The country has again been treated to a display of North Carolina justice. The bus-driver who apparently murdered a Negro soldier deliberately has been freed. This acquittal has all the earmarks of a miscarriage of justice.

According to accounts received here, Pvt. Booker T. Spicely was killed in cold-blood by a white bus-driver because the soldier objected to being Jim Crowed during his ride on the bus. Spicely said that he had paid his fare and would ride where he pleased. On leaving the bus Pvt. Spicely chided the bus-driver, Herman Lee Council, on the latter's draft status. The bus-driver became infuriated, followed the Negro soldier off the bus and fired two shots into his body.

The soldier was unarmed. The driver following him off the bus. Yet the defense claimed self-defense. It took an all-white jury just one hour to bring in a not guilty verdict.

This killing eliminates one trained soldier. It is one soldier less that the Axis has to contend with. Through the great ramifications of the war Pvt. Spicely's death may contribute to the loss of a score of white soldiers. Yes, to some southerners any risk is worth taking, yes, the risk of losing the war itself, in order to keep Negroes in their "place."

Although the prosecution for murder comes under the heading of "states rights," when cases like this occur regularly, the Army is going to have to devise better means to protect Negro soldiers when they are assigned to southern camps. The quick exoneratation of this bus-driver is an encouragement to other "crackers" to declare "open season" on Negro soldiers. The Army had better act fast with some protective measures because Negro soldiers and Negro civilians are becoming fed up.