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**FLORIDA AT WAR**

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**PERSEVERING ON THE HOME FRONT:  
BLACKS IN FLORIDA DURING WORLD WAR II**

James A. Schnur

**THE SECOND WORLD** War forever changed the face of Florida. Unfortunately, scholarly accounts assessing the impact of World War II on the state have confined their discussions to economic and demographic changes. Traditional narratives have neglected the plight of African-Americans who persevered on the home front. Without a better understanding of the obstacles and achievements blacks faced during this pivotal stage in American history, it is difficult to fully appreciate the postwar civil rights movement. In the time between Germany's invasion of Poland in 1939 and Japan's capitulation in 1945, some Floridians began to question the exploitive, degrading, paternalistic, and often violent nature of race relations in the state and the South. The saga of the war on segregation is the story of a war within a war.<sup>1</sup>

White Southerners, who remembered the threat to white supremacy by carpetbagger regimes of the mid-19th century, had circumscribed black political activity immediately after the end of Reconstruction, a practice that continued into the 1940s. Realizing that a victory in the Democratic primary guaranteed election to office, whites had given the South a one-party system that controlled each and every election. Even the Republican party, long portrayed as a threat to white control, refused to put forth a civil rights platform, despite having more registered blacks than whites. In the 1930s and 40s, any changes that were made to the system had to come from the local leaders, since the Republican hierarchy and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt pursued a policy of placating Southern whites by downplaying the idea of black political equality.<sup>2</sup>

Here and there, small victories offered hope for further reform. In 1934, for example, a verdict by the Federal district court

in Pensacola affirmed the right of blacks to register as Democrats. Despite the court's opinion, the party officials enacted resolutions that further curtailed the rights of party members to vote in primaries. After he organized a Brevard County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP] in 1934, Harry T. Moore informed the national office that Florida chapters would make a state-wide effort to secure greater suffrage for blacks. African-Americans did register to vote after the state legislature repealed the poll tax in 1937 and after the courts intervened to remove other obstacles to political participation.<sup>3</sup>

Judicial decisions sanctioned black empowerment. In early 1943, the Florida Supreme Court quashed an indictment against a black man from Escambia County who had allegedly assaulted and raped a white woman. Justice Glenn Terrell explained that the Court nullified the indictment because county officials had systematically excluded qualified African-Americans from the grand juries. Although blacks had served on juries in Pinellas and Dade counties as early as 1941, this decision required courts throughout the state to empanel blacks. By February 1943, Florida's Attorney General advised all county officials that they should select black jurors whenever a black defendant faced the death penalty. Within five months of this advisory opinion, blacks had served on juries in Jackson, Escambia, and Martin counties, and other counties added African-Americans to their jury lists for the first time in modern history. In the 1944 *Smith v. Allwright* decision, the U. S. Supreme Court abolished the "white primary" and invalidated party regulations that allowed Democrats in southern states to deny voting privileges to blacks. According to the Court, the Democratic party's rules created a "closed club" of selective members and violated the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the Constitution.<sup>4</sup>

White Floridians protested the Court's findings and found ways to circumvent the *Smith v. Allwright* verdict. Violence and intimidation were the easiest and most effective ways to render the judgment impotent. When a well-known Jacksonville African-

American minister appeared at the polls during the Democratic primary in May 1944, two white men informed him that he could vote in the November general election, but not in the primary. When the clergyman showed his registration receipt, the whites became abusive and threatening. "You won't go to jail (for voting)," one of them assured the minister, "but you will be killed....This is Florida and...we don't allow niggers to vote here in Democratic primaries. If you know what is good for you, you better get away from here."<sup>5</sup>

While the general public in Florida ignored the decision, officials sought to evade it. J. Tom Watson, the state's flamboyant Attorney General, led the opposition to *Smith v. Allwright*. He remarked in a speech that "the Negro and the white man in American idealism are entitled to the same political rights...[yet] there is no such thing as racial equality, and there never will be." During the 1945 legislative session, he used his influence to persuade the Senate elections committee to repeal all Florida laws governing the Democratic primary, which permitted the party to establish membership qualifications by default. Tom Conley, chairman of the state Democratic executive committee, took advantage of this action and implemented his prior promise to resist any order requiring black participation in primaries.<sup>6</sup>

Such acts of subterfuge ultimately failed. African-Americans organized political committees and initiated lawsuits to have the courts declare the revised white primaries unconstitutional. Encouraged by the *Smith v. Allwright* decision, Harry T. Moore and other NAACP leaders established the Progressive Voters League of Florida [PVL] in 1944 to serve as an umbrella organization for challenges to the Jim Crow system. Based on the premise that blacks possessed the same fundamental rights of citizenship exercised by whites, Moore pushed the PVL to fight against lynchings and police brutality, to seek equal job and educational opportunities, to evaluate the credentials of prospective officeholders, to recommend acceptable candidates for public office, and to promote the exercise of black suffrage rights by opening Democratic primaries in all counties.

Throughout Florida, blacks courageously challenged barriers erected by white politicians, such as Tampa's White Municipal Party [WMP]. The WMP was a non-partisan organization designed to ensure the election of individuals who supported its program of maintaining the Jim Crow system. For a while, the WMP was effective and candidates who pledged their loyalty handily defeated their opponents. By 1951, however, more than 7,000 blacks had managed to enroll in the WMP and thus render it ineffective as a bastion of Jim Crowism.<sup>7</sup>

In many Florida communities, African-Americans went to court to make certain that local governments and politicians complied with the Supreme Court's mandate. In 1945, one Pensacola minister sued to outlaw the white primary in the Panhandle, while the Reverend Enoch Davis, along with other pastors, filed a similar suit in Pinellas County. The judge in that case deliberated only ten minutes before rescinding the primary law. When news of the outcome became public knowledge, many blacks immediately went to the county courthouse in Clearwater to register as Democrats. In mid-1945, the Florida Supreme Court extended the decision to all political entities in the state, thus killing the whites-only primary system.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the decisions of the various courts, white politicians remained wary of publicly courting black voters. When Spessard Holland, Florida's wartime governor, announced his candidacy for the U. S. Senate, black leaders approached him to offer their support. The chairman of the state's Negro Tuberculosis organization told him that his decision to run "has been received by the Negroes of Florida with the greatest of delight. We shall not only be hopeful for your election but for the first time...we can help." Harry T. Moore informed Holland that the PVL endorsed his campaign and encouraged African-Americans to vote for their former governor. While Holland doubtlessly appreciated this support, he did nothing to advertise it. When a Holland campaign worker sent a response to Moore in April 1945, he used stationery that lacked the campaign letterhead and mailed the letter in a plain envelope.<sup>9</sup>

The reinstatement of the black franchise forever modified

Florida's political climate. The number of black voters increased rapidly throughout the late 1940s, and finally stabilized during the early 1950s. Before 1944, few if any of the 20,000 blacks permitted to vote in the general elections could participate in the Democratic primary. By May 1946, nearly 50,000 African-Americans had registered to cast their ballots, and the majority had enrolled as Democrats. In the presidential election of 1948, 85,000 black voters exercised their political clout and voted for Harry S. Truman. Republican Thomas E. Dewey and Dixiecrat J. Strom Thurmond received few votes from the African-American community. Most of the new registrants came from one of two distinctive settings. They either lived in rural areas where the black population was small and did not threaten the white majority or they came from urban areas large enough to support a viable black middle class and to provide anonymity for the individual voter. The influx of new residents from other parts of the country during Florida's postwar period modified somewhat white reluctance to grant blacks the full franchise. Even more important, African-American exercise of the franchise did not lead to the political and social chaos predicted by segregationist doomsayers. Pork chop politicians--the county-seat elites who dominated the politics of the old plantation belt--continued to resist Negro suffrage. Although blacks repudiated candidates who espoused white supremacy, surprisingly they tended to vote with pork choppers to elect Democrats in the general election.<sup>10</sup>

In general, political empowerment strengthened the African-American communities. Civic participation nurtured a generation of black leaders who no longer accepted separate and unequal treatment based upon race as an inviolable institution. Although Sam Solomon did qualify for a seat on the Miami city commission in 1943, few blacks sought public office for city or countywide offices until the mid-1950s or later. White politicians, however, could not ignore the growing demands of black voters for reform, and a growing African-American electorate compelled some municipalities to provide playgrounds, sidewalks, and other amenities previously denied

black neighborhoods prior to World War II. In the immediate post-war period, public housing projects for blacks appeared in Tampa, Miami, Jacksonville, Clearwater and other cities with large black populations.<sup>11</sup>

Among the major problems faced by blacks in a segregated society, adequate and acceptable housing ranked at the top. By the early 1930s, contagious diseases ravaged the unfortunate occupants of the small, dirty shacks that constituted Miami's 350 acre Colored Town [now known as Overtown]. The white civic elite of the city sought New Deal relief to relocate African-Americans from this section into public housing, but their actions stemmed more from a desire to extend Miami's business district than from any great humanitarian concerns for blacks. Other cities were equally unconcerned about the plight of black families. Some, like Gainesville, actually penalized Negroes who improved their property by levying disproportionate *ad valorem* taxes. Gainesville also lacked a city building code to regulate the use and disposal of unsafe buildings. As a result, white landlords continued to extract exorbitant rents for buildings that became increasingly unfit for human habitation. A February 1940 study indicated that major disparities between black and white living accommodations existed in St. Petersburg. According to that study, eleven percent of the city's white residents occupied substandard housing, while 84% of the black population lived in inadequate structures. Similar results were to be found in cities across the state.<sup>12</sup>

The institution of segregation acted as an impregnable barrier to neighborhood improvements. A 1943 St. Petersburg city planning commission report described the substandard and deteriorated infrastructure prevalent in black areas, but the report failed to hold white politicians and landlords accountable. The National Urban League followed up the 1943 study and in 1945, in a separate study, noted that city officials had failed to take any remedial action during the ensuing two years. When improvements were made by city governments, the intention generally to prevent the encroachment of

squalid conditions on adjacent white neighborhoods. Projects were often undertaken with an eye toward the auxiliary benefits for whites. The completion of a low-income housing unit in Polk County was hailed by one newspaper because "there will be less disease among the Negroes of Lakeland and therefore less disease among the white residents." In 1943 the City of Tampa and the Federal Public Housing Authority cut plans to build low cost housing for blacks because the larger project would infringe on an area of white housing. Attempts by blacks to move into areas of better housing provoked legal and illegal responses by the white community. When African-Americans left the ghetto area of Miami in 1945 for better housing in Brown's subdivision, an area with racially restricted zoning ordinances, city police arrested them. Carloads of armed white men swept through the area and burned crosses near the doorsteps of blacks who had relocated. Governor Millard F. Caldwell chose to view the matter as a dispute over local zoning laws and refused to intervene.<sup>13</sup>

Florida blacks were also denied recreational facilities or were forced to accept substandard ones. Even the state's beaches were restricted, and coastal communities frequently denied persons of color access to city property. When Dade County commissioners issued bonds in 1941 to construct new beaches and to improve existing ones, they made no provisions for the county's 45,000 African-American citizens. Without access to public beaches in Miami, blacks had to travel to a segregated beach in Fort Lauderdale. On the other coast, St. Petersburg officials were just as blase over the concerns of the city's black community for adequate recreational facilities. In 1936, Pinellas County blacks demanded that officials either construct a swimming pool for Negroes or set aside a bathing beach for them. The St. Petersburg Ministerial Association threw its support to the issue in 1940, but a mayoral commission created to study the question tabled it indefinitely. Despite the absence of parks and other facilities in their own neighborhoods, blacks seldom tried to use those in white residential areas. Authorities in Jacksonville provided seven

playgrounds for whites for every one playground in black neighborhoods. Although no ordinance prevented blacks from entering any of the city's 175 parks, they were prohibited from using any of the facilities in them. Thus customs and laws combined to restrict the use of most public facilities to whites only. While African-Americans vigorously sought separate but equal facilities in Miami, St. Petersburg, and Jacksonville, they did not attempt to force the issue by challenging the tenets of the Jim Crow system.<sup>14</sup>

Jacksonville, with its large black neighborhoods, was a microcosm of race relations throughout Florida. In 1946, a bi-racial citizen's group, with the assistance of the Southern Regional Council and the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College, began a study of the city's black community. The committee found that prewar conditions in housing and health had changed little during the course of the war. One half of the housing areas occupied by African Americans were classified as slums. Forty-eight percent of the homes occupied by owners were assessed as having value of less than \$1500, and a similar percentage was judged as failing to meet minimum standards for health and decency. Dirt roads, pit toilets, and inadequate sanitary collection program were typical. Sidewalks and paved streets were present only along major thoroughfares and in neighborhoods previously occupied by whites. Only 25% of the city's blacks lived in areas where at least some of the homes had been connected to the municipal sewer system. Less than 50% of the dwellings had bathtubs, and fewer than 10% had hot running water. That such conditions spawned disease could not be denied. Blacks experienced a tuberculosis caused death rate six times higher than that of whites, and the black infant mortality rate was nearly twice as high. Duval County had only one black physician for every 7,385 residents in the segregated community.<sup>15</sup>

The war produced significant benefits for Florida's black population. Armed with the G.I. Bill which guaranteed their home mortgages, black veterans moved their families away from the ghettos and purchased homes in less congested subdivisions. Other

blacks, encouraged by the mobility of veterans, sought to relocate from the restricted areas of the prewar era. Construction of new houses in new subdivisions provided new opportunities, and the rate of home ownership by African-Americans rose continuously throughout the late 1940s. In Miami, black homeownership increased by approximately 30% in the five years between 1945 and 1950. Most of these new homes were located outside the central Negro district in the unincorporated areas of Dade County. Here the limitations imposed by building codes were relaxed, and a smaller white population offered less resistance. Although the movement to these areas continued, blacks found that some of the old problems persisted. Restrictive covenants remained on many properties, including houses built during the immediate postwar period. Although a 1948 U.S. Supreme Court decision asserted that no person could petition any court of law to enforce a restrictive covenant, the ruling did not void existing covenants nor prevent property owners from creating new ones. Police harassment, which accompanied the movement of blacks into the newer areas, was viewed by the black community as white oppression, pure and simple.<sup>16</sup>

Black soldiers also felt the wrath of the law. The Roosevelt Administration and its Office of War Information [OWI] failed in its efforts to convince white Southerners that the threat of fascism endangered all Americans to the point that segregation and Jim Crowism should take a back seat to winning the war. Southerners refused to abandon decades of racism even momentarily, since they did not accede to the ideal of democracy at home. War Department officials did what they could to protect black soldiers stationed in the South, but their ability to do so ended at the edge of military reservations. White supremacists, opposed to Federal efforts to find equitable facilities and opportunities for black soldiers, were quite willing to do what they could to limit off-base activities. Black conscripts from Northern states who challenged the Jim Crow system in Florida were viewed as the greatest threat to the social stability of the region. In Pensacola, the open questioning of this system by

black soldiers prompted local Negro leaders to create the Pensacola Improvement Association, which sought a restoration of full voting privileges for all blacks.<sup>17</sup>

Although some newspapers--most notably the *St. Petersburg Times*--moderated their editorial positions on the question of race during World War II, African-Americans remained suspicious of the press. Even though the *Times* occasionally included feature stories of renown blacks in the main sections of the paper, most news articles by and about African-Americans were confined to separate and segregated sections. While blacks hoped the press would use the nation's struggle against foreign racism to begin a forthright discussion of the same problem in the United States, newspapers did not respond in such a manner. White owned publications did little to dispel widely believed rumors that African-Americans plotted to rape white women and to resort to violence after most white men had entered military service overseas.<sup>18</sup>

Confrontations between white law enforcement officials and black soldiers were inevitable because of the large number of installations in Florida. While some incidents did provoke race "riots" in the state, they lacked the ferocity or notoriety of those in other areas of the United States. During the summer of 1942, Jacksonville policemen used a fight between two Camp Blanding soldiers as an excuse to intimidate the entire black community in that city. When police officers brutally beat some blacks at the scene and patrolled the area armed with shotguns, pistols, and submachine guns, only a few frustrated residents threw bricks and bottles. This demonstration of black anger was quickly suppressed by local authorities. In 1944, police in Tallahassee also became involved in a riot. When rivalries between soldiers from Camp Gordon-Johnston and Dale Mabry Field escalated into a full-fledged riot, policemen assisted MPs in restoring calm. As the MPs herded soldiers in a truck after once disturbance, Tallahassee officers pointed guns at the soldiers and threatened to "blow them to hell." In 1944 and again in 1945, military and civilian law enforcement personnel responded to riots in

Frenchtown, a black enclave near central Tallahassee. As a result of these incidents, the commander of Camp Gordon-Johnston decided to follow the advice of the Tallahassee city manager and postpone indefinitely the arrival of new black soldiers.<sup>19</sup>

When Attorney General J. Tom Watson advised the Florida State Defense Council in 1942 that sheriffs could create posses to protect the life, health, property, and morals of Floridians, he awarded law officers broad discretionary powers to suppress rebellion and rioting *and to regulate morality*. State and local officials immediately moved to use their powers to regulate the behavior of African-Americans. Placed in the position of guardians of public morality and health, these officers of government acted quickly against "jook" joints, social diseases, and any other problems that might conceivably sabotage the war effort. Many of their efforts were aimed at the African-American community, and their actions were applauded by white Floridians. In 1941, the *Miami Herald* enunciated the thinking of many whites in and out of authority when it described one view of the city's black community. "Negro town has become a den of iniquity," wrote the editor, "with prostitution flourishing, bolita tickets for sale on every hand, where the children can look from their bedrooms and see the numbers racket in operation. And, seeing their elders engaged in innumerable nefarious enterprises, they grow up under the illusion that crime is a normal way of life."<sup>20</sup>

Authorities also hoped to curb wartime promiscuity and to eliminate the spread of venereal diseases. Officials at the U.S. Public Health Service, who claimed that Florida had the highest disease rate in the United States, asked policemen to corral "professional disease spreaders."<sup>21</sup> Although officers did incarcerate many white "Victory girls" and prostitutes, in some cities they tended to concentrate their attention on blacks. Women of color, lacking the social mobility of their white counterparts, offered much easier targets to authorities seeking to placate the Federal government. Black females, unlike white women, seldom filled critical defense jobs and were therefore considered more expendable.<sup>22</sup>

While the practice of prostitution concerned most Floridians, one sexual act--miscegenation--inspired some white men to commit murder. Florida's constitution prohibited whites from marrying any person who had black ancestors as far back as the fourth generation. Certainly white Floridians would never condone interracial sexual relations involving white women and black men, although similar sanctions did not apply to white men and black women. Violence was a frequent response by the white community of Florida when this taboo was violated, and lynching remained the ultimate form of social control. Courts of law imposed the death penalty for those who transgressed the complicated sexual code of the South.<sup>23</sup>

Threats of Federal intervention failed to curb extralegal lynchings. Southerners loathed Federal authorities who hoped to lift the wartime morale of African-Americans by proposing anti-lynching legislation. While a 1939 *Largo Sentinel* editorial asserted that "the two races in the South get along very well," vigilantism thrived throughout the Old Plantation Belt. The only recorded lynching in the United States during 1945 occurred in Madison County, Florida. The lynching of Jesse James Payne, while involving an economic dispute between sharecropper and landowner, was the product of a charge of sexual assault against Payne, a Negro.<sup>24</sup> In some cases, lynchings occurred but were not reported as such. The murder of Willie Banks in 1944 was one such example. Banks' decomposed body was found along the banks of the Apalachicola River in the Spring of 1944. A jury, convened to investigate his death, declared that Banks had died from unknown causes.<sup>25</sup> Although lynchings occurred, violence on a lesser scale was more commonplace.

Whites resorted to intimidation to enforce segregationist practices in virtually all areas of contact. Sometimes whites invaded areas that were normally restricted to blacks and brought with them the force of law to ensure that their incursions into these areas were done according to the Jim Crow system. For example, twenty-five soldiers carrying shotguns paraded around the football field at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical College during the 1942 homecom-

ing celebration in search of a black soldier who had argued with a white MP. In the days before the Florida State College for Women became the coeducational Florida State University, white Tallahasseans often attended football games at the all-black FAMC. After a large crowd at a 1941 game left no seating for white spectators, state officials required black civilians to sit on one side of the field, with the remaining 50% of the seats divided among black soldiers, white civilians, and the governor's staff. Throughout the game, white MPs threatened members of the black audience, even forcing FAMC alumni in uniform to move away from their friends in the civilian section.<sup>26</sup>

Segregation practices were not restricted to colleges, as Floridians maliciously neglected the educational needs of African-Americans enrolled in public schools. The professional level of black teachers had been gradually improving, and in the 1930s, a cadre of college-educated teachers became active in reforming the segregated schools. The Florida Teachers Association, a black counterpart to the Florida Education Association, worked with the NAACP and other organizations to improve general educational conditions. Other support organizations at the local level were created in various counties, and these local groups attacked disparities in funding, physical facilities, and teachers' pay between whites and blacks.<sup>27</sup>

In 1941, a group of black educators in Palm Beach County formed the Palm Beach County Teachers Association [PBCTA], and in 1943, this organization successfully challenged the county school board's decision to close black schools to accommodate demands for agricultural labor. The board, describing its action as being "in the interest of the national war effort," did not apply the same yardstick to white schools, which remained open. The PBCTA not only produced a reversal in this instance, but the organization was successful in persuading the school board to end split school terms [based on crop harvests] in future sessions.<sup>28</sup>

Similar efforts on the part of black educators in Broward County were not successful, however, and white officials there closed

African-American schools from December to July in the years 1942-1945 in order to provide agricultural labor. While the county provided white students with ten months of continuous education, black students were provided with only four months of instruction. Officials ignored pleas from black mothers who offered their labor in the fields in exchange for more educational opportunities for their children. What happened in Palm Beach County was not unique, and blacks throughout the state faced the arduous tasks of battling white controlled school boards to hold on to the opportunities of the past and for minimal improvements.<sup>29</sup>

Even the booming wartime economy of the state failed to provide additional revenue for black education. When Duval County received an \$800,000 grant to improve and expand educational facilities, white school authorities decided not to allocate any of the funds to black schools. Even rudimentary facilities were lacking in Negro schools, and in 1945, students at Jacksonville's black high school found it necessary to undertake a fund raising drive to purchase a water fountain because the local school board refused to pay for it. A 1946 survey found that only one of twenty-two black schools operating in Duval County had adequate sanitary and structural ratings to justify physical rehabilitation. Similar conditions existed throughout Florida's numerous school districts. Not only were black school facilities inadequate, but special educational programs, kindergartens, and advanced curricula were practically unknown.<sup>30</sup>

Florida's Jim Crow system produced some bizarre circumstances, but perhaps none more bizarre than the preference officials gave to white POWs over black citizens. Nazi POWs, incarcerated in about a dozen camps around the state, fared much better than African-Americans. Although some politicians, such as Representative Robert Sikes of Florida, expected German prisoners to be "thoroughly indoctrinated into the workings of democracy," any formal discussion of race relations in America was scrupulously avoided. POWs were employed in the state's forest and agricultural industries, and their treatment by other whites was sometimes better than the

treatment black soldiers had to tolerate. When German prisoners complained about having to work in a MacDill Field mess hall kitchen where black and white American soldiers ate in the same building, military authorities appeased the POWs by segregating whites and blacks into different dining areas.<sup>31</sup> Such an incident causes one to wonder which nation's ideals truly won the war in the short term.

Despite the prevailing Jim Crow system, Florida blacks made substantial contributions to the war effort. Pupils and teachers in a Jacksonville junior high school started a savings bond program immediately after Pearl Harbor and continued the effort throughout the war. Students in the defense training school at Florida Normal College constructed a large boat that patrolled the Atlantic Coast. Instructors in public schools and FAMC sponsored conferences, offered specialized defense related training, and enhanced their curriculum to meet the needs of the military.<sup>32</sup>

Unfortunately, many blacks never received adequate recognition for their services to the war effort. Prejudice prevented most whites from appreciating the heroic deeds and patriotic exertions blacks made. For example, a larger percentage of the black population of St. Petersburg served in the military than that of the white citizenry, but few people in the area were ever made aware of this fact. In Jacksonville, returning black soldiers were excluded from the November 1945 victory parade and celebration. Indeed, if the writings of white journalists in white owned newspapers in Florida remained as the only extant records of black contributions to the war, it would be easy to conclude that African-Americans had done little positive and much negative in the struggle against militarism.<sup>33</sup>

Where Florida newspapers excluded mention of most African-American contributions, the national black press--such as the *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Atlanta Daily World*, and the *Baltimore Afro-American*--provided more comprehensive coverage. The *Courier* hired correspondents throughout the United States and informed its readers of happenings in various areas. From Florida came columns with catchy headings like "Moving Over Miami," "Around the Cigar

City," and "News About St. Petersburg." Although the black press asked readers to postpone temporarily their individual grievances and assiduously defend the United States, it did not abandon its prewar emphasis on civil rights reform.<sup>34</sup>

Two months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the *Courier* launched its "Double V" campaign, which demanded victory on the home front as well as success on the battlefield. The *Daily World* recounted the heroic deeds of black soldiers and the atrocities of home front segregationists on an almost daily basis. As the war progressed, black journalists maintained their support of the war effort, but they also became more militant in their demands for an end to racial violence and the Jim Crow system. They focused their attention on the need for black community leaders, who they saw as the first line of action, to take an aggressive role in seeking social, political, and economic rights.<sup>35</sup>

World War II marked a critical juncture in the history of blacks in Florida and the United States. Victory against overseas racism and injustice demanded that Americans examine their society at home. Black servicemen, confident in their abilities to lead and assured of their abilities to resist oppression, infused the black community with a new spirit of independence and an aggressive sense of urgency. The skills honed in the cauldron of battle were now employed in the fight for civil rights, and new leaders, adept in organizing and motivating followers, were called to the front. Black professional and business classes joined with ministers and others within the black community to present a united front against the intransigency of the white establishment. The tenacity that had marked the efforts of the black community during the war period now dominated the postwar struggle for equality. One scholar, writing in 1943, described the impact of World War II on the nation's African-American community thusly, "It was as if some universal message had come through the great mass of Negroes urging them to dream new dreams and protest against the old order." Slowly, but surely, the cumulative lessons of World War II and the confidence of

a new generation of tested leaders fused to achieve what had been so painfully denied. For Florida blacks, World War II did not end until the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.<sup>36</sup>

#### NOTES

James A. Schnur is a three-time winner of The Florida Historical Society's *Governor LeRoy Collins Prize*. He is currently a graduate student in history and library science at the University of South Florida and is employed by the USF Library in St. Petersburg. An extended version of this paper won the 1992 *Governor LeRoy Collins Prize*.

<sup>1</sup>For an example of a scholarly approach that fails to examine the issue of race, see Ben F. Rogers, "Florida in World War II: Tourists and Citrus," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 39 (July 1960): 34-41.

<sup>2</sup>John Morton Blum, *V Was for Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War II* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976) 191-92; James William Dunn, "The New Deal and Florida Politics" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Florida State University, 1971), 23.

<sup>3</sup>Dunn, "New Deal," 239; Gloster B. Current, "Martyr for a Cause," *Crisis* 59 (February 1952): 75; Raymond O. Arsenault, *St. Petersburg and the Florida Dream, 1880-1950* (Norfolk: The Donning Company, 1988), 305.

<sup>4</sup>*Sarasota Herald Tribune*, January 15, 1943; *Atlanta Daily World*, January 22, 1943; Arsenault, *Florida Dream*, 305; *Pittsburgh Courier*, March 21, 1942; *Key West Citizen*, June 3, 1943; James R. McGovern, *The Emergence of a City in the Modern South: Pensacola 1900-1945* (DeLeon Spring, FL: E. O. Painter, 1976), 167-68; *Stuart [FL] News*, February 18, 1943.

<sup>5</sup>*Atlanta Daily World*, May 6, 1944.

<sup>6</sup>Edward D. Davis, *A Half Century of Struggle for Freedom*

in *Florida* (Orlando: Drake's Publ., 1981), 141, 144; *Atlanta Daily World*, March 3, 1945; April 19, 1945; May 26, 1945; *Jacksonville Florida Times-Union*, April 4, 1944.

<sup>7</sup>William G. Carleton and Hugh Douglas Price, "America's Newest Voter: A Florida Case Study," *Antioch Review* 14 (December 1954): 445; Current, "Martyr," 78; Harry T. Moore to Spessard Holland, April 11, 1946, Box 229, Spessard L. Holland Papers, University of Florida Special Collections [SHP]; Charles J. Parrish, "Minority Politics in a Southern City: Tampa, Florida, 1950-1960," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Florida, 1960); Gary R. Mormino and George E. Pozzeta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City: Italians and Their Latin Neighbors in Tampa, 1885-1985* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1990), 53, 58.

<sup>8</sup>Enoch Douglas Davis, *On the Bethel Trail* (St. Petersburg: Valkyrie Press, 1979), 58; *Atlanta Daily World*, July 29; August 1 and 2, 1945.

<sup>9</sup>Chester R. Cowart to Spessard Holland, November 8, 1945, Box 228, SHP; Harry T. Moore to Spessard Holland, May 4, 1946, Box 229, SHP.

<sup>10</sup>Carleton and Price, "America's Newest Voter," 441-42; William G. Carleton, "Negro Politics in Florida: Another Middle-Class Revolution in the Making," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 57 (Autumn 1958), 419-20.

<sup>11</sup>Carleton and Price, "America's Newest Voter," 442-43, 445-46; Leavy Winston Oliver, "An Historical Survey and Analysis of the Progress of Negroes in Public Service (1932-1952)," (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Indiana University, 1955), 151; *Atlanta Daily World*, April 16, 1943.

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<sup>14</sup>*Atlanta Daily World*, January 5 and February 5, 6, 1942; Arsenault, *Florida Dream*, 306-07; Darryl L. Paulson, "Stay Out, The Water's Fine: Desegregating Municipal Swimming Facilities in St. Petersburg, Florida," *Tampa Bay History* 4 (Fall/Winter 1982): 6-7; Richard P. Daniel and others, *Jacksonville Looks at Its Negro Community: A Survey of Conditions Affecting the Negro Population in Jacksonville and Duval County, Florida* (Jacksonville: Council of Social Agencies, 1946), 56.

<sup>15</sup>Daniel, *Jacksonville*, i, 1-24; Miller, "Negro Life," 26, 30, 40, 136.

<sup>16</sup>Reinhold P. Wolff and David K. Gillogly, *Negro Housing in the Miami Area: Effects of the Postwar Building Boom*, Area Development Series No. 1 (Miami: University of Miami Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 1951) 3-6, 10; Stetson Kennedy, *Jim Crow Guide: The Way It Was* (Boca Raton: Florida Atlantic University Press, 1990), 75-76; Paul Sargis George, "Criminal Justice in Miami: 1896-1930," (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Florida State University, 1975), 197.

<sup>17</sup>Clark Foreman, "Race Tension in the South," *New Republic*, September 21, 1942, 340-41; *Atlanta Daily World*, February 14, and August 4, 1942; McGovern, *Emergence*, 167.

<sup>18</sup>*Florida Star*, February 11 and May 26, 1956; Robert Hooker, *100 Years, The St. Petersburg Times, July 25, 1884 to July 25, 1984: The Times and Its Times* (St. Petersburg: St. Petersburg Times, 1984), 43, 65-66. The *St. Petersburg Times* started a weekly Negro news page in October 1938. The newspaper published this Jim Crow page on a daily basis beginning in 1948 and did not abolish it until 1967.

<sup>19</sup>Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, August 3, 1942; Atlanta *Daily World*, July 7, 1942; August 6, 18 and October 1, 6, 8, 1944; April 11, 1945.

<sup>20</sup>*Bristol Free Press*, February 5, 1942; *Sanford Herald*, July 16, 1941.

<sup>21</sup>*Ocala Evening Star*, August 6, 8, 15, 1942; *Bristol Free Press*, August 20, 1942; Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, September 4, 1942. For a more detailed discussion of prostitution and efforts to halt the spread of venereal diseases, see Dawn Truax's article in this volume.

<sup>22</sup>Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union*, October 6, 1942; Atlanta *Daily World*, July 8, 1944.

<sup>23</sup>Article XVI, Section 24, Constitution of 1885, State of Florida; Atlanta *Daily World*, September 1, 5, and 22, 1944; Margaret Vandiver, "Race, Clemency, and Executions in Florida 1924-1966, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Florida State University, 1983), 44.

<sup>24</sup>Atlanta *Daily World*, June 25, 1943; *Largo Sentinel*, January 12, 1939; Jack E. Davis, "Shades of Justice: The Lynching of Jesse James Payne and Its Aftermath," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of South Florida, 1989), viii, 2-3, 13-16, 23-26, 81, 90-94, 119-23, 153.

<sup>25</sup>Vandiver, "Race," 48; *Bristol Free Press*, March 30, 1944.

<sup>26</sup>Atlanta *Daily World*, November 3, 1942.

<sup>27</sup>J. Irving E. Scott, *The Education of Black People in Florida* (Philadelphia: Dorrence and Company, 1974), 1-2, 64-66; Davis, *A Half Century*, 131-37.

<sup>28</sup>Scott, *Education*, 2-3, 14-15, 74.

<sup>29</sup>*Ocala Evening Star*, July 21, 1942; Atlanta *Daily World*, February 3 and July 2, 1942; April 11, 1944; January 7, 1945; Charles O. Andrews to J. W. Studebaker, March 27, 1944, Box 31, Charles O. Andrews Papers, 1936-1946 [COAP], University of Florida Special Collections.

<sup>30</sup>Atlanta *Daily World* March 3, 1942; October 2 and 13, 1945. Daniel, *Jacksonville*, 43; Arsenault, *Florida Dream*, 306-07.

<sup>31</sup>Robert H. Brisbane, *The Black Vanguard: Origins of the Negro Social Revolution, 1900-1960* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1971), 164; Kennedy, *Jim Crow Guide*, 125-26; Atlanta *Daily World* February 9, 1945; Robert D. Billinger, Jr., "With the Wehrmacht in Florida: The German P.O.W. Facility at Camp Blanding, 1942-1946," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 58 (October 1979): 161-72.

<sup>32</sup>Atlanta *Daily World* January 3, 1942; *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 2, 1943; Jacksonville *Florida Times-Union* November 2, 1942; Leedell W. Neyland and John W. Riley, *The History of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1963), 159, 161-63.

<sup>33</sup>Atlanta *Daily World*, February 8, 1942 and November 4 and 8, 1945; Neyland and Riley, *History*, 161-63; Arsenault, *Florida Dream*, 303.

<sup>34</sup>Atlanta *Daily World*, January 2, 1943; *Pittsburgh Courier*, January 2 and 6, 1943.

<sup>35</sup>*Pittsburgh Courier*, January 2, 1943; Davis, *Half Century*, 67.

<sup>36</sup>George Brown Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*, Volume 10, *A History of the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 694, 711, 716; McGovern, *Emergence*, 166-67; Carleton, "Negro", 422.