

Why Lynching Persists

By C. VALENTINE

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The Amsterdam News stands for free speech and has always stood for it, but it never has, and never will, stand for free license to abuse everything decent and orderly that people love and care for, including the government, the only one we know and have, and the best there is in all of the world, imperfect as it is, and as much as we have to complain that it is deficient in. When haranguers and magazine scribblers in the pay of revolutionary propagandists accuse honest men and women of being apostates and dotards and grafters, because they refuse to stand for the principles of riot and revolution, for murder and confiscation of property, because they stand for them in the name of "The New Crowd," it is high time for the thoughtful people of Harlem to sit up and make a note of the insolence and the danger of it all.

The above appeared in *The Amsterdam News* of July 23, in lieu of editorial comment upon the race war at that time raging at the nation's capital.

It is a concrete example of one of the chief reasons for the persistence of lynching and the mob-spirit. The white man reading such damnable, sniveling drivel as the above would undoubtedly feel sure that the Negro was perfectly contented with his lot in this country. The Southern white man using it as proof of the Negro's contentment with his treatment could easily make himself out an angel from above rather than the fiend incarnate he is. No white man could be blamed for treating as misrepresentations of the general attitude of the race the utterances and

demands of out-spoken and self-respecting, race-serving Negroes.

The United States Government would be acting in a perfectly proper manner by taking no action to protect Negroes in their citizenship rights. This government in which the Negro has no representation whatever, and which has not within the last fifty years shown the slightest disposition, under Republican or Democratic regime, to safeguard his Constitutional rights, is great and good, in fact, according to *The Amsterdam News* "the best there is in all the world," so why, white men may ask, should they make any effort to improve it to the end that it would afford equal protection to all its citizens? The Negro is satisfied—his papers say so. So why bother about him? He delights in being governed by white men, for white men. So why force representation in the government upon him?

Surely this satisfaction to stay "put" of our lick-spittle contemporaries explains many things. It explains, for instance, the reason of the nation's apathy to the murder and oppression of its Negro citizens. They love to be oppressed and murdered, so why should white men get stirred up about it? Why should liberal-minded whites fight and agitate against the infliction of wrongs and injustices, when those upon whom they are inflicted are satisfied and even happy under the infliction? Why should the United States

Government and those in high places essay a solution of the race problem when such a step is apparently not desired by the Negro and would only hurt the feelings of Southern whites without any possible gratitude and thanks from the oppressed Negro who, according to *The Amsterdam News*, is satisfied and even proud to be the white man's slave, door-mat, foot-ball and other nice things?

But is the Negro really satisfied to be these things? And if not satisfied to be lynched and oppressed is he satisfied to be misrepresented?

While we have reprinted *The Amsterdam News'* editorial squib in its entirety so as to leave no opportunity for suspicion of misquoting or of only partial quotation, we do not consider that the latter half of it deserves serious answer. Even those least familiar with the fight between the conservative and radical forces of the world must be aware of the financial inequalities of the situation when on one side are the plutes, the rich beneficiaries of wage slavery, exploitation of women and children and the imperialism that finds vent in "colonies" and crown possessions in Africa, Asia and the West Indies, and on the other side are only those who are brave enough to dare the wrath and vindictive vengeance of the conservatives whose private control of the wealth of the world they threaten and whose ire and fighting dollars they have thus aroused.

And as to "dotards and grafters"—why possibly the average person can judge whether any but a dotard could have written the squib we have quoted; and certainly the colored voters of Harlem should be able to remember the names of the publications that in the past have sold them out.

DOMESTIC NOTES.

The enlisted personnel of the 807th Pioneer Infantry presented a loving cup to their band master. Mr. Will Voderay will long be remembered by those he served so faithfully. The men contributed 350 francs (\$63.00) toward the loving cup.

First Sergeant Willie A. Williams, Infantry, unassigned, wants to thank the enlisted personnel of Hg. Co., 807th Pioneer Infantry, for their loyal service during his work as First Sergeant in France and for the splendid gift of \$25.00 presented him as a token of their esteem and friendship.

IF WE MUST DIE.

If we must die, let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot.
While round us bark the mad and hungry
dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
If we must die—oh, let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be
shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrained to honor us, though
dead!

Oh, kinsmen! We must meet the common
foe;
Though far outnumbered, let us still be
brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one
death-blow!
What though before us lies the open
grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cow-
ardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but—fighting
back!

—CLAUDE MCKAY.

A MARSELLAISE

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere the world
grows older!
Help lies in nought but thee and me,
Hope is before us, the long years that
bore us
Bore leaders more than men may be.

Let dead hearts tarry and trade and marry,
And trembling muse their dreams of
mirth,
While we the living our lives are giving
To bring the bright new world to birth.

Come, shoulder to shoulder ere earth grows
older!
The Cause spreads over land and sea;
Now the world shaketh, and fear awaketh,
And joy at last for thee and me.
—William Morris in *The Voice of Toil*.

AFRICA

Often now I hear a voice a-calling.
Calling me across the mighty sea.
And responsively my heart is swelling
Native land, I long to answer thee.

Long to leave the hate of foster mother,
To be nurtured by thy kindly hand,
Sitting at thy feet with my black mother,
Africa, to know thy sunny land.
—Virginia P. Jackson.