

# The Omaha Guide

A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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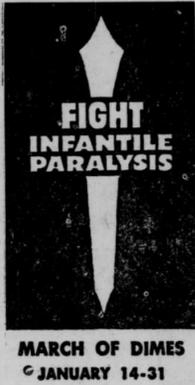
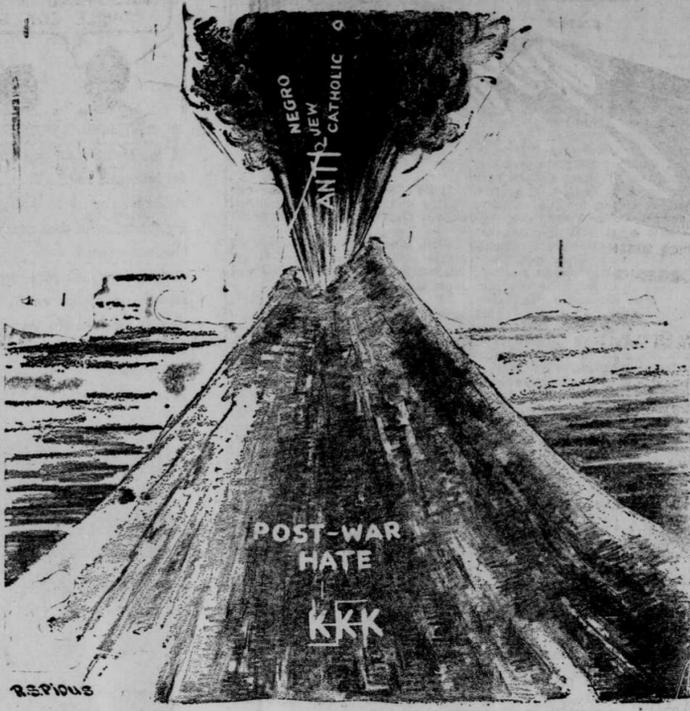
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## Editorial: "Shall This Happen Here!"



itarian ideals and attainment of material comfort, that comparison has become impossible. We have gotten ahead because heretofore our faith in freedom, in representative government, in the right of a man to keep the rewards of hard work, has been complete. Heretofore we have never, in effect, said: "Freedom is okay, but—"

In commenting on the present socialistic policy of Great Britain, which a powerful faction in our country seems bent on copying, opposition leader Winston Churchill said: "I foresee with sorrow but without fear that in the next few years we shall come to fundamental quarrels in this country. It seems impossible to escape the fact that events are moving and will move toward this issue: 'The People vs. the Socialists.'"

If there is one thing our country should keep in mind above everything else during the coming year and in all the years to follow, it is that freedom has no "buts." You either believe in it or you don't, and socialism isn't freedom.



Capitalism's perennial housing problem has become a housing crisis—and capitalism is tackling its crisis in a typically capitalist way.

The President has re-established building material priorities for houses costing \$10,000 or less. The "or less" is meaningless in a situation where the cream of "middle class" demand is waiting to be skimmed. In effect, the order gives new housing priorities to those who can afford \$10,000 homes.

For the millions of demobilized worker-veterans, war workers, and other proletarians, Negro and white, whose families are living "doubled up" or who face the calamity of eviction, "high-minded" housing committees and spotlight-hogging politicians offer a variety of "temporary solutions" ranging from "remodeled" old-law tenements to converted military barracks and "Quonsetvilles"—acres of those monotonous monstrosities called the Quonset hut, such as sheltered G. I.'s from the Aleutians to the New Hebrides.

(In New York City, Governor Dewey, who claims the dubious honor for having military barracks converted, deftly passed the buck to local authorities when the question of jim-crowing Negroes was raised.)

Commenting on the makeshift "solutions," the New York Times, with characteristic bourgeois piety, observed: "None of the temporary solutions to the housing problems are very palatable; the critical situation demands concessions everywhere, and in our ideals as well."

But the sacrifice of "our ideals" is by no means a unique experience for the class that rules our present society. For a hundred years, capitalist reformers, faced with the poverty-breeding, hence slum-breeding, economic laws inherent in the system, have had no other recourse than to deliver moral sermons whose emotional effects immediately evaporate under the influence of private interests.

Today, in the face of the most severe housing crisis this nation has known, the parasitic vultures for whom a housing shortage is a condition for high profits—the bank-realtor-contractor combination—conspire, not to solve, but to prolong the crisis. This has always been their policy toward Negro housing which reached the crisis stage long ago. Stimulating civic-mindedness, this element is forever projecting grandiose schemes for "slum-clearance." But they are schemes which, when finally undertaken on a trifling scale and after years of delay—and to the accompaniment of loud-self-praise—, simply result in forcing slum dwellers into

other run-down areas while the new and elaborate buildings that arise are turned over to the "better class."

It is with the problem of low-rent housing as it is with unemployment. The capitalists and their apologists moralize against unemployment, but their system requires a surplus army of jobless workers. As the Atlantic Chamber of Commerce put it: "Private competitive capitalism requires a floating number of unemployed." What the capitalists fear, is not unemployment in itself, but the possibility that unemployment may grow to unmanageable proportions. Similarly with their dismay over the housing crisis. In the case of Negroes, they have successfully pursued a do-nothing policy for years, and their political State is only now compelled to palliate the situation because the crisis has spread to involve the working population of the whole nation.

In the capitalist's inept and heartless handling of the housing problem, the system's callous cruelty lies exposed, and bourgeois piety fails utterly to conceal its ugliness. There are no real shortages of materials, machines or men to prevent the rapid construction, not of "temporary," but of sturdy, efficient housing for every family in the nation. Such housing could be constructed in a trice, so to speak, as the stupendous atom bomb factories and whole cities were built for war, were it not for the material interests of a venal ruling class.

Let no one kid himself. The present flurry of government activity does not mean the housing problem is being solved. In time, a lot of houses will be built, and many will have "for sale" and "for rent" signs on them as in the "thirties". But they will be too expensive for workingmen to live in.

There can be no real solution to the housing problem until society is reorganized and private interests give way to Socialist collectivism. Socialism opens the way for a rational utilization of our resources and an intelligent assault on the consequences of capitalist poverty. The "housing problem" in a Socialist Commonwealth would be nothing but a building problem, the kind of problem, in other words, that workers can easily and speedily overcome.

## OVERTONES

—(by Al Heningburg)

### FREEDOM OF OPINION:

One of the greatest things in America today, and for which Americans will always fight, is the freedom to form one's opinion without outside direction or coercion. In the Alabama town in which I lived as a boy, Negroes were taught to have a high opinion of all whites, and a correspondingly low one of themselves. The Negro who ventured to think of himself as "being good as a white man" was to be avoided. He was anti-social, and would get everybody into trouble.

That town still leads the entire section in illiteracy and poverty. For it was impossible to stifle expression among black folks without including the greater number of whites. Ten men ruled the town, including the sheriff and the money lender who charged twenty-five cents on the dollar per week. When some reckless individual failed to pay off, the sheriff did. When we can bring freedom of opinion to towns like that, and thus permit them to share in the secret of American greatness, both ignorance and poverty will be well on the way out.

### HEALTH AT HOME:

Hundreds of thousands of under-nourished men, women, and children will die in Europe this winter. The statisticians have already chalked up a huge number, and each day's deaths reach toward that awful total. No human being anywhere can be happy over these mass deaths. But we aren't happy either over some of the terrible conditions in this country. In one American city, Negro physicians seem to have entered a conspiracy with the

Board of Health. As a pay-off to keep Negro patients from clamoring to enter well-established public and private hospitals, Negro physicians are permitted to operate so-called hospitals which are a disgrace to the community and to the medical profession.

### CUTTING RED TAPE:

Although provisions for the educating and general re-orientation of veterans have been liberalized, there is still an amazing amount of red tape to be cut through before the individual GI can obtain benefits to which he is entitled. "The mills of the Gods grind slowly", and at times they seem to stop altogether. But don't let your veteran become discouraged. Keep on cutting away at the red tape until you get desirable action. Better patience now than disappointment later.

### PLEASE TO REMEMBER:

My seven-year old son came to me while I was shaving this morning, and shaving time is the moment at which most men would prefer to be left undisturbed. Especially by small sons. Holding out his report card from grade 2A, set a three, section 4, he said: "I only fell down in two things this time, reading and spelling." Since these comprise two-thirds of his academic endeavor, I was prompted to take on the righteous indignation of a father, and talk very sharply indeed. But then something stopped me, something by the way which never seemed to have stopped my dad. And I realized that I too had brought in some not-too-good cards in my day, and that even now I fail much more often than I succeed. So we finished our shaving in comparative peace, with both of us deciding to do better in both reading and spelling.

### POLITICS ABROAD:

The cultured voice of our Secretary of State troubled me much a few nights ago. Mr. Byrnes is disturbed, and understandably so, over the failure of the peoples of Rumania and Bulgaria to take on the ways of democracy. Of course, I agreed with Mr. Byrnes, only he said just half enough. The Secretary of State could understand Rumania and Bulgaria better if he took the time to understand South Carolina at all. Democracy is not a commodity which can be sold like wheat or oil, it is a way of life which must be experienced before it can be explained. The people in Bucharest aren't stupid, and they realize how weak is the argument of a man who has never been able to practice at home what he preaches abroad.

### THE SOUTH IS GROWING UP:

More and more intelligent southerners of both races are coming to realize that regional prosperity demands an end to racial segregation and discrimination. We don't need both those words, for in this case they mean the same thing. An increasing number of the South's best editors are trying to educate their readers to the point at which communities will try to make the best possible use of all resources, both natural and human. This means that eventually Negroes in the South will sound and act like men. At that time, and not before, whites in the same region will also begin to think and to act like men.

### INDUSTRIAL LABOR RELATIONS

(by George E. DeMar for CNS)

The clock is ticking away the first hours and minutes of 1946. The gains and losses of Negroes in the industrial field is the subject of discussion by many. Has the Negro assured himself by his performance of an advanced position in the industrial life of America? What can he now do to get more respect from management and from his fellow white workers? The answers to these questions are pretty clear, but only the activity of Negroes in the year just began, will make secure the advances of the past.

White America has revised its thinking with reference to the Negro. Management in good conscience no longer says that the Negro is not mechanically inclined; that Negroes are not punctual; that Negroes are not reliable, efficient and capable workers. Trade union leadership now knows that Negroes are not strike-breakers, but make just as good trade unionists as any other workers. The public itself recognizes that Negroes are just as good soldiers in all branches of service as his white brothers.

While the myths with reference to the Negro have been as thoroughly exploded as if hit by an atom bomb, the failure of democratic America to pass a permanent fair employment bill remains a plague on both houses of Congress. The greatest single task of the Negro in 1946 is to see to it that Congress passes fair employment legislation. The right to work is the right to live. Negro soldiers along with their white brothers bled and died on foreign fields in order to protect this right. Let us resolve that this nation spell out its policies in employment for all the world to see.

We have the right of free speech. Let us resolve to use it by writing each month to the President, the leaders of the House and of the Senate. Our particular Congressmen and Senators—let us tell them that in the name of the men who died on the battlefields to protect America they cannot destroy America by failure to pass permanent fair employment legislation. This is the activity we must engage in if our gains are to be made secure.

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