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WHAT NOW DO WE LEARN OF RACE AND MINORITY PEOPLES?

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Some twenty years ago when a similar survey was done for the *Journal**, it was relatively easy to run through the "literature" of the subject. Take the movies for example: then, any motion picture buff, who had visited the theater regularly for a decade and who had read, say, Lewis Jacobs' history of the movies could know how Hollywood pictured race relations in general and the Negro in particular. Even a foreigner, Peter Noble, way away in Britain, could do an effective round-up as in his *The Negro and The Films*.

Such a quick, efficient survey would be hardly possible today. A solitary observer certainly could not himself see all of the films that included race relations themes or sub-themes nor could he do his space-time calculations without a small-size computer at his elbow.

All of this, of course, makes the obvious point that the *quantity* of the words and images on the relations of ethnic, cultural and national groups in our social order has expanded enormously since the second world war. We are exposed to much more than ever before about regions and peoples and cultures within and without our country. And it is not difficult to explain why this is so.

After Hitler, the reading, writing and

listening world became highly conscious of the possible fate of minorities. It took some time before the enormity of the inhumanity of the concentration camps became common knowledge. Even now, it is difficult to comprehend such behavior on the part of one of the most literate and "civilized" nations of the modern world. Thoughtful students of recent history add the footnote that now Europeans had done wholesale to other Europeans what they had been doing piecemeal for some time to colonials — wherever these "primitive" and "backward" folk resisted conquest and exploitation. Whole tribes have been wiped out in Africa without a single book or film to record the genocide.

After Bandung (1955), the world realized that global race relations were in for a sharp shift. This was the first congress of its type in modern history: (1) in which Asia and Africa excluded Europe and (2) rejected not only economic and political colonialism but cultural imperialism as well. Figuratively speaking, the books of "the white man's burden" were burned and the anti-European stance became characteristic. One delegate at Bandung is reported to have said: "My father somehow felt that he was helped by white missionaries and government officials. I know better. When I think of a white man, I spit."

After the Supreme Court's desegregation decision of 1954 and the Montgomery bus boycott of the following year,

*L. D. Reddick, "Educational Programs for the Improvement of Race Relations: Motion Pictures, Radio, the Press, and Libraries," *Journal of Negro Education*, XIII (July 1944), 367-389.