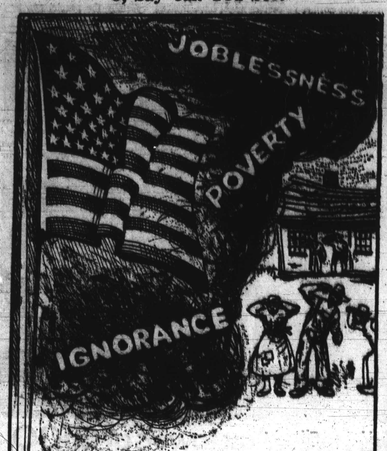
"O, Say Can You See?"



"Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of hate and bitterness." — MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Baltimore Afro-American

May we let our light so shine that it will illuminate that which is good and beautiful, and magnify our Father which is in heaven. May we stand strong and firm against dragon, falsehood, darkness, hatred, pessimism and prejudice.—Carl Murphy, Editor-Publisher 1922-1967

July 4 And The Flag

Students of Anglo-Saxon history have often heard the story that in the year 1066 William the Conqueror first landed with his fighting troops at what is now the British Isles. He planted his battle flag, looked around, waved his arms about and cried, "All this land is mine."

Never since then, flags have symbolized ownership, sovereignty, caused the most important things a country can do to be expressing one of their collective selves.

Most people will suffer unimagined pain — even death — to protect and keep their national flag.

It was on the date-line of this paper — July 4 — the year ago, that this country declared itself free and independent of what had been its mother country, England — declared itself separative under its own flag.

Figuratively, the framers of the Declaration of Independence looked around, waved their arms about and cried, "All this land is ours."

These prior inhabitants we call Indians did not understand their globalish, and ever since have been trying to recover from the shock of the tradesing handjoy contained in the declaration.

Other people, black people — have been wrestling ever since to establish their right to participate equally in this planet known as earth.

Since the beginning, we have contrived with the United to chart the Indians; we have wrestled with the United to serve civilization out of what was left of it; we have bled and died with the United in our civil and foreign wars to keep the emotional symbol — the flag — flying.

And despite all — though there are millions of blacks who feel vindicated and rewarded — there are still millions of others who, for cause, believe that does not fly over them.

These are hard visions of ever seeing and understanding — visions stirred when they look for the flag.

These are those who, when the flag is raised because some white men in one instance still decide that in their white neighborhoods we are wanted and welcome, and in another instance they who suffer poverty and prejudice and unemployment and poorness and poor schools and no jobs in the ghetto — for them, the flag, rather, is a symbol of a country that does not fly over them.

Yesterday, we had a vision