

Scant Praise . . . Plenty of Criticism

John Clark Discovers Negroes Now Talking; Ike Gets 'Suggestions'

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MILWAUKEE, Wis.—(Aboard the Eisenhower Train)—The Eisenhower "road show" continues to attract unexplainable crowds and has started Negroes to talking.

Truman's "give 'em hell" feature and Stevenson's literary masterpieces haven't cut in on the Eisenhower "gate response."

In touring Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin last week, exposing the "fifty cent dollar," Korean war and the bungle that got us into it, unity in America and virtually crying for peace, the general's Presidential caravan attracted friends and critics among Negroes.

What they mean in votes on Nov. 4, it is impossible to say.

AT LEAST, he has aroused that part of America's citizenry to discussion.

Some critics are restless over failure to clarify and expand his stand on civil rights, particularly FEPC.

One group contends that the whole campaign is being run the wrong way, and that more preachers should be enlisted and have the ear of Eisenhower.

IT IS becoming a common sight for "promoters" mostly those defeated in all of their life-long operations, to board the Eisenhower Special with the "one plan that will bring Negroes tumbling into the Republican fold."

Probably the most interesting group was encountered by the writer at Peoria on Thursday night.

These audiences and critics were found in two establishments owned and operated by Negroes.

The first was George W. Green (Blue Shadow) and the second was Cabristo Collins (Bris Collins), both located on North.

AMONG THOSE who talked and listened, were Charles Freeman, leader in the Second Precinct, Third Ward; S. R. Thomas, Solomon Hobbs, Richard Pryor, Raymond Jones; Thomas Taylor and Robert Ryan, manager of "Bris" Collins' tavern.

Peoria, itself is a Republican city, and the county by the same name, is predominantly Republican.

But, even old rock-ribbed Republicans had more fault to find with Eisenhower than was the case of Democrats and Stevenson.

OBJECTIONS RAN from reports and experiences from and by ex-GI's who served in World War II, to the Truman preaching that the General's military mind cannot get adjusted to domestic problems.

Repeated questions were raised on Eisenhower's position on FEPC! Most distasteful were Eisenhower's acceptance of Wisconsin's Senator Joseph McCarthy; visiting Southern states, praising the Confederate Generals of the Civil War and expressing so much pleasure and honor in being the guest of Dixiecrats, especially South Carolina's Gov. James F. Byrnes.

THE GI "Beef" was a claim that it was General George S. Patton, not Eisenhower, who initiated the move to integrate troops in the "Battle of the Bulge," and occasions where construction workers were engaged in building barracks for white troops, while they (Negro construction GI's) slept in "pup tents" on the ground.

Statements made by Eisenhower before a Congressional Committee on integrating the armed forces were still distorted and the narrators were not inclined to be corrected.

THE TAFT-HARTLEY law came in for a few remarks, but even the labor man was not familiar with the law, except that he joined with Truman, who said it should be repealed.

Eisenhower could not get one man's vote because he remembered the "hungry days" under Hoover and wanted no more of them.

Probably the wildest objection came from one who said that

Eisenhower "broke" the Ninety-ninth Pursuit Squadron, sent the entire outfit back to the United States and made mess hands out of the whole squadron of commissioned officers, including Colonel Benjamin O. Davis.

AT SEVERAL points the writer attempted to make corrections, but remained quiet when charged with "trying to sell that soldier." Our sole purpose was to find out how "our people" are thinking.

The Peoria "forum" was interesting because those who took part did talk.

A month ago, it was almost impossible to find many Negroes anywhere who would talk about General Eisenhower or Governor Stevenson. Strangely, no mention was made by the "agingers" about the Nixon campaign fund.

THEY HAD high praise for Stevenson, Democratic Presidential nominee, but "clamped up" on Alabama's Senator John J. Sparkman, the Governor's running mate.

Mr. Green, owner of the "Blue Shadow" has been a lifelong Republican, active in the Elks, and is serving his fourth six-month term as Exalted Ruler of Peter H. Clarke Lodge 403.

He was a delegate to the Atlantic City convention this year and objected to the privileges extended to Congressman William Dawson, who told his brothers that everything we have came under Democrats.

GREEN CONTENTS that Dawson should not have been permitted to make a Democratic speech unless an able Republican leader was given the same privilege.

"Bris" Collins is also a Republican, but supported the present Democratic Mayor of Peoria.

In his tavern, he refuses to handle products of Peoria's Hiram Walker or National Distillers because the firm and the agent will not employ Negroes above menial classifications.

He did not declare himself on the November elections, but reminded the writer that he is still a registered Republican.

— BIGGEST and the BEST —