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## WHAT IS AMERICA?



by RUTH TAYLOR

The other evening a man, rich in years and experience, told me a story which sums up in a few words just what America is.

The story goes as follows: A Viking crew, one of those daring breed whose insatiable curiosity drove their small galleys into all parts of the world, sailed up a river in France. They were met by the challenge: "From whence do ye come and who is your master?"

The Vikings answered with the shout: "We come from all the earth, and we call no man 'master'."

Then he went on to say: "Is not this the position of the United States?"

The analogy applies clear down the line. America was founded by men whose insatiable desire for freedom drove them to seek progress and prosperity across the seas. Those who came here were daring souls, eager to live to the fullest ready to work hard to get ahead, quick to take every opportunity for advancement for themselves and their children.

They came—like the Vikings, from all parts of the big earth bringing with them the best in racial, national and religious culture which in the natural evolution of our society are fusing into one unified culture in which the best of each strain is preserved and dignified.

In America there are no dual nationalities. A man may be—should be—proud of the country from which he comes but his allegiance is here and he proves it by his actions. Americans are not divided by their religions. Protestant, Catholic or Jew—they all say with deep feeling, "In God We Trust." We Americans come from all of the earth—but we come from and our hearts are where we ARE.

We call no man master. We have not been part of the feudal system. We have been free men on this soil and we owe our fealty only to God and our country—which is of our own making and of our own ruling.

the close cooperation of the Vikings—the respect given to the individual no matter at what task he works, the cooperation of shipmates who rely on one on the other.

"We come from all the earth, and we call no man 'master'."



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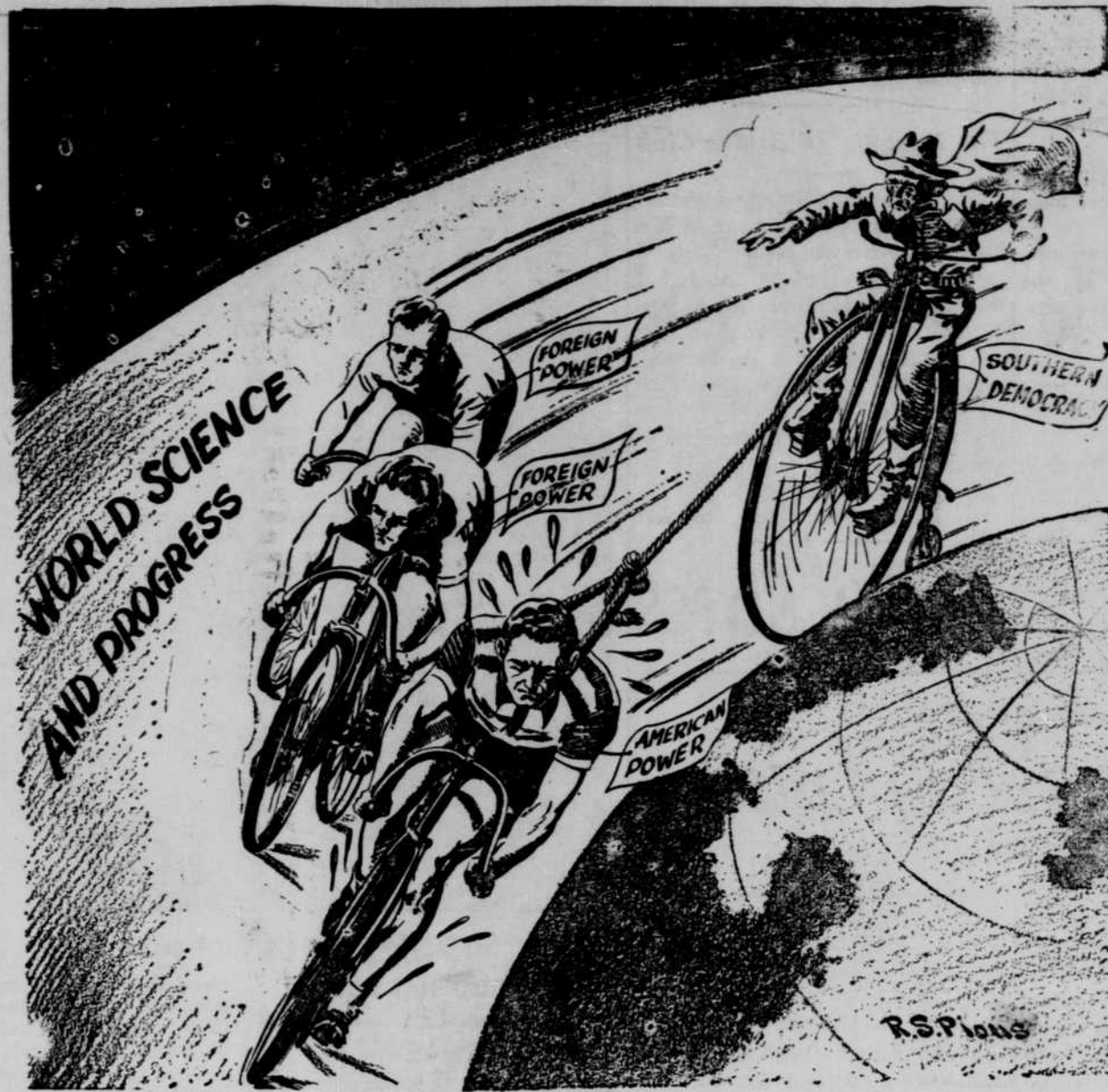
Who was the worst enemy of the Negro slave, the 'good' slave master or the 'bad' one?

I don't toss this one out as an idle quiz. The question, and the answer have their modern applications. From the standpoint of the individual slave, to be owned by a master who was sadistically cruel was an infinitely worse misfortune than to be owned by one who was kindly and considerate. But when we consider the slaves' class and historic interests—as embodied in the aspiration for freedom—the good master appears, paradoxically, as by far the most insidious and potent foe. His very kindness his refusal to permit the families of slaves to be broken up, the paternalistic manner in which he supervised their physical welfare and religious training, gave to the institution of chattel slavery a moral veneer and armed pro-slavery elements in the North powerful arguments to sway the wavering mass.

Few will disagree with this summation today. Time has same proposition had been uttered, say in 1850, it would have evoked puzzled bewilderment if not open disbelief. Just as, today, the charge that reformers and 'good' employers of the Henry Kaiser type are the workers worst enemies evokes puzzled bewilderment and open disbelief.

Yet, I venture to make the charge, I hasten to add, however, that I make the charge not because I think a Henry Kaiser exploits workers more ruthlessly than, say, General Motors but because through his profit-sharing scheme, company medicine and conciliatory attitude generally, he, and other 'good' employers, give a moral veneer to the

## Editorial: "Time Waits for No One!"



### NAACP GAINS 5,000 MEMBERS ON WEST COAST

San Francisco, Calif.—During 1945 the NAACP gained 5,000 new members on the Pacific Coast, according to Noah W. Griffin, Secretary of the Regional Office out here. California branches made the greatest gains, with Los Angeles maintaining its place as the fifth largest NAACP unit in the nation. The increase in Oregon was about 50 per cent, but there was a slight decrease in Washington due to the shutdown of war industries and movement of war workers out of the state. The region has set a goal of 30,000 members for 1946.

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### system of wage slavery.

I am speaking now in terms of the class and historic interests of the workers, not in terms of the individual interests of the wage slavery within his slavery. The class and historic interests of the workers clearly call for an end to the hazard of employment and the degradation of poverty. They call for the termination of the system like cotton and pork to the caprices of the market. They require, in short, the advent of a new social system under the means of production are owned collectively, managed democratically and operated for the benefit of society.

It was Benjamin Franklin who said "the rich will do everything for the poor—except get off their backs". The observation is particularly apropos as are determined as the 'bad' employers to stay in the saddle. The difference is that they are less reluctant to put more padding under the saddle, not only because it affords an easier ride.

"This view will explain why this writer looks askance at the union leaders who, by damning this employer as "ruthless" (General Motors, for example) and by singing hosannas to the friendly and constructive spirit of that employer (for instance, Ford and Chrysler) divide the exploiting class into 'good' and 'bad'. This merely serves as a smoke screen for the real villain of the piece. For whether some employers are good or not, the system is bad. And I daresay that the time will come when this conclusion will be as universally accepted as the conclusion is accepted today that Negro slavery was bad.

It would say "Oddsnots, we have still to flea the cat's tail". For actually it doesn't make much difference even to the individual worker whether his employer is 'good' or 'bad'. All employers are forced by the competitive nature of the system to squeeze as much as possible out of their workers as they can. All must lay workers when business gets bad. All are compelled constantly to install labor-displacing equipment and thus send new recruits into the army of unemployed. The best hearted corporation executive in the country is under the same compulsion as the hardest hearted to grind down the toilers.

## OVERTONES

—(by Al Heningburg)

### Too Much Noise:

One of the most serious dangers facing a minority group in a country like America is that too many of us cease to be useful, hardworking citizens, and drop to the low level of the professional protesters. These professionals not only spend all their time an denery inveighing against the general order of things but they get all steamed up when every other professional noisemaker in the town doesn't join in whatever is their particular project of the moment. When that kind of thing happens to a group over too long a period. They toil not, neither do they spin, but they do raise Cain.

Of course we need people like that but ever so much more do we need men and women with enough brains to get the work of the world done, in spite of the difficulties to be faced. Too great is the danger of spending our whole effort on complaint, and not enough of it on the big job of getting things done. When a fellow spends all his time grieving about the way his neighbor is treating him, he sometimes forgets to go to work and before he knows it there is no bread in the house. And those about whom he complains not only control things generally, they even move into his neighborhood and sell him goods at most unreasonable prices.

We shall always need men who have the courage of their convictions but we need even more those who can operate businesses and help to give their neighbors a job. At the present time, too many are school teachers and 'leaders'. The Negro's share of these two groups is much higher than it needs be with the result that often we make too much noise over very small accomplishments.

### For Equalized Salaries:

It's too early to know whether this is news or just rumor but there seems good reason to believe that salaries of Negro teachers in Mississippi will be made to equal the salaries of whites who have the same training and experience. This doesn't mean that they will earn much money for even the white teachers in Mississippi are underpaid, but it will just about double the income now received by Negroes.

### No Time For Hatred:

In many ways, Booker T. Washington was one of the

very few great Americans. When he was chosen recently on the first ballot for the well known Hall of Fame, he was chosen not as a Negro, but as an American whose contribution was significant. He was not chosen because he had been campaigned about but because his stature was such that the 100 hundred judges were practically unanimous in their selection of the great Negro teacher and philosopher as 1st choice. When Mr. Washington said "I shall allow no man to drag me down so low as to make me hate him", he was speaking from actual experience, and he knew how soul-searing hatred can be. He knew that he had a job to do, and that if he hated some folks as much as their meanness would suggest, he wouldn't have had time for anything else. When meditation and arbitration have been exhausted; when fighting is inevitable, the only thing to do is to pitch in and fight with all you've got but you're more certain of winning if you keep a cool head. There is no time for hatred even when the fight is on.

### Those New Jobs:

In spite of all that we hear about unemployment and its attendant dangers, there are hundreds of different types of new jobs in the offing in these United States. This is important for young people, many of whom are trying to decide now just what they are going to do to earn a living. We hope earnestly that all these young folks will find out everything possible about new occupations, and about the skills needed to master them. Of course they will learn sooner or later that the good old-fashioned qualities of honesty and industry will be just as much in demand in 1950 as they were in 1850. And it's still true that more workers fail because they don't have the right social qualities than because they lack needed skills.

### Some More Misinformation:

One of the worst results of living in a segregated society is that many of those discriminated against come to absorb many Negroes believe that Negroes are unclean, dishonest, and are criminally inclined. They don't like to admit these, and they don't understand their own feelings, but the fact is there just the same.

## Plain Talk...

(BY DAN GARDNER)

### "GI" PRISONERS OF POLICY ASK OUT OF INDIA-BURMA ROLE OF BEING SERVANTS TO BRITISH INTERESTS

We know what our servicemen are doing in Europe, in the Philippines and in Japan. That is, we have a pretty good idea of what occupation duties in former enemy territory require in policing by the victorious military until civilian government under proper supervision can be restored. We don't pretend, however, to understand what good purpose is being served in keeping our forces in the India-Burma theatre.

This theatre is not an occupation zone; it is British territory and the Japs were chased out of India long before V-J Day.

Occupation forces in India and in Burma are largely Negro, but the racial line is given less emphasis here, in favor of justice for both white and Negro troops who have earned their right to return home.

So desperate are the men that 1300 enlisted personnel in a January 11, 1946 mass meeting at the Eastern India Air Depot at Panagarh, India, contributed funds to pay for an advertisement in American newspapers to ask U. S. citizens vital questions.

The writer has been to the China-Burma-India (CBI) theatre of war and knows of conditions which American boys are subjected to and feels that those interested in fair play will join in condemnation of a War Department policy that isolates Americans in a forgotten part of the world as pawns in some program that results in helping others than ourselves.

Currently, the answer to the gripes of the CBI troops is that American soldiers are needed in India and Burma to dispose of surplus U. S. property. Common sense arithmetic shows that an American private in India is paid 200 rupees per month in addition to being provided with food, shelter and medical care.

The average monthly wage for an Indian laborer is forty rupees. Most of the U. S. property disposal at the Panagarh Base, for example, consisting largely of demolishing obsolete aircraft, which could have been done by Indian

## DO'S AND DONT'S:



They are Americans but do tell them about the cultural contributions of Africa, so that they will realize that their heritage is as rich as that of other fellow Americans.

civilians, was done by high ranking U. S. Air Force technicians.

Breakdown in comparative monetary values shows that the Indian rupee is worth 30 cents. This means an American soldier gets \$60 a month, base army pay, against \$1.20 a month for an Indian civilian laborer. There are uncounted millions of Indians who work for far less in any capacity they can be used.

Occupational policy in Japan and in Germany should neither affect nor be jeopardized by the redeployment of India-Burma personnel, the mass meeting at Panagarh decided. War Department ruling does not permit basic training for new recruits at overseas points as was often done before the war. Thus, the return of India-Burma soldiers to the States is held up because of a lack of replacements. Today it requires 14 weeks of basic training when during the war men often went into combat units overseas with six weeks and less of basic. The boys in the India-Burma theatre want to know why?

Returning to arithmetic, the average CBI "GI Prisoner of Policy" is bewildered in what it is all about when he compares the sale of surplus U. S. property in India with the cost of keeping U. S. Army personnel on duty there.

With millions of unemployed Indians around, he cannot understand what is the issue in punishing him with long service in a forgotten part of the world to appease some tight little clique of financiers and bankers who see a chance to make a lot of money with the British and are moving in at the expense of our boys. Little or no practical work is being done in India today.

Negro engineering companies built the world-famous Ledo Road; Negro quartermaster outfits transported vital war supplies to China; white and Negro work outfits maintained supply lines throughout the war against Japan.

They did more than they were required to do. Now is the time for them to come home. In fact, they should have been returned home long, long ago.

## The Common Defense

(by Rev. William C. Kernan)

### On The Side Of The Victorious Legions—

Let us resolve to live in the American way. The future belongs to it. Tyranny—called totalitarianism in its Communist and Fascist guise—old, tried and found wanting. Racial prejudice is old. Religious persecution is old—and of date—out of step with the times and the demand of the times. It is American democracy that is new—the recognition of the rights of man that has a short and very recent history—the right to worship in accordance with the dictates of conscience that asserted its claims on mankind but a few years ago. Let us embrace and ever hold fast to democracy. The future belongs to it.

Gladstone, speaking in Parliament on behalf of Lord Russell's Reform Bill said, "You cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side. The great social forces which move onwards in their might and majesty, and which the tumult of our debates does no tfor a moment impede or disturb—these great social forces are against you; they are marshalled on our side; and the banned which we now carry in this fight, though perhaps at some moment it may droop over our sinking heads, yet it soon again will float in the eye of heaven—perhaps not to an easy but to a certain and to a not distant victory."

Gladstone's words are our words. The democratic principles which we are standing for today, the things we are doing to make democracy work today, are what all men will stand for—what all men will do tomorrow. The future belongs to us. We are on the side of the victorious legions.

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