

H13-A Mc 13

February 6, 1942

Mr. George G. McDemmond
2939 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

This letter is in reply to your communication dated January 13, in which you were presenting a report on the Defense Train matter. I had no idea that the businessmen of New Orleans were subjected to such inconveniences, and I am pleased to know that they refused to submit to these indignities.

The Contract Distribution Office has now been merged with the Production Division of the War Production Board and a new field division will be created to supervise field problems. Before we put into execution our contract service operation, we shall arrange with this unit to give proper treatment to our businessmen in certain sections of the Country.

I hope that you will play an important part on your State Committee and I feel assured that you will function in any capacity. Select that operation to which you are best fitted and notify Wallace accordingly. The Conference has been tentatively set for April 10th-11th, subject to the approval of the Secretary's Office. If possible, try to arrange transportation for several members of the Board of Trade to attend this Conference. Please let me hear from you frequently. A revised plan of action is enclosed.

Very sincerely yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dmj

2939 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana
January 13, 1942

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster;

It would appear that I am a very poor correspondent. I am. I suppose that having to write my own letters after several years of having them done for me has made me either lazy or disposed to procrastination. However, some of the delay is, or rather was, necessitated by certain investigations which had to be made before I could give you a complete report on the "Defense train" affair. Here are the final events of this unfortunate affair.

To sum it all up Negroes were not to be admitted at the regular hours. I had several telephone conversations with Mr. Judd, the manager of the contract division, who after hearing from Washington, attempted to get me to agree to a segregated half hour for Negroes. He promised that he would talk with the Commander of the train and give me a final decision on the admittance of Negroes at the regular hours. It developed that on Friday, the final day of the exhibit, I received a telegram from Mr. Judd at three thirty-five in the afternoon advising that "members of your organization will be admitted from four-thirty to five o'clock." You can appreciate that such a notification would not permit the proper notification of interested persons nor sufficient time to get there. Our Negro business men, however had me previously inform Mr. Judd that a segregated time was out of the question and that they would not be present. To all appearances no Negroes attended.

I had been told that two Negroes had attended, but that they had gone as "white". I had to follow this up so that I could tell you whether this were true. I have not been able to see either of the Cook bros., but the wife of one tells me that the two brothers did go and attended the morning session. She inferred that they were not recognized as Negroes, both of the men are very fair. As far as I know no others went to the exhibit.

I was able to stifle all publicity. I felt that because of the strenuous condition of the times that the least agitation of that sort would be better for all concerned. I informed Mr. Judd that Negroes considered such action "a slap in the face" and that we felt that our assistance and loyalty were not needed. We are going to continue our fight here against such injustices, but we propose to do so in such a manner that our indignation will be voiced and felt, but that our loyalty to our country will not be doubted.

I am still pursuing my business. It is growing in size, and I am going to add another employee in a few weeks. This seems strange perhaps in the face of the fact that I said previously that I am not making any money. I still am not making any. I propose to add this employee to take my place in the business as far as my labor contribution is concerned and to get myself a job to have the necessary capital to bolster my business. If I can keep it going to the extent that I can keep the five persons I have associated with me working and paying their salaries, and that it will continue to grow in output and will permit of sufficient other increment to allow plant expansion, I shall be glad to consider the business successful.

Rising prices here in New Orleans are wreaking a havoc on the small business man. My output cost have increased more than thirty percent, yet I have not been able to increase my consumer cost at all. My margin of profit has been cut approximately twenty percent. I mention this because I know that you are interested in the problems of the small business man. I hope that the government will soon consider the plight of the small business man and will include the Negro.

Pardon the length of the letter, but I know that you wanted to know the outcome of the exhibit incident and I like to feel that you are interested in my problems as a business man. I certainly hope that you are enjoying good health, and that you will continue to serve us in your present capacity for we all believe that we have a friend in you at Washington. I shall be glad to know if you still contemplate the conference in D.C. With my very best wishes for your continued success, I am,

Respectfully yours,

George G. Mc Demmond
George G. Mc Demmond

P.S. There has been a very distasteful affair here in Alexandria, La. Negro soldiers were involved with white M.P.s and city and state police. Local Negroes are very much aroused.

MGD

2939 Audubon Street,
New Orleans, Louisiana,
June 3, 1942.

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster,
Adviser on Negro Affairs,
U.S. Dept. of Commerce,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

Please pardon my tardiness in answering your correspondence of a recent date, in which you requested statements of the two Loan Associations domiciled here in Louisiana. Because of the press of certain personal matters, I was not able to contact these firms immediately.

I spoke, however, with the director of the Douglass Assn., and he has promised me a statement shortly, if other members of the board permit. From the other I have not yet had a reply. I hope to have this information within a week and shall send it to you at once.

You asked regarding my Potato Chip Business and I am happy to say that it is steadily growing and bids fair to become a successful venture. I have six employees and am grossing in the neighborhood of ten thousand dollars annually. The marginal profit, however, has been cut more than half by the exorbitant rise in production cost, i. e., potatoes, cooking oil and bags. If rationing, and still higher potato and oil cost is not imminent, I hope in a few months to have the business so stabilized as to weather almost any storm. I have bought my first truck and hope to buy another in the next few months.

I shall write you more at length very shortly. Again, let me wish you success in your endeavors, and to assure you that I am as always,

Yours friendly,

George G. McDemmond
George G. McDemmond

GGM:ws

March 26, 1941

Dear Mr. MacKeachie:

The Department of Commerce has approved a conference on Negro Business to be held in the Commerce Auditorium, April 18 and 19, 1941. The conference will be composed of bankers, contractors, retailers and insurance executives, and is formed for the purpose of effecting a more adequate integration of Negro business problems into the government program.

It is the Department's belief that within this group there are business men qualified to supply the government with produce, but who are unfamiliar with the procedure and policy of the Division of Purchases.

A session on National Defense and the Negro in Business will be held Saturday afternoon, April 19, at 2 P.M. In order to familiarize the conference with the program of the Division of Purchases, it would be a favor if you would consent to make a short address to the conference on this subject.

Sincerely yours,

Norman W. Baxter,
Assistant to the Secretary.

Mr. Douglas C. MacKeachie,
Assistant Director, Division of Purchases,
Office of Production Management,
Social Security Building,
Washington, D. C.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NEW YORK BRANCH
45 BROADWAY

SAN FRANCISCO BRANCH
OLD MINT BLDG.

UNITED STATES TRAVEL BUREAU

NEW YORK CITY,
March 28, 1941.

Mr. E. M. Lancaster,
Special Adviser on Negro Affairs,
Department of Commerce,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

We have read with much interest that you have worked out plans for a conference in Washington, next month, which will attempt to unify and promote Negro business.

In connection with the promotion of Negro business, may we call your attention to the field of travel and recreation. Travel ranks as America's third largest industry and it is estimated that Negroes are contributing over 140 million dollars, annually to the huge sum America is spending for travel and recreation.

In every center of large Negro population, there exists an opportunity right now, for some agency to furnish intelligent, accurate information and counsel to people who wish to travel or may be induced to do so.

For your information there is enclosed a copy of a letter which is being mailed to Negro hotel owners and managers, throughout the country.

Based on the nation-wide 16-year survey just completed by the editors of Western Advertising, \$6,516,837.00 is estimated to have been appropriated by State legislatures or raised by private subscription and local tax levies for advertising for the 1940-41 tourist season. This exceeds by nearly \$1,500,000.00 the amounts estimated for the 1939-40 season.

"TRAVEL STRENGTHENS AMERICA"

We are glad of this opportunity to address you and if we can be of any service to you, within the scope of our activities, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely yours,

Jay Wingate,
Supervisor,
New York Branch.

By:

Chas. A. R. McDowell

Chas. A. R. McDowell,
Collaborator,
Division of Negro Activities.

Enclosure: 1753180

COPY

Dear Sir:

On several occasions we have enjoyed the privilege of addressing the owners and managers of hotels in every section of the country. The response has been exceedingly gratifying.

In our letter on "Travel America Year" which you received from us last spring, we emphasized the close relationship between the hotel industry and travel promotion. Hotel promotion is a new field but it already displays a marked tendency to acquire fixed rituals and procedure.

A national association of Negro hotels, it appears to the writer, would assume a place of great importance, since it would be one of the very few tangible, strictly business activities among our organizations.

We are addressing the management of hotels in different sections of the country, with an earnest request for opinions on this matter of national organization, with the following suggested objectives:

1 - To maintain and improve standards of sound business practice, and to encourage a high standard of professional conduct among men and women engaged in hotel sales promotion.

2 - To discuss and disseminate information concerning ways and means of promoting profitable business of all types, including rooms, food and internal sales.

3 - To encourage between members the confidential interchange of information concerning the buying habits and practices of conventions and other groups.

4 - To recommend standards governing sales procedure and other methods affecting sales.

5 - To seek the cooperation of the American Hotel Association and other recognized bodies in this particular sphere of interest.

The United States Travel Bureau is interested in the formation of such an association because as we have pointed out, there is close relationship between travel and modern places of accommodation. The Bureau is merely suggesting this organization of the hotels, but does not expect to have any specific part in its eventual operation.

Your interest in our efforts will be highly appreciated and for your convenience in replying, we have enclosed an addressed envelope which requires no postage.

Sincerely yours,

Jay Wingate,
Supervisor,
New York Branch.

By:

Chas. A. R. McDowell,
Collaborator,
Division of Negro Activities.



NEW ORLEANS NEGRO BOARD OF TRADE

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE

2107 DRYADES STREET -
2939 Audubon Street

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

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October 18, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

Thank you for your very kind and informative letter in answer to my request for information regarding the making of potato chips. It most have been an arduous task for your secretary to copy all that material for me. I certainly appreciate it, and shall remember such kindnesses.

I shall experiment with the suggested procedures and inform you of my findings in about three weeks. I am already following most of the suggested steps.

There was a newspaper editorial and an article mentioning that the National Dairy Association in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture had finally developed a process for manufacturing potato chips that would render them capable of remaining fresh for an indefinite period. I have not been able as yet to get any information as to the veracity of this announcement or as to the possibility of the formula being made available to the trade. If I am not being a bother would you use your connections and abilities to find out whether these statements were true and if so to get the formula for me if it is available.

I am still looking forward to the time when we shall have our Business Institute so that we may ask you to come and visit with us as well as to help us further our local program. I have hopes that we will still be able to get assistance from the local Chamber of Commerce. All indications are favorable to that end. I shall keep you informed. By the way - local business men were quite impressed with the information contained in the report of the Washington meeting. Let us have more such.

Thank you for your ever present helpfulness and with my best wishes for continued success, I am,

Sincerely yours,

G. G. McDemmond
G.G. McDemmond

TO PROMOTE THE COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter
NT=Overnight Telegram
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter

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Sta. Radiogram 23

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JA151 45 NT=NEWORLEANS LA 11

EMMER MARTIN LANCASTER=

ADVISOR ON NEGRO AFFAIRS U E DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC=
JUDD ADVISES 3 NEGRO MANUFACTURERS TO BE INVITED TO SPECIAL
SHOWING FRIDAY AT FOUR TO FIVE PM TOLD NEGROS RESENT
DISCRIMINATORY ARRANGEMENT AND WILL NOT ACCEPT JUDD TO SEE
COMMANDING OFFICER WILL PHONE TOMORROW JUDD INSISTS EXHIBIT
RESTRICTED TO MANUFACTURERS ONLY OTHER BUSINESS MEN
INTERESTED=

G G MCDEMMOND.

3 PM.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

March 20, 1941

Mrs. M. L. McNeel, President
Business Teachers Club
1858 California Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. McNeel:

The First Annual Conference on Negro Business sponsored by the Negro Affairs Division of the Department of Commerce will be held in the Department Auditorium, Friday and Saturday, April 18th and 19th. Sessions will be held during the day beginning at 10:00 a.m., and closing at 5:00 p.m. Subsequent releases will contain further information as to sessions and speakers.

The Division of Negro Affairs solicits the support of your organization and urges the membership to attend and participate in the session discussions which will be open to the public.

The enclosed release contains excerpts from persons who have ascribed to this program.

Very sincerely yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

Encl.
EML:cmj



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2979 Audubon Street
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December 9, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

In my letter of a few days ago, I told you that the local office of the C.P.M. had advised me that Negro business men would be issued invitations to attend the exhibit upon their written request. I am sorry to report today that there has been a change and that I am now told that no invitations are to be issued. Briefly these are the facts as I know them.

Last week after receiving your letter I immediately contacted the Contract Division Office of the O.P.M. and requested information as to admittance to the train. I was advised that a written request was necessary and upon receipt of such communication an invitation would be issued. I also had the assurance of the informant that a letter from me listing such names of Negroes as were interested would be invited. I was advised that the train was principally for manufacturers, but that interested business men would receive the invitations as I requested.

Today I called the office to inquire about the invitations, and was advised, "I am sorry but since I talked with you last week we are in receipt of instructions from the commanding officer of the train that because of conditions in the south that Negroes would not be invited." I, of course, deplored that statement and so advised the gentleman. I asked for the name of the commanding officer so that I might have his name for inclusion in this letter to you. In a few minutes a Mr. Judd was connected with me and very aptly advised me that there were no Negroes in the manufacturing business and as such was the case none were being invited. He assured me that color was not the reason. No amount of persuasion, or the fact that I told the gentleman that there are Negro Manufacturers of a sort here did get me any further in the matter of being invited.

The local press is anxious to get the story. I have asked them to hold off until I hear from you. Please write or wire me immediately as the Negroes here are Aggrieved.

TO PROMOTE THE COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

Sincerely,
G. G. McDemmond

*Mr. E. Judd
New Orleans
Mr. Judd
in charge of train*



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December 2, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
U. S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

I am terribly embarrassed. Believe me, I owe you an apology for what seems a very bad breach of business etiquette, not to mention the seeming disregard for my friendly feeling and esteem for you. A letter which should have reached you more than a month ago was just mailed yesterday. It happened this way. After writing the letter to you I asked my wife to place a stamp upon it and post it for me. When I received your letter of a few days ago, she remembered that she had left the letter in a purse that she did not use since the coming of cool weather. She was very apologetic and asked me to explain to you just what happened. I ask your forgiveness for the both of us.

I have contacted the office of the O.P.M. as you directed and have been assured by them that they will mail invitations to Negroes who write in and request same. I am now contacting certain of our business men who would be interested in seeing the exhibit and who would probably make an effort to get contracts for the manufacture of such articles as they may be able to produce. I was told that they would permit me to send in a blanket list for such persons as I would name. I shall let you hear from me by December ninth if the invitations do not arrive.

Let me thank you again for your information in answer to my query on the manufacture of potato chips. I have been making several experiments with them, but have not been able to lengthen the duration of their freshness. We are in the midst of a rainy season and such weather wreaks havoc to potato chips. Any additional information as to a method of overcoming this handicap or whether there is any truth in the article referred to in my last letter will be greatly appreciated.

I have been making some observations on the effects of rising prices and scarcity of materials as they affect the small business man and I am not enthusiastic about the results. It appears that many small businesses will be

forced to close unless some very definite steps are taken to protect them from monopolies and other large capital manipulations.

My business has felt very keenly the effects of rising prices and shortages of first class materials because of large quantity buying by interests who corner the markets for speculation and the hoarding of produce for the time when prices are still higher. As an example I am not able to buy as fine a potato as I could three weeks ago and I am paying more than twenty percent more for the inferior quality. My margin of profit has been cut nearly fifteen percent, and I am not able to increase my cost to the consumer because the monied competitors are holding their prices the same with the hope that I will be forced to close out.

As a result I have been teaching my Mother and sister the technical and administrative sides of the business with the hope that in a few weeks I may be able to give it entirely over to their care so that I may seek employment to gain the necessary funds to support my business and to take care of other obligations which my business has long since been able to provide not a penny. (A long sentence but it states my problem) It is absolutely essential that I do so or I stand to lose everything that I have been able to accumulate.

I believe that you know of my interest in business generally and specifically as it relates to the Negro. If at any time there is an opening in your department where the services of a man who has the interest of business at heart and who would like to work as you do for the development of the small man's business, I hope that you will give me some consideration. It is imperative that I get work and soon. The nature of my business will permit me to leave it in capable hands and it will prosper if the necessary capital is available. I have had several calls from the war department for service as a clerk at several of the army camps, but never an appointment. I do not know whether they chose someone else or whether a clerk of a lighter hue was desired for the particular job.

I shall keep you informed of my progress, or the lack of it, and of business trends in this area as I see them. I hope to be a better correspondent some day, but at present the strain of business propagation requires a lot of time.

Please accept my apology for the tardiness of my letter and remember that I am always at your service whenever you or the Department feels that I am able to render you a service.

Sincerely yours,
G.G. McDemmond
G.G. McDemmond

November 26, 1941

Mr. George G. McDemmond
2939 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

The Contract Distribution Division of O.P.M. has initiated a plan to avail to manufacturers and persons in business, facilities for defense contract orders.

On the 10th of November, three special trains left Washington for a tour throughout the country to inform manufacturers and small businessmen as to the function of the Contract Distribution Division and the procedure to secure defense contracts and procurement orders. Government officials from the O.P.M., Army, Navy and Maritime Commission will accompany these trains and advise businessmen on defense technique.

In my judgment this is an opportunity for Negroes in business to become acquainted with this defense service, and the purpose of this communication is to inform you and other prominent persons in business who desire to inspect these defense exhibits, the date and place of these defense trains. The trains will be on display December 11th in New Orleans. These special trains are not open to the public, and admission thereto is by cards issued by the field offices of the Contract Distribution Division of the O.P.M., which for your information is located at the Federal Reserve Bank Building in New Orleans.

The Washington office has been requested to advise the various field offices to include colored businessmen in the inspection tour of these trains and I think it advisable that you contact your field office immediately.

Please let me know the outcome of your efforts.

Very truly yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dmh

October 4, 1941

Mr. George G. McDemmond
2989 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

The Department of Agriculture submitted to me this material which I am forwarding to you. The specialist in charge of the Cereal Division has manifested unusual interest in my inquiry, and is desirous in knowing the outcome of your venture. This release contains a formula for the manufacture of potato chips which is universally advocated by the Department of Agriculture. If this does not suit your purpose, please advise me accordingly.

The response from various persons who received the conference proceedings is favorable. Within a short time I shall arrange a complete plan of action for our 1942 conference which I feel will meet your approval.

Very truly yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

Enclosures 3
EML:dmh



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September 29, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

Thank you for your copy of the proceedings of the Washington conference. I shall treasure it and keep it for posterity as a concrete example of a fine piece of work.

I have been quite busy of late in setting up a potato chip business for my mother and sister. I hope to build quite a business. I have quite a problem here with the humidity as it hastens the staleness of the chips. In that regard I am asking that you do me a personal favor. I have just read that the Department of Agriculture has developed a process for preserving the freshness of a potato chip indefinitely. Will you please look into this and let me know the details as soon as possible. If I can get the formula immediately, I believe that I can outstrip some of my competitors before they get set. I shall certainly appreciate your assistance in this matter as a great help to me. Since you are in D.C. and because of your position I believe that you can facilitate my getting this information.

I shall write you more fully in the next few days as to developments here and other affairs. I hope that we shall be able to have you come to us at our next Business seminar.

With my best wishes for your continued success, I am,

Respectfully yours,

G. G. McDemmond
G.G. Mc Demmond



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August 16, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

The past few weeks have been quite trying to me. I have had all manners of duties to perform, and it seems that I have not had the mental clearness to cope with the situations which arose. My grandmother, who I loved very dearly, had been ill and it finally proved fatal on Monday, August 11th and she was buried on Wednesday, which day was her 88th birthday. Her illness and death has quite upset me and I am only now becoming able to think of anything than my great loss. She reared me, along with my mother, and her love for me was general knowledge to most of the people in the neighborhood.

I have made some investigations regarding the white insurance companies who do business with colored people in Louisiana. To be able to give an accurate report on the number of such companies a breakdown will have to be made on the companies operating in the state. In the last report issued by the Secretary of State on the companies operating in the state there was no indication as to which of the companies were doing business as insurance companies though they were classified as Fraternal, Burial, Societies. We know that some Fraternal also operate as insurance companies. There are also some listed companies that are doing business that are unknown to me in this section and investigation will be necessary to determine whether they sell to Negroes. I shall be happy to give you a complete report in a week or two. If there is any particular phase you want covered I shall be glad to include it in my report to you.

I believe, as expressed before, that the Washington Conference was the most important step made in recent years, or at any time, for the furtherance of the Negro in business. The conference should be an annual affair, and should have regular appointed committees to follow through with the program as outlined in session at Washington. At least

2.
Mr. Lancaster, cont.

two Negro field representatives should be appointed to visit the various Negro business centers in the country and study the problems which confront them. Investigations should also be made as to the types of persecutions which are heaped upon the Negro business man by representatives of city and state governments, jobbers, Associations of Commerce, Salesmen, white competitors and divers other deterrents to Negro business growth. The field agents could be of invaluable assistance in helping the Negro business man in setting up modern business methods, in buying, in detecting fraudulent deals, and in general to make the small Negro business man a better business man.]

If funds are available, literature should be sent to merchants throughout the country for the purpose of schooling them in correct business practices. This could be a regular service of the department, and the local government chambers could be used as the distributing agency. Efforts should be made to have the local white associations give recognition to the Negro groups and to have them cooperate with the Negro program.

don't include

[Finally, I hope that there will be many more conferences called by the Department of Commerce. A repetition of the splendid meeting held in April will do untold good in helping us to grow economically. A tie-in with the work of the National Negro Business League will unify our efforts and lead the Negro people of this country to economic security after not so many years have passed.]

I again want to thank you for the part you played in making the conference possible and the splendid follow up work you have since been doing. I am looking forward to the Memphis meeting and to seeing you and talking with you there. I am hoping that events will permit my going. The many drawbacks that I have had in the past few weeks will make it necessary that I sacrifice quite a bit to be present, but it is worth the sacrifice.

I hope to hear from you soon in regard to the insurance query.

With my fondest regards,

George G. McDemmond
George G. Mc Demmond.

August 8, 1941

Mr. George G. McDemmond
2939 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

The official proceedings of the recent Negro Business Conference held in Washington, D. C. have been presented to the Commerce Duplicating Section for preparation and will be ready for publication next week. It has been suggested that a statement be secured from each member of the National Committee on the Negro in Business who attended the Conference with reference to his impressions thereof. These replies will be released simultaneously with the distribution of the proceedings.

I shall be pleased to receive your impression of the Conference and any constructive criticisms you wish to offer.

Very truly yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dah

July 29, 1941

Mr. George G. McDemmond
2939 Audubon Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

I have your recent letter and I appreciate your complimentary remarks with reference to the conference. I presume that you will attend the convention of the National Negro Business League. The Department of Commerce has approved my travel allowance to this convention. I wish to confer with you and others as to the future program of this office and the provisions of the committee's report on recommendations and findings.

I am interested in the study of the Louisiana situation you mentioned in your letter. Upon its completion I shall be pleased to receive a copy of the report.

I have knowledge that there are a number of white insurance companies in Louisiana writing Negro business. Please send me a list of these companies at your earliest opportunity.

Very sincerely yours,

Emer Martin Lancaster
Advisor on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dmh



NEW ORLEANS NEGRO BOARD OF TRADE

AFFILIATED WITH THE NATIONAL NEGRO BUSINESS LEAGUE

~~2107 BRYAN STREET~~

2939 Audubon Street

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July 23, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Advisor on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster;

I am in receipt of your letter of July 15th. Please accept my appreciation of your interest and the report.

In my opinion I believe that the Washington meeting and the subsequent report to the Department of Commerce is the most noteworthy accomplishment that Negro business has gained in its existence. We, who know of your efforts, shall always be indebted to you for making this possible.

We are making splendid gains in New Orleans with our Board of Trade. The Housewives League is also functioning splendidly. The Local Chamber Of Commerce assured me through its manager of Operations last week that it will cooperate with us. He also intimated that some financial aid might be possible. If you could have known the previous attitude which prevailed you could really appreciate what a step forward this is to us.

Since seeing you in Washington, I have made a change in employment. After being with Flint-Goodridge Hospital for more than four years I left to take a position as Agency Director for the Keystone Life Insurance Company. But after being with them less than two weeks I decided that it would serve me better to leave as quickly as possible. I have had several offers but they have not been quite the thing for me to do, but I shall have to do something soon as my bride of a few months is beginning to be uneasy because of my three week lay off.

While I am not working if there is any way that I can serve your office or you, I shall be glad to do so. I have been making some study of the situation here in Louisiana and when it is completed it will be of help to us in our program.

Please accept my thanks for the splendid work you are doing and for your continued success.

Respectfully yours,

TO PROMOTE THE COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

George G. McDemmond

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON

July 15, 1941

Mr. G. G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

I have made several additions to the report of the Committee on Recommendations and Findings which were recently forwarded to you by Mr. J. B. Blayton.

Since the enclosed draft, which has been approved by the Secretary's office, might be included in our published proceedings, I respectfully urge that you indicate your approval thereon at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Advisor on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dmh
Encl.

April 4, 1941

Mr. G. G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

I was very much gratified to know that you will attend the business conference in Washington this month, and I regret that your letter was not received earlier.

The survey which you mentioned in your letter appears interesting, and while I have not assigned you to any speaking part on the program I suggest that you discuss the New Orleans program from the floor. All proposals made during the general discussion will receive notation in our general proceedings. Please advise if this is satisfactory.

Very sincerely yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EMM:dnj



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April 1, 1941

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

For some unexplainable reason your letter of March 12th has just been received by me this morning, and I hastily answer.

In a previous letter to you, I stated my approval of the Conference and my willingness to attend. I shall arrange to be present on April 18th and 19th for the sessions.

I shall send, under separate cover, a photograph, as per your request, and I am also sending a copy of the survey which we have recently made here in New Orleans, and a Directory of Negro-owned establishments here.

With anticipation of a successful Conference, I am,

Very truly yours,

G. G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade

GGMcD-w.

March 12, 1941

Mr. G. G. McDemmond
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

During the past year communications were addressed to you with reference to the formation of a National Negro Business Committee and Conference to affect a more adequate integration into the Department of Commerce of Negroes engaged in business. Recently, the conference and committee were approved by the Secretary of Commerce, and a preliminary announcement thereof has been prepared and submitted to the Department's Press Bureau for immediate release.

Letters on file indicate that you approved of this program, and I am pleased to announce that this conference on the Negro in Business will be held Friday and Saturday, April 18th and 19th in the Department of Commerce Auditorium, Washington, D. C.

A subsequent release containing the sessions, speakers and photographs will be distributed shortly. In order to complete our program and comply with the requests of newspapers for a list of persons attending the conference, we respectfully urge that you send your photograph and advise us as to your attendance at your very earliest opportunity.

The Department of Commerce will not be able to defray the traveling or accommodation expenses of committee members, and no attendance or registration fee will be charged.

We expect your active participation in the conference discussions, and I await your reply.

Very truly yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U. S. Department of Commerce

EML:dah

FLINT-GOODRIDGE HOSPITAL
OF
DILLARD UNIVERSITY
NEW ORLEANS

October 28, 1940

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Advisor of Negro Affairs
United States Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

I am in receipt of your letter of October 23, in which you advise of a postponement of the day of the conference, and wish to say that you may consider me as willing to serve at any time that is convenient to your office. I am just recovering from an operation and would have found the proposed date inconvenient at this time.

Respectfully yours,

G. G. McDemmond

GGM:D:hw

G. G. McDemmond

October 23, 1940

Mr. George G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

The conference of the proposed National Negro Business Advisory Council, upon the request of the Department of Commerce, has been postponed until a later date in order that the newly appointed Secretary of Commerce, the Hon. Jesse H. Jones, may have adequate opportunity to effect re-organization plans now under consideration.

This program has not been disapproved and the conference will go forward at an early date next year. Please advise if you will continue to serve as a member of the Council.

Cordially yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
U.S. Department of Commerce

EML:dng

October 24, 1940

Mr. G. G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

Your letter of October 21, addressed to Mr.
Lancaster, has come while he is out of the city.
I shall be glad to bring your letter to the
attention of Mr. Lancaster upon his return to
the office within the next two weeks.

Sincerely yours,

Daisy N. Jackson
Secretary to Mr. Lancaster

DNJ



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October 21, 1940

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
United States Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

Since my last correspondence I have been confined to Flint-Goodridge Hospital as a patient and have not been able to write you of our work with the Negro Board of Trade. It was only a few days ago that I underwent an operation, but I felt that I should let you hear from me.

We are issuing a journal of Negro Business here in New Orleans and I should like to know how many copies you will require for your department and any other place where you might wish them sent. We believe that it will be quite a creditable booklet and will give some idea of general Negro progress in New Orleans. Having limited facilities for investigation we do not claim that it will be complete but feel that it will cast some outlook in Negro Business progress in New Orleans. We are soon to get out questionnaires and to institute a survey so that we may be well informed on general conditions in Louisiana.

With my very best wishes for your continued success in your field, I am

Respectfully yours,

G. G. McDemmond
G. G. McDemmond

GGMcd:m



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September 19, 1940

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
United States Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lancaster:

I am in receipt of your letter of September 12, in which you ask whether I will serve as a member of the National Negro Business Advisory Council. To this query, I wish to advise you that I heartily accept the invitation to confer with you on this very vital matter.

I have begun to supplement my files, and to make additional surveys through the New Orleans Negro Board of Trade and certain other agencies in our community, as well as by personal investigation, in order that we may present as complete a picture as possible of the factors which influence, both negatively and positively, the growth of Negro business in New Orleans and the state of Louisiana. I shall be very happy to have such additional information as you deem necessary, and wish to assure you that you may feel free to call on us at any time for such assistance as you may need in the formulation and working out of your program.

With my very best wishes for your continued success, I am,

Yours very truly,

NEW ORLEANS NEGRO BOARD OF TRADE

George G. McDermond
George G. McDermond,
Executive Secretary

GGM/ABB

September 12, 1940

Mr. George G. McDemmond
Executive Secretary
New Orleans Negro Board of Trade
2107 Dryades Street
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mr. McDemmond:

Recently a letter was addressed to you containing proposals for the formation of a National Negro Business Advisory Council to which you replied favorably. The purpose of this communication is to ascertain if you will serve as a member thereof.

Details pertaining to the program and date of the conference will be outlined later in the form of a Department release.

I await your reply.

Respectfully yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs,
U. S. Department of Commerce.

EML:DMH



NEW ORLEANS NEGRO BOARD OF TRADE

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September 9, 1940

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J. EDWIN WILKINS

Mr. Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs
United States Department of Commerce
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Lancaster:

I have just returned to my office this morning and found your letter dated August 27. You will recall that I was at the Business League Convention in Detroit, and I added a little vacation before I returned home. Please accept this for my delay in answering your letter.

Your speech at the luncheon in Detroit, as well as the information which I have at hand now, gave me much information as to what you have in mind for the development of Negro business by governmental assistance. I firmly believe this to be a step in the right direction and will be a great boon to the struggling Negro businessmen.

In this section where I serve as regional vice-president of the National Negro Business League, I find that there is a great need for the type of agency which you propose. Much good can accrue, particularly, from fact finding bureaus and from placement units which will serve to integrate business minded young people into the classes of business for which they will be more suited.

Any information or services which you desire of me or the New Orleans Negro Board of Trade, we shall be very happy to give. We should like representation from this area at your conference because we feel that New Orleans and its surrounding territory has problems of a very peculiar type, which are not generally found throughout other places in the nation. With my very best wishes for a continuance of your success, and with the hope that we shall meet again, I am,

Yours very truly,

NEW ORLEANS NEGRO BOARD OF TRADE

George G. McDemmond
George G. McDemmond,
Executive Secretary

August 27, 1940

Mr. George McDemond
Flint-Goodridge Hospital
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. McDemond:

The Department of Commerce is interested in assisting Negro businesses with their problems as they relate to Governmental regulations, but unfortunately, except for statistical data upon retail establishments and their incomes, we have very little knowledge of their problems. Information pertaining thereto in my opinion can be acquired only through a medium of contact with the Federal Government. I have in mind the formation of a Negro Business Advisory Council or committee similar to the Business Advisory Council which meets at the call of the Secretary of Commerce, to recommend and advise methods of improving business by Governmental assistance.

I propose that this Negro Council should be composed of fifty or more prominent Negro businessmen throughout the country who are representative of all types of business including financial and manufacturing interests, retail and wholesale establishments.

Recently Professor Jesse W. Lewis and Associate Professors H. Naylor Fitzhugh and James B. Mitchell of the Department of Commerce and Finance, Howard University, conferred with me with reference to the foregoing. Out of this conference several proposals were made with reference toward using the Negro Advisory office of the Department of Commerce as a clearing house for all Negro businessmen throughout the country pertaining to (a) business administration curricula in various Negro institutions, (b) placement of students in business establishments; this would be determined by maintaining a list furnished by the schools of all choice students applying for jobs in various types of businesses and a list of those businesses desiring expert

The Department of Commerce is pleased to inform
you of the following:
New Orleans, La.
Mississippi
Mr. George H. Boardman
Director

employees of college experience, (c) factual studies to be made available for the benefit of small Negro businesses, (d) a conference to be called and held in the auditorium of the Department of Commerce and its use thereof as headquarters for the proposed committee of which the professors of business administration courses in Negro institutions will be members.

I shall appreciate your reactions with reference to these proposals, and I await your immediate reply.

Respectfully yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs,
U. S. Department of Commerce.

EML:DMH

August 15, 1940

Mr. R. L. McDougall
Vice President
Mechanics and Farmers Bank
Durham, North Carolina

Dear Mr. McDougall:

The Department of Commerce is interested in assisting Negro businesses with their problems as they relate to Governmental regulations, but unfortunately, except for statistical data upon retail establishments and their incomes, we have very little knowledge of their problems. Information pertaining thereto in my opinion can be acquired only through a medium of contact with the Federal Government. I have in mind the formation of a Negro Business Advisory Council or committee similar to the Business Advisory Council which meets at the call of the Secretary of Commerce, to recommend and advise methods of improving business by Governmental assistance.

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Department of Commerce
Департамент Торговли
и Промышленности
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негров

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I shall appreciate your reactions with reference to these proposals, and I await your immediate reply.

Respectfully yours,

Emmer Martin Lancaster
Adviser on Negro Affairs,
U. S. Department of Commerce.

EML:DME