

EDITORIALS

THE OMAHA GUIDE

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Race prejudice must go. The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man must prevail. These are the only principles which will stand the acid test of good citizenship in time of peace, war and death.

Omaha, Nebraska, Saturday, November 2, 1935

FOUR HOMES WAITING FOR THEIR BOYS

(Continued from last week)

"I know you all up there are doing all you can for our boys. And I hope you keep right on doing it until they are free with us again. Though I don't know what they are coming back to."

CUT OFF FROM RELIEF

Mrs. Williams lives in this rambling old house with her sister and her children, and a lodger and her children. She was completely cut off the relief while she was sick, and stayed with Mother Patterson who took her in and cared for her. The children stayed with her sister.

They wouldn't give her anything until she went back to her children, they told her. "Imagine that, letting on that I abandoned my children or something. Just so they could put more money in their own pockets. I know they do. They just ran a man out of town for telling on them. They do all us people out of our relief money and put it in their own pocket. They don't even deny it very hard. Because the papers and reports they send on to the government tell what they spent all the money they got for the relief and nobody except us knows the difference.

"I went to the relief lady and fought and finally, four weeks ago, she put me back on—after I came here. Yes, I get \$1.50 a week for me and all the children. That's all. She knows I don't pay my sister any rent. So all I get is that \$1.50 and I had to go fight for the last one, too. She didn't send it out when it was supposed to come.

PRISONERS RELIEF OF I. E. D. HELPS

"If it wasn't for the money you all send me every month we'd all be starved to death. We just about get enough to eat to keep alive on now. I was hoping to save enough money to get to see Eugene, but I couldn't with the doctor and the medicine I had to get, and feel that I was taking the food out of the mouths of my children when I did it."

Mrs. Williams has six children besides Eugene. The youngest is Christine. She has a tiny, heart-shaped face, and large, sad eyes like her mother's. After her comes Dorothy and then three boys, Fred and Junior and Robert, who is thirteen now. Just the size of Eugene when he left home, and the same age. "He looks so much like I remember Eugene, too," Mrs. Williams said. Then there's Ophelia, age 15. Ophelia is a big girl who never smiles. She doesn't get a chance to smile. She's working all the time. Especially now that her mother is sick. She has to cook and wash and try to keep the children clean, though that is an impossible task. All around the house is dust and filth. The children run around half-naked and bare footed, in clouds of gray dust. There's no place for them to sit except on the bare ground. They simply can't keep clean. And so Ophelia stands over the tub, and scrubs away at the rags.

"And I bet if she was a boy she'd be off just like he was," said Mrs. Williams. "That child is so unhappy. Like me when I was her age, work and work and nothing else, and hardly enough to eat, and no decent clothes. I don't blame Eugene for going off. Maybe he would have found work further on—so he could grow up decent and help us all.

"Maybe when he's free he'll be able to take all of us away from this here—"

The sweep of her hand embraced the blackened boards of the porch, the chairs that all missed a leg or a back or a seat, the road banked by mountains of junk and garbage, the tottering old houses, and the ragged children. Maybe soon—

"Ada, I'm gonna tell my mother you was talking to a white lady all day long." This belligerent statement was made by a mean looking red-headed youngster to Mrs. Ada Wright, mother of Roy and Andy, two of the Scottsboro boys in the kitchen of the "white-folks house" she works at. Among her many duties which include scrubbing the large house, washing, and doing all the cooking is the care of this boy and his little sister. They have a white nurse to look after them. But they don't like her, and why should she work when she can get Mrs. Wright to fetch and carry for her, while she sits out on the shady porch ordering her around. The lady of the house is away on business most of the day.

In 1932, Mrs. Ada Wright left the same job at the invitation of the International Labor Defense and traveled through twenty-six countries of Europe. Wherever she went, if she was not put in jail or immediately deported by the police, she was greeted by huge crowds of workers, who cheered her in more than a dozen different languages and pledged to help her win freedom for her two sons and all the other Scottsboro boys.

ACCLAIMED BY CROWDS

In Germany, she spoke to a mass gathering of 150,000 in the Lustgarten in Berlin. In Paris, she was acclaimed by tens of thousands. In the Soviet Union at the World Congress of

the International Labor Defense, Mrs. Wright was a guest of honor.

To millions she became a symbol of an oppressed, black-skinned people—a mother whose children are threatened with murder and lynching so that a whole nation can be "kept in its place" for plunder and robbery.

Back in Chattanooga, Tennessee, Mrs. Ada Wright is being pushed back "into her place." She has to support herself and her baby Lucille, who is 13 years old. Her married daughters have troubles of their own. Mother Wright and Lucille move back and forth, staying with each of them part of the time. Beatrice, the oldest daughter, lives in the house the "boys" lived in and grew up in. It's just beyond the tracks. All day long and far into the night trains passing over those steel rails could beckon to the boys carrying promises of work and plenty further on yonder, somewhere.

Roy and Andy Wright and their friends Haywood Patterson and Eugene Williams must have been tempted by those shiny roads for years. At home—only poverty and hunger and no work no matter how hard you tried. So there was only hope left. And one fine morning the four boys went off together on those tracks and got as far as Scottsboro, Alabama, and a lynch sentence to death.

STARVATION WAGES

Mrs. Wright thinks of her boys all the time while she goes about her work in the fine "white folks" house way out in a suburb called St. Elmo. Its wide clean streets are shaded by the sides of Lookout Mountain from the intense heat of the southern sun. She gets \$5 a week for seven days work from seven in the morning to seven at night. It costs her a dollar a week in bus fare to get out there every day. That leaves \$4 a week for her and Lucille—which would mean starvation but for the funds supplementing it from the International Labor Defense.

Mother Wright smiles as she works. She is full of hope. She saw all those thousands of people all over the world who are ready to help her boys. "Sure, I keep cheerful," she said as she pulled her tired hands out of the dish pan and wiped them on her apron. "I try not to worry about the boys. I know they have plenty of friends thinking for them and doing for them every minute they are in jail. It makes it easier as the months go by to know that."

Mother Patterson lives in Chattanooga too. Right near the tracks. Her little wooden house is as neat as a pin. Its mantel pieces are decorated with pictures of Haywood taken at his three trials and of crowds and meetings held for Scottsboro defense. In the back of her house is a small garden in which she works all day long raising a good part of the food the Patterson family gets to eat. Claude Patterson, Heywood's father, a slight wiry man works in the railroad shops. Long time ago he used to make \$30 or \$40 a week. But five years ago things began to get bad and he got less and less and hunger found its way into the little household. The older daughters had gone off and got married, but the young ones—Heywood was the oldest of them—were left at home and Heywood wanted to help them. That is why he went off with his friends hunting work.

WAITS FOR HER BOY

Mother Patterson never has a waking moment without thinking of her boy. His wide eyes look down on her from every corner of the house. She smiles up at him and tries not to weep when she thinks of him locked up in jail these four and a half years. She works hard all day long but she doesn't mind it. She even found time to nurse Mother Williams through a terrible sickness that lasted for months, caring for her until she was able to go home to her six little children.

Mother Patterson has not lost hope. She knows all the people she spoke to at all those meetings from coast to coast will do all they can to free her boy. She does not fear the new trial that's coming—though her kind eyes flash when she talks about "that Victoria Price" and the new lying warrants she just swore out in Scottsboro against those children. She is waiting bravely for the day when she can take down all those pictures off the walls, because her boy, her Haywood, will be home again where he belongs.

A RACIAL DANGER

There is one phase of the Italian-Ethiopian struggle that has received much less notice than it deserves. That phase—which, in the long view, may become the most important and most potentially dangerous of all the phases—is the inter-racial complications that may arise from Italy's imperial ambitions.

Here is the way it is expressed by the famed American Negro leader, educator, and writer, W. E. B. Du Bois, in the October issue of Foreign Affairs: "The probabilities are that Italy . . . will subdue Ethiopia. If this happens, it will be a costly victory, both for Italy and the white world—India, China and Japan, Africa in Africa and in America, and all the South Seas and Indian America—all that vast mass of men who have felt the oppression and insults, the slavery and exploitation of white folks, will say: 'I told you so! There is no faith in them even toward each other. They do not believe in Christianity and they will never voluntarily recognize the essential equality of human beings or surrender the idea of dominating the majority of men for their own selfish ends. Japan was right. The only path to freedom and equality is force, and force to the uttermost.'"

Mr. Du Bois' allusion to China and Japan involves another point that is not so well understood at it should be. When Japan started her invasion of Manchuria a few years ago, the white nations seemed to be solidly on the side of China. Japan was called an outlaw among nations, was held to be a menace to the peace of the world. Yet a legion of white observers have returned from the orient since, bringing the news that China today feels more friendly to the Japanese who tried—and are

still trying—to wrest from her a large share of her territory, than she does toward the English, the Americans, the Germans, the Italians and others. Results of that has been something approaching a Concord between Tokyo and Nanking governments. Whites have definitely "lost face" in China—they are mistrusted, disliked, feared. The Chinese believe they talk much, make fine promises, and then do nothing. They believe that the sole white ambition is to exploit the resources, human and material, of the black and yellow peoples.

The situation is particularly serious to England. If, as Mr. Du Bois also pointed out, an understanding between China and Japan closes Asia to white "aggression", India need no longer hesitate between passive resistance and open rebellion. India is a mighty muscle in the body of the British Empire. Her millions of natives are governed by a few thousand whites. What an Indian revolt would mean can only be conjectured—but the sun that finally set on it would be red indeed. So it goes throughout all the colonies of blackpeoples governed by Europeans—in British, French and Italian Someliland, in Kenya Colony, elsewhere in Africa and South America.

Nothing is more horrible, more dangerous, more corrupting to the orderly possessors of civilization than race warfare. The great majority of the earth's population is colored, and a great majority of these colored people are dominated by whites. If as Italy-Ethiopian disorder leads to a decisive split between the two great groups, it will be one of the most important events in the history of the world—an event that, over a period of many years, perhaps, centuries, can change all the maps, and remake the earth into a different plan.

SANCTIONS

League of Nations Sanctions against Italy will probably be in force by the time this is read.

First sanctions will be economic, and will take the following forms among others:

Forbid the opening of credit to Italy in any foreign country. Forbid authorization of an Italian bond issue in any foreign country. Forbid opening of bank credit to Italy in any League nation agreeing to the sanctions. Forbid opening of normal commercial credits—a prohibition which, it is said, would bring about an almost complete stoppage of Italian trade. In brief, the sanctions would be designed to paralyze Italy's import and export business.

Only three League nations voted against the sanctions and said they would not obey them—Albania and Hungary, which are relatively unimportant, and Austria, which, due to geographical position, is very important. Austria connects Italy with Germany, which is no longer a member of the League. Thus, goods Italy needs can be bought in Germany, transported across Austria, largely nullifying League sanctions. The League, which is now being led by England, could of course cure that by military action—something that would mean war. Many still believe that nothing will be really settled until that war occurs.

THE WAY OUT

(By Loren Miller)

THEY DIE IN BED

In the first place I don't believe that Mussolini's son-in-law is flying over the Ethiopian lines dropping bombs. Flyers sometimes get shot down and dictators, generals, and their kinsfolk don't get killed in action; they die in bed.

I suspect that the story was cooked up by some of Mussolini's hired men in order to give the folks at home a thrill. Probably they didn't intend to do it, but their little yarn provides an excellent object lesson for Negroes.

The story goes that the son-in-law got his idea of bombing women and children from watching the Japanese perform a similar trick when they were reducing Manchuria to the status of a vassal.

It happened that the Chinese were almost as devoid of modern arms as are the Ethiopians, Japan had modern weapons of death as does Italy. Even the son-in-law of a dictator could hardly fail to get such an obvious point.

Remember Manchuria

The parallel doesn't end there. Those who recall the Manchurian incident will remember that the Japanese didn't quite have the nerve to annex the large part of China that they conquered. Instead, the Japanese looked around until they found a Mr. Henry Pu Yi.

Mr. Pu Yi was living in extended obscurity at the time, but the Japanese took him to Tokio, dressed him in a top hat and a daco wn and made him emperor of Manchuko. He's doing nicely on the job now, thank you.

Mussolini got that idea too. Reports have it that he has found an equally obscure Ethi-

opian lord who has been inflated to the rank of emperor of that part of the country the Italians have been able to conquer. My geneologists report that the gentleman is a blood relative of a number of our own Uncle Toms.

In The Same Boat

I hope to have more to report on that score later, but for the present, I only want to point out that Japan is as militaristic as Italy and that it is no more averse to conquering weaker nations of colored peoples.

I know that will be an awful blow to those who have been prating about Japanese love of all colored peoples, but I'm not responsible for facts; the best I can do is to report them.

Japan and Italy have been in the same boat for some time. Both nations are ruled by little cliques of militarists who build their war machines at the expense of the people.

It costs money to equip armies and furnish navies and the working people have to foot the bill. In both Italy and Japan, living standards of the people are kept low to give the rich a chance to enjoy luxury.

No Copyright

I understand that there has been some grumbling about the disparity in the standards of living between rich and poor in both nations.

In both instances the militarists have sought to stay the discontent by telling their people that greater glories and better standards of living depend on foreign conquest. The Japanese rulers thought of it first, but there's no copyright on ideas. Mr. Mussolini never did much original thinking anyhow.

Unhappily, both Japanese and Italian militarists have found their way out attacking people whom we call colored. That's only an incident; either or both, would have attacked

KELLY MILLER SAYS

SOCIAL PRETENTIONS

AMONG NEGROES

Roughly speaking, society is divided into three classes—the upper, the middle and the lower. Only those belong to the upper class who are able to live, educate their children and give them a footing in life without working for a living, and are wholly free from the anxieties of a livelihood. The middle class is composed of men in professions, politics, business, commerce and the higher ranks of the technical and skilled pursuits, from which they derive a competent living with marginal time and income for intellectual and cultural activities. To the lower class is assigned those whose chief energies are engrossed in the rougher and coarser forms of toil from which they derive scarcely more than the bare necessities of life.

According to this classification there is no upper class among Negroes (though the uppish class often mistake themselves for the upper class) and a comparatively small number are in the middle class. The great bulk of the race falls in the lower classification.

Man is a distinction-making animal. Where there are no grounds for real distinctions

According to this classification, pretensions of the Negro so-called "elite" have generally been grotesque and bizarre. Wherever a handful of Negroes rose above the bulk of their kind, they at once set up superficial and silly distinctions. The house servants differentiated themselves from the field hands on the grounds that they wore better clothes, ate better food, and enjoyed closer association with the master and mistress of the manor. The cook, the coachman and the barber took first rank in Negro society.

During and after Reconstruction, office holding became the badge of distinction. Negro Senators, Congressmen and political left-overs of the Reconstruction regime gave an artificial impulse to Washington Negro society from which it has not wholly recovered down to this present day. At one time a government clerk, along with a Washington school teacher, were the social arbiters and law givers.

When the Negro first began to go to college, academic degrees adorned their visiting cards and admitted the holder at once to the exclusive elite circles. Upon the rise of the professional class, the teacher, preacher, lawyer and physician were assigned first place.

This silly social aristocracy was accompanied by mimicry of manners, dress and carriage (not character) of white social celebrities from whom they borrowed the form rather than the substance of social distinction.

Wealth inherited is always more honorific than wealth acquired for it gives a basis of hereditary social distinction. So far as wealth is concerned, there never has been, is not now nor is there likely to be, in the near future, and considerable class of Negroes of independent

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white nations had they found the opportunity. In fact, Japan is now flirting with the idea of attacking the Soviet Union, populated by a pre-dominantly white group. Italy may be at war with Europe any day. It's not the color that counts with imperialists, it's the possibility of feathering their own nests.