

The Author of "Strange Fruit" Talks About White Culture and Her Play.

Weekly Feature Launched To Promote Race Harmony

Every Week, we shall present "Our Guest Column," a non-profit service of the American Press Associates devoted to furthering group understanding. Edited by Erna P. Harris, noted journalist, our new weekly column will feature prominent guest contributors who will review current developments on the minority group front and suggest local and nationwide action. Coming soon as guest columnists are Pearl S. Buck, A. Philip Randolph, George S. Schuyler, Dr. Ira De Reid, Rev. Howard Kester, Elmo Roper and other leaders in the fight for equality.

OUR GUEST Column

(Edited by Erna P. Harris)

LILLIAN E. SMITH TALKS ABOUT WHITE CULTURE AND HER PLAY

(edited by ERNA P. HARRIS)

Well, "Strange Fruit" is now ready for the harvest. It is a fruit that sets some folks' teeth on edge and a fruit that others find tempting and good to the taste. Some (white and colored) are so allergic to it that they walk out of the theater, and some find it so fascinating that they come back two and three times—and pay to do so.

If you ask people what "Strange Fruit" is about, you will get many different answers. Many whites will tell you that it is about the "Negro problem," whatever that is. Others will tell you that the author is in favor of intermarriage (she certainly has no objection to it) and that this is her defense of it. A few will tell you that it is an insult to Negro womanhood, and others will say that it is a sneer at white mothers and their sons. But a white Baptist minister of Philadelphia preached a sermon against "Strange Fruit," denouncing it as an attack on the Christian Church (white). He succeeded in getting the white Methodist and Baptist Ministerial Councils to pass resolutions to ban the show, the Methodists asking that all lines be deleted that made the white man appear to be a hypocrite.

The censor of Philadelphia ordered all such lines deleted, and pressure was exerted from the Mayor's office. The lines were deleted; many other ministers rose up in protest against the proposed banning, the theatre was packed to overflowing and the show went on. The censor, by the way, said that it was the first time in ten years that a playwright had refused to make the deletions ordered. He commented that he had lost a lot of face, but the author replied that his loss of face was better than her loss of integrity.

Then "Strange Fruit" came to New York. The fight began again. This time the technique was the smothering process. Three Broadway drama critics (all white Southerners) used the old and well-worn southern formula of saying the show was dull and boring. Being a Georgia white woman, I had a good laugh. The idea of any white Southerner man being bored with "Strange Fruit" is plain funny. But many readers of the New York press are not southern white women who know their old South, and hence the trick was not without its deadly effect.

Yet through it all, from Montreal to Toronto, to Boston, to Philadelphia, to New York, not one critic has said what the play is really about, and that seems an incredible thing. It is a play about human beings trapped and destroyed by segregation, the prevailing pattern of our white culture; but no one has said so. It is about the deep heart-breaking conflict between Christianity and White Supremacy, but no one has mentioned this. It is about the white man and his infatuation with his own importance; it is about a disease of the heart and

LOCAL & NAT'L NEWS--10c per copy "AND WORTH IT"

THE OMAHA GUIDE

JUSTICE/EQUALITY ALL THE NEWS WHILE IT IS NEWS HEW TO THE LINE
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AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 30 To Hold Open House for Members of Armed Forces

Community Response to "Y" Program Will Determine Provision for Adequate Facilities

ter Reuther, vice president of the UAW, talk to newsmen after meeting with the General Motors management at the General Motors building here.



TALK WITH NEWSMEN AFTER MEETING WITH G. M. MANAGEMENT

Detroit, Mich., (soundphoto) — R. C. Thomas, president and Wal-

WHITE ON COMMITTEE DRAFTING UAW STATEMENT

Detroit, Michigan—Walter White, Secretary of the NAACP, was a member of the committee of five which drafted a statement from 14 representatives who inspected mind that destroys all our people, whatever their color, if they come too close to it. It is a play about you and me and the profound difficulty we have in becoming sane, mature human beings, but no one has mentioned this. Yet the play goes on, making friends and enemies, and making lots of them. One wonders which will win as the weeks go by, the friends or the enemies. For the decision may be important, not for the play's author, nor its producers, but for white people and colored people living in this segregated culture of ours.

Note to readers: Miss Smith is much too modest about the merits of her play. Howard Barnes, reviewing "Strange Fruit" in the New York Herald Tribune, said it is "a show to make one sit up and take notice." Arthur Pollock, writing in the Brooklyn Eagle, called it "one of the most important plays of the season, of any season... more bite than a half dozen ordinary dramas."

U. S. COAST GUARD SEEKS ENLISTMENTS OF YOUNG MEN 17 TO 25 YEARS OLD

Enlistment in the United States Coast Guard is now open for young men of the ages 17 to 25 inclusive. Men who have completed two years of high school may enlist with the rating of Apprentice Seaman, while those who have not completed two years of high school but who have completed the 8th grade, may enlist as Stewards Mate 3/c. Enlistments may be for two or three years, this is optional with the men. Those interested should contact the Coast Guard Recruiting Representative, Room 316-A, Post Office Building, Omaha, Nebraska.

Howard C. King, CGM, USCG., is Recruiting Representative for Omaha, Nebraska.

ATTENTION WORKERS!

4 POINTS "TO THINK ABOUT"

1. Don't hesitate to make suggestions to your superiors when you know better ways and quicker methods of doing certain tasks.
2. Avoid street car and bus "incidents" by taking showers and changing clothes completely after a day's work is done.
3. Don't lay off even though you are not feeling exactly well.
4. Luck plays no part in success. Seize an opportunity when one comes your way and remember to practice some of the above and your friends will call you "lucky."

OMAHA URBAN LEAGUE, Industrial Relations Dept., Duward R. Crooms, Executive Sec'y. Arthur B. McCaw, Ass't Executive.

USO BUILDING WILL OPEN AGAIN SOON UNDER ANOTHER NAME

The second floor and the south side of the first floor of the Jewell Building at 2221 North 24th, recently occupied by the USO, has been leased by the Youth Centers, Inc., and will be made available for use by the community. A committee composed of representatives of the Urban League, YWCA, and YMCA, and the City Recreation Committee will work out the policies.

Many details are yet to be worked out but at least the effort to bring about community cooperation has resulted in success. First the agencies above mentioned met and agreed that these facilities were needed. Then a committee, primarily Al Kennedy and W. H. Mead, carried on negotiations and recommendations were approved by the Youth Centers Board last Friday and by the Community Welfare Council last Monday.

It was agreed that Gaines T. Bradford, the "Y" Secretary, would have his headquarters in the building and would be responsible for the scheduling and the general management of those portions leased. This does not mean, said Mr. Mead, that this building is to be the YMCA building. It is merely a temporary headquarters for its Secretary and some of its program. The "Y" is attempting to carry on a cooperation program and will work with the other agencies in meeting the greatest needs of this community. The securing of these facilities is only a temporary measure until the city plans go forward for the development of Burdette Park with a new school, gym and swimming pool, and until such time as the YM and YW can build their new building.

LINCOLN U. (MO.) CLOSES BECAUSE OF FLU EPIDEMIC

Jefferson City, Mo., Dec. 8, 1945 What started out to be a series of colds contracted by students at Lincoln University (Mo.) developed into an influenza epidemic causing the institution to discontinue instructional work on December 5. Two hundred students were stricken with the disease.

President Sherman D. Scruggs stated that because of the crowded conditions of the dormitories, it was felt best for the student's safety to scatter them out. About 85 of the infected students remained for treatment. Unaffected students and teacher personnel welcomed the additional two-week extension on the scheduled holiday period, which was to have begun Dec. 18. All living quarters will be treated for occupancy before the students return to school on January 3. The president said the last time will be made up at a later date.

All administrators, administrative assistants, full time cafeteria workers, and maintenance employees have continued at their posts.

Dr. R. N. James, State Health Director, said the epidemic sprang up in the southern part of the state and is spreading rapidly.

Sale of War Surplus Autos, Trucks, Trailers, and Scooters To Be Held at Ft. Crook, Dec. 19

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation in Omaha announced that a sale of War Surplus automobiles, trucks, trailer and scooters will be held at Fort Crook, Nebraska, at 8:30 a. m., December 19. No Jeeps will be on sale, as a special sale of such equipment to veterans only is now in progress. No lists or catalogs are available, but all equipment may be inspected December 17 and 18 at Fort Crook.

Prospective buyers attending the sale will be given an itemized list of all equipment showing the ceiling price of each item. Equipment will be sold in single lots; none will be sold in quantity lots. Before each item is offered for sale, buyers will be given a card on which they will write their bid. When bids are all received, the sale on that particular item will be closed, and the highest bidder announced. No bids over the ceiling price will be accepted. In case several bidders offer the ceiling price they will draw lots.

U. S. NAVAL LIEUT. RESUMES LAW PRACTICE

Peter E. Marchetti announces that he has just been released from the U. S. Naval Service as a Lieutenant in the United States Coast Guard and has resumed the practice of law with offices at 1037 Omaha National Bank Building, where he is associated with Shotwell and Vance, Jackson 7250.

STATE ORGANIZER OF NAT'L BEAUTY CULTURISTS' L'GE



MRS. CHRISTINE ALTHOUSE of the Althouse School of Beauty Culture, 2715-2717 North 24th St., who recently returned from Chicago and parts east, has been appointed State Organizer of the National Beauty Culturists' League.

Watch for her column, each week "Health, Beauty and Success" which will soon appear in this paper.

HERE DECEMBER 19TH



LIONEL HAMPTON

Sponsored by our Ace Dance Promoter, Mr. James Jewell, Mr. Lionel Hampton and his famous band will appear here next Wednesday evening at the Railroad Men's Benevolent Club, 24th and Miami streets.

SHARP PROTEST TO NAVY ON BARRING RETURNING SOLDIERS FROM CARRIER

Washington, D.C.—The refusal of Navy officers of the aircraft carrier Croatan to allow 123 Negro soldiers to come home on that vessel, solely because they were not white, drew a sharp protest last week from the NAACP to Secretary of the Navy, James V. Forrestal.

Citing an incident from World War 1, where a Negro regiment was barred from returning to the United States from France by a battleship captain who declared Negroes had never ridden (except as servants) on a battleship "and never would," the NAACP letter declared:

"It is 27 years since 1918 and despite the progress that has been made in many areas of human relationships, we find the United States Navy in 1945 no farther ahead in its attitude than it was in 1918."

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"It remained only for the Navy to say to these men that they could not return on a Navy vessel because of their color. If the United States Navy is to leave as final memory in the minds of Ne-

Urge All World War II Vets to Attend

Roosevelt Post No. 30 of the American Legion, 24th at Parker streets (upstairs), will entertain all members of the Armed Forces in World War II on Thursday, December 20th, at 8 pm. All Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Wacs, and Nurses are cordially invited to free eats, drink and entertainment. No matter if you have been discharged or are still in the service, you are welcome. Come out and get acquainted with your Commanders.

gro American soldiers the bitter thought that because they are not white, they cannot receive at the hands of their country's Navy the same treatment as other veterans who fought the good fight, then the war against Hitlerism has not been won. This Association calls upon you to issue orders to all commanders of Navy vessels being used to return veterans to the United States to accept contingents as scheduled without regard to race or color."

YOUTH LOOKS TO THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

On the third Sunday morning, the young people will be in charge

of the services at Zion Baptist Church rendering as usual splendid spiritual services to their church. On this Sunday, Mason Devereaux Jr., is to deliver the short talk before the regular sermon by the pastor Reverend Williams. He has chosen "Youth Looks to the Church for Christian Leadership and Spiritual Guidance" as the subject of his brief address.

NAACP TO HOLD REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING SUNDAY AT CLEAVES TEMPLE CME.

The NAACP's regular monthly meeting will be held at the Cleaves CME Temple Church, 25th and Decatur Streets on Sunday after

noon, Dec. 16 at 3:30 pm.

All members are urged to attend and bring a friend as the membership drive was a success and the local branch hopes to reach the 2,000 membership mark in Omaha and to make as good a showing as most other cities with their drives.

Expired memberships are hoped to be renewed at this meeting.

Are you a member of the NAACP? If Not, WHY NOT?

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USO HOSTESSES REWARDED FOR SERVICE



Hempstead, L. I.—Five-star USO pins in recognition of between 4500 and 5500 hours of volunteer service are awarded (top left) by Colonel Edward E. Hildreth, Commanding Officer at Mitchell Field, L. I., to Mrs. Elizabeth Bass Golding, vice-chairman of the Nassau USO Operating Committee, and to Mrs. Florence Fuller, chairman of the interracial information desk committee at a ceremony recently held at the Nichols Court USO here. Only four of these high honors were awarded. Above left, a small group of the 440 Hempstead USO hostesses to whom Colonel Hildreth presented pins of from one to four stars in recognition of between 500 and 3000 hours of volunteer service. From left to right in the front row are, Dorothy Schlaer, Mildred Gentry, Thelma Bauman, Erissa Gentry, Eloise Mills. The picture at left shows some of the junior hostesses and the men they serve. The occasion is one of the weekly USO dances held at the Lido Beach Naval Center. Attendance at these dances is still more than 5000.

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GIVE TO THE SISTER ELIZABETH KENNY FOUNDATION

BING CROSBY National Chairman

Purchase Of YMCA. Building Is Our Responsibility Says Mason

NO MEANS AS YET PROVIDED FOR FUTURE OF OUR YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IN THE RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL FIELDS

3115 Miami St. Omaha, Nebraska, December, 1945

To the Editor of the Omaha Guide:

DEAR SIR:

When the former U.S.O. was first established I wrote an article making an appeal to the people of Omaha to form a committee for the purpose of purchasing the U.S.O. for a future YMCA.

In last week's Guide I notice that you too are fighting for such a project, and through your paper I would like to appeal to the Negroes of Omaha once more to help in this worthy cause.

In a recent survey statistics showed that 30% of the increased population in Omaha were Negroes. Statistics also show that the Negro has made at least 25% more money during the war.

We have built up our churches, and formed new clubs, but no means has been provided for future of our young men and women in the recreational and social fields.

It is alright to set back and let the downtown YMCA secure a building for us, but it would be far better and more profitable to us as a race of people, to purchase the U.S.O. ourselves.

We owe it to the young men who have gone out and fought for their city and country, to provide them with some place where they can find rest, peace and contentment.

I hope that the Omaha Guide will continue its fight for this worthy cause and in doing so will enlist the aid of some of the organizations of this city.

Respectfully yours,

E. A. MASON.

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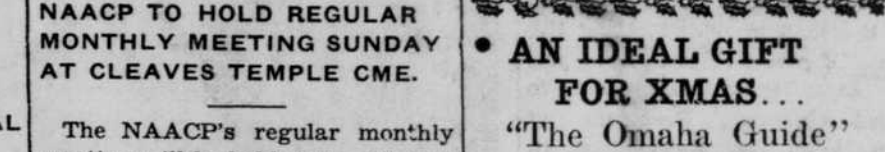
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123 Omaha Loan & Building Assn. Bldg. Omaha, Nebraska.

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