

SPEECH OF DR. JAMES J. MCCLENDON
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FOR DELIVERY VJ DAY

It is very fitting that we pause to pay tribute tonight to our heroes of all races, creeds and colors, who served America in its great hour of need. It is fitting that we observe VJ Day solemnly, contemplating not only the great victory won over Fascism, Nazism, and Imperialism, but we must also contemplate the great task that lies before us.

Colored and white Americans have participated in this great struggle together/ They have suffered, bled and died together, for an ideal called Democracy and a belief that this time we on the home front will work out a durable and lasting peace, which will afford equal opportunities to all regardless of Race color or creed.

No greater monument can be erected to the men who, on the battle front made this day of victory celebration possible, than for us, the living to learn to work and live together in peace and dignity.

Over eighty years ago a great American said, that this nation could not then exist half slave and half free. Today we remember the words of another great American who said this nation cannot exist with one-third of its people ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed.

All of us, therefore, must now, dedicate ourselves to the task of providing full employment. A job for all who want to work. We must work to insure fair employment practices, a decent home for everyone to live in. These are attainable.

Negro Americans have played their part in this great victory. Many Negro scientists worked alongside of white scientists to perfect the atomic bomb. Among them were; Dr. William J. Knox of New York, Dr. J. Ernest Wilkins of Chicago and Dr. Moddie Taylor of Chicago.

Colored Americans have purchased twenty million dollars worth of war bonds. More than a millian colored Americans fought bravely and with commendation, and labored in every category of our armed forces. They and their families resent most vehemently the slanderous remarks about their fighting records and abilities, made by Senators Eastland and Bilbo of Mississippi.

If Democracy is to survive, all Americans must rid themselves of the great monster of religious and racial prejudices. VJ Day is our challenge to see that this is accomplished.