

National GRAPEVINE

By CHARLEY CHEROKEE

COLORED WOMEN become home front issue No. 1-A. Negroes being problem No. 1, and 'women in general problem No. 2, this makes Negro women a headache.

In Washington, thousands of new colored government-girls from all over, create an awful situation. Of course, it's not their fault that housing, feeding, entertaining and keeping them reasonably moral is driving Y.W.C.A., and all colored welfare directors crazy. And can they help it if hiring, firing, rating, training and supervising them, and appeasing the crackers who work with them, has driven government personnel officers, supervisors, and cafeteria managers to "observation" hospitals? Forty thousand good, bad and unasked colored girls make quite a mob "living in the streets" just to stay out of the awful rooms most live in. They are compiling unsatisfactory work records because of too much sick leave, and police from the women's bureau have soured on them long ago.

Washington leadership, colored and white, private and government is doing what it can, which is damn little. One government-built dormitory is about to open (only 300 girls), another is a-building (another 400). Lanham Act administrators are practically forcing funds on the municipal recreation set-up to establish get-together neighborhood centers for the girls, but the "Negro assistants" in D.C. recreation seem more concerned with entertaining soldier boys.

Nationally, picture is a little rosier. Appointment of Maudelle Bousfield to McNutt's (Manpower Commission) Women's Advisory Committee, has helped efforts to get more colored women workers in war industries. Looking up every day, this employment and training picture will improve as more nursery schools for children of working mothers are established. In Detroit United Auto Workers (Ford local 600) stepped up its fight for Negro women's jobs and training. In D. C. United Federal Workers probed a nasty War Department mess involving transfer-or-not-to-transfer colored girls along with a Division moving to Newark. In many cities colored girls deliver telegrams in Western Union and Postal regalia.

Nevertheless, when bigger headaches are ached, colored women will ache 'em.

FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT

Egypt—Colored troops newly landed from convoy in Cairo, plead for opportunity to chase Nazis with a gun instead of engineers pick and shovel and stavedore's truck. They want in the glory end.

Alaska—Scheduled for formal opening November 20, new wonder-built Alaska to U. S. highway was informally opened by two Negro soldier-bulldozer (grading tractor to you) operators who met head on as two ends of road pushed from opposite directions, met in wilderness.

Germany—Propaganda for South African and Asia distribution is prepared to convince white overlords that coming of U. S. Negro troops will make natives unruly and break down white supremacy. That intended for India and South America harps on lynchings and other prejudices in Southern U. S. It never gets mixed.

Home and Abroad—White soldiers still write home about good and bad advice given them by commanding officers intended to control their attitudes and actions toward Negro troops. Depends on the officer

Washington—War Production Board announced Airplane production up 10 per cent for September, Ordnance up 7 per cent, Naval vessels up 22 per cent, Merchant ships up 10 per cent, and privies for colored women in industrial plants up 10 per cent. White women will work side by side with colored women, but that's all.

GRAPEVINE

Censorship by British and U. S. Censors has held up that eagerly awaited November Issue of Survey Graphic devoted entirely to Negro and edited by Alain Locke. Bitter vituperatives have been banded about. Meanwhile S. American and West Indian subscribers to the Defender and other Negro weeklies complain bitterly that papers arrive with three-fourths of contents clipped away by censors. (They don't even know about this column).

Irony is the name for Mississippi. Colored merchants, barbers, ministers, school teachers and children all suspended activities in several towns and joined whites in saving the cotton crops threatened by shortage of cotton pickers. Returning home happy in the thought of having helped the war effort, many of these colored workers had to make wide detours to dodge lynch mobs at Shubuta bridge and Laurel (No wonder there are more Mississippi Negroes in Chicago than in Jackson and Natchez).

Votes cast by Negroes proved effective only where the parties were virtually deadlocked. Determined to scare the Dems into action by flirting with the Reps, Negroes are now apprehensive. They took it on the chin in Congress where several famous Democratic liberals were displaced by unpredictable Republicans. Southern reactionaries were returned and may now have a field day. While Mitchell bowed out to colored Democrat Dawson, several colored members of State legislatures were re-elected. Furious Democrats threatened to clean out the Dem National Committee from Flynn down.

War on venereal disease opened a second front as 14 former CCC camps opened as detention homes for colored and white prostitutes, where girls will be compelled to remain until treated beyond contagious stage of syphilis. SCOOP—These homes operated under Lanham Act funds in army-industry areas of Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee Utah, Virgin Islands, and Canal Zone, will offer first opportunity for application of revolutionary and relatively dan-

gerous one-week and one-day syphilis cures.

WORK, WORK, WORK

Portland—AFL showed how weak 'he control of its chiefs over local sub-chiefs as Race Baiter Ray continued to discriminate against Negro workers at Kaiser Yards, and bitterly demanded that no more be promoted. AFL big-shots have ordered Ray to desist 'till the heat's off, but he refuses.

Washington—That War Manpower booklet Charley told you about months ago is now off the press. Signed as Charley said by McNutt, Donald Nelso, Navy Secretary Knox and War Undersecretary Patterson, it's entitled "Manpower—One Tenth of a Nation." Illustrated, slick-paper printed on fourteen letter-size pages, it is in its final somewhat vitiated form, the usual Urban League, better magazine, portrayal and dramatization of why Negro workers are desirable and available. Should serve good purpose.

Suitland (Mo.)—Census Bureau says there are 84,000 Negro workers in U. S. who were born in other lands, but work restrictions are being eased for them. Also reports that Negro migration is from stranded and rural areas to large urban industrial centers, rather than from South to North. For example many New York and New Jersey Negro workers are now working in Norfolk.

Washington—Capital Transit company still obdurately refuses to hire Negro motormen or bus drivers. In overflow mass-meeting, Adam Powell imported from New York, proved master of technique of mass morale building in 40 minute up-and-at-'em talk. CoFEP has also taken an interest in matter.

NEWSREEL

Marian Anderson lost at least one admirer when she bowed to war pressure and agreed to sing in Constitution Hall although DAR says it will set no precedent and guarantees nothing . . . Negro troops in Liberia stripped for action as Allies moved on French African Colonies . . . Colored leaders in all communities had better bestir themselves and sponsor some nursery projects for working-mother children as only limited funds have been earmarked for this. Act now and see local WPA . . . Next week, Dark Saints . . . Marian Anderson mural in South Interior Building basement is still undedicated and unmarked . . . Chicago pressure may result in establishment of air corps technical school for colored pilots in windy city . . . N.A.A.C.P. promises a finish fight in liberating those 10 colored women held in jail as witnesses for months in Jersey City . . . Tampa, Fla., gets medal for best home defense set-up in Negro neighborhoods . . . All government executive speeches must be checked now, even those by little-shots . . . Clark Foreman's new liberal paper, the Southern Patriot, to be published in Nashville, asks and deserves your support . . . Richmond Negro citizens protest Jim Crow Price Rationing Boards as un-American . . . Write to a soldier, and BUY ANOTHER BOND. MISTER, but don't let the DAR or anybody else make you back down when you're right, Keep 'em Squirming.