

## "Dear Mr. President", Nashville, Tennessee, January or February 1942

### AFS 6440A

W. J. Faulkner: Dear Mr. President, my name is W. J. Faulkner, college pastor at Fisk University and one who is interested in boys in the city of Nashville. I think one of the brightest spots in our life here at Nashville at the present time, with reference to the white and colored relationships, is a work that I'm interested in at the Negro youth center where white and colored members of the board direct the center. It's a recreational project that promotes citywide programs in the winter. And in the spring and summer, it has outdoor activities and gives the youngsters a chance to go out in the country where they might get a bit of fresh air. And where they might build up their bodies to become good citizens, good strong men in our community.

These things couldn't be if our colored youth didn't share so generously with in the benefits of the Council of Community Agencies and the Community Chest. I think one of the most hopeful signs of good will down here, where we're kept out of industries and other things, is that we do work together as white and colored citizens interested in giving the Negro boy a chance.

One of the finest things that's been done by this Negro youth center has been a Halloween program which we hold in one of the city parks in the Fall. Thousands of our boys and girls come there for a good time and the police records show that not a single arrest has been made for the last three Halloweens among colored youth in Nashville. I think this is quite a record and our juvenile delinquency has gone down as a result of the work in this center. I think this is a very fine investment in race relations and in money from the Community Chest.

Chesterfield White: My dear Mr. President, my name is Chesterfield White. I am just about to enter the armed forces of America. As I go to take my places with the other soldiers of this country I am asking myself a question, "What am I fighting for?" I am fighting to help preserve democracy and to beat the Axis power. The American way of life is so dear to me and to every American freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and a representative form of government. In the countries where they have a dictatorship of government they are opposed to that freedom. And may I say as Irving Berlin has said in his song, "God bless America."

Miss C. L. Hightower: Dear Mr. President, I am Miss C. L. Hightower, Negro adult teacher of Bethlehem Center, located in Nashville, Tennessee. We have but one main objective and that is to give you, our armed forces, loyal support and whatever you may ask for. Regardless of the cost or sacrifice, we intend to block every advance made by Hitler. Here on the homefront as a WPA teacher, I can use my position to instruct my pupils in methods of civilian defense and urge them to support



our national war effort. We have many illiterate boys of draft age who attend our night school. It is my objective to instruct them so that they may be better when they go to the army. I hope that my contribution, however small, has added much.