

WMSJ
RW 12/2/46

Mr Walter White,
Executive Secretary, N.A.A.C.P.
20 West 40th St.
New York 18, N.Y.

3402 Delano St.
Houston 4, Texas
November 8, 1946

U of Texas
Sweet.

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Dear Mr. White:

You doubtless may see all through my signature that I am the recent applicant to the University of Texas, and whose case is now being processed by the Texas Legal Staff of the N.A.A.C.P.

This feature I relate not through an abstract lust for popularity, but to stress the advisability of divorcing my personal identity from the particulars with which this letter deals, basically.

This request I make only in thoughts of best interest to our case, which must be viewed more from its influence on the lives of countless Negro children throughout the state of Texas than from any attitude of recklessness on the part of any single person otherwise involved.

Very frankly, I have agreed with the opinions of so many persons accused of being Communistic that I loathe to deny that I am one. And yet, I can ~~only~~ truthfully admit that a lecture of

mine on Marxism would be as non-sensical as a Bilboic thesis on Democracy. Thus, in relating the following matter, I do so purely for what it may mean to the new column feature which you are writing for several large white papers, and for which you requested "big game" attitudes in Negroes.

I have spent four years of study toward the bachelor's degree, and one year graduate work at the University of Michigan. Thus, with such a background gaining a natural urge to fully understand the full meaning behind the antics of "Bigger Thomas", I make it a point in my bus side to work every morning in this southern city to give special attention to the subjects and trends of their conversations.

It would be indeed inflaming to the American white man to share my advantage; for I find Negroes of the very lowest strata (lowest by virtue of the pressures around him) surprisingly interested in the power movements now being played by Russia and the United States — and strangely "all out" FOR Russia. So much so that it is occasionally necessary for me to glance up at the "Jim Crow" signs above me to be assured that I am in Houston rather than Stalingrad.

It may be that ^{it is} the difference between the word of Russia's program of racial equality and Houston's actual one of Jim Crow which explains fully the reaction which I have previously recorded as "strange".

This, then, is by way of saying that these attitudes behind the Jim Crow sign seem to shape into three (3) patterns:

① "Aint Byrnes a hell-of-a-something to be arguing about Justice with Malabar?"

② "Yeh, yo head and get tough with Russia. I hope you (The United States) gets the hell beat out of you". Here, it is difficult for me to be exacting in interpreting "Bigger's" own position in the equation.

Has he, under the maddened impulse of the moment's freedom "at the big gate" failed to reckon with his own stake in a defeat of America by ANY nation?

Has he placed such trivial valuation on his lot as not to feel anything lost should this fate come to the United States. Or is it that he just doesn't give a damn?

③ "The American white man's going to get hell beat out of him just by thinking aint nobody got any sense but him." How the hell they know "Papa Joe" aint got an atom bomb too. Just cause they do us

the way they do, they think they is suppose to do the talking and You the listening. Thats, why I felt so good when that Russian walked out of that meeting the other day."

Regardless of the full meaning behind these "big gate" mumbles, there seems one thing positive to anyone positioned to fully study the features of common blending in them all: That if there was a measure of Color which made the American Negro study well his position in the past war with Japan, there will be the more difficult one in the event of war with Russia. It will be much easier to fight a Colored brother intent on suppression than a White man who knows no social prejudice.

Frankly, it is my opinion from what I have heard behind the South's Jim Crow signs that it will take a hell of a lot of flag waving to make a useful soldier out of the Southern Negro in the event of war with Russia. And this appears more so a truth unless some of those persons now demanding a "get tougher with Russia" policy don't soon see the advantage in its counterpart of doing better by our minorities."

Very frankly, it takes plenty of reading.

behind Pearl Buck, Lillian Smith, Henry Wallace, and Earl Conrad to help ME keep even my balance.

I thought that these lines might be of use to you, in spite of their blunt interpretation.

Aware of my position at this time, and the cost of a careless word to the present educational struggle of the Negroes of Texas I have been very cautious of my every action. Thus please accept this as a measure of aid to you, and not evidencing an undisciplined and indiscrete pen.

Best wishes for all the best things of this life, I am

Very truly yours
 Herman M. Sweatt

P.S.

I would hate to be caught using the United States Mails as a means of telling your republican friend, Harry A. Williamson just what I think of the Northern Republican far their hand in helping kill the F.E.P.C. You see, as a member of the Houston Branch, National Postal Alliance we are now feeling the vindictive repercussions from the Houston Postmaster as a result of the F.E.P.C. being killed with our charge of racial discrimination against the Houston Post Office in its hand, and in its initial steps of proceeding,