

Race Actors Played For 'Gone With The Wind' Parts

By EARL J. MORRIS

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 10—(Special)—“Seventy-five years of racial self-respect has flown with the breeze in the much ballyhooed Hollywood epic film ‘Gone With the Wind.’” Picture yourselves standing before Producer David O. Selznick, Director George Cukor and 26 members of the production staff, all white, and reading script which contains the word “Nigger” several times. Well, approximately one hundred Race actors did just that in competing for coveted roles in the picture while all their years of racial pride were being wafted away on the wings of a gust of “Wind.” They forgot all about self-respect, pride, and duty to their race. Efforts by the Negro Press, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and other progressive agencies were either forgotten or disregarded in a money-hungry contest for a few days work in a motion picture in Hollywood.

This is the type of racial representation your race has in the motion picture industry. This is the type of persons that we have attempted to glorify. Can you imagine any other racial group—Jewish, Italian, Hungarian or Irish—that would condescend to insult the whole of their race or nation for a few days work in a picture? Can you expect Hollywood to be fair to your people when they know out here that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link?

Sold Out Race

The motion picture is one of your most valuable mediums. It may be used to introduce your people and their finer qualifications to the other peoples of the earth. It can definitely aid Race progress in all parts of the world—but not with the disloyal assistance of those selfish Race motion picture actors who would sell their self-respect for a paltry few dollars and the opportunity to “clown” in the eighth act.

The cameras have been grinding on the picture. “Gone With the Wind.” We know that the word, “N.....” is tabooed by the Will Hayes of ice. But we also know of another word ap-

pearing on the censor list of that same office, and that Ernest Whitman, in “Jesse James”—starring Tyrone Power, Henry Fonda and Nancy Kelly, a 20th Century-Fox picture—is referred to as a “darker.”

Insult to the Race

The book, “Gone With the Wind” was written by Margaret Mitchell, but Sidney Howard and Oliver H. P. Garrett must have worn the letter “N” off their typewriters in writing the screen adaptation. The picture is being produced by David O. Selznick on the Selznick lot in Culver City. George Cukor is directing the opus. Clark Gable has the role of “Rhett Butler,” Vivian Leigh is “Scarlett O’Hara,” Leslie Howard is “Ashley Wilkes,” and Olivia De Havilland is “Melanie Wilkes.” The Race artists are Hattie McDaniel as “Mammy,” Oscar Polk as “Pork,” Thelma “Butterfly” McQueen as “Prissy,” Everette Brown as “Big Sam,” Ben Carter as “Jeems,” and others. Race actors and extras will receive approximately \$50,000 for their part in the picture.

Their Arguments

These actors take the stand with arguments: (1) That they need the money; (2) that they are artists merely depicting events in the story; (3) that New York’s Negro society lionized Carl Van Vechten who penned “Nigger Heaven;” (4) Why complain about Margaret Mitchell for recording actualities when Race authors flagrantly use the objectionable words in their compositions. They argue that Langston Hughes, noted playwright, crammed his play, “Mulatto” with such words—used as nouns and adjectives. They say that the average colored person uses the words referred to as pet expressions among them-

selves. They picture themselves no more culpable than others and say: “We get paid to use the words in the script.”

The writer has never seen Fredi Washington in the role of a maid on the screen, and—speaking for the masses—we do not object to seeing our people in domestic caricatures, but we do feel that—because of their artistic contributions, Maxine Sullivan and Louise Beavers rate something up to their standard.

Dislike Roles Given

To us, Louis Armstrong is the king of all trumpeters—but we dislike seeing him depicted as a horn-tooting clown. Besides, we do our share to support the film industry, financially, and we just don’t like it. Race audiences don’t like it. But Hollywood will continue to disregard these same Race audiences as long as they remain mute. As long as Hollywood feels that some sepia screen actors and actresses have no respect for themselves and their race.

Your artists should serve as ambassadors sent out to bring about better inter-racial relationship instead of divorcing themselves from racial advancement and the principles of Americanism. Such names as “Snowflakes,” “Slickum,” “Sleep N’Eat,” “Stepin Fetchit,” and other like misnomers should be removed from the screen credits. Race actors and actresses should vie for roles that will permit them to display dramatic ability and run the gamut of emotions instead of consistently seeking to portray grinning flunkys and cotton pickers.

If you will write to the Will Hays office, 5504 Hollywood boulevard, Hollywood, Calif., and demand that the word “nigger” be stricken from “Gone With the Wind” comes to your town and helping to maintain the 75 years of progress that has been attained by the American Negro. Make this demand in no uncertain terms, and if Hollywood decides not to hear you—you may stay at home when “Gone With the Winds” comes to your town and theater.