



J. ERNEST WILKINS

... a challenge to churches

• **FIRST NEGRO** ever appointed to the President's "Little Cabinet," Assistant Labor Secretary **J. Ernest Wilkins** last week called on American churches to end racial segregation in their congregations. Churches, he said, are lagging behind the armed forces, industry and schools in this respect.

Mr. Wilkins came out of segregated schools in Missouri, had to go to college in another State to become a lawyer. He began practicing law in Chicago in 1921, became president of the Cook County Bar Association and secretary of the Judicial Council of the Methodist Church. He was appointed to his Labor post last March.

Heading the U. S. delegation to the International Labor Organization conference in Geneva last June, Mr. Wilkins won acclaim for the way he handled a dispute involving the Russians. When his Labor Department superiors were out of the capital last August, Mr. Wilkins became the first Negro ever to attend a presidential Cabinet meeting.

When asked about opportunities for a Negro in the U. S., Mr. Wilkins is quick to cite himself as an example.

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