

Straight Thinking

It gives us pleasure to present this section for it is evidence that some youngsters are taught to do hard, straight thinking. May we warn, however, that this is no cause for complacency. Some of the children who write this section are from the same schools as those who contributed to the "Crooked Thinking" section. Billy, whose thinking is crooked, may be sitting next to Johnny, who thinks straight. Eternal vigilance against inaccurate methods of thinking is the responsibility of the educator. Are you on the job?

We Look for Authentic Information

¶ I feel it is un-American to have prejudices against any minority group. After all, a prejudice is usually a strong feeling based on remarks one has heard. I think anyone who has any prejudices against anyone should look up facts about them. I'm sure he would find that most of what he has heard is untrue. I, for a long time, had a prejudice against the Negroes. I felt that they were no good. But after reading books and articles about them, I have changed my mind about them. I found out they aren't so bad after all. Lately, our class has analyzed some of our prejudices and many of us found out that they were based on false facts. I wish everyone would do this. I'm sure it would help them a lot.

We Recognize Rumor and Misinformation

¶ Comic books have had an amazing effect on children, especially those of nine or so. Their impressions of gangsters, Nazis, and supermen are really enlightening. For instance, Jimmy comes home to supper and is told of a guest for dinner, a man from the Japanese district. Immediately Jimmy forms his comic-book influenced impression. The guest will be short. His hair will probably stand on end and naturally his teeth will be bucked beyond all dentists' help. Then, to top it off, comes the eye-glasses. He wouldn't be Japanese without eye-glasses. When the guest finally comes, Lo! and behold, to Jimmy's great amazement the man looks completely human.

¶ I wouldn't mind if any Jewish, Negro, Catholic or any foreign family moved next door because I think it would be nice to learn if all the rumors about them are really true. I would like to know a lot about them and their customs.

¶ "The Jews are running the White House."

This statement has nothing to back it up as only four percent of our population is Jewish and that is exactly the same percentage of Jews who work in the white house (at Washington) or who are in federal politics (Bureau of Statics). So the person or persons who write a statement of this kind are dileratly lying in an effort to put over this point or purpose. No reliable paper would print such a statement.

¶ I feel toward the Negro as if they were as good as any good American. I have heard bad things about the Negro, but I don't believe them because I have lived next door to them almost all my life. I am a paper boy and most of my customers are Negroes, and they never fail to pay.

¶ Most prejudices are formed from hearing others slander those of minority groups. My experience in the matter demonstrates this. All my life I have heard that Jews are gyps, so my youthful mind formed a picture which included all Jews. They had long white beards, unkempt and uncombed. All wore black skull caps and contrived to emit a smile from between their evil lips. Every Jew, to my mind, was a merchant, and one who swindled everyone, particularly delighting in driving his grandfather to the poorhouse. All this had been derived from one sentence which I had heard repeatedly throughout the years. It was, "Those Jews would cheat their own grandfathers." The years have broadened my mind so that I welcomed a unit in school called "Americans All" which pictures social, racial and religious groups as Americans. Through this study I have overcome my prejudice against the Jewish people.

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ALL INTELLIGENT PEOPLE know Discrimination is unjust, but unfortunately in our country all educated people aren't intelligent.

ALL THE TIME people are giving ideas on how to help this problem when many of them do not follow their ideas.

We Distrust Emotionalized Reactions

¶ People have strange attitudes about such things as inter-racial relations. A person will greatly admire Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai Shek but when one speaks about the Chinese laundryman down the street, the same person will immediately say, "Oh, he's only a Chinaman", completely forgetting that the Chiangs are also Chinese.

¶ Suppose we go back to our childhood days and see what problem, if any, existed at that time. I can remember playing with white children in the neighborhood and also in the lower grades at school. All went well. No hatred existed at that time. I went to their parties and they came to mine. As years rolled on things began to change. I began to notice the change in what had been my favorite playmates.

What then brings on the change in individuals? I believe that all the hysteria directed against racial or religious groups are mentally contagious. Like measles and tuberculosis, they spread from one person to another. They can be prevented or controlled by methods of education just as diseases of the body have been controlled.

We Recognize the Dangers of Generalization

¶ I do not think that it is fair for a person to condemn one race of people because one person or group has done wrong. For example, some people living here in the U. S. have condemned Americans of Japanese descent because of Pearl Harbor. It is not their fault that they are Japanese any more than it is our fault that we are of German, Irish, or English ancestry.

¶ The other night as I was walking home from school, I saw a "bunch" of Spanish girls of about junior high school age. They were dirty, their hair was unruly, and they wore no anklets. They were spread across the sidewalk so that nobody could get by. I had to go in to a store, and to do so I had to go around them. Instead of their letting me by they pushed me into the gutter; and they called me filthy names and such. I could

have gotten raging mad, and I wanted to do so, but I didn't pay any attention because I know they were just showing their ignorance. I thought of the hundreds of Spanish-speaking kids who are really swell—Arnold Gonzalez, Lucille and Ben Herrera, the entire Martinez family—and I knew they would blush for shame at the conduct of these young ruffians.

¶ Now, here in America there are lots of people who will have nothing to do with any one of Jewish blood. Some people say that Jews are stingy. That isn't true. Of course I'll admit that some Jews are, but so are some Scotchmen, and that doesn't mean that every person of Scotch descent is cheap. You can't judge one large group of people by one person, or even one hundred persons, no more than you can say that all books are no good, because you have read one hundred books and didn't like anyone of them.

We Believe in the Rights of the Individual

¶ I believe the Negro should have the right to vote. Even now he is fighting for that right. It is pretty silly to be willing to die for something and not be allowed to have that right you may have died for.

¶ Foreigners are O.K. They aren't quite used to the American way of living but they'll catch on.

¶ I believe that a person's religion is his own affair. If others believe that they can go to heaven by different ways, that's up to them. Religion is a very personal business and we should not be prejudiced if someone differs with us. I am not an authority and I cannot judge whether a certain religion is right or not, so I have no right to be prejudiced.

¶ I would not object living next door to a Negro, Japanese, Chinese, German, Polish, etc. Because everyone is equal to the same think. Every person is a human bean and have a right just as the other.

¶ I also do not like the way people talk about the Jews. The people say that the Jews never work hard. I know because I have cousins, uncles, and friends who are Jews. I think they work just as hard as anyone else in the world. People say they are money hungry. Maybe they are, but they work for it and work hard too.

¶ I think the Japanese American people should be classed just as everyone else is. It is not their fault they are of a different color than most of us, nor is it their fault that people of their race are our enemies at the present. But we should remember they are Americans and not natives of Japan.

Now during the war, more than ever, most people resent even seeing them walking down the street. If they are walking down the street it shows they are real Americans because they have been thoroughly investigated by our government.

We Resent Injustice

¶ The white people should not tease the negroes the way they do. They can't help it if they're not the same color as we are. God made them that way and He must have had a reason or He wouldn't have done it.

¶ I think the colored folks or people are all right. Some kids or people believe that they carry knives around with them and I just don't believe. The only difference between the colored and the white people are that they are a different color and has a accent to there words. Some people might be crippled or a broken arm and the people who have no broken arm or aren't crippled think they are better then others, but my opinion is that they are just as good as us.

¶ A colored woman is born with two strikes against her, first, because she is a Negro, and second, because she is a woman. A colored man is born with one strike against him, because he is a Negro. (*Negro girl*)

¶ I think the negros should have certain privileges, to do certain things, and to go to certain places, and not be cooped up like a bird in a cage all the rest of their lives. I think its pitiful the way they're being pushed around. Its a wonder they don't turn against us. If I were a negro I wouldn't stand for it. I also think that they should be allowed to buy any house if its for sale. Personally, I think the people that push them around should be punished in some sort of way so that they wouldn't do it again. I know some people that used to live down in the negro district. They told me that some of the negros have more manners than the whites. Some have more cooking ability than the white people.

¶ Does every citizen of America have equality? Are we perfect as a government? Should we then go out to a peace conference and make plans for other countrys when we, ourselves, need reforming? It has been proven that men, regardless of race, creed or color can work, live, fight and die side by side. The negro, the jewish boy and the Catholics fight side by side in battles of this war. They also die together. Isn't it just as right that they should come home and live together? Come home and go to the same movies, eat in the same resturants, ride together in the same vehicles, without fear of arest? Can not our government keep them to this effect?

¶ The Negro treatments has not infuriated me so much as that of the Indian has. These red men, who first lived on this bounteous land, who taught the early American settlers how to till the soil, hunt and fish, were later massacred by the hundreds. In the 1800's the Indians were placed in reservations, crowded together in dirty quarters and given only a limited amount of education just because they were in *our* way. *We* needed more room.

We Insist on a Square Deal

¶ I like the Germans Japanese chinese negros and jews that live in America. I think that they are very extra nice people. I think all foreigners that lives in the USA should be treed as any other person is but I think they should not take advantage of the things they get to do. Well them Jap Americans are ok just as long as they stay americans and no japs. And the Jap warlords like tojo I think are nuts. That Jap emporor is controlled by the Jap army and navy but I think the Japs that fight the war in the American army are ok. Some Americans think all japs are not right, but they are not right.

¶ The white believe if they give the negor the right to eat and associate with them, they will eventually want to marry them. This idea is false and is held only in the white man's mind. The negro first of all wants to earn a decent living, and then to vote. He hasn't a thought of intermarriage.

THE NEGRO PROBLEM is a very hard one and it will take someone smarter than me to solve it.

¶ "Aw, you Jew," said one boy to another. The boy to whom the remark was directed was immediately indignant. This is only one example of the attitude of some young people towards those of other creeds. I am not blaming youth for this disgraceful attitude though, because young people only reflect the ideas of their elders. I have heard friends of the family, who have no connection with show-business, say that they object to the Jewish people because they own many of our large theatres and places of entertainment and have to an extent, monopolized certain other businesses. The Swiss make advances in science, but no one denounces the Germans and the Swiss for their ingenuity. So, if the Jewish mind can afford us better entertainment and if they work better than we Gentiles in some fields, then they should work in these fields unhindered.

We Appreciate our Differences and Likenesses

¶ Before studying the intercultural course I realized that there were Italians, Negroes, and other groups making up America, but I hadn't realized what they contributed to this country nor the importance of their contributions. Only now do I know that the book I like was written by an Italian and my favorite music was written by a Negro. I understand now that if I want to help my country to be a real democracy I should learn to live and cooperate with all my fellow Americans.

¶ There may be a feeling of hatred against the Germans because of this and other wars, but, that is not justified because the German people as a whole are not responsible for this war. We owe a great deal to Germany for its many accomplishments in the scientific field.

¶ I regard with highest esteem such Negroes as Dr. Carver, Paul Robeson and many others. I do not regard them as great Negroes but as great people. (*White boy*)

We Recognize Cause and Effect

¶ It is stated that there is more juvenile delinquency among the Negro race than the white race. If that is true it is because the white race won't give the Negro children decent playgrounds for recreation, therefore, they end up in the poolrooms, taverns, etc.

If they were given decent places for recreation there would be fewer delinquents among the Negro race.

¶ If a person is Prejudice against whole amounts of people he is not a real citizen of the world. If people hate each other only wars will come and then we will not advance any. And if rich people do not employ a certain race they are no good because they are not advancing any.

¶ Negroes are polite, courteous and kind. I think that the negroes are better than some whites. My opinion is that we are responsible for the way they act in some ways. Negroes have hearts as well as whites, and they should be treated well. They haven't much opportunity in America. They should have as much opportunity as the whites.

¶ The reason for the negroes getting drunk is that that is the only thing that they can do with their money. They can't buy a decent place in which to live.

¶ As I am Spanish I know there is an awful lot of racial discrimination because I have been discriminated against more than once. I think that the whole world should look at each other as brother and sister. The reason there are gangs of Spanish-speaking boys rioting is because they are trying to get revenge for so much discrimination.

It seems that the "zoot" is the cause of the whole thing. Spanish-speaking boys and girls wear zoot-suits and jeans and sweaters; authorities try to stop this; I don't see anything wrong with wearing clothes of that sort. It doesn't seem possible that so much trouble could be stirred up on account of some clothing does it? Since when do clothes signify a person's character, or mean the difference between a good person and a bad person?

We Look to Basic Causes

¶ All people should have equal social and political rights. Because, of the population on the earth, each person is different in his or her physical characteristics, the racial minorities often get oppressed. There are many "reason" for this oppression. In this country an example would be the southern politician's fear of an educated Negro vote and some Californian farmers fearing the competition of the efficient Japanese farms. In many countries an outside enemy has stirred up hate

by playing different cultural, economic, and racial groups against each other.

¶ When the "so called zoot-suiters" broke out and started fights in California, people denounced every Spaniard on sight, but you can't judge everyone by a few. If people had read the papers to the last and smallest detail they would have read that the Mexicans who started the fights had been sent to the U. S. in cattle cars, to work in the beet fields. They had to sleep and eat in them, and ride three days in the hot sun. When they pulled into the station in California they were naturally restless. People stood around making wise cracks and commenting on the way they looked. Who wouldn't get just a little peeved? (*Boy of Spanish descent*)

We Reason It Out

¶ If a white man and a colored man believe in Democracy and another colored man believes in the Nazis the first colored man is more closely related to the white man than he is to the second colored man.

¶ Of all the occupations which one could mention, I cannot think of one from which a Negro can be excluded without rewriting the Bible, Constitution and Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. These works allow no room for racial discrimination, prejudice, or intolerance. As immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, who are we to say what freedoms a Negro shall or shall not have?

¶ Most of the American younger generation, from Missouri on down through the Southern states, believe the Negro to be of a very low class; they believe Negroes are here to serve the white people. I believed that too, until I started "Race Relations."

Now I shall attempt to prove the statements made by my friends are completely untrue.

A. Why should we "ship all Negroes back to Africa?" They helped explore this land. America is a democracy, a free nation, therefore why shouldn't the Negroes be here. They are fighting for America and the American people. Certainly this fact gives them the right to be thought of as American Citizens.

B. "Negroes should be made to act as servants." As I stated before they are citizens. Once they were slaves, not now. The

Constitution says so; therefore, they have the right to live as a free people.

C. "Negroes are all dumb." Those who made that statement certainly should be sure they know what they are saying before making such a broad, untrue statement. Phyllis Wheatley learned the English language and read the Bible in sixteen months. George Washington Carver invented articles that could be made from peanuts. In doing this he gave many white people jobs. What about Brooker T. Washington, John Chavis, Ben Banneker, and many other! All brilliant. All Negroes.

D. "Put all Negroes in one state and leave them alone." This statement means nothing. In the first place there is not one of our forty-eight states available. Also, there are many educated Negroes who are in industries that might not be carried on in that state. And how about the colored entertainers we like to see and hear? No, it would never work out. Besides these facts, there are Negroes fighting and dying in this war and there are Negroes in defense work, who have a real job to do, just as we do. They have a right to live as we do.

E. We are not superior to them and they should not treat us as if we were. They are no longer slaves, they were not all slaves before they came to America. According to God we all look alike. Why should we be prejudiced because of a darker skin? Don't we all want to be as near like God as possible? Why not start right here.

That's my point of view on the subject of the Negro problem in regard to the attitudes and beliefs of children of majority groups. I believe I am right.

We Know It's Our Job

¶ Race, color, creed make no difference when it comes to dying on the battlefield. Why then should it make any difference when it comes to their living? It is to us, the youth of today, to understand and to practice tolerance and temperance of thought and action in order to be worthy of the sacrifices that are being made.

I love the hold nation. Iv nothing to say abut no on

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