

The Political Color Line Fades

GEORGIA is as great a citadel of White Supremacy as exists in the South, but it was there that a Negro, aided and abetted by white Georgians, took it upon himself to test the legal bulwarks of the white Democratic primary. Primus King, Negro, of Columbus, attempted to register and vote as a Democrat, and was refused by his County Democratic Committee on the sole grounds of his color. He then went into Federal court to argue that the Democratic Primary, as it is constituted in the one-party South, is a substitute for, or at least an integral part of the General Election, and is therefore subject to the provisions of the 14th, 15th and 17th Amendments to the Constitution. He won his case in a Federal court, but was then taken to another round before the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals sitting in New Orleans, very probably noting the case. The Atlanta Journal notes:

King's case was argued in the first instance by white attorneys, Georgian born and bred. His first victory was the ruling of Judge T. Holt Davis, Georgian born and bred, that Negro citizens who profess to be Democrats cannot legally be excluded from Democratic primaries. The opinion of the appellate court, sustaining Judge Davis' ruling, was written by Judge Samuel H. Siler, of Marietta, Georgian born and bred. There can be no charge, therefore, that Georgia is being afflicted with carpet-bag judges, or that the case is being laid down by outsiders unmindful of our traditions and our ideals.

The two court decisions in the Primus King case, plus previous Supreme Court decisions in somewhat similar but not quite so clearcut cases in Louisiana and Texas, will, we think, mark the beginning of the end of the political color line in the South. The theory that the Democratic Party, as a private organization, can exercise free choice in extending its membership is on the scrap heap along with the Grandfather Law, property requirements, rigged literacy tests, and all the other ancient devices for disfranchising the Negro.

Yet, even though the now inevitable entry of the Negro into Southern politics means a clear break with a bloodily-defended tradition, *The Atlanta Journal* notes that the newspapers in the smaller Georgia towns, where race prejudice has always been open and unashamed, have accepted it calmly. Already, in a municipal election in Valdosta, 350 Negroes have voted in a Democratic primary in which only 3,000 votes were cast, but *The Lowndes County News* saw the election only as proof "that whites and Negroes can go to the polls and vote at the same time on the same issues without any bitter feelings. The occasion marked a great forward step for the Negroes of Valdosta, to whom we think a large part of the credit for no disturbance is due."

Other small Georgia papers show the same thoughtful tolerance. The *Clifton Enterprise* wonders "if it would not be a good idea to allow the Negroes to vote. Perhaps this would insure that the whites would take full advantage of their right to express their judgment." And *The Tifton Gazette* remarks that "it might be that the real solution would be for more white voters to go to the polls. Due to the apathy of the voters we still have what is termed government by the minority."

It's early yet, but there seems to be a healthy trend showing through Georgia's reaction to the coming wholesale enfranchisement of the Negro. The first impulse has been to reexamine the archaic one-party system the South imposed upon itself as a defense against the Negro vote, and seeing it now, when it can no longer serve that basic purpose, perhaps white Southerners in Georgia will begin to be at last realize how dearly they bought 90 years of political supremacy. If they do, and if they then proceed to the establishment of true party system in the region, a system that provides the continuing conflict essential to our form of government, then they may find that Primus King's bold foray into Federal court has served the white race as well as it has his own.

Dark Days At The Haberdashery

THERE is no more gloomy a spot these days than the haberdashery. The gleaming glass cases at the front of the shop contain a few discouraged looking socks and a scattering of over-priced and over-patterned neckties. The neat shelves behind them, once filled with shirts, shorts and pajamas, are empty. The empty shelves are a sight that would fit any man whose cranium rates between pinhead and doublebump. In the rear, where the sleeves of suits and overcoats once flapped cheerfully in the aisle, there are only empty coatrangers and three plaid sport jackets, one of which is a dark, one noted for their white teeth and bristly manner, have come to resemble pallbearers.

Whatever troubles have beset the purveyors of female raiment during these months of textile famine, there are as nothing compared to the woes of the gentleman's clothier. He is, and has been, caught in something very like a manufacturers' strike against the OPA, and he is, despite his helplessness, the recipient of a disproportionate share of the blame for the nation's clothing shortage. He is finding their worn cuffs inside their shabby sleeves, have a way of examining the price tags on the few miscellaneous articles still on display and muttering something about profiteering. Few of them stop to think that the haberdasher, who must maintain his establishment open, though he has nothing to sell, is rapidly losing his own shirt.

News that the Government has finally

decided to install one of its price-control bulwarks in the field of cotton textiles may mean that relief is coming at last. There will be higher prices coming with it, of course—15 cents per shirt and eight cents per pair of shorts, according to the OPA—and there is every reason to believe that the initial price increase will be the beginning of a series extending upward into an uncertain future. But at least it should release that great logjam of goods in the warehouses and get something back on the shelves.

And when the shirts and suits and socks and shorts finally appear, and the cash register at the haberdashery resumes its merry symphony in a slightly higher key, there will be few who remember the dark days of the famine. The haberdasher has no vast backlog of finished goods to release at a higher price and a higher profit to make up for the months when his overhead continued and his gross receipts dwindled away to a fraction of normal. He, as well as his customers, will pay the cost of the manufacturers' strike that finally bent the price line, and his share will, like the amount of blame he receives for the spiraling prices in his shop, be disproportionate.

We wonder sometimes if the most prominent haberdasher of them all, the neat little man who now resides in a large white house on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, ever stops to consider the end-product of the series of compromises he fondly believes is a wage-price policy.

Blueprint Of Our Social Effort

WHERE have taken notice of a little red-covered pamphlet that has been in circulation in Charlotte for several weeks. It bears the title, "Directory of Social Resources of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County," and it is the work of the Community Council.

The Council, finding need for a brief, factual survey of the various "agencies" whose primary function is to render education, health, recreation, and case work services to the Community, undertook it some months ago. The result is exactly what the title implies—a directory in which all pertinent information is conveniently arranged and displayed.

Between Alcoholics Anonymous on the first page and the Young Women's Christian Association—Phyllis Wheatley Branch on the last there are listed a total of 72 agencies. The old familiar, frequently published names are there, and a few—such as the Charlotte Police Department—that may surprise you. For each agency, officials are listed, office hours are specified, source of support is indicated, and its primary function is outlined in some detail.

The directory is handily cross-indexed by services. For instance, under Blind are listed Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, Department of Public Welfare, Mecklenburg County Association for the Blind, North Carolina Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Variety Club Clinic. The four-page index provides a stripped but reasonably accurate blueprint of the community's social effort, public and pri-

vate, and there may be some who find it an indication of pointless overlapping, waste and inefficiency.

The Community Council's purpose, however, was simply to compile data "for informational purposes in order that we might achieve the greatest benefit from established community agencies." No attempt was made at evaluation, approval or disapproval—that's another job for another day and perhaps for still another agency. At any rate the Council has succeeded admirably in what it set out to do; its directory is well worth the considerable effort that went into it.

Always the gent in mixed company, the old rounder is opposed to gray bread or the off-color toast.

And yet, if Rep. Jim Curley can be incarcerated for making promises he couldn't possibly fulfill, what statesman is safe?

The Russian chum has barred Thornton Wilder's "our town" from his sector of Berlin as "too depressing." What is desired is something heady and insouciant, like Gorki's "the upper depths."

At St. Louis a collector of internal revenue says the public makes twice as many errors filling out the "simplified" tax form. It somehow brings to mind Hank Wallace, clarifying a previous remark.

People's Platform Builders Wave Red Flag

TO a veteran in desperate need of a home—reading *The News* is a maddening experience. The red flags you wave are in the form of news releases informing us that this that company is about to put up a building at a cost of 40, 50 or 60,000 dollars.

What I'd like to know is—when in thunder are these plutocrats getting the materials to do this? What about housing? Of what use is the GI Bill when real estate agents and sellers would rather deal with the veteran is getting it. They work on the assumption that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush—so the veteran is just out of luck.

Who said the war is over? Almost six months ago, I left my wife and four daughters in Norfolk (where I was honorably discharged from the Navy) in search of a place to live. Took a good job in a town in Virginia and had to give it up after three months, because of a hopeless housing situation. Immediately thereafter, offered a job in my third month here—still without a home. In a few months, my son will be out of the Navy too—that makes us seven.

Will I have to quit Charlotte as I did the other town and go back to my makeshift home in Norfolk, simply because the big money boys must have their office buildings?

—SIGNATURE WITHHELD.

Between The Eyes

IT IS obvious that the three gentlemen, who were so zealous in their attack upon Mr. Jack Holmes for shooting a "Peeping Tom" here Feb. 23, 1946, did not know the facts of the case. I happen to be living at 2116 Rozell's Ferry Road where my sister and brother-in-law live. I have been in the house since the window the "Peeping Tom" was shot.

This community has been terrorized for the past two months by a series of "Peeping Tom" incidents, about which the police have done exactly nothing. One lady, after having called the police two or three times in one week, was told that they "just shut out all ambulance and don't call us."

I have great compassion for the "Gentlemen" who were so humiliated by the incident. I, for my sister and her daughter, wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Jack Holmes. If I ever see anyone, whether a student at Johnson C. Smith University or Harvard, or even someone who has to work for a living, peeping into a window I would consider myself justified in putting a bullet between his eyes and four years in the Army I think I could do it too.

The Police Department should be absolved of all blame of "Sleuthing and Bloodhounding" after the peeper. As usual they came down and tramped around for a few minutes and returned to their desks. The peeper was only found after a few citizens in this community had trailed him to the Johnson C. Smith

University infirmary, where he had been treated for a gunshot wound, which incidentally had not been reported. The police have been so inefficient in doing anything about these incidents that the people of this community are thinking about abdicating from Charlotte and getting a police force of their own.

—H. H. CURTIS.

Small Loan Business

CERTAIN industrial loan agencies were exempted from State supervision by Section 4-1/2, H.B. 176, which reads as follows:

"Nothing in this Act shall be construed to apply to any person, firm or corporation engaged solely in the business of making loans of fifty dollars (\$50.00) or more secured by motor vehicles."

There are 65 of these agencies that have registered with the State Banking Commission and have filed Certificates of Exemption. It is generally known that the charges by a great many of these agencies are in excess of legal rate.

We feel that Section 4-1/2 should be repealed and all of them should be placed under supervision. There is no real reason for their exemption.

—GURNEY P. HOOD, COMMISSIONER OF BANKS.

To Legalize Sin?

I HAVE been reading Burke Davis and the People's Platform—can't make sense out of either. Will you please answer a few questions for me?

How can we make stores to sell anything legal that God has condemned. Before you answer this one please read chapter I Timothy. The 10th verse tells us the "love of money is the root of all evil." All right, we are going to make what God has condemned legal.

Save us from the responsibility of raising and educating our children. See if you can find the answer in your own heart. Don't come to South Carolina for this answer. No, I'm not a holier than thou, just a poor Baptist that can't see what a man gets if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul.

—MRS. LULA RIVERS.

(NOTE: As directed, we read I Timothy. But we didn't stop short of verse 10, for we got down to Verse 23 and found: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake."—Eds., This magazine.)

The People's Platform is available to any reader who cares to mount it. Communications should be less than 300 words, typewritten if possible, and on only one side of the paper. Libel and obscenity will be deleted—otherwise anything goes. Each letter must be signed, although, in exceptional cases and upon request, we will withhold the writer's name.—Editors, *The News*.

When the atom bill gets into secret Senate-House conference he will make sure that his own Max-Johnson bill is substituted for any non-military measure that Senator McMahon of Connecticut is able to shove through.

When the bill is brought in the Senate hearings is interesting. The Senate committee has listened to the scientists who did the real work and are ready to ignore them. Instead, the committee is giving more weight to Gen. Leslie Groves, who at first considered the atom bomb a New Deal bomb.

Although in charge of the atom project, it was months before Groves did anything more than snicker at the idea that it could end the world.

When Professor Harold Urey, one of the chief atom scientists, was asked the other day how many men in General Groves' staff were Republicans, he replied:

"He didn't count it more than eighteen months."

'Voted Against Veterans'

Veterans are considering a new symbol which may become as famous as the label "Made by Union Labor." It will probably take the form of the initials "VAV."

Marquis Childs Leah's Influence

OF all the men in President Truman's oddly assorted inner circle, no one has more influence, and at the same time is less known to the public, than Admiral William D. Leahy.

It is not merely on military and diplomatic matters that the 70-year-old Admiral gives the President the benefit of his counsel. Often, in his dry, ironic fashion, he advises on political and economic issues as well.

The President has come to lean heavily on this counselor whom he inherited from his predecessor. It had been assumed that Leahy would retire to private life after the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The other wartime leaders are either in retirement or have been removed from the center of power. But Leahy, who has a reserve and a tactfulness that make him a barrier between him and most people, is today firmly entrenched in the White House.

This is a curious climax for an Annapolis man who, until 1920, followed the traditional Navy career. As the result of a friendship which had begun when Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of the Navy during World War I, came Leahy's assignment from President Roosevelt in 1939 to be Governor of Puerto Rico. He was great popular during his year in that office.

In 1940, Roosevelt made him Ambassador to Vichy France. His instructions were to make friends with Marshal Petain.

NOT DIFFICULT This proved not in the least difficult for Leahy. The dour Admiral, who knows how to un-bowdlerize a situation, called for him and the gossipoid old Admiral became firm friends. Leahy spent hours in the Marshal's suite in Vichy's Hotel du Parc as the shadowy-figures-of-France's collaborationist Government came and went.

In fact, the Admiral grew so attached to Petain that, after he returned to this country in 1942 to become the President's personal chief of staff, he refused to have any evil of the old Marshal. He even wrote a story of Petain's foolish and scandalous behavior as Ambassador to Vichy. Leahy continued to believe that Petain had meant the best for France.

Petain, convicted of treason, to-

day languishes in bored confinement on the little Ile d'Yeu in the Bay of Biscay. He will soon be 90 years old.

SUSPICIOUS OF COMMUNISM

HAVING had only a limited experience of world politics during his Naval career, Leahy was probably more susceptible to the impressions he received during those two critical years in France. A man whose broad background would have been. The crisis between the extreme left and center, which was then acute, Leahy was then acute. Leahy's experience at Vichy, where he had implanted his deep suspicions of Communism. There is no doubt that he has recently played an important part in persuading the President of the need to take a firmer stand toward the Soviets.

The new policy, first expressed in Secretary of State Byrnes' recent speech, was formulated in a series of White House talks that frequently found the President expressing sharp irritation over Russian maneuvers. He did not conceal from visitors his resentment of Soviet conduct.

The President, incidentally, went over the text of Winston Churchill's Fulton speech before it was delivered. The two men discussed in considerable detail the Russian position on any living American.

HOME INFLUENCE RESENTED

It is when Leahy's advice touches on domestic policy that his role is most resented by others close to the President. When his patience snaps, Robert H. Hannegan, Chairman, National Democratic Club, has been known to blow off on the subject of the kind of advice the President receives.

Current rumors have Hannegan resigning. If that happens, as it may, one reason will be the national chairman's refusal of instruction when he walks into the President's office and sees the list of people on whom the President relies.

In their own special fields, some of these advisers have great knowledge and capacity. Leahy, for example, knows as much about the conduct of the war on the very top level as any living American. He was present at all the important conferences.

But these advisers are not universal experts. When they step outside their specialized fields, they are often wrong. That is something the President has still to learn.

Borrowing Denied

John L. Lewis denies that he borrowed the trouty idea from Petrillo. He points for precedent to a proposal 30 years ago by the head of the Pennsylvania Department of Mines that a tax of 2 1/2 cents a ton be levied on the companies to provide care for workers injured in the mines.

BAILEY'S BILL

Bills offered in the Senate by Senator Bailey of Missouri, which would forbid an employer to pay royalties to the author of a book, a trade union to receive them. The Strike Control bill recently passed by the Senate would forbid labor royalties, but Senator Bailey has announced that he will amend the bill to allow for an amendment to any labor disputes legislation reaching the Senate floor. In Bailey's opinion: "The great complaint in the present time was that the Government farmed out the taxes. We are now in the same process of farming out taxes to the big labor leaders."

Railroad Strike

DESPITE all the threatening talk, you can mark it down that there will be no repetition of the last railroad strike in 1922, which crippled transportation throughout the nation.

Here's the way government labor experts date it out: Eighteen brotherhoods, representing 1,250,000 workmen, have submitted their minimum wage-increase demand of 15 cents a day to two government arbitration boards in Chicago.

Under the law, when a dispute is submitted to arbitration, both sides are compelled to abide by the board's ruling. But the law is unfavorable to the Government in a strike here, though a number of changes in "rules" (working conditions) demanded by the eighteen brotherhoods are still in mediation.

Biggest problem is the settlement of a "rump" dispute involving the trainmen (250,000 members) and the engineers (100,000 members). Both sides have refused to go along with the other brotherhoods and have insisted that both the wage and "rule" demands be arbitrated together.

The settlement of the rump dispute will be a major test of the law. The law was nullified under the railway act by President's appointment of an emergency fact-finding board, for the act provided that there can be no strike for 30 days after the board is named. The board is now in session.

This "cooling-off" period has never failed to prevent a strike, when invoked, since 1926 when the railway labor was used. It has been used many times since. That is something that will be settled peacefully, can be fairly

Drew Pearson's • Truman Opposes 'Brass' Control Of Atom Merry-Go-Round •

HENRY WALLACE has walked across the White House threshold hundreds of times, but rarely was he more heavyhearted than when he went in to confer with his good friend, Harry Truman, regarding the atom bomb.

Wallace has been asked by Truman to keep an eye on the battle of atomic energy now raging on Capitol Hill, and the purpose of his visit was to tell the President the latest and saddest news—that the Senate atomic committee was ready to report out a bill which would turn atomic energy over to the same military control which delayed its development during the war. If adopted, the bill would be in a position to take the first real steps toward Fascism this country has ever seen.

For example, the bill would be able to: (1) appoint military exclusively to the Presidential commission on atomic energy; (2) put such blanket restrictions on atomic energy that the scientific study of atomic research would be halted; (3) give the military the right to fire any scientist from public or private employment; (4) give military full authority to make its own laws for people working on atomic energy "over and above the espionage act"; (5) set up criminal penalties for discussion of atomic energy among scientists over and above those proscribed by Congress; and (6) permit private ownership of fissionable material (the material from which atomic bombs are made).

Wallace pointed out that it was absurd to give such powers to the military in times of peace.

We wouldn't let them control all gasoline or coal, even though they too are used for national defense, would we?" the Secretary of Commerce argued.

Truman Opposes Military

PRESIDENT TRUMAN emphatically agreed. He even went further and promised that he would do everything he could to prevent brahmin military control of atomic energy.

When these initials are used immediately following a Congressman's name, it will indicate that he "voted against veterans."

Congressmen, already sensitive about this year's elections, worried sick about last week's vote on housing for veterans, especially the vote on subsidies which would have permitted low-cost homes at a price-range which veterans could afford.

This worry was why Congress ducked a roll-call vote. If each Congressman had been forced to stand up and be counted, it would have been political suicide for Congress. Instead a "teller" vote was taken, which meant that Congressmen merely walked swiftly down the center of the aisle to be counted.

However, alert newsmen standing just above in the press gallery carefully tabulated those voting against veterans' housing. The Republicans, except for Rep. Charles LaFollette of Indiana, George Bender of Ohio, voted as a block against veterans.

The Democrats, despite a plea from President Truman himself, plus telegrams from Bob Hannegan, split ranks.

Here are the Democrats who in the future will be labelled "VAV" (voted against veterans' housing) in this important test: Barden, N. C.; Brown, Ga.; Camp, Ga.; Colmer, Miss.; Cramer, N. C.; Egan, N. C.; Gurnea, N. C.; Harbo, N. C.; Earhartman, Tenn.; Ervin, N. C.; Gathings, Ark.; Gibbs, N. C.; Hare, S. C.; Kanhm, Tex.; McMillan, S. C.; McMillan, S. C.; McMillan, S. C.; McMillan, S. C.; Murray, Tenn.; Paden, Ga.; Page, Tex.; Riley, S. C.; Roe, Miss.; Russell, Tex.; Slaughter, Mo.; Smith, Va.; Summers, Miss.; Tamm, Va.; Tamm, Va.; Vinson, Ga.; Whitten, Miss.; Whittington, Miss.

Although in charge of the atom project, it was months before Groves did anything more than snicker at the idea that it could end the world.

When Professor Harold Urey, one of the chief atom scientists, was asked the other day how many men in General Groves' staff were Republicans, he replied:

"He didn't count it more than eighteen months."

'Voted Against Veterans'

Veterans are considering a new symbol which may become as famous as the label "Made by Union Labor." It will probably take the form of the initials "VAV."

When these initials are used immediately following a Congressman's name, it will indicate that he "voted against veterans."

Congressmen, already sensitive about this year's elections, worried sick about last week's vote on housing for veterans, especially the vote on subsidies which would have permitted low-cost homes at a price-range which veterans could afford.

This worry was why Congress ducked a roll-call vote. If each Congressman had been forced to stand up and be counted, it would have been political suicide for Congress. Instead a "teller" vote was taken, which meant that Congressmen merely walked swiftly down the center of the aisle to be counted.

However, alert newsmen standing just above in the press gallery carefully tabulated those voting against veterans' housing. The Republicans, except for Rep. Charles LaFollette of Indiana, George Bender of Ohio, voted as a block against veterans.

The Democrats, despite a plea from President Truman himself, plus telegrams from Bob Hannegan, split ranks.