

The Omaha Guide

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

Published Every Saturday at 2420 Grant Street
 OMAHA, NEBRASKA—PHONE HA. 0800
 Entered as Second Class Matter March 15, 1927
 at the Post Office at Omaha, Nebraska, under
 Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

C. C. Galloway, Publisher and Acting Editor

All News Copy of Churches and all organizations must be in our office not later than 1:00 p. m. Monday for current issue. All Advertising Copy on Paid Articles, not later than Wednesday noon, preceding date of issue, to insure publication.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE IN OMAHA
 ONE YEAR \$3.00
 SIX MONTHS \$1.75
 THREE MONTHS \$1.25

SUBSCRIPTION RATE OUT OF TOWN
 ONE YEAR \$3.50
 SIX MONTHS \$2.00

National Advertising Representatives—
 INTERSTATE UNITED NEWSPAPERS, Inc.
 545 Fifth Avenue, New York City, Phone:—
 Murray Hill 2-5452, Ray Peck, Manager

THESE THINGS COME NOT BACK

by Ruth Taylor

There is an old proverb taken from the Persian—"Four things come not back—the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life and the neglected opportunity."

"The spoken word". It is not the fine things we have said that come back to us. What haunts us is the careless word, the critical speech, the unconscious cruelty. The times we misunderstood or misinterpreted our neighbor's action, the hasty generalization, the rumor repeated as though it were fact, the unkind gossip, are what we remember. If we are sincere in our endeavor to do right, these things plague us. These are the words that hurt us as deeply as those against whom we talked.

"The sped arrow". This is the barb of unkindness that went straight to the heart of our neighbor, the wise-crack that stung, the indifference to our brother's needs, the cold withdrawal from the common life. The sharp trick, the self-interest we displayed, the spurning of the outstretched hand are among the things that torment us.

"The past life". Not only do we recall those things we did individually but our national mistakes, for which we, as citizens, are responsible. We neglected the developing of brotherly relations between Americans of good faith. We assumed an isolationist attitude toward the problems of the world. We allowed the sores of other nations to fester and flare up until the plague threatened us with its virus of hatred.

"The neglected opportunity". Here again we suffer from both our individual and national errors.—the friendships we did not make, the help to the downtrodden we did not give, the responsibility we shirked. We create out of the wilderness a great nation. We founded a democracy—but how have we lived up to it?

We have our opportunity now to correct old mistakes—but we must remember the four things that come not back: Let the words we speak be words of fairness and friendship. Let the arrows we send forth carry messages of brotherly love. Let our life be as near to what we want our future to be, as we can make it—and let us not neglect any opportunity to prove the worth of our faith.

LOW WAGE SCALES FORCE NEGRO WOMEN TO WORK

(by Mary McLeod Bethune President, National Council of Negro Women)

(The following article by Mrs. Bethune is the third of a series released by the CIO in its drive to raise the standard of living for all Americans through increasing purchasing power.)

Day by day, two out of every five Negro women in America have to leave home to go to work, whereas only two out of every eight white women face this daily grind.

In normal times, nearly 2,000,000 Negro women go out to work in the kitchens of other women's homes, in over-heated steam-filled laundries, in canneries, in cotton fields and in factories. They accept these hard, unpleasant, low-paying jobs not because they like to work more than their white sisters, but BECAUSE OF THE LOW INCOME OF NEGRO MEN.

This need to supplement the family income in order to keep alive is one of the greatest handicaps to the race in the struggle for full citizenship and the American standard of living. As long as our mothers must neglect their children in order to feed them we will have a high juvenile delinquency rate.

The whole social structure of the Negro community is blighted by this economic necessity. Our health standards suffer. Our health standards suffer. Our opportunities for self-development and education are curtailed. The stability of our family life is undermined. Our moral and physical stamina are impaired.

"The public must pay dearly for the substandard working and living conditions of many thousands of Negro women workers," a publication of the Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor asserts. "When people have no jobs or their wages are too low for adequate support, they still must have food, shelter, and clothing—Experience has shown further that low living standards are costly in that they breed crime and disease, which effect all citizens."

This is the social price we are compelled to pay to keep on living in a society which, though able, seems unwilling to pay our men sufficient wages to enable them to maintain a decent standard of living for their families. Aware of this condition, the Congress of Industrial Organizations has launched a nationwide drive on two fronts to correct this evil: one, through the maintenance of take-home pay which has been cut 30 percent since the war ended; and the other, through raising the hourly minimum wage to 65 cents.

The bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act

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to provide a 65c minimum is one of the most important legislative matters now before Congress. Of the 10,000,000 American workers now earning less than the proposed minimum, a considerable number are Negroes. At the bottom of the economic scale, Negro men and women workers are concentrated in low-paying occupations.

However, it is not only the manual workers, who are underpaid. There are thousands of white collar workers, secretaries, typists, clerks, insurance workers and school teachers whose earnings fail to cover even the high living costs let alone provide a little security for the future. These workers struggle to get along. As a consequence, they are compelled to carry two jobs and must work at night and over week-ends. Cramped living quarters and constant debts are other results of low wages.

The CIO drive for a decent standard of living goes beyond the organized labor movement. It must involve all of us—our professional and white collar workers, our small business men, our unorganized workers as well as our trade unionists. All of us, whatever our calling, have a stake in raising the standard of living, through increasing purchasing power.

As President of the National Council of Negro Women, I urge our women to mobilize their forces in their respective communities behind these drives. Let your Senators and representatives in Congress know that this legislation is vital to you and your community. Write them, wire them, visit them. Let the editors of your community newspaper know your sentiments. Work with your church groups, youth groups, business groups—we must get information over to the people so that they can think intelligently and act effectively. The challenge to carry forward this program comes to every woman. Women have a very definite responsibility as moulders of opinion to see that public opinion in every household in America is crystallized in the support of every measure that will help America to become a better place in which to live. Let us throw all our strength behind this drive and with one long, hard push all together work constructively for a decent living standard for every American family.

OVERTONES: Al Heningburg THE CIO CONVENTION:

Important to—workers everywhere is this passage taken from the memo calling next month's (January) convention: "It is not impossible for fascist ideas to conquer America even though Axis military might is crushed. Reaction which was temporarily partially silenced by the war is again becoming prevalent. Those who place profits before people, those who believe the Negro should be kept 'in his place', those who seek a scapegoat in the Jews, are now as vociferous as ever."

"Likewise, those who seek to crush labor as the protagonist of democracy are determined to use unemployment as their tool and the financial reserves built at the taxpayers' expense as a weapon."

The future of the workingman, and the future of his home and children, are tied up in those words. We are due to see the greatest struggle in the industrial life of America. A struggle between those who furnish the money, and those who furnish the labor. Many would say that those who furnish the money also furnish the brains and the initiative. This is far from the truth. Our present high standards of living in this country are the result of a COMBINATION of the resources of labor and capital. Without the other, either is useless. But the great danger for the cause of labor is that management rolls up huge abcklogs of profit which enable it to weather the kind of storm which is now gathering. Whether labor can keep the unity and the wisdom necessary to work steadily toward its objectives is one of the big questions of the New Year.

EXAMINATION FOR AMERICA:

We've never had too much respect for those who wait for the New Year to come around to fill the books with good resolutions which they never intended to carry out, but it does pay to stop and take

Editorial: A Partly Shackled World is Never Free!



stock once in awhile. And many Americans are onw taking such stock of themselves as individuals, as well as of the nation as a whole. The direction which America takes in 1946 may well determine whether western civilization gets the necessary grip on itself, or whether the golden age of democracy is even now pretty well over.

GOOD NEWS FOR GI JOE:

Hundreds of thousands of veterans will benefit by the liberalized provisions recently made available to those who wish to continue their studies, or to borrow money with which to begin business. It is much less likely now that a veteran will begin a course of study, only to be forced to give it up because of lack of funds, long before the course is completed. Not nearly so difficult as before is the task of borrowing in order to start a business. In some cities, veterans are pooling their capital, and beginning cooperative enterprises which, if well managed, will obtain strong public support.

The Negro veteran will still find it difficult to meet the exacting standards set by banks which have the money to lend. This veteran needs the help and guidance of every qualified individual and agency in trying to meet those standards. One of the most important is making a careful study of all the conditions surrounding the proposed business. A frequent mistake made is that of relying solely upon the trade of other Negroes. Every would-be Negro businessman should remember this: "Negroes won't buy from you simply because you are a Negro, but they as well as other Americans will buy when the merchandise or the service is exactly what they want."

TOO MUCH JIBBER JABBER:

Last week this column defended young people from the charge frequently made that the younger generation is "going to the dogs." Old folks have always thought that the youngsters were too skittish and irresponsible, and that will probably always be true. Plato complained about it, and Martin Luther was concerned on the same score.

This week our position sounds like an about face, for it is a complaint about the unnecessary amount of noise that many of us make as we go about our daily routine. This includes some adults too, but the youngsters have more energy, and perhaps think less about other people. If your conversation or your laughter attracts undue attention, or serves to disturb your neighbor in any fashion, the chances are that there is too much of both. It's no more sensible to strike people in the face with shouts and jibber jabber than to strike them with your fists.

PLAIN TALK—by Dan Gardner— MacARTHUR DOES FOR JAPS WHAT NO WHIE MAN SINCE ABE LINCOLN HAS DONE FOR NEGROES:

One of the greatest jobs in modern times to make members of a darker race revere a white man is being done currently in Japan by Gen. MacArthur. Observers predict that within 20 years, MacArthur will be the Japanese version of the American Negro's Abraham Lincoln. Things that MacArthur are doing in Japan are basic but of overwhelming benefit to the common people, the great masses of Japs who are now being given every conceivable freedom they had for centuries before being denied.

Under MacArthur the ordinary Japanese is finally being shown, in many instances almost forcibly, what are the benefits of democracy and why the system which Japan has followed for a thousand years is no good in modern times.

We know, of course, that what MacArthur is doing is to make the American white man great in the Far East where the British, the Dutch, the French and other species of the white race have generated hate and contempt on the part of native populations. By hitting hard at the headline Japs and giving what benefits that occur from such a policy to the little fellow, MacArthur follows the policy first ascribed to Julius Caesar, "Divide and Rule". However, this diversion and governing process is making friends for the American white man where before

he was only a hated monstrous legend. Freedom of the press, freedom of speech, movement and the granting of universal suffrage to all Japanese, including women, are startling steps to the bewildered Sons of the Rising Sun who never had any of these things before and consequently didn't know what they are and, in fact, never thought about them, so bowed down were they under exploitation and the burdens that are laid on the backs of the little people the world over by bureaucracy and imperialism.

All these things give rise to the idea of a MacArthur doing for the American Negro still slavery in the South what is being done for the Japanese. The American Negro has never warred on this country, except in instances of rebellion such as Nat Turner's insurrection, and other uprisings of the slaves beaten down to the ground by the burden of the white man's chains.

Although Lincoln freed the slaves, his work in this connection has been nullified almost completely by the whites who got into the saddle after Honest Abe's assassination. American Negroes gave their blood that MacArthur might get to Tokyo to do for the Japanese, our defeated enemies what the American Negro's own homeland refuses to do.

The Japanese can not vote, thanks to the combined efforts of Negro and white fighting units who chased the Japs from Manila, from Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Leyte and back into the home islands. The Japanese has equality where he didn't have it before, thanks to MacArthur who ought to thank every American Negro he meets that there were such persons around could drive trucks through mud and mire, up and down mountains; tear up roadways through dense jungle, withstand the terrific tropical heat and diseases, who sang a song as they marched, many of them to their doom.

Yes, the Japanese, who went down to defeat under the atom bomb and under naval blockading, in addition to the sterling performances of Negro and white fighting men, are now in a position to get the things the Negroes who helped defeat them will not get in another 100 years unless some sort of a major spiritual and social turnabout takes place in the heart of the white man in the South.

In another quarter of a century, providing there is no major war going on Japan will be back on its feet.

The Japanese will enshrine MacArthur as the symbol of liberty, freedom and democracy.

In another quarter of a century more Negroes will be lynched by berserk, bloodthirsty white hoodlums on the streets of Mississippi's proudest cities, in Texas, in the bayous of Louisiana, in Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee, South Carolina, in any of the states below the Mason-Dixon Line that do not intend to be decent to a minority group so long as the federal government tolerates these violations of the Constitution which grants theoretically to every man, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

A MacArthur is needed in Washington who won't see color as he moves about putting our national house in order. A MacArthur is needed in the South who will see that all men are the same, despite color; that they all eat, all sleep, all dream, all have desires, all have in common the desire to live and multiply peacefully.

HAPPINESS AND SORROW

by Ruth Taylor

— What is the real secret of life—the secret of living at one with one's self and in that inner circle of calm and quiet through which the winds of worry cannot penetrate and which the storms of discontent cannot shake?

Van Dyke phrased it once as "to have known happiness and never to be afraid of sorrow." If you stop to think it through, that is a charm which anyone of us may have. For happiness is not dependent upon material prosperity. Think it over the happiness you have had. How do you remember them? By some possession—or by a snatch of well remembered music, the afterglow of a summer sunset—or a hillside white with snow and girdled by black pines, the scent of flowers or of fresh cut grass, a longed for laugh, a quiet companionship—an hour of peace. Aren't those the things that spell happiness? Remember happiness is a jewel whose value grows with the years—but like pearls, they must be worn to live.

Guard your happiness by enjoying it to the utmost. Live happily, rejoicing in all of beauty, joy or contentment that comes your way. Do not discolor your happiness with brooding on sorrow to come. And when it does, as it comes to all, don't be afraid. Sorrow bravely met is not an enemy but a friend—bringing with it a sense of comradeship with others who have endured—and in the end a quiet peace for remembered joys. Sorrow is the shading that emphasizes the reality of happiness. If we will face it with courage—sorrow is never greater than we can bear.

The evening prayer which Stevenson wrote for his household in Samoa belongs to us all these days. It was used there when his nearing death would have saddened a lesser spirit and it breathes the comfort of faith we need today when there are among us so many sorrowing hearts, so many homes to which loved ones will not return.

"We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favour, folk of many families and nations, gathered together in the peace of this roof. Be patient still; suffer us awhile longer to endure and, if it may be, help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies. Be with our friends. Be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest. If any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns to us call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labour—eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and if the day be marked for sorrow—strong to endure it."