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ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



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October 5, 1939

My dear Mrs. Thompson:

Thank you for your letter of  
September 26.

We understand. And if we are  
successful in raising the funds for the  
project and should publish the pamphlets  
we will send Mrs. Roosevelt copies as  
they are published.

Ever sincerely,

*Malvina C. Thompson*  
Secretary

Mrs. Malvina C. Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

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October  
6th  
1939

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My dear Miss Thompson:

I have taken up immediately with our Philadelphia Branch for investigation the letter to Mrs. Roosevelt of September 28th from Mrs. Henry Trossman of Philadelphia which you sent me on October 3d. As soon as we receive a report from our Branch I will write you again.

What Mrs. Trossman charges may be true. But we have had so many instances of exploitation of domestic workers that I prefer reserving judgment until we check on the charges.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*W. H. Roosevelt*

1/2/40

MEMO FOR E. R.

You should not accept a place as a member of this group but I suggest that you ask the Attorney General to look into this whole case if it is possible to smell out any interstate activity or effect in the crime.

F. D. R.

*to advise*

*See his incite*

January 3, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

I do not think it would be wise for me to give my name as a sponsor to the report you sent me, so I think this is one request I shall have to refuse.

I am giving your letter to the Attorney General.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 - 5th  
NYC

DD

See Hon. Frank Murphy  
100 1/3/40

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January  
 5th  
 1940

100

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I think, under the circumstances,  
 your decision is wise.

In the same mail with your letter  
 comes one from the Vice President's clerk,  
 copy of which and of my reply are enclosed.

Cordially,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

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Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
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**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

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*Official Organ: The Crisis*



January  
 5th  
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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I think, under the circumstances,  
 your decision is wise.

In the same mail with your letter  
 comes one from the Vice President's clerk,  
 copy of which and of my reply are enclosed.

Cordially,

Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

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ENDORSED BY THE NATIONAL INFORMATION BUREAU, 215 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

THE VICE PRESIDENT'S CHAMBER  
Washington

January 2, 1940

Mr. Walter White,  
Sixty Nine Fifth Avenue  
New York City, N. Y.

My dear Mr. White:

It is useless for me to refer your telegram of today to Mr. Garner; since I knew, and I thought you and all others knew, that he will not enlarge on any statement that he makes.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Louis Friday  
Clerk to the Vice President

COPY

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
69 Fifth Avenue - New York

January  
5th  
1940

My dear Mr. Friday:

I have your letter of January 2nd declining to refer my telegram to Mr. Garner in which I requested, on behalf of Negro Americans, information as to whether or not Mr. Garner included Negroes in Texas and other southern states, now barred from participation in so-called Democratic white primaries, when the Vice President expressed the hope that the 1940 Democratic Presidential candidate would be selected in party conventions or primaries in which all Democrats would participate.

We note your statement that Mr. Garner has a rule against enlarging upon any statement that he makes. It would appear to us that this is one exception which he could wisely and profitably make since the question we ask deals with the matter of observance or non-observance of the Constitution guaranties that all qualified citizens should not be barred on account of race, creed or color from voting.

Ever sincerely,

(Signed) Walter White  
Secretary.

Mr. Louis Friday  
Clerk to the Vice President  
The Vice President's Chamber  
Washington, D. C.

100  
P. 1584

January 31, 1940

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to acknowledge  
your letter of January 29, together with its  
enclosure.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

0

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**January 29  
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*ack*  
 My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

You will be interested  
 in the enclosed copy of a release sent out by  
 the National Republican Committee on the Anti-  
 Lynching Bill. I call your particular atten-  
 tion to the marked paragraphs on page 2.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:LC  
 Enc.

C  
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P  
Y

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
Publicity Division  
718 Jackson Place, N.W.  
Washington, D. C.

January 11, 1940/CP 32

For release in newspapers  
on Thursday January 18, 1940  
and thereafter.

HEAVY REPUBLICAN SUPPORT

PASSES ANTI-LYNCHING BILL

Congressman Arthur W. Mitchell, only Colored Member of Congress Attacks GOP Stand--Cooler Heads Thwart Apparent Purpose to Alienate Republican Support--Bill Goes Through 252 to 131.

BY EMMETT J. SCOTT

Washington, D.C.-- The Anti-Lynching Bill was the first item on the Calendar in the House of Representatives Monday January 8, forced there last July by a bi-partisan vote of 116 Republicans, 99 Democrats, 2 Progressives, and 1 Laborite.

A petition discharging the House Rules Committee from consideration of the Bill had been on the Speaker's table for four months, where it was effectively bottled up and apparently dead.

The Anti-Lynching Bill now under consideration, it may be well to state, is a consolidation, by agreement, of bills introduced in the House respectively by Congressman Joseph A. Gavagan, Democrat, of the 21st New York District, and Congressman Hamilton Fish, Republican, of the 26th New York District.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and dozens of other liberal organizations, supported the bill, and have kept interest in it alive by educational campaigns in every section of the country.

The Gavagan-Fish Bill in the House and the Wagner-Van Nuys-Capper Bill in the Senate seek the same remedies proposed by the Dyer Bill first introduced in the House by Congressman L. C. Dyer, a Republican from Missouri, and passed January 28, 1922, by a vote of 231 to 119.

The above recital clearly indicates that the Anti-Lynching Bill has been supported by Republicans and Democrats alike in the House and in the Senate, and by liberal elements of the North and the South. Efforts have been made to keep the question from becoming a partisan one.

The debate on the measure started Monday in the most pacific way in connection with the vote as to whether the Committee on Rules should be discharged from further consideration of the resolution. When the vote was taken there were 256 ayes and 114 nays, 1 answered "present", not voting 52. 149 Republicans, 104 Democrats, 2 Progressives and 1 American Laborite voted to take up the bill. Against it were 111 Democrats and 3 Republicans.

Congressman Martin J. Kennedy, of New York, who opened the debate stated that Jackson Day is a most appropriate day to discuss so important a resolution. Andrew Jackson, he said, was a courageous and fearless man. He urged that the pending bill be considered in an atmosphere of good-fellowship and brotherhood, and in a calm, friendly and dispassionate manner. He particularly emphasized the fact that there is nothing of sectional importance about this bill. It simply implicates our democracy to protect minorities against mob law wherever it may break out, he said.

Also, he called attention to the fact that the Nation is now warring on crime and that "the only gap is a lack of an Anti-Lynching Statute".

"Pass this Bill", he said, "and lynching, the crime against democracy and tolerance will be gone with the wind."

Unhappily, the debate did not proceed in the atmosphere

challenged by Mr. Kennedy. Sectionalism and bitter recriminatory and racial antagonisms entered it. Tempers were frayed. Sectional emotionalism was to the forefront in many of the speeches made.

It remained for Congressman Arthur W. Mitchell, Democrat, the only Colored Member of Congress, to hotly charge the Republican Party with "trying to buy back the Colored vote" in supporting the pending Anti-Lynching Bill. Equally hot resentment followed this statement by several Republicans, including Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, and Representative McDowell, Republican of Pennsylvania. The latter accused Mr. Mitchell of trying to alienate the Republicans from the bill's support, and asserted that 98 per cent. of his Party Colleagues would vote for it.

Congressman Mitchell's speech was assertedly in support of the Bill. His political charges brought into the discussion, however, tangents calculated to wreck it, by alienating Republican support.

Republican Congressman Robson of Kentucky pointed out that: "It is not a matter of votes for me. I have practically no Colored people in my district. In one county in my district there has not lived a Colored person for forty years. It is not a question of politics, I want to say to the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary. We can entertain honest convictions on legislation as well as the gentlemen who oppose this legislation. I am honestly in favor of it and have been through the years.....

"I believe this measure is constitutional and that we ought to wipe out forever this dark blot on our country, because America is the worst sinner of any country in the world for murdering people by mob violence. There is no excuse for it. This law will stop it. I think it is constitutional, and I just as earnestly support it as my distinguished friend from Texas (Mr. Sumners) opposes it".

Congressman Clarence J. Brown, Republican of Ohio declared: "We hear much of the struggle throughout the world to maintain democracy. From the lips of some of those who oppose this measure comes at other times the loudest protestations of belief in democracy. Let me say, here and now, that if democracy is to continue to live throughout the world and here in our beloved America, those of us who have the ability and the power to do so must see to it that the full rights of the weak and the defenseless are safeguarded and protected against the violence and the intolerance of the strong and the mighty".

Congressman James Secombe, Republican of Ohio, stated that he intended to vote for the Bill as a matter of principle with the feeling that it is absolutely constitutional and not a matter of trying to buy anyone's vote as stated by Congressman Mitchell. He also said that this is not a racial question. He quoted Congressman Mitchell's letter to Joseph Parvis of 2600 Calumet Avenue, Chicago, saying that he could not take up the matter of securing a job for him with the Work Projects Administration unless he first had a letter from his Ward Committeeman.

"I think this is a question of principle, and I think this betrays his sincerity in trying to claim who is Santa Claus and who is not", Congressman Secombe said, "I have the highest regard for the Colored race, and it is on that principle that I intend to vote for this bill. But if anyone ever talked against a just bill in behalf of the Colored people, then certainly the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Mitchell) did this afternoon. I think he should have some explaining to do to the White people as well as the Colored people in his district, and to the people of this Nation, as to the contents of this letter, where he plays politics with the necessities and privileges of his constituents".

The question naturally arises: Are Congressman Gavran, Senator Wagner, Senator Van Nuys, and the 104 Democrats who supported the Bill, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an organization most favorable to the New Deal, "trying to buy Negro votes" for the Democratic Party as he charges the 149 Republicans are seeking to do for their Party?

Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York, summed up the Republican attitude when he said: "I wish to reiterate for the sake of the record that I do not believe the Colored vote is for sale on this Federal Anti-Lynching Bill or any other legislation and I do not want any such implication to be carried in the Congressional

Record, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Mitchell) to the contrary notwithstanding. It is an unjust and unfair reflection on the Colored people of America. We on this side are voting for this legislation because we believe it is right and constitutional and as the leader of this side in the fight I want every Republican who does not believe this bill is constitutional to vote against it. I am absolutely convinced and I have been for 20 years of the constitutionality of this type of legislation, the need for it and the right of the Negro people to have it. That is why we are going to fight for this Federal Anti-Lynching Bill now and in the years to come until it is enacted into law as long as there is one lynching in the United States of America".

The final vote on the measure was taken Wednesday, January 10. The Bill passed, 252 to 131. A tabulation shows 140 Republicans, 109 Democrats, 1 American Laborite and 2 Progressives voted for the Bill, while 123 Democrats, and only 8 Republicans opposed it.

*Wald  
msk* 110  
✓

February 1, 1940

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to say that it would not be possible for her to do any work on the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Committee. If you want to use her name, however, she is glad to give permission.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York  
N.Y.

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and 2-1

**JAMES WELDON JOHNSON MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**  
SIXTY-NINE FIFTH AVENUE . . . . . NEW YORK, N. Y.

January 26, 1940

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SECRETARY  
WALTER WHITE

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Ever since James Weldon Johnson's death there has been a constant and increasing demand for some suitable tribute to his memory. So many plans have been suggested in various parts of the country that a group of his most intimate friends have been meeting for the purpose of devising one upon which all could unite. As a result of these discussions the persons whose names appear on this letterhead have formed the James Weldon Johnson Memorial Committee and have prepared a list of distinguished Americans who were associated with Mr. Johnson in one or more of his varied activities and whom we are now asking to serve on a National Sponsoring Committee.

It is proposed to erect a symbolic statue facing Central Park at the corner of Seventh Avenue and 110th Street in New York City. Mayor La Guardia has assured the Committee that the City of New York will supply the land without cost, which will reduce the cost of the memorial considerably.

The plan is for a figure and pedestal about thirty feet high. On one side of the pedestal will be a plaque of Mr. Johnson's head and on the other side the first verse of his magnificent poem, O BLACK AND UNKNOWN BARDS. The symbolic figure atop the pedestal will be based upon the poem.

The statue will be designed by Richmond Barthe, the brilliant Negro sculptor who was a friend and protege of Mr. Johnson. It is estimated that the total cost will not exceed \$20,000. The Committee feels that such a statue, the first to be erected in honor of a Negro in the City of New York and the first distinguished and important public monument created through Negro genius will serve the double purpose of being at once an inspiration to colored people and an education for whites.

It is hoped that as many different individuals as possible will contribute, including school children, so that each of those whose lives have been enriched by Mr. Johnson's work during his life may have a part in perpetuating his memory.

We sincerely hope that you will notify me that you will consent to serve. Should inquiry be made to you by those wishing to participate through contributions, checks may be made payable to Theodore Roosevelt, Chairman, or Gene Buck, Treasurer, and sent to 69 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Ever sincerely

*Walter White*  
Secretary

*Dear Mrs. Roosevelt,*  
*Very truly yours,*

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D. C.

*J. P. D.*

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON MEMORIAL COMMITTEE  
SIXTY-NINE FIFTH AVENUE . . . . . NEW YORK, N. Y.

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SECRETARY  
WALTER WHITE

100

February 19th  
1940

Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Miss Thompson:

Thank you for your letter saying that  
Mrs. Roosevelt will serve on the James  
Weldon Johnson Memorial Sponsoring Committee.  
We, of course, will not expect her to do  
any work, but we are delighted to have the  
use of her name.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

WW:NP

March 18, 1940

Dear Mr. White :

Mrs. Roosevelt was away last week and is sorry you did not have a reply to your letter of March 11. It has just come to her attention upon her return today.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

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*This was last 14*

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March 11, 1940

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I trust that you did not object to the request I made through Miss Thompson dealing with Governor Chandler, Mrs. Connor and the Anti-Lynching Bill. When I see you I will tell you more of what lies back of that request.

I asked Senator Van Nuys's office to send you as soon as they come from the printer Part I of the Hearings on the Anti-Lynching Bill in which you will be interested, I know, particularly in the testimony of the Reverend Greshman Harmon, Mr. Arthur Spingarn and Dean William H. Hastie. Perhaps also you will be interested in the part of my testimony in which I attempted to point out the unsoundness of arguments comparing lynching in the South with homicides in metropolitan areas.

I shall be back in Washington tomorrow (Tuesday) for what we hope will be the final hearings on the Anti-Lynching Bill.

If you have a minute or two to spare either Tuesday or Wednesday I would like very much to talk with you.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Elinor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

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March  
 19th  
 1940

My dear Miss Thompson:

Thank you for your telegram of today. Mr. Wallach and I will be at 20 East 11th Street promptly at six p.m. on Thursday, March 21st.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

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Miss Melvina Thompson  
 Secretary to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WM:CTF

March 19, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to tell you  
that she has showed the President your letter  
of March 12 with its enclosure.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York  
N.Y.

0

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March

12th

1940 (Dictated March 11)

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

You will be interested in the enclosed letter from a prominent Negro physician of Charleston, South Carolina, about the attitude of Governor Maybank who wrote to Senator Ashurst asking permission to testify against the anti-lynching bill.

When I was in Charleston two years ago I was told that when Mr. Maybank was a candidate for Mayor of Charleston in 1930 he had made the statement that:

"When I am elected Niggers will have to eat Niggers because that is all the food they will get since I will fire them from every job in Charleston."

This was the item on which I was trying to check with Dr. Purvis.

This, of course, is for your confidential information, though if you want to show it to the President or anyone else you are at liberty to do so, particularly since it refers to the President.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

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WW:CTF

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31st ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., JUNE 18-23, 1940

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3/6/40

A. G. PURVIS, M. D.  
Charleston, S. C.

Dear Mr. White;

Your letter reached me an hour ago and I hasten a reply. I did not know that you had made any request, locally, until the Rev. Mr. Hughes air mailed me on Monday morning.

First-- Last evening's Evening Post carries the statement that Gov. Maybank has notified the Committee that he will not appear but will stand on the recent resolution of the Southern Governors.

I doubt that you will find anything in print like the statement you mentioned. Maybank is too astute a politician to allow such statements to appear in print. However, he is not above making them. He is rabidly anti-Negro by inheritance. If we shall ever meet I will tell you the historical rumor as to his origin. He comes from the Rhett's and they are dogs.

In his first campaign for mayor he said, over the radio, I want my white friends to know that I will do nothing to give any Negro a support. At his table, so I was told, he made the statement-- I have the nigger where I want him, now. He has taken every job away from Negroes that white people will have. He has brought thousands of the crackers from Virginia, Alabama, Georgia and Florida into Charleston and they get employment in preference to local Negro and local white.

When the President visited Charleston, the first time, a public appearance was arranged on the grounds of the Citadel. The white public was informed, as to arrangements, through the News & Courier. No arrangement was made for Colored. My sister, Mrs. Louise Bell, called him up and asked what, if any, arrangement had been made for colored people. His reply was, "I have not given them a thought."

He fought the Jenkins Orphanage and, after the death of the Rev. D. J. Jenkins succeeded in getting it out of town by taking over the buildings and erecting new ones on the Jenkins farm at Lincoln Park. In the exchange the Orphanage has been, clearly, robbed. Before the death of Rev. Jenkins, and after he had lost the first attempt to get rid of the institution, he summoned Rev. Jenkins to his office. There he showed him a letter from a northern white woman asking about the worthiness of the institution; that she desired to make a money contribution. He said, now Jenkins I wrote this lady and told her that any money sent you would be well spent and that you are worthy of any help she may care to give you. You see that you have my sympathy but I DO NOT HAVE A DIME FOR YOU.

Maybank has been very careful not to let anything appear in print would hurt his drag in Washington (with the President).

I realize that the above information is very thin. Yet it may serve to trap him through question and answer.

In my haste to get this to you I have jumbled it, quite, but trust that it will help you. I assure you that any important news will reach you by clipping and, if I have not sent you any such clipping, there is great doubt that any has appeared.

Sincerely,

Augustus G. Purvis, M.D.

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York  
N.Y.

March 19, 1940

Mrs. Roosevelt will be in New York Wednesday and Thursday. Could see you and Mr. Wallach 20 East 11th Street for fifteen minutes at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday.

Malvina Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt

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MARY WHITE OVINGTON

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: The Crisis



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MAR 16 1940

March 15, 1940

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I tried to get in touch with you this week in Washington but found you were to be away until Monday, the 18th.

There are one or two matters I want to discuss with you, about which I would rather not write. Would it be possible for you to see me any time next Wednesday or Thursday, the 20th or 21st? And may I bring with me Mr. Sidney Wallach of the American Jewish Committee with whom I have been working on certain matters such as the treatment of domestic workers, which we both want to talk over with you?

Will you be good enough to wire me on Monday which day you can see me?

Ever sincerely,

Walter White  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

P.S. - If Tuesday would suit you better I could come down that day. - WW

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*look up letter mailed today please wire*

100

March 26, 1940

Dear Mr. White:

I spoke to the President about the question of the filibuster. He does not think it can be true, but has no way of being certain.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
NYC

0

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March  
 25th  
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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I neglected to give you Mr. Sidney Wallach's address when we talked the other day. You can write him either at the American Jewish Committee, 386 Fourth Avenue, or at his home address which is 145 West 86th Street, should you prefer that any of the inquiries you might wish to make of him not be sent through the office of the American Jewish Committee.

Both he and I enjoyed tremendously the talk with you and your son Jimmie.

Another thing I forgot was this: I have been told by a number of persons in Washington who should know what they are talking about that opponents of the anti-lynching bill are worried by the fact that they will not have Senator Borah to help them and also by the state of Senator Connolly's health. I am further told that they are trying to get Senator Claude Pepper to lead the filibuster. I am loath to believe this because of my regard for Senator Pepper, particularly following a talk which he and Mr. Charles H. Houston and I had two years ago. Do you think there is any foundation for fear that Senator Pepper may do this?

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

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31st ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., JUNE 18-21, 1940

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*File*

*Mailed*  
May 28, 1940  
*He wants a photo*

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

There is a very important matter which I should like to discuss with you. Will you be good enough to let me know you could see me some time Thursday or during the afternoon of Friday, of this week?

I would appreciate your sending your answer, if convenient, by the bearer of this note.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
20 East 11th Street  
New York City

*10 30  
11 30  
to Macaulay*

*Will you  
be good  
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TELEGRAM

52WUC 28 D.L. 4:27pm

The White House  
Washington

*Columbian*  
*3017*  
*1/21/40*  
*Blanch*  
*file*

NEW YORK, N.Y., May 27, 1940.

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT.

Will be in Washington tomorrow, Tuesday, to three o'clock.  
Could you see me for five minutes on important matter? Please  
advise care Hastie, 1221 Fairmont Street, Northwest, Washington.

WALTER WHITE.

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April  
 24th  
 1940

(Dictated April 23d)

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100

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I thought you would be interested  
 in seeing the enclosed copy of correspondence  
 between Senator Barkley and ourselves with  
 regard to the Anti-Lynching Bill.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

*Jed*

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WM:CTF

UNITED STATES SENATE  
Conference of the Majority

COPY

April 22, 1940

Mr. Walter White, Secretary  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York City

Dear Sir:

Your recent letters concerning the anti-lynching bill, and demanding to know when it will be taken up in the Senate, were received.

Your first letter to me, dated April 2, was so replete with inexcusable misstatements that I felt, and still feel, considerable resentment at its contents. I showed it to Senators Wagner and VanNuys, to whom I learned you sent copies. Both of them felt that the letter was unfair and, in some of its assertions, without the slightest foundation.

I have always shown you and your organization the utmost courtesy. I have also been entirely frank with you in all my discussions of this legislation.

When I labored through a six weeks filibuster in the last Congress, making every possible effort to bring the Anti-Lynching Bill to a vote, you were quite familiar with the situation and expressed your appreciation for the efforts which I had made.

When you wrote me several months ago, asking me whether I thought it would be possible to secure the adoption of the cloture rule on this measure, I wrote you frankly that I did not think so. You replied that you were disappointed but you did not controvert the statement which I had made to you of the situation.

Later you wrote me that you would be in Washington on a certain day in the future and would like to see me. I learned later that you had called by the office but that I was either in Committee or on the Floor of the Senate, but I did not learn this until the following day. I heard nothing further from you until your letter of April 2 was received.

Therefore, when you state in this letter that you had been trying ever since last November to confer with me about this measure and that I had refused to see you regarding it, you stated what was untrue and what you knew was untrue when you said it. You know that Congress adjourned on the 3rd day of November and that I was not in Washington until January, when the present Session began. You made no effort to see me during the recess of Congress and you made no effort to see me until the occasion to which I have already referred, when I was not in the office.

Furthermore, you stated that I had refused to consult with Senator Wagner concerning this measure. This statement is so ridiculous and baseless that no one outside an insane asylum would believe it, and no one who had any regard for truth would make it.

I have seen Senator Wagner practically every day when the Senate has been in Session and also in frequent sessions of Committee of which we are both members. We talk frequently about matters of legislation pending before the Senate and before his Committees. Senator Wagner never at any time told you or intimated to you that I had refused to discuss the anti-lynching bill with him, for such a statement would have been wholly untrue and I have too high a regard for him to believe for a moment that he would be guilty of so gross a misstatement.

I did, on my own initiative, discuss this bill with him several weeks before it was reported by the Senate Committee, at which time he expressed the hope that the Committee might work out a compromise that would have some chance of passage. I shared that hope. But nothing came of the suggestion.

When the bill was reported and placed on the calendar a few days ago, I went to Senator Ashurst, Chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and asked him what his idea was about the bill's consideration. He told me it was not the Committee's plan or thought that an effort would be made to take it up until after other important and necessary legislation was disposed of, for the reason that whenever this measure is taken up all other business, no matter how urgent, would come to a stop and the Senate would find itself in the midst of another filibuster, which would be most regrettable at this time. Senator Van Nuys, who is Chairman of the Sub-Committee which had charge of this bill, confirmed this statement as to the attitude of the Committee. In a recent conference with him he reiterated that it was not the wish of the Committee to have the Anti-Lynching Bill interfere with other legislation that must be enacted before this Congress adjourns, but that when this legislation is disposed of, an effort would be made to bring up the Anti-Lynching Bill.

In addition to your untruthful letter, you caused to be published in the "Louisville Defender", a colored newspaper, published in Louisville, Ky., a front-page article with boxcar headlines across the page, the statement that I was holding up a vote on this bill, that I was opposed to it, that ever since last November I had refused to confer with you or Senator Wagner about it, and repeating and magnifying the statements you had made in your letter to me.

You knew when you sent this misinformation to the "Louisville Defender" that it was wholly untrue, and you did it for the deliberate and malicious purpose of deceiving the readers of that paper and wilfully misrepresenting me. You did it for the purpose of attempting to build a fire under me by sort of local intimidation and in order to do this you were responsible for the publication in that paper of statements that were without the slightest foundation in fact. I am sending to that newspaper a copy of this letter to you in order that its publishers may get the truth.

In my letter to you of January 31, 1940, I stated that my attitude toward this legislation had not changed since it was under consideration two years ago and that I had no reason to suppose that it would change when the bill comes up again, but you were willing to inspire the false statement in that newspaper that I was not only opposed to the bill but was blocking its consideration.

As for the newspaper quotations which you included in your letter to me, I never saw them and am not responsible for them.

I am unable to give you any information as to when the anti-lynching bill will be taken up in the Senate. Its sponsors are thoroughly conversant with the situation in the Senate and they did not feel that it should be taken up at a time when other important legislation that can pass is awaiting the Senate's consideration, and thus practically stop the legislative process. For they know, just as you know, that this bill cannot be brought to a vote without cloture and they know, just as you know, that it is impossible to obtain a two-thirds vote to limit debate on this measure.

So far as conferences are concerned, I am available and have been available at any and all times to Senator Wagner, Senator VanNuys and Senator Clark, with whom I conferred on the subject before it was reported from the Committee, or with any other Senators, including Senator Capper, who has never mentioned the anti-lynching bill to me since it has been before the United States Senate. These senators know that I have never refused to discuss any legislation when requested and they know that on this particular legislation I have taken the initiative in discussing it during the present session. They are thoroughly familiar with the situation in the Senate and are under no exigencies of employment that could require them to indulge in statements utterly false or resort to tactics utterly contemptible.

Yours truly,

(Signed) ALBEN W. BARKLEY

April  
23rd  
1940

C O P Y

Hon. Alben W. Barkley  
Majority Leader, United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

I have read with astonishment your letter of April 22nd. Because of its importance to the citizens of the United States, I shall answer it with equal frankness but shall try to do so with less heat and flinging of epithets.

I wish to take up the points you make seriatim. Your charge that my letter to you of April 2nd was "so replete with inexcusable misstatements" that you feel considerable resentment is the first one on which I wish to comment. An even greater resentment is felt by a great many people throughout the country at the manner in which this legislation for years has been kicked about in the Senate. A handful of senators have imposed their will upon the overwhelming majority of that body. With but few exceptions, the majority has made no determined, uncompromising effort to dispose of this bill by securing a vote on it and disposing of it one way or the other. There is widespread resentment which is steadily growing at the apparent complete failure of the Senate leadership to initiate or even contemplate the initiation of any determined effort to secure action. Your letter of April 22nd echoes this same defeatism and manifests not the slightest determination to put up any effective resistance to the obstructionists who, two years ago, tied up the Senate for nearly seven weeks at a cost to the American taxpayer of an estimated \$460,000.

You charge misstatements with respect to efforts made through Senator Wagner and directly to obtain a conference with you to find out just what you as Majority Leader of the Senate proposed to do about getting a vote on the anti-lynching bill. Let's look at

23 April 1940

the record and see what the facts are.

On October 31, 1939, you wrote me that you did not believe cloture could be secured and stated you would be glad to discuss this matter with interested senators and me. I replied on November 1st advising you that I had written to Senators Wagner, Van Nuys and Capper urging that a conference be arranged with you during the coming week to determine what action should be taken. That conference was not arranged because, we presume, you were tied up with the fight for amendment of the Neutrality Act during the special session and which, incidentally, we refrained, and made public our action, from urging consideration of the anti-lynching bill because of the importance of the measure for which the special session was called.

On January 18, 1940, I wrote you that I would be in Washington Thursday, Friday and Saturday, January 18, 19 and 20, and requested an appointment with you. You replied on January 19 asking me to get in touch with your office. I telephoned you on January 18 and again on January 20 but was unsuccessful in getting an appointment with you.

My next effort was on January 31 when I wrote you stating that I would again be in Washington on February 2 and 3 and asked for an appointment. To that letter I received no reply. On February 2 and again on February 20 I telephoned your office in an effort to make an appointment.

I telephoned you again on March 5 for an appointment but was unsuccessful. Again, on March 8th, I wrote you that I had made repeated attempts over the last three months to see you but had not been able to do so and I asked if you could see me on March 7 or 8. On March 13 you replied that you were sorry it had been impossible for me to get in touch with you personally but that you found it difficult to spend much time in your office and were so pressed for time that you had not been able to see me. I replied to that letter on March 15 informing you of Senator Wagner's suggestion that he, Senator Van Nuys and I talk with you and that he would try to arrange such an appointment.

On March 29 while in Washington I telephoned your office, unsuccessfully, to make an appointment.

Now as to the efforts made through Senator Wagner to confer with you. On November 1st I wrote him enclosing copy of your letter to me of October 31st in which you expressed a willingness to talk with the interested senators and myself and asked him to arrange the appointment, to which he replied that he would attempt to make the appointment during the week of November 13. On December 15 I telegraphed Senator Wagner about the appointment which had not been arranged for November because of your absence from Washington and Senator Wagner replied, through his secretary, that he was taking up with you the matter of the conference and would wire me later in the day. When no further word came we assumed, which assumption we later found to be correct, that Senator Wagner had not been successful.

After the anti-lynching bill had passed the House and hearings had been completed before the Senate Judiciary Committee, I telegraphed

23 April 1940

Senator Wagner, on March 27, asking him to arrange the appointment with you for March 29 when I was to be in Washington. Senator Wagner telegraphed that because you were "tied up by arrangement for all important vote on Pittman amendment to Trade Agreement Bill" conference could not be arranged.

Again, on April 2, I wired Senator Wagner about the appointment and once more, on April 15, asking him to take up with you the matter of a conference. In addition, there were several long-distance telephone calls to, as well as conferences in Washington with, Senator Wagner in which this same request was made.

In the light of this record we leave it to any impartial observer as to whether I have stated anything that was untrue when I declared that I had been trying since last November to confer with you about this measure and had not been able to do so. You, yourself, have employed an unfortunate choice of words when you charge me with saying that you had "refused" to see me and when you assert, therefore, that I had "stated what was untrue and what you knew was untrue when you said it". I have at no time said that you refused to see me but instead have said that I had been unable to see you since I had not been able to arrange a conference with you or to get any definite commitment from you as to precisely what you were going to do as Majority Leader in getting a vote on the anti-lynching bill.

At this point I wish to make perfectly clear that my repeated requests were not due to any desire to trespass upon your time but solely to ascertain just how much effort you planned to put forth to secure a vote on the bill so that I in turn could report accurately to those interested in the bill what you planned to do. Incidentally, you admit in your letter of April 22nd that you are still unable, at this late date in the session, to give us any information as to when the anti-lynching bill will be taken up in the Senate.

You are likewise incorrect when you charge that I had stated that you "had refused to consult with Senator Wagner concerning this measure". Such a statement made by myself or anyone else would be both stupid and ridiculous. How could I know the content of all the conversations you and Senator Wagner have had, in the light of the constant contacts between yourselves? I have instead stated that Senator Wagner had been unable to arrange the conference suggested by you of the interested senators and myself, and the fact that no such meeting had been arranged is all the answer that any intelligent person needs.

As to your statement that you discussed the anti-lynching bill with Senator Wagner several weeks before it was reported by the Senate Committee and that he at that time expressed the hope that "the Committee would work out a compromise that would have some chance of passage", we have no knowledge of any such compromise being suggested by Senator Wagner or any other sponsor of the bill. Nor do we have any information about Senator Van Noy's statement that the Committee did not wish the anti-lynching bill to interfere with any other legislation that must be enacted before the Congress adjourns "but that when this legislation is disposed of an effort would be made (to) bring up the anti-lynching bill". Supporters of this bill know that if the anti-lynching bill is

23 April 1940

not called up until the very end of the session many of the senators will not stay in Washington to try to get it passed because they will be eager to get away to their party conventions. This would play directly into the hands of the filibusterers and would practically insure another successful filibuster against this legislation.

As for the story in the April 13th issue of the Louisville Defender, I enclose copy of our press release of April 5th and ask you to point out any single inaccuracy in it. You will note that in it we quote the interview appearing in the New York Herald-Tribune of April 1st, which we quoted to you in our letter of April 2nd, in which the statement is made that when you were asked "when the controversial anti-lynching bill would come up, Senator Barkley avoided the question with a laughing counter-question to his interrogator. Extraneous information has it that every attempt will be made to sidetrack the bill.... the sooner Congress adjourns the less the likelihood will be that the bill will have to be taken up by the Senate".

In that story we stated what was absolutely true-- namely, that you had declined to commit yourself in any fashion as to when the bill would be taken up. Will you be good enough to point out to us where there is any "misinformation" in this statement? As for your charge that this statement was sent out "for the deliberate and malicious purpose of deceiving the readers of that paper and wilfully misrepresenting me", such a charge is unfounded and unfair. Through our weekly press service, through communications to branches of this Association and to church, labor and other organizations who are working for enactment of the anti-lynching bill, we keep those interested supplied with the week-to-week progress of this and other legislation. If supplying this information is to be interpreted by you as an attempt "to build a fire under me by sort of local intimidation", then we can do nothing to prevent your harboring any such belief. We have supplied the facts to those interested throughout our career and will continue to do so. And since you state that you are sending to the Louisville Defender copy of your letter to me, I shall be equally courteous to the Defender by sending them a copy of this reply.

As to your statement that "this bill cannot be brought to a vote without cloture and they (sponsors of the bill) know, just as you know, that it is impossible to obtain a two-thirds vote to limit debate on this measure," I do not know any such thing. A considerable number of Democratic senators have declared that they will vote for cloture. A number of Republican senators have stated that they will not do as they did during the 1938 filibuster when they voted against limitation of the debate and will this year vote for cloture.

The criticism a great many of us, who see mob violence becoming an increasing menace to the preservation of democratic government in our country, make is that those responsible for the handling of this legislation do not manifest the moral courage to oppose the brazen tactics of the minority which is fighting this bill. With such weak opposition to filibustering, there is no wonder that the filibusterers are so cocksure and are so confident that they can once again prevent a majority of the Senate from voting one way or the other on this legislation. It is this situation which is resented by citizens, white as well as

23 April 1940

colored, and South as well as North.

As for your gratuitous reference to the effect that the Senate sponsors "are under no exigencies of employment", which we assume you mean by implication also to apply to yourself, I would not ordinarily deign to pay any attention to such a gibe. But it is sufficient for me to say that you and every other member of the Senate presumably, under our Constitution and our form of Government, are in the employ of the people who elect you to office. Otherwise, there would be no necessity of political campaigns to elect members of the Senate, presidents of the United States, or any other elective officers.

As for your reference to indulgence "in statements utterly false", we leave that to the record. As for your further statement about "resort to tactics utterly contemptible", if revealing the facts as the record bears them out is "contemptible", then we shall continue to be guilty of that charge.

In conclusion, we assume that your attitude as Majority Leader, as expressed in this letter, means that all hope of supporters of anti-lynching legislation must be abandoned for any vigorous and determined efforts to get it enacted at this session of the Congress.

Ever sincerely,

(Signed) Walter White  
Secretary.

COPY

June 12, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

I wish very much that it were possible for me to be present at your Thirty-first Annual Conference in Philadelphia on the 18th and regret that other engagements make it impossible. Will you, therefore, be kind enough to extend to all those present my greetings and good wishes and tell them that I have very pleasant memories of the Thirtieth Conference which I attended last year?

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
60 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

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White:

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I wish very much that it were possible for me to be present at your thirty-first annual conference in Phila. on the 18th. and regret that other engagements make it impossible. Will you therefore, be kind enough to extend to all those present, my greetings and good wishes, and tell them that I have very pleasant memories of the thirtieth conference which I attended last year?

E.R.

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



June 10th  
 1940

*ack  
 6/12/40*

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

We would be honored to have a message of greeting from you to the Thirty-first Annual Conference of the N.A.A.C.P. which opens in Philadelphia on June 18th.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WV: CTF

June 26, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to acknowledge your letter of June 24, and to thank you for the copy of your speech which you sent her.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

ds

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June 24th  
 1940

JUN 26 1940

*6/26/40*

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I thought you might like to see the enclosed copy of the speech which I made yesterday at the closing session of our Thirty-first Annual Conference. I am immodest enough to send it because I believe it is a fairly accurate presentation of what is going on in the minds of the vast majority of Negro Americans.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary.

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 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

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ADDRESS BY WALTER WHITE, Secretary,  
AT THE CLOSING SESSION OF THE  
THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,

METROPOLITAN OPERA HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA,  
PENNSYLVANIA, JUNE 23, 1940

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In the light of the news of unmitigated tragedy which has poured in upon us from Europe during the past fortnight a conference devoted to discussion of efforts to preserve democracy in a world inundated by dictatorship seems almost academic and unreal. The appalling speed with which nations, peoples and concepts of national and human relationships have been swept away leaves most of us so bewildered that we do not know what to do. We ask ourselves-- is there any stopping place for the forces of barbarism which run wild in the world today? We wonder if our country can resist this apparently irresistible tide which during recent months has swamped and destroyed what we call civil liberties and the democratic way of life in Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, England, France, the Scandinavian countries and the Balkans.

But we must not--we cannot-- let ourselves be deterred either in the efforts to protect America from being conquered by dictatorship or from fighting to make democracy a reality instead of the hypocritical thing called democracy which, as far as the Negro is concerned, has been what was given him.

Complex and difficult as have been the problems the Negro has faced in his struggle for survival in America during the past three centuries, those problems become infinitely more terrible in a

time like this. There are those who recently have declared that the Negro would not fight for America if war between America and Soviet Russia was declared. Any person making such a statement about ninety-nine per cent of the American Negroes is, in plain language, talking through his hat. The Negro would fight for America as he has fought for her in every war, large or small, in which our country has been engaged from its beginning. He would fight with the same loyalty, the same bravery, the same devotion that he has always fought.

But there is an enormous difference between the spirit in which Negroes would enter some war to come, whether in the near or distant future, and that with which, for example, he entered in 1917. After that war "to make the world safe for democracy", the Negro soldier returned confident that in his own land he would be given at least a small portion of that democracy for whose preservation he had fought. And what was his reward? Some of them were lynched and even burned at the stake for daring to wear the uniform of the United States Army. Instead of gratitude for what he had done he was confronted with the infamous Ku Klux Klan which was organized right after the war to put the Negro back "into his place". He found the same doors shut as sharply in his face when he sought employment, education and a decent place in which to live and raise a family as he had encountered before he went to Flanders Fields to fight for freedom. Disillusionment, despair and bitterness followed in the wake of the cruel life which white America forced upon him in the post-war years.

If America in her desperate hour of need in the days ahead of us wants the loyalty of twelve million American Negroes she had

better wake up. She must understand that Negro Americans are thinking for themselves. She would do well to realize that Negroes face the prospect of again being called to defend their country with this question firmly and unchangeably fixed in their minds-- what point is there in fighting and perhaps dying to save democracy if there is no democracy to save? She had best take a leaf from the book of experience of England. The British Empire, with but little difference in her methods of exploitation of her black and brown subjects, was forced in desperation to abolish race prejudice in her army by removing the color bar and admitting non-European British subjects to the Royal Air Force of the British Empire. But our own country, faced with danger almost as great as that of England, still clings tenaciously to the stupid and vicious prejudices of the past. Recently our War Department, dominated by Southern whites, has ordered the designation of the famous 369th Regiment as "Colored" despite the fact that the record in the last war of this unit was one of the most gallant of any which fought in the first World War. I haven't heard as yet of the 107th Regiment of New York being designated as "Irish" because the overwhelming majority of its men are of Irish descent. Nor have I heard of any other regiments being set apart as "German," "Jewish," or "Chinese".

And this is but the beginning. Negroes are barred from the Air Corps, from Annapolis, and can get into West Point only at the expense of almost overwhelming difficulty. Not only are Negro Americans of education, training and courage barred from the more skilled posts in the armed forces of America but they are even being barred from enlistment as Privates. We ask America: Do you want us

to be loyal, and do you want us to help save what is left of democracy in the world? Or, do you want to fill us with contempt for your facile talk of democracy when such treatment says in plain language that you not only do not want us to live for democracy's sake but not even to die for it? These are blunt, plain-spoken words - and it is intended that they should be blunt and plain-spoken.

Sometimes we almost despair of our own nation. Cannot America see what lies back of the present suicide of Europe? Is America going to hold on to its prejudices and thus fling wide its arms in welcome to the same powers of greed and stupidity which have destroyed the old world? We wonder! It is imperative that America, and particularly Negro America, understand the factors which have led to Europe's and the world's debacle of today, and particularly how avarice based on color prejudice has been one of the chief factors in bringing about that collapse. We don't hear much about the part that Africa and other lands inhabited by black, brown, yellow peoples played in the contemporary scene. Nor do many of us remember where Hitler's theories of Aryanism found their roots. Let me direct your attention to the historical facts. At the close of the Franco-Prussian War Europe was exhausted. France had to find new sources of raw material and of manpower to maintain herself as one of the powerful nations of Europe. She turned her efforts towards building a great African empire whose enormous natural resources would replenish her exhausted treasury and whose black soldiers could fill the thinned ranks of her army. Germany with feverish speed rushed explorers, traders, colonists and missionaries into hitherto unexplored and untouched parts of the dark continent. England, her profits from the

slave trade ended by the American Civil War and economic forces, began her colonization of South, West and East Africa. Leopold of Belgium had preceded them all and had firmly entrenched himself and Belgium in control of the notorious Belgium Congo-- notorious because of the unbelievable cruelties which the agents of Leopold inflicted upon the black natives to make them produce more and more rubber. Portugal, Spain and Italy followed suit. As a result all of Africa, except tiny Ethiopia and Liberia, were under European control by the beginning of the Twentieth Century where less than five per cent of Africa had been under control and exploitation when the Franco-Prussian War ended.

The world began immediately to hear of "the white man's burden" and the necessity of taking the benefits of white European civilization to the backward peoples of the world. By a remarkable coincidence the black and brown and yellow peoples deemed capable of assimilating the white man's civilization invariably had great natural resources in their countries, such as rubber, gold, diamonds, minerals and other valuables. And we began to hear more and more of the theories of Gobineau and Chamberlain, of the "superiority" of the blue-eyed, blonde, white-skinned human beings over those whose skins were not white.

What was the result? More and more power politics began to be played. More and more desperate became the struggle for raw materials, markets and wealth. Non-white peoples in Africa and the Far East, the West Indies and the United States were ground down even more furiously to extract the last penny of profit from their labor. The white world selfishly and arrogantly proceeded on the theory that they had an inalienable and everlasting right to rob mercilessly not

only darker people of the world but each other as well. In the words of Mark Twain, the white world has proceeded along this course blithely and blindly with "the calm <sup>Composure</sup> ~~composure~~ of a Christian with four aces".

It would be an over-simplification to say that the horrible disaster spread before our eyes in Europe today is solely due to this blind greed and insensate prejudice. But no informed, honest and intelligent person can dare deny that the racial arrogance based upon greed developed to its most horrible perfection in the war machine of Adolf Hitler is not largely due to the course of history since 1870.

Is the United States going to be able to see where the course of European history, so far as race and color are concerned, is leading Europe and America in time to save itself? Can the entrenched racial prejudices of the United States be discarded or at least modified in time to prevent similar disaster overwhelming us? It is exceedingly doubtful. For three decades the N.A.A.C.P. has warned America, for example, that mob violence directed against one segment of the American public would inevitably lead, unless checked, to mob violence against other Americans. With but few exceptions that warning has fallen on ears that are stone deaf. We have pointed out again and again that bigots always begin their bigotry on the most vulnerable and defenseless group in a country and then, when they have learned and perfected the technique of bigotry, the bigots have moved to the next, and then to the next, and from there to the next most vulnerable group until the rights and liberties of all are destroyed. This has been the definitely fixed course of mob violence and lynching against the Negro in the United States. Because 99.8 per cent of the hundreds of thousands of lynchers who have lynched 5,127 men and women, white and Negro, in the United States since 1882 have gone scot free,

a pattern of taking the law into their own hands has been made almost a part of the mores of our country. Thus white men and women, as well as black men and women, today stand in danger during nervous times like those of being beaten or killed by lawless mobs. We ask today the question whether or not America can see the signs which are plainly marked in the fact that the Ku Klux Klan is being revived in various parts of the country, that the three persons known to have been lynched, to date, in 1940 have all been white, that so-called Christian Fronts, Nazi bands and other subversive movements are flourishing like the green bay-tree; that during very recent weeks mobs have manhandled and almost lynched members of a religious sect in places as widely separated as Maine and Texas.

And what does the United States Senate do while these things happen? Seventy-three of the 96 members of the United States Senate say they want to vote for passage of a Federal law against lynching. And why hasn't this overwhelming majority of the Senate been able so to vote if democracy and the right of the majority to express its will mean anything? Everyone of you knows the double answer-- that a small but implacably bigoted minority has threatened to filibuster if the anti-lynching bill is called up for debate and vote and that the Majority Leader of the Senate, Mr. Barkley from Kentucky, and the vast majority of the members of the Senate--both Republicans and Democrats--haven't the guts to stand up like men and fight the Tom Connally-Bilbo-"Cotton Ed" Smith filibustering gang which comes from the states where lynchings are most frequent and where the Federal Constitution is violated with impunity every day in the week, and particularly on election day when qualified citizens, white as well as Negro, are

barred by the iniquitous poll tax, by so-called white Democratic primaries, by chicanery and by mob intimidation from exercising the right to vote. And, to add insult to injury, there is even talk in Washington and in the press that two of the leaders of the battalion of death against the anti-lynching bill-- Senator James F. Byrnes of South Carolina and John H. Bankhead of Alabama-- are being seriously considered as a running-mate on the Democratic ticket with President Roosevelt! It is not often that I attempt to indulge in political prophecy, but I venture to assert that if the leaders of the Democratic Party deliberated from now until the Democratic Convention opens in Chicago as to the best means of driving all Negroes except the paid politicians out of the Democratic Party, these leaders could find no more effective means of doing this than by placing on the ticket men who have fought every single measure advocated by Negroes and who, in addition, have heaped vituperation on the Negro time and time again. The Republican Party for many years believed that it had the Negro vote so firmly in its power that it did not need to do anything to continue receiving the support of Negro voters. We wonder if the Democrats have become so drunk with power that they are going to make the same mistake especially in the seventeen states with 281 electoral votes in which the Negro vote holds the potential balance of power? And neither of the major political parties dares to hit at the root of the evil which creates this reactionary bloc which has such disproportionate power in the National Congress as to hamstring, and kill not only anti-lynching legislation but the Wage and Hour Act, the National Labor Relations Act, Housing and every other form of enlightened legislation designed to better the lot of Americans who need

the protection of such legislation.

Tomorrow in this city the Republican National Convention meets to select candidates and adopt a platform. A fortnight hence the Democrats will gather in Chicago for the same purpose. What should we say to these conventions? And what must we repeat in season and out of season up to Election Day next November 5th?

We insist on the color line being immediately and totally abolished from the armed forces of our country. Any candidate for the office of President of the United States and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy must be honestly and completely committed to a program of complete integration of Negroes into every branch of the service.

Any candidate who would merit the support of thoughtful Negroes must by his previous record and by his uncompromising stand during the campaign place himself squarely on record by word and deed against attacks upon minorities-- racial, religious and economic-- which it is the current practice of sinister political and social institutions to utilize in climbing to power.

Any candidate we would support must look forward and not backward in the matter of economic, social and political reforms for the benefit of the masses of mankind as contrasted to those who would still further concentrate wealth and power dangerously and destructively in the hands of a few.

We applaud and endorse denunciation of bigotry against minorities in other lands. But we do not fail to note that most white Americans can wax exceeding wrath about what is being done a long way off but who remain strangely silent about similar, and sometimes long-lived, barbarity in our own country, such as lynching, economic and

educational discrimination against the Negro, disfranchisement and the wholesale oppression of minority groups in our own country, and particularly of the Negro. Any candidate who would like to deserve and receive the large and important Negro vote must be able to see atrocities at his own doorstep as well as those three thousand miles away. This includes the present occupant of the White House who has disappointed us by his failure to espouse openly and vigorously the passage of the anti-lynching bill.

Any candidate who would find favor with Negro voters must realize and act upon the realization that the Negro traditionally has been the victim of discrimination in employment both at the hands of private employers and the Federal and State governments as well. He must be willing to take a forthright stand against that discrimination which includes long-continued and vicious discrimination in the Civil Service. Negro men and women have undergone untold hardships to acquire an education. We are heartily tired of having our color bar us from employment after we have not and passed competitive tests through the medium of that education. A minimum of 800,000 jobs have been or will be created in the new defense program of nearly five billion dollars which Congress has voted. We say bluntly that we want and we expect to get our proportionate share of these jobs when we are qualified to fill them. We expect to support, irrespective of party whose labels are meaningless to us, those who would not only promise but who would keep their promises to see that we get what is rightfully ours in this and other employment for which we are going to be taxed at the same rate as other Americans. We urge emulation of the example set by New York City under Fiorello LaGuardia who not only has stated

but has put his words into action that he will not give a job to a Negro solely because he is a Negro but who will see that a job is not denied to a Negro because he is a Negro.

We say to candidates that you can expect our support only if the programs of Federal Housing and slum clearance, aid to agricultural workers such as sharecroppers, tenant-farmers and agricultural day-workers without discrimination on account of race, creed or color, and full integration of Negro Americans into every department and benefit of the Federal Government are assured to the extent this is possible.

But while we make these demands upon the political parties we also set them up as yardsticks to help Negro voters appraise political parties and candidates and to let Negro Americans know what they have a right to expect and to demand. The growing political independence of the Negro has given him greatly increased power during recent years. But that power is nowhere near as great as it would be if Negroes themselves were more intelligent and more united. Let me cite an example of how the Negro has not yet made himself sufficiently respected and feared by politicians. Last year at Richmond you passed a resolution instructing the national office to draft and have introduced an amendment to the National Labor Relations Act to prohibit labor unions which habitually discriminate on account of race, creed or color from being designated as the bargaining agents of workers in the industries in which these unions are organized. Such an amendment was drafted. We conferred with member after member of the majority in the House of Representatives. Several of them come from districts where the Negro vote runs as high as from forty to sixty-five per cent. Everyone of these congressmen begged to be excused because he feared reprisals more from the American Federation of Labor unions which

discriminate against Negroes than he feared Negro voters. Precisely the same reception was accorded us by the minority in the House of Representatives. We have made notable progress during the last decade towards punishing our enemies and rewarding our friends. But we haven't yet made enough progress to get the consideration from politicians which we so desperately need. There are still too many venal and purchasable politicians who can go to the party bosses and promise to deliver "the Negro vote". In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred only the gullible white political bosses believe these politicians can deliver the Negro vote. We have got to let America know that the Negro vote is increasingly intelligent, independent and unpurchasable either by material rewards or unctuous campaign oratory. It is imperative that we become increasingly independent politically; that we remain non-partisan; and that we give our support to men and measures and not to meaningless party labels.

Troubled days lie ahead of us. In this dark hour none of us can say whether democracy can survive even in our own country. We Negroes will give for the preservation of democracy our full measure of devotion and sacrifice as we have always given them. We want democracy to survive. But we want true democracy and not the spurious hypocritical brand which has been handed out to us in the past. We favor adequate defense for our country to ward off attack. But bombing planes, battle ships and bullets are only a very small part of the defense we need. No country can survive unless its people love it because it lives up to or at least tries to live up to its protestations of justice and human decency. We say to America: Build your planes and battleships and we will help you. But for God's sake stop being hypocrites and give us the opportunity to earn a decent living, to care for and to make good citizens of ourselves and our

citizens of ourselves and our families, to give us protection from the howling mob and from those who would deny us a chance to learn and earn. Give us the reason to love America and to be loyal to it. Don't continue to slap us in the face when we would help you to build a lasting government which will not take one iota of opportunity from any white American but which instead will extend the benefits and opportunities to all Americans whatever their race, creed, color or origin may be.

We do not ask this for ourselves alone. We ask it for your sake too. In the words of the immortal Abraham Lincoln who, in his Edwardsville address in 1858 uttered this warning which so many Americans have ignored:

"And, when, by all these means you have succeeded in dehumanizing the Negro, when you have placed him where the ray of hope is blown out as in the darkness of the damned, are you quite sure that the demon you have roused will not turn and rend you? What constitutes the bulwark of our own liberty and independence? It is not our foreign battlements, our bristling seacoasts, our Army, and our Navy. These are not our reliance against tyranny. All of those may be turned against us. Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defense is in the spirit which prized liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your own doors. Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subject of the first cunning tyrant who arises among you."

---

July 31, 1940

Dear Mr. White:

I am sorry to hear of the death of your mother and know what a loss it is to you.

You were fortunate to have such a mother and I know her life will always be an inspiration to you.

With my sincere sympathy, I am

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
NYC

0

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28 July 1940.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

You will probably remember that just about a year ago I took the liberty of bringing my mother with me when I came up to Hyde Park to see you.

Last Sunday we buried Mother at Atlanta. She died quite suddenly from a heart attack. The last time I saw her she asked about you and again told me how much she had enjoyed meeting you. Your graciousness to her had given her renewed courage to face the trying lot which was hers, particularly in the illness of her youngest child at Oneonta who, a fortnight ago, finished four years flat on her back.

Since Mother died I have had a new understanding of how remarkable a person she was. On a mail carrier's salary which never exceeded \$125 a month she and Father established and maintained a Christian home with high ideals, acquired a little property, and put seven children through college. They did this in the face of all the prejudice which people like them encounter in a place like Atlanta. I am proud to be her son.

Sincerely,

*Walter White*

Aug 2 1940

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August  
1st  
1940

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I am delighted to have that  
inscribed and fine portrait of yourself.  
I shall treasure this greatly.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

WALTER WHITE.

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Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WJ:CTF

Returned to Walter White - 9/4

Letters sent with <sup>+</sup>Thurgood Marshall's let  
Aug. 9 - all marked "Return to Walter White"

The papers referred  
to in this letter  
are evidently the  
ones in attached  
file.

He asks for  
return of them.

Mr. R. [unclear] [unclear]  
says [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

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August 16, 1940

AUG 17 1940

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

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Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Have you finished with the letters from Secretary Stimson and others which I left with you when Aubrey Williams and I called to see you at Hyde Park last Friday? If you have finished with them, I would appreciate your returning them as I want to use them. If you have not finished with them, could you let me have them back long enough to make copies of them? I will then return the originals to you.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

*I'll get them back soon  
 asking for them*

WW:CEM

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New York	Lillian A. Alexander Dr. Allan Knight Chalmers Marion Cuthbert Hubert T. Delany Douglas P. Falconer Lewis S. Gannett John Hammond Rev. John Haynes Holmes Dr. William Lloyd Jones Dr. John H. Johnson Hon. Herbert H. Lehman William Allan Nelson Mary White Ovington Hon. Charles Poletti A. Philip Randolph Rev. James H. Robinson Col. Theodore Roosevelt Amy E. Spingarn Arthur B. Spingarn Hon. Charles E. Toney Frances Harriet Williams Dr. Louis T. Wright
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August 16, 1940

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Have you finished with the letters from Secretary Stimson and others which I left with you when Aubrey Williams and I called to see you at Hyde Park last Friday? If you have finished with them, I would appreciate your returning them as I want to use them. If you have not finished with them, could you let me have them back long enough to make copies of them? I will then return the originals to you.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

WW:CEM

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

August 24, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR

E. R.

For your information.

F. D. R.

Enclosures

*Send copy to Mr. White*

*Walter White  
69 Fifth Ave  
NYC*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

8/16/40

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

To remind you to speak to  
the Secretaries of War and Navy  
about at Cabinet this afternoon.

TOI

WAR DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON

August 20, 1940.

THE WHITE HOUSE

The President,

The White House.

Dear Mr. President:

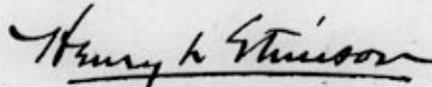
The question of the employment of negro manpower in the Army of the United States has again been raised by Mr. Thurgood Marshall, Special Counsel of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

In the Regular Army there are colored persons in all arms and services except the Air Corps, Signal Corps and Finance Department. Neither the Air Corps nor the Signal Corps have colored units at present, while only a few men of the Finance Department are assigned to units. In the recent augmentation of the Regular Army, colored tactical units have been activated in the Field Artillery, Coast Artillery, Corps of Engineers, Chemical Warfare Service, and Quartermaster Corps. Due to the time required to assemble and organize a trained nucleus for these units, recruiting was not authorized until August 15, 1940. Recruits are now being accepted to fill and maintain all units.

If selective service is approved, colored personnel will be inducted and trained in the Army of the United States in the ratio the available negro manpower bears to the available white manpower. This personnel will be allotted to all arms and services except the Air Corps and the Signal Corps, generally in proportion to the strength of those arms and services.

With respect to aviation, there has been no development of colored personnel in this field. Therefore the War Department arranged with the Civil Aeronautics Authority to make a beginning by starting an aviation school at Glenview, Illinois. As for the Signal Corps, there has been nothing so far to indicate the availability of experienced colored personnel to form the basis for the development of such technical units.

Respectfully yours,



Secretary of War.

August 9, 1940

Memorandum to the Secretary  
From Thurgood Marshall

Re: Proposed Conference on Discrimination in the National Defense Program.

A- Enlistment Program:

As soon as the War Department announced its program of increasing the Armed Forces by enlistment, many Negroes applied at the regular enlistment stations. They were told that the Army was not accepting applications of Negroes.

We immediately wrote Secretary Woodring (January 18, 1940) and by letter of January 23, Secretary Woodring replied that "practically all vacancies in colored organizations have been filled. Colored applicants are enlisted only for colored organizations, which are stationed at points indicated below:" (Please note the attached letter which gives the list of separate Negro units.)

After a reasonable length of time it has become obvious that there are not enough applicants to fill the required number of enlisted men expected by the War Department. The press and radio are constantly urging American citizens to enlist. Negroes are applying and are being refused throughout the country.

At the present time Negroes are refused the right to enlist in the Marine Corps, the Air Corps, Chemical Warfare Service, Field Artillery, Finance Department and the Signal Corps. There are two regiments of infantry and two regiments of cavalry with enlisted men in the Quartermaster Corps, Medical Department, Ordnance Department and the Detached Enlistment Men's List.

By letter of August 2, 1940, the Navy Department admits the continuation of its policy of refusing to admit Negroes in any branch of the Service except the Messman's Branch.

By letter of June 5, 1940 the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps advises that "enlistments are not being accepted from members of the colored race for assignment to the Air Corps, because no provision has been made for the establishment of negro air units."

The problem is two-fold: (1) Discrimination against Negroes deprives the United States of capable and qualified men for its Armed Forces. (2) Discrimination against Negroes deprives these American citizens of their right to training in specialized work and also their right to serve and defend their country in the same manner as other citizens.

**B Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Bill:**

Unless the present policy of the War Department and the Navy Department changes, Negroes who are drafted under the Conscription Bill will be denied the right to serve in all branches of the Service along with other American citizens, but will be restricted to certain isolated, unspecialized services with very little specialized training.

Under these circumstances it can reasonably be expected that many Negroes will refuse to serve and many will go to jail rather than to be thus discriminated against. This will lead to much confusion, much dissention and will tend to destroy the feeling of unity which is necessary for the defense program.

All of this can be and will be charged directly to the present Administration because it is up to the present Administration to abolish these racial bars.

Sept. 21, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

I have your letter of September 17th, and have given it to the President so he will have it before the meeting.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
NAACP  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

VAL-KILL COTTAGES  
HYDE PARK, DUTCHESS COUNTY  
NEW YORK

Sept. 21, 1940

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT:

This is for your consideration  
before the meeting with the colored  
group.

100

E.R.

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**MARY WHITE OVERTON**

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
 ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



September  
 17th  
 1940

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Wilmington, Del.	Louis L. Redding

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

It was good seeing you again last night. Your speech is going to do a lot of good.

There has been a considerable amount of discussion in the Negro press about the question of segregation of Negroes in the armed forces. Here is an editorial from the Baltimore Afro-American which is typical of the comment. As you of course know, Negroes object to being the one group so segregated not only on the basis of the principle involved but because such separation makes easier discrimination by hostile or prejudiced superiors. I wonder if the time isn't ripe for the experiment to be tried in a state like New York, for example, where Americans could serve their country in a regiment, or division, on the basis of physical condition, loyalty and ability rather than on race, or creed, or color.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE ALGONQUIN 4-3551

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Wilmington, Del.	Louis L. Redding

September 26, 1940

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I thought you would be interested in seeing the enclosed leaflet which someone in Tennessee has sent to me.

Sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

ww:and

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	Dr. Charles H. Thompson
	Dr. Elizabeth Yates Webb

October 4, 1940

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Here are two statements prepared at the suggestion of Dave Niles after he talked with you today. The statement marked "A" would be one issued by the White House. Statement "B" would be one giving our account of what took place at the September 27th conference.

Thank you very much for your usual prompt and vigorous action. I was in a most difficult position in not getting a reply from the White House to our telephone calls and telegram. We did not want to violate the unwritten rule about revealing what had taken place in the conference with the President until the White House had given us authority to do so. In the meantime we were having much difficulty in trying to explain why we could not say what had taken place. This was harmful all around.

Should you wish me to come up to Hyde Park either Saturday or Sunday to talk this over with you I would be glad to do so. I would like to bring with me Mr. Wilkins of our staff who handles much of our publicity. You can reach me at the office of the N.A.A.C.P., ALgonquin 4-3551, between 9:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. Saturday, and at any other time at my home, EDGecombe 4-9311.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 Hyde Park  
 New York

WW:RR

P.S. - I am enclosing also copy of our confidential office memorandum on the September 27th conference. - WW

A

Washington, -----, Details of the conference dealing with discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces of the United States which was held at the White House on September 27th were made public today by the White House.

Present at the conference were: The President, Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, Assistant Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson, A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, T. Arnold Hill of the National Youth Administration, and Walter White, Secretary of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People.

The President stated to the conferees that Negroes would be integrated into all branches of the army, combat as well as service units, at the rate of 9.5% which is the ratio of the Negro population to the total population.

In response to inquiries about the training of Negroes as Commissioned Officers, the use of Negro professionals such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses, and the use of Negroes in the Air Corps, the President stated that plans for the use of Negroes in these capacities had not yet been developed.

The Assistant Secretary of War, Patterson stated that the War Department planned to call for service soon Negro reserve officers but that the date had not yet been decided upon.

A considerable part of the discussion was devoted to the possibility of organization of mixed units in Northern States. The War Department representative agreed to consider this proposal.

As to the Navy, Col. Knox stated that while he was sympathetic, he felt that the problem there was almost insoluble since men have to live together on ships. Col. Knox stated "that Southern and Northern ships are impossible."

At the conclusion of the Conference the President suggested the immediate appointment of a qualified Negro in the War Department and one in the Navy Department to assist in the solution of these particular problems.

Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and White presented a memorandum to the President and the War and Navy representatives urging the use of Negro reserve officers and the same opportunities for training Negroes as given to others, the opening of opportunities for training and service in all branches of the air service, requirements that existing units of the army and units to be established be required to accept officers and enlisted personnel on the basis of ability instead of race or color, the use of qualified Negro technicians, abolition of racial discrimination in the Navy, and the appointment of competent Negro civilians as Assistants to the Secretary of the War and the Navy. Abolition of the existing discrimination not only in the armed forces but in employment of Negroes in Army Arsenals, Navy Yards and industrial plants who have received National Defense Contracts was also urged vigorously.

CONFERENCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Friday-September 27, 1940--11:35 P.M.-12:10 P.M.

Subject: Discrimination Against Negroes in the Armed Forces of the United States

Present: The President; Secretary of the Navy Col. Frank Knox; Ass't. Secretary of the War Robert R. Patterson; Mr. A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; T. Arnold Hill, Assistant to Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune of the National Youth Administration; Mr. Walter White, Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P.

The President opened the conference by stating that he had been pleasantly surprised a few days before by the officials of the War Department stating to him, without solicitation on his part, that Negroes would be integrated into all branches of the armed service as well as service units.

The Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., having been designated as spokesman, asked the President, first, if this applied to officers as well as enlisted men and, second, if this meant that Negroes would be continued to be used only in separate units, and third, if this open door policy applied to the Navy as well as to the Army.

Mr. Patterson stated that it was planned to call soon approximately six hundred Negroes who were reserve officers for use in the armed forces. And as to the further use of Negroes as officers he stated that the War Department is bound by legislation passed by Congress in 1920 limiting them to the use of officers who have had World War service or R.O.T.C. training. Patterson stated that the War Department was attempting to get Congress to change this act since officers with the above qualifications were not sufficient in number to handle the army which will be created by the draft. Mr. Patterson did not refer to officers trained at West Point from which Negroes are almost completely excluded, there having been only two Negro graduates from that institution since 1870.

Apparently no one of the conferees with the exception of Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and the Secretary had even thought of non-segregated units in the Army. The President, however, was immediately receptive when the Secretary called to his attention the fact that while there might be at the outset difficulties in putting white and Negro soldiers together in Mississippi and Georgia divisions or regiments; there was no reason to anticipate any difficulties as being unsurpassable in states like New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, where Negroes and whites attend the same schools, play on the same athletic teams, and live in the same neighborhoods without difficulty. The Secretary emphasized that in an army fighting allegedly for democracy should be the last place in which to practice undemocratic segregation.

The President stated that it should not be difficult to have the Negro regiments next to the white regiments and the Negro battery next to the white battery in an Army division; that in times of war replacements from one battery or regiment to another are the usual procedures; that through this continuity of Negro and white regiments and batteries the Army could "back into" the formation of units without segregation.

Mr. Patterson stated to the Secretary that the suggestion was one which the War Department had never thought of but that he personally thought that it was an experiment worth trying and one which might be made a success.

As to the Navy, Col. Knox stated that while he was sympathetic, he felt that the problem there was almost unsolvable since men have to live together on ships. He stated that Southern ships and Northern ships are impossible.

The President, however, stated to Col. Knox that since the Navy was organizing new bands for ships, the Navy should immediately organize Negro bands and place them on the ships. This would be an opening toward which in time might help to solve the problem since it would accustom white sailors to the presence of Negroes on ships. Col. Knox promised to look into the possibilities of doing this.

At this point the attached memorandum which had been prepared by the Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and White, with the assistance of Messrs. Houston, Hastie, and Weaver was presented to the President and Messrs. Knox and Patterson. Each of these individuals agreed to study the memorandum and to see what could be done about carrying it out. The President read the memorandum carefully before the conference ended.

The President stated to the War and Navy Department representatives that there should be someone in each of these departments to handle matters relating to the Negro. The Secretary got the impression that the President had in mind only someone in an advisory capacity rather than one with authority such as would be vested in, for example, an assistant secretary of War, or an assistant to the ~~assistant~~ secretary of War, and a comparable position in the Navy.

It will remain to be seen how far the two branches of the armed service will go. Emphasis was placed in eliminating discrimination in employment in the Army Arsenals, Navy Yards, and in the apprenticeship schools being conducted by the Government. Because of the shortness of time, there was no opportunity to go into great detail in connection with this discrimination.

MEMORANDUM as suggested basis of conference on alleged  
discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces -  
White House, September 27, 1940:

The following are important phases of the integration of the Negro into military aspects of the national defense program:

1. The use of presently available Negro reserve officers in training recruits and other forms of active service. At the same time, a policy of training additional Negro officers in all branches of the services should be announced. Present facilities and those to be provided in the future should be made available for such training.

2. Immediate designation of centers where Negroes may be trained for work in all branches of the aviation corps. It is not enough to train pilots alone, but in addition navigators, bombers, gunners, radio-men, and mechanics must be trained in order to facilitate full Negro participation in the air service.

3. Existing units of the Army and units to be established should be required to accept and select officers and enlisted personnel without regard to race.

4. Specialized personnel such as Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists and officers of chemical warfare, camouflage service and the like should be integrated into the services.

5. The appointment of Negroes as responsible members in the various national and local agencies engaged in the administration of the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940.

6. The development of effective techniques for assuring the extension of the policy of integration to positions in the Navy other than the menial services to which Negroes are now restricted.

7. The adoption of policies and the development of tech-

niques to assure the participation of trained Negro women as Army and Navy nurses as well as in the Red Cross.

One of the procedures which will facilitate the achievement of these objectives is the appointment of competent Negro civilians as assistants to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. To be effective, such assistants should be responsible directly to those Cabinet members and should be vested with authority to require the cooperation and assistance of technical and administrative personnel of those Departments in the devising of effective and orderly procedures.

In addition, there is the equally important problem of equitable participation of Negroes in employment incident to national defense, with particular reference to army arsenals, navy yards and industries having national defense contracts.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Judge Patterson says:

Paragraph #3 is inaccurate and should read

"The President stated to the conferees that Negro units would be organized into all branches of the army, combat as well as service."

Paragraph #6 should be omitted as it is not true. During the discussion, the President pointed out that this is not possible of achievement at this time.

Paragraph #8 - Judge Patterson does not remember that this was discussed. It was on the memo presented by the Negroes, but it was not discussed. This paragraph should be left out.

M.C.T.

B

New York ----- , Details of the conference dealing with discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces of the United States which was held at the White House on September 27th were made public today by the N.A.A.C.P.

Present at the conference were: The President, Secretary of the Navy, Frank Knox, Assistant Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson, A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, T. Arnold Hill, of the National Youth Administration, and Walter White, Secretary of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People.

The President stated to the conferees that Negroes would be integrated into all branches of the army, combat as well as service units, at the rate of 9.5% which is the ratio of the Negro population to the total population.

In response to inquiries about the training of Negroes as Commissioned Officers, the use of Negro professionals such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses, and the use of Negroes in the Air Corps, the President stated that plans for the use of Negroes in these capacities had not yet been developed.

The Assistant Secretary of War, Patterson stated that the War Department planned to call for service soon Negro reserve officers but that the date had not yet been decided upon.

A considerable part of the discussion was devoted to the possibility of organization of mixed units in Northern States. The War Department representative agreed to consider this proposal.

As to the Navy, Col. Knox stated that while he was sympathetic, he felt that the problem there was almost insoluble since men have to live together on ships. Col Knox stated that "Southern" and "Northern" ships are impossible.

At the conclusion of the Conference the President suggested the immediate appointment of a qualified Negro in the War Department and one in the Navy Department to assist in the solution of these particular problems.

Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and White presented a memorandum to the President and the War and Navy representatives urging the use of Negro reserve officers and the same opportunities for training Negroes as given to others, the opening of opportunities for training and service in all branches of the air service, requirements that existing units of the army and units to be established be required to accept officers and enlisted personnel on the basis of ability instead of race or color, the use of qualified Negro technicians, abolition of racial discrimination in the Navy, and the appointment of competent Negro civilians as Assistants to the Secretary of the War and the Navy.

Abolition of the existing discrimination not only in the armed forces but in employment of Negroes in Army Arsenals, Navy Yards, and industrial plants who have received National Defense Contracts was also urged vigorously.

Speaking on behalf of Messrs. Rondolph, Hill and himself, Walter White made the following statement: "It is gratifying that opportunity has been afforded to discuss frankly with the Commander in Chief and with the top representatives of the Navy and Army the flagrant discrimination Negro citizens are encountering in the combat and civilian wings of National Defense. While very little was definitely promised so far as action against these barriers is concerned, we believe definite progress was made.

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
 ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



October  
 7th  
 1940

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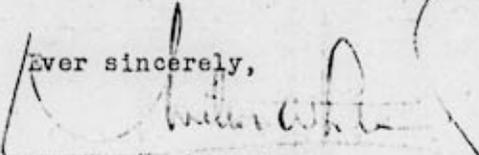
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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Thank you very much for clearing up the matter of the release on the White House conference on September 27th. Here is copy of the story which we sent out by air mail today in order to reach the Negro press for publication this week.

Ever sincerely,  
  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

**PRESS SERVICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Telephone ALgonquin 4-5551

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October 5, 1940

**DETAILS OF WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON  
ARMY-NAVY-INDUSTRY DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST NEGROES REVEALED**

Memorandum of Requests Presented to President

New York----Details of the conference dealing with discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces of the United States which was held at the White House on September 27th were made public today by the N.A.A.C.P.

Present at the conference were: The President, the Secretary of the Navy, Col. Frank Knox, the Assistant Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson, A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, T. Arnold Hill, of the National Youth Administration, and Walter White, Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The President stated to the conferees that Negro units would be organized in all branches of the army, combat as well as service units.

In response to inquiries about the training of Negroes as Commissioned Officers, the use of Negro professionals such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists and nurses, and the use of Negroes in the Air Corps, the President stated that plans for the use of Negroes in these capacities had not yet been developed.

The Assistant Secretary of War, Patterson stated that the War Department planned to call for service soon Negro reserve officers but that the date had not yet been decided upon.

As to the Navy, Col. Knox stated that while he was sympathetic, he felt that the problem there was almost inseluble since men have to live together on ships. Col. Knox stated that "Southern" and "Northern" ships are impossible.

Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and White presented a memorandum to the President and the War and Navy representatives urging the use of Negro reserve officers and the same opportunities for training Negroes as given to others, the opening of opportunities for training and service in all branches of the air service, requirements that existing units of the army and units to be established be required to accept officers and enlisted personnel on the basis of ability, instead of race or color, the use of qualified Negro technicians, abolition of racial discrimination in the Navy, and the appointment of competent Negro civilians as Assistants to the Secretary of the War and the Navy.

Abolition of the existing discrimination not only in the armed forces but in employment of Negroes in Army Arsenals, Navy

Yards, and industrial plants who have received National Defense Contracts was also urged vigorously.

Speaking on behalf of Messrs. Randolph, Hill and himself, Walter White made the following statement: "It is gratifying that opportunity has been afforded to discuss frankly with the Commander-in-Chief and with the top representatives of the Navy and Army the flagrant discrimination Negro citizens are encountering in the combat and civilian wings of National Defense. While very little was definitely promised so far as action against those barriers is concerned, we believe definite progress was made."

The complete text of the memorandum given to President Roosevelt, Col. Knox of the Navy, and Assistant Secretary of War Patterson reads:

"The following are important phases of the integration of the Negro into military aspects of the national defense program:

"1. The use of presently available Negro reserve officers in training recruits and other forms of active service. At the same time, a policy of training additional Negro officers in all branches of the services should be announced. Present facilities and those to be provided in the future should be made available for such training.

"2. Immediate designation of centers where Negroes may be trained for work in all branches of the aviation corps. It is not enough to train pilots alone, but in addition navigators, bombers, gunners, radio-men, and mechanics must be trained in order to facilitate full Negro participation in the air service.

"3. Existing units of the Army and units to be established should be required to accept and select officers and enlisted personnel without regard to race.

"4. Specialized personnel such as Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists and officers of chemical warfare, camouflage service and the like should be integrated into the services.

"5. The appointment of Negroes as responsible members in the various national and local agencies engaged in the administration of the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940.

"6. The development of effective techniques for assuring the extension of the policy of integration to positions in the Navy other than the menial services to which Negroes are now restricted.

"7. The adoption of policies and the development of techniques to assure the participation of trained Negro women as Army and Navy nurses as well as in the Red Cross.

"One of the procedures which will facilitate the achievement of these objectives is the appointment of competent Negro civilians as assistants to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. To be effective, such assistants should be responsible directly to those Cabinet members and should be vested with authority to require the cooperation and assistance of technical and administrative personnel of those Departments in the devising of effective and orderly procedures.

In addition, there is the equally important problem of equitable participation of Negroes in employment incident to national defense, with particular reference to army arsenals, navy yards and industries having national-defense contracts."

October 8, 1940

100

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to acknowledge with thanks your letter of September 26, enclosing the leaflet sent to you by some one in Tennessee.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

DD

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**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

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October  
 12th  
 1940

PERSONAL AND  
 CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I am sorry we were forced to take this step. But the White House announcement left us no other alternative.

Here is a typical example of the spot on which we were put. Miss Pearl Mitchell of Cleveland is a prominent social worker and a member of the National Board of the N.A.A.C.P. I enclose copy of a letter she has just sent us of the effect of the White House statement. I enclose also copy of a letter from Miss Henriette Pellenberg of New York City.

We have been swamped with protests and inquiries. I am sure you can see the position in which we were put.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 Hyde Park,  
 New York.

WW:CTF

ENDORSED BY THE NATIONAL INFORMATION BUREAU, 330 WEST 42ND STREET, NEW YORK

31st ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., JUNE 18-23, 1940

COPY

2126 E. 93rd Street  
Cleveland, Ohio.

Oct. 11, 1940.

Dear Walter and Roy:

Pardon joint letter but time will not permit separate ones.

1st. At our Exec. Com. meeting this wk there was a very heated discussion re the unfairness of our N.A.A.C.P. Nat'l Office and Policies about politics.

Harry Davis led the attack and W. O. Walker, Call Post assisted. They maintain that Mr. Pickens was restricted in his political activities just because he was out for Wendell Willkie, Republican.

That Walter White went out for Al Smith and is now out for Roosevelt, that Walter and N.A.A.C.P. are compromising by assenting to Jim Crow in the U. S. Army & Navy by Pres. Roosevelt just because he is for Roosevelt.

That Roy Wilkins is assisting the Democrats by allowing a letter to be sent from their headquarters quoting him as favoring the New Deal. And Walker added Roy's picture accompanies the article. I rec'd a letter but no photo. Also that Roy is using the Crisis for Roosevelt, that he tore up all the statements of Willkie & plans to use the next issue just before the election to boost Roosevelt.

The white press of Cleveland (every one of the three - Plaindealer, Press & News) are fighting Roosevelt on 3rd term basis supposedly & they put into their papers a distorted article re Pres. Roosevelt and the Negro without one dissenting remark from the N.A.A.C.P. and other leaders present.

Altho Walker's headlines are "Roosevelt OK's Army's Jim Crow Policy" he does print at the bottom of his quotations from Stephen Early, Press Sec'y to Roosevelt the full release made from your office.

Grace Caver Alexander telephones me that heated arguments are being held also at offices of Relief etc. saying N.A.A.C.P. is laying down & accepting Jim Crow policy. I think a press release as to our stand is very necessary.

Personally I am for Roosevelt altho I cannot understand his silence on the Anti-Lynch Bill or on Jim Crow policies. As much as it is necessary for him to be a strategist to hold some Southern strength he could take a stand. However, I feel Mrs. Roosevelt has covered his deficiencies, that she does portray what he would like to do so I am still for Roosevelt.

Our court employees are forbidden to enter into politics & thus it is necessary for me to stay out. However they say my name spells N.A.A.C.P. here and I would call myself an Independent for the sake of misunderstandings & successes of the N.A.A.C.P. locally.

I feel that Charlie Houston did the right thing, that the Board took the right step re its request for salaried members of the staff & affiliation. I still feel that you, my two friends, must watch & be careful if we are to be considered Fair & Consistent.

Sincerely yours,  
Pearl

COPY

October 11, 1940

Gentlemen:

The New York Evening Post had an article in which was said that Walter White, president of the N.A.A.C.P., was in favor of having segregated Negro troops in the United States Army.

I cannot understand such an attitude coming from a leader of the fight for the rights of Negroes in America.

If this stand can be explained to me, will you please do so.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Henrietta Fellenberg (Miss)

336 Fort Washington Avenue  
New York, N. Y.

**PRESS SERVICE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE  
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**MARY WHITE OVIINGTON**  
Treasurer

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Telephone ALgonquin 4-5551

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Assistant Secretary  
**GEORGE B. MURPHY, Jr.**  
Publicity Assistant

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October 11, 1940

**WHITE HOUSE CHARGED WITH  
TRICKERY IN ANNOUNCING  
JIM CROW POLICY OF ARMY**

NAACP Denies Approving Segregation in Wire to President and  
Declares He Used Negro Leaders and Organizations in  
Attempt to Cover Up Unfair Treatment of Race in  
National Defense

-----  
**NEGRO OFFICERS ON THE SKIDS**

New York---A statement from the White House October 9 implying that a committee of three persons, including Walter White, secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., had approved a policy of segregation for Negro units in the Army, was repudiated and denounced here October 10 in a prompt telegram of protest to President Roosevelt.

The United Press account of the White House statement declared:

"White House Secretary Early said the segregation policy was approved after Mr. Roosevelt had conferred with Walter White, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and two other Negro leaders, etc."

This phraseology in the press was characterized by the N.A.A.C.P. as a "trick" to give the impression that Negroes had approved of the Army Jim Crow, and to remove the pressure from President Roosevelt as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy.

The telegram, signed by Mr. White, A. Phillip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and T. Arnold Hill, formerly industrial secretary of the National Urban League and at present an assistant in the National Youth Administration, declared "in a written memorandum we submitted we specifically repudiated segregation."

On other points of policy enunciated by the White House statement, the telegram declared:

"We most vigorously protest your approval of War Department policy regarding Negroes in armed forces which precludes Negro officers except chaplains and doctors in regular army units other than two national guard regiments staffed by Negro officers. We deny statement that 'at arsenals and army posts Negro civilians are accorded equal opportunity for employment'.

"We ask proof that even one Negro is now being given aviation training as pilot in army air corps. As recently as October first nineteen forty the Adjutant General of the War Department wrote

(Continued)

'applications from colored persons for flying cadet appointment or for enlistment in the Air Corps are not being accepted.'

"We further vigorously question your statement that morale is splendid in existing Negro units of the regular army. Many enlisted men in these segregated units have made repeated protests at being forced to serve as hostlers and servants to white army officers. We further question that jim crow policy of army 'has been proven satisfactory'. It has never been satisfactory nor is it now to Negro Americans. Such segregation has been destructive of morale and has permitted prejudiced superiors to exercise their bigotry on defenseless Negro regiments.

"We are inexpressibly shocked that a President of the United States at a time of national peril should surrender so completely to enemies of Democracy who would destroy national unity by advocating segregation. Official approval by the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of such discrimination and segregation is a stab in the back of Democracy. It is a tragic coincidence that you issued your statement on the same day the coup de grace was given by Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley to the Anti-Lynching bill. The two acts are a double blow at the patriotism of twelve million Negro citizens."

The NAACP has sent a letter to its 600 branches, youth councils and college chapters urging active and continued protest against President Roosevelt's jim crow national defense policy. The letter asks action before election day to make the protests of Negro Americans most effective.

The NAACP announced that the whole section of policy dealing with Negro army officers was a plan to put Negro officers "on the skids" and eventually eliminate them altogether.

An important part of the N.A.A.C.P. protests and activity will be upon the employment of Negroes in arsenals, navy yards, and industrial plants which have been awarded contracts under the national defense program.

BARKLEY SOUNDS DEATH  
OF ANTI-LYNCHING BILL

10/11/40

Says Poll of Senate Shows Not Enough Votes to Invoke  
Cloture and Thus Beat Filibuster

Washington, D.C.---In an attempt to obviate any further discussion of the anti-lynching bill during this session of Congress, Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley told the Senate on Tuesday, October 8 that he was "willing to take the responsibility of saying that in the midst of our international situation, our defense program...it is impractical at this time to make a futile effort to obtain a vote on the bill."

Admitting that invoking cloture (limitation of debate) would be the only means of getting a vote on the bill he said: "I have had a very careful personal and individual poll made of the members of the Senate on the Democratic side and on the Republican side, and in that effort the minority leader has cooperated, and it has been ascertained that cloture cannot be obtained at this time in order to have a vote on the Anti-lynching bill. It is not only impossible to obtain the two-thirds vote necessary to adopt it, but it would not be possible to get a majority on either side of the Senate for cloture."

Barkley made the statement in response to a question put to him by Senator Warren Barbour, of New Jersey, who asked the Majority leader "if there is to be an opportunity to bring up the Anti-lynching bill in this session before we either adjourn or recess."

Elucidating his own position with respect to the bill the New Jersey Senator said: "As for myself, I most strongly and emphatically point out that this legislation has been passed over obviously too often and altogether too long, and should have consideration."

"I am wholeheartedly and sincerely in favor of it, not only because of the promise that it stands for, but because it represents even more than merely preventing lynching; it has become a symbol of tolerance as representing the true American attitude in relation

to real equality, without prejudice as regards race, creed, or color."

Senator Barbour read a letter he received from Walter White, in which the N.A.A.C.P. secretary pointed to the seven lynchings of 1940, particularly the lynching at Brownsville, Tennessee as "comparable to the oppression of minorities in Nazi Germany, which Americans and the Congress have rightly denounced."

Barkley accused the N.A.A.C.P. of putting him on the spot "because of the not only insistent but sometimes peremptory demands that, regardless of anything else, the Anti-lynching bill be brought forward for consideration in the Senate."

As a final gesture the Majority Leader of the Senate told Barbour that he hoped the bill could be brought up "at an early date, either when we come back in November or at an early date in the next session."

In a telegram to President Roosevelt October 10, Walter White told the President that Barkley's sounding the death knell of the anti-lynching bill represented a "blow at the patriotism of twelve million Negro citizens."

ALABAMANS GO TO COURT  
SEEKING RIGHT TO VOTE

10/11/40-

Birmingham, Ala.---The right of local boards of registrars to arbitrarily bar Negroes from registering to vote will be tested for the first time here Monday, October 14, when nine Negro citizens appear before the circuit court of Jefferson County, Ala., to have their qualifications determined by a jury.

The nine persons who are represented by Arthur D. Shores, counsel for the local branch of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, include: William Boswell, Jasper Townsend, Leslie B. Hutchinson, Willie P. Harris, Rufus E. Crosby, Edgar L. Howard, Willie J. Humphry, Claude Smith and Alonzo Evans.

The case has been hanging fire since last January, when the applicants appeared before the local board of registrars and were refused registration, after an examination behind closed doors. They filed petitions in the circuit court last February, under a state law which provides that where one has been denied registration, he may appeal to the circuit court, and have his qualifications determined by a jury.

Bringing the case into court marks a victory for Mr. Shores who, with the backing of the local N.A.A.C.P. branch and the southern state conference of N.A.A.C.P. branches, has waged a long fight to have the courts determine the qualifications upon which the fitness of applicants for registration may be judged.

Commenting on the case Shores said: "This will be the first time we have had to try any of these cases. Heretofore, after petitions were filed, the petitioners received their certificates of registration through the mail. Hence it appears that we may actually get a chance to have our petitioners' qualifications determined by a jury. This we should like to have done."

HOUSE PASSES LUDLOW  
AMENDMENT TO PREVENT  
DISCRIMINATION IN  
DEFENSE TRAINING PROGRAM

10/11/40

Washington, D.C.---The ban against discrimination contained in the Conscription Bill, was carried over into that part of the defense program affecting the trainees recruited under the Office of Education and the National Youth Administration, when the House passed an amendment to the civil functions bill (H.R. 10539) introduced September 23 by Representative Ludlow, of Indiana.

The Ludlow amendment states that "No trainee under the foregoing appropriations shall be discriminated against because of sex, race, or color, and where separate schools are required by law for separate population groups, to the extent needed for trainees of each such group, equitable provision shall be made for facilities and training of like quality."

NEW YORKER REFUSED IN  
ARMY AIR CORPS

10/11/40

New York---Lt. Thomas Dale Davis, of the 369th coast artillery, anti-aircraft, formerly New York national guard, has been refused enlistment in the army air corps. His first application was made April 30, 1940 and was approved by a succession of officials, beginning with his captain and ending with a Lieutenant Colonel of the Adjutant General's office of the New York National Guard. Nevertheless, Lt. Davis was refused May 31, 1940 by Major F. A. Macon, assistant adjutant general in Washington, on the excuse that "there are no units composed of colored men."

NEGRO SKILLED LABORERS  
DENIED JOBS IN GEORGIA  
MILITARY DEFENSE CENTER

10/11/40

New York---A protest against the discrimination suffered by Negroes in Columbus, Georgia who sought employment in private and Government-directed defense projects in Columbus, Georgia, was launched today with the advisory council of the National Defense Commission in Washington, by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The Association acted upon complaints received from its Columbus, Georgia branch. According to the report Negro bricklayers, carpenters, and painters have been refused clearance for jobs, through the United States Employment Bureau there. The report also pointed out that the Williams Lumber company in Columbus, with defense contracts totalling more than \$2,000,000, has refused to employ skilled Negro labor. Because of its importance as a military center this Georgia town is humming with defense activity, especially in the building industry.

353 ELIGIBLE NEGRO  
RESERVE OFFICERS, SAYS  
WAR DEPARTMENT

10/11/40

New York---At present there are 353 eligible Negro Reserve officers, according to Robert P. Patterson, Assistant Secretary of War.

Patterson made the announcement in a letter to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in response to an inquiry filed with his office October 1. "The records of the War Department," the letter said, "indicate that a total of 4,926 Negro students have enrolled as Freshmen in the Reserve Officers Training Corps at two schools having all Negro personnel. Of these, a total of 554 have completed the four-year R.O.T.C. course at these schools." No information was available, according to the letter, as to the race of students enrolled in the R.O.T.C. in mixed schools.

With the statement that both Colonel Benjamin O. Davis and his son Lt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., will "normally remain on their present assignments until the summer of 1942, when they will complete their four-year tour of duty," the Assistant Secretary of War said that "it is impossible to predict what future assignments will be given to any officer of the Regular Army."

100  
October 21, 1940

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to thank you for sending her the copy of the Baltimore Afro-American and for calling her attention to the two special pages.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

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69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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Official Organ: *The Crisis*

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*order 10-21*

October 10, 1940

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

You will be interested in the editorial page (page 4) and in the full-page advertisement on page 12 of the October 12th issue of the Baltimore Afro-American, which I am sending you under separate cover.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

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October  
 23rd  
 1940

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*100*

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

If it is possible for you to spare me five minutes today I should like very much to talk with you. I have a luncheon appointment from 12:30 to 1:30 but if you could see me only during that time I would cancel it. I have a meeting at the office here, beginning at 2:00, which will probably last an hour and a half. Otherwise I could make it at any time you say.

Cordially,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 20 East 11th Street  
 New York City

WW:CTF

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31st ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PHILADELPHIA, PA., JUNE 18-23, 1940

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October 23, 1940

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Thank you for your message that you will see me some time Thursday and will telephone me around 2:30.

I want to take the Congressional Limited at 4:30 for Washington and if you can see me at an hour which will permit me to do that, I will be grateful. If, however, that is impossible, I will take a later train.

The matter I want to discuss with you is so urgent that I want to talk with you before I talk with certain people in Washington on Thursday night and Friday morning.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 20 East 11th Street  
 New York, N.Y.

P.S. In order to save your time I am enclosing copies of telegram from and to Assistant secretary of War Ratterson and a letter from and to Stephen Early regarding the White House statement. I hope you will have time to read this before I talk with you.

ww:amb

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
69 Fifth Avenue - New York

October 21, 1940

My dear Mr. Early:

I received your letter of October 18 this morning on my return to the city. I have read very carefully the transcript of the October 9th press conference which you sent me. It is the considered judgment of myself and my associates that the newspaper men, and especially the United Press and the Associated Press representatives, played down your statement when they only stated that "the President approved the policy after he had conferred with Walter White, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, two other Negroes and Secretary of the Navy Knox, and Assistant Secretary of War Patterson."

Your statement that "as a result of that conference", conveys to every reasonable person the explicit and unmistakable impression that Messrs. Randolph, Hill and I approved segregation and discrimination during the September 27th conference at the White House instead of resolutely opposing it.

We insist, therefore, that a moral obligation rests upon the White House to correct the implication for which it is responsible. Whatever your intentions as secretary to the President may have been in your choice of verbiage, the country has gained from your words a meaning which is diametrically opposed to the truth.

We repeat, therefore, that we cannot with honor confer with Assistant Secretary of War Patterson or any other executive until the White House takes steps to correct the damaging impression on this issue which it created.

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Stephen Early  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

(Signed) Walter White  
Secretary.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

October 18, 1940.

My dear Mr. White:

Your telegram of October tenth was received and referred by the President's direction to the Assistant Secretary of War, the Honorable Robert E. Patterson.

On October sixteenth, Secretary Patterson telegraphed you, saying that he would be glad to discuss the matter with you, Mr. Randolph and Mr. Hill, at your convenience. He asked you to let him know the date most convenient to you for that conference. Your reply to this telegram was received by the Assistant Secretary of War today. In this telegram to Mr. Patterson, you expressed the feeling that your value as a conferee had "been seriously impaired by the White House release of October ninth". You further suggested that the White House had given certain implications to the press on October ninth -- implications which were not justified.

I am sending you herewith a verbatim and complete transcript of the press conference I held on October ninth. I submit to you, in all fairness, that this statement by me to the press does not give any reader the impression that you had approved segregation or that you did not oppose it.

I believe, realizing how deeply you feel about this issue, that if you will read the transcript of my conference, you will agree with me that it contains no such implications as you charge.

I do not feel, therefore, that the White House can be expected to correct implications for which it is not, in any way, responsible. On the other hand, however, I can assure you that Judge Patterson is willing, at your convenience, to meet with you and your associates for further discussion of this matter.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Stephen Early  
Secretary to the President.

Mr. Walter White,  
Secretary, National Association for  
Advancement of Colored People,  
New York, N. Y.

MR. EARLY'S  
PRESS CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 9, 1940  
WEDNESDAY

Q. Any comment on Lerothy Thompson's column today?  
STE: No. I think she was able to comment for herself.

MR. EARLY: I will run through a good bit of stuff for you here this morning.  
Starting with the appointment list we have Hon. Sam H. Husbands,  
who is with Schram on the R.F.C., coming in at 11.45.

At 11.00 the Secretary of War is coming in with Dr. Clarence A.  
Dykstra. I would watch that.

Q. Isn't he president of the University of Wisconsin?  
STE: Yes.

Q. New draft director?  
STE: I wouldn't know.

At 11.15 the President receives our Ambassador to Argentine,  
Norman Armour. He has been to White Sulphur Springs and is on his way to  
New York.

At 11.30 Gifford Pinchot will be in. He asked for the appoint-  
ment by telegram from his home in Pennsylvania.

At 11.45 at the request of the secretary of the Advisory Com-  
mittee the President is receiving the membership of his Advisory Committee on  
Political Refugees headed by Francis Biddle, James McDonald, George Warren  
and Henry Hart.

At 11.45 Lyndon Johnson of Texas will be in. That is routine  
so far as I am able to ascertain.

The United Confederate Veterans will be received by the President  
at 12.45.

He is lunching today with Henry Wallace.

At 1.50 he is seeing Sidney Hillman.

That is the list of appointments today.

Q. Any background on Hillman?  
STE: It is a request. He said he had a lot of papers he wanted to go over  
with the President.

Last night at 11.00 E.S.T. the President signed the tax bill and  
a long list of other bills. I will give you the numbers and identification.

We have got a message from Senator Vic Donahey sent by wire from  
Lakeview, Ohio, which says that the condition of his health prevents him  
from joining the President's party in Ohio on October tenth. The Senator  
continues: "You will receive a splendid ovation in Ohio and in my opinion  
carry the State in the November election. This telegram may be release."

You will remember that on September 27th the President held a conference in his office with Walter White and, I think, two other negro leaders. Present at that conference also were the Secretary of Navy and the Assistant Secretary of War. The subject discussed at the conference and responsible for the conference was negro participation in national defense.

As a result of that conference the War Department has drafted a statement of policy with regard to negroes in national defense. The statement of policy was submitted by Judge Patterson to the President, and today was approved by the President. The President's approval causes it to become or to be made immediately effective by the War Department. Here are the statements of policy.

I believe that is all I have for you.

Q. Any more details on this trip?

STE: Nothing new.

Q. Senator Donahay said October 10th -- it would be October 11th wouldn't it?

STE: Yes.

Q. Will the President visit Camp Edwards next week?

STE: I can't say. I can tell you that there is nothing definite beyond the Ohio trip at the present moment. He has a number of things he wants to do but they are all too tentative to answer.

Q. Several statements have been printed that the President is going to Johnstown to inspect flood control projects along the Conemaugh river?

STE: That is probably something they worked up locally that they want him to do there.

Q. They want him to stop.

STE: We are stopping to pick up a group of people. That is all we know about it. That is still the plan.

Q. Anything on the Far East?

STE: Nothing I can give you.

Q. Did Secretary Hull see the President last night?

STE: I have not asked him. I am sure he hasn't seen him. But I am not sure he didn't talk to him on the phone. He has a habit of doing that day and night. Hull doesn't see the President as often as he used to because he uses the phone all the time.

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HON ROBERT P PATTERSON  
ASSIST SECY OF WAR  
WASHINGTON DC

WE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT YOUR TELEGRAM OF OCTOBER SIXTEENTH INVITING MESSRS RANDOLPH HILL AND MYSELF TO CONFERENCE. MR RANDOLPH AND I FEEL OUR VALUE AS CONFEREES HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY IMPAIRED BY WHITE HOUSE RELEASE OF OCTOBER NINTH WHICH MISREPRESENTED OUR WRITTEN AND SPOKEN OPPOSITION TO SEGREGATION THROUGH THE IMPLICATION THAT WE APPROVED SUCH A POLICY. UNTIL WHITE HOUSE ITSELF CORRECTS THIS WE DO NOT FEEL THAT THERE IS ANY VALUE IN FURTHER CONFERENCES

WALTER WHITE

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COPY

WALTER WHITE NATIONAL ASSN FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

THE PRESIDENT HAS SENT ME YOUR TELEGRAM OF OCTOBER NINTH  
 I WILL BE GLAD TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH YOU AND MR RANDOLPH AND  
 MR HILL AT YOUR EARLY CONVENIENCE. PLEASE LET ME KNOW DATE  
 MOST CONVENIENT TO YOU

ROBERT P PATTERSON  
 THE ASST SECRETARY OF WAR WASHN DC

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

October 25, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
MR. ROOSEVELT

B<sup>x</sup>  
1584

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

F. D. R.

October 25, 1940.

My dear Mr. White:

Since writing to you on October eighteenth, I have learned that certain newspapers have interpreted the White House statement of October ninth in a way that has caused embarrassment to you and your associates Messrs. Randolph and Hill.

My purpose in writing you at this time is to tell you as emphatically and as honestly as it is possible for any man to speak to another, that there was no disposition or intention on my part, when I made the statement to the press, to cause you or your colleagues any embarrassment whatsoever. If the words I used have been interpreted by any newspaper writer in a way that embarrasses you or your associates, I am deeply regretful.

As I told you in my letter of October eighteenth, the stenographer's report of my oral statement to the press, reads as follows:

"You will remember that on September 27th the President held a conference in his office with Walter White and, I think, two other negro leaders. Present at that conference also were the Secretary of Navy and the Assistant Secretary of War. The subject discussed at the conference and responsible for the conference was negro participation in national defense.

"As a result of that conference the War Department has drafted a statement of policy with regard to negroes in national defense. The statement of policy was submitted by Judge Patterson to the President, and today was approved by the President. The President's approval causes it to become or to be made immediately effective by the War Department. Here are the statements of policy."

The meaning I intended to convey to the press -- the meaning that most of the newspapermen present understood and used accordingly -- was that, in all probability, there would have been no "statement of policy with regard to negroes in national defense" had it not been for the conference you and your associates had with the President, the Secretary of the Navy and the Assistant Secretary of War on September 27th.

In other words, when I used the language "As a result of that conference the War Department has drafted a statement of policy, etc," I did not mean or intend to convey the impression that the statement of policy had been approved by you and your associates but that it had come about because of the discussions that had been held. You will note that there is nothing in anything that I said that could be used to indicate your approval of the policy or that either Mr. Hill or Mr. Randolph had given it their approval.

As evidence of the fact that this is written to you in the best of faith, I want you to know that I have told the newspapermen to whom I spoke on October ninth how my statement to them has been misinterpreted by a part of the press. They also have been acquainted with the contents of this letter to you.

Very sincerely yours,

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

Mr. Walter White,  
Secretary, National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People,  
69 Fifth Avenue,  
New York, N. Y.

Copy to Mrs. Roosevelt ✓  
Copy to Judge Patterson

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

"FDR - You might like to read memo attached. E.R."  
Return.

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UCT 4-1940  
 October 3, 1940

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I want to tell you how grateful we are to you for arranging the conference last Friday with the President, the Secretary of the Navy and the Assistant Secretary of War. I want to share with you our office record of the interview.

Later on when the pressure on you has let up a bit - if it ever does - I would like to talk further with you about this whole issue.

With cordial personal greetings,

Ever sincerely,  
*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

CONFERENCE AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Friday-September 27, 1940--11:35 P.M.-12:10 P.M.

Subject: Discrimination Against Negroes in the Armed Forces of the United States.

Present: The President; Secretary of the Navy-Col. Frank Knox; Ass't. Secretary of the War, Mr. Robert R. Patterson; Mr. A. Philip Randolph, President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; T. Arnold Hill, Assistant to Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune of the National Youth Administration; Mr. Walter White, Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P.

The President opened the conference by stating that he had been pleasantly surprised a few days before by the officials of the War Department stating to him, without solicitation on his part, that Negroes would be integrated into all branches of the armed service as well as service units.

The Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. having been designated as spokesman asked the President, first, if this applied to officers as well as enlisted men and, second, if this meant that Negroes would be continued to be used only in separate units, and third, if this open door policy applied to the Navy as well as to the Army.

Mr. Patterson stated that it was planned to call soon approximately six hundred Negroes who were reserve officers for use in the armed forces. And as to the further use of Negroes as officers he stated that the War Department is bound by legislation passed by Congress in 1920 limiting them to the use of officers who have had World War service or R.O.T.C. training. Patterson stated that the War Department was attempting to get Congress to change this act since officers with the above qualifications were not sufficient in number to handle the army which will be created by the draft. Mr. Patterson did not refer to officers trained at West Point from which Negroes are almost completely excluded, there having been only two Negro graduates from that institution since 1870.

Apparently no one of the conferees with the exception of Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and the Secretary had even thought of non-segregated units in the Army. The President, however, was immediately receptive when the Secretary called to his attention the fact that while there might be at the outset difficulties in putting white and Negro soldiers together in Mississippi and Georgia divisions or regiments; there was no reason to anticipate any difficulties as being unsurpassable in states like New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, where Negroes and whites attend the same schools, play on the same athletic teams, and live in the same neighborhoods without difficulty. The Secretary emphasized that in an army fighting allegedly for democracy should be the last place in which to practice undemocratic segregation.

The President stated that it should not be difficult to have the Negro regiments next to the white regiments and the Negro battery next to the white battery in an Army division; that in times of war replacements from one battery or regiment to another are the usual procedures; that through this continuity of Negro and white regiments and batteries the Army could "back into" the formation of units without segregation.

Mr. Patterson stated to the Secretary that the suggestion was one which the War Department had never thought of but that he personally thought that it was an experiment worth trying and one which might be made a success.

As to the Navy, Col. Knox stated that while he was sympathetic, he felt that the problem there was almost unsolvable since men have to live together on ships. He stated that Southern ships and Northern ships are impossible.

The President, however, stated to Col. Knox that since the Navy was organizing new bands for ships, the Navy should immediately organize Negro bands and place them on the ships. This would be an opening toward which in time might help to solve the problem since it would accustom white sailors to the presence of Negroes on ships. Col. Knox promised to look into the possibilities of doing this.

At this point the attached memorandum which had been prepared by the Messrs. Randolph, Hill, and White, with the assistance of Messrs. Houston, Hastie, and Weaver was presented to the President and Messrs. Knox and Patterson. Each of these individuals agreed to study the memorandum and to see what could be done about carrying it out. The President read the memorandum carefully before the conference ended.

The President stated to the War and Navy Department representatives that there should be someone in each of these departments to handle matters relating to the Negro. The Secretary got the impression that the President had in mind only someone in an advisory capacity rather than one with authority such as would be vested in, for example, an assistant secretary of War, or an assistant to the assistant secretary of War, and a comparable position in the Navy.

It will remain to be seen how far the two branches of the armed service will go. Emphasis was placed in eliminating discrimination in employment in the Army Arsenals, Navy Yards, and in the apprenticeship schools being conducted by the Government. Because of the shortness of time, there was no opportunity to go into great detail in connection with this discrimination.

MEMORANDUM as suggested basis of conference on alleged  
discrimination against Negroes in the armed forces -  
White House, September 27, 1940:

The following are important phases of the integration of the Negro into military aspects of the national defense program:

1. The use of presently available Negro reserve officers in training recruits and other forms of active service. At the same time, a policy of training additional Negro officers in all branches of the services should be announced. Present facilities and those to be provided in the future should be made available for such training.
2. Immediate designation of centers where Negroes may be trained for work in all branches of the aviation corps. It is not enough to train pilots alone, but in addition navigators, bombers, gunners, radio-men, and mechanics must be trained in order to facilitate full Negro participation in the air service.
3. Existing units of the Army and units to be established should be required to accept and select officers and enlisted personnel without regard to race.
4. Specialized personnel such as Negro physicians, dentists, pharmacists and officers of chemical warfare, camouflage service and the like should be integrated into the services.
5. The appointment of Negroes as responsible members in the various national and local agencies engaged in the administration of the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940.
6. The development of effective techniques for assuring the extension of the policy of integration to positions in the Navy other than the menial services to which Negroes are now restricted.
7. The adoption of policies and the development of tech-

niques to assure the participation of trained Negro women as Army and Navy nurses as well as in the Red Cross.

One of the procedures which will facilitate the achievement of these objectives is the appointment of competent Negro civilians as assistants to the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy. To be effective, such assistants should be responsible directly to those Cabinet members and should be vested with authority to require the cooperation and assistance of technical and administrative personnel of those Departments in the devising of effective and orderly procedures.

In addition, there is the equally important problem of equitable participation of Negroes in employment incident to national defense, with particular reference to army arsenals, navy yards and industries having national defense contracts.

100

November 14, 1940

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to tell you that she gave your letter written from Rock Castle, Virginia, on November 2, to the President.

Very sincerely yours,

Administrative Officer  
Social Correspondence

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

0

OFFICE OF  
THE DIRECTOR  
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NOV 5 1940

ROCK CASTLE, VA. 2 November 1940

*Send letter to  
Mr. Tolson  
11-14*

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

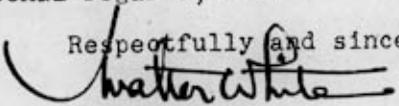
Would you be good enough to place this letter in the President's hands as soon as is convenient?

Before doing so, will you read it as it deals with the Caribbean situation and in particular with the Virgin Islands. On my way back to New York tomorrow night I plan to stop off in Washington to talk with Dean Hastie and one or two others there to find out if they have any information on the rumors that there is some trouble brewing in the Islands. I will advise you and the President if I learn anything of value.

And may I take this means of thanking you once again for your invaluable aid in straightening out certain difficulties.

With cordial personal regards, I am

Respectfully and sincerely,



Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York City.

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December  
 13th  
 1940

*Mrs. Roosevelt*

100

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Under separate cover I am sending you a copy of the December 14th issue of the Saturday Evening Post containing an article, "It's Our Country, Too", in which you may be interested.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 WALTER WHITE.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

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November 4, 1940

100

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Please forgive me for imposing upon you so much. But I would be grateful if you would give the President the enclosed personal note of thanks for what he did in the matter of the integration of Negroes into the armed forces of the United States.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 Hyde Park  
 New York

WW:RR

January 2, 1948

100

My dear Mr. White:

I gave your material to the President and will be glad to see you at any time. However, I feel there is little I can do.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
NAACP  
69 Fifth Aven.  
NYC

DD

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I apologize for the amount of reading matter I send you with this letter. But I believe that it deals with so important a matter, not only with respect to the future welfare of the Virgin Islands but also the whole question of the Caribbean, that it merits your attention.

You will remember that you were good enough to place in the President's hands a letter I wrote him from Rock Castle, Virginia, about the fantastic stories that a "revolution" was brewing in the Virgin Islands. I enclose a copy of that letter, a copy of the President's reply of November 30th, a copy of my reply to that letter dated December 4th, and reply by the Secretary of the Interior dated December 19th to my letter of December 4th to the President.

I particularly commend to your attention the letter dated November 13th from Acting Governor Robert Morss Lovett, copy of memorandum I prepared for Charles W. Taussig when he asked my opinion about the impending "revolution" shortly after the President had told him that such a rumor had been brought to him, and of a personal hand-written letter dated December 11th which I received recently from Acting Governor Lovett.

Since the latter was a personal letter to me I asked Mr. Lovett's permission to share it with you and the President and he has just cabled me permission to do so.

When you shall have read these I will be glad to discuss them with you should you wish me to do so.

Ever sincerely,

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt,  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

*All him I gave from this  
 will be glad to take  
 her attorney's  
 this is  
 12/24/40*

February 7, 1941

100

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt says she will be glad to attend the hearings you mention in your letter of January 31 if she is asked to do so, but she does not know how much she will be able to contribute.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

DD

Mrs A -

Wish to go if

asked, but do not know

how much can

contribute

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**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

**TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551**

*Official Organ: The Crisis*



**January  
31st  
1941**

*Filed  
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W. J. H. H.*

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I want you to know about the progress we are making in our efforts to focus public attention on the discrimination against the Negro in the national defense program, including the Army, Navy, Air Corps and particularly the industrial phases of the situation.

I spent several days in Washington this week working on the matter. Senators Wagner and Barbour and perhaps several other Senators, including, we hope, one or two from the South, are planning to introduce a resolution for a Senate investigation of the status and treatment of the Negro. It is thought best, at present, to ask the Senate Committee on Education and Labor to make the inquiry instead of asking the Senate to authorize the setting up of a special committee. The investigating committee will be asked to recommend corrective legislation which it deems necessary as a result of what is learned from the hearings.

If the public and particularly the Southern reaction to an article of mine, "It's Our Country, Too", which recently appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, is a good barometer, the country would be shocked and disturbed at what is going on if they only knew the facts. It may well be that exposure of the facts may greatly aid those persons in the Government who want to do the right thing both for the Negro and for the country.

Members of the Senate with whom I have talked feel that the chief difficulty will be encountered in the Senate Audit and Control Committee of which Senator James Byrnes is chairman, when an appropriation for such an investigation is sought. It is thought also that the best procedure would be for Senator Thomas, as chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor, to hold preliminary hearings as soon after the resolution is introduced as is possible and to invite to

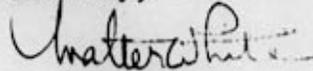
#2 - Mrs. Roosevelt

January 31, 1941.

testify at those preliminary hearings one or two outstanding persons whose testimony will focus public attention upon the problem. You have probably guessed by now that the one person whose testimony would do most in this situation would be your own. Would you be willing to testify?

If the resolution is introduced during the coming week the preliminary hearings on it would probably not take place until sometime after the middle of February or even after the first of March.

Ever sincerely,



Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

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*Official Organ: The Crisis*



February  
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*Jee*

My dear Miss Thompson:

Please tell Mrs. Roosevelt how very happy we are to have her letter accepting the invitation to testify before the Senate committee. It is characteristic of her, being the modest person she is, that she feels that "she does not know how much she will be able to contribute".

One of the things she can testify to which will be of enormous value would be a recital of the efforts which she has made in numerous instances to break down discrimination against Negroes in the Army, Navy, Air Corps and in the industrial phases of the defense program.

Another very valuable contribution she could make would be testimony that in sheer self-interest the United States must change its pattern of discrimination while it is fighting for democracy.

As soon as the date is set for the hearing I will notify you.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
 Secretary to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

February 20, 1941

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My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt says she would love to hear Dean Dixon's Symphony Orchestra but every moment of her time is taken until the second of March. She could be in New York that night if Sunday would be convenient to the artists and the other guests.

I would appreciate your letting me know as soon as possible as Mrs. Roosevelt's calendar fills up quickly.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

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(Dictated 2/10)

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Here is a clipping from today's PM about a concert by the Dean Dixon's Symphony Orchestra which Mrs. White and I heard yesterday. They played the Eroica magnificently. How would you like to hear them on one of your trips to New York?

I am sure Mr. Dixon and the orchestra would be honored to play for you, Mayor La Guardia, Leopold Stokowski and one or two others who I thought of asking for an evening which is convenient to all of you. I think you would be very much pleased with what has been done in whipping together an orchestra to play as beautifully as this one does when it is considered that most of the members are persons engaged in work of a manual type.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D.C.

WV:amb  
 enc.

*Filed low if sub  
 have every document forwarded  
 by the 2d of 1941  
 by the 2d of 1941*

## By the People, For the People

By HENRY SIMON

Seven years ago Dean Dixon, a handsome lad still in his teens, thought Harlem ought to have more good and serious music. So he organized the Dean Dixon Symphony Society. It comprised one violinist and one pianist.

Today that little orchestra has grown to over 60 members and yesterday afternoon, in the Park Palace Casino's ballroom at Fifth Ave. and 110th, gave its seventh annual concert. The orchestral part of the program included a Mozart overture, a Glinka fantasy, and Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony.

Honors were shared with the American People's Chorus, which you have probably heard on records helping Paul Robeson in *Ballad for Americans* and which Mr. Dixon now conducts. He is successor to Earl Robinson, composer of the *Ballad* and organizer of the chorus, who now holds a Guggenheim fellowship.

Then there was the baritone, Aubrey Pankey, one of a group of Negro artists who used to make good reputations and livings for themselves in Europe and who, forced home by the war, are trying to find places in the American musical scene now.



Aubrey Pankey

Mr. Pankey and the chorus have interesting and socially significant histories, but what interested me most yesterday was that orchestra. Mr. Dixon, its talented leader, is a Juilliard graduate and a candidate for the doctorate at Teachers College. He is interested in conducting beautiful music beautifully (which he does) and doesn't think it especially significant that his band has 20 Negroes in it, the rest being white.

I do. I think it is also significant that about half the members are women, that the ages run from 15 to 64, and that Local

## Beethoven at the Park Palace



This is Dean Dixon, caught in action yesterday at the Park Palace Casino. His symphony orchestra, in which there are both Negro and white musicians, is seated differently from the orthodox symphonic arrangement because of the narrowness of the Park Palace stage. The fiddles take back seats; and he has the smaller, woodwind section up front, the way Stokowski does.

Photo by Martin Harris, PM Staff

802 of the Musicians' Union was willing to let a few of its professionals help out for the concert.

This is, as Professor Raymond Burrows pointed out after the intermission, a community project. It is backed by an energetic organization of women who come from the neighborhood. Tickets are given free to a limited number of school children, and the audience is the sort you seldom see at Carnegie or Town Hall.

In short, this is music coming right out of a neighborhood, and it breaks down lines between ages, colors, professionals and non-

professionals. It couldn't do that—and also attract so large an audience as yesterday's—without being extraordinarily good music. Which is exactly what I heard yesterday.

P.S. Dean Dixon's isn't the only organization of its kind. There are some 20 others in New York and from time to time PM will report on them. But I thought this one important enough to miss Bruno Walter's final concert with the Philharmonic, a program of new music by the Roth Quartet and Emanuel Feuermann's Beethoven recital for the New Friends, all of which were also happening yesterday afternoon.

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**MADISON S. JONES, JR.** YOUTH DIRECTOR

My dear Miss Thompson:

In the absence of Mr. White from the city I am acknowledging receipt of your letter of February 20th in which you state that Mrs. Roosevelt could be in New York on Sunday night, March 2nd, to hear the Dean Lixon Symphony Orchestra.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to reach Mr. White before tomorrow (Wednesday) afternoon or Thursday morning when he is to be in Washington. At that time I shall place the matter before him and he will doubtless get in touch with you.

Very sincerely yours,

*Catherine C. Field*  
 Secretary to Mr. White.

Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
 Secretary to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

CTF

*First Annual Essay Contest... National Negro Youth Week... April 27 - May 3*

32nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS, June 24-29, 1941

100

March 3, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has your telegram of March 1 and asks me to say she fears it will not be possible for her to hear the Dixon orchestra until some time in May.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

0

TELEGRAM

*ack  
3-3*

The White House  
Washington

40wunc 29 933p

New York, March 1, 1941.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

Just returned to city tonight. Deeply regret time too short arrange  
audition for you of Dean Dixon's orchestra tomorrow night. Will you  
have any time free later in month.

Walter White.

*See not possible  
the way*

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March 7, 1941

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I thought you would be interested  
 in seeing this article in yesterday's  
 New York Post.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

#2 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt

13 March 1941

If it be desired that I be present I will, of course,  
be glad to attend.

Respectfully,

Secretary.

100

COPY

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*Official Organ: The Crisis*



March 13th  
 1941

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AIR MAIL

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Last Thursday Aubrey Williams and Wayne Coy invited a group of us to confer in Washington on the very serious situation with respect to the employment of Negroes in industries filling contracts for the national defense program. It was unanimously agreed at the conference that only action by the President could be effective to reverse this present trend. It was also unanimously agreed that we should seek an audience with the President at which would be present Negroes who have first-hand information, and Messrs. Hillman, Knudsen, Knox and Stimson or the representatives of the last two.

Accordingly, the enclosed letter is being mailed late today to the President. If you agree that such a conference should be held and would care to express that opinion to the President, we would be most grateful. I do not think my presence at the conference is as important as Aubrey, Judge Hastie and others think, and I put my own name in only because they insisted.

You will be glad, I know, to learn that the Senate investigation is moving steadily forward. Senator Pepper has just wired that he will be glad to serve on the sub-committee, and Senators Schwartz and Taft have also wired that they will be willing to serve. The other two members of the sub-committee will probably be Senators Mead and La Follette.

My apologies to you for breaking in on your well deserved holiday.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
 Golden Beach  
 Miami Beach,  
 Florida.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
69 Fifth Avenue - New York

WALTER WHITE, Secretary.

March 13th  
1941

Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The situation with reference to the exclusion of Negroes from employment in defense industries is becoming more and more alarming. Last week a meeting was held in Washington for the purpose of discussing the whole matter and it was the unanimous opinion of those present that nothing short of action on your part would meet the situation. I have therefore been requested to ask you to invite to the White House responsible persons in the Government, as well as other interested persons, for a conference on this subject.

It is suggested that in addition to Mr. Knudsen, Mr. Hillman, and the Secretaries of War and the Navy (or the representatives of the Secretaries of War and the Navy), the following Negroes be invited:

Mr. A. Philip Randolph, President of the  
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids

Dr. Marshall Shepard of Philadelphia, member  
of the Pennsylvania Legislature and Pastor  
of the Mount Olivet Baptist Church

Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, Director of Negro  
Work of the National Youth Administration,  
or a representative from her office

Judge William H. Hastie, Civilian Aide to the  
Secretary of War

Dr. Channing H. Tobias of the National Y.M.C.A.  
and member of the Advisory Committee on  
Selective Service.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*file*

March 18th

Memo to Mrs. Lund-

Mr. Walter White has an appointment with Mrs. Roosevelt at 5:00 P.M. today, Tuesday, March 18th.

M. Somerville

March 20, 1941

100

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to acknowledge your letter of March 5 and to tell you that May 11 would not be a convenient date for her to attend the concert. She could not do it until on or after May 17.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

DD

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*Checked  
3-28-41*

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**March 5th  
 1941**

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My dear Miss Thompson:

Thank you for your letter of March 3d.

Will Sunday evening, May 11th, be convenient for Mrs. Roosevelt? Mr. Dixon came in to see me yesterday and at my suggestion is arranging a special concert at the Heckscher Theatre, Fifth Avenue and 104th Street.

I would appreciate your letting me know if May 11th is convenient (it is the first available date and, in fact, the only available date at the Heckscher Theatre in May) so that we may go ahead with the plans and invite Mayor LaGuardia, Leopold Stokowski and several others who want to hear Mr. Dixon's orchestra.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

WALTER WHITE.

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Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
 Secretary to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

*Lo Cab. de Tel. 1/4*

WW:CTF

32nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS, June 24-29, 1941

MISS THOMPSON:

Is this April 1st date the  
same thing?

The press conference is also  
scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

mt

file

TELEGRAM

The White House

18WUAB TWS PAID 3 MINS 4:18 p.m.

Washington

NEW YORK, N.Y., MARCH 28, 1941

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, ( PLEASE FORWARD IMMEDIATELY)

In conference with Senator Schwartz yesterday, he informed me he wished remain as chairman Sub-committee on Senator resolution 75 and that he must go to Denver today to be gone until about April 15. He seems to think facts so clear preliminary hearings would be unnecessary and that we should save personal testimony for hearings before select committee. He asked me submit memorandum which has been done. It would be most helpful if you would address letter to Senator Schwartz as chairman subcommittee giving your opinion of necessity of Senate investigation. Will you do this?

Walter White.

100

Mrs. Roosevelt

Handwritten  
initials

March 20, 1941

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Mrs. Roosevelt can do as you request ten a.m. April first.

MALVINA C. THOMPSON  
Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

*[Faint handwritten notes, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]*

wire

Walter White -  
N. A. A. C. P.

NYC

Mrs. P. can do as you  
request 10 AM -  
April 1st -

Walter White telephoned to say

Senators Pepper

Thomas

Mead

are out of the city - for  
the week end -

He wants to set hearing

Tues - April 1st - A.M.

Wed " 2nd " "

whichever is more

convenient for you

April 1st 10 a.m. possible

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 YOUTH DIRECTOR

*file*  
 March 22, 1941

My dear Miss Thompson:

My warm thanks for your telegram informing me that Mrs. Roosevelt can appear before the Senate Committee on Senate Resolution #75 at 10:00 A. M., Tuesday, April 1. I have immediately transmitted this information to Senator Thomas for transmittal by him to the Chairman of the Subcommittee whom he is to appoint in Senator Schwartz's stead. This was made necessary because Senator Schwartz will have to go to Arizona next week to be gone for two or three weeks and we do not wish to hold up the matter that long.

Thank you for your letter about Mrs. Roosevelt's inability to hear the Dean Dixon orchestra on May 11. I have immediately written to Mr. Dixon to see if he can change the date to the 18th, which Mrs. Roosevelt informed me last Tuesday is convenient for her. The difficulty lies in the matter of getting the Hecksher Theatre. Mr. Dixon told me that May 11 was the only date which was available, but I hope that he will be able to make the rearrangement.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary

Miss Malvina C. Thompson  
 Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

April 2, 1941

*Pending*  
*May 18*

*100*

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has put May 18  
down in her engagement book for the concert  
of Dean Dixon's Symphony Orchestra. I will  
let you know later how many tickets she wants.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

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*Added  
4-2-41*

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
 ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE**  
**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



*Mar 25 1941*

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March 24, 1941

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Dean Dixon has just telephoned me that he was able to get the dance group which had rented the Heckscher Theatre for May 18th to exchange dates with him. The dance group is now taking the 11th and Mr. Dixon has the 18th so will you put this in your engagement book and also let me know how many tickets you would wish?

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D.C.

W:amb

*Handwritten initials*

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100  
May 6, 1941

My dear Mr. White:

Your letter of April 23 was forwarded to Mrs. Roosevelt, who is away on a lecture trip. She has returned it and asked me to write you, saying that she would like to have four tickets for the Dean Dixon concert on May 18.

Very sincerely yours,

Administrative Officer  
Social Correspondence

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

DD

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69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



April 23rd  
1941

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My dear Miss Thompson:

Can you wire me how many tickets Mrs. Roosevelt will wish for her party for the Dean Dixon concert on May 18th?

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Secretary.

*Wanted by Paul & Jane 4*

Miss Malvina Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

*Legn & Sand*

VV:CTF

32nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS, June 24-29, 1941

STANDARD FORM NO. 14A  
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT  
MARCH 10, 1926

# TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM

The White House  
Washington

May 14, 1941

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

Please let me know hour of Dean Dixon concert and  
where it will be held.

Malvina C. Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt

TELEGRAM

19WUDtws pd 3

The White House

Washington

New York NY 138pm May 14 1941

100  
J. C.

Miss Malvina Thompson

The White House

Retel tickets for Mrs. Roosevelt sent registered mail yesterday to Ralph Magee. Dixon concert to be held Heckscher theatre 5Ave and 104th Street Sunday May 18 1941 8:40 p.m.

Walter White.

215pmd

100

May 17, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to thank  
you for the tickets for the concert on May 18.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

0

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*ack  
5-17*

May 13th  
1941

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My dear Mr. Magee:

Here are the four tickets, No. D-108 to D-111, inclusive, for Mrs. Roosevelt for the Dean Dixon concert on May 18th at 8:40 P.M. Please see that Mrs. Roosevelt gets these.

Ever sincerely,

Secretary.

Mr. Ralph W. Magee  
Administrative Officer,  
Social Correspondence  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

May 26, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

I wonder if you can suggest any  
organisation which might be willing to help  
in this case?

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue, NYC

Winifred Barton (Lady Barton - wife of last British Minister to Abyssinia)  
wants to know of women's organ. which might help Ethiopian Women's Work Assoc.

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JUN 12 1941

June 11, 1941

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I am sorry to have been so long answering your letter of May 26 but I have just returned from several days' absence from the city.

Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune is the President of the National Council of Negro Women and I would think that organization would be interested in the case of Princess Tsahai.

I would like also to see some such organization as the National Federation of Women's Clubs interested in this because the Ethiopian situation, as you and I agree, transcends race.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

P.S. - I am returning Mrs. Barton's letter. - WW

June 2, 1941

150

My dear Mr. White:

I am very glad to send greetings and good wishes to those attending the Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This organization has done good work in the past and I hope this Thirty-Second Annual Conference will be an inspiration and a help in carrying on a useful and expanded program in the future.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
NAACP  
69 Fifth Ave.  
NYC

DD

MAY 31 1941

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69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

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May 29, 1941

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

On June 24th there will open at Houston, Texas, the thirty-second Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. We would very gratefully appreciate a message of greeting to the Conference from you.

Unhappily the wide spread discrimination and segregation the Negro is encountering in the national defense program has lowered morale of the Negro to an alarming extent. As an antidote and also to demonstrate that there are those who dare speak out against this vicious and dangerous practice, a message of greeting from you would be of great value. We sincerely hope you will consent to send such a message.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D.C.

W:amb

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# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*



June 6th  
 1941

*File*

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

We are grateful to you for your letter of greetings to our Thirty-second Annual Conference, and I send you our warm thanks.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

32nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS, June 24-29, 1941

100

June 12, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has your letter of June 10 and asks me to express her regret that she cannot attend the Dean Dixon concert on June 21 or 28. She is leaving on the 17th for a vacation of several weeks in Canada.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

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# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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June 10th  
 1941

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 BRANCH COORDINATOR  
**MADISON S. JONES, JR.**  
 YOUTH DIRECTOR

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Are you going to be in New York on either June 21st or 28th? If so, would you care again to hear Mr. Dean Dixon, this time conducting the Toscanini N.B.C. Symphony? Here is copy of letter I have just received from Mr. Dixon.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 WALTER WHITE.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

32nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS, June 24-29, 1941

450 West 149th Street  
New York, N. Y.

June 8, 1941.

My dear Mr. White,

I have just been invited to conduct two concerts with the N.B.C. Summer Symphony (the Toscanini orchestra). They are to take place on the 21st and the 28th of June, two Saturday evenings, at 9:30 o'clock.

This will be my first guest appearance with a major symphony orchestra and I am quite happy at the prospect. I should like to extend an invitation to you to be my guest at one of these affairs (either, at your convenience).

It was very kind of you, Mr. White, to invite Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the May 18th concert, and I am wondering if you would again like to extend an invitation to her to attend one of these two affairs. She was so very gracious about the May 18th affair and seemed so definitely impressed with the work of the community orchestra, that I would like very much if she could both see and hear me, in this, my first big musical venture.

Hoping this finds you in the best of health and looking forward to hearing from you soon, I am

Sincerely,

Dean Dixon.

COPY

*Letting  
E.R.*

*Job*

July 30, 1941

*/ J.O.*

Dear Mr. White:

The article from PM is interesting  
and encouraging.

I am so glad you were favorably  
impressed with Campobello.

Very sincerely yours,

0

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
NYC

I had a most interesting time at Campobello. They are a remarkably fine group of young people and I believe their experience at Campobello is going to bear rich returns on their campuses.

.. Walter White

Copy for Joe Lash

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**MARY WHITE O'VINGTON**

*am  
7-30*

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*Official Organ: The Crisis*



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**Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt**  
**Hyde Park**  
**New York**

**My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:**

Here is an interesting clipping from yesterday's PM which I thought you and the President would like to see. I believe that there are a great many other white people like Mr. Starr who feel as he does. Perhaps it is not too optimistic to believe that there are as many white Americans ready to practice democracy as there are those to cling to the old prejudices.

I had a most interesting time at Campobello. They are a remarkably fine group of young people and I believe their experience at Campobello is going to bear rich returns on their campuses.

Cordially,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

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Wilmington, Del.	Louis L. Redding

**WW:amb  
 enc.**

*Not at home  
 Legat you had been so friendly  
 I had with group  
 etc.  
 Admin 10/5*



Roger Starr Photo by May Morris, PM Staff

## Park Ave. Youth Ready for Draft . . . If They'll Put Him in a Negro Unit

By WILLARD WINNER

Roger Starr, 23, of 270 Park Ave., thinks it's about time for the people of the U. S. A. to start practicing the democracy they preach.

He is concerned now about the discrimination against Negroes in the National Defense Program and determined to do something about it.

He started by notifying his draft board, No. 20, at 351 Madison Ave., that he is willing to be inducted into the army if he can be assigned to a Negro unit. In his letter to the board, he said:

"Faced with history's most ominous threat to world domination, America stands with one hand tied. One-eleventh of our population (the Negro) is denied the right to participate fully in this country's activities, and the right to share in its responsibilities.

"As a white, the Army wants to place me in a unit with white troops. Perhaps you can help me achieve something that I prefer. I should prefer to be placed with Negro troops, for then they would become mixed troops: American troops."

Mr. Starr's reason is that he does not want to be a party to discriminatory practices. Furthermore, he feels that his example would encourage thousands of Americans, who would be glad to prove that they are not prejudiced against their fellow Americans whose skin happens to be a different color.

Mr. Starr lives in a spacious six-room apartment. He has led a pretty comfortable life. But he is aware that not all Americans have been so fortunate.

"For this reason," he said, "I feel a certain necessity to integrate my life with what is going on around me."

He is a graduate of Lawrenceville School (\$1500 a year tuition), and Yale '39.

"Only recently," he said, "I became aware of the extent of the prejudice against Negroes in this country, and the really disgraceful manner in which they are being discriminated against in the defense program."

It was through reading the stories of racial discrimination in PM that he realized to what extent the prejudice against Negroes has been interfering with the defense effort, he said.

"I am convinced," he said, "that Negro segregation in the armed forces and the anti-Negro policies of many defense manufacturers question the sincerity of our talk of democracy and threaten the efficiency and success of our entire defense effort."

### Court Reserves Rule On Schappes Motion

The New York State Supreme Court has reserved opinion on a motion for a certification of reasonable doubt in the case of Morris U. Schappes, City College teacher convicted of perjury before the Rapp-Coudert committee.

Schappes has been in the Tombs since his conviction July 1. He was denied bail pending appeal. A motion for his release in custody of his attorney as Dr. Bella V. Dodd, chairman of the Committee for Defense of Public Education, was also denied.



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August 16, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

Thank you for your letter about Dean  
Dixon. I had seen the article about the concert  
and was so glad he made such a grand impression.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
NYC

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**Wilmington, Del.** Louis L. Redding

August 12, 1941

(Dictated Aug. 11, 1941)

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

You would have been very proud last evening to have seen the results of your gracious interest in Dean Dixon. One of the largest crowds of the season at the Lewisohn Stadium applauded Mr. Dixon with tremendous enthusiasm.

As far as I could see not a person in the crowd of 5,600 left the Stadium even after the concert was finished, which is quite a contrast with the usual behavior.

With his characteristic modesty and generosity Mr. Dixon attempted several times to get the orchestra to rise and accept the applause with him but the orchestra refused with equal generosity wishing Mr. Dixon to get the ovation in which they joined. It was a thrilling occasion which demonstrated once more, that given the opportunity, we can be human beings and not let artificial barriers keep us from recognizing genius.

A distinguished audience was present including David Sarnoff, Eva Gautier, Carl Van Vechten and others, many of whom came back to New York from the country and vacations to be present.

Here is a clipping from today's Times which I thought you would like to see.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 Hyde Park  
 New York

WW:amb

N. Y. Times, Aug. 11, 1941  
**NEGRO CONDUCTOR  
IN STADIUM DEBUT**

**Dean Dixon, 26, First of His  
Race to Lead Philharmonic  
Applauded by 5,600**

Dean Dixon, 26-year-old Negro conductor, who earlier in the season was called to public attention by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and who conducted two concerts with the NBC Summer Symphony Orchestra in June made his debut last night as conductor of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra at the Lewisohn Stadium. He thereby earned the distinction of being the first member of his race and probably the youngest musician ever to conduct that famous organization.

He made an excellent impression. The 5,600 members of the audience recalled him twice before the intermission and four times at the end of the concert, and during these recalls the men of the orchestra three times paid him the compliment of refusing to rise at his bidding. Instead, they joined with the audience in applauding him.

**Conducts With Assurance**

Mr. Dixon has gained most of his experience conducting community orchestras of his own creation and last night his experience stood him in good stead. He conducted with assurance and a splendidly clear beat. The orchestra was under perfect control at all times, and he made it discourse some fine music, for he is a sensitive musician as well as a leader who can communicate his own energy and temperament to his men.

The first part of the program consisted of Berlioz's Overture to "Benvenuto Cellini" and Brahms's First symphony. Both went well, but it was not until after the intermission that he really did his best conducting. In Sam Franko's transcription for strings of a Bach arioso from Cantata No. 156 he showed how expressively he could modulate beautiful string tone.

**Liszt Work Is Heard**

In the Scherzo from Mendelssohn's music to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" he showed how he could give a well-planned and carefully graded performance of a delicate work. And in the final work, Liszt's "Les Préludes," he was able to demonstrate his talent for alternating lyrical evocation with fine dramatic climaxes.

The novelty of his program was a Prelude and Hula, by Daikeong Lee, a young man of Chinese-Hawaiian origin who is now an American citizen and was a fellow student with Mr. Dixon at the Juillard School of Music. It proved to be a well-scored work, the prelude having more originality than the hula, which was too reminiscent of Ravel's "Bolero." Mr. Lee, a slight little man in contrast to the stocky Mr. Dixon, came on the stage to shake hands with his colleagues and acknowledge the applause. R. P.

MEMO FOR

MRS. ROOSEVELT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.

*Jell*

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE  
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69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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Official Organ: *The Crisis*



September

22nd

1941 (Dictated September 19th)

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My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I have come to you on so many occasions with tales of woe that I am certain there must be times when you dread the sight of me. That is why I am glad on this occasion to be able to report gratifying progress towards betterment of a condition in which improvement you played so major a part.

I refer to the way in which the Fair Employment Practice Committee is going about its job. Mr. Ethridge has plunged in with his characteristic energy, forthrightness and courage. In view of the fact that Barry Bingham is in the Navy and Herbert Agar is devoting practically all of his time to the work of the Fight for Freedom Committee and part in the running of the Louisville Courier-Journal and several other subsidiary corporations, much has been added to Mr. Ethridge's already heavy responsibilities there. But one would think, from the amount of time and thought he is giving to the Fair Employment Practice Committee, that he had nothing else to do except that. He and Governor Cramer have gone to the heads of a number of plants which were believed to be adamant in their refusal to employ Negroes and induced changes in employment policies. The Committee itself is getting well organized and is assembling a small but very good staff. It is probably too early to indulge in too much optimism but it can safely be said that if the Committee continues to work as it has started out doing, remarkable improvement in the matter of employment will follow.

Once again I want to tell you how grateful every Negro and every member of other minorities which have been discriminated against should be to you, the

#2 - Mrs. Roosevelt

22 September 1941.

President, and Mayor LaGuardia.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
Secretary. 7

P.S. - Mayor LaGuardia told me at dinner a year or two ago, at which you, he and I were speakers, that some day I would make a speech saying that a matter was being handled all right and that he would then drop dead of heart-failure. I hope my enthusiasm for the work of the Fair Employment Practice Committee won't have this effect on him because we need him as Mayor of New York for another four years.

If you care to tell the President how pleased we are, I hope you will agree to do so.

W.W.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

100,  
WHITE

September 27, 1941

Forwarded by Mrs. Roosevelt for the  
attention of General Osborne

Walter White on subject of commission for Joe Louis

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 26, 1941.

MEMORANDUM FOR

MRS. ROOSEVELT

I suggest you take this up  
with Fred Osborn. I very much  
doubt if Joe Louis has the necessary  
educational qualifications to be  
a Lieutenant in the Army..

*✓*  
*Send letter to W.W. over staff -*  
*H. D. R.*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

SEPT. 23, 1941

MEMO FOR THE PRESIDENT:

This seems to me a good idea.  
Would you think wise for me to  
tell Walter White to go ahead  
with it?

E.R.

*And send*

*100 file*

October 2, 1941

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, N.Y.

*x Harry x John M.*

Mrs. Roosevelt can see Mr. Haller and Mr. Wilson at White House  
five o'clock Friday.

Malvina Thompson  
Secretary to Mrs. Roosevelt

# TELEGRAM

## The White House Washington

32WUK1 Tws 7:26 P.M.

NEWYORK, N.Y., Oct. 1, 1941

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT:

WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SEE ON FRIDAY OR SATURDAY OF THIS WEEK LIEUT. HARRY HALLER AND PRIVATE JOHN M. WILSON WHO HAVE A MOST INTERESTING STORY TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE SHOW THEY HAVE PUT ON WITH ENLISTED MEN AS A MEANS OF RAISING SOLDIER AND CIVILIAN MORALE. I FIRST MET LIEUT. HALLER WHEN HE WAS A STUDENT AT PRINCETON AND HAVE FOLLOWED HIS WORK ON THE BALTIMORE SUN WITH KEEN INTEREST. HE IS A FINE EXAMPLE OF INTELLIGENT WHITE SOUTHERN OPINION. YOU CAN COMMUNICATE WITH HIM EITHER DIRECTLY AT THE CENTURY HOTEL, 111 WEST 46 STREET, NEW YORK CITY, UNTIL THURSDAY AFTERNOON OR 879 PARK AVENUE, BALTIMORE, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY. HE AND MR. WILSON MUST BE BACK AT FT. BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA, SUNDAY NIGHT.

WALTER WHITE.

White

5 on Friday 1941 - at  
NSL.

TELEGRAM

21WUC TWS PD - 3 MINS  
**The White House**  
**Washington**

*file*  
*10*

NEW YORK, N.Y., OCTOBER 3, 1941

MISS MALVINA C. THOMPSON.

THANKS FOR YOUR TELEGRAM. PLEASE ADVISE MRS. ROOSEVELT  
THAT LIEUTENANT HALLER AND MISTER WILSON WILL BE AT WHITE  
HOUSE TODAY AT FIVE PM.

WALTER WHITE.

1:05PM

October 31, 1941

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt would like to  
have you let her know what you really think  
of the National Conference of Negro Youth.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White  
National Association for Advancement  
of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York City

d.

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Wilmington, Del.	

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*

November  
 5th  
 1941

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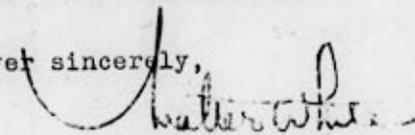
My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Here are the resolutions passed at the N.A.A.C.P. Student Conference held at Hampton Institute October 31--November 2. I wish you could have been there. We had some thirty-four colleges represented. Ten students came from Swarthmore College, to which, amazingly enough, Negroes are not admitted despite its being a Quaker school.

One of the most gratifying things in connection with the conference was that the delegates, without exception, were level-headed, thoughtful persons who looked at the problem of race from the broad angle of democracy itself. There was none of the usual "lunatic fringe".

When you can get to it I would like very much to have your reaction to the resolutions.

Ever sincerely,

  
 Secretary.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:CTF

November 12, 1941

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to thank you for your letter of November 5 enclosing copies of the resolutions passed at the N.A.A.C.P. Student Conference held at Hampton Institute.

Mrs. Roosevelt is glad to know that the conference was so successful and appreciates your courtesy in sending her the resolutions.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White, Secretary  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

PLF/HY

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

REPORT OF RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE  
THIRD ANNUAL STUDENT YOUTH CONFERENCE

Hampton Institute  
Hampton, Virginia  
November 2, 1941

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, the members of the third annual student conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, including delegates from thirty colleges both white and Negro, meeting as we are in a most crucial period of the world's history, recognize the urgent necessity for the development of a well-trained group of young leaders to meet the present world crisis and to assume leadership in the coming social reconstruction.

We recognize as Negro youth that because of our traditionally insecure position in the operations of democracy, upon us falls the compelling responsibility of developing a concrete statement of purpose and a program of action which will close the gap between the existing theories and the actual practices of democracy.

We call attention of all Americans to the irony of our position as American citizens to be compelled to fight for the right to fight for democracy.

We are convinced that the failure to extend democratic rights and privileges to any group in the community, either through indifference or deliberate intent, opens the way to the destruction of democratic rights for all.

We take cognizance of the new environment forced upon us by the present war crisis. We recognize that the instrument of war is no final solution to the pressing problems facing the world today, and pledge ourselves to work for the building of a democratic and secure world society in which war as an institution has no place. To realize this objective we place ourselves

in the vanguard for the winning of social and economic justice, not only for Negroes but for all underprivileged groups and minorities.

#### CIVIL LIBERTIES

We reiterate that no individual is isolated and that the civil rights of one are the civil rights of all. We feel that our hard-won liberties should not be sacrificed under the guise of war hysteria and urge the guaranteeing and extension of such rights to all people.

We members of N.A.A.C.P. student chapters feel the need to educate ourselves more fully upon the nature and extent of our constitutional guarantees, with a view toward carrying this information into our communities. We therefore recommend such concrete objectives as:

- (1) Organization of discussion and forum groups under trained leadership on our respective campuses;
- (2) The deputizing of students to go into the community and carry on a program of education on these issues;
- (3) Cooperation of N.A.A.C.P. student chapters with other groups in the communities who are fighting for the extension of civil rights and liberties.

#### POLL TAX

We condemn the poll tax because it excludes 79% of the adult population, both Negro and white, of eight southern states from participating in the elementary democratic process of voting and because it denies to these citizens a voice in the affairs of their state and local bodies or of the nation as a whole; because through the maintenance of the poll tax, Congressional representatives from the southern states are able to gain a dis-proportionate influence in congress and to block or delay social and labor legislation designed to aid the underprivileged section of the citizenry. We realize that the elimination of the poll tax and the wider participation of Negroes and poor white citizens in the political life of the south would bring about unprecedented changes and help to provide a frontal attack on the social and economic leg of this section behind the rest of the country; that the abolition of the poll tax is a prerequisite for the establishment of

equal rights and opportunities for negro citizens in the South.

We therefore recommend:

- (1) Initiation of an Anti-Poll tax by N.A.A.C.P. Student Chapters on college campuses and communities, in cooperation with other student and adult groups, that the agitation against the poll-tax include forums and discussions, and demand for national anti-poll tax legislation.
- (2) That we write our citizens in our respective communities where the poll tax is in effect to pay such taxes as a means of exercising their right to vote and demand legislative repeal of the tax;
- (3) That we write our respective Congressmen urging them to sign the petition to bring the Geyer Anti-Poll tax Bill out of committee and place it before Congress;
- (4) That we inquire into the work of the Southern Electoral Reform League with a view toward greater cooperation with their objective to arouse interest in the anti-poll tax movement throughout the south. That the issue be dramatized through wearing of tags, buttons and through other more imaginative methods.

#### WHITE PRIMARY

We approve the fight against the white primary in the south and pledge ourselves to educate ourselves, our fellow-students, and our communities to the nature of the white primary and its actual effect upon the right to choose candidates in southern states.

#### SEGREGATION AND DISCRIMINATION

(1) Action to meet the problem of discrimination and segregation is the personal concern of each individual member of the N.A.A.C.P. We recommend in every situation where there is a possibility of obtaining sympathy and support, that the individual take personal responsibility for bringing incidents of discrimination into the open. We endorse the continuance of civil suits where there are flagrant violations of the equal rights of citizens, and urge that we individually acquaint ourselves with the various laws of our several states affecting segregation policies and civil rights with a view toward seeking redress in the courts wherever possible.

(2) We call upon our white fellow students and all Americans to

join with us in the breaking down of segregation and discriminatory policies by continued protest against these practices both to those individuals and groups immediately responsible for the practices and to those officials responsible for the enforcement of such policies by <sup>the</sup> urging of inclusion of study of Negro life and history in their college curricula; by the reading of Negro newspapers and magazines to keep abreast of those aspects of the problem ignored by the national press, and by the increased development of inter-racial student conferences in all sections of the country.

#### COOPERATION WITH OTHER MINORITIES

We recognize the basic similarity of the problems of all minority groups and, therefore, seek greater cooperation among those groups with a view toward a more intelligent understanding of these problems as a whole, and for a unified attack upon the denial of rights to minorities in our country.

#### ANTI-SEMITISM

We thoroughly condemn the incidence of anti-Semitism in our own ranks and seek to bring about a greater appreciation for the contributions of Jews in all fields of human endeavor to help destroy such incipient prejudice.

#### SHARECROPPERS

Since so large a proportion of Negro agricultural workers are sharecroppers and migratory workers, condemned to a life of insecurity, slow starvation, ill health and exclusion from the democratic process, by the breaking down of the southern agricultural system, we pledge ourselves to the inclusion of the study of this problem in our program during the present school year, and favor the participation of all N.A.A.C.P. student chapters and other student groups in annual National sharecroppers week.

#### LABOR EDUCATION

As students who are members of a minority group the overwhelming proportion of whose numbers are wage workers, we identify our interests with the

cause of labor and consider the aims and objectives of the labor movement a subject for competent study.

We favor specific action on the part of Student Chapters to secure the inclusion of labor education in our college curricula, and assume the task of interpreting the role of labor unions to the Negro community with the purpose of gaining sympathy and support by Negroes for labor's in our current national life.

#### LABOR UNIONS

(1) We conceive of free labor unions and an important instrument for the expression of democracy. We reaffirm our support of democratic labor unionism without respect to race, color or creed and oppose any move in the direction of acting under the guise of the present national crisis to curtail rights gained by labor unions.

(2) While recognizing the principle of the right to organization and action on the part of workers to secure a more equitable distribution of our national wealth, we nevertheless deplore the outright exclusion, segregation and discrimination practiced by certain American Federation of Labor Unions and Railway Brotherhoods, through constitutional provisions, ritual or manipulation of preferred employment lists. We condemn these policies as short sighted and dangerous for labor itself, opening the way for the destruction of labor's rights as a whole. We urge that this conference implore the executive council of the American Federation of Labor to set up a committee to deal with the problems of race relations within its own ranks.

(3) We deplore the existence of segregated locals in the trade union movement, and seek the ultimate integration of Negro workers and white workers into single unions. As an answer to those sceptics who contend that it is not feasible to organize black and white workers into the same locals in southern communities, we point to the successful experience in the United Mine Workers of America where Negro and white unionists work together in the same unions without conflict and to their mutual advantage. We also point

out the experience of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in bringing Negro and white sharecroppers and farm tenants together without regard to race or color.

Where segregated locals already exist, we favor the coordination of union officials of both locals, the representation of Negro unionists on all central bodies and city-wide union councils, and we deem it the responsibility of these Negro unionists to work for the integration of Negro workers into their trade unions and the breaking down of racial barriers within the unions.

(4) We heartily endorse the policy of complete integration of all workers into the union membership and its program is exemplified by C.I.O. unions and the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, A.F. of L. and we urge fullest participation of the Negro membership in the affairs of their unions, to become more effective union workers, to develop Negro labor leadership and to break down undesirable racial attitudes on the part of white workers.

(5) We urge that no trade union be awarded closed shop agreement by the Federal Mediation Board if such union discriminates against workers because of race, color, or creed.

(6) We implore the Fair Employment Practices Board to use its full powers to apply sanctions against labor unions who practice discrimination with regard to race, color or creed.

#### NEGRO YOUTH AND DEFENSE

We have found the attitudes toward Negroes in the armed forces ranging from complete segregation of Negroes and whites to an earnest attempt at complete equality through mutual understanding. Negroes have been excluded from the air corps and navy, and in the army there are frequently separate recreation facilities for the white and black men. In places where there is no rigid segregation there is apt to be definite disapproval of fraternization of colored and white men, and too often there is prejudice against Negro

applicants for officer training schools.

We condemn the policy of the armed forces in spreading to peoples from hitherto tolerant parts of the country the discriminating practices peculiar to the south. We assert that there is no place for this inequality among citizens of a nation struggling to maintain equality for the peoples of all nations. We think that the mixing of Negroes and whites in the armed forces is an unparalleled opportunity for bringing Negro problems to the fore, and we seriously urge the adoption of the following lines of action towards success in achieving this goal:

- (1) Continued opposition to discrimination against Negroes in every phase of defense, by protests to legislators and to such government representatives as officials at induction centers, and by a march on Washington.
- (2) Planned integration of Negro groups in national defense.
- (3) Protests against such isolated incidents of physical violence but only such incidents as have a general significance. Such protests should be preceded by careful investigation and presented with this broader significance in mind.
- (4) A program for the improvement of the morale of the armed forces. Colleges near army camps are urged to sue their campus facilities to the greatest possible extent.
- (5) A sincere pledge to take full advantage of present opportunities for destroying racial barriers during the present emergency.
- (6) Approval of the work of the March on Washington Committee and the appeal that this Committee continue its work with the express purpose of securing from the President of the United States a statement with respect to Negroes in the armed forces of our country.

#### NEGRO YOUTH AS A CONSUMER

(1) We are aware of the economic power of the Negro as a consumer and favor the use of this power through organized efforts to raise the general level of the entire group. We recommend the organization of this power to secure jobs through boycotts, especially of stores which are primarily supported by Negroes, but oppose the use of these movements to foster racial nationalism.

(2) We recommend the development of student cooperatives on the

various college campuses.

(3) We urge the establishment of courses in consumer problems on campuses where non-existent, and the taking of such courses where they are now offered.

(4) We suggest the use of our economic training to raise living standards as a whole in the community, and urge the formation of social service projects through student deputization to help community families organize and make effective use of their incomes.

(5) We favor the wider study of producers', consumers', and self-help cooperatives as a partial attack on the complicated problem of economic security.

(6) We recommend the widest possible use of governmental agencies to obtain information on consumer problems, living standards, and intelligent use of income.

#### POST WAR RECONSTRUCTION

(1) We recommend a policy of intelligent opportunism to break down all barriers against Negro workers and professionals during the present national crisis, so as to insure the entrenchment of Negroes in all phases of national life in the coming post-war reconstruction.

(2) We recommend that this Conference urge the President of the United States to appoint Negro members to all national post-war planning boards and commissions in order to secure fullest consideration for the role of Negroes in the post-war reconstruction.

(3) We urge our Negro leaders to devote some time to planned thinking through the post-war problems facing our generation and to formulate a plan of action to meet these problems.

#### VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND TRAINING

(1) We emphasize the need for a program of scientific vocational guidance and the bringing of/ <sup>the</sup> results of such a program to college campuses.

We suggest a re-orientation of Negro youth with reference to job training; that jobs be considered from the point of view of the aptitude and abilities of the student rather than for their prestige value; that Negro youth inquire into those fields of training not now being pursued by members of the Negro group with a view toward entry into such fields.

(2) We feel a particular obligation devolving upon us to stimulate interest among young Negroes for the present vocational training program in national defense industries. We recognize that unless our young people receive training now and are prepared to meet such opportunities as are opened to them in defense industries, we will be completely frozen out of the industrial life of the nation when our economy is transferred back to peace-time industry. We therefore urge that student chapters make special efforts to acquaint the Negro community with the nature of these training courses; that they work for the securing of information of and the setting up of such courses in communities where they do not now exist, and the registration and attendance of Negro students in courses which are now available.

(3) To implement our efforts, we suggest utilization of all governmental agencies for information, guidance and cooperation, particularly the National Youth Administration, the United States Office of Education and the Negro Employment and Training Division of OPM.

#### NEGRO YOUTH AND EDUCATION

(1) While recognizing the problem of discrimination in education is not peculiar to Negro students alone, we condemn the flagrant abuses and limitations imposed upon the Negro in this field. We are opposed first to such political interference with education as the recent action of Governor Gene Talmadge of Georgia; secondly, to the maintenance of separate schools for Negroes in 17 states and the District of Columbia; and finally to the necessity for the forced migration of Negro students in search of opportunity in education.

(2) We feel that Negroes should not avoid or run away from this

discrimination. All legal rights to equal education in the large universities and graduate schools of the South should be exploited in an attempt to win the admission of Negro students to white universities and to assure equal facilities for existing Negro graduate schools. We find the burden of separate schools heavy in a section of the country least able to bear this burden, and the system unfair which forces <sup>citizens</sup> to seek for higher education outside their state. We therefore urge that more Negro students continue to make application for admission to all Southern universities and to seek discussion with white college students of the South on this issue.

(3) We further urge the importance of specialized training for Negro youth; and re-emphasize the need for scientific vocational training in order to assure a wide choice of vocations and the development of particular aptitudes.

(4) We invite the help of white students in asking for federal aid to education and in demanding the improvement of those social and economic conditions which still make for inadequate facilities, lack of schools in rural areas, poorly-trained teachers, and unequal salaries, curriculum unfitted to needs, poor attendance, average and retarded pupils and pupil mortality.

(5) Finally, we urge N.A.A.C.P. Student Chapters to initiate conferences with other Negro and white student groups on the question of Negro Youth in Education, and pledge our support of such meetings.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

We urge a restatement of the duties of the Advisory Committee to our Student Conference so that the Committee be activated in planning more concretely the translation of this program into action.

#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSE

Our observation of other youth groups is that there is a growing interest in the development of leadership training courses to carry out more effectively the policies of their organizations. We strongly urge that

provision be made by the National Office of the N.A.A.C.P. for a youth leadership training institute to be carried on sometime during the next summer or early fall.

#### VOTE OF APPRECIATION

We tender a vote of appreciation to the N.A.A.C.P. Student Chapter of Hampton Institute, to the students, faculty and staff of Hampton, to our student officers and Advisory Committee of this Conference, to the speakers and the National Office Staff of the N.A.A.C.P. for their splendid and untiring work in making possible this Conference.

#### ODELL WALLER CASE

We fully endorse the efforts of the Workers Defense League, in cooperation with the N.A.A.C.P., the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and other Organizations, to save the life of Odell Waller, young Negro sharecropper sentenced to die for the self-defense killing of his white landlord in Gretna, Va. We believe the speedy conviction of young Waller by an all-white poll tax jury to be a denial of the right to trial by a jury of Waller's peers, and we seek to make possible a reversal of the decision of the Virginia Supreme Court in upholding Waller's defense sentence.

We pledge our efforts to support the WDL's fight to save Waller's life through a writ of habeas corpus to the Virginia State Supreme Court, and a request for review by the United States Supreme Court if this effort fails.

We therefore call upon this Conference to write to Governor James H. Price of Virginia, urging that he grant young Waller a stay of execution to permit these further appeals of his case.

We furthermore pledge ourselves to rally support in our communities after the Conference in the following ways:

- (1) Education: emphasizing the defense of Odell Waller, together with its background of sharecropper exploitation, and poll-tax discrimination; through
  - (a) study groups

- (b) mass meetings
  - (c) publicity in college and community press
  - (d) private conversation
- (2) Pressure: in all these activities we will endeavor to obtain letters to be sent to Governor James H. Price, at Richmond, Virginia.
- (3) Funds: We will raise a pledged sum in our community with which to carry on the defense, by:
- (a) setting aside funds from our organization.
  - (b) collections at meetings.
  - (c) use of collection sheets which individually explain the case.
  - (d) fund raising affairs.

Our concern is strongly felt. We, as individuals, will work personally to carry through this program. We will work to see that our N.A.A.C.P. student Chapter brings the issue to the entire campus. We will endeavor to bring the Waller case and the issues it represents to the attention of the entire community where the college is located. In this connection we will work to obtain the support of ministers, fraternal, labor and other civic leaders, and see that the meetings of these organizations are supplied with student or other speakers so that they may take action to save Waller.

We dedicate ourselves to the task of seeing this issue fought through to victory -- justice for Odell Waller, freedom of all to vote.

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The above program of action was adopted unanimsously by the delegates of the Third Annual Student Conference of the N.A.A.C.P. at their business session, on Sunday morning, November 2, 1941.

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RETURN TO MRS. ROOSEVELT

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5

MEMO FOR GRACE TULLY:

Mrs. Roosevelt would like the attached  
letter brought to the attention of the President.

H. C. T.

November 25, 1941

My dear Mr. White:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to thank you for your letter of November 19 and to say that she will be glad to bring Pearl Buck's letter to the attention of the President.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

Mr. Walter White, Secretary  
National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People  
69 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York

PLF/HY

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# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: ALGONQUIN 4-3551

Official Organ: *The Crisis*

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MADISON S. JONES, JR.	YOUTH DIRECTOR

November 19, 1941

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Fearing that you may not have seen it, I am sending you Pearl Buck's magnificent letter in the Times of November 15.

Will you be good enough to show this to the President?

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White*  
 Secretary

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
 The White House  
 Washington, D. C.

WW:RR

# Letters to The Times

## Harlem Seen as a Symbol

### Pearl Buck Holds Unrest is a Growing Revolt Against Racial Prejudice

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:  
Your editorial of Nov. 12, "The Other Side of Harlem," denies the basic cause for the situation in our country of which the "New manifestation of crime in Harlem is only a symptom slight enough for what it signifies. Non-are the constructive measures proposed sufficient. It would be impossible for any accumulation of social welfare work to solve the situation which produces crime in Harlem. We all know that merely to make arrests and impose jail sentences can be nothing but an emergency measure and one which promises no fundamental improvement for the future. But equally palliative are the efforts of welfare workers on the basis upon which they are now organized.

The reason why colored Americans are compelled to live in ghettos, where they are helpless against high rents and miserable housing, is the segregation to which race prejudice compels them. Race prejudice compels people to take what work they can get because there are so many jobs. Negroes can't get. Race prejudice makes and keeps Negroes' wages low because some labor unions will not admit colored labor on the same basis as white labor. Race prejudice and race prejudice alone is the root of the plight of people in greater and lesser Harlems all over our country.

### Hope Becoming Despair

As a result of the effects of race prejudice a very serious conviction is gradually becoming settled in the minds of colored Americans all over our country. They are coming to see that what they have been taught and have believed is not true—namely, that if colored people can be patient and good and show themselves obedient and humble they will inevitably prove themselves worthy citizens and will therefore receive the rewards of full citizenship. They are beginning to believe, and this in very large numbers, that individual or even collective worth as human beings gains them nothing so long as they are Negroes. The hopefulness natural to their race is now changing to despair. Colored leaders are saying today that no amount of achievement will gain anything for the colored people as a whole, and that, moreover, they no longer believe the people of the United States will fight for democracy. Americans may fight to live and do as they like, they say, but not for democracy.

This conviction of some colored leaders and many more colored people is rapidly permeating the whole twelve millions. When hope is taken away from a people moral degeneration follows swiftly after. Young colored men and women today are giving up hope of justice or security in their own country. When this hopelessness reaches down to certain strata in any society, outbreaks of crime are inevitable. We must expect it in many places besides Harlem. It has already occurred in other cities.

The swiftness with which this long-gathering despair has come to a present head is due, perhaps, more than to any other immediate cause, to the refusal of the majority of defense industries to employ colored labor on anything like an equal basis with white labor. To the colored American this is final proof of the hopelessness of his plight, that even in the defense of his country he is not allowed his share of work.

### Segregation Curbs Patriotism

And yet it may be a mistake to say that this denial of the chance at jobs is more to blame than the resolute segregation in the Army or the practical limitation in the Navy. The colored American, thanks to an education in democracy, now really wants to see his country a democracy. When he defends the United States of America he does not want to do so segregated and lim-

ited white people. True, we would then be totalitarian rather than democratic, but if that is what we want, let us say so and let us tell the Negro so. Then the white Americans will be relieved of the necessity of hypocrisy and the colored people will know where they are. They may even settle down into a docile subject race, so long as we are able to keep the weapons of rebellion from them—and these include education.

As an American I should deplore any such thing, and yet the world needs this sort of clarification. Democracy now suffers from vagueness because of the lack of relation between principle and action. With all the evils that Hitlerism has, at least it has one virtue; that it makes no pretense of loving its fellow-man and of wanting all people to be free and equal. Everybody knows where nation stands and what to expect of it. Cruel as it is, and dangerous as it is to civilization, it is less cruel, and it may be even less dangerous in the end, than the sort of democracy which is not real enough or strong enough to practice what it preaches. To destroy hope utterly is kinder than to allow it without intending to let it be fulfilled.

### Patience Waning

The importance of facing the situation between white and colored people in our own country is twofold—it is upon this rock that our own ship of democracy may go down first, and upon this rock, too, that all peoples may divide into the ultimate enmity. Everywhere in the world the colored peoples are asking each other if they must forever endure the arrogant ruling white race. They feel they have been very long patient, but they cannot be patient forever and they will not. In India such men as Nehru, now again in jail at the hands of white men fighting for democracy in Europe; in our own country colored Americans, as intelligent and well educated as Nehru, barred by their color alone from an equal chance with white Americans to earn their living or to defend democracy—there is a deep, subtle, dangerous relationship between them. We are foolish if we do not realize it.

For in many educated colored Americans hopelessness results not in simple crime but in a rejection of patriotism. There are those, and some of them leaders, who fear Japan in the present crisis, seeing in Japan the future leader of all colored peoples in the world. There are those who prefer Hitler to British imperialism, feeling that if English rule over colored races can be destroyed, then Hitler can be dealt with afterward as the less established evil. At home and abroad the white race has the choice to make—whether it will follow the totalitarian principle of ruler and subject races, even to the inevitable and of rebellion and the worst of wars, or whether peoples of all colors will decide to work out ways of living in mutual harmony and freedom.

### Crisis Near at Hand

Such is the situation between colored and white peoples at this moment. It is idle to say that the crisis is two steps off and let us attend first to defense and the present war. Crisis between white and colored is not two steps off—it is close, inextricably mingled with this war, because the war against nazism carries race equality or inequality as one of its main issues. It does no good that we ourselves keep the issue hushed and hidden and apart from the thinking of the mass of the white people. The crisis approaches, whether white people are willing to know it or not. It approaches in the world, and with that inexorable march our own people are keeping step.

What then should we do if we are honest believers in the democratic way of life? We must move swiftly and at once, and our President should not fear so to move, to do away with the effects of race prejudice upon colored Americans. Race prejudice cannot be taken out of people unfortunately by surgical operation, although it is an evil and foreign growth. Children do not have it until they catch it from older people. I have frequent proof of this, the

responsibility with white citizens for the welfare of the nation, and thus remove the chief reason for the half-tolerant, wholly patronizing contempt of the white for the colored and thereby build in the colored citizen belief in himself. Democratic government must keep space of science and realize that there is no basis beyond prejudice for the belief that one race is intrinsically superior to another. Continued injustice may make any one inferior, temporarily, regardless of his color.

I read with complete approval of every plan to better the conditions under which colored people must live and work. But until race prejudice is conquered and its effects removed, the bitter fact remains that the colored American knows he will not get a better job for being better educated and better housed or for having in his childhood more playgrounds. He will not be given an equal chance with the white American of his class and ability. Race prejudice will still deny democracy to him.

Are we Americans to go on accepting the stupidities of race prejudice? I know the oft-repeated wearisome defense. Intermarriage is the fearful specter behind everything. On that there is but one answer. Are we to deny to 12,000,000 Americans the rights and privileges of our country, and are we to risk our very democracy itself by maintaining a determined rule-subject relationship between white and colored, because some day a few white and colored individuals may choose to marry each other?

Is democracy right or is it wrong? If it is right, then let us dare to make it so.  
FRANK S. BUCK  
Perkasie, Pa., Nov. 14, 1941.

## Control of Prices Not All

### Mr. Haruch Argues Against Treating the Matter as Separate Effort

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

In your editorial "The President on Taxes" you say: "The President is completely right" when he draws our attention to the fact "that taxation is a necessary complement of price-control legislation, because the continuing effectiveness of price control is largely dependent upon the restriction of the demand for goods." Quite right.

Too much emphasis has been placed upon price control and not enough on the other things necessary for preventing inflation. In my testimony before the House Banking and Currency Committee I said: "To ease the inflationary pressures we must try to increase supply, either directly by increasing production or indirectly by finding substitutes, or by conservation and simplification. Then we must try to cut off demand."

"1. Increased taxes which will lessen buying power but above all will help to pay as we go and avoid many of the social and economic after-effects of war.

"2. By controlling credit so that the government would borrow from individuals rather than banks, further lessening purchasing power.

"Demand can never be cut sufficiently to meet supply and price control plus priorities therefore must bridge the gap."

And again: "I do not believe that you can treat price control as a separate effort. It must be intimately tied up and move in step with all other war controls, wage and rent control, priorities, conservation, compensating war trade, war finance, and so forth. They are like the fingers of a hand. Without all together the job can't be done satisfactorily."

Further: "Price control must be treated as only a part of the whole of total defense made necessary by the threat of total war. By itself, price control has no value and will fail. Therefore it must be discussed in relation to the whole scheme of industrial mobilization."

When you talk of defense it must be

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## The Times

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...million, with each H. 200, 000, 000 a people moral degeneration follows swiftly after. Young colored men and women today are giving up hope of justice or security in their own country. When this hopelessness reaches down to certain strata in any society, outbreaks of crime are inevitable. We must expect it in many places besides Harlem. It has already occurred in other cities.

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**Segregation Curbs Patriotism**

And yet it may be a mistake to say that this denial of the chance at jobs is more to blame than the resolute segregation in the Army or the practical limitation in the Navy. The colored American, thanks to an education in democracy, now really wants to see his country a democracy. When he defends the United States of America he does not want to do so segregated and limited. This contradicts his idea of a democracy. He has grown up a good deal since the World War. And he has not forgotten that war. He is willing to fight and die again, but not for something he does not possess anyway.

The white American is conscious of this feeling now seething and mounting in the hearts of his colored countrymen. But the white American sedulously avoids acknowledging or indeed even facing it. With the same curious blindness which none of us could understand in France, we white Americans avoid the reality in our own country. We do not want to discover the real truth about the colored American, which is that our prejudice denies him democracy. We refuse to face it because we do not want to change the status of the colored person. We wish to keep him the servant of the white man.

**Hypocrisy Seen**

I am, I think, realistic and objective on this matter of race, having lived most of my life among colored peoples. My own ancestry is entirely Southern, and I am very familiar with the problems of white and colored in the South. I do not, however, believe their solution is to be found in what the average white southerner says. In the familiar patter, that the Negro is a childish creature, delightful enough in his place, who only wants to be taken care of and fed and sheltered and treated kindly. That the Negro in the South often glibly falls in with such assertions means nothing. That Negro is afraid of his white master, and says what the white man wants him to say. The same Negro quickly expresses himself in totally different terms as soon as he changes his locale and is relieved of his fear.

But be that as it may, the real point is that our democracy does not allow for the present division between a white ruler race and a subject colored race, and we ought to make up our minds as to what we want and then move to accomplish it. If the United States is to include subject and ruler peoples, then let us be honest about it and change the Constitution and make it plain that Negroes cannot share the privileges of

...Anne O'Hary McCormick is on a brief vacation. Her column, "Europe," will be resumed shortly.

**Crisis Near at Hand**

Such is the situation between colored and white peoples at this moment. It is idle to say that the crisis is two steps off and let us attend first to defense and the present war. Crisis between white and colored is not two steps off—it is close, inextricably mingled with this war, because the war against nazism carries race equality or inequality as one of its main issues. It does no good that we ourselves keep the issue hushed and hidden and apart from the thinking of the mass of the white people. The crisis approaches, whether white people are willing to know it or not. It approaches in the world, and with that inexorable march our own people are keeping step.

What then should we do if we are honest believers in the democratic way of life? We must move swiftly and at once, and our President should not fear so to move, to do away with the effects of race prejudice upon colored Americans. Race prejudice cannot be taken out of people unfortunately by surgical operation, although it is an evil and foreign growth. Children do not have it until they catch it from older people. I have frequent proof of this, the most recent being through the 13-year-old son of an American friend newly returned from China.

This white child goes to public school in a New Jersey town. When a class picnic was to be held it was found that the place chosen excluded colored people. To his deep indignation the boy found that his teachers, instead of changing the place, accepted the exclusion and managed by "tactful ways" to see that no colored children came to the picnic. The white boy was shocked to the soul at this injustice in his own land to which he had long looked with love and pride while he was growing up in China. His hurt was personal, too, because his own best friend happened to be a fine colored boy. "I won't go if Henry can't go," was his right decision.

**Adolescents Little Prejudiced**

Nor do adolescents have race prejudice in anything like the degree that older people have. Recently in Texas there were a championship white football team and a championship colored team at high schools in the same city. Of course their managers and coaches would not schedule them to play each other. But the white team went out one morning by secret arrangement and played the colored team. They said to their coach when they returned: "We just wanted to see which of us was better." As it happened, it was a tie game, and though there is symbolism enough in that ideal ending, the significance of the incident, and of plenty of others like it, is that the boys, colored and white, had no prejudice against each other.

Intelligent white people seldom suffer from race prejudice so severely as ignorants do, and there are many who would, if they dared, acknowledge that they have none whatever. But too few dare. For whenever the disease of race prejudice is found it is bitter and incurable and dies only with death.

But if nothing can remove race prejudice from those in whom it is ingrained, they should not be allowed to violate our nation's democracy. At least our government can and should see to it that all Americans shall have equal economic opportunity and that colored people in this democracy shall not suffer insult because of their color. It can and should insist that colored citizens shall share

"1. Increased taxes which will increase buying power but above all will help to pay as we go and avoid many of the social and economic aftermaths of war.

"2. By controlling credit so that the government would borrow from individuals rather than banks, further lessening purchasing power.

"Demand can never be cut sufficiently to meet supply and price control plus priorities therefore must bridge the gap."

And again: "I do not believe that you can treat price control as a separate effort. It must be intimately tied up and move in step with all other war controls, wage and rent control, priorities, conservation, commingling war funds, war finance, and so forth. They are like the fingers of a hand. Without all together the job can't be done satisfactorily."

Further: "Price control must be treated as only a part of the whole of total defense made necessary by the threat of total war. By itself, price control has no value and will fail. Therefore it must be discussed in relation to the whole scheme of industrial mobilization."

When you talk of defense it must be total defense, and if it is total defense it must be defense now and all-out defense.

—BENJAMIN M. HAZUCH, New York, Nov. 12, 1941.

**Aid Sought for the Blind**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

The blind of New York find themselves in a little isolated group groping on a dark island. The Lighthouse is their beacon which brings hope by its program of training, work and recreation. To curtail these services would be tragic to the blind.

For 25 years the New York Association for the Blind, through its six buildings, has assisted the blind of all ages. These services are free, regardless of race or creed, and are supported by voluntary contributions.

A gift to the Lighthouse is translated into new hope for the blind. Send your contributions to Thomas S. McLane, treasurer, the Lighthouse, 111 East Fifty-ninth Street.

ALAN BLACKBURN, Director of Social Welfare, New York, Nov. 12, 1941.

**THE DAYLIGHT CAME**

After awareness came, he said, "I live, I have a name, a body that in air breathes and can move in happiness and pain.

Something to take and something I can give; And some will cherish it and some not care.

He rose and dressed, went down the stairs again Out in the street and looked upon the "setdown":

He felt the thunder of his restless heart, The power in his urging, restless feet. He said, "I do not seek to win the crown.

I am not conscious I have any part To play to and in victory or defeat. This is a day, and there are many more Swinging down years with numbers not my own;

All that is mine is bearing in the mind The opening and the closing of the door From which this moment rolled away the stone."

JOHN RUCKERT,

100

December 5, 1941

Dear Mr. White:

Mr. Enoc P. Waters, Jr. tells me that he has nominated Miss Willa B. Brown for the Spingarn award this year, because of the interest she has created in aviation.

I know about Miss Brown and hope her name will be given consideration.

Very sincerely yours,

Mr. Walter White  
69 Fifth Avenue, NYC

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# NATIONAL AIRMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

"THE PIONEER BRANCH"

3435 INDIANA AVENUE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

12-5  
November 28, 1941  
*W. B. Brown*  
*has been a member since 1941*  
*1945*

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WILLA B. BROWN  
1st Vice President  
A. MANSFIELD BRIGHT  
2nd Vice President  
CORNELIUS E. COFFEY  
Secretary  
JOY GURLEY  
Assistant Secretary  
RACHEL L. CARTER  
Treasurer  
ALBERT F. STUMP  
Business Manager  
NEAL SIMEON  
Publicity Agent  
SIMEON E. BROWN  
Historian  
OTIS GRANT COLLINS  
Sergeant-at-Arms  
GEORGE WEBSTER  
Adviser  
ENOC P. WATERS, JR.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:-

I have nominated Miss Willa B. Brown for the Spingarn award and would appreciate your writing a letter of endorsement of my nomination to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 69 Fiftieth Avenue, New York City.

The Spingarn award is presented annually by the N.A.A.C.P. to the person felt to have made the greatest contribution to the Negro race. Last year it was presented to Richard Wright for his novel "Native Son".

Miss Brown, as you know, is responsible for the present interest of Negroes in aviation, more than any other single individual. She was one of the founders of the National Airmen's Association of America; is at the present time CAA coordinator of two units of the Civilian Pilot Training Program in Chicago; is head of the aviation department, Wendell Phillips High School; and has developed and directs the largest privately owned Negro aviation school in the country--the Coffey School of Aeronautics. In addition, at the request of the U. S. Government, it was she who conducted a special pilot training program designed to prove that the Negro can absorb intensive aeronautical training. As a result of this experiment Negroes were admitted into the U. S. Army Air Corps through the establishment of the 99th Pursuit Squadron, though on a separate basis instead of complete integration for which Miss Brown has been fighting.

To the Negro race Miss Brown is a pioneer in the field of aviation, and she means to her group of people what the late Amelia Earhart meant to the world in general, and on the strength of her work I feel her a worthy candidate for the honor. If you agree with me won't you get a letter of endorsement in within a week?

Sincerely yours,

*Enoc P. Waters, Jr.*  
Enoc P. Waters, Jr.  
Adviser

EPW/ljg  
Bulletin enclosed

SPONSOR OF TWO UNITS OF THE CIVILIAN PILOT TRAINING PROGRAM

Who's  
Who in  
Aviation



WILLA B. BROWN

Personal History

Born Glasgow, Kentucky, January 22, 1906  
Daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Eric B. Brown

Educational Qualifications

Attended elementary schools in Indianapolis, Indiana and  
Terre Haute, Indiana, graduating from Sarah Scott Junior High  
School, 1920 ----- Wiley High School, Terre Haute, Indiana,  
1923 ----- Indiana State Teachers College, A.B. degree, 1927  
----- Pursued courses leading to M.A. degree in Business Ad-  
ministration, Northwestern University, 1934-37 ----- Master  
Mechanic's certificate, Aeronautical University (Chicago),  
1935 ----- Private pilot's certificate, 1937 ----- Limited  
Commercial pilot's certificate, 1939 ----- CAA Ground School  
Instructor's rating, 1940.

Accomplishments

Head of Commercial Department, Roosevelt High School, Gary Indiana, 1927-32 ----- Secretary to Clara Paul Paige, Director of Chicago Relief Administration, 1932-33 ----- Social Service Worker, Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, 1933 ----- Cashier, Walgreen Drug Company, 1933-35 ----- Clerk-stenographer, U.S. Department of Immigration and Naturalization, (Federal civil service), 1936 ----- Clerk-typist, U.S. Post Office Department, (Federal civil service), 1936-37 ----- Secretary-laboratory assistant to Dr. Julian H. Lewis, Department of Pathology, The University of Chicago, 1937-38 ----- Secretary-receptionist to Dr. Theodore K. Lawless, Dermatologist, 1938-39 ----- Secretary to Horace R. Cayton, Director, WPA Sociological Study of the Negro in Chicago, 1939 ----- Founded with Cornelius R. Coffey and Enoc P. Waters, Jr., the National Airmen's Association of America, 1939 ----- Launched fight for participation of Negroes in Civilian Pilot Training Program and for integration of Negroes into the United States Army Air Corps, 1939 ----- Elected national secretary, National Airmen's Association of America, 1939 ----- Teacher of aviation subjects, WPA Adult Education Program, 1939-40 ----- Organized the Coffey School of Aeronautics, 1940 ----- Selected by U.S. Army Air Corps and Civil Aeronautics Administration to conduct experiment for admission of Negroes to the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1940 ----- CAA Ground School Instructor, 1940 ----- Clerk-typist, Illinois State Unemployment Compensation (State civil service), 1940 ----- Director, Coffey School of Aeronautics, 1940-41 ----- Aviation Mechanic's Instructor, Chicago Board of Education, 1940-41 ----- Elected president, Pioneer (Chicago) branch of the National Airmen's Association of America, 1941 ----- Elected vice-president, Aeronautical Association of Negro Schools, 1941.

#### Recognition

Interviewed by Chicago Tribune, 1937, 40, 41 ----- Cited by Negro press for contribution to aviation, 1936-41 ----- Selected by Louisville Defender as guest of honor at annual Cooking School promotion, 1939 ----- Selected by Chicago City Wide Forum as one of ten persons making greatest contribution to the Negro race, 1939 ----- Interviewed by Time magazine, 1939 ----- Cited in Who's Who in Aviation, 1940 ----- Awarded trophy by Bachelor-Benedicts Club in recognition of achievements in aviation, 1940 ----- Selected by Civil Aeronautics Administration to set up and conduct aviation exhibition at American Negro Exposition, 1940 ----- Appointed to stage air shows during aviation conferences of the National Airmen's Association of America, 1939-40-41 ----- Selected by Committee of One Hundred as one of the "honored six" Negroes, 1941 ----- Asked by Superintendent of Chicago Public Schools to design aviation shops for new vocational school, 1941.

In addition, Miss Brown has been recognized by the Civil Aeronautics Administration as the outstanding authority on the Negro in aviation; has been asked to appear before numerous groups of various natures in Chicago, and more than a hundred other cities throughout the United States as well as participating in several radio broadcasts in the South and in the middle West.

#### Significant Contribution to Aviation

Miss Brown has been responsible, more than any other one individual, for the popularization of aviation among the Negro masses. As a result of her successful fight for the inclusion of Negroes in the Civilian Pilot Training Program eight colleges and two private flying schools are today training hundreds of Negroes to fly at government expense.

Because of the successful outcome of the experiment which she conducted at the request of the United States Army Air Corps and the Civil Aeronautics Administration the 99th Pursuit Squadron was established in 1941. The 99th Pursuit Squadron, however, does not represent the ideal for which she was fighting. She is still campaigning for the complete integration of Negroes into the U.S. Army Air Corps without regard to race. What progress has been made, however, along these lines can be attributed principally to her organizational ability and her dogged determination.

It has been largely through her efforts that Negro flyers throughout the country have been welded into an effective unit, and she participated in the organization of Negro private flying schools and colleges which have to do with the aeronautical training of Negroes. She has also represented the Negro race through membership in such national aviation associations as the Women Flyers of America, and the National Aviation Training Association.

One of the most inspirational figures in the field of Negro aviation today, Miss Brown has been either directly or indirectly responsible for the training and placing of several Negro aviation instructors and mechanics; she likewise has inspired hundreds of young people to select aviation as a career.

Miss Willa B. Brown is the only Negro woman presently making a career of aviation, and as director of the Coffey School of Aeronautics is one of the Negro race's outstanding business women, administering federal contracts valued at from \$60,000.00 to \$100,000.00 annually, thereby giving employment in a new avenue of endeavor to approximately thirty persons who are skilled in aviation occupations.

--National Airmen's Association of America

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**69 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK**

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December 8, 1941

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Your letter recommending Miss Willa B. Brown for the Spingarn Medal has been received and will be referred to the Spingarn Medal Committee for consideration.

Ever sincerely,

*Walter White (7)*  
 Secretary

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