

IV

DON'T SPEND YOUR MONEY WHERE YOU CAN'T WORK

The basic problem of life is living—^{finding}ways and means of subsistence.

The most telling and detrimental form of discrimination, consequently, is economic discrimination. Of all the phases of color prejudice and

discrimination, were it not for this economic narrowing of the means of livelihood to ^{two hundred thousand}250,000 American citizens in Bronzeville, and to ^{fifteen million}15,000,000

Americans in general—the race question would not be a problem, merely

a contest. But the ^{were raised}problem caused by the Negro being the "last hired

and the first fired" becomes ^{acute}acute when considered from the angle of

successful living. And ~~from whatever angle~~ one considers the movement

of Negroes into direct competition with whites, the refusal of employers

to pay Negroes the same wages for the same work, and the creation of

artificial barriers to advancement, ~~it is the main problem of Chicago's~~

~~Bronzeville, or any other Bronzeville.~~

The Negro Press, concerning itself with expressing the thoughts and desires of inarticulate groups, attempts to create a unity of move-

~~ment~~ in the fight against job discrimination. Through the Press every

stereotyped "reason" for prohibiting Negro employment in any field is

exploded, leaving the residue of pure prejudice balking the economic

advancement of a large percentage of Americans. Perhaps ~~the~~ Chicago Negro

Press has made its greatest contribution to American living in its fight for economic opportunities ^{of} ~~the~~ Bronzeville inhabitants. Not only have the more stable publications ^{relentlessly} ~~relentlessly~~ attacked employment barriers, but journals specifically devoted to job-securing campaigns have risen from time to time. The most notable and far-reaching of these drives was that led by The Chicago Whip during the years 1929 through 1932. Here the concentrated efforts of the Press lined up the majority of its subscribers behind a movement whose impetus carried them to a surging victory. Causing the populace to become aware of the potentialities of purchasing power as well as the ballot in ^{gaining} ~~securing~~ equal rights, this campaign overshadows any employment crusade within Bronzeville. Churches, lodges, civic and social organizations lent their assistance in providing pickets, staging parades and participating in boycotts to ^{achieve} ~~secure~~ the desired ^{and} ~~aim~~. The aim was not ^{to obtain} ~~as~~ a proportionate political representation; ^{nor to} ~~not at a breaking down of~~ social barriers; it was a much simpler one ^{to} ~~to~~ secure the right for Negroes to work in the community in which they lived. The actual fight, as such, took less than three months. But the slow ^{cumulative} ~~cumulating~~ drive through which it was brought about covered a period of years. Truly, the search for democracy in "the land of the free" is a long and weary one.

Editors of Bronzeville's journals have consistently urged its readers to patronize Negro enterprises, hoping to offset the ^{growing} increasing unemployment by increasing Negro business. Not only did the ~~Chicago Negro~~ Press promote Negro business, but it saw in vocational training a solution to the Negro's economic problems. While numerous Editors disagreed with Booker T. Washington's policy of wholesale industrial training, few ^{disputed} ~~dissented~~ on the value of business preparation as one means of economic advancement. In February, 1917, as the United States was on the threshold of the World War, ~~then~~ The Champion Magazine, "a monthly survey of Negro achievement", reflecting upon the ^{MOVE} ~~vast~~ migratory of Negroes Northward, ^{made the} editorially appealed:

"What remedy can be applied to the present situation among the Negroes of the United States, the so-called hegira that is making the Southland void of black labor? Is not this the hour to strike? Is not this the moment to seize the lance offered us and become the industrial leaders of the North?

"Unskilled labor is the weakest economic weapon a people can possess. The North wants, and will always want, men who can prove themselves efficient in these skilled trades. Hewers of wood and drawers of water have no place in such an economic scheme as the States north of the Mason and Dixon line. Trained men, regardless of race, color or creed, are needed in the shops and the factories, and no people possess greater opportunities in that respect than the Negro.

"We advise the friends of the Negro to train him in the arts and the crafts and to render him capable of enduring in the North by making him accustomed to the Northern standard of living. The Negro of the North must not be permitted to sink into the peasant class, but must be lifted to a plane several notches higher than that accorded darker races in the Southland. Schools, different from either the Tuskegee or the Atlanta type, should be within reach of those of the peasant class in the South who desire to make their homes in the Yankee states.

"If this were done the Negro would triumph economically as well as industrially...."

But while it was true, as The Champion stated, that trained men

were "needed in the shops and factories" of the North, it did not follow that Negro workers would be accepted, trained or otherwise. The steady exodus of ⁶ Brown Americans from South to North resulted not in loosening, but in tightening the economic reins against them. This migratory movement, one of the largest ever experienced within the United States, was constantly increasing in ~~intensity~~ and making itself felt in wholesale discrimination and riots caused by the competition between whites and blacks for jobs. But the World War broke upon the country and for a while the labor problem was reversed, ~~not only were~~ ^{the} workers of ~~any~~ ^{every} race ~~and~~ ^{and} needed and accepted ^{and} ~~but~~ the highest premium was put upon both skilled and common labor. Although there was vicious discrimination and race hatred within the army, Bronzeville's ² Editors, as all editors, were mainly occupied in gearing the populace into a spirit of patriotism.

The war ended, Negro migration northward increased, race riots became frequent and substantial jobs were scarce. From the beginning, white workers resented the influx of dark Americans into the Northern labor market. ^{strong feeling} ~~Vehemence~~ was particularly aroused on both sides when colored laborers, unable to gain admittance into unions, or ^{from} ~~equitable~~ salaries, were forced to underbid white workers as an only means of survival. The Negro Press continued to mirror the existing conditions.

The Fraternal Advocate of August, 1919, ~~reflecting~~ ^{peculiarly American} upon the practice of employing ~~even~~ aliens in preference to Negro citizens, ^{stated:}

"Now that the war is over and the American nation is ^{burdened} ~~burdened~~ with an enormous debt as a result of the late war, the alien has made his money and is now ready to leave, leaving the burden of taxation up to the American people, while they escape by returning back to their fatherland. Surely this ought to be a lesson to the American capitalist and an appeal to their better business judgment. There are many instances where preference has been given aliens against the black man who is wholly American and whose earnings 100 per cent is spent to the credit of American commerce against the aliens 33 per cent."

Such appeals to the common sense of the American business

man were made in the hope that reason would outweigh prejudice. But

while fighting for fairness among white businesses, the Press found

it ^{advisable} ~~more urgent~~ to appeal to the Negro populace to support their

own enterprises. On January 11, 1919, The Broad Ax published an

editorial stating:

"We are anxious to see a fine race spirit take hold of our people this year 1919. Spend more of the money you must spend with your own people in business. We are the only people on earth that will let other stores than our own flourish in our localities. Let a Negro open a store in a white neighborhood and see what white people will do. Try it yourself. We ought to sell to our own race most of the things we have to eat, wear and supply our homes with. And we ought to buy what we need when it can be had from our own race in business."

"We have a few good groceries, milliner shops, drug stores, several good dentists, a host of Negro doctors and lawyers, and there is not any excuse at all unless we are just a down right lot of chumps, without ambition, and cannot see two feet into the future."

The most vigorous ^{to Negro business} ~~vanguard~~ of the Negro business movement,

The Chicago Whip, early took the lead in dedicating itself to the

support of Bronzeville enterprises. The paper ^{maintained} ~~stated~~, July 3, 1919:

The Chicago Defender of October 16, 1920, was, and still is, of the opinion that "When you patronize your own merchants you are building a solid foundation for yourself and the future generation to stand on." Characteristic of the Negro's optimistic outlook, Bronze-ville Editors ^{are, generally speaking,} ~~were~~ constantly looking forward to a time when racial barriers ^{will} ~~would~~ be a thing of the past; ^{but the pressing need for a} ~~but the pressing need for a~~ solution ^{predicament,} ~~out~~ of an unbearable economic position called for something immediately tangible. In the creation of Negro business ^{is} ~~was~~ seen not only ^{an important} ~~a~~ strong step in economic advancement, but directly a means of self-preservation. The Fraternal Advocate of September, 1921, ^{makes clear,} ~~re-~~

^{usual point of view.} ~~states~~ the ^{pecuniary} ~~characteristic~~ ~~advocation~~

"Demands of society have grown and the rights of individual merit must be recognized, so must ^{usual} ~~pecuniary~~ advantage be preserved. This fact is yet to be forcibly impressed upon the Colored race as a whole. As long as 85 % of their monies are deposited in banks of the opposite race, 95% invested in insurance, they (white companies) will continue to control 95% of positions and 99% of all the business. This isn't idle gossip, ^{if} ~~but~~ an absolute fact, and yet, tomorrow were the Colored man to wake up to his advantage, it is possible for him to control 75% of his bank deposits, 80% of insurance, 70% of real estate and 30% of mercantile business.

"By so doing he could create positions of employment for thousands of his own race and divert millions of dollars to the people of his own race. This is business thought and self-preservation."

In the early twenties, however, the unemployment situation was general, and the Chicago Defender sympathetically voiced a statement

^{on} ~~of~~ the Chicago scene, calling for a concrete contribution for relief:

"It is estimated that 100,000 men are out of work in Chicago. About one-seventh of this number comes from our ranks... These men are not hoboes or loafers, but honest, industrious and steady workers when work is to be had. But in these abnormal times...their appeal for temporary aid should be immediately responded to..."

"We have Organizations such as the Urban League striving with their limited resources to ameliorate conditions.. Have you sent your check to aid this worthy cause?"--April 9, 1921.

As the Negro population increased so that its purchasing power became ^{telling} an effective factor, this, through the leadership of the Press, was utilized as a weapon to provide employment in business concerns, ^{especially} ~~particularly~~ those within Negro communities. The strenuous agitation of ~~The~~ Chicago Whip, followed in varying degree by all Negro journals, called for boycotts against merchants discriminating against Negroes in Bronzeville. The Chicago Bulletin, July 12, 1927, ^{frowned on} ~~remarked caustically about~~ Southside merchants whose trade came almost entirely from Negroes, yet who refused to hire them:

"The people who patronize any business as a rule, are the people who live in that particular community where the business may be established. ~~These~~ ^{entire} people who open up business in any community, securing almost their entire patronage from that particular community, owe the people of that community something more than a pair of hose for 'one dollar'. They seem to feel that they have done enough to come into a district in which they never expect to live, nor expect have their children educated there but to open their stores, sell their wares at a great profit, get rich soon, move away to selected and restricted territories and leaving nothing in the communities from which they receive wealth. ^{to} "They owe a part of their earnings to the activities of the community into which they move their business, but not their homes, if they refuse to contribute they should be marked as undesirable storkeepers, and respecting citizens of that community should pass them up.----"

Through successive stage ^{the} Press, aided or led by various organizations for Negro welfare, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Chicago Urban League, built up a sentiment resulting in a direct boycott of merchants within Bronzeville who refused to ^{employ} ~~use~~ Negro workers. ~~In the main~~ this campaign was successful and the number of jobs won were counted in the thousands. Still

^{Victory}
the ~~success~~ was far from complete and the revived Chicago Whip,

reviewing the fight, January 28, 1939, ^{raised a rallying cry,} ~~stated:~~

"Some say that the great work of The Whip was not understood and appreciated when it was battling for and in the interests of the colored people of America, a few years ago. We are not interested in that view point. What The Chicago Whip did for the colored people a few years ago is now a matter of history.

"The Chicago Whip is now in your midst to carry on "The Unfinished Task ". All of us know that the great campaign launched by The Whip in twenty nine and carried thru, until thirty-two resulted in over three thousand jobs for colored people right here in Chicago. We all know that the idea of 'Don't Spend your Money where you can't work' spread like wild fire, from coast to coast. The Supreme Court in October past, held that a picket for jobs conducted under a 'Don't Spend your money where you can't work' campaign was legal, even Justice Black didn't dissent. Newspapers, magazine, economists, and sociologists have recognized the justice and the expediency of that campaign. It is now a famous fight known the country over. The Chicago Whip will carry on then, with your support.

"Look at Walgreens, A&P stores, the butcher shops, Woolworths, and all over the business in our districts, and note the Colored people working. They were not there ten years ago. The Chicago Whip put them there. Well, here is your newspaper again, back on the scene of action, equipped with new sinews for battle.... ~~The Chicago Whip~~...The task is as yet unfinished.

And ~~so truly~~ the task is yet unfinished. The fight for

jobs within and without the Negro community continues. While the Whip

claimed that their campaign resulted in over "three thousand jobs",

the Negro representation in Negro-supported stores is still unbalanced.

The Pathfinder of November 3, 1938, ^{contemplating} ~~reflecting upon~~ this situation

stated:

"The unemployment situation, in the South Center Community as well as in all others with a predominately non-white population, in all of its phases has always been relatively below par...

"The greatest potential source of employment is the local business man, who depends directly for his support upon the residents within the community...

"The people who supply this support are, without question, entitled to the bulk of employment in these concerns... Obviously, therefore, the solution is within our power. It resolves itself into the simple equation--No Employment! No Support!!"

This cry, "No employment! No support!", aimed at the ears of ~~the~~

~~white~~ organizations profiting from Negro patronize but ^{denying} ~~refusing to~~

^{months} employ Negro workers, struck against the practices of many insurance

Chicago, February 18, 1939
companies. The Whip adequately stated the colored citizens' case against white insurance companies—also ^{contending} ~~reasoning~~ for the support of Negro-

operated companies:

"Colored people paid over forty million dollars into white insurance companies last year and in spite of this staggering sum of money spent, they received the sum total of no jobs in return. Is there reason ~~than~~ to wonder that the race is impoverished and unprogressive? Let it not be understood that we receive nothing in return for that is not true, because the forty million dollars spent, paid the premiums upon thousands of

insurance policies and gave the beneficiaries protection. Still forty million dollars is an overwhelming amount of money to spend in one year not to warrant one single job.

"Insurance is a fine, lucrative business. Premium rates are fixed out of the maze of human experience in such a manner that the companies can pay their claims, maintain their reserves and still make money. The colored people, thus, by paying in forty million dollars in one year, aid in the stabilizing of the insurance but gain nothing in the way of stabilizing themselves. On its face this practice and ~~such~~ principle of doing business is obviously unfair. It clearly reveals the infamous policy that gigantic white concerns have adopted--that of taking all they can get from us and giving as little as possible in return.

"Colored insurance companies last year received a little over nine million dollars in premium income from colored people and gave ~~our~~ over five thousand jobs to their own people as well as gilt-edged insurance protection. Such a situation clearly resolves itself into a double indictment. It indicts the white company for their gross unfairness and unparalleled cold-bloodedness and indicts the colored people for their lack of common sense, lack of vision and loyalty."

"The colored companies must meet all of the rigid qualifications of the white companies, they must come under the same governmental supervision. They must carry the same relative reserves with the state and they have stood the acid test of the depression relatively as well as the white companies. Then what is the answer?

"If the white companies continue to refuse us our fair share of jobs ^{our} based on the amount of money we spend with them, and this they adamantly, arbitrarily and arrogantly refuse to do, then we ought to do business with ~~an~~ own companies for that reason. But there are multitudinous other reasons. There is the question of racial pride, there is the question of the centralization of capital, the question of racial independence. There are so many reasons why we should get back of the companies that we cannot enumerate them all. Isn't this forty million dollars a staggering sum ~~in~~ of money to spend, not to receive a single solitary job out of it?"--Feb. 18, 1939..

The predominating poverty of a large portion of Bronzeville

citizens, contrasted with the power and ~~effulgence~~ ^{affluence} of thriving businesses

operated by outsiders, serves as fuel to inflame the populace against

this form of inequality. The Chicago Bee, ^{pointing to the bottom of the barrel} ~~stating the case for the~~

lack of prosperity within the ^{Negro} colored community, remarks:

"That prosperity has not reached the colored sectors in large measure is attributable to two reasons--not much work in colored districts, and, the fact that what money we spend in our districts goes to make prosperity in other ~~districts~~ districts than our own. The Big Business men of other races who have monopolized our business enterprises do not bank their money, spend their money or live in our districts. They hand us a sop by giving employment to a few figureheads who hire a few full time jobholders, fewer part time employees, are too yellow to demand that colored boys and girls, men and women be given jobs in the accounting and executive positions. We are easy marks.

"And so while other racial districts prosper at our own expense because they enjoy the profits of the business of their own districts and the profits, our districts are bled of as well, we stew and fret as the result of adverse conditions of our own making, which conditions we can rectify whenever we are so minded. Signs indicate that prosperity has not reached us as yet. Nor will it until we use our common sense in respect to creating our own prosperity. No political party can legislate prosperity!..." ~~Oct 13, 1935~~

^{incessantly} The Chicago World ^{proo and cons} constantly reiterates the ^{Chicago} appeal for

employment within the Negro community. An editorial from ^{Feb. 25, 1939,} ~~The World~~

reads:

"The problem of living is becoming more serious each hour to people on the Southside of Chicago. The main cause of their plight and the anxiety of their uncertain future appears to be the two fold lack of employment outside of their district and the lack of it within the district confines.

"...For years the Chicago World has made an urgent appeal to the merchants in the area to give colored boys and girls a chance by hiring them as clerks, cashiers, or in any capacity which they are able to handle.

"There are at present hundreds of these colored boys and ^{girls} ~~grls~~ employed, but there are still many important jobs in businesses in the ~~above~~ ^{could} described ~~xxx~~ neighborhood where hundreds more ^{could} be employed. The same program that is trying to be worked out in the Southside is carried out in the predominant Greek, Italian and Lithuanian districts. The results are not the same, however, the Greek, Italian and Lithuanian control their neighborhood ~~enterprises~~ not only by furnishing the ~~xxx~~ ^{could} cash for the bulk of the enterprises run, but also by the correct application of his buying power and obvious demand that their racial group be hired in preference any other group in all of their neighborhood stores.

"Since they do not have the money to foster many business enterprises, the colored people's plight lies in the ability to get as many jobs in their districts as possible. In other districts the expressed theory is that the people who live in the district are entitled to all the jobs in that district. In the Southside, appeal after appeal has been made for the merchants to please follow this plan of hiring people who live in the neighborhood. In many instances the merchants have responded with jobs, which is a fine spirit and have given and continue to give equitable wages. The merchants who refuse are not in keeping with the spirit of the neighborhood from which they are reaping a huge benefit and instead, they show their greed when they should show their willingness to cooperate by keeping a good will spirit in hiring more help. Many times when confronted with the problem, many merchants utter a big yelp when faced with words of boycotting them because they will not accede to the demands of an impoverished people. Something must be done."

Efforts to gain community employment increases in periods when the general economic status is lowered. Thus the most intense and successful efforts of Bronzeville to secure community employment ^{was} during the years 1929 through 1932. The unsteady years, 1936-1939, also called for a reawakening of the Negro to the ^{possibilities} ~~potentialities~~ of his purchasing power. The Southside Business and Professional Review,

a yearly publication created especially for the fostering of Negro

business interests, ^{enlightens the public} ~~remarked~~ in the 1935 issue:

"The expenditure of \$53,980,900 in 1935 by the Negroes in Chicago for food and clothing alone, if intelligently directed, would achieve for the Negro race what no other force or power could accomplish. It would produce a greater degree of economic independence than all other similar agencies employed in the solution of this problem combined."

This publication states the principle object of its existence in the same issue:

"No description of the possibilities of the colored people in the city of Chicago can ~~be~~ be complete without accurate information as to their purchasing power, their capacity and opportunity for self-improvement and a thorough understanding of their economic disadvantage. These subjects will be exhaustively studied and discussed in subsequent issues of this year book and in this initial publication we offer nothing more than a fleeting glimpse of the phenomenal advancement of the Negro business and professional men and their more than two hundred thousand supporters to be expected in the near future."...1935 ~~issue~~

The short-lived journal, The Colored Merchant and Caterer, ^{following} ~~re-~~

~~Fleeting~~ the trend towards organizing Negro business, like The Southside Business and Professional Review, was created especially for the

pursuance of colored interests in the business line. The January

1935, issue ^{announced} ~~stated~~ its purpose:

"Using these pages as our medium of expression, we the publishers of this magazine, are endeavoring to accelerate the growth of Negro business. Frank discussions of the problems that daily confront the business man of color will be found in every issue. Achievements of successful men and women will be recorded as an incentive to Mr. and Mrs. Colored American. Whenever it is possible, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ we shall quote success formulas as given by both Colored and White leaders.

"We dedicate this periodical to Negro business, not because we are ignorant of the fact that all business, both Colored and White, are firmly interlocked, but rather because, in the past, little or no emphasis has been placed upon the important part Negroes are playing in the development of America's colossal industries."

And Bronzeville's leading journal, ^{repeated} ~~revised~~ the much advocated

principle of building Negro business:

"The black people of America are slow to recognize that they like other groups can only build a sound foundation upon convictions. These convictions must embrace the determination to establish business places of like nature owned and operated by our group.

"Our failure to appreciate the importance of building from ~~within~~ ^{within} HAS MADE us the last rung in the ladder of progress. No group of people who cannot see the necessity of trading with their own people in their various business enterprises can hope to build themselves up as any essential element in the business world..." -- June 1st, 1935. *The Chicago Defender, June 1, 1935.*

Thus in a constantly moving panorama the Negro Press presents

the vital aspects of Bronzeville's economic life. ^{Slogans} ~~Advancements~~ such

as "use your buying power as you use your ballot", developing and

fostering Negro business, securing jobs within the community, and

practicing as well as preaching ~~the slogan~~ "Don't spend your money

where you can't work!", are all policies ^{to} which at ^{one} ~~some~~ time ^{or another} the

Press has lent its strength, ~~in~~ ^{to} sponsoring.

Still the pursuing of these policies are only minor aspects to

the Chicago Negro labor situation. The right to work not only in the

Negro community but ~~in any occupation open to Americans~~ is the main

~~handle~~ the Press has ~~pulled for~~. Closely allied with the "Don't spend

your money where you can't work" movement within the community, ~~spring~~^{is} the fight for just job representation among the public utilities. While thousands of Negroes ^{participate} subscribe to the various public utilities, such as street cars, elevated lines, gas, ~~and~~ light, telephone and public railway companies, ^{there} ~~there comes~~ only a return in jobs of the most menial sort, porters, laborers, maids, ~~etc.~~ The highly qualified colored applicant must go begging for positions which an average trained white worker could easily secure. The problem is not only one of equality of opportunities, but one of sportsmanship and fairness. While in some cases a white employer may argue that he cannot hire colored laborers because of the refusal of his employees to work with them--this lukewarm attempt to cover ^{up} prejudice falls short when considered ^{such} ~~from the point of~~ government agencies as ^{the} Civil Service, WPA, and allied projects, and ~~from~~ the attitude maintained by thousands of private employers. Such companies as Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, Walgreen Drug Company and F. W. Woolworth stores, who have ^{provided} ~~tended~~ a somewhat ^{to} ~~relative~~ job representation to colored workers, have generally received the praise and good wishes of the Negro Press for their fair attitude. The 49th State Compass editorially endorsed ~~Wal-~~^{Wal-}green Drug Company April, 1936:

"The Walgreen Drug Company employs more than 1500 Negroes. Of this, 1500, scattered throughout the various branches of this giant drug company, 75 are employed in about seven stores on Chicago's Southside, with an average of a little better than ten persons per store.

"The majority of these positions held by these employees in this particular district, are in the better jobs... All are paid good salaries..."

But while certain private corporations have ^{tended to} ~~tended~~ a limited job representation to Negroes, public utilities have not capitulated to any arguments ^{presented} ~~presented~~ for effacing color discrimination. As yet the methods used to secure employment have had little effect upon these plutocratic institutions. Campaigns calling for the discontinuance of telephone service, petitioning the surface and elevated lines, refusal to pay gas or light bills, and various ^{just} managed boycotts have been initiated and attempted with little results. The unity and organization ^{have} ~~has~~ required to make such campaigns successful ~~has~~ not as yet been obtained by the Bronzeville populace. The idea that white corporations should suddenly become fair-minded enough to cease discriminating against their darker countrymen, is a step too far in the future to be depended upon. [?] Meanwhile the detrimental forces of an [?] adverse economic position [?] calls for immediate action. This the Bronzeville Press has to a large extent created and sponsored in vehement and spirited editorials.

However it is not to be inferred, here or elsewhere, that the

Negro Press in Chicago has maintained a steady or unified front on ~~any of the issues, involving the economic life of its populace.~~

This is especially true when considering the fight to secure equal rights ~~among~~ the utilities. Because of the individuality of its journals and Editors, the Negro Press often presents diversified and sometimes contradictory attitudes in the various economic ~~campaigns.~~

But the fight upon the utilities, while not constant, has always been renewed at intervals.

In a recent issue, the Chicago Whip, ~~voiced~~ ^{set forth} the sentiment

resulting from their long and uncompromising fight for jobs: "It is about time that the great public utilities in Chicago realized that they cannot forever go on receiving the support of the public when they deal so unfairly and cold-bloodedly with minority groups. The colored people are not employed by either electric people or the gas folks yet they must buy the service and then pay for it or get cut off. If there was public ownership of private utilities, ~~we~~ we would at least have a chance to get employment." ^{The Chicago Whip}

April 1st, 1939. In commenting upon the action taken by the New York state

^{use} legislative body, the Chicago Pittsburg Courier remarked April 1, 1939: ^{unmasked the contradiction in the newly enacted law;}

"The New York State legislature has unanimously passed a bill introduced by a Negro member to outlaw switch blade knives by classifying them as dangerous weapons.

"There is no doubt that the switch blade knife is a dangerous weapon and that there has been far too much killing with this weapon, although such homicides are by no means confined to the Negro population.

"But the same legislature refused to even consider the seven measures sponsored by the Temporary Commission on the condition of Urban Colored Population which would have outlawed the wholesale statewide discrimination against Negro workers practiced by public utilities, the civil service and other private and public organizations and institutions.

"The New York Assemblymen are not worried about Negroes starving to death, but they pretend to be much concerned about ~~them~~ knifing each other to death."

In the earlier ^{phase} of this ^{fight for} ~~among the utilities~~, a somewhat

encouraging ^{step} had been made with the ~~Gas Corporation~~ and the

Chicago Defender stated -16-

DURHAM

April 12, 1919!

"After a fight of years we have just broken the ice with the Gas Corporation, who consented to just eight of our men to work in semi-clerical positions on trial. While we appreciate the fact that it is within their power to give or ~~may~~ deprive us of an opportunity to get back some of the money we have paid them we also know that they do not exercise that power in our behalf to any appreciable extent, and why? Not because we cannot deliver the goods, but they are imbued with the same prejudiced feeling found in the average Southerner. The Chicago City Railway Company and the Elevated Railway Company are public utilities that must find place for us in their employ, and these places as motormen, conductors and clerks, not janitors or common laborers. We ask for nothing more than we rightly ~~deserve~~ deserve or are entitled to. If officials of these companies refuse to grant us a place on their pay ~~rolls~~ rolls, offering as an excuse that our presence would cause a general strike of the white employees, we will take the matter up directly with the head of organized labor, and thrash it out with them. Unionism cannot stand forever and leave the black worker outside the doors, and the quicker these autocratic organizations realize their welfare and the welfare of the community at large hinges on a cemented (unionization) of all working people, the better it will be for all concerned." *unionization*

But in taking "the matter up directly with the head of organized labor", there was no active response. Paradoxically, organized labor, while claiming to fight for the unification of all workers, has been largely opposed to the entrance of colored workers. This logic, or lack of logic, conflicting with the very principles of unionism, and weakening the inner and outer structure of unions, causes ~~for~~ tremendous discord in localities in which there are large numbers of competing colored workers. The Negro Press has pointed out that if Negroes are barred from unions, the only ~~sequential act~~ *thing to do* is to compete against union workers for the right to live and receive wages. On the side of the white union workers, seeing colored workers breaking his well-intentioned strikes, underbidding him—the ~~sequential act~~ *workmen* would seem to organize all ~~workers~~ *workers*, black and white, into a union for the common good. But so powerful is prejudic

that it often outweighs the clearest reason. Some of the strongest white labor leaders have failed to see that one group of workers forced to work for subsistence wages forces all laborers towards the same level. Great strides and strikes in the labor movement have been shortened by this lack of foresight on the part of union leaders. The Negro Press, at times sarcastic, ~~satiristic~~, appealing, and occasionally openly opposed to unions have exposed the hypocrisy and weaknesses of many of these "democratic" groups. A ^{couple of} ~~few~~ excerpts from ~~The~~ ^{Compass} 49th State illustrates this attitude:

"...labor unions which unimistakably control employment, still persistently refuse admission to the Negro. He has been called the 'labor reserve' and he has been 'reserved' to the point where he is now practically excluded from the labor market..." ~~March, 1936.~~ ^{March, 1936.}

"When labor unions prevent Negroes from becoming union members, and urge the world to buy only union made goods, isn't this insistence upon a universal boycott of Negro labor?"... ~~March, 1936.~~ ^{March, 1936.} ~~The 49th State~~ ^{Compass}

Yet, colored labor, aware of the need for unionization in order to realize any equitable standard of living, has long ^{struggled} ~~attempted~~ to ^{for} ~~gain~~ admittance in even the most ^{prejudiced} ~~discriminating~~ unions. For long Negro labor ~~has~~ ^{has} seen in unions a chance to increase his wages and regulate his conditions of employment. Sympathetically the activities and object of union workers have been reviewed in the

Bronzeville Press. The March 26, 1931, issue of the Chicago Defender voiced its sympathy with organized labor:

RP 14
"The Air is rife with rumors of a strike in the packing industries....The packers, not content with reducing the wages of their employees, went a step farther by lengthening the hours of employment. While there may be some shadow of excuse for wage reduction due to the readjustment to be expected in all lines of industry at this time, we are at a loss to understand why further sacrifices should be demanded by exacting a ten-hour day..."

"We sympathize with organized labor in its struggle for better wages, a short day and better living conditions. We would like to see every colored working man a member of the union. In time, no doubt, we shall see a thorough unionizing of colored workers. That time will come, however, when the leaders of organized labor can assure our workmen the same helpful support that is given to the white members of the union...."

In presenting the case for colored and white laborers working together in the same unions, The Chicago Whip, February 19, 1939,

thoughtfully points out:

"The pity of it is that Unions need the wholehearted support of colored labor. They represent a large element of the working class. If they are barred by white unionists they will work anyway if jobs are available and if necessary they will accept sub-union wages, for after all Negroes must eat. This automatically places the two laboring groups in competition and permits wily capitalists to play one against the other to the detriment of both.

"And of course Negro labor needs the unions. Often forced to take mere pittance in lieu of living wages if they are to work at all... They are the most exploited segment of the population. They need to work hand in hand with all other exploited persons to present a strong front capable of battling unscrupulous capitalists on even terms."

While fighting to overcome the handicaps of union restrictions, the Negro Press often ~~promoted~~ ^{alluding to} advocated the organization of Negro workers among themselves. ~~Commenting on~~ a parade of Negro workers in

New York, The Chicago Bee of September 23, 1934, remarked:

building which is
"Last Labor Day Harlem witnessed a unique demonstration on the part of Negro labor, which, as we are informed, had nothing at all to do with Communism and other 'ism's' so distasteful to some of our palates. The Union Mechanics and Association, an organization of masons, bricklayers, carpenters and other building tradesmen, staged a worthy parade and program which was deserving of comment in the columns of our weekly newspapers."

"It was said that this was the first time in the history of Harlem that an organized labor force from among our people had gotten together and spoken through demonstration against the barriers erected against the Negro in his struggle to make a living."

"These men, as are other unorganized workers of our race, all over the land are having a tremendous struggle trying to obtain employment in federal, state and city projects in New York because of red tape and down-right race prejudice. Chicago is afflicted with the same disease. In Chicago, as in Harlem, these workers are denied a chance to work on the

very buildings in which they live when these structures are in need of repairing.

"We need such an organization here in our city, manned and sponsored by Negroes who know their subject and who can act intelligently for relief."

Undoubtedly the most notable work in organizing Negro workers was that done by A. Phillips Randolph among the Negro Pullman porters and

~~maids~~ In the face of the most blinding obstacles, when few dreamed that

he ^{ever} could succeed, his persistence and genius broke down countless

barriers and brought to Pullman porters the largest wage increase in

their history. Fittingly, the Chicago Defender of September 25, 1937,

paid tribute to this feat:

"When the Pullman company signed the wage agreement with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, granting a wage increase of a million and a quarter dollars, on August 25, in the Pullman building in Chicago, history was made. It was made for the Porters and maids; it was made for the American labor movement, and it was made for the entire Race.

"When it is considered that the Pullman Company has never before capitulated to a group of its workers in a bona fide trade union--~~the Pullman Company has never before capitulated to a group of its workers in a bona fide trade union--~~ for the Pullman Conductors secured their union during the war when there was no opposition to the organization of railroad workers since the roads were under government control--the importance and far reaching value of this victory of the porters is all the more apparent.

"It is a tribute to the character ~~of~~ of the porters that they exhibited the required tenacity, courage and good sense to tread the path of struggle for twelve long years until they won recognition and an agreement with a big wage boost from the Pullman interest.

"We applaud and salute the Porters and their leads, and not only for the victory they have achieved, though that is far reaching, invaluable and of world significance, but also for the inspiration it will give other Race workers of hand and brain and the Race generally to organize and fight for our rights."

The great American Federation of Labor, which has largely excluded or attempted to set different standards for colored workers, has

been a main cause for ~~some~~ of the Negro's lukewarm attitude towards

unions. During the expanding period of this union, when even the

^{status} ~~statute~~ of workers outside the United States was a concern of ^{Mr.} ~~Mister~~

Green, The Chicago Bee, July 30, 1927, editorially remarked:

"President Green of the American Federation of Labor, is interesting himself and his organization in the affairs of the workers in Latin-American countries. He might better utilize ~~the~~ ^{some} of his time in persuading his co-workers to consider the plea of the American colored workers through their representatives for full and free recognition in all of the unions. Some time since the leaders of the National Urban League laid before him the plea for the admission of colored workers into all of the affiliated unions.

"As yet no definite stand has been taken in this matter.

"We hope that President Green will let his interest in the workers begin at home. The Negro is called upon to protect the industries of the country along with ~~the~~ his other fellow-citizens in time of war."

The interest of the American Federation of Labor continued to

center in Panama in preference to Harlem or Bronzeville. Several

years after the above comment, the same paper, ^{declared} ~~remarked~~: (August 12, 1933)

"The American Federation of Labor has adopted a policy of keeping Negroes out of the majority of their skilled trade unions. In Chicago and elsewhere in this country, the ranks of union labor are constantly filled with alien workers while black Americans may starve for all they care. It will be in order ~~for~~ labor to clean house at home, first."

As the fast-growing offspring of the A.F. of L., the Committee

^F on Industrial Organization, rose to prominence, and as their labor

leaders displayed a more democratic policy, comments from Bronzeville's

newspapers reflects the Negro's attitude. Almost unanimously the

C.I.O. was given preference over the A.F. of L. One periodical, ^{The} ~~re~~

^{regarding} the two largest unions in America, ^{speaks} ~~says~~:

"In the annual report of the St. Louis Urban League released last week, it was proposed that a state law be passed making it illegal for labor unions to bar qualified Negroes on the basis of race. St. Louis with its A.F. of L. locals has been particularly notorious in this respect. A Negro there may get a membership card only as a common laborer, thus barring skilled workers from the ~~advantages~~ advantages of Unionization. Those holding union cards ~~received~~ in other cities are not accepted for A.F. of L. membership in the Missouri metropolis.

"...When discrimination exists the Committee for Industrial Organization will at least make an attempt to remedy conditions. The American Federation, whether in St. Louis or elsewhere that rank? prejudice against the Negro unionists, doesn't give a damn.

"Negro labor everywhere has a double battle. It must stand shoulder to shoulder with white workers to fight for general benefits to the entire laboring class, then after the fight is won Negro labor must fight white labor with which it has previously allied itself in order to get its just share of those gains."

And speaking further in favor of the C.I.O., the same *issue of the*

adds
paper ~~states~~:

"...It has made serious attempts to enroll Negroes, and if ~~skeptics~~ skeptics say this policy is purely a temporary device to make the CIO as strong ~~as its~~ older rival and after it achieves its goal it will treat Africans as has the federation, I must remind them that the John L. Lewis group could have ignored the black worker as much as does the William Green Organization and by so doing it obtained the support from enough unionists to make the CIO far stronger than it is with its present policy interracial.

"As long as the CIO maintains its present policy of working for the interests of labor in general without regard to race and seeks to adjust differences between its white and black membership, it merits Negro support. While the CIO is not perfect, it is a step in the right direction."

thus has
The C.I.O. ~~consequently gains~~ the sympathy and support of

the Negro Press. The direction of various labor forces has been

towards national social movements. The Communists, because of their

preoccupation with the proletariat, have invariably attracted the

attention of the Press—although *at first the reaction* ~~until recently it mainly~~ resulted in

dislike and antagonism rather than any alliance. For years the Negro

Press in Chicago took its attitude from the white press and ~~was~~ *was*

Check:

W.H. Feb. 18, 1939

a' staunch supporters of anti-Communist movements. All of the "comrades" ^{were} serenades for favor ~~was~~ rejected by the Bronzeville Press. The rejection was not complete, however, as occasionally one of the more outspoken journals would ^{print a conciliatory editorial} ~~make a sympathetic comment:~~

"As we take a brief resume in circumspect of the signs of the times, it is plain to us that America, and particularly the United States, is constructively and progressively evolving itself into something diametrically different from the present structure.

"Socialistic inclinations and tendencies are manifest in legislation and popular clamor.

"Everywhere we hear the voice of the masses bewailing and bemoaning the high cost of living, the unheard of exorbitant prices and the political and economic causes...

"The darker races have caught the spirit of the age, and the signs of the times points to a new era soon to startle the world." Chicago Whip, Dec. 27, 1919. ^{emphatic}

^{The} But if the "spirit of the age" was communism, the Negro Press was generally ^{slow} ~~latent~~ in catching it. When the depression settled in and Communistic activity became intense, allying itself with job-getting and rent-reducing campaigns, and extending itself to gather in some Bronzeville "brothers", ^{one} ~~some~~ of the most conservative Negro publications found this activity too satisfying not to extend words of tentative approval. The following excerpts illustrates and clarifies

the reactions of the Negro Press:

"Coming forth in limpid prose, a startling fact is broadcast in the Daily Worker...that there has been no attendant success in the effort to recruit members to their cause from the ranks of Negro labor..

^{stupidous} "The Communists...shouldn't be alarmed at what they term the Negro's timidity ~~with~~ that which is really cautiousness on his part. For the Communist party is not a party in power; and a party not in power is as an untamed horse--no one can divine its future work, usefulness and dependability. And grievous experience has taught the American Negro that parties, in the past, have used him as a sort of "shock" brigade" to batter down the strongholds of antagonists, and to capture the enemy, and when his ~~stupidous~~ work is accomplished, he is invariably forgotten. What assurance, then, he reasons, has he that the Communist party, struggling for power today as the other parties did yesterday, will not upon obtaining his coveted power, if ever they do, follow in the footsteps of present-day ascendant parties, and forget him after the battle is won?"

—Feb. 4, 1934. Chicago Bee. ^{The Chicago Bee, February 4, 1934.}

And from the same journal, another comment: (Sept. 2, 1934)

"The Reds are a noisy and mouthy lot. Their first principle of organization is conceived in bedlam; their method of operation is through declamation from the hilltops and ~~exhortation~~ ^{exhortation} to the mass. A true Red will admit his ~~power~~ ^{prolific} ability to toss words hither and yon and also will agree that his mission as a bearer of the ~~red~~ ^{crimson} standard to foment and create sentiment for his cause through much talk and demonstration. But sometimes fire actually burns where there is much smoke. Witness Angelo Herndon. ~~Caught~~ ^{Caught} distributing Communist literature in Georgia, he went to jail on a 20-year sentence, and being in Georgia, his incarceration was regarded as final.

"High-powered organizations looked his case over, decided that the task was humanly impossible; bathed themselves in the reflected glory of agitation surrounding the matter, and did nothing. But the mouthy, noisy Reds had ideas. They yelled, extolled, bleated and ranted until they 'sprung' the young man from the Georgia jail. Their loud breathings must have caught fire, for within a couple of weeks it was announced that Herndon had been granted a rehearing by the Georgia Supreme Court. The Reds are a ~~noisy~~ ^{noisy} lot and admit it. Some people tuck their skirts closely about them, afraid of the crimson splatter, but the crimson splatter brought Herndon out into the daylight again..."

While no publication openly ^{forced} ~~admitted~~ itself with the Communist party, ^{some of} the practices of the Reds ~~generally~~ met the approval of the Press. The revolt ^{against} ~~from~~ the pressure of poverty caused by prejudice took the form of fighting organizations allying themselves with any party or principle promising aid. The spirit of the

years after 1929 was one calling for action. Dynamite, truly a

~~dynamite~~ ^{frankly unveiled its position on} little publication, ~~frankly spoke~~ September 10, 1938:

"There is a paradox that generally proves dangerous to any kind of reform but we must put ourselves in position to accept the consequences that go with the chance, the same as as a convict would in an attempt to break from prison. The white man's psychology has worked around to this--

"When a Negro revolts and resents the many forms of maltreatment and insidious bits of oppression, as is being preyed upon us, there is a group that quickly brands us as communist socialists, radicals and what not--

"When we go our way...paying absolutely no attention to our economic status, and allowing ourselves to be 'fleeced' by whites and Jews, we are peaceful citizens. If it takes communism, socialism, radicalism, Nazism, Fascism or common-sense-ism, let's get going! If any kind of 'ism' will lead us out of this economic bondage of modern slavery--we should be on our way. We should ~~have~~ ^{have} heard the mumbling and grumbling of the masses and focused our undivided attention on a leader that will be recognized as a modern Moses."

and numerous allied government agencies.

Upon the advent of the New Deal the Negro Press found itself in a peculiar position. Irrevocably Republican journals such as The Chicago World confronted with a government program obviously aiding their readers, had either to give up party loyalty or continue the attack upon the Democratic party by pointing out inadequacies existing within New Deal agencies. On the other hand, such journals as the

Chicago Defender and the Chicago Bee maintained in degrees their Republican attachments, yet supported wholly the Democratic-run New

Deal. The attitude expressed by the "Chicago World," the "Little

Chicago Tribune" of Negro journalism, is ^{presented} ~~stated~~ in the following

comments.

"The condition of our country is appalling. First, relief, or shall we call it the dole? Then a brilliant farce as brought forward in the name of the WPA. You may among other things give this its true but very intrinsic meaning-- WAIT PATIENTLY AMERICA! For what? Hasn't America waited until American patience has been exhausted, everybody has become so unnerved that they have become radical. That something very unusual may happen is clearly voiced by the individuals among the multitudes. Have men not been given work under the new fandangled name WPA? The answer is yes.³ But, with starvation wages. And don't the people eat? Yes, they eat, but how do they eat and pay rent on the munificent sum of fifty-five dollars per month? Of course that's the basis ~~is~~ or the rate of pay they are supposed to get but when you consider the deduction from their pay envelope ~~frax~~ for wet days, cold days, shortage of materials, sickness caused by exposure outdoors, the numerous holidays throughout the year, he she or both haven't very much left to do anything with."

However the majority of Negro journals, from a lukewarm

reception of the New Deal gradually worked up to a vigorous backing

of practically all of Roosevelt's policies. In ^{reference} ~~regards~~ to the NRA, the

date on P. 11 of "WPA" - 1939
wherever it is

However the clearest indictment of the present system and the best appeal the Communists had for the Negro populace was ^{published} ~~stated~~ in

the fighting Chicago Whip, August 1, 1931:

"The rottenness, the injustice, the grim brutality and cold unconcern of our present system has become too irksome for the man farthest down to be longer endured in silence and pacifism. It is high time that those who would stem a revolution ~~busied~~ themselves in sweeping and lasting cures to the cancerous sores which fester upon our body politic and fiercely competitive society. The Communists have framed a program of social remedies which cannot fail to appeal to the starving, jobless millions, who live in barren want, while everywhere about them is evidence of restricted plenty in the greedy hands of the few. Safety and security, peace and plenty are the things most dear to the hearts of the inarticulate lowly, and these are the things which the radicals hold out

as bait to the masses, white as well as black. To argue that they cannot give them but begs the question, for the obvious answer is that our present systems HAVE not given them, and offer no promise of them.

"If our major parties would stem this rising tide of Communism, let them take steps to provide for such immediate needs as are virtually hurling the masses into the ranks of radicalism. Food, shelter and clothing, adequate employment are the only answer to the challenge of Communism, not mere words of mouth denials. The demand among both black and white alike is insisting for improvement--or change."

And as the New Deal came in the answer to the Whip's appeal

was made. Food, shelter, clothing and employment was provided and

automatically the ranks of radicalism diminished. From the

communist meetings, the "Bug-House" clubs, and the street pavements

came workers willing and ready to trade any alliance for relief through

jobs and a sense of security. Park benches became empty and WPA crews

began to grow. The Whip had spoken: "If our major parties would stem

this rising tide of Communism, let them take steps to provide for such

immediate needs as are virtually hurling the masses into the ranks of

radicalism." The answer came in the form of the CCC, NYA, NRA, PWA.

Chicago Bee commented, (Oct. 1, 1933) "Someone has to take the lead,

and it is commendable that steps have been taken to look after the

welfare of Negro workers under the provisions of the NRA." Continuing

and expressing its approval of the New Deal, the ^{editor of the Chicago Bee} ~~paper~~ remarked: (Oct. 1, 1933)

"We believe that the government is sincere in its efforts to improve conditions. If it is not to fail, the government will have to get out its big stick for use on racketeering employers who seek to get for themselves all the profits at the expense of their Negro employees."

The Chicago Bee ^{further} stated the Bronzeville Press's general attitude toward the New Deal when it ^{on several occasions (the doctrine that)} ~~said~~ "August 27, 1933) "The New

Deal means a New Day as well as New Methods." Such agencies as

the NYA and WPA were ^{given definite approval} favorably reviewed. While in many particulars

expressing dissatisfaction with prejudice and discrimination operating

against colored workers within these agencies, the New Deal was

regarded as such an ^mimprovement over the previous system that generally,

journals were occupied in pointing out its advantages. Edgar G.

Brown, in an article in The Southside Business and Professional

Review, analyzing the benefits the New Deal has given the Negro

citizen, speaks thus of the NYA:

SEE following page:

filling
 "Twenty-eight colored leaders are members of the State NYA advisory committee, North and South. An equal number of colored assistant State Directors and trained college men and women of the colored race are ~~filling~~ high executive positions in New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Tennessee, Indiana, Ohio, Missouri... which State programs have had the largest participation of young colored men and women.

"The National Youth Administration is helping approximately 26,000 colored youths to continue in school through payments for part-time work under supervision of school authorities. These young people range in age from 16 to 25 years. There are approximately 5,000 of these colored students in the undergraduate class and 70 graduate college students in both the strictly Negro institutions and the leading Universities. The average monthly rate per college student is \$25, while the graduate students receive from \$25 to \$30 monthly. Those students of high school class are being paid a maximum of \$6 per month."

The Chicago Pittsburg Courier of February 4, 1939, had a

similar statement to make concerning the NYA:

"Amidst all the criticism of New Deal politics and administrations, it is noteworthy that there has been no criticism of the National Youth Administration..."

"Perhaps one reason why nothing but good is said of the NYA is because it has been doing a so obviously necessary work in aiding young people to complete their schooling and to adjust themselves to the developing social order."

"Aubrey Williams, the NYA administrator, has just reported that the present academic year 13.5 per cent more college students are being assisted than last term, or 77,886, as compared to 75,993."

"Negro youth has received its proportionate share of this assistance, according to all reports, and Mrs. Bethune and her assistants have been zealous in their work for the good of Negro youth."

"Thousands of young Negroes have been forced to stop their schooling had it not been for this valuable government agency."

Frayser T. Lane, in a column on the editorial page of the

appended the entire of the report
Chicago Bee, reports the following of the WPA. (December 25, 1938)

"Of all the... organizations inaugurated by the New Deal administration, the WPA or Works Progress Administration is perhaps the best understood and most appreciated by urban dwellers. We are quite prone to joke about the shovel leaners of the WPA and criticise their slow tempo, but in due time the results of their efforts are quite apparent. The beauty of the community has been ~~enhanced~~ enhanced by parks, boulevards and good roads. Necessary surveys and studies have been made and recreational and cultural facilities have been brought within reach of all elements of the community. Most of these things were not possible before the WPA program was launched."

"The WPA has revealed to the citizens just what the government can mean to them. The logical question is "Why haven't these things been done before?" When people are working and earning their keep by the sweat of their brow they are happier and more loyal. They will ~~make~~ make better soldiers and more willing to fight for the country that does not forget them in peaceful times."

The Press did not confine its statements to mere approval of the New Deal agencies; it lent its columns and editorials in answering charges of anti-New Dealers and calling for a better managed WPA. Examination of the Negro Press, however, does not show that ~~the~~ Bronzeville journals regarded the government's alphabet agencies entirely as angels of economic salvation. With these "angels" came the usual American color discrimination; and such organizations as the Chicago Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People have been, ~~hotly~~ occupied in fighting for more fairness and less prejudice within the WPA and ~~allied~~ projects. But the Negro Press seldom ~~seeks~~ ^{finds} opportunities to strike at reactionaries.

The Dynamite, September 24, 1938, was ~~somewhat~~ irritated by ~~a comment~~ ^{an editorial printed}

~~made~~ in the famous Chicago Tribune ^{took} ~~made~~ ^{exception;}

"During this critical moment and these trying times, when Negroes along with the other suffering nationalities who make up the vast army of 13,000,000 unemployed, as they fight daily for economic security and jobs, the vicious Tribune lashes out its ribald propaganda in an attempt to ridicule Negroes, meanwhile continuing throwing their stigma on the WPA and the New Deal .

....

"We admit that the WPA, so far as treatments to Negroes is not entirely something to write home in boasting about, but it ~~is~~ certainly is doing more than the "World's Greatest Newspaper" in helping the people. At least it offers a means to an end--and temporary shelter along with food. When one is constantly treading the sod daily seeking a job--seeing his loved ones fastly fading away before his eyes, being subjected to all types of humiliation and inevitable, worn out theory of white supremacy, any job, WPA or what not will be quite ~~very~~ welcome. But the powerful Tribune (the cracked voice of the west) generally speaking, has only one side to present, and strange as it may seem, the wrong side--always."

The Negro Press's alliance with the New Deal is one of support

and defense. In this, as in the previewed employment phases, reflections of Bronzeville's economic position is seen in its persistent fight for economic freedom. Meanwhile, alarmed voices, concerning themselves over "What will happen to America if Fascism Comes", blithely ignore the position of Negro Americans. For Bronzeville inhabitants, ^{and socially,} ~~economic~~ fascism is not "coming", it is already here and Negroes are looking for a time when it will "leave". The economic position ^{into} which this group of Americans are forced ~~into~~ makes a mockery of American democracy. Whatever conception the individual has of America, it cannot be overlooked that this chapter mirrors the reactions, however inadequately, of one group towards a fascist society. Whatever opinion one has of the degrees of adverse discrimination the Negro populace is subjected to, it cannot be forgotten that were it not for stringent racial prejudice, there would be little ^{use} for a Negro Press ^{and}—some of Bronzeville's journals would ^{be suspended} ~~stop~~ publication. Likewise, this chapter, "Don't Spend Your Money Where You can't work", ^{would} ~~could~~ not have been written.

But this is "the home of the brave"; this is America. And this is the land which enjoys "the highest standard of living in the world"—with modifications for its Negro citizens. It is these factors which ^{have} made the Negro Press the strongest advocate of economic rights

the Al. ^{can} possess. It is the advance guard in the ^{warfare} fight against economic injustice, and as one journal ^{put it} states:

The watch dog of our group is the Negro Press. When this dog remains silent, the masses are of the opinion that all is well".--
Dynamite, August 15, 1936

But for ^{sixty} ~~fifty~~ years the ~~Chicago~~ Negro Press has ^{elegant} ~~never~~ been ^{declared} ~~in the interest of its loyal following~~ silent.

Richard I. Durham