

# The Omaha Guide

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him bruised, bandaged and forlorn. Politicians rally to his defense. Moreover, so pervading is the belief in this spook, that probably ninety-nine per cent of the population would agree that "the public must be protected," and "the public interest is paramount."

Nevertheless, this writer ventures to brand the concept of "The Public" an arrant fraud! There is no such thing as a "public" whose interests are separate and apart from those of the working class and the capitalist class. As for that part of the so-called "public" which, during a strike, is always to be found rolling its eyes and declaiming for "the public interest"—the capitalists—watch closely and you will note that it stands cheek by jowl with the struck employer. Its press prints lies about the strike and heaps bucketfuls of slurs on the strikers. Its politicians berate them over their alleged "irresponsible conduct" and "inconsideration for the public interest." Indeed, according to the logic of these gentlemen—spokesmen for wealth and privileged, the only way for workers to "serve the public interest" is to take wage-cuts and other impositions without a whimper and retreat en masse to serfdom.

But the overwhelming majority of the so-called "public" are workers. And for workers to complain that a strike is causing the "public" to suffer is about as sensible as for rear echelon troops to complain over the "inconveniences" resulting from front-line fighting. The working class is one Army. And just as every battalion of a real army has a vital interest in the victories and defeats of its battle-line troops, so have all non-striking workers a vital interest in the outcome of strike-struggles their embattled brothers are waging.

As this is written, some of the greatest industrial conflicts this nation has ever experienced are pending. At least two of these are in industries—steel and meat packing—in which the proportion of Negro workers is high. They have a hard fight ahead, for they face foes who are as ruthless as they are powerful. The managements of these great corporations, stewards for rich and idle men, will feign the most touching concern for the poor, suffering "public"....but they will not hesitate to starve the wives and children of their own employees to bring them to their knees.

There will be much blubbery for "The Public" in the days ahead, but working men and working women, even those not directly involved in strikes, should not be fooled. They should take the inconveniences, and even the hardships, as they come, with the knowledge that the fight of striking workers is their fight too.

And it is their fight. The whole capitalist class has aligned itself with the big corporations because it knows that if the wage line is breached in one place, it will be breached in others, and wages generally will rise. On the other hand, if the recent post V-J Day wage cuts hold in the steel, meat-packing, auto and other strike-bound industries, they will also hold all along the line.

The Negro community is overwhelmingly a working class community, it should turn a deaf ear to "public interest" spook talk. It should support by every means, the gallant workers who, by resisting and striking, evince the kind of spirit which is big with promise for the future. It is an earnest that slavery shall not prevail.

## OVERTONES

—(by Al Heningburg)

An attractive young woman swung into the corner grocery, and she did not carry a shopping bag. She looked much like Park Avenue, and gave the impression that some other bodies usually looked after such chores as the buying of food. The clerk's face lighted up when he saw her, and with a smile said: "Some very fine salmon just came in, Ma'am." I followed the customer back to the shelves, inspected one of the cans with a view to purchase, and discovered that on the bottom there was a number pencilled in blue. You have already guessed that the number on the BOTTOM of the can had nothing whatever to do with the price of salmon. But it had much to do with just one more scheme used by the numbers rackets to deprive their deluded victims of their money.

### THEY WANT HOME:

More and more it becomes evident that American service men stationed overseas want to get back home as fast as they can. Some complain that



**MARCH OF DIMES**  
 JANUARY 14-31

Why Not Make this One of our Examples to the World.



### DO'S AND DON'TS:



Girls, you may be the weaker sex, but don't load your escorts down with your paraphernalia. Do be practical in your choice of accessories when attending dances.

brides coming to this country are given preference in ships; others that the 82nd Airborne Division had a long line of priority in order that all men in the Division could be in New York for the parade of last Saturday. These men cannot understand why they need to stay in China or in France, and many of the French and the Chinese are openly suggesting to that the good Americans go back where they came from. One of the things our nation has to settle is the extent to which we can force or persuade other nations to adopt the mode of living which we call democracy.

Negroes in the service are likely to feel this whole business more than some other American troops. Generally disadvantaged by the nature of their services, they face the added problem of seeing men in uniform similar to theirs inciting native people against them. Englishmen have been amazed at the tenacity with which American soldiers insist that other American soldiers should be treated not like men, but like animals. People in other lands know that story rather well, and that is one of the reasons that we shall have difficulty persuading anyone to take on the ways called democratic.

### THE STREET:

For those who read, and the number is increasing daily, there is an interesting range of books dealing with what Negroes are doing and thinking about in this country. One of the best of these is THE STREET, first novel by Ann Petrie, who writes with photographic accuracy about interesting people and places. Her setting for THE STREET, which won the Houghton Mifflin Life in America prize, is 116th Street in New York. America needs more books like this, for the story of the Negro in this country is not told well enough or often enough. And those who should be able to tell this fascinating story most effectively are Negroes themselves. Every time a young person like Ann Petrie becomes nationally known, thousands of Negro boys and girls are stimulated to aim a little bit higher than they would have aimed otherwise. This kind of result alone is enough to encourage Negroes who can produce something worthwhile to do so, and to do at a moment when the whole country is in a mood to listen and to read.

### TOO MUCH MONEY:

In more ways than one, there is too much money in circulation in this country. This fact doesn't affect wealthy Americans much, for they are much more thoughtful and careful on this score than the rest of us, but it is demoralizing to millions of poor folks like myself. The urge to spend large sums for trifles, or to pay for a piece of property two or three times its real value; these are signs that we have arrived at what the economists call inflation. Some of us are going to be wise enough to go on waiting for the things we've been wanting, instead of making a mad rush to add ourselves to the victims already trapped by foolish spending. Of course if you can afford to spend in this wild fashion, and your income is assured for the next twenty years, with no financial worries for yourself or your children, you need not read this at all.

### ON COLLEGE PRESIDENTS:

Many of us have not yet overcome the habit set some years ago of thinking of presidents of Negro colleges as being under-trained handkerchief heads whose chief function was to prevent real learning. Just one look at the men and women who sat in the Hotel Commodore one day last week plotting the next campaign for the United Negro College Fund would have benefitted many who have not brought themselves up to date on this picture. There you found some of the best brains of America; there you discovered a concentration of serious intention to go on doing a better job.

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### WHAT IS AMERICA?



by Ruth Taylor

There is a great fascination in the little homes strung out across the rolling countryside. There is nothing spectacular about them, no mark of unusual beauty or careful landscaping. Yet they have a distinction which the great estates do not possess. There are miles upon miles of them; strings of light from a train window; houses far enough apart to grow; little, lighted windows strung across a continent with roads binding towns and homes together. It is these myriad homes in small towns that constitute America.

What would it be like to live in a world composed entirely of people of genius—men with single track minds and temperaments, each capable of great achievement because of singleness of purpose and aim, and an ability to eliminate the little things of life?

The bold, ambitious people are busy getting ready to enjoy life—but the people of the little homes in small towns are the ones who really live. They are the men who work faithfully all day long at tasks, going from these tasks at the day's close to life with their families. They have time to putter about, to enjoy their homes, their gardens, their children, to take an active part in their church and their community, to be neighborly. It is this body of people who make up the democracy we call America.

It is how these people think; it is how these people vote; it is how these people decide, that makes America different from any country in the world—for it is the combined decision of these people that determines what the policies of America shall be. Bigger are they and more powerful than the dictators of all the world.

And because of this it is the task of the people of the little town to think clearly and carefully, to realize their responsibilities and to act courageously and at all times in full accord with the high principles of their own Declaration of Independence, and always by word and deed to "hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." If they do this, this stronghold of Democracy will endure throughout any storm which may assail it.

### LABOR FRONT

(by George DeMar)

### A REAL MAN:

A man is worthy of hire. An efficient, friendly worker is entitled to praise.

James H. Hill, an engineer for the United States Rubber Company, was being retired with full pension. He had been employed by the company for 33 years and 7 months. A banquet was given in his honor. Co-workers and company representatives were present.

Not a roamer on the job or with reverence to his living quarters, he kept the same room apartment

for 29 years. He had watched his family and his sister Pocahontas' family grow. Children became men and women. They became outstanding social workers, lawyers, physicians, teachers, postal employees, top-flight domestics, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, privates. Each experienced the friendliness of James Hill. Each he knew as youngsters trying to get an education, trying to break through the maize of prejudice which surrounds the struggling Negro. He knew of their heart aches, their illness—even death. Not a fellow to tarry over a mistake, you could admit and go or stay. Always he would say, "If you can't make it here, you can't make it anywhere."

Bald now as the sully with a fringe on top, he is 65, about 5' 7", weighs 165. Married for 40 years to Rosa, a faithful companion, he likes both the old and new. Emphatic in speech, he is quiet upon occasion. Always saying, "You know, fellow, some thing seems to be wrong with me," or, "Birdie, I really don't know." Generally he has the right answer.

Well, Back to the banquet, the official representatives of the U. S. Rubber Company praised punctuality, reliability, efficiency, cooperativeness, and adaptability. Arthur Wright for the company presented a Victory Bond and said, "You will never have to wait."

Younger employees called this hard-bitten, but friendly man "Pop" and said, "He will always complain about his legs and can outrun any of us."

James Hill said in reply to the presentation and praise a few words: "Well, I did not think anybody thought this much about me. I am going to take a rest." James Hill was a faithful, efficient, reliable worker, and don't forget, he was a union man.

### The Common Defense

#### THE TRAGEDY OF HATE:

(by Rev. William C. Kernan)

Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas, addressing a gathering of Christian Youth at Christ church New York City, told the story of a woman who had gone to meet a train bringing some 1300 refugees to Palestine.

"She stood," said Mrs. Douglas, "with an old man waiting with tears in his eyes for a grand-daughter, the only living member of the large family he had left behind him in Europe; with a physician whose wife had been gassed to death in Germany but whose son had somehow escaped and was coming to him; with hundreds of other tremulous, bereft human beings, waiting for some one miraculously rescued relative. Then the newcomers began to descend from the train—an orphaned girl from Italy, an orphaned lad from France, a youth who when asked from where he came, replied: 'What difference does that make? What matters is where I have come to, not where I've come from. I've come home.'"

"He stretched out his hands in joy—and the woman saw the number scorched into his flesh—108223—his slave number in a labor camp. There were such numbers on the hands of all the 1300 newcomers, on the hands, too, of a little boy of six, who came shyly up to the woman and told her, in reply to her question, that he had come originally from a town in Poland. He was six years old and his eight years old sister was with him. 'She and I,' he said simply, 'are the only Jews left of all the thousands in our town. Just she and I.'"

A boy—with a mark of a slave burned into his flesh! Has Twentieth Century civilization come to that! Two little children—bereft of everything and everyone—the only members of their religion left in their town—the rest liquidated.

Anti-Semitic lies did it—lies nurtured by hatred—until hatred had accomplished its perfect work—murder. Well did St. John say, "Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer."