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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.

EDITORIALS

THE NEGRO AND THE NATION'S NUMBER ONE PROBLEM

By A. Phillip Randolph, International
President Brotherhood of Sleeping
Car Porters.

President Roosevelt has designat-
ed the South as the nation's Number
One Problem. Considering the extreme
sensitiveness of the South, and the fact
that the President must rely upon it
very largely to control the next na-
tional Democratic Convention, and to
a great extent to get NEW DEAL leg-
islation through the Congress, this was
a courageous statement. Time out of
mind, the South under the aegis of the
bankrupt doctrine of states' rights, has
insisted that it be left alone in the
handling of its various problems. The
major reason for this position is that
the South realizes that its big problem
is the problem of race, and it is deter-
mined to brook no interference on this
question. It realizes that its treatment
of the Negro people, following eman-
cipation from slavery in 1863 will not
bear the white light of public opinion.

Disfranchisement of the Negro
people in flagrant violation of the 14th
Amendment of the Constitution and
its enslavement of great masses of Ne-
gro workers on turpentine and lumber
plantations in utter nullification of the
13th Amendment together with all
forms of jim-crowism in the nature of
segregation, vagrancy laws, vicious
relis of the BLACK CODE, to say
nothing of the national disgrace of the
lynch terror and the mob law, and the
notorious flouting of all civil rights
and decency by the night riders and the
KLU KLUX KLAN, place the South in
a position of grave moral vulnerabili-
ty.

It is a matter of common knowl-
edge that millions of Negroes are
caught within the sinister grip of the
share crop and tenant farming, a form
of feudalism where the workers have
the status of pre-capitalistic semi serfs.

This is a travesty upon justice, a
mockery of civilized life and an insult
to the Bill of Rights and common
sense.

But the President did not touch
upon these delicate and inflammable
issues. The reason is clear. He is a po-
litician, a diplomat and a statesman. As
a politician, he looks carefully to the
maintenance of political fences so that
the Democratic majority in Congress
may remain safe in order to insure the
passage of his important measures.
Under our present party system, this
strategy from the point of view of the
leader of a great party, which must
depend upon the "solid South" to no
little extent is not without merit.

As a diplomat, he knew that to
raise the question of social justice for
the Negro people in the south, would
result in a volcanic eruption of racial
hatred and bitterness of the most vir-
ulent nature which would sweep over
the land.

In the pattern of a statesman,

President Roosevelt is looking steadily
toward the completion of his progres-
sive NEW DEAL legislative structure,
the success of which can not fail to im-
prove the living status of black Ameri-
cans.

Now, the question arises as to the
wisdom of foregoing facing a basic
human principle of social justice, in the
form of the right of the Negro people
to vote and be secure from the ravages
of the mid-night riding mob, as well as
the persecution of the lynch judge, in
order to secure favorable consideration
for other constructive economic mea-
sures that will benefit the people of the
south, including the Negro. This ques-
tion, the wide and far reaching impli-
cations of which are too intricate and
complex to be answered with complete-
ness and finality in a brief editorial,
will bob up ever and anon to plague
the NEW DEAL champions.

Our own opinion is that the great
prestige and power of some President
of the United States must be thrown
into the balance against the nefarious
terrorization of black Americans below
the Mason and Dixon Line. While it
may not be propitious for President
Roosevelt to take the bit in his mouth
and defy southern burbon political au-
tocracy at a time when he is seeking to
secure the enactment of laws that are
viciously fought by the Chambers of
Commerce the National Manufacturer
Association and all stripes of fascists,
from Maine, to Florida, yet there is no
person who has ever occupied the
White House who can openly, positive-
ly and frankly demand that the South
put its house in order by abolishing the
lily-white Democratic and Republican
Primaries, so that black Americans,
who have fought and died and crims-
oned the battle fields of every war in
which this nation has engaged from
Bunker Hill to Flanders Field, than the
matchless Franklin Delano Roosevelt.
He has the moral and spiritual power
to drive the Tillmans, Bleases, Varda-
mans and Bilbos into defeat and inno-
cuous obscurity. For how can anyone in
America talk with any honesty about
democracy in the face of the notorious
rotten-borough system of the South,
where colored Americans are counted in
the population as a basis of the election
of Southern Congressmen and yet de-
nied their constitutional right of suf-
frage.

Yet, it may be that the President
may some day strike out in righteous
indignation against this horrible
breach of political decency and demo-
cratic tradition. We probably must
await his own decision with respect to
the time of action. But we are certain
as the night follows the day that the
South will never cease to be the na-
tion's Number One Problem so long as
one third of the population are treated
as economic and political peons.

The existence of such a condition
of the Negro people who have made an
imperishable contribution in labor, ta-
lent, genius, ability, courage and blood
to our great country, is out of harmony
with the high idealism and practical
policies of social, economic and political
reform of vision, and the spirit of hu-
manitarian prophecy of our great Pre-
sident Franklin Roosevelt, who history
will set down at the top of Washington
Jefferson and Lincoln, great Presi-
dents though they were as a statesman
of the people.

And it is clear that he is not with-
out due need of courage. One needs
must have courage and much courage,
to attempt a revision in the number of
judges of the well nigh ancient insti-
tution of the United States Supreme
Court.

He lost, but he certainly was not
defeated in the attainment of the broad

objective of his maneuver. Moreover,
he denounced southern feudalistic ro-
yalists right in the heart of the
south.

But while he is certainly friendly
to the cause of Negro freedom and jus-
tice and has probably done more to ad-
vance this freedom and justice for the
race than any other American Presi-
dent, he has, nevertheless, remained
silent on the question of the passage of
Wagner Van Nuys Gavagan Anti-
Lynching Bill and the abolition of dis-
franchisement of Negro citizens in the
south.

Of course, in the main, this is the
Negro's own problem. It is he who must
bring sufficient pressure to bear out
upon the President and the Congress
to wipe out the evil of lynching and the
menace of the grand father clause
which curtails the right of the Negroes
to vote. The President nor Congress
will act without, pressure, and fifteen
million Negroes, when organized, can
exert a tremendous amount of pressure
to secure proper economic political and
civil consideration.

But it is proper to add, in this con-
nection, that the attack upon the South
at the nation's Number One Problem
by President Roosevelt with a view to
effecting its reconstruction in terms of
production and distribution, as well as
general social improvement, is certain
to benefit the Negro people of the
South. However, it will be important
and necessary for the Negroes them-
selves to see to it that they participate
in the solution of this Number One
Problem, as well as in the economic re-
construction of the South. Legislation
may be passed which is ever so benefi-
cent, but its purposes so far as the
well being of the Negro people is con-
cerned, may be nullified by adminis-
tration. It is not less important to the
Negro people to watch the administra-
tion. It is not less important to the
Negro people to watch the administration
of a law, than its enactment. No one
denies that the 14th Amendment was
intended to guarantee the right to vote
and other civil privileges to the Negro
people. But the effect of the Amend-
ment is killed by interpretation and ad-
ministration.

Fundamentally, the south is back-
ward. Both black and white workers
are in poverty, because both are unor-
ganized. The South has more than a
fourth of the total population of the
nation but raises only one fifth of the
country's dairy products, not enough
for itself. The report of the National
Emergency Council on the South, ap-
pointed by President Roosevelt, states
definitely that the southern people
need food, although the south has a
variety of fertile soils, a mild climate,
fine seaports, navigable rivers, good
railroads, coal and iron and other mi-
nerals, two thirds of the nation's oil,
forty per cent of its forests ideal fish-
ing and hunting. Yet the reports states
that fat-back corn bread and molasses
is the all too common diet of the great
masses of the people, not black people
alone, but white people, also.

What is the trouble? The answer
is the South has never been able to rise
because it has been too busy keeping
the Negro people down, and as the sage
of Tuskegee, Booker Washington, said
"You can not keep a man down in the
ditch without staying down there with
him." Thus, not only are Negroes, the
large majority of whom in the south
are in dire poverty, but so are the
whites. One Englishman traveling
through the South made the cryptic
remark that his eyes behold, especially
in Georgia, "peaches poverty and
pines." And Georgia typical of the oth-
er Southern states.

What is the remedy? The remedy

lies not only in the President's recom-
mendation of certain economic mea-
sures of business, industrial and agri-
cultural reform, but fundamentally of
organization into trade unions, tenant
farmers' organizations, share coppers'
unions and cooperatives among con-
sumers and producers, of the black
and white workers in the cities and on
the farms. Not into separate jim-crow
unions, but into the same unions. It is
base to he reconstruction of the South
that the fifteen million black people be
made free citizens with a right to vote
in every election and to be voted for,
even if federal troops must be station-
ed there to see that this simple act of
justice be done. Have not federal
troops been used for less noble pur-
poses?

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HOW BIG IS TOO BIG?

Legislative attempts to limit the
size of businesses, especially those en-
gaged in the merchandising field bring
to the fore a question similar to "How
far is up?" The news question is, How
big is too big? Is the grocery store to
be kept by law to the crossroads empor-
ium size? Is its number of employes
or its annual turnover, to be rigidly re-
stricted? If not, just what basis of
computing size is to be used?

Some of the lawmakers would des-
troy the chain stores, on the grounds
that they are too widespread, too large
and efficient, and do too much business.
If that is true, what is to be done about
department stores—some of which,
though they operate but a single outlet
do as much business as a chain with
hundreds of stores and draw trade
from the entire community and its en-
vironments?

Such questions as these inevitably
appear when you attempt to make
mere size the arbiter of commercial
virtue. Any law defining the right and
wrong sizes of industry is bound to be
unsound law, in that it must be based
upon the prejudices and opinions of in-
dividuals. A far sounder solution to
the question of size is found in natural
economic law. When a business be-
comes too big and unwieldy it likewise
becomes wasteful and inefficient—and a
smaller competitor promptly steps in
and takes its trade. There are difficul-
ties as well as advantages in size—as
the fact that thousands of progres-
sive independent merchants have only
met chain competition but have given
it a merry race, proves.

Halt industrial growth by law and
you halt progress. You establish a false
standard that is destructive of oppor-
tunity. To all intents and purposes you
defraud the consumer. You shackle am-
bition and ability. And in the long run,
everyone loses.

—oOo—

NO GUESS WORK

The safety of life insurance, as an
institution, has been proven in a hun-
dred economic storms. And that safety
is guaranteed by two irrevocable prin-
ciples—the multiplication table and
the law of mortality.

A life insurance company knows
almost to a nickel how much it will
have to pay out during any given fu-
ture period. Its charges and costs are
adjusted accordingly. And the money is
there and ready when a contract fall
due.

Life insurance has survived the
greatest war and the greatest depres-
sion in modern history with its colors
flying. That is why more and more ci-
tizens are turning to it as a haven for
savings.