



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Crisis, Vol. 14, No. 4

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peace in the world so long as the color and race prejudice reign supreme as they do now. Yet the colored men of Asia, Africa and America, all, at this moment, engaged in fighting for the allies and the United States in making the world safe for democracy! Oh! the hypocrisy of the whole thing! it burns my very soul. I am sorry my personal means and the fact that I am a forced exile from home, prevent my doing anything substantial to relieve the distress caused to your people by the conduct of your white countrymen, yet even as a stranger I feel that I must be among the first to send you a monetary contribution. Please accept the enclosed check as an expression of my deep sympathy. I am enclosing another check on account of my subscription for the Crisis and will be glad to know if you accept aliens as members of your organization. Believe me to be one with you in your struggle for your rights as members of the human race. Sincerely yours,
AN ASIATIC GENTLEMAN.

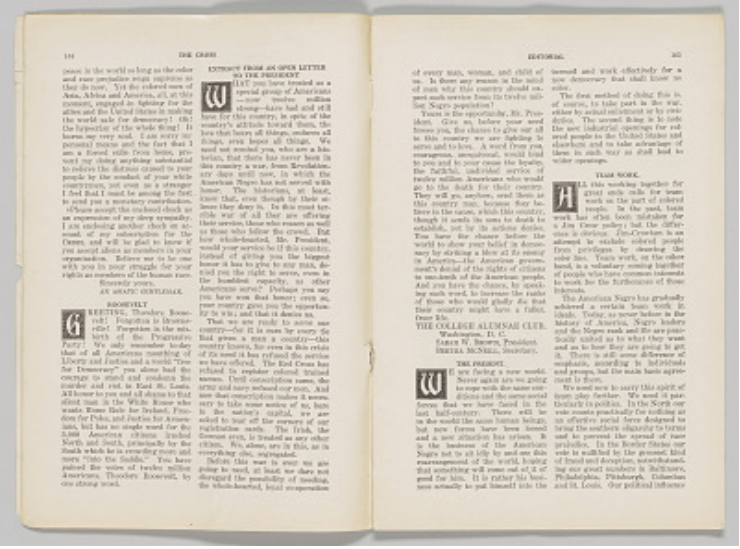
ROOSEVELT
GREETING, Theodore Roosevelt! Forgotten in Brownsville! Forgotten is the misbirth of the Progressive Party! We only remember to-day that of all Americans mouthing of Liberty and Justice and a world "free for Democracy" you alone had the courage to stand and condemn the murder and riot in East St. Louis. All honor to you and all shame to that silent man in the White House who wants Home Rule for Ireland, Freedom for Poles, and Justice for Armenians, but has no single word for the 3,000 American citizens lynched North and South, principally by the South which he is crowding more and more "into the Saddle." You have gained the votes of twelve million Americans, Theodore Roosevelt, by one strong word.

EXTRACT FROM AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

WHAT you have treated as a special group of Americans - now twelve million strong - have had and still have for this country, in spite of the country's attitude toward them, the love that bears all things, endures all things, even hopes all things. We need not remind you, who are a historian, that there has never been in this country a war, from Revolutionary days until now, in which the American Negro has not served with honor. The historians, at least, know that, even though by their silence they deny it. In this most terrible war of all they are offering their service, those who reason as well as those who follow the crown. But how whole-hearted, Mr. President, would your service be if this country, instead of giving you the biggest honor it has to give to any man, denied you the right to serve, even in the humblest capacity, as other Americans serve? Perhaps you say you have won that honor; even so, your country gave you the opportunity to win; and that it denies us.

Than we are ready to serve our country - for it is ours by every tie that gives a man a country - this country knows, for even in this crisis of its need it has refused the service we have offered. The Red Cross has refused to register colored trained nurses. Until conscription came, the army and navy refused our men. And now that conscription makes it necessary to take some notice of us, here in the nation's capital, we are asked to tear off the corners of our registration cards. The Irish, the German even, is treated as any other citizen. We, alone, are in this, as in everything else, segregated.

Before this war is over we are going to need, at least we dare not



disregard the possibility of needing, the whole-hearted, loyal co-operation of every man, woman, and child of us. Is there any reason in the mind of men why this country should expect such service from its twelve million Negro population?

Yours is the opportunity, Mr. President. Give us, before your need forces you, the change to give our all to this country we are fighting to serve and to love. A word from you, courageous, unequivocal, would bind to you and to your cause the loyalty, the faithful, undivided service of twelve million Americans who would go to the death for their country. They will go, anyhow, send them as this country may, because they believe in the cause, which this country, though it sends its sons to death to establish, yet by its actions denies. You have the change before the world to show your belief in democracy by striking a blow at its enemy in America - the American government's denial of the rights of citizens to one-tenth of the American people. And you have the change, by speaking such word, to increase the ranks of those who would gladly die that their country might have a fuller, freer life.

THE COLLEGE ALUMNAE CLUB,
Washington, D. C.
Sarah W. Brown, President.
Berth McNeill, Secretary.

THE PRESENT.

WE are facing a new world. never again are we going to cope with the same conditions and the same social forces that we have faced in the last half-century. There will be in the world the same human beings, but new forces have been loosed and a new situation has arisen. It is the business of the American Negro not to sit idly by and see this rearrangement of the world, hoping that something will come out of it of good for him. It is rather his business actually to put himself into the turmoil and work effectively for a new democracy that shall know no color.

The first method of doing this is, of course, to take part in the war, either by actual enlistment or by civic duties. The second thing is to note the new industrial openings for colored people in the United States and elsewhere and to take advantage of them in such way as shall lead to wider openings.

TEAM WORK.

ALL this working together for great ends calls for team work on the part of colored people. In the past, team work has often been mistaken for a Jim Crow policy; but the difference is obvious. Jim-Crowism is an attempt to exclude colored people from privileges by drawing the color line. Team work, on the other hand, is a voluntary coming together of people who have common interests to work for the furtherance of those interests.

The American Negro has gradually achieved a certain team work in the ideals. Today, as never before in the history of America, Negro leaders and the Negro rank and file are practically united as to what they want and as to how they are going to get it. There is still some difference of emphasis, according to individuals and groups, but the main basic agreement is there.

We need now to carry this spirit of team play further. we need it particularly in politics. In the North our vote counts practically for nothing as an effective social force designed to bring the southern oligarchy to terms and to prevent the spread of race prejudice. In the Border States our vote is nullified by the grossest kind of fraud and deception, notwithstanding our great numbers in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Columbus and St. Louis. Our political influence

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