Fred."

They moved him just to the water, holding his head up. Fred Ulm stood knee-deep, his face pale against the cutting chill of the creek. Ulm's hands closed about Ben's shoulders, and abruptly, before Ben could draw in his breath, shoved his head under.

The water was icy. It bit at the roots of his hair. Ben knew better than to fight even what little he could, but a ringing grew in his ears, and his lungs seemed about to burst. Instinctively he struggled, trying to twist his head toward the top. Panic grew within him. Ulm snatched him up suddenly.

Ben's breath came out in an explosive gush. Before he could suck in the new air, Ulm, timing it perfectly, thrust him under again. This time Ben's lungs were empty; air-starved, they seemed afire. The noise in his ears was deafening. *He's shore goan drown me*, he thought in terror. Now a star burst of lights streamed through his brain. The blood hammered in his temples. Then he dimly anticipated

that he was about to be brought up, and he opened his mouth to be ready for the air. Convulsively his lungs expanded, and instead of air he inhaled water. The water was like acid, strangling him.

Distantly, Fred Ulm's shout came to him, an imperative whisper: "You ready to say it?" Ben tried to speak, but he only croaked and coughed. For a moment he was held there, the water running out of his hair.

"You better say something quick!"
Yes, yes! Couldn't they hear him? Yes!

A far-off voice said, "Give him a minute, Fred, he's trying to say something."

Ain't I saying it? Can't you hear me?
"You better say something, Ben!"

An inch below Ben's face, the creek, the torturer, waited.

"You goan say it, Ben?" the voice insisted.

A spew of water came from Ben's open mouth. He fought the choking, and when he spoke, he said, "You cain't make me!"

Down his head went.

Gradually the dark terror subsided. In its place came a pleasant, anesthetic

twinkling of lights, floating him. Trouble sat in the front of the boat, scratching his ear. A yellow fly lit on the side, preening transparent wings with its hind feet. Ears raised, Trouble watched the fly the way he watched the bees when he went to the woods in spring with Miss Hannah, to pick pink honey-suckle for the green-glass vase. The water rippled pleasantly.

Abruptly, Ben was dragged back. The damp leaves now were warm against his blue cheek; the sounds that drifted to him were insignificant. There was an angry roaring, the swishing of brush. In the distorted scene, he seemed to see Fred Ulm floundering and gasping in the channel of the ice-water creek.

Now one of the sounds fastened itself to Ben's brain familiarly. Again the sound came, carrying a bull note, a note of fury, and suddenly he knew it was his father's voice. With an effort he half turned on his back, and saw a blurred Thursday Ragan standing almost over him, flailing those big red fists at anybody who would come within reach.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

"IT'S OUR COUNTRY, TOO"

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369th—lost 1100 men, killed and wounded, won 172 individual French and American decorations and never surrendered a foot of ground to the enemy. When, early in 1919, the 369th marched up Fifth Avenue, its regimental standard bore the ribbons of the Croix de Guerre.

Despite this record, the United States—in the preparation for and the fighting of the next war—hesitates to make use of its reservoir of Negro manpower or has used it as little or as insignificantly as possible.

Negro youths, like other young Americans, have recently become acutely air-minded. There is every reason to believe that many of them would make good aviators. "The first requisite of a military flier," says the Chicago Tribune, "is quick nervous responses. He should have a superior sense of balance, excellent muscular co-ordination, a good sensory apparatus, a sound body. In short, the qualities which make a good athlete are required of a flier. Of course he should have physical and moral courage as well. In all of these qualifications Negroes have given ample demonstration of their fitness. A race which has produced, in the span of a few years, Joe Louis, Henry Armstrong, Jesse Owens, Kenny Washington of U. C. L. A., Jefferson of Northwestern—All-American halfback—Ozzie Simmons of Iowa—All-American halfback—a substantial number of Golden Gloves champions and other absolutely top-notch athletes, provides a rich resource which ought not to be lost to the country through prejudice. In the face of this roster of world champions, the physical fitness and courage of their race cannot be questioned by any reasonable man. The record suggests that the country would lose less by refusing to train Harvard, Yale and Princeton men for the flying corps than by refusing to train Negroes."

Up to the present, however, this source of aviation manpower has not been touched for either the Army or the Navy. Testifying recently before a committee of the House of Representatives, Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, declared, "As to pilots,

there is no such thing as colored aviation at the present time." He added, however, that "a start has been made and I think the CAA—Civil Aeronautics Authority—is the proper place for that start or beginning to be made."

What General Marshall apparently had in mind when he referred to a start having been made, was the 1939 Army expansion act, which authorized the Secretary of War to lend military equipment to at least one accredited civilian aviation school to train Negro fliers. That concession was won only after a vigorous struggle. Eventually, in line with the law, the War Department designated the Chicago School of Aeronautics, at Glenview, Illinois, to train Negro pilots, and lent equipment to the school for that purpose. What the general's testimony did not bring out was the fact that the Army Air Corps, to date, has not enlisted or sent any Negroes to the Glenview school for training. There being no Negro units in the Air Corps, the Army, presumably, wouldn't know what to do with a Negro pilot if it trained one.

Even in those few instances where Negroes have been permitted to take training courses from the Civil Aeronautics Authority in American universities, they are left—so far as American military aviation is concerned—with no place to go to use their training. Recently, Walter L. Robinson, a Negro, was given flight training under the CAA at the University of Minnesota. He finished with a standing of thirteenth in a class of 300. When, along with some of his fellow graduates, he applied for enlistment in the Army Air Corps, he was told by the lieutenant in charge that it was useless for him to apply. "There is no place for a Negro," said the lieutenant, "in the Air Corps."

Robinson, knowing that the British—with their backs to the wall—had opened the Royal Air Force both to Negroes and to Indians, went to Canada and applied for service. He was almost instantly accepted.

The Robinson case has become a *cause célèbre* among Negroes and in the Negro press. Thoughtful Negroes, says a Negro educator, "are wondering

whether it will take the national humiliation of military defeat such as France now knows," to establish, for American Negroes, the right to fight for America.

But the no-place-for-Negroes policy of the Air Corps does not differ greatly from that of other branches of the Army. According to its own official statements, the Army is badly in need of pharmacists. Recently a Negro pharmacist took the prescribed examinations, passed with a high average and applied for service. He was told, "We're not going to have any black pharmacists in the Army."

During the Army's high-pressure drive for enlistments, it has been virtually impossible for Negroes to volunteer in any branch of the service. Negro volunteers are taken only for service in Negro regiments. On September first, in those regiments there were only 304 vacancies. At that time, in the 2nd Corps Area, embracing New York, New Jersey and Delaware, voluntary enlistment of whites had fallen far below the number hoped for. But Negroes seeking to enlist in that area were turned down. Late in August, a Negro high-school teacher—holding, incidentally, a master's degree from Columbia University—took four of his pupils to the Army recruiting station at Charlotte, North Carolina, to help them enlist. They were told that the recruiting station was for "whites only." When the teacher asked for further particulars, he was assaulted by men in Army uniform and thrown out with a fractured jaw.

No Negro has ever served, either as an officer or an enlisted man, in the Marine Corps. During the last thirty years, one Negro has been graduated from West Point. At present there are five Negro officers in the Regular Army. Three of them are chaplains. Two are combat officers. Of these latter, one is Brig. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, commander of the famous 369th. He came up from the ranks, served for a time as military attaché in Liberia, and since then has taught military science at Negro colleges. The other is his son,

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Lt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the West Point graduate. He finished in 1936, ranking thirty-fifth in a class of 276. He now commands the R. O. T. C. at the Negro Tuskegee Institute.

There are, however, 500 Negro officers in the Army reserve. Most of these are men commissioned during the World War. Up to mid-September, not one of these reserve officers had been called for service or training. According to Mr. Roosevelt's recent statement, these men apparently will not be entirely ignored. More of them will probably be needed, since some 1,000,000 Negroes are due to be called under the draft.

Judged by the practices which have prevailed, the plans of the War Department called for drawing as meagerly as possible upon the military resources or the patriotism of the nation's Negroes. Recently a War Department order was issued requiring two Negro National Guard regiments—Harlem's 369th and the 8th Illinois—to add to their names the word "Colored."

There was an immediate uproar, on the ground that, since predominantly Jewish or German or Irish units of the National Guard were not designated as such, there should be no singling out of Negro regiments. The order was rescinded.

But the Negroes believe that, designated or not, their fighting services will be used only if present policies can be widely changed. It is true that the 369th has been recently converted into an antiaircraft regiment. That, however, was due to the vigorous intercession of Gov. Herbert H. Lehman and Gen. William N. Haskell, of the New York National Guard. The department's plan, as reported to the governor, had been to convert the 369th into a labor regiment.

A mounting storm of protests from white as well as Negro Americans against discrimination in the armed forces, which coincided with the presidential campaign, resulted in the promotion of Col. Benjamin O. Davis, of the 369th New York Antiaircraft Regiment, to brigadier general, the first instance of a Negro becoming a general in the United States Army. On the same date, Dean William H. Hastie, of the Howard University Law School, was appointed civilian aide to the Secretary of War; Major Campbell Johnson, a third Negro, was made executive assistant to Dr. Clarence Dykstra, director of the draft. On October twenty-fifth the President wrote a letter announcing a relaxation of the previously announced plans to continue existing conditions which had aroused nationwide protest. Some Negroes promptly labeled these appointments as "appeasement jobs," while others, more realistic, attributed them to the successful protests and recognized that one gets something in this world only when he has something—in this case, the vote—which the other fellow wants and needs.

Servants in Khaki

Negro apprehensions have been further increased by the present fate of the Negro regiments of the regular Army—the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments. "Today and for some years past," says the Chicago Tribune, "the bulk of the regiment—the 10th Cavalry—has been split between West Point and Fort Leavenworth. Its members are employed chiefly as grooms and horse holders for officers and cadets."

Troop F of the 10th Cavalry is doing the same menial work at Fort Myer, Virginia. A recent investigation at Fort Riley, Kansas, revealed that, as late as mid-August "not a single member of the 9th Cavalry was being trained in any capacity to fight, but, to the contrary, they are merely hostlers. . . . Many of them are well educated . . . but they are simply not being trained as combat troops."

Inquiry at Fort Benning, Georgia, regarding the 24th Infantry brought the reply that this "is not a combat unit." They serve in the capacity of a service unit. Most of the men are given some form of training as truck drivers, cooks, caretakers of horses and in other menial tasks. A few are also serving in the band and as clerks and as caretakers of the equipment.

Henry L. Stimson, the Secretary of War, stated in August that "in the augmentation of the Army now under way, additional colored units have been authorized. These include one field artillery regiment, two coast artillery antiaircraft battalions, one engineer regiment for general service, twelve quartermaster companies and one chemical decontamination company."

That, on the face of it, looked like a good beginning. But it did not take the Negro press very long to break down those "authorizations" into more specific and less satisfactory terms. Quartermaster companies, said the Negroes, are service and not combat units. The engineer regiment, according to my information, is also due to be a service unit, which is another word for a labor battalion. The chemical decontamination company evidently will be trained in the arts of delousing, garbage removal and the care of latrines.

The Negro field artillery regiment referred to by Mr. Stimson was to be established at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Several weeks after the announcement of the organization of such a regiment was made, inquiries at Fort Sill revealed that the Negro soldiers there were chiefly employed in washing dishes, shining boots, cleaning the houses and mowing the lawns of the officers at the post. When the Oklahoma National Guard came to Fort Sill for training, the Negro troops performed the same services for the Guard officers.

Negroes and Negro soldiers know perfectly well that some white soldiers are required to perform menial tasks in the Army. Negroes do not object to some Negro soldiers doing the same kind of work. But they do vigorously object against all Negro soldiers, regardless of training and qualifications, being relegated to the role of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

"We will be American soldiers," says William H. Hastie. "We will be American ditchdiggers. We will be American aviators. We will be American laborers. We will be anything that any other American should be in this whole program of national defense. But we won't be black auxiliaries."

When a Negro desiring a combat post turns from the Army to the Navy he runs into even more insurmountable difficulties. Life aboard ship presents problems which are likely to be more acute than in any Army post. Moreover, although the Army has had all-Negro regiments, there has never been an all-Negro naval vessel. Thus, no Negro has ever graduated from Annapolis, and only two Negroes, during the past seventy years, have been permitted to enter it.

Until the World War it was possible for Negroes in the Navy to attain the rank of petty officer. Nowadays they are permitted to enlist only as menials. They can rise only to the position of officers' cook or steward. If a Negro youth enlists, he is rated as a mess attendant, third class, at twenty-one dollars a month. He is obliged to remain in that classification for a year. A white boy enlisting at the same time is eligible for promotion in rating every three months and, at the end of the year, may have become a petty officer with a fifty-four-dollars-a-month salary.

"After many years of experience," says the chief of the Bureau of Navigation, writing on behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, "the policy of not enlisting men of the colored race for any branch of the naval service except messman branch was adopted to meet the best interests of general ship efficiency. . . . This policy not only serves the best interests of the Navy and the country but serves the best interests of the men themselves."

The Industrial Picture

A somewhat similar policy appears to be in operation in some of the navy yards. At the Charleston, South Carolina, yard Negro employees in the powerhouse are used to teach white employees. The whites thus are advanced to the engine room, classified as engineers and given higher pay. The Negro teacher remains in the fireman's classification.

Due, perhaps, to the fact that the mechanics union bars Negroes from membership, Negroes in the machine shop at Charleston are not permitted to rise above the position of mechanic's helper. Formerly the renovating division was entirely manned by Negroes. Pay in that division was recently raised from \$3.84 to \$5.20 a day. Immediately all the Negroes were displaced by whites. One Negro, admitted to the renovating division as a "trainee," was assigned to the janitor service at \$3.84 a day. A white applicant who entered at the same time and also did janitor work was rated as an explosives operator and paid \$5.20 a day. When an educated Negro took the civil-service examination as explosives operator and passed, he was notified by the board of civil-service examiners that his rating was "canceled—unsuitable for position of explosives operator."

As far as the industrial side of the defense program is concerned, the Negroes constitute a great reservoir of trained and skilled workers. Since the Civil War, public and private moneys have been spent in increasing volume for this type of Negro education. Within the last ten years more than 30,000 Negroes have graduated from colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools. During the same period more than 200,000 have finished high school. A considerably larger number have graduated from trade, industrial and mechanical-arts schools or finished courses given by the WPA, the NYA or other state and Federal agencies.

Despite the fact that thousands of them are trained workers and, therefore, assets in the nation's defense-construction program, the evidence seems to indicate that here, too, the policy seems to be to get along without Negroes. In some instances, at least, this policy is adhered to regardless of the consequences to defense.

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One large airplane-manufacturing company with a huge Government contract happens to be located in a New England state near the large estate of a wealthy and patriotic woman. One of her gardeners was of German birth. When she found that he was a leading figure in the local Nazi Bund and aggressively pro-Hitler and anti-American in his opinions, she promptly fired him. Twenty-four hours later he landed a job—apparently with no questions asked—in the airplane plant. American Negroes, however, are refused employment in that plant, regardless of their training. One young Negro recently applied. He was a graduate of an excellent trade school. His average of grades for his course had been 98.4 per cent. But good as his record was and badly as skilled men were needed, he was turned down. Subsequently this concern notified the state and Federal employment office that henceforth Negro applicants should not be sent and that if they were sent they would not be hired. Having discovered that the defense program—which made a place for anti-American aliens—had no place for his loyalty and skill, the Negro with the 98.4 per cent average took a job in a garage washing automobiles.

I have made an extensive survey of the policy toward the employment of Negroes of a large number of the several hundred plants which are working on defense orders for the United States Government. Some of these concerns did not reply. A number of them replied that they were prevented, by their contract with the Government, from disclosing the information desired. From out of the voluminous replies which were received, however, it is fairly clear that the Army policy toward Negroes has been established, in varying degrees, in many of these industrial establishments.

One of the plants where that policy is not in operation is a Southern concern—the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, of Newport News, Virginia. According to J. B. Woodward, Jr., vice-president and general manager of that company, 3000 of the 12,000 men employed at the plant on August twenty-second were Negroes. "Many of them," he said, "are helpers in skilled trades. There are also many Negroes in service jobs as chauffeurs, porters and messengers. All laborers and nearly all our riveters, chippers and drillers are Negroes. There is no ban, written or unwritten, on the employment of Negroes, and the company has always found them, as a class, loyal and efficient employees. The total pay roll of this company is now averaging more than \$400,000 per week and the amount received by any employee is determined by the kind of job he holds, and not by his color."

The Negro and the Unions

In the shipbuilding industry new workers are qualified for skilled classification largely through the apprenticeship system. From the standpoint of the younger Negro worker, therefore, even the Newport News company offers little for the future,

since the apprenticeship schools which it maintains are open only to white workers.

The Government itself maintains apprenticeship schools at the Pensacola naval air base. There the Government offers a four-year course and pays the trainee \$2.88 a day while taking it. Negroes are barred from these courses. Among the several thousand skilled workers at the Pensacola base there are about ten Negroes.

The Tampa Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company has contracts from the Maritime Commission amounting to about \$17,000,000. The management wrote to me that it was not only willing but, skilled labor being hard to get, eager to employ qualified Negroes. The snag at Tampa is certain AFL unions, such as the International Boilermakers Union, which, by constitutional clauses, bar from membership all who are not "members of the white race."

At this plant, in 1936, the employees, led by twelve Negroes, organized and won a strike for higher wages. The

LETTER FOR CHRISTMAS

By EVA WILLES WANGSGAARD

DEAR FOLKS: I somehow haven't learned the knack Of saying easily, "I can't come back This Christmastime." For, as I write, I see The homemade star that tops the balsam tree, The painted paper toys that wore so well As trimmings, and the crystal, silver bell. Beneath the colored lights, the tinsel streams On scooters, skiing togs—and other dreams Become concrete. And there's the added thrill Of stockings that you always used to fill With small surprises given just for fun: The dog that barked, the lizard that would run, The goose that laid the golden egg, the car That bucked and whirled. How dear these trifles are Now that they come as ghost toys from the past, Whose worth and transience I have learned at last! Such joys are dropped by love and sacrifice From time's swift wings, and are not offered twice. But having known them, I shall never lack— Dear Dad and Mother, don't expect me back.

plant then was unorganized. The success of the strike brought in, posthaste, the organizers. When a closed shop was asked for, the question was raised about the status of the Negroes—who constituted 50 per cent of the employees. The organizers promised that the Negroes would be taken care of with a special charter. Immediately after the closed-shop agreement was signed, however, the organizers double-crossed both the Negroes and the management, and demanded that all workers not bona-fide union members be discharged. There was no out. The Negroes—many of them highly skilled workers—were fired. They appealed to William Green, president of the AFL, and to other union officials. Neither Mr. Green nor any of his subordinates took any corrective action. Last June a regional official of the AFL promised an investigation. The promise is still unkept.

For three months two colored aviation mechanics sought employment at the Boeing Aircraft plant at Seattle, which, to date, has received Government contracts totaling nearly \$32,-

000,000. Late in July, the Boeing Company apparently withdrew its refusal to employ Negroes and announced that it would take on qualified Negro mechanics, provided they were members of Aeronautical Mechanics Union No. 751, with which the company had a contract. Application forms were issued to the two Negroes. Whereupon it was discovered that the Aeronautical Union likewise has a clause in its constitution which bars Negroes from membership.

Unseen Barriers

My survey indicates that many of the industrial concerns which are reluctant to hire Negroes or which bar them altogether do so because of the objections of their own employees or because of labor-union regulations. For these reasons, also, a good many concerns which have no actual ban on the employment of Negroes, even in skilled occupations, nonetheless seem to make it a point to hire as few as possible. The few hired are generally for unskilled jobs of a sort least likely to throw them into competition with white employees or—even more important—with the all-white labor unions. At Wichita, Stearman Aircraft, a division of Boeing, has received orders from the Government for \$5,713,389 worth of planes; another Boeing plant in Wichita has a contract for \$2,041,947.97 for planes, making a total of \$7,755,336.97. Stearman officials write that the number of persons employed and the total pay roll are confidential. The company does disclose, however, that only three Negroes are employed, at a total pay-roll cost of \$230 a month. Two of them are porters, one an assistant cook.

The Rev. S. L. McDowell, a Negro Baptist minister of Nashville, recently wrote to Stinson Aircraft regarding possible work for Negroes in the Nashville plant, which is expected to employ 7000 to 8000 men. Rudolph Funk replied: "I am not certain at the present time how many colored people will be employed in our plant. As far as I know, there will be very few. There possibly will be some porters and truckmen."

To fulfill contracts for planes for the Federal Government this company will do most of its employing through tax-supported employment agencies jointly run by the Federal Government and the state of Tennessee. This public agency maintains separate offices for the registration of white and Negro workers. The Negro division is listed as a bureau for "domestic and personal service." Skilled Negro workers are required to register as common laborers and, if they insist, are given a second classification in the skills which they possess. Even then, requests for skilled workers are never sent to the Negro office until all available whites listed at the "white" office have been given employment. Repeated protests to Washington have been unavailing.

Westinghouse has Government contracts to manufacture radio apparatus and communications equipment totaling \$8,024,892. In its Baltimore plant, at present, 800 persons are employed,

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COMMISSION

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of which normally three are Negroes. They are laborers and porters. No skilled Negro workers are hired, but there is no ban, according to the company, on the employment of Negroes. The Virginia Engineering Company, at Norfolk, to which have been awarded contracts totaling \$13,125,000, reports that it is now employing 1500 persons, of which probably 500 are Negroes. All of them are unskilled laborers.

According to the Baltimore Urban League, the Glenn L. Martin Company, already employing more than 10,000 workers, most of them on Government orders, has never employed a single Negro. The Colt Arms Company, of Hartford, refused to give any information. But a number of young Negroes have recently been turned away with the assertion that "we are not hiring any Negroes today." W. G. Skelly, of the Spartan Aircraft Company, of Tulsa, doubts "very much that even later, when we get to manufacturing the planes, we will require any colored help, with the exception of possibly using a few laborers." In Cleveland, neither General Motors nor the White Motor Company—both of which are working on large Government orders—employs Negroes. This again is largely a result of the policy of the International Association of Machinists in barring Negroes from membership.

The Federal Government, in the interest of speeding up defense, has begun slowly to move in on the problem of Negro employment in defense industries.

Recently, Sidney Hillman, of the National Defense Advisory Commission, appointed Dr. Robert C. Weaver as administrative assistant in the commission's labor-supply division. Doctor Weaver is a Negro. His duties will include the integration of qualified Negroes in the vocational and apprenticeship courses which are to be established to train workers and to supply such skilled workers to the plants working on defense contracts. The Defense Commission itself has issued a statement of labor policy which includes the admonitory statement that "workers should not be discriminated against because of age, sex, race or color."

In the administration of the draft law, the President has appointed a Negro member of the six-man Advisory Committee on Selective Service. He is Channing H. Tobias, national Negro secretary of the Y. M. C. A. Particularly in the larger cities, Negroes are being appointed to many of the city and local draft boards.

When, during the summer, the NAACP appealed to Secretary Stimson for a greater combat opportunity for Negroes, the Secretary's reply was a veiled warning that to criticize the department's policies was to obstruct

defense. "The success of the national-defense program," wrote Mr. Stimson, "can best be established by united support of the War Department plans, which have been worked out after years of study by those who have devoted their lives to these questions. Unity can be destroyed by attempting to establish a program which is contrary to the War Department's plans by those who are not familiar either with the principles involved or the requirements of such plans."

On a small minority of Negroes, these repeated rebuffs have had a disillusioning effect. That, in the opinion of many Negro leaders, explains why both Fascists and Communists, of late, have increased their proselytizing work in the country's Negro communities.

It is the Negroes' hope that Mr. Roosevelt's recent declaration will have a remedial effect in this situation. The overwhelming majority of American Negroes regard the United States as a country which they helped to build, and which, rebuffed or not, they propose to help defend. Unsatisfactory as conditions are, the average Negro, up to now, doesn't believe that either Hitler or Stalin has anything better to offer. He is, therefore, hanging on to his faith in democracy and going grimly ahead, determined to carry on his shoulders a fair share of the burden of its defense.

THEN MY INDIANA HOME, GOOD NIGHT

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way some kids were reputed to act about jam and jelly. On his way home from school, trotting barefoot along the brick sidewalks, Corbett would stop in at his father's shop.

That was the hub of Kentwood's intimate masculine existence. Sometimes all six chairs were filled—long, long ago, maybe around 1900 sometime—and often there were men waiting on the leather benches around the wall. Tom kept a mandolin there, and a guitar too. He hadn't joined in any barbershop choruses since he became a responsible husband and father; he felt that a professional man couldn't be too careful of his dignity. But sometimes Walter Ferrell or Milo Foster or some of those young bucks would be thumping out Good-bye, Dolly Gray or My Old Kentucky Home. And singing in harmony too.

And Corbett would tiptoe across the clean-swept floor and stand beside his father's chair—the first chair, the master's chair, right inside the window with its pink-and-gilt lettered legend: PALACE TONSORIAL PARLOR.

"Papa," Corbett would whisper.

All the men would laugh then, and Tom would laugh a little, proudly, and then bend down to hear what Corbett had to say.

"Papa, I was just thinking that maybe you might bring home a treat tonight. Maybe you might bring home some marshmallow walnuts from Crandall's."

Of course, Tom couldn't bring home such a luxury as marshmallow walnuts every night. You had to watch little leaks in the finances, even if you did have the biggest and best shop in town.

Tom grew to be mighty glad that he had checked the little leaks in the financial reservoir. For Corbett had gone through college—four years—and without that college training he might not have grown into such a suc-

cessful insurance man—one of the Century Club, no less—one of the hundred best men in his nationwide organization.

And Daughter Luella. They'd given her three years at college, right up until the summer when she married young Doctor Gerschwiller.

She was just a kid when she married him; Tom had felt a little awed because Doctor Gerschwiller's was such an old and important medical family in Indiana. She lived in Indianapolis, too, Luella did, although in a different suburb from Corbett. Henry Gerschwiller was about the top stomach specialist around there.

It was Henry who had taken Carrie to a sinus man when she began having so much trouble a year or two before. They had talked about Arizona at first, but somehow Carrie was always dreaming of Florida. That was how it had come about. The house was rented and the shop was sold—what was left of it: two chairs, and half the time not enough business for one man. Indianapolis had grown in the past generation; it reached its long dark arms out toward Kentwood; Kentwood people had their barbering done in Indianapolis nowadays.

Tom McCracken was in the grocery store, the while he thought about these things. Automatically, he was ordering the items on Carrie's list, and idly picking up a few more groceries that struck his fancy.

"What's those things? Gourds?"

The grocery clerk said in his easy Florida drawl, "No, captain, those are papayas. Something like a melon. They're mighty good; better try one." He plucked one papaya off the heap and added it to the stack of groceries.

Tom McCracken snorted, "Hold on a minute. I didn't —"

"That's all right, captain! That's with the compliments of the store."

Just try it—see how you like it. Mighty good for the stomach, they say."

"There's nothing wrong with my stomach," said Tom curtly, and he didn't rest until the papaya was back on the pile from which it had come. Some crazy kind of tropical fruit! He didn't want to eat things like that.

Tom walked slowly north along Main Street, fanning himself with his hat. Pink, purple, lavender, gold—blossoms shone before his eyes—vines and hedges and tangles of flowers. They weren't like the flowers at home. He liked petunias and nasturtiums. He liked Northern flowers—bleeding hearts, lilacs, crab-apple blossoms.

There was something sweet in the air; he stopped and sniffed suspiciously for a moment. Probably orange or grapefruit blossoms, or something queer and tropical.

He shook his head and walked on past tiny bungalows, past the shadows of swaying coconut palms.

To his amazement, the porch of Cottage No. 3, Palmetto Court, seemed filled with women. Women's laughter arose as he approached—all the chitter and chatter they made. Two of them were sitting in the porch swing and one on the railing; Carrie herself was in a chair.

Tom McCracken didn't know where Carrie had got hold of all these women. At home—well, that was different. He used to come home and find Carrie there with Lena Martin and Mrs. Burbank, and maybe the Greenwood girls. Or Elsie Wickware, or somebody—just laughing and talking—old friends, younger women, some of them, just neighbors, and not caring who was the barber's wife, and who was the preacher's wife or the banker's daughter. He'd come home, neat and proud, glad to leave the shop he loved, glad to come

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