

SUMMARY REMARKS BY JESSIE P. GUZMAN AFTER PANEL DISCUSSION OF THE "ATLANTA STORY" BY MEMBERS OF THE ATLANTA BRANCH OF WILPF JANUARY 1962

The world is seeking peace and freedom, but these cannot exist where good will is non-existent. This is true whether among nations or within nations, states or local communities. No country or region can be great or even prosperous when one group of its people is pitted against the other. One of the things we need to understand is that it does not matter how great a region's efforts are to achieve economic, cultural, political, or religious fulfillment, they cannot be realized if the premises on which fulfillment rests are faulty. We cannot have a strong economic structure if a part of our people are denied the opportunity of developing to their fullest capacity so that they too may contribute their share to building that structure. We cannot have high cultural standards and achievements, if some citizens are denied exposure to opportunities which inspire those standards. We can never have a truly democratic government if some citizens are denied a voice in saying how they shall be governed and who shall speak for them. We are simply going through the form and know nothing of the substance of Christianity when we recognize only members of our race as worthy associates. The obligations of citizenship cannot be shunned as many are now doing by fleeing to the out-skirts of cities or by setting up private schools to prevent desegregation of the schools so that little children may not know their neighbors, even though they are citizens of the same country, state, and local community. Any artificial barrier raised to prevent free interaction between people in a democracy refutes the ideals of that democracy. Some communities in the South are beginning to see this. Atlanta is one of them. Certainly the State of Georgia should be proud to have an Atlanta.

From the story presented by members of the Atlanta Branch of WILPF this afternoon, we have seen that if each person concerns himself with the problems

existing between the races in his own community, they can be solved. Each person can be a constructive influence upon others. The result of Walter White's contact with one of our panalists has just been revealed. Although working with the integration movement is not easy, high principles and high standards of applying them can accomplish much. The activities of Atlanta's HOPE and OASIS in promoting desegregation of the public schools in that city indicate the ways that integration can be promoted. They also show that it takes the involvement of the whole community to successfully achieve desired goals, including educational as well as other objectives.

Peace and freedom appear to be on their way to Atlanta. If this is true in this city, it can be true all over the South.