



U.S. ARMY SIGNAL CORPS

Citizens of NEGRO BLOOD

by Wendell L. Willkie

At their conventions, both major parties dodged the issue of racial discrimination. Platforms were adopted which, in their pledges to the Negro and their programs for him, are "tragically inadequate." Mr. Willkie demands that the candidates put aside generalities and pious platitudes, and deal forthrightly with this inescapable issue.

THE political and economic situation of our citizens of Negro blood is of an importance in the election which has not been equaled since the immediately following the Civil War. Negro people and their spokesmen in the North and in the South know it; thoughtful Americans of whatever background know it; our enemies and allies know it. Only those leaders of two political parties who wrote and endorsed the party platforms apparently failed to grasp the import of this fact.

The war has given new opportunity to the Negro and at the same time has sized the injustices in our attitude toward him. More than that, it has made us conscious of the contradictions between

our treatment of our Negro minority and the ideals for which we are fighting. The equitable treatment of racial minorities in America is basic to our chance for a just and lasting peace. For it cannot be too much emphasized that in the world today whatever we do *at home* affects our foreign policy, and whatever we do *abroad* affects our domestic policy. The two are necessarily interrelated. On no single question is this truth so inescapable as in the repercussions all around the world that result from our treatment at home of our colored citizen.

One of the widespread consequences of this war is the growing determination among colonial, subject and minority peoples everywhere to win for themselves a share of the freedom for which the Allied Nations are fighting. This is the great quest of our time. To future historians it may well overshadow all other aspects of the present conflict. We, as Americans, cannot be on one side abroad and the other at home. We cannot expect small nations and men of other races and colors to credit the good faith of our professed purposes and to join us in international collaboration for future peace if we continue to practice so ugly discrimination at home against our own minorities, the largest of which is our fourteen million Negro citizens.

The list of grievances of the Negro people is a long one. Not only is the Negro in many parts of the country denied his legal rights in violation of the Constitution, but he is denied the substance of freedom and opportunity in such matters as equal education,

equal chance for economic advancement, and his just share of such public services as playgrounds, hospitals and community provisions for health and welfare of all kinds. He is systematically housed in the worst sections of our large cities, and for his poor housing, is frequently charged exorbitant rents. He is traditionally the "last hired" and the "first fired." He is too often denied protection under the law. But of all the indignities and injustices Negro men and women suffer today, the most bitter and ironic is the discrimination practiced by the Armed Forces of their country—the country for which they are being asked to give their lives.

The Right to Liberty

In short, the Negro lives in our midst under discriminations which differ from the racial discrimination practiced by our enemies, the Nazis, only in that ours are illegal and that we are free—if we wish—to fight against them.

The deep patience of the colored people is nearing its end. The war has pointed the issues for them. They feel—and who can deny them?—that if they have the right to die with their white fellow citizens in the protection of liberty they also have the right to live with them in the enjoyment of liberty.

We have granted them the first right. It is our obligation to see that they get the second. The most effective means at hand toward that end is political—effective as a bargaining point for the Negro whose vote at the moment is sought by both parties; and

"... of all the indignities and injustices, the most ironic is the discrimination practiced by the Armed Forces"

effective as an instrument of justice in the hands of all Americans who desire to redress wrongs of which most Americans are ashamed.

It must be said at once that both of the 1944 political platforms, in their pledges to the Negro and their programs for him, are tragically inadequate. It must also be said that the Republican platform is distinctly better than the Democratic. The latter, in a brief paragraph of generalities gives lip service to the laws we already have, and to the duties many of our elected representatives have systematically disregarded.

"We believe," reads the Democratic plank, "that racial and religious minorities have the right to live, develop and vote equally with all citizens and share the rights that are guaranteed by our Constitution. Congress should exert its full constitutional powers to protect those rights."

Small wonder that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People issued a statement after the Democratic Convention which said:

"To call the section on the Negro a plank is a misnomer. It is best characterized as a splinter. Badgered by professional bigots from the South and dictated to by Northern political machines more interested in voter than in principle, the Democratic mount-

(Continued on page 47)

INCIDENT IN BERLIN

BY MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY

Few spies make a mistake and live. But this spy was an amateur—and he made an amateur's mistake about a beautiful woman

ILLUSTRATED BY
RONALD McLEOD

SOMEONE once said to him that the moment after he crossed the frontier into Germany must be the worst of all, the moment when he felt the door shut behind him, but that was not the worst, he thought now; this was the worst, the moment before he crossed the frontier.

For now there was still time to turn back. He did not have to cross that boundary. There was no compulsion but his own will to make him go on. Although he had come to know well this last-minute revolt, it had never been so sharp in him before, so hard to resist. He had a feeling now that his luck had run out.

But he made himself step forward in his turn and present his papers. The flickering hope that something might be found to be out of order died; the substitution of photographs had been well done, and as Henrik Olson, Swedish commercial traveler, Peter Freeman Brown passed from Switzerland into the Third Reich. The agony of the last moment of safety was over.

Now he felt only anxious carefulness tinged with the wonder that was always present in him, a wry, faintly quizzical wonder, that he, of all men in the world, should be involved in these experiences. He disliked subterfuge and was afraid of risk. Adventure had never appealed to him; even in business he had been careful and conservative.

And now, here he was. . . .

Peter Brown was an American, born near Boston. When he was a boy, his family had sent him to school in Switzerland where he had learned to speak French and German so well that later, after college, an uncle in the jewelry business sent him abroad as a buyer. He had fallen in love with a Swiss girl and married her and gone to work for his father-in-law, head of a firm of manufacturing jewelers, traveling over Europe as their representative. He liked his life in Switzerland, and ordinarily so many Americans came there that, until the United States entered the war, he had never felt isolated from his own country.

This matter of being a "source man" for his government—the Nazis would call him a spy—had come about gradually. In the beginning he had not been able to say no to the German refugees who were frantic for news of families left behind. He had been making frequent trips for his firm then—those were years when jewelers did a good business in the Reich, and it had not been too difficult to make cautious inquiries.

As time went on he had begun to be asked, confidentially, by people in authority for certain information. He was observant and practical, with a pleasant knack for getting along with people, so what he reported was clear and uncolored. It had become a regular thing for him, after a trip, to talk over conditions with a man from Washington.

Then his wife, Marguerite, died. That was just before the fall of Norway. After that he had taken risks he would not have thought fair to take before, nothing spectacular, but dangerous, nonetheless. A contact with the underground. Messages. Letters.

When America came into the war he had thought his usefulness, such as it was, had ended, but actually it was more important than ever to know current conditions in Germany and a sensible businessman made a good scout, so Peter Brown had been asked to go again behind the lines.

He had gone several times, as a Swiss, on forged passports. Now he was going to Berlin as a Swede—as Henrik Olson, repre-