A SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION
OF THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

A Thesis Presented for the
Degree of Master of Arts

By
Maxwell R. Brooks, B.S.E.

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Approved by:
[Signature]
# A SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF
THE NEGRO NEWSPAPER

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FOREWARD

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The Negro press of today occupies a firmly established place in American life. Though it has been in existence in this country for more than a century, during the last two decades it has witnessed an unparalleled rate of development. From a ridiculed and lowly status it has grown into an influential institution which must be given serious consideration when dealing with problems affecting Negro life. Its editors have changed their emphasis from oratory to that of constructive programs.

The point of view which has grown out of this study is that Negro journalism in the United States may be studied effectively only in the light of the many social influences which have acted upon it. Since the existing social order preceded the Negro press and has at all times dominated it, the burden of adjustment has been with the press. This factor is of primary importance in any attempt to account for the attitudes of Negro journalism toward American society.

The burden of this study is to investigate and to give sociological interpretations to the interaction taking place
between the Negro newspapers and the societal forces which act upon it.

The writer is deeply indebted to Dr. Lloyd A. Cook who pointed out the possibility of a study of this nature and has since very generously given critical and helpful advice.

To Dr. Frederick G. Detweiler for his patient council, and for the use of his book, The Negro Press in the United States, which has been an invaluable source of historic data; to the Gentlemen of the Associated Negro Press, The National Feature Service, the Scott newspaper Syndicate, and to the many editors who have supplied newspapers, filled out questionnaires and sent other information; the writer is obligated and takes this opportunity to thank.

MAXWELL R. BROOKS
CHAPTER I

Introduction

A. The Social Background

The Negro's contribution to American literature and art has been that of an oppressed group. It has reflected in different forms, every degree of emotion from resignation, to open hostility against the dominant race. These attitudes are the outgrowth of his socio-political history in the United States.

First brought to America in 1619 the Negro soon came to occupy a slave status. Though there have always been free Negroes in this country, for the most part during the next two centuries remained in slavery. The traders and factors purposefully practiced a system of mixing the members of different tribes during the stages of the journey from Africa to America as a means of simplifying problems of control. After having been scattered throughout the colonies the slaves were prohibited by the plantation owners from practicing native rites and ceremonies. The inevitable outcome of these repressive measures meant for the African demoralization of everything around which his life had been organized. During these early years he was voiceless and unorganized.

The reorganization of life for the slaves began to take shape under the influence of the Christian religion. Quite
naturally they were receptive subjects for this religion since it promised them after death everything which was denied them in life. Their eagerness to embrace the Christian faith is shown in a report prepared by Rev. J. Renatus Schmidt, of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen, which is an account of the society's efforts down to the year 1790. Writes Rev. Schmidt:

"I saw numbers of Negroes still buried in all their native ignorance and darkness, and my soul was grieved for them. Soon after some of them came to me, requesting instruction, at the same time acknowledging their ignorance in the most affecting manner. They begged that a weekly sermon might be delivered expressly for their benefit."

The societies for the religious instruction of the slaves did not, however, receive whole hearted support from the masters and owners. Although they were indifferent at first to the slaves religious instruction, after a time the owners began to look with suspicion upon the large gatherings of slaves for worship and grew to distrust the Negro preacher as a potential leader of insurrection.

That their fear may have had some foundation in truth is suggested in a poem by Paul Lawrence Dunbar, who makes an anti-bellum preacher admonish his congregation at the conclusion of a sermon on the delivery of the Hebrew children from their

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bondage in Egypt:

Now don't run and tell yo masters
Dat I's preachin discontent.

It is likewise an historical fact that the Negro preacher did take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the assembly of slaves for worship to lay plans for an organized insurrection. On this point Du Bois quotes Williams' *History of the Negro Race*:

"The sundry religions classes or congregations with Negro leaders or local preachers, into which were formed the Negro members of the Various Churches in Charleston, furnished Vesey with the first rudiments of an organization and at the same time with a singularly safe medium for conducting his underground agitation."

He says of Nat Turner, another preacher, and leader of slave insurrection in Virginia:

"He was a Christian and a man .............driven by religious fanaticism, he undertook a difficult and bloody task."

Thus we see that through the pulpit a considerable part of the Negro race became vocal and militant before he was fully literate.

The reaction on the part of the slave states to these insurrections led by Negro preachers was that "A wave of legislation passed over the South prohibiting the slaves from learning to read and write, forbidding Negroes to preach, and

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Ibid, P. 23
interfering with Negro religious meetings. Virginia declared
in 1831, "that neither slaves or free Negroes might preach,
while in Maryland and Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi similar
laws were passed."

It was in this atmosphere that the Negro newspaper came
into existence in the Northern states and began openly to carry
on the work of agitation that many Negro preachers had been
doing secretly.

B. Origin and Development

Robert T. Kerlin, a careful student of Negro life wrote:

"There is being produced in America a literature of which
America as the term is commonly understood is not aware. It
is a literature of protest—protest sometimes pathetic and
prayerful, sometimes vehement and bitter. It comes from Negro
writers, in prose and verse, in the various forms of fiction,
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We are concerned in this study with one form of this protest
literature, that of the Negro newspapers. In the preceding pages
we have described the social setting in which these papers
began their hazardous agitation against slavery. Social re-
form was the motivating force which brought the Negro press
into existence and it has since that time dominated its editorial
opinion. The history of the development of the Negro press

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3 Ibid, P. 24

falls easily into four phases: the pre-Civil-War period, the post-civil War period, the pre-World War period and post-World-war period. Whereas there are no clear cut lines of demarkation between the different periods and considerable overlapping is to be found, yet each period is individualized sufficiently to possess characteristics of its own.

The early Negro papers of the Pre-Civil-War period entered the field with a definite purpose in view - the abolition of slavery, and all effort was directed toward the accomplishment of this aim. The names of some of these early papers such as: Freedom's Journal, Rights of all, The Elevator, The Genius of Freedom, and The Liberator are suggestive of their anti-slavery policies. Available records show that Freedom's Journal was the first Negro Newspaper to appear in this country, the date of its appearance being 1827. From that time until the Civil War, thirty three years later, there occurred sporadic growths of so called newspapers about twenty-six in all.

The editors of these early papers held a distinct advantage over the militant preachers who had preceded them. They were freeman, located in Northern cities such as Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and were much better trained. John B. Russworn, who with Samuel Cornish edited Freedom's Journal, was the first college Graduate among Negroes when he took his degree from

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The Negro Year Book, 1921-22, P. 153
Bowdon in 1828. That David Walker, author of the famous Appeal, was also an influential writer is proven by the fact that as far south as Louisiana men were imprisoned for being in possession of the pamphlet. The ability and character of Frederick Douglas, the most widely known of these early editors is too well established for extended discussion here. His paper, the North Star, was a large sheet published weekly at a cost of $80. The change of name to Frederick Douglas's Paper was made, he says, in order to distinguish it from the many papers with "Stars" in their titles.

These early papers, however, were not newspapers in the strict sense of the word. They were rather organs of propaganda some being edited by individuals, while others were supported by organizations all of which had one common aim, that of freedom of the slaves. There was a scarcity of available news for a Negro newspaper and poor means for its communication, and therefore editorial opinion made up the bulk of printed matter. There was also much of that material which is now to be found in Magazines.

Financial difficulties were responsible for the short life span of most of these publications. The mass of Negroes were still enslaved and prohibited from reading printed matter, while the illiteracy rate was exceedingly high even among the small body of free Negroes found chiefly in the Northern states.

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P. 36-41
Circulation was necessarily limited and hence many of these early papers were forced out of business due to the lack of support. Frederick Douglas, however, managed to keep his paper afloat until the emancipation of the slaves and the union of the states had been assured.

During the post Civil War period the work of the abolition sheets having been accomplished, they passed from the scene and Negro publications were concerned with religious activities and problems of reconstruction. Emancipation brought with it a redifininition of the Negro's status in society. Formerly a slave he suddenly found himself a freeman whose political rights as set forth in the thirteenth andfourteenth amendments were protected by the Freedman's Bureau. The racial accomodation which had been afforded by the slave regime was definately broken and Negroes came to exist as a separate group with their own particular problems of adjustment to make. Thus during this period the "Voice of the Negro" appeared in a new role—that of aiding the bewildered and unorganized freeman to adjust themselves to their new life.

The rapid increase of papers during this period is cited by Detweiler who quotes I. Garland Penn in this regard.

"From the year 1866 on, Afro-American newspapers were being founded in almost every state, some of which died an early death while others survived many years."

7 Ibid, P. 42
8 Ibid, P. 46
Prominent among these post War periodicals were the denominational organs. The oldest one of these and the only one of that period which still survives is the Christian Recorder published as the official organ of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Although it came into existence eight years before the Civil War began, it took no part in the Abolition agitation but devoted itself to church news. In the seventies came the Southwestern Christian Advocate, The American Baptist, The Star of Zion, The Afro-Presbyterian while others of a similar nature appeared in the eighties and nineties. Matter of a religious nature, and editorial opinion on problems of adjustment for the newly emancipated Negro made up the reading material. The financial support afforded these periodicals by the denominational and fraternal bodies insured them more security and greater longevity than had been enjoyed by those of the pre-war period.

During this period there were also large numbers of editorial sheets which could hardly be termed newspapers. Mr. Fortune speaks of them as pamphlets. He states: "For many years before and after 1880, until our newspapers became established as vehicles of race news, hopes and aspirations, the thinkers of the race found an outlet for their pent-up Utica" in pamphlets. I had a collection of some ten thousand or more of these pamphlets when I disposed of my newspaper property in 1907."

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Ibid, P. 47-48
It was not, however, until near the close of the century that the Negro newspaper as we know it today was able to successfully weather the storms of adversity. The first Negro paper to be published in the South, the Colored American, printed in Augusta, Georgia, October, 1865, had been taken over by its creditors in less than six months. This in general was the history of other secular papers immediately after the war. But by the close of the century several of these pioneer papers had definitely established themselves. Mr. L. M. Hershaw, says of them in 1906 while writing on the Negro press:

"......there are twenty five or thirty (papers) published by Negroes in different sections of the country which are really a credit to the profession of journalism."

He divides the Negro newspapers of this time into four classes: school papers, religious papers, fraternal and beneficial papers, and secular papers to which belongs the great body of newspapers. Of this latter group even at this early period we find Negro editors divided on policies affecting Negro life. One group headed by the Guardian of Boston, whose editor was William Monroe Trotter, a graduate of Harvard University, claimed for the Negro all the natural, civil and political rights which inhere in man as man. This paper's motto was:

"For every right with all thy might."

It insisted upon the enjoyment of these rights now, without restrictions and qualifications not applicable to other men. The other group of editors led by T. T. Fortune of the New York Age, preached the post-ponement or present abdication of civil and political rights for economic and educational development and emphasized industrial education. Each of these warring camps found support in the leading Negro newspaper men of the day. William Calvin Chase of the Washington Bee, H. C. Smith of the Cleveland Gazette, The Conservator of Chicago, and the Advance of St. Louis, were among the more militant groups; while The Tribune of Philadelphia, edited by Chris. J. Perry a faithful churchman, The Independent of Atlanta, Georgia, The Planet of Richmond, Virginia, the Freeman of Indianapolis, whose editor was George L. Knox, and John H. Murphy's The Afro-American Ledger, both prominent churchmen, headed the conservative element.

These points of view held by the opposing groups of journalist were not fundamentally different from the two school of thought made famous by tow of the most outstanding American Negroes W. E. B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington.

The new tone of militancy which was again developing in Negro journalism may be traced to contemporary mal-adjustments which had appeared in race relations, chiefly in the South. Certain legislation known as the Black Codes, passed by many
southern states soon after the war, had taken away the Negro's newly acquired citizenship rights and had seriously hampered his economic opportunities. The withdrawal of Federal soldiers from the south by order of President Hayes removed what protection the freeman had enjoyed. Thereupon they were intimidated and kept away from the polls while legislation was passed which took away from them the ballot. The Ku Klux Klan and the Night Riders were persecuting Negroes, and lynching during the ten year period, 1890 to 1900, reached an all time high mark."

Finally a race riot of serious proportions occurred in Atlanta, Georgia in 1906 which was witnessed by Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, who was then a teacher in Atlanta University. Scores of people, both black and white, were killed and wounded in the reign of terror which lasted for five days. Other serious riots occurred in Springfield, Illinois and New York City, all of which stimulated the birth of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1910. Dr. Du Bois came to New York to become its Director of Publicity and Research, and editor of the Crisis, its official organ.

Militant Negro journalism of the pre-World-War period had its real beginning in the pen of W. E. B. Du Bois. Other Negro University graduates who were contributors to periodicals of this time, Kelly Miller, William Monroe Trotter and J. W. E. Bowen, were also critical of the conservatism and influence of
the great leader, Booker T. Washington. While they recognized his ability and paid due tribute to his achievements, yet they differed with his social philosophy, and protested against the legal discriminations and injustices being imposed upon the Negro in the south. Dr. Du Bois very clearly sets forth their points of disagreement:

"Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission....(he) distinctly ask that black people give up, at least for the present three things-----
First, political power
Second, insistence on civil rights
Third, higher education of Negro Youth-----and concentrate all their energies on industrial education, the accumulation of wealth, and the conciliation of the South. This policy has been courageously and insistently advocated for over fifteen years, and has been triumphant for perhaps ten years. As a result of this tendor of the palm-branch, what has been the return?

In these years have occurred:
1. The disfranchisement of the Negro
2. The legal creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro
3. The steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro.

These movements are not, to be sure, direct results of Mr. Washington's teachings: but his propaganda has, without a shadow of a doubt, helped their speedier accomplishment. It is
possible and probable that nine millions of men can make
effective progress in economic lines if they are deprived of
political rights, made a servile cast, and allowed only the
most meager chance of developing their exceptional men?" 12

The death of Booker T. Washington shortly after the
organization of the N. A. A. C. P. removed whatever influence he
may have had in stemming the current of growing militancy,
thus leaving Negro journalism led by the Crisis Magazine, free
to take advantage of the many levers afforded during the World
War to coast into prominence on "race" propaganda.
CHAPTER II

Scope and Circulation

A. The Scope of Negro Newspapers

The great stimulus for the development of journalism in America came during the World War period. When the United States entered into this conflict out interest in the struggle became a personal matter. Americans wanted to know of the doings of their millions of fathers, husbands, brothers and sons engaged in this world conflagration. Newspapers sprang up all over the country and those already in existence climbed into the limelight, and success on war propaganda.

There were also some 2,290,000 Negro Americans registered for service in the United States Army. When we add to this number the millions of people at home who were related to them or otherwise interested in their welfare, we have a sizable reading body of colored Americans. The white dailies were too much concerned with the larger issues involved to satisfy the special interest of this minority group in regard to the part played by their sons in France. So again societal circumstances played into the hands of Negro newspaper men.

During this time there was a great expansion of the number and circulation of Negro newspapers. It was in speaking of this period that Robert T. Kerlin said:

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1 Negro Year Book, 1918-19, P. 215
"The colored people of America are going to their own papers in these days for the news and for their guidance in thinking. These papers are coming to them from a score of Northern cities – Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cleveland: they are coming to them from the great border cities – Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, St. Louis; they are coming to them from every Southern city. Wherever in all the land there is a considerable Negro population there is a Negro newspaper. Little Rock has four, Louisville-five, Indianapolis-six, New York City-ten; the State of Georgia has nine, Mississippi-nineteen, Illinois-eleven; California-seven."

In all we find at the close of the World War some 450 periodicals published by and for Negroes. There were 70 Religious periodicals, 85 school papers, 7 organs of National Associations and Magazines of general literature, 30 fraternal organs and 220 newspapers.

Since that time there has been a great deal of fluctuation in the number of Negro newspapers. Many new ones have appeared while others have gone out of existence, changed names, merged with some other paper, or in some other manner lost their identity. Ayer and Son's Directory list only 106 newspapers edited by Negroes in 1936. That this list is incomplete,
however, is evident from the fact that the writer is in possession of a number of these papers that were being published in 1936 which this Agency does not include.

The W. B. Ziff Company in Chicago, lists (120) "Leading Negro Publications of the United States." The writer wonders, however, why such well known weeklies as The Pittsburgh Courier, The Washington Tribuen, The Philadelphia Independent, and The New York Age are not included here among the "Leading Negro Publications."

The most complete list of Negro publications available to the writer is found in the Negro Year Book, which states: "There are now 250 periodicals published by or for Negroes" (in the United States.)

In addition there are a number published in the West Indies, Africa, and one in Canada.

B. Circulation

The circulation of these papers is quite extensive. They are edited in thirty-five states and the District of Columbia and reach practically every community in the country where there is a sizable Negro population while some families in rural areas are subscribers to one or more of them. Many of these larger weeklies are nationally known, the majority, however, are local, with only sectional subscribers. There are eight of these larger papers whose circulation is estimated

5 International Year Book, 1937, P. 207
6 Negro Year Book, 1931-32 P.
7 Ibid
by, The Audit Bureau of Circulation. They are: the Afro-
American of Baltimore, with a circulation of 59,670; The
New York Amsterdam News with 27,393 subscribers; the Norfolk
Journal and Guide, of Norfolk, Virginia, 17,027; The Phila-
delphia Tribune, 16,227; The St. Louis Argus, 13,066; the
Houston Informer, 11,711 and the Dallas Express of Dallas,
Texas, completes the list with 5,993 subscribers. Among the
best known papers with an extensive circulation which are not
included in the A. B. C. are the Pittsburgh Courier, with a
sworn circulation of 76,000; the Chicago Defender, 50,000;
the New York Age, 27,200.

The Atlanta Daily World, the Nation's only Negro daily,
has a daily circulation of 9,100, the Sunday edition 15,600 and
the National edition which is printed each Wednesday has a cir-
culation of 4,500 copies. "The combined circulation of our
entire group of papers (Scott newspaper Syndicate)", writes
the editor, W. A. Scott, is 55,835. This report is compiled
each month and the figures given are on the average.

In addition to those papers already mentioned there are a
dozen or more with a circulation exceeding 10,000. Best
known among this group are: the Indianapolis Recorder; the
Phoenix Tribune, of Phoenix, Arizona; the California Eagle,
published in Los Angeles; the Chicago Whip; the Plain Dealer
of Kansas City, Kansas; the Newark Herald, of Newark, N. J.;

8 Ayer and Son's Directory, 1926
9 Letter from Editor, April 13, 1937
the Cleveland Gazette; the Shreveport Sun of Shreveport, Louisiana and the Washington Tribune, published in the Nation's capital.

The total circulation of Negro newspapers is difficult to estimate since for the most part they are not audited. Of the 120 papers listed by the W. B. Ziff Company an even 60 have no statement as to their circulation, which serves to illustrate how difficult it is to determine the total circulation. Detweiler thought that a combined circulation of Negro periodicals was probably over a million with the actual number of readers far in excess of this figure. The circulation of these periodicals today is probably not far from this figure. The total number of readers of these papers is probably four or five millions, since they are passed around extensively within the group.

C. Circulation of News

We noted that the earlier Negro papers were given over largely to editorial opinion. What news there was to be found in these papers was gathered by the editors themselves or clipped from the current dailies. The larger and more successful papers gradually developed a staff of correspondents located in strategic centers for gathering news which they sent in to the home paper. It was not until 1919 that the first news Agency,

10 Ayer and Son's Directory, 1936
11 International Year Book, 1937, P. 207
The Associated Negro Press, was formed to serve Negro newspapers. Its director was Mr. Claude A. Barrett, who still retains that position.

The Executive Staff of the Associated Negro Press today is composed of thirty members, twenty seven of whom are located in the principal cities of the United States, and one in each of the Virgin Island, London, England, and Johannesburg, South Africa. There are 67 papers holding membership that the Associated Negro Press serves. The present location is 13 3507 South Parkway, Chicago, Illinois.

This agency also functions as a cooperative news gathering and distributing organization in which each member paper is pledged to send in the important news to its home office for the benefit of the other members. It sends out weekly mimeographed releases with sufficient material for a 24 page paper. Its news stories are well written by able journalists who specialize in feature writing, news writing, society news and music.

The Scott Newspaper Syndicate is the leading news agency for Negro papers in the South. It is located at 210 Auburn Avenue, N. E. Atlanta, Georgia. The Atlanta Daily World is the leading paper in this syndicate. The Memphis World, and Birmingham World, both semi-weeklies, and thirty other members papers make up this syndicate. Most of these papers are

Letter from director March 3, 1937.
Southern but there are a few in the North as well. The home office functions much in the manner of the A. N. P. There are editorial and technical staffs to make up the copy and supply news of National and state wide interest, editorials, feature articles, comics and whatever else may be needed to make the paper complete and interesting. The home office is in communication with the other leading news agencies and with the Negro columnists, thus enabling them to supply for their member papers the best features of Negro newspapers as well as local news.

Other News Agencies Are:

National Feature
413 East 25th Street
Chicago, Illinois

Tuskegee Institute Press Service
Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

Calvin's Newspaper Service
143 West 125th Street
New York City, New York

Crusader News Service
799 Broadway, New York City, New York

Press Service of the N. A. A. C. P.
69 Fifth Avenue, New York City, New York

The growth of these various agencies has contributed much to the development of the Negro newspapers. They have widened the horizon for the editors, particularly the editors of the smaller papers, by bringing them a vast amount of well written

14 Letter from Editor, April 13, 1937
15 Chambliss, Rollin, What Negro newspapers of Georgia Say About Some Social Problems, 1933 P. 14
news whose sources they could never have hoped to reach without this service.
CHAPTER III

RACE CONSCIOUSNESS

A. Origin

Race consciousness as we understand it today is a comparatively recent development in the history of mankind. Ancient civilizations such as Greece and Rome had very little social discrimination based on color or race. We are told that in the declining years of the Roman Empire that Africans, both men and women, were important into Rome for the purpose of inbreeding with the Romans in an attempt to restore vitality to the fading Empire. Among these early cultures there was much evidence of a high degree of unity and group consciousness, but such distinctions did not take on racial significance until the age of exploration with its impact of Western culture upon that of the pre-literate black and red man.

In America this contact of whites and red men made the early pioneers race conscious, but the problems incident to the enslavement of the Negro were the greatest influences in its development. The slaves being members of one racial group and as a class subject to the same white domination developed a race consciousness. During the period of enslavement this consciousness expressed itself in various ways.

1 Macrone, I. D. Psychological Factors Affecting the Attitude of white and Black in S. Africa. S. Afr. of Science XXVII 1930, 591 ff;
There was vocal protest, an occasional slave uprising, the establishment of separate religious groups, until finally it burst into full bloom in the form of abolition propaganda of the Negro press.

Today race consciousness is one of the pronounced characteristics of American society. It is manifested by every ethnic group represented in the population. As a result of this psychology interaction between the various racial elements to be found in this country is often narrowly biased, or marked by an attitude of indifference to the welfare of the "out" group.

"As long as there are people in this Country who have common racial or nationalist interests," writes Professor Park, "they will have papers to interpret events from their own peculiar point of view. So there is, in American, an Irish press, a Jewish press and a Negro press, not to mention others published in English."

B. Race Consciousness of the Press

The Negro press thrives upon the race question and keeps its issues always alive in the minds of its readers. The editors who use the term "our group", or, "race member" rather than to use the racial name, Negro, are striving to awaken this feeling of consciousness of kind, solidarity.

3 Park, Robert E. The Immigrant Press 1922, P. 12
4 Coined and popularized by the Chicago Defender
In this respect the Negro Newspaper plays the unusual role, of fighting against race prejudice and yet existing because of the many issues which grow out of it.

On this point one editor says:

"It is argued that if the black people desire to receive all of the benefits of the American Nation that they should not seek to build up an independent racial psychology but should think only as American citizens. This is a beautiful alturistic theory but a theory it is that will not adjust itself to our present conditions. As things exist in America, we, the black people must be self centered and self-conscious if we would preserve ourselves."

Negroes in America have made long forward strides in social and economic progress during the last seventy years and are striving to divorce themselves from everything that is suggestive of the former lowly status which they occupied in this country. Hence, any implications suggestive of this former condition are resented by them. In their efforts to conform, to be like other Americans, they are extremely sensitive to any barriers which may tend to keep them apart, or to discourage their full participation in civic and social life. They resent having restrictions imposed upon them which

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The Chicago Whip, Editorial Jan. 15, 1927
hamper their economic opportunities and make the competitive struggle for existence harder for them than for members of other races. A protest against any and all such infringements finds a prominent place in the Negro newspaper.

In speaking of the use of "humilific" terms when referring to colored people one editor writes:

"The Negro feels that their sense of niceties of life should cause the average white person to refrain from using reflective terms or words about a class of people. These thoughtless persons take delight in referring to colored people as "niggers". Some claim that in using the word darkey it is done in a more patronizing spirit, but they should know that it is as offensive to colored people as other approbrious terms. It is a common occurrence in the several courts of the South to have colored witnesses or defendants referred to in this insulting manner and upheld by those who should see that the feeling of the humblest is protected. In the trial of Herdon in Atlanta, 'Nigger', "darkey" etc., were used overtime. To the credit of the colored lawyers for the defense, the court's attention was called to it, with a direct ruling that it must be discontinued."

Miss Nannie H. Borroughs, Principal of National Training School at Washington D. C., in a broadcasting discussion of the Negro said:

Savannah Tribune, March 2, 1933
"The radio announcer for the National Broadcasting Company who said no matter what the Negro is he is still a 'Negro' is as dangerous a person as a Communist or Red. In fact, he is more dangerous because he is given an opportunity to broadcast subtle, but fallacious, propaganda that breeds contempt for the Negro and promotes misunderstanding and social injustice."

The Pittsburgh Courier takes to task Supreme Court justice, McReynolds, for using the term 'darkey'. This incident occurred at a fraternity banquet and was given the Week's headlines as follows:

"SUPREME COURT JUSTICE INSULTS RACE"

After giving a summary of justice McReynolds court record which showed that he had dissented from the Supreme Court's decisions ordering new trials for the Scottsboro boys, and also in the Arkansas case where five Negro were railroaded for murder in order to save them from lynching, the article summarizes:

"The use of the term "darkey" ........ is as opprobrious to self-respecting colored citizens as the terms "dago", "sheeny", "wop" or "kike" are to the other races. However, innocently employed, the use of the word tends to show a sub-conscious mind set, which might mitigate against the

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Negro Year Book 1931-32 P. 17
rendering of an unprejudiced opinion in any case involving the constitutional rights of the Negro race."

The Negro newspaper also protests against the treatment of crime news by white papers when the accused happens to be a Negro. The indictment made against the white press in this respect is two-fold. First, that only place the Negro figures in the White paper is in the crime news; and second that the race angle rather than the crime itself is always played up and given undue prominence. Along fight against this condition has brought about the following results:

"Upon the request and through the insistence of Mr. Walter White, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Publisher William Randolph Hearst has ordered the editors of his various papers to desist from playing the Negro up in the crime news. Many leading dailies had taken this salutary step before Publisher Hearst decided that it was the fair thing to do."

Further evidence of race consciousness is reflected by the keen alertness of the press to discrimination of any kind aimed at the Negro. On the editorial page of the Guardian, published in Boston, Massachusetts is the weekly caption in large print:

8 The Pittsburgh Courier March 27, 1937
9 The Plain Dealer, Kansas City, Kansas Feb. 5, 1937
"SEGREGATION FOR COLORED IS THE REAL PERMANENT DAMNING DEGRADATION IN THE U.S.A. - Fight it."

From Dallas, Texas comes the statement that:

"NEGROES NOT INCLUDED IN PAN AMERICAN EXHIBIT"

The article continues: "The calling of A. Maceo Smith, Assistant Manager of Negro participation in the Centennial, to return the exhibits in the Hall of Negro life to the exhibitors, seems to confirm the rumor that the federal government had denied the Negro participation feature in the Pan-American Exposition for 1937.........there is much concern amongst Dallas and Texas Negro"...... Further details will be published later."

The manner in which this growing race consciousness expresses itself in the Negro group has not been confined, however, to vocal and printed protest. Leaders of the group are carrying out systematically organized programs in an effort to stimulate a protective race consciousness, and to develop in the Negro people pride in the accomplishments of their race. It was Frederick Douglas who took the position that the Negro would gain recognition by disproving the existence of the stereotyped pattern of him, and with this purpose in mind he set about publishing his paper. Today there are a number of societies or organizations whose purpose it is to reveal to the Negro historical events in which the race has figured worthy of recognition and in which Negroes may take just pride.

10 The Dallas Gazette, Jan. 30, 1937
"The time has come", says the Negro World, of New York, "for the Negro to forget and cast behind him his hero worship and adoration of other races and to start immediately to create and emulate heroes of his own. We must canonize our own saints, create our own martyrs and elevate to positions of fame and honor black men and women who have made their distinct contributions to our racial history."

The National Urban League through its Departments of Research and Investigations keeps in close touch with Negro Life in all of its phases and makes this information available through its monthly periodical, Opportunity, a well edited Magazine.

The Department of Records and Research Tuskegee Institute has until recently published an Annual Encyclopedia of the Negro, the Negro Year Book, edited by Mr. Monroe N. Work, which supplied an abundance of statistics and select literature covering every branch of activity among Negro peoples.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, though primarily a protector of Negro rights is another society carrying on research on Negro Life and molding race consciousness. Its organ The Crisis is militant and plays up the "race" issue. One of its best known columns is: Along the N. A. A. C. P. Battle-front.

Several newspapers carry sections devoted to Negro history. One of the best known of these columns is "Your History", a

Quoted Negro Year Book 1931-32 P. 16
feature carried by the Pittsburgh Courier and conducted by J. A. Rogers, a well known correspondent.

The weekly salutation is:

"Your history dates back beyond the cotton field of the South: back thousands of years before Christ."

In all there are some 175 National organizations fraternities, lodges, business association, professional associations—whose purpose it is to keep alive the realization of their communality of interest and to bind them into a more unified race conscious group.

Many of these organizations sponsor nation wide movements or programs which catch the public eyes. Thus we have the annual celebration of NegroHistory Week, sponsored by the Association For the Study of Negro Life; Vocational Opportunity Week, sponsored by the Urban League; Negro Health Week; The Annual Go to High School, Go to College Campaign fostered by the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity; National Negro Youth Week, at which time there is brought to the attention of the entire American people the bitter difficulties hampering and handicapping the Negro young people; Negro Business Week; National Negro Congress a labor convention and many other such movements whose purpose and aims are set forth, and whose activities and programs are given extensive promotion in the Negro newspapers.

12 Negro Year Book 1931-32 P. 521-525
That there is an effort to promote a fraternalism of race among Negro peoples who are widely separated, is indicated by an editorial entitled "Divided We Fall" appearing in The Weekly Mirror, a paper edited in Monrovia, Liberia.

After stating that the progress of the Black Race has been impeded by "insidious propaganda, for the purpose of stirring up a spirit of mistrust and jealousy" the editorial illustrates:

"For example the Black man living in America was told that the Ethiopian was not a member of the Black race, that he did not regard himself as such, that he looked with contempt upon Afro-Americans and wanted nothing to do with them. The Ethiopian was told, that the colored American was no better than a slave, that he was weak and spineless, and not worth making friends with. Other branches of our race living in Africa have been given a similar description of us while we in turn were told that they were all savages that murdered missionairies and was believed so long until even now, the spirit of fear and mistrust started by them is holding the black race apart.................................

While keeping us divided among ourselves they are forging social, economical and political chains to enslave the lot of us...............................

As I write this we are approaching nearer and nearer to the greatest up-heavel the world has ever seen.
Today the weapons are words, tomorrow they will be airplanes, bombs, machine guns and deadly gases and we should prepare to face this calamity with eyes open and united and with every resource of Black wit and courage ready."
CHAPTER IV

Propaganda and News

A. Propaganda

Propaganda permeates every phase of literary effort. It has crowded into the realm of education and distorts and re-defines the findings of pure science. We may discover it in art, poetry and sculpture, while it comes to us over the radio, on the screen, and through the medium of music. Similarly this form of promotion finds a prominent place in the press. Every group with special interests seeks to advance its cause wherever possible by publication. In this respect Negro journalist are not different from other interest groups. They play the dual role of dissemination of news, and race promotion.

The great opportunity for blending important news and race propaganda on a big scale came during the world war period. The war with its inherent journalistic possibilities was the motivating influence which stimulated the development of Negro journalism into a profession. That Negro soldiers performed creditably on the battlefields of Europe there is much evidence all of which was grist for the mill of their newspapers. Race promotion and news are well blended in this extract.

"Are you Aware", asks one paper of this period, "That a Negro was the first American to receive the Croix de Guerre
with Palm and Gold Star? That three Negro Regiments and several battalions and companies were cited and had their flags decorated for valorous conduct? That Negroes Placed for the First Time in Artillery and signal corps units won high distinction? That Negroes in the early part of the war held 20 per cent of all territory assigned to Americans. That out of 45,000 Negroes engaged in battle only nine were taken prisoners? Negroes fought to the death rather than submit to captivity. That the Negroes established a record for continuous service in the trenches—191 days?¹

Exceptional cases of individual heroism and bravery were given detailed description.

Another story is introduced by these headlines:

THE FIRST SOLDIERS AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY
FORCES DECORATED FOR BRAVERY WERE TWO NEGROES

The story continues:

"The first soldiers of the American Army to be decorated for bravery in France were two Negroes, Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts, members of the 369th Infantry which was formerly the 15th New York National Guard Regiment.

On the night of May 15th, 1918, these two men while on sentry duty were attacked by a raiding party of some twenty or more Germans. The names of these two men will stand out forever on the roll of honor of their race. Battling in the

¹ Kerlin, Robert, T. The Voice of the Negro, (quoted) 1919--p. 31-32.
blackness of night with their rifles, hand grenades and bolo knives, wholly deprived of their assistance of their comrades they put flight an enemy assaulting party of at least twenty-four strong. For this act of bravery, Johnson and Roberts received medals of honor.......

News of this kind was headline material in anybody's newspaper and had a powerful influence in promoting race pride among the Negro population whose members were figuring for the first time in the World news of a creditable nature. It appeared that when placed on an equal footing that the darker brother was proving his ability to take his place in the world of affairs.

The Negro press enjoyed a hitherto unheard of prestige when its leading newspaper men were called to Washington for a conference regarding the part they could play in molding public opinion in the Negro population.

Such national and international events as these which grew out of the world war furnished the groundwork for a re-definition of the Negroe's status in America, and were responsible for the renewed journalistic attack upon American society and the many inequalities of the bi-racial system which were having a negative effect upon the progress of the Negro. Thus the race question pure and simple was another issue given a new impetus by this conflict.

From the first putting the Negro into the army was

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2 Negro Year Book, 1918-19, P. 98 (quoted)
fiercely resented in the South because it made the colored soldiers an equal of the white. The readers of Negro newspapers were told that white soldiers were carrying into France the race prejudice peculiar to America.

Factual evidence for this growing propaganda is indicated by Major J. E. Spingarn of the American Expeditionary Forces, who publically accused Southern white officers with treason if they preferred white ascendency in the army to the measures necessary for efficiency and for victory.

Negro editors were quick to recognize the great possibilities for advancing their own profession inherent in such a situation. The Negro reading public already made gullible by the war news was in a receptive mood for whatever propaganda the newspaper men may wish to print. That these press men were sincere in their efforts to champion the Negro cause there is little question, but that they have also exploited this field for purely commercial purposes cannot be denied. Robert S. Abbot, editor of the Chicago Defender, states that he built his paper to its powerful position through propaganda against the south and that such a policy would continue as he had control of it. 'I tell the truth if I can get it, and if it suits my purpose, he said; but if I can't get the facts, I read between the lines and tell what I know to be facts, even though the reports say different.'

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4 Jones, D. R., Effect of Negro Press on Race Relation in South, 1932, p. 34.
This appears to have been the attitude of other Negro editors who capitalized on propagandizing the race issues which grew out of the contact of Negro soldiers with the French people. The absence of race prejudice in France was contrasted with the caste system based on race in America, all of which made a tremendous appeal to American Negroes and swelled the circulation of Negro Newspapers. At the close of the war when Negro soldiers began returning to the United States they brought with them a new attitude toward America, and toward the question of race relations. After spending months on the battle fields fighting side by side with white American soldiers and those of other nations they openly resented being discriminated against, and forced to ride in "Jim Crow" cars. They challenged the whole structure of society wherein Negroes were forced to accept the subordinated role. Their attitude is shown in this extract from an editorial.

"We have tasted of liberty and know that no force beneath the universe can enslave us; we have committed ourselves to the battle for liberty and justice."

White America resented this new militancy on the part of the Negro. Especially was this true in the South the foremost advocate of keeping the Negro in his place. Conflict was imminent in such a situation. A Negro soldier was lynched apparently for saying that he was no longer afraid of a white man since he had seen one run for his life on the field of

5 Kerlin, Robert, T., The Voice of the Negro 1919, P. 33.
battle. A wave of race conflict and social upheaval swept over the entire country. Mob rule and lynching increased and where the Negro fought back many serious race riots ensued one occurring in the Nation's capital itself. The Ku Klux Klan, an old acquaintance organized during the post Civil-War period for the intimidation and control of Negro, was revived and brought into play. As a result of the mal-adjustments in socio-economic conditions in the south and attracted by the awakening industrial opportunities in the North, a great wave of Negro migration to Northern and urban areas ensued.

Throughout this post-war period Negro newspapers played a dominant role. They boldly championed the recognition of the Negro's civil and political rights while many of the Northern papers advocated complete social equality.

"We propose", says the Rising Sun of Pueblo, Colorado, "to wage a relentless warfare against everything that prevents us from being recognized as full fledged citizens of America....We propose to contend for our complete rights before the law, just representation in politics; meritorious consideration in labor, no discriminating in education or public accommodation, no domiciliary restrictions, and a repeal or prevention of the enactment of any statute or ordinance by either state, municipality or nation in contravention to the constitution of the United States of America."

This equality propaganda of the Negro papers offended the

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Detweiler, F. G. The Negro Press, 1922.
social codes of the South to such an extent that violent retaliation often resulted.

The printing office of the Houston Informer was broken into one occasion and the entire edition of the paper, which was ready for the mails, together with the subscription and advertising books and other important documents were stolen over night. The Chicago Defender was banned by city ordinance in Pinebluff Arkansas, while a shipment of the same papers was burned in Mississippi. Members of the Ku Klux Klan invaded the office of the Baptist Leader, printed in Birmingham, Alabama, and notified the editor, that unless the publication ceased making attacks on the notorious order harm would be done. Many other editors received threatening letters for printing "radical" articles.

All such attacks upon the Negro press were given wide publicity in their papers and undoubtedly increased their circulation and influence. Especially was their influence on Negro migration felt. While they denounced the South, the industrial and social possibilities for Negroes in the North were widely propagandized. Week after week the Northern papers arrived in Southern communities with glowing news items and editorials inviting the Negro to move North. A letter received by the New York Age illustrates the influence these papers were having on migration.

"When spring opens we want to come North. We see through

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7 Ibid 152-158.
the columns of the Age very encouraging words for those who want work. We are enthused over this intelligence. Have been reading in the Age about employment offered at Holyoke, Mass., and in the tobacco fields of Connecticut. Let us know how we can get our tickets to come North, so we will be ready when the time arrives for our departure."

During the twenties there came upon the scene some of the best known among the present day writers - George S. Schuyler, A. Phillip Randolph, Chandler Owen, J. A. Rogers, Charles S. Johnson, W. A. Scott - men who no longer depend upon the pastorage, the small business, or civil position for a living while they wrote for Negro papers, but who were rather professional journalist. If we add to this group the present day crop of professional newspaper men such as Carl Murphy of the Afro American, P. B. Young, editor of the Norfolk (Va.) Journal and Guide, Rovert S. Vann of the Pittsburgh Courier, C. A. Scott editor of the Atlanta World and many others, we have represented well trained and serious students of American life who waste little time in loosely woven agitation but rather harness propaganda in support of particular issues. Through the use of their papers they are seeking to motivate Negroes to use their political power and civic pressures to obtain for themselves the things about which the older school waxed eloquent. Thus in the Parker case, the Negro Press in an organized campaign fought to block his appointment to

8. Ibid p. 73
Supreme Court. Propaganda is undoubtedly a dominant characteristic of the press but is being used more pointedly than before.

Here appears an editorial from the Atlanta World to this effect. "Negroes Must Take Active Part in Civic Affairs. September 20th the city of Atlanta holds its primary. While Negroes have not been accustomed to vote in the white primary there is no legal reason that they should not cast their ballot in such a primary. Even though they do not vote or attempt to vote in the primary, there is no reason why they should not register and prepare themselves to vote in the general election, and to put out a ticket if necessary for the different vacancies to be filled by councilmen and other officials....The leaders feel that 90,000 Negroes, one-third of the city's population, should assist in the operation of our government. We cannot expect plain justice until we are represented."

B. News

We may be led to believe from what has been said in the preceding pages, that the Negro press is all propaganda. Such an assumption, however, would be fallacious since the Negro Newspaper has a substantial grip on every phase of current news common to all newspapers. World topics are discussed authoritatively by correspondents many of whom are on the scene of action.

The Atlanta World, August 13, 1933
The Negro papers cannot hope to compete with the Metropolitan dailies in supplying news of the day. Hence, their approach must have some other appeal than that of impersonal news which would be for the most part stale by the time the papers made their weekly appearance. This contact is established through race, or, oppression psychosis. There is reflected a distinct attitude of fraternalism toward oppressed people of all races and classes. The exploited Chinese, the Hindus, the Jews in Germany, and the Natives of Africa all find sympathetic treatment in the Negro Newspaper.

We are informed by The Tampa Bulletin that:

"GREAT BRITIAN, RULER OF DARK SUBJECTS, HAS FEW SURVIVING CHANCES.

Dallas—(By Claude C. Teffort For A. N. P.)—

Britannica still rules the waves!

But as one writer aptly puts it she also "waives the rules"

The sun sets, but never on the British Empire, The greatest power the World has known.

But what about Britian's chances in the next war? How will she fare?

From all indications she has everything to lose and nothing to gain. This will certainly have a very decided effect on the millions of dark subjects now under her rule..............

Will Colonies Help?

Will Britian have the loyal support of all her colonies in the event of war? And if war does come and she is weakened,
will she be able to keep her possessions from declaring their independence?

The British have lost quite a lot of prestige already since the Italio-Ethiopian affair, and now the muddled Spanish situation. Will the colonies think the same of their big protector?

Things do not look any too good for England. India is seething with unrest. Canada has a strong growing sentiment against aiding the Empire in war. Ireland, right next door has already won her independence...........

The averages show that as a world power, Britain has just about spent its day."

The Italio-Ethiopian war because of the race conflict involved was given wide publicity in the Negro papers. "Special correspondents" carried on an extensive campaign of pro-Ethiopian propaganda to the last. As late as February, 1936 a (Special to the Courier) reads:

Rogers Reveals Ethiopia has Recaptured Over Two-Thirds of The Territory Italians 'Grabbed'.
Ras Seymoun and Ras Kassa Have Outsmarted Il Duce's Board of Strategy Salassie to Use Italian Roads.

By J. A. Rogers.

Assis Ababa, Feb. 3. - Dispatches from commanders at the Northern front near Hauzen indicated that ......Ethiopian troops had captured more than two-thirds of the territory

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10 The Tampa Bulletin, Jan. 30, 1937
11 Pittsburgh Courier, Feb. 8, 1936
relinquished to the Italians at the start of the war. Ras
11
Seymoun has "Mopped up"

The Ethiopian cause still is given much space in the
news and editorial comment.

One recent editorial reads:
New York April 22 - "Mussolini's rape of Ethiopia continues
to make the nations of the world jittery.........

The whole world is paying dearly because France and
England truckled to Mussolini instead of squelching him......
But all this is to the black man's advantage when the white
12
nations begin to crack up his day will come."

Since the Negro Newspaper is addressed primarily to the
American Negro, we may reasonably expect the bulk of the news
to be devoted to problems and interests in which they are
immediately concerned. The colored people read their papers
primarily to find out what the twelve million or more American
Negroes are doing. One is not aware of the magnitude of the
Negroe's cultural life in America until he reads their news
papers. Scattered throughout the length and breadth of the
land are these millions of people whose chief source of in-
formation concerning Negro activities is the Negro press.
Through the editorials they keep in touch with current thought
of the race leaders. They learn of the Negroes activities in
the business world, in educational, political and civic affairs.

11 Pittsburgh Courier Feb. 8, 1936
12 Ibid April, 24, 1937.
They read of individual achievements by race members in science, the professions, music, stage, screen and in sports. At last but by no means least, is the society news and feature material. On a few of these points we shall let the press speak for itself.

1. Business

BUSINESS LEADERS DISCOVER HAITI ON "GLORY ROAD" TO RECOVERY.

SPALDING, WRIGHT AND OTHERS RETURN FROM TEN-DAY INSPECTION TOUR WITH GLOWING REPORT OF REPUBLIC'S FUTURE.

By Edgar T. Ronzeare
Staff Correspondent

New York, April 22—Haiti's depression-torn economic structure is being rebuilt on the solid foundation of President Steno Vincent's far-sighted economic program. This is the consensus of a good-will delegation which just returned this week. Headed by Major Wright, president of the Citizen and Southern Bank and Trust Company of Philadelphia the delegates disembarked on Monday from the S. S. Columbia after a ten-day observation tour in the Black Republic.

President Vincent has the answer to most of his country's ills. It is Haiti's lack of capital. Her industrial captains, dealing primarily in coffee, bananas, cocoanuts, grapefruit and oranges have created vast markets in France and America which Haitian planters cannot supply.
Under the Presidents reconstruction program, Haiti is developing her own experts.........

The eyes of every forward looking Haitian from Stenic Vincent down, are focused on 1943. That year will see the liquidation of the Haitian debt now estimated at nine million 13 dollars."

2. Politics

The Negro is coming more and more to occupy an important place in the political life of the country especially is this true in the north. There are a number of state and city posts occupied by Negroes and there is one Congressman, Mr. Arthur Mitchell. Mobility in political affairs is keenly watched and reported by the press. Thus we learn that the:

"Appointment of William Hastey as federal district judge in the Virgin islands by President Roosevelt has confirmed by the Senate .... Mr. Hastey is the first colored man appoint-
ed to the federal bench and the youngest federal judge. He is 32 years old."

3. Education

The educational world including the 109 Negro Colleges and Universities in the United States, their administration, faculty, and student activities, furnishes an endless source of news for Negro newspapers.

_________________________________________
13 The Pittsburgh Courier, April 24, 1937
14 The Atlanta Daily World April 27, 1937
DEANS AND REGISTRARS
TO MEET AT SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Baton Rouge, La. - (and ) "Plans are under way at Southern University for the entertainment of some 200 persons who are expected to attend the 12th annual meeting of the National Association of Collegiate Deans and Registrars in Negro Schools, February 10-12. William H. Wiggins, President of the Association and Assistant Registrar at Prairie View State College, will preside."

4. Social News

Church news, and fraternal activities are given due space while society life and an abundance of feature material are pronounced characteristics of the Negro newspaper. Colored people have come to lean heavily upon their own press for news of this kind. Events of the day are read in the metropolitan dailies, and while it is true that some of them carry "Colored Social Notes", they fall short of satisfying the desire for society news among their colored readers. Hence, it is in this field of human interest material that the Negro newspaper makes one of its strongest appeals to the reader. While they all strive to fill this demand many of the larger weeklies have created a superstructure of Negro society life which is very superficial and out of harmony with other phases of Negro life. In self defense the press-man maintain that that is what their readers want, which is probably true. It is for the readers an escape

15 The Tampa Bulletin Feb. 6, 1937.
from reality, an antidote against their precarious social status.

Most of these papers have sections given over to the stage, screen, music, books and drama. In this field the race is well represented by a large number of artists whose reputation is well established. On the stage and screen are such familiar characters as Bill Robinson, Stepin Fetchet, Paul Robeson, Louisa Beavers, Fredi Washington, Nina Mae McKinney and others.

In music are Marian Anderson, Roland Hayes, Frank Dawson, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, J. Rosemond Johnson, Clearance Cameron White. In literature and drama we find the ever present W. E. B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, and James Weldon Johnson. If we add to this group a whole host of lesser lights, orchestra leaders, night club entertainers and what not, we have a large reservoir of source material from which much interesting news is drawn.

The realm of sports with a sizeable array of professional and College athletes is another source of news for the Negro papers. Among the present crop are such performers as Joe Louis, Ozzie Simmons, Jesse Owens, John Henry Louis, Cornelius Johnson, David Albritton, Melvin Walker, Ben Johnson, Eulace Peacock, Johnnie Woodruff, Al Threadgill, all of whom are top notchers and big names in any paper and are translated into "race" heroes in the Negro press.

4. Letters

Special recognition or distinction won by a Negro in any field - scholarship, education, science-finds a welcome place
in the newspapers. Thus we learn that:

DR. JONES SURPASSES EDWARD VIII

One of the four American Negroes recognized, the Wilberforce Educator appears in International Who's Who in a paragraph with more attention than Edward VIII.

Dr. Gilbert H. Jones, former president of Wilberforce University, and now a professor of Political science is given place in 1937 International Who's Who. Dr. Jones is the author of several books, pamphlets and magazine articles."

5. Science

DR. CRAVER TELLS OF COMBINED MILK

Jackson, Miss. April 19, (A. N. P.) - an "instant peanut coffee" which can be made by adding a teaspoonful of the liquid to a cup of water and which includes sugar and cream in the same extract from peanut was among 300 useful products described here Monday by Dr. George W. Carver, famous Tuskegee scientist at the Mississippi Farm Chemirgic conference."

6. Father Divine

Recently a new comer has forced his way into the news columns is the person of Father Divine, the Harlem cult leader. The press-men are apparently as baffled by his phenomenal rise to power and how he manages to stay there as are the rest of

16 The Columbus Advocate, April 19, 1937
17 Ibid, April 19, 1937
us. Comment on him is non commital.

AFRAID OF DIVINE

New York—"Father Divine has not yet been forced to pay, it was learned early this week. The Divine case is now in the hands of an official referee. It seems that no judge is willing to take the responsibility of forcing Divine to pay, since a judge died suddenly a few years ago, after rendering a decision against the Harlem cult leader."

DIVINE SETTLES

New York—Payment of $7,724.15 in cash on Monday settled the Byness auto-crash judgement against Father Divine and his white secretary, John Lamb, in time to halt contempt proceedings against the cult leader scheduled for Thursday.

The same mystery which has shrouded Divine's financial status throughout two years of court litigation veiled the source of the case, which was turned over by Nat N. Kranzler, white, Newark attorney, acting "solely for John Lamb."

Sensational news is still given a prominent place in many papers. The Chicago Defender a pioneer in this field still holds to this policy. Murder, lynching, scandal, race discrimination, all in the most gruesome details are presented to its readers. Other papers, the Chicago World, The Afro-American feature sensationalism; while the Washington Tribune, and the Norfolk Journal and Guide pay little attention to

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18 Washington Tribune, Jan. 23, 1937
19 Afro-American Jan. 30, 1937
the sensational. The Tribune finds that Washington's intellectual level among its readers makes it unnecessary to appeal to its readers through this channel.

We may summarize by saying that the news content of the Negro Newspaper covers every phase of American life, which may be made interesting to its readers. The editors have been dominated by the belief that if their newspaper wants to grow in circulation, that they must find out what type of news their reading public wants and meet that demand. This policy has led to an emphasis on race, and promotion, thus making much of the news highly opinionated more nearly resembling the editorial than news items.
CHAPTER V

The Demand for Status

The fourteenth Amendment made the Negro a citizen of the United States while the fifteenth gave him the right to vote, but the freedom, justice, equality, guaranteed him under the law have not been granted in actual experience. So long as the Negro is willing to accept this role of an underprivileged citizen some form of accommodation between the two races is maintained, but wherever he seeks to secure for himself the same opportunities and privileges which are enjoyed by the majority group, conflict ensues.

For the last half century or more the progress of the Negro race in America has been commented upon. Wealth has increased from $20,000,000 at the close of the civil war to $2,000,000,000 in 1927. Illiteracy within the group has steadily declined from 81.4 per cent in 1870 to 16.3 per cent in 1930. There are 109 Colleges and Universities in the United States devoted to the training of thousands of Negro Youth; while graduates in large numbers are being turned out each year from the mixed Universities throughout the Northern and Western States. Professional and business men and women are taking their places in the world of affairs and there are marked evidences of a developing middle class

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1 Reuter, E.B., The American Race Problem, 1927, P.(232)
among the proletariat who are invading new fields of industry with greater economic possibilities. With such a large section of the population on the upward march to social, political and economic accommodations of former years between the black and white races are being disrupted. The Negro refuses to stay put; he refuses to accept without protest the inferior role, to be segregated, jimmied discriminated against, or, in any way singled out because of race and treated differently from other citizens.

It is this attitude that meets with opposition from the majority group. It is a stock example that any southerner will tell you that "a Nigger is alright in his place". The same southerner will interpret place as occupying any of the stereotyped character roles - the black mammy, uncle Tom, Sally the cook, or John, the plantation worker. The new Negro, on the other hand has come to understand place as being the level to which his abilities, intellectual attainment, and economic success will carry him. Economic rivalry is undoubtedly an important factor to be taken into account, especially on the lower income levels, but the economic factor fails to explain the whole story. The question of status, is what the larger issue is concerned with. The white group will accept him but not as an equal. In the South where the conflict is more acute, a colored nurse with a white baby in her arms may ride in the same railroad car with the white passengers, food may be prepared and served by colored
persons, but the Honorable Arthur W. Mitchell, a United States Congressman is forced to ride in a jim-crow coach and not allowed first class accommodations since such an act would imply equality.

These social attitudes may be traced back to the period of chattel slavery and constitute a distinct culture lag. The white south still refuses any social recognition to what was once their property. Such attitudes are not confined to any one class or section but permeate the whole societal structure. Whereas the "poor whites" are further embittered by having to compete with the Negro, the upper class resents just as acutely any effort on his part which may tend to challenge white superiority. During the last Presidential election, the Democratic Official Ballot of the State of Alabama had the words "white supremacy" printed across the top of the Ballot, just above the rooster. The present Governor of Florida, Fred P. Cone, in discussing a proposal to raise the salary of president J.E.R.Lee, of the State College for Negroes, to $4,000, told the budget board that "no Negro on earth was worth $4,000 a year salary not to teach school". A distinguished clergyman in the Southern Episcopal Church after some mental conflict, announced a few years ago that he had resolved that

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4 The Richmond Plannet, Jan. 23, 1937
5 Philadelphia Independent, Feb. 14, 1937
thenceforth when a colored woman was decently married, to address her as "Mrs. , "out of respect," as he explained for the holy state of matrimony."

Throughout the South white people refuse to address a Negro by the title of "Mr.", or "Mrs.", since such action would be indicative of equality of status.

B. The Role of The Press

Foremost among the many agencies demanding status for the group have been the Negro newspapers. From the start they have been for the most part aggressive and uncompromising. The degree of militancy reflected, however, has been influenced by sectionalism. In general the Northern papers have been more militant than those of the South. This may be explained to some extent by the fact that the Northern press-men enjoy greater security against acts of violence which have occasionally been committed against the person and property of the more outspoken Southern editors. One Georgia Newspaper man is quoted as saying that the Crusader News Agency releases were "a little too radical for our people", and he refused to print them. Another editor in Mississippi in a letter to the writer states that, "in this section of the country there are many things that a man (meaning Negro) may desire to say and do, that he cannot do under the existing circumstances. It is


7 Chambliss, Rollin, 1932, P. 19 What Negro Newspaper of Georgia Say About Some Social Problems
not for lack of manhood", he explains, "but we have to use common sense if we expect to stay here".

Due to the element of sectionalism Negro peoples are faced with widely different social and economic problems, and the editors themselves are influenced by regional conditions to such an extent that there has often emerged different types of leadership all with a particular set of demands. Such a condition has often caused the question to be raised, just what does the Negro want?

What seems to be a fair answer to this question, representative of the group, is offered by one editorial:

"We want", it states, "To be let alone. We want no laws, no concessions of any kind in which we are named as distinct and apart from all other American citizens. As American citizens we are entitled to just what other American citizens get. That and no more...... All we ask is the right to live our lives as others live theirs. We are tired of being constantly supervised by those who have neither our interest, nor the interest of their country at heart. We ask for the right to work, to play, to eat and sleep as men and women of American. We make no claim for any special brand of equality, rather we want equality of opportunity to do that which we can do best to the interest of all concerned........"

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8 Young, L. R., Editor of Weekly Echo, Meredian Miss. April 30, 1927

9 Chicago Defender (quoted in Pierce, N.A.A.C.P. Study in Pressure, 1935, P. 25
Although the Southern editors have the same general aims-group promotion and the elimination of gross inequalities that the Northern newspapers men have, it is from the latter that we get the unconditional demand complete equality boldly set forth. The platform of the Chicago Defender illustrates this point.

Robert S. Abbot, editor and publisher of the Defender, says that he founded his paper upon the theory that his people, "would support anyone who takes the lead in our fight for complete equality and justice. I believe today as I have always believed that a Negro Newspaper can survive only so long as it adheres to this policy." On the editorial written in large white letters in a black block are the words:

1. AMERICAN RACE PREJUDICE MUST BE DESTROYED

Robert S. Abbot

just below the platform continues:

2. The opening up of all trades and trades unions to blacks as well as whites.

3. Representation in the President's cabinet.

4. Engineers and firemen on all American railroads and government controlled industries.

5. Representation in all departments of the police forces over the entire United States.

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6. Government schools open to all American citizens in preference to foreigners.

7. Conductors on all railroads throughout the United States.

8. Motormen and conductors on surface, elevated and motor-buss lines throughout America.


10. Full enfranchisement of all American citizens.

11. Below this is another black block with the following quotation in white letters:

"A MAN WHO IS GOOD ENOUGH TO SHED HIS BLOOD FOR HIS COUNTRY IS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE GIVEN A SQUARE DEAL AFTERWARD. MORE THAN THAT NO MAN IS ENTITLED TO, AND LESS THAN THAT NO MAN SHALL HAVE!"

-Theodore Roosevelt-

Any reader of the pages of the Defender knows that is stands squarely upon this platform.

The Afro-American sets forth its platform as follows:

1. Colored Policemen, policewomen and fireman.

2. Colored representatives on city, county, and boards of education.

3. Equal salaries for equal work for school teachers, without regard to color and sex.

4. Colored members of boards of state institutions where inmates are colored.
5. The organization of labor unions among all groups of colored workers.

6. A University and Agricultural College for colored people, supported by the state.

7. Closer co-operation between farmers of the state and federal farm agents.

The Courier-Digest, of Uniontown, Pa. takes for its platform:

1. Promotion of Negro Business.
2. Breakdown of segregation in public places.
4. Encouragement and promotion of education.
5. Building of greater race pride and selfrespect.
6. Exposure of fraudulent political and business activities.

Written in large print across the top of the editorial page of the Guardian of Boston, Mass., is the heading:

SEGREGATION FOR COLORED IS THE REAL PERMANENT DAMNING DEGRADATION IN THE U. S. A.-FIGHT IT.

These platforms are typical of the note of militancy expressed in these Northern papers.

Those of the south are more cautious in their declarations as was previously indicated but taken as a whole the Negro paper's demands may be narrowed down to particular issues. The fight they wager is not against vague generalities but against specific infringements of what the editors believe to
be constitutional rights. These demands may be summarized into a few primary issues on which the most of them seem to agree. They demand: that lynching be stopped and that Negroes be given the same protection accorded other citizens; equal educational facilities; equal industrial opportunities; that Negroes be allowed to vote without undue restriction; justice in the courts; and the abolition of discrimination, segregation and jim-crowism.

The point at issue is well stated by Charles M. Melden, one contributor to Negro editorial opinion.

"The Negro is not concerning himself as much as his white neighbor thinks, with social equality," he writes. "He is not so anxious to thrust himself upon the white man's society. He does not consider it a supreme honor to sit beside a white person in a public conveyance, to eat with him, or to marry his daughter. What he is concerned with, and has reason to be, are his prerogatives, as a citizen - his civil rights and privileges-guaranteed to him under the constitution of his country, but denied him through the cunning machinations and superior power of the white race."

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Melden, Charles, M., From Slave to Citizen, 1921, p. 60
1. Lynching

One of the first constitutional guarantees of citizenship in the United States is that of trial by one's peers. Since Negroes accused of crime in some Southern states are frequently lynched before being brought to trial, or immediately thereafter one of the most vehement demands of Negro newspapers is for protection against mob rule. They denounce lynching and ardently support anti lynching legislation. One editorial on this subject reads:

"Lynching as well as kidnapping should be made a Federal offense. The states have proven conclusively their inability or unwillingness to apprehend and convict those guilty of lynching. If Congress has power to make kidnapping a Federal offense, why not lynching? Isn't lynching just as great a crime as kidnapping? It seems that we are unwilling to have enacted laws sufficient for the protection of all Americans, until, some outstanding American becomes a victim... There are adequate laws for the prosecution, conviction and punishment of all types of criminals. There should be also adequate laws for the protection of those who may not be criminals against lynching."

From the nation's capitol comes a similar comment on this problem.

"We hear Congress expects to stage another rumpus over an Anti-lynching bill. Opposition to such legislation may

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11 Atlanta World, Oct. 16, 1933 (Quoted from Chambliss, R., What Negro Newspapers of Georgia Say about Some Social Problems 1933. P. 68
be able to block it again.

Perhaps it should be blocked - we are still open to persuasion on this issue. But deeply as we deplore most Congressional debate which puts nothing tangible through the mill, wrangling about lynching may not be a waste of time. Every debate on this subject in the National form strengthens National feeling against lynching.

"That puts responsibility in the matter squarely up to state and local authority in the territory which opposes Federal anti-lynching law. The issue always has been simple and still is. Either local authority must stop lynching or confess its impotence and made way for Federal action. Thus far the states have refused to accept the responsibility and opposed acceptance of it by central government. That dog-in-the manger position can't be held in indefinitely."

At present the Negro press is unanimous in its support of the Gavagan Bill which recently was passed by the lower house by a 277-119 vote.

2. The Courts

That the Negro writers are critical of the kind of justice meted out to those Negroes so unfortunate as to be brought before the court, is apparent to anyone who reads their papers. They have protested much against the fact that until recently Negroes in the South have been entirely excluded from jury service thus leaving a Negro to be tried by a white jury more

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12 The Washington Tribune, Jan 16, 1937
than likely to be prejudiced. At an earlier period W. E. B. DuBois wrote:

"Daily the Negro is coming more and more to look upon the law and justice not as protecting safe guards, but as a source of humiliation and oppression. The laws are made by men who have little interest in him; they are executed by men who have absolutely no motive for treating the black people with courtesy, or consideration and finally the accused law breaker is tried not by his peers, but too often by men who would rather punish ten innocent Negroes than to let one guilty one escape."

The attitude of Negro editors toward the court of justice has not changed materially since that time.

"For generations in this country", states one editorial, "when a Negro came into court facing a white opponent, he had to settle not only the question involved in the charge against him but also all the traditional charges against his race - in fact the whole race question. Like Socrates before his accusers, he had to face a jury which was influenced not only by the evidence just presented, but also by the evidence just presented, but also by the evidence that had been taught them in their infancy, in their growing up, in literature, taverns, shops, and from a million other sources."

Even so conservative a periodical as Opportunity, in

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14 Pickens, Wm., (quoted from Chambliss, R., What Negro Newspapers in Georgia Say About Some Social Problems P. 36.
commenting upon this subject says that..."it is in our courts of justice that the ugliest chapter of his (the Negro's) degradation is written. In his case the code is reversed. Whereas the white citizen, according to legal ethics, is always assumed to be innocent until he is proven guilty, the black one is generally assumed to be guilty unless he can prove his innocence."

The press too is critical of the laxity with which the court deals with criminals when the participants are Negroes. In speaking of the 27 homicides committed in that city during the year 1936, the Richmond (Va.) Planet says:

"Every one of these Negro killers were apprehended by the police and brought to trial in the criminal courts of this city...it is sufficient to say that the number of acquittals and the light punishment meted out to a vast majority of these killers suggest either unpreparedness on the part of the law enforcement officials or a studied indifference to the magnitude of crime when the principals are Negroes...

They will kill as long as they are led to believe that killing a Negro is of minor importance in the eyes of the law."

3. Economic Opportunities

The press demands status for the Negro in the economic life of the country. That the black workers in the main are to be found in unskilled and the lower wage brackets in industry; and also constitute a larger proportionate number of

15 Opportunity, May 1932, P. 157
16 The Richmond Planet Jan 23, 1937
share croppers in the south is a well known fact. This marginal and unstable position which he occupies has led the press to insist that Negro workers be included and given equal status in labor unions.

"The Negro's worst enemy," states one commentator, "is not his white employer or the capitalist, but his fellow white worker."

The American Federation of Labor in dealing with the Negro labor problem has never made any conscientious effort to include him, and when on those occasions attention has been given to specific instances of discrimination, the officials have washed their hands of the affair with the declaration that it is not the policy of the Federation to dictate the policy of locals in this respect.

With the rise of the C. I. O. the question of the Negro's status in these unions has been a primary issue. Editorial comment is more favorable toward the latter organization since the Negro workers are included on the same basis with white workmen.

"The Unions backing the Committed for Industrial Organization seem to be more sensible than craft unions, on the race question as well as in other matters. Even in the most backward parts of the South, where segregation is a religion, white and colored members of the United Mine Workers belong to the same locals and elect officers of the both races

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17 The Pittsburgh Courier Feb. 22, 1936.
according to ability. The same enlightened attitude toward colored workers obtains in the Garment industry in New York. The laundry workers and dock workers have also pushed the race question into the background, or at least out of the foreground in union affairs."

At the present writing the labor situation is a very unsettled affair, and just what the Negro's ultimate status will be is highly speculative.

Charges of labor peonage in the South have been repeatedly made by the press and investigation has frequently shown grounds for complaint.

"For years", states the Savannah Tribune, "reports have been made frequently of the existence of peonage in many parts of the South, and severe treatment inflicted upon the ones who attempted to escape from such a forced bondage. It has been extremely difficult to cause conviction, even though evidences have been convincing. In some cases the accused are justified by unjust state laws. These laws are not the cause of untold hardships upon thousands of Negroes in the rural districts, who may fall in the hands of unscrupulous farm owners. Most of these people are working and only receive in renumeration food from a commissary at many times the price that the same article can be secured in any legitimate store. Very often the laborer is charged with more goods than re-

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18 The Pittsburgh Courier April 24, 1934.
ceived, causing a supposed indebtedness to the owner. This has to be worked out. If attempt is made to leave before this is done, the accused is arrested, carried through some form of trial, and Farmed out to some one in payment of the cost."  

There were a number of prosecutions under the charge of peonage of plantation owners, turpentine and lumber camp operators. During the period 1935-30 four men were sentenced to imprisonment in the Atlanta Federal prison from Anderson, South Carolina. Five were found guilty of peonage in Texas, and two in Mississippi.

In self protection against this form of exploitation "The years of 1935 and 1936 saw the organization of at least 25,000 black and white workers of the cotton-belt farms of the south into a Southern Tenant Farmers Union."  

Civil Service has not been immune to charges of discrimination. From New York comes word that "Complaint has been made to the post office department in Washington by the N.A.A.C.P., on the passing over of Clyvanus Browne, Jr., a colored man, who stood number three on the eligible list for clerks and carriers in the Woodbury, New Jersey, Post Office." A similar "Protest has been lodged with the Post Office department in Washington because the post master

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20 The Negro Year Book, 1931-32
21 Chicago World, Feb. 6, 1937
22 The Columbus Voice, Mar. 20, 1937.
at Pensacola, Florida has passed over the name of Chauncey A. Borras eight times in making appointments."

In an editorial, A Dark Blot on Civil Service Reform, Kelly Miller writes:

"The Civil Service law requires that there shall be no discrimination on account of race, sex, or religion, in Civil Service appointments or promotion.

Before the introduction of the photograph thousands of colored men and women entered the clerical ranks of the Government as the result of competitive examination. Within these later years colored applicants have been so discriminated against and humiliated by having the door of opportunity slammed in their faces that few if any now deem it worth-while to enter the examinations.

There is a clear and unmistakable purpose to introduce the caste system, based on race, into the public service. The thousands of Negroes in the Federal service are assigned for the most part to sub-clerk duties.

The complaint does not lodge against the Civil Service Commission itself. No one alleges unfairness in the conduct of the examination, the rating of papers, or the certification of names. But when the list is sent to the appointing officer, there is the rub. As long as they are vested with discretionary power they can discriminate among the three applicants

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23 The Dayton Forum, Jan. 23, 1937.
submitted to them. The evil practice is accentuated by
undue deference to division chiefs who are allowed to deter-
mine the race or sex of recruits for their divisions."

4. Education

Educational facilities for Negroes in the South are
fully recognized by all students of the problem to be far
inferior to those for white people. Buildings, equipment,
salaries and provisions for transportation all are supplied
in entirely different ratios for the two races. Here is the
picture in briefest outline. "America as a whole spends an
average of $99 a year on every pupil enrolled in school;
the South ...... spends $44.31 per white pupil and $12.57
per Negro pupil. The Negro pupil receives in public sup-
port of his education about one fourth that of the southern
white child and less than one eighth that of the average
pupil in the Nation as a whole..... Individual states with
huge black populations show even greater discrepancies.
Georgia spends an average of $35.42 for each white child
and $6.38 for each colored pupil. Similar figures for Mis-
sissippi are $45.34 against $5.45. In those two states which
together embrace one eighth of the total Negro population
of the Nation, the colored pupils get only about 6 per cent
of the amount which America as a whole deems necessary for
education of its children." Drawing upon this situation
the papers have carried on a relentless warfare against the
unequal educational appropriations. Typical of editors

opinion on this subject is the following comment:

"Sixty per cent of the school children in Georgia are white, 40 per cent are colored. However, last year (1935) the state spent twenty millions for white education and two million for Negro education. This shows that Georgia is not interested in Negro education."

Failure of some of these states to make provisions for graduate and professional training for Negroes has resulted in many instances in the use of pressure. The technique of which will be dealt with more extensively in the following chapter. Suffice it to say here that the Negro newspapers have been instrumental in educating the Negro population to the realization of the extent of existing equalities, and at present are lending their full support to the Amended Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill.

5. The Ballot

The disfranchisement or intimidation of Negro voters in many states in the South is bitterly opposed by the press. It demands that the qualifications imposed upon Negro voters be no more exacting than those qualifications required of all citizens. Such examples as the following are singled out for criticism.

"When Negroes attempted to vote in Daytona Beach, Florida recently each Negro was challenged with a long list of questions taking fifteen or more minutes to answer, the

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The Pittsburgh Courier, Feb. 22, 1936
plan being apparently to wear out their patience and cause the line which was two blocks long to leave the poles without voting."

The Detroit Tribune charges that the caption "White Supremacy" appearing on the head of the Democratic column on the ballot used November 3, 1936, was a direct attempt to intimidate Negro voters and prevent them from exercising their constitutional rights of the franchise.

Perhaps the most recent case given wide publicity is that involving the right of the Negro to vote in the Texas primaries. The case is being handled by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and to date is still unsettled.

6. Segregation

The press lodges vehement protest against segregation in residential districts and means of transportation, while the refusal of hotels, restaurants, and theatres to accommodate Negroes is denounced and given wide publicity. In this respect sectionalism plays an important role. In the South where separation of the two races in public places and conveyances is fixed by the statute, the demand is for equal accommodations, while in the North the question is purely one of status. Since some of the Northern states have Civil Rights laws and in the others there is no legal support for separation of people on the basis of race, the Negro has

26 Chambliss, Rollin, What Negro Newspaper of Georgia Say, 1933, P. 42.
27 The Detroit Tribune, Jan. 30, 1937
often availed himself of the use of the courts to force recognition of his rights of citizenship.

From Harrisonburgh, Pennsylvania, comes an example of this point.

"The State Equal Rights Bill May receive another test if threats to file suit against the Penn-Harris Hotel here for alleged discriminatory practice against a group of race teachers are carried out...."

Following a meeting of the American Federation of Teachers, Local 192 the teachers accompanied by a group of approximately 20 white teachers entered the dining room of the Penn-Harris Hotel...

The hotel hostess whose name was not learned, promptly informed the educators that the colored members of the party would not be served."

C. Self Criticism

While demanding from the majority group recognition for the Negro as a full-fledged citizen the newspapers have not failed to point out to their readers that citizenship also entails a degree of responsibility which many of them have not assumed.

The New York Amsterdam News, in an editorial on this issue very impatiently asks: "When are Negroes going to grow up? When will they realize that being full fledged citizens means assumption of responsibilities as well as privileges?"

28 The New York Amsterdam News, Jan. 30, 1937
29 Pittsburgh Courier, March 27, 1937
"All Citizens", says the Tampa Bulletin, "Should have equal responsibility and opportunity... All should not only be prepared to speak for man and measures but to vote for them as well. Herein do Negroes, in some sections of our country, fall short, not so much because they have been disqualified, but because they have consented to remain so. There is our trouble. We petition for so much, we resolve so much. It is all right to petition when we are prepared We petition for the ballot before we qualify......Lets qualify. Lets be citizens indeed. We may."
CHAPTER VI

The Negro Newspaper As A Pressure Agency

A. The Judge Parker Case

Newspaper men as well as other race leaders are coming to realize that a positive program of self-help is going to be the means by which the Negroes position will ultimately be bettered. Acting upon this belief the demands as set forth by the Newspapers are being followed up by the use of pressure in order to bring about their realization.

Foremost among these pressure agencies is the Negro press itself. Though subject to widely different sectional influences, there are instances on record in which Negro Newspapers scattered over the entire country have taken an unanimous stand on issues vital to Negroes. Typical of this, was the stand taken against Judge Parker, appointed by President Hoover to the Supreme Court.

In this fight the press because of its extensive circulation and intimate contact with Negro life throughout the country occupied an enviable position as an agency of pressure. It kept the Negro population informed on the issue and because of its appeal to race consciousness was one agency instrumental in stimulating an organized fight supported by other organizations.

A brief history of the case shows that in 1920, while running on the Republican ticket for Governor of North
North Carolina, Judge Parker had denounced the outlawing of the grandfather clause, in a speech adding that he was opposed to Negroes voting.

"The Negro, as a class does not desire to enter politics. The Republican Party of North Carolina does not desire him to do so. We recognize the fact that he has not yet reached that state in his development. When he can share the burdens of Government"...He further stated that the Negro voting "was a source of evil and danger to both the races."

These and similar statements were attributed to Judge Parker. Ten years passed and the opportunity was at hand for the Republican Party to reward one of its faithful members. President Hoover accordingly named Judge Parker a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. But the Negro press and the N.A.A.C.P had not forgotten. Together they leaped into the fight against him. Extracts taken from his address made in 1920 were sent out by Walter White, Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. to Negro Newspaper men throughout the country. He was called upon to retract these statements, but he refused to do so, answering instead that he had been a friend of the Negro, and had done many things in his capacity as judge and governor to aid the Negro cause. There-upon the newspapers and the N. A. C. P. launched into one of their most successful campaigns. Papers appeared in every city

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1 The Pittsburgh Courier, Dec. 10, 1936.
and town of any size stating that Judge Parker was prejudiced against the Negro and was unfit to act as Supreme Court Justice since the Constitution of the United States had emphatically given the Negro the vote, to which Judge Parker was opposed. This was of course a very convincing argument against his appointment.

The final outcome was that Judge Parker's appointment was rejected in the Senate by a close vote - 41 to 39. While it cannot be said that the N.A.A.C.P., the Negro press, and other Negro pressure groups defeated him, it is apparent that they were instrumental in forcing the "race" issue into the foreground and keeping it there.

The New York Evening Post is quoted as saying on this point:

"To us it seems that the Negro issue was the decisive consideration. The other issues merely entered into the case. They swayed their various blocs by votes, but the threat of an organized Negro vote was the influence that swayed enough regular Republican votes to defeat confirmation." 2

B. Other Cases

Other battles waged by the N.A.A.C.P. have received the ready support of the Negro newspapers. As a pressure organization the N.A.A.C.P. is a study in itself and lies outside of the scope of this work. The first annual report under the

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heading PURPOSE, sets forth the work which it had outlined for itself.

"The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People seeks to uplift the colored men and women of this country by securing to them the full enjoyment of their rights as citizens, justice in all courts and equality of opportunity everywhere...."

For the realization of these aims the N.A.A.C.P. has waged a persistent and organized fight being responsible for five decisions in favor of the Negro handed down by the United States Supreme Court:

1. In 1915 Grandfather Clause Disfranchising Negroes.
2. In 1917 Residential segregation.
3. In 1925 Trial dominated by mob held to be not due process of law.
4. In 1927 Texas Democratic primary
5. In 1927 Segregation in Louisiana.

Numerous other litigations have been carried on in the lower courts with varying degrees of success. One such case of far reaching influence was successfully prosecuted against the University of Maryland, when on January 15, 1935, Maryland's highest court affirmed the trial court's ruling which

\footnote{National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, First Annual Report, 1911.}
\footnote{Ibid 1931}
had ordered that Donald Gaines Murray, be admitted to the law school. Thus Maryland became the first southern state where Negroes secure graduate and professional training in the state University.

At the present time in the Negro organizations all over the country have enlisted the services of the press in support of two bills now before Congress which vitally affect the Negro - the Gavagan anti-lynch bill, and the Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill.

In commenting on the Gavagan bill the Atlanta Daily World says:

"There is strong feeling in Washington that it is not sufficient for senators to state that they are in favor of the legislation and will vote for it when it comes to the floor. What is needed now is the promise of senators to work to bring the bill to the floor.

The citizens back home are urged to write and have their senators go to the leaders in the Senate and call for action on the anti-lynching bill."

There is an abundance of pamphlet material in circulation asking readers to support these measures:

"The crisis in the Anti-lynch fight is at hand. Read the facts....Then wire your Congressman... to vote for the Gavagan Anti-lynching bill....Call every church, labor union

Atlanta Daily World, April 27, 1937
political club and civic association you can reach; and urge them to wire their congressman to support and vote for the Gavagan Bill, H. R. 1507. Telegraph: Do not write."

Congressman Joseph A. Gavagan, author of the bill, in praising the organized support mobilized behind his bill by the N.A.A.C.P. and cooperating organizations, said:

"I received wonderful support from the N.A.A.C.P. and its friends. I do not know how they did what they did for often we would decide on something late in the afternoon and the next day we would be getting responses from all parts of the country."

The National Coordinating Committee, a committee composed of some 27 National organizations enlisted the services of the press for the support of the "Amended" Harrison-Black-Fletcher Bill. The original bill provided that $100,000,000 to $300,000,000 be turned over to the states on the basis of their populations 5 to 20 years of age, inclusive, with no guarantee that Negro separate schools would receive their fair share of funds. The Amended House Bill provided that the U. S. Commissioner of Education shall withhold funds if "a just and equitable expenditure" were not made. Newspapers and thousands of pamphlets urge their readers to wire their Senators and Representatives to vote for the bill.

Pressure is often applied similarly in local communities in which the Negro newspapers play a prominent role. The

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6 N.A.A.C.P. Letters, April 2, 1937
7 The Pittsburgh Courier, May 8, 1937
recent campaign put on by the Chicago Whip in its effort to force white stores located in sections of Chicago where their patronage was largely Negro, to employ colored clerks, is a good illustration.

Don't Buy Where You Can't Work was the slogan of this campaign. This approach was accompanied by picketing, and placing a boycott on those stores refusing to employ Negro clerks. Since the volume of Negro trade was large enough to be important many stores found it a good business policy to comply with this demand and employ some Negro clerks.

Similar tactics have been used in other cities with varying degrees of success, in which the newspaper always plays a leading role in the application of pressure.

In summarizing we may say that in local state and National affairs the Negro Newspaper is one of the foremost and persistent pressure agencies among the negro people. It is ever alert, and ready to pool its resources with those of other organizations where the common welfare of the group is at stake.
CHAPTER VII
Summary and Conclusion

Since the culture traits of African origin which may have been transplanted here during the early days of slave trade have long since either entirely disappeared, or have been modified beyond recognition, the American Negroes' cultural heritage begins in America. Thus as this culture imposes itself upon the Negro there is no culture clash; no resistance offered to it. The Negro does not constitute an isolated racial unit but intermingles with all other elements in the population, hence communication is established with every phase of cultural life. He speaks the same language professes the same religion, wears the same clothing, reads the same literature, eats the same foods and is otherwise influenced by all the social controls and pressures which act upon the total population and tend to bring about conformity.

Not only are exteriors tending to approximate majority group standards but the race itself is developing a new racial type whose physical appearance is less distinctive. The Negro, it would seem, wishes to conform. He is desirous of becoming assimilated into the larger stream of cultural life, and of loosing his racial identity. Any barriers which are interposed that tend to restrict his full participation are keenly resented.
The Negro newspapers reflect the extent to which the group has come to accept these social values. In appearance and make up they are coming to closely resemble the metropolitan dailies. This is due in part to the fact that the Negro newspaper men have aped these dailies in whatever features appeared to contribute to their journalistic success. Thus we find that sensationalism did not develop independently in the Negro newspaper but was carefully adopted from the Hurst papers, whose success may be attributed in no small measure by their treatment of this kind of news. Moreover, since an increasing number of Negro journalists are being trained in our modern schools of journalism much of the conformity of Negro Newspapers to current standards is due to this fact. Thus, many features common to all newspapers which serve to make them attractive and interesting are to be found in the Negro papers. Sections devoted to current literature, poetry, art, bridge, chats, comics and feature material are given an increasing amount of space.

It is in the realm of social life that their newspapers reflect the extent to which Negro life seeks to conform to majority group values. Standards of beauty are definitely white standards. Any casual survey of the society pages of these newspapers will convince the reader of this fact. Women's pictures are almost invariably very light in color with thin features. Seldom is the black woman's picture found on these pages.
A very natural question to grow out of such a study as this is, what influence does the Negro newspaper have on Negro life?

Such influence is extremely difficult to measure. When we consider the hundreds of other channels by which impressions are made on colored people in their daily contacts with American culture, and when we estimate that only about one third of the total Negro population reads their papers, we are inclined to doubt if Negroes are influenced to any appreciable degree by them. While it is true that when dealing with particular issues, the press is often able to stir up action on the part of its readers, for the most part such response is sporadic and short lived.

The effect that the Negro press has on the white population is negligible. Though occasionally the more militant papers have been called to their attention, for the most part the white people are not aware of the existence of the Negro Newspapers. Indeed this is one fact which the Negro editors have long bemoaned, that week after week they protest, and demand, while the majority group to whom the message is addressed is scarcely aware of the existence of their publications and entirely indifferent to what they say.

If the editors themselves were in agreement on social and economic problems, there would be some basis for a permanent influence. But Negro editors as are white newspapermen are often caught up in party politics, or factional
rivalry, and are miles apart on many issues. Not only is this true of widely separated geographical regions, but is often true in the same communities as well. In the same city may be found a Negro editor who ardently supports the social program of the present administration, while another may wage just as vigorous a war against it. One editor replies that there is no discrimination against the Negro in Matters of relief, or in the administration of public works, while another states that there is discrimination.

Such distinct differences of editorial opinion on primary issues has done much to weaken what influence on Negro life the Newspapers once enjoyed, and has made for confusion rather than clearly defined leadership. Had the editors followed up the advantage which they gained during the world war period, they could have organized themselves into a united influential body. The Negro population was restless, gullible, and in the proper frame of mind to accept their leadership, but they let this opportunity slip by. Today it appears that colored people buy and read their newspapers not because they are seeking leadership, but rather due to race consciousness, and a sense of group loyalty.

All things considered the outlook for Negro journalism is promising. As colored people become more secure, better educated, and more race conscious, they will lend an increasing amount of support to the press. So long as there
are problems of race, readers will demand organs of their own to interpret events from their own particular viewpoints. Hence the fields now being cultivated by the Negro Newspapers will remain fertile soil for a long time to come.
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