

The SOUTH at the CROSSROADS: Revolt, Exodus Change South Installment II

Payne, Ethel L

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# the SOUTH at the CROSSROADS

## Revolt, Exodus Change South

By ETHEL L. PAYNE

(Installment II)

The impact of the industrial revolution upon the South in the wake of the boll weevil scourge which destroyed the one-commodity-cotton economy, shattered the old feudalism philosophy of the South which had paved the way for the Civil War.

### GREAT MIGRATION

In the depression and war years, Negroes migrated by the thousands to the North and West. Lured by higher wages proffered them and a dream of better treatment, they poured out of the South, stripping the area of a vast reservoir of unskilled labor and farm workers as well as domestic help. The transition from rural life to the fast hard pace of urban living was too much for many to adjust to.

But some elected to remain, principally because their agrarian instincts made them cling to the land, stubborn as it was to wrest a living from and as hard as the master race was on them.

### THE COMMON MAN

Along came Franklin Roosevelt and his revolutionary theories on the common man. That had appeal to an impoverished South which needed help from the Federal government to keep it from starving. Mechanization and new industries moving in brought prosperity and trouble too.



JUST BEFORE civil rights rally on Detroit's Eastside, E. Daniel Nixon, treasurer, Montgomery Improvement Association, discusses the Montgomery, Ala. bus boycott with officers and staff members of UAW. Later he addressed 1,500 UAW members who contributed over \$2,000 at the meeting. Seated, left to right, Nixon, Kenneth Morris, co-director Region 1; Norman Matthews. Standing, left to

right, William Lattimore, international representative, Region 1; William H. Oliver, co-director, Fair Practices and Anti-Discrimination department; William Bowman, international representative, Region 1.

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The new enemy was almost as menacing as the old "hobble-de-boo" of "uppity nigras" getting out of line, perhaps even more so.

Trade unionism was its name. It smacked of socialism and to the home grown fascists who could only carry on their power by ruthless suppression of liberalism in any form, this represented a horrible nightmare of integration and overthrow of the status quo.

Right to work laws and ter-

roristic campaigns helped some, but they weren't enough to halt the dangerous trend of the little people to wake up and see that they were being duped.

The next step then was to infiltrate the ranks of labor and sow seeds of dissension that black men would take the place of white men on skilled jobs if they weren't held rigidly down and barred from membership.

At the same time, the chambers of commerce and tycoons of business and industry were busy sending emissaries to the North to lure new industry into the South with attractive offers of tax free land sites and cheap labor.

The latter meant non-union labor. So there was war within and without organized labor. The skilled technicians and management from the North who came in with the plants were carefully brainwashed of Yankee ideas and often times, they would become more "Southern" than the natives.

### IMPACT OF DECISION

On May 17, 1954, the blow fell. The impact was the same as the firing on Fort Sumter that led to the Civil War, only this time the South was depending on three methods of getting around the decision, instead of raising an army.

1. Use every legal means possible to circumvent the decree.

Chief Judge John Parker of the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals

for the Fourth Circuit gives this interpretation of the decision. "The constitution does not require integration. It forbids discrimination. It does not forbid segregation. It forbids the use of governmental powers to enforce segregation."

2. Mobilizing a powerful propaganda campaign to win sympathy for its feelings and to help in delaying indefinitely the implement of the decision. In this, some observers feel the South is making the most headway. In fact, A. Philip Randolph charges that the Northern press is being "brainwashed" by the Southern press into pleading its case for gradualism which means "neverism."

3. Increasing intimidation and terrorism against Negro citizens to frighten them into yielding. So far, this has stiffened opposition

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on the part of Negroes, but the present aim of the white Southern strategists is to encircle and annihilate the NAACP in order to leave Negroes without any legal weapons to fight back.

In general, the 17 states affected by the Supreme Court decision fall into three categories, 1. "Acceptance": Kentucky, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Tennessee, West Virginia and Oklahoma. 2. "Wait and See": Arkansas, North Carolina, Texas and Florida. 3. "Reject": Alabama, Georgia, Louis-

iana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Virginia.

In the acceptance group, it is notable that these are border states where the Negro population is not as heavy as in the deep South. Some states like Missouri and Kansas have moved right ahead without waiting for implementation instructions.

In the Wait and See group, Arkansas has attempted in some parts of the state to go ahead, but has been set back in some instances, for example in the widely publicized case of the

small town of Hoxie.

Florida is wrestling with the newest court order requiring the admission of a Negro to its state university law school. Texas has opened some public and graduate schools. And North Carolina has college students, although so far, none of this has passed on to the lower grades.

The hard core of resistance is in the six deep South states where the prediction is that some day, a local authority is going to defy a direct order from the courts to admit Negro children and the courts will then be required to prosecute and carry out the order.

What most Southerners have overlooked is that at least psychologically and emotionally, the Negro has matured rapidly and is quite ready for integration.

The biggest shortcoming is in the inequities of the separate systems where the Negro student lags behind scholastically due to inadequate training, an argument all the more powerful in favor of eradication of the segregated rule.

# Activities of Women's National Organizations

by REBECCA STILES TAYLOR

## RACE WOMEN CONTEND FOR EMANCIPATION POVERTY, RACE, SEX

How free are American women? How civilized? It is said that a very good measuring rod of freedom, civilization and democracy, in America as everywhere else, is the position of women. What a mockery was "Mother's Day" in a world where mothers have not been considered in building its security and happiness. Where mothers' sons are slaughtered despite mothers' voice. One cannot observe the position of women in America today without reference to the country's struggle for women's rights. To do so would be as ridiculous as to approach the fight for Negro rights without bearing in mind the glorious traditions of the Abolitionists and the Civil War.

Just one hundred years ago, the white woman in these glorious United States was little more than the chattel of her husband, or her father; either could beat her with legal impunity. Her right to an education, a professional career, control over her own children, ownership of property in her own name, had not been established. She had no vote and no voice. The limited rights that women enjoy in this country today are not gifts.

They are CONCESSIONS WON THROUGH MILITANT STRUGGLE in which some men have helped but the work was done chiefly by women themselves. To imagine that women gained full emancipation through the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution is just as absurd as to suppose that the Negro gained full and equal rights through the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. The condition of the country today, the high points in women's life during the past ten years will show only too clearly the limited nature of women's freedom.

At the time of the 1930 census there were supposed to be ten and three-quarter millions of working women in the United States—more than six times as many as in 1870. Throughout the last ten years, data show that women's wages were only from 50 to 60 per cent as high as men's. Not only do women receive less than men for the same work but in many cases skilled women receive less than men engaged in unskilled work.

### **Race Women**

**TWO MILLION** of the nation's workers are **NEGRO WOMEN**, the worst paid and the most overburdened of all, tribly exploited because of their **POVERTY**, their **COLOR OR RACE** and their **SEX**. The greatest barrier to full rights that face white women is that of **SEX**, and with the growing number of white women fast becoming a part of the legislative bodies of cities, counties, states and of the national government itself, white women have lifted the standard of women and will continue to do so. To emancipate their sex is the key to all other advantages of citizenship that confront them as a whole. But what of the Race woman?

No entire group of women has ever been so poverty stricken as the Race women. Her father, brother and son are as poverty stricken as she, so there is little to expect from them. Neither they nor she has any economic backing. Neither makes a living wage.

The fact that she is a woman of color is a most formidable barrier to employment. Read the advertisements in the daily papers and note the times "wh" (meaning white) is used. Then, too, the majority of our women are unskilled workers. It isn't necessary for a woman to be a college graduate to be able to do any one thing well. Illiterate Irish women make perfect Irish point lace and there is a market for it. Persian, Chinese, even Indian women make or create beautiful perfect products that find a market. What is the matter with American Race women? Why can't we create something that we can make perfectly and plentifully that will find a market?

With the emancipation from poverty and from a slave-thinking race complex, the Race woman can better face discrimination of sex. She must join her white sister in the valiant fight she has been waging for more than a hundred years for freedom for the sex. To do this the Race woman must become an independent thinker. She must learn to rely

more fully on herself in every way. She must pay more attention to the world outside her door and the laws, rules, customs and regulations that exist and know whether they be in her favor or otherwise. She must stop taking things for granted. She must make true the saying which now is a fallacy—"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." But to do this she must first believe in herself and make that self worthwhile. When this is done half of the battle has been fought, and the perfect end is inevitable.

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### **TRANSPORTATION CHAIRMAN FOR ILLINOIS ANNOUNCES SCHEDULE FOR OKLAHOMA**

The officers and members of the Illinois Association of Colored Women and sister state associations of this section, you are, herein, notified that the Alton and the Frisco railroads have been selected as the official route from Chicago to Oklahoma City for the biennial meeting of the National Association of Colored Women for the reason that these lines offer the best service for our members.

Special coach train service has been arranged for the accommodation of delegates and friends as follows: Leave Chicago 12:40 noon (Daylight Time) from Union station; or 11:40 standard time; arrive St. Louis 5:10 p.m., standard time; leave St. Louis 6:30 p.m., standard time, arrive Oklahoma City 8:10 a.m., standard time at Union station. Only one night en route. Special type coaches and dining cars. No change of cars. Equally good return service.

Delegates coming from Milwaukee, Toledo, Detroit and other points can easily reach Chicago in time to leave with the Chicago group. Train passes through Joliet, Bloomington, Springfield and St. Louis where members from the East will join us.

By traveling together on the same train on the going trip, we can secure a coach party fare of \$17.70 if we have 75 or more persons--if we can get 150 to go together, the fare will be \$16.05 for each person. Individual return ticket is hand-

ed to each one with a return limit of ten days. Arrangements will be made so you may purchase tickets in advance and also make payments in advance through your state chairman, Mrs. Maude E. Smith, chairman of transportation for Illinois, 6432 Vernon avenue, Chicago, Ill.

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#### **ARKANSAS STATE ASS'N HOLDS BOARD MEET AND PLANS FOR CONVENTION**

It's spring; the buds begin to open; the air is filled with the songs of birds. We welcome spring, and I am sure just as all nature has taken on new life, we as club leaders must awaken our clubs to their duty and responsibility. I am sure we are all willing and ready to do our part to help our state work go forward. Let the spirit of cooperation continue to dwell among you. Today's crisis brings to my mind the necessity of the full cooperation of each club woman.

#### **Board Meeting**

Our executive board meeting in Pine Bluff, Ark., April 18, 1941, at the A. M. and N. college, was well attended, and there was much interest shown among the women. We are urging the organization of more clubs. We need more strong women more enthusiasm among the club women; organization of more girls' clubs, with representatives at our state meeting in Little Rock. Our sponsor of girls' clubs, Mrs.

Theresa Warren, is anxious to make this a record breaking meeting for girls. Please send more delegates to our state meeting.

Several communications were read. A letter from Mrs. Johnson of Texas, urging the attendance of as many as possible to the national convention in Oklahoma City in July. We are asked to help Texas elect one of their native daughters, Mrs. Ada B. DeMint, as national president. There were two letters from the ex-treasurer. A letter from our executive secretary, Mrs. Sallie Stewart. A report was made of the timber sold from our land.

### **New Clubs**

I have received several letters from different club women stating that they plan to be present at our state meeting and federate. This, of course, sounds very encouraging, because we need more strength. We stand with open arms to welcome all new clubs.

### **Annual Meeting**

The annual state meeting will be held in Little Rock, Ark., June 1, 2 and 3.

### **State Dues For Ten**

#### **Members Or Fraction Thereof**

State dues, \$1; National dues, \$5; Ways and Means, (minimum) \$1.50; Scholarship fund (minimum) \$2; Girls' Industrial Home, \$5; Headquarters, \$5.

This is the ratio of dues for the club of ten members, and for a club of twenty, the amount is double.