

Copy of a Special Memorandum

on

THE SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF NEGROES
IN THE UNITED STATES

submitted to

The President

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

by the

National Urban League for Social Service Among Negroes
1133 Broadway
New York, New York

April 15, 1933

(COPY)

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE
1133 Broadway
New York City

April
Fifteenth
1933

The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States
White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

This memorandum which I am transmitting to you in the name of the National Urban League contains a summary of important social facts pertaining to the Negro population of the United States. It has been prepared for your personal use by the Research Department of the League, with the hope that in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the public which may be furthered by your administration the conditions obtaining among Negroes may not be overlooked. Too often when steps are taken to ameliorate social conditions Negroes are not given equitable consideration.

The National Urban League is a movement with branches in forty-four cities located throughout the country North and South. Organized to improve the living and working conditions of Negroes in cities, its national board and local boards are made up of white and colored persons of distinction who have bound themselves together in a spirit of cooperation and mutual good-will to improve the relations between the races and to foster practical, scientific approaches to the problems of the Negro.

With assurance that our service is at your command, I am

Sincerely yours,

EKJ/MLA

Eugene Kinckle Jones
Eugene Kinckle Jones,
Executive Secretary.

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I.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES:

We of the National Urban League for Social Service Among Negroes are well aware of the fact that the social welfare of 12,000,000 Negroes is inextricably bound up with the country's general social well-being. But twenty-two years of pioneering in this field have shown us that in too many instances the condition of the Negro population is rendered less secure by reason of certain non-fundamental factors that can be eliminated.

Because we believe that the cause of social justice can best and first be served through the dissemination of knowledge, we have prepared the attached memorandum covering certain phases of Negro life in the United States. We believe this statement to contain, in brief, some of the most pertinent situations affecting the Negro's adjustment. We also think that, supplemented by such other material as you may demand, it will serve as a constant reference on the subject.

The National Urban League wishes to assure the President of its desire and willingness to cooperate actively in such programs as the Government may inaugurate within the field of its interest.

II.

POPULATION

The most spectacular movement of population within the United States in recent years has been the drift of hundreds of thousands of Negroes from South to North.

A. Growth

Despite predictions to the contrary, the Negro population during the 1920-1930 decade increased more rapidly than at any period since 1890-1900.

There are 13,911,000 persons of colored races in the United States distributed in the following proportions:

Negro	11,891,000
Mexican	1,423,000
Indian	332,000
Japanese	139,000
Chinese	75,000
Filipino	45,000
Other	6,000

Between 1920 and 1930 the colored population of the United States increased 20 per cent, while the white group increased 15.7 per cent. The Negro group increased 13.6 per cent during this decade - the gain of 1,428,012 persons being the largest ever recorded. The Negro group, as did the white, showed a downward trend in natural growth during 1920-1930. This trend has been caused more by a rapid reduction in the birth rate than in the death rate. A rising standard of living, postponement of marriage and migration have been factors in

reducing the birth rate.

WHITE AND NEGRO POPULATION
of
THE UNITED STATES
1790-1930

YEAR	N U M B E R		PER CENT INCREASE		Per Cent Negro in Population
	White	Negro	White	Negro	
1930	108,864,207	11,891,143	14.8	13.6	9.7
1920	94,820,915	10,463,131	16.0	6.5	9.9
1910	81,721,957	9,827,763	22.3	11.2	10.7
1900	66,809,196	8,833,994	21.2	18.0	11.6
1890	55,101,258	7,488,676	27.0	13.8	11.9
1880	43,402,970	6,580,793	29.2	34.9	13.1
1870	33,589,377	5,392,172	24.8	9.9	13.5
1860	26,922,537	4,441,830	37.7	22.1	14.1
1850	19,553,068	3,638,808	37.7	26.6	15.7
1840	14,195,805	2,873,648	34.7	23.4	16.8
1830	10,537,378	2,328,642	33.9	31.4	18.1
1820	7,866,797	1,771,656	34.2	28.6	18.4
1810	5,862,073	1,377,808	36.1	37.5	19.0
1800	4,306,446	1,002,037	35.8	32.3	18.9
1790	3,172,006	757,208	--	--	19.3

The vacuum created by the restriction of immigration in 1921 drew hundreds of thousands of Southern Negroes from the farm to industrial cities. This movement had manifold repercussions upon the Negro population.

B. Migration

The migration of Negroes between 1910 and 1925 was prompted by the following factors:

1. Deep-seated dissatisfaction with current economic disadvantages of the tenant system and the difficulty the Negro experienced in escaping from it.
2. Discontent with the school facilities provided by Southern communities.
3. A sense of insecurity in some communities because of inadequate protection of Negro life and property.
4. Disorganization of farm life by the boll weevil plague.
5. Need for more workers in the industrial labor market.

In 1910 only 4.8 per cent of Southern-born Negroes were living elsewhere in the United States. By 1920 there were 780,000 Southern-born Negroes living in the North and West, 8.1 per cent of the total. The increase in the North was nearly half a million from 1910 to 1920, or 45 per cent. Between 1920 and 1930, the increase was almost a million, or 63 per cent.

This movement of Negroes was dominantly a process of urbanization, as Northern rural districts have attracted very few migrants. The following table shows the growth of the Negro population in the ten largest cities of Negro residence during the period 1900-1930:

THE TEN LARGEST CENTERS OF NEGRO POPULATION
IN 1930, AND THEIR GROWTH SINCE 1900

CITY	NEGRO POPULATION			
	1930	1920	1910	1900
New York, N. Y.	327,706	152,467	91,709	60,666
Chicago, Ill.	233,903	109,458	44,103	30,150
Philadelphia, Pa.	219,599	134,229	84,459	62,613
Baltimore, Md.	142,106	108,322	84,749	79,258
Washington, D. C.	132,068	109,996	94,446	86,702
New Orleans, La.	129,632	100,930	89,262	77,714
Detroit, Mich.	120,066	40,838	5,741	4,111
Birmingham, Ala.	99,077	70,230	52,305	16,575
Memphis, Tenn.	96,550	61,181	52,441	49,910
St. Louis, Mo.	93,580	69,854	43,960	35,516

III.

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

The Negro has contributed more labor per capita to the development of the United States than any other racial group.

The changes in occupational status between 1920 and 1930 are very significant because they are primarily the consequence of the recent northward migration of Negroes.

A. Occupational Facts

1. The Negro forms 11.3 per cent of the country's working masses, although his population is only 9.2 per cent of the whole.

2. In more or less normal periods 5,500,000 Negroes are gainfully employed.

3. The masses of Negro workers are employed in the following occupational groups:

2,000,000 in Agriculture - doing 19 per cent of all the farming

1,600,000 in Personal and Domestic Service - doing 31.8 per cent of all the work

1,025,000 in Manufacturing and Mechanical Industries - doing 7.3 per cent of all the work.

4. Women Workers

Approximately one-fourth of all women fifteen years of age and over are workers, while approximately one-half (1,777,000) of all Negro women in the same age group are gainfully employed. Negro married women form one-fourth of all the married women working away from home. The ratio of Negro married women employed is three times greater than that for all women, three and a half times greater than the ratio of native-white women, and four times greater than that of foreign-born white women.

5. Child Labor

Of the 667,000 children between the ages of ten and fifteen gainfully employed, 240,000 or 36 per cent

are Negro children. The rate of child labor among Negroes is five times higher than that among native-white children and eight times higher than that of foreign-born whites. In South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana the actual number of Negro children so employed is greater than the number of white children.

B. Agriculture

The Negro farmer is America's principal peasant. He, as owner and tenant, operates about 30 per cent of the Southern farms and performs a great part of the hired labor. He is so closely identified with Southern agriculture that his racial status depends greatly upon sectional farming conditions.

1. Systems (Tenant, One Crop and Credit)

In the South, the Negro is particularly affected by the tenant system, the one crop system and the credit system. Each agricultural depression since 1910 has shown a decrease in ownership and renting classes and an increase in cropper classes among Negroes. The position he will occupy in the future depends very largely upon the trend of cotton production and the diversification of crops. This diversification cannot be secured until the tenancy and credit structure remove the pressure of "money"

or "cash" crops from the shoulders of Southern agriculture. The crop mortgage system growing out of this evil, inherently weak and too frequently abused, makes it impossible to maintain a good standard of living. Studies of Negro farm incomes in several sections show averages around \$400 a year - with many falling below this figure. So long as such a condition exists, the desertion of Southern farms for city jobs will doubtless continue.

2. The Federal Government

The Extension services of the Federal Department of Agriculture through farm demonstrators and home demonstration agents has been eminently successful among Negro farmers. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929 provided the nucleus for constructing a more satisfactory vehicle for cooperative action among Negro farmers. However, the present set-up of Federal aid does little toward improving the basic evils of Southern agriculture as it affects the Negro. A staff of 335 Negro cooperative extension workers is engaged in carrying to Negro farmers information on improved farming and home-making methods. These are trained men and women employed cooperatives by the United States Department of Agriculture and the land grant colleges of the fifteen Southern states.

C. Non-Agricultural Pursuits

Since the World War, Negroes have replaced alien labor in arduous monotonous jobs of industry. Within recent years Negroes have risen into skilled and semi-skilled jobs in certain areas. The increase of the Negro city population to five million has caused a shrinkage in agricultural and domestic service pursuits. The transition, however, has caused certain losses.

1. Job Displacement

Negro employment has been affected by the incursion of white workers into fields of employment formerly occupied almost exclusively by Negroes. In restaurants and hotels Negro men waiters have been partially displaced by white men or by white or Negro girls. White patrons have almost entirely abandoned colored barber shops in the South. In the same section where they formerly monopolized the building trades, Negro carpenters, plasterers and masons are steadily declining in number. Then there is a recent and persistent pressure by which Negro locomotive firemen are being replaced by white men.

Political disfranchisement throughout the South leaves the Negro open to local governmental exploitation. This is evidenced in sporadic attempts of white groups, such as barbers, to drive Negroes out by municipal ordinance, the licensing of electricians, plumbers and other skilled tradesmen and the barring

of Negroes from public employment on such work as construction, street cleaning and garbage removal.

2. Habits and Handicaps

There are real handicaps to the Negro who desires to rise in the industrial scale. These are not entirely the fault of the Negro but of the pseudo-social competition under which the Negro labors.

These handicaps may be summarized as follows:

- a. Living down a tradition of slavery.
- b. Frequently, regardless of skill, he is forced to begin at the bottom and seldom does his promotion follow the usual procedure so popularly regarded as typical in a democracy.
- c. When there is prosperity and plenty of work, there are opportunities at the bottom. In times of unemployment, the pressure on the "bottom" position drives the Negro out of industry.
- d. There are traditions of employment - "deadlines" limiting the employment of Negroes.
- e. Labor unions, by limiting their membership to white citizens, effectively bar the entrance of Negroes into occupational fields under their control.

D. Federal Government

1. Negro Employees

On June 30, 1928 there were 51,882 Negroes on the Federal payroll. This number represented an increase from 51,805 in 1923 and 22,540 in 1910. These employees are distributed throughout forty-six branches of the Federal service both at Washington and at large. In 1930, approximately 187 of these employees held what are regarded by

the Census Bureau as positions as "officials and inspectors." These positions included the Minister to Liberia and Consuls at Oporto, Portugal; Calais, France; St. Michaels, Azores; and Los Palmas, Canary Islands.

2. Services

In the current maldistribution of population in urban and rural areas - the problem of migration and labor - the opportunities for the Federal Government to aid in a more satisfactory readjustment of Negro life are manifold. The present services of the Department of Labor through the Employment Service, Women's Bureau and Children's Bureau might well become more actively interested in these problems. In times of unemployment necessitating Federal relief, the services of an expert to aid in the satisfactory amelioration of these conditions would be most helpful.

IV.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND RELIEF

In a time of depression, the Negro is especially handicapped by unemployment.

The most reliable estimates indicate that there are approximately 1,500,000 unemployed Negro workers in the United States. Aside from the general social factors determining unemployment, the Negro worker is pushed out of employment because of active efforts to have his occupations taken over by white workers. Evidence of this unemployment is told in the reports of local relief organizations showing a ratio of Negroes

among the relief-receiving group from two to nine times its ratio in the population. Federal aid has been of some moment in aiding this group, but the following comments are offered on its administration.

A. Federal Funds and Local Relief

The new phase of Federal aid through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation brings to the National Government more so than ever before certain phases of local practices that heretofore have been local issues. We refer to the discriminatory practices in the distribution of relief that operate against Negro citizens.

The National Urban League for Social Service Among Negroes, backed by a quarter of a century's experience in social problems in its field, sent its Director of Industrial Relations, T. Arnold Hill, on an exploratory trip into the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. Mr. Hill's excursion of ten weeks revealed many facts of utmost importance. His preliminary report said - "The Negro unemployed worker is the victim of rank discrimination in the allotment both of material relief and emergency work-relief, in part provided for by loans of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to states in this area."

A number of communities are aggravating an already unhealthy social condition by adding additional discriminations in the form of distinct and flagrant violation of the principles and practices of democratic society. In support of this contention, we submit the following:

1. In NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana, work-relief is administered through the New Orleans Welfare Committee. On March 24, 1933, there were 7,673 Negro families receiving relief and 26,097 persons registered for work. (This is the extent of the problem in a city where 28.3 per cent of the population is Negro). From May until October, 1932, the work-relief project was financed through a bond issue of \$750,000. Because this was tax money, the Committee ruled that it should be expended in proportion to the per cent of the racial population - 70 per cent for whites and 30 per cent for Negroes. When Federal funds were available, it is stated that "this ratio was not adhered to." However, it was revived in December, 1932. The number of day's work was reduced from four to three and finally to two a week, except for colored families who, regardless of need, were given a maximum of one day's work a week. Thus, the New Orleans Times Picayune states on February 3, 1933: "During the month of January the average monthly work-relief to white families averaged \$22 and to colored families approximately \$11.....The Welfare Committee is pleased to announce that it has evolved a plan which increases the average work-relief to approximately \$28 per month for white families and approximately \$15 per month for colored families."

The daily rate of pay for all work-relief persons is \$2.00 per day, three-fifths of which is furnished by the R.F.C. funds and the balance by the state.

"Oddly enough," states one authority, "the attitude of the Negro family concerned regarding the changes to which it has become subjected is that of resigned hopelessness."

NOTE:

The Unemployment Relief Committee of the State of Louisiana reports that on February 11, 1933 there were 118,017 colored persons registered for work-relief. Of this number 65,724 were receiving work-relief on that date. The average level of relief per month was \$8.43. It was estimated that 38.1 per cent of the Negro population of the State was receiving this type of relief.

2. BIRMINGHAM, Alabama.

Approximately 75 per cent of this city's Negro working population is unemployed. During the first week of January, 1932, there were 6,000 white families and 11,000 Negro families on the relief rolls of the city.

The situation has become increasingly serious since 1930. Direct relief, distribution of Government flour and cotton goods, planning for local gardens and food credit at commissaries are among the relief methods utilized.

3. JACKSONVILLE, Florida, has been sorely pressed because it lacked adequate relief funds. In December, 1932, there were 9,800 cases being handled by the local relief units. At the end of that month, it was financially impossible to aid 1,988 needy families eligible for relief. This has been an additional handicap to many Negro families. Furthermore, work-relief wages were twenty cents an hour for Negro men and thirty cents an hour for white men. One phase of the situation is covered by this statement: "The school law here is such that even in normal times Negroes are not compelled to attend school. The added condition of not having food, clothing and proper shelter has made this situation more appalling."

4. In ATLANTA, Georgia, lunches have been provided for white children attending the public schools, through the R.F.C. funds. Many promises have been given that this will be done for colored children, but as late as February, 1933, not one cent had been allowed colored schools for this purpose.

Negro relief-workers receive fifty cents less per day than white workers. Likewise, food orders per Negro family have a value of fifty cents lower than those given white families.

5. In TEXAS, the employment of Negroes on public construction depends upon where this construction is being done. Under the home labor rule few, if any, Negroes are employed on highway construction in Central Texas. In West Texas, highway construction workers are white. In the southern part of the State, Negroes and Mexicans are "employed without discrimination." On Federal building construction "Negroes are employed just as they have always been in all building construction in Texas."

6. In HOUSTON, Texas, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-six of the 6,128 families receiving relief in

January, 1933, were Negroes. Here, it is stated, the relief policy is not to give Negroes relief as readily as it is given to whites. When Negro persons apply, they are given an appointment for three or four weeks hence when they may come in for registration. Thereafter, an investigation is made and the quantity of relief determined. In this way, approximately one-third of the Negro relief applicants are eliminated.

7. In MIAMI, Florida, relief is administered through the Dade County Department of Public Welfare. Men employed on work-relief receive three days' work every two weeks. This situation is presumably true for both white and Negro workers. However, the daily rate of pay for white workers is \$2.45 while the Negro workmen are paid only \$1.25.
8. In CHARLESTON, South Carolina, where Negroes form 54.2 per cent of the population and are estimated as being fully 50 per cent unemployed, they are given 30 per cent of the work-relief, or three days' work a week at one dollar a day. White workers are given 70 per cent of the work - three days a week at one dollar and fifty cents a day.

The above examples are not to be regarded as giving the total picture in any one of these communities. They do demonstrate, however, the pertinent problems that are being faced in the distribution of relief. It is true that in other communities a much more intelligent approach is being made to the problem of work-relief provided with Federal funds.

In Tulsa, Oklahoma, where the R.F.C. funds went into effect in October, 1932, and where the Negro population was suffering because "white people are accepting work they would never consider before," the R.F.C. Committee has accepted two projects to apply for the benefit of the Negro section. One will improve the streets and the

general condition of the Negro residential section, and the other will improve that section of the public park reserved for Negroes.

Organization for the utilization of R.F.C. funds in Mobile, Alabama, has only recently been completed. There is assurance, however, that Negroes "will receive the same benefits of work-relief, direct relief, social guidance and supervision as the white families."

In Norfolk, Virginia; Owensboro, Kentucky; Tampa, Florida; San Antonio, Texas; and Dallas, Texas, for example, efforts are made to distribute work-relief on the basis of need rather than race. In Norfolk, exactly the same rate of pay has been given and the same number of day's work per week has been allowed. The administration in that city has based the number of day's work per week on the number of dependents in each family--allowing one day in families of two or three, two days in families of four or five and three days in families of six or more.

In Kansas City, Missouri, a different type of problem is found. The inclusion of Negroes on work projects has been unbelievably small. Of 3,500 men employed under the city's ten-year plan, official figures reported fewer than 100 Negroes. Negro applicants for work-relief during the past three weeks "in many instances waited in line from early as five o'clock in the morning until late in the afternoon in order to plead for a chance to work. They were told there was 'no work for colored today,' or 'Democrats only need apply,' or 'see your precinct captain.' In some instances they were sent on a wild goose chase all over the city in order to

find politicians who would certify them for work designed as 'unemployment relief.' This situation has gone far beyond anything I have ever seen or hope to see again."

In Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where the heads of all families receiving relief must work on the State roads, Negro men "do not accept work as freely" as other racial groups. The relief agencies "have tried to persuade many of our colored families to return to their own people in the South, but they have refused. They do not wish to work on the farm and much prefer city life, even though their life here is only a mere existence."

In Gary, Indiana, where the entire economic organization of Negro life has been demoralized and where fully half of the Negro population is being supported by public funds, it is felt that "the white citizens are losing whatever respect they may have had for the integrity and self-reliance of the Negro population because of its necessary though abject dependence on public philanthropy."

In presenting this material, the National Urban League wishes to submit the proposition that wise administration of relief funds during this period of national emergency demands that relief be apportioned on the basis of need. In many instances the practices followed in local communities tend to make chronic paupers out of the Negro population and to create a permanent dependent class. The increasing adaptation of the Negro to city life in the past ten years makes imperative the necessity of constructive relief programs that

will preserve some of these gains, at least the spirit that made them possible.

The Federal Government has within its power the amelioration of certain of these difficulties by providing for the distribution of relief on the basis of need and without discrimination against race. One social agency expressed the real need in this situation some years ago as follows: "When people are sick, we can cure them; when they are bad, we can try to reform them; but when they are out of work, there is only one effective remedy for their troubles and that is real work and real wages." While the cure for our ills is not immediately possible, the assistance of the Federal Government through its relief funds has provided the vehicle for intelligent beginnings in this direction. To have the best results of this public investment deliberately aborted by prejudiced allocation of funds, meagre as they are, is inequitable, unjust and nepotistic.

It is the belief of this organization that the selection of a liaison person to function in cooperation with the Federal Government in seeing that justice is done to all groups without discrimination is most necessary.

V.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF EMPLOYMENT

There are at least four problems of employment that are facing the Negro worker today. Three of these have already been brought to the attention of the Federal Government. So far, no

definite action is known to have taken place in correcting these situations. These problems are:

A. Employment of Negroes on the Mississippi Flood Control Projects

In September, 1932, a special report on alleged unsavory working conditions existing for Negroes in the contractors' camps on various Mississippi flood control projects was laid before General G. B. Pillsbury, Assistant Chief of Army Engineers. This report was based upon personal investigations of work conditions in twenty-two contractors' camps. It alleged the existence of "conditions amounting to virtual slavery," including beatings given to men and women, commissary system abuses amounting to extortion and unsanitary living arrangements.

This report was sent to Colonel Ferguson, President of the Mississippi River Commission at Vicksburg, who was said to be "making a thorough investigation down there." In October, 1932, President Hoover appointed a commission of four persons to investigate conditions, but no funds were available to make the inquiry.

On December 12, 1932, Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York introduced in the Senate a resolution authorizing a congressional investigation into these conditions. This resolution was referred to the Commerce Committee. The Government's contract system is blamed for the alleged conditions.

B. Discrimination Against Negro Workers
at Hoover Dam

For more than a year there has been widespread discontent because Negroes have not been able to find adequate employment in the construction of the Hoover Dam. Last November, only 30 were employed in this project, and not a single one employed by the Reclamation Department in that locality. Newspapers published by Negroes throughout the country protested vigorously and saddled responsibility upon the former administration.

The National Bar Association, an organization of Negro lawyers, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People made a public issue of it, and labored to effect a satisfactory agreement with Government officials in Washington and contractors and representatives of the United States Employment Service in Las Vegas.

The influence of the National Urban League was sought, and in November, 1932, Floyd C. Covington, Executive Secretary of the Los Angeles Urban League, visited the area. Mr. Covington found:

"A false conception of numerical percentages is followed by the Federal Employment Bureau at Las Vegas. The following paragraph quoted from the superintendent's letter indicates this:

'I am herewith enclosing some figures relative to registrations and placements of colored help on the Hoover Dam project. The total colored registrations are 201; our total colored

placements are 53 - or 26.3 per cent of the total registrations have found employment. The total war veterans registered with us numbers 60, and we have been successful in placing 40 of this number - or 75 per cent. The white registrations since January 1st of this year total 11,718, and the placements total 1,854 - or slightly less than 16 per cent.'

"These percentages of the Negro group are instantly affected by the fact that more than 600 Negro men were discouraged in going to Las Vegas who had registered at the Urban League office. This does not include a large number of men from other states who did not come to Las Vegas because of apparent discrimination against them on account of color. No doubt, if all agencies working in the interest of the Negro had not only persuaded but insisted that Negroes not go to the Dam site, this number of 201 would have increased to the same proportion as the white registrants. Secondly, those Negroes who have been employed have been hired in unskilled positions only - mostly as trackmen and muckers. Thirdly, the available supply of qualified Negro workmen will always be limited because of the present living conditions afforded Negroes in Las Vegas. Fourthly, it should be remembered that a large number of Negroes who are competent to do varied kinds of work at the Dam is available in and around Los Angeles, and they represent a cross-section of the United States. These men are registered at the Urban League office and could be transferred to the United States Department of Labor's Employment Office in Los Angeles for verification of their skill and fitness.

"The United States Government and the Six Companies, Inc., have followed a theoretical policy that the only way that Negroes can be included in the employment quota of men at Hoover Dam is through and by the maintenance of separate facilities for them.

- (a) "The Negro employees have been accorded a separate dormitory, with sufficient accommodations to house

in excess of seventy-five Negro workmen. Of the total men employed at the time of this study, only sixteen of the thirty Negroes employed were residing in the dormitory. In fairness to the company, however, this situation is due to the insistence of the Colored Labor Protective Association that the men make a daily round trip of sixty miles from River Camp to Las Vegas.

- (b) "The Negro employees are accorded separate tables in the commissary dining room. (The writer had the privilege of dining with the men. No one can complain of either the type or quantity of food served). This condition, perhaps necessary at the outset, would be instantly broken down by the men themselves. No actual account of friction between white and Negro workers was apparent in any connection. For example:

"A Negro who was originally employed as mucker is now doing all of the barbering work in the commissary store. White employees consider the man one of the finest workers and personalities in the camp. A young white man, former employee of the Bank of America, was in charge of the commissary store at the night hour. He and the Negro barber are the only two in charge of this large commissary set-up. This is a definite example of the possibility of white and Negro skilled employees working together harmoniously; and, in fact, that a Negro can do personal service of the most intimate kind for white men without friction.

"The white technicians, such as carpenters, pipe-fitters, cement finishers, and the like, daily send out a special request for the Negro workmen to be sent to their various sections to do unskilled laboring work for them.

"White men employed in the United States Department of Reclamation have continually asked the Negro foreman and his men why there were no Negroes employed in the Reclamation Department under the complete supervision of the United States Government and separate from the Six Companies, Inc. (Note: Not a single Negro is employed in the Reclamation Department in either skilled or unskilled capacity, despite the fact that this division is Government-controlled).

"Boulder City - a Government-owned reservation - modern in all its urbanized settings, is virtually a 'white city.' Three Negroes are employed in the city in stores and barber shops. Only one Negro, a barber shop porter, resides in Boulder City. No doubt, investigation would indicate that he is being housed at the goodness of an employer or other interested white.

"It is approximately eight miles from Boulder City to the actual working site of the Dam. Many men (white), therefore, have only eight miles - sixteen round trip - to travel daily to their work. They have a modern city, operated under the City-Manager plan, in which to locate their families. To the contrary, Negro workmen must either stay in the company dormitory at River Camp or travel sixty miles per day to live in a vice-infested community with no protection for their families, if they should desire to bring them.

"There are more than 300 applicants (white) for houses in Boulder City. According to the President of the Six Companies, Inc., no more houses will be built by them. Here, of course, is a limitation for whites. In comparison, this means complete exclusion to Negroes. Yet there is unlimited land in and around Boulder City. Shacks and temporary dwellings are taboo in the city. This means that men may not follow the usual 'camping' set-up. What is to hinder, however, the building of acceptable homes or dwellings by the men themselves for their families? Why should not there be, at least, the usual Negro community in this now Government-owned 'white' city?

"Babcock and Wilcox, steel manufacturers, are now erecting their plant to supply the steel for the tunnels. The

plant and dormitory are being built by the Six Companies, Inc. Their main office buildings are being erected by a Boulder City contractor. A dormitory with one hundred rooms is being erected by Anderson Brothers who have charge of Six Companies' dormitory system. It is important, therefore, that this company be contacted in time to encourage them to include Negroes at the outset, before similar precedents above established are followed."

Protest abated temporarily, but this report brings the issue to the front again. A discussion of the matter in important Negro circles recently concluded with the agreement that the National Urban League should call the matter to the attention of the Secretary of Labor. Accordingly, the National Urban League is respectfully requesting the Secretary's prompt attention to the practices now in vogue that definitely interfere with the fair and democratic participation of Negro workers in the employment offered at Hoover Dam.

We hardly need call your attention to the fact that Negroes have suffered disproportionately during the current business upheaval - a fact which gives weight to our claim for impartial selection of workers on a Government project, uninfluenced by race, color, or creed, at a time when public works are being accelerated to provide jobs for the unemployed.

C. Peonage

Stories of peonage and Negro agricultural workers in the United States are not new, but recently there have come to the attention of the Federal District Attorney at Memphis, Tennessee - Swayne D. Maddox - "more than 200 complaints" from Negroes on

plantations in Mississippi and Arkansas. This information, it is stated, will be given to Department of Justice agents in Washington for investigation.

D. Negro Railway Employees

For more than twenty years there have been numerous efforts to check and curtail the employment of Negroes on railroads. The position the Negro holds is an anomalous one. To hold their employment on the Gulf Coast Lines of the Missouri Pacific, Negro firemen have actually signed wage agreements fixing their wages at figures below the standard rates. As early as 1926, it was the hope of firemen that not a single Negro "remain on the left side of an engine cab." To this end new contracts between the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen negotiated during the last few years have practically caused the elimination of Negro firemen.

The elimination of Negro railway employees from the field controlled by the four transportation brotherhoods presents one of our most pressing problems of occupational adjustment. The following situation is the most current in this field.

Since November 9, 1932, on the Louisiana, Mississippi and Vicksburg section of the Illinois Central Railroad, seven Negro switchmen, brakemen and firemen have been murdered on the job and more than ten others have been wounded. In normal times, firemen's jobs on the Louisiana Division of the Illinois Central are divided on a 50-50 ratio between Negroes and whites. Early during this period

of unemployment, white firemen on the Louisiana Division asked for a five per cent reduction in the number of Negro firemen. This was granted. Later, an additional cut of Negro employees was requested. When official action was delayed over a long period, the reign of terror began.

From New Orleans come reports that the Negro firemen are going to keep on working, preferring to "take a chance on being shot to starving to death."

VI.

EDUCATION

"The Negro schools of today are about what the white schools were a generation ago."

- Recent Social Trends.

A. School Attendance

There has been a distinct improvement in the school attendance rate of Negro children in the United States since 1910. However, there are still 250,000 Negro children between the ages of seven and thirteen who are not attending school and nearly a million from five to twenty who are not enrolled.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

By Sex and Age Groups
and by
Color and Nativity
United States
1910-1930

Population Class and Census Year	Age and Per Cent in School			
	7 to 13 years	14 to 15 years	16 to 17 years	18 to 20 years
All Classes:				
1930.....	95.3	88.8	57.3	21.4
1920.....	90.6	79.9	42.9	14.8
1910.....	86.1	75.0	43.1	15.2
Native white of native parentage:				
1930.....	96.1	90.0	61.0	24.4
1920.....	92.2	83.9	48.7	17.5
1910.....	83.2	60.3	51.1	19.6
Native white of mixed and foreign parentage:				
1930.....	96.0	91.3	54.4	19.3
1920.....	94.1	77.9	34.5	11.9
1910.....	92.7	73.6	36.6	11.8
Foreign born white:				
1930.....	97.5	92.6	52.3	15.6
1920.....	84.1	66.7	23.5	7.0
1910.....	87.1	56.9	17.5	4.6
Negro:				
1930.....	81.3	78.1	46.3	13.3
1920.....	73.5	62.7	39.2	10.8
1910.....	64.1	56.3	35.5	11.7

Source:

U. S. Bureau of the Census, Population
Statistics, 1910, 1920 and 1930.

B. Public Schools in the South

In the separate public schools for Negro children in six Southern states, the expenditure per Negro child of school age in 1928 was \$8.86.

This expenditure is only about one-fourth of that for the white children.

C. School Terms; Salaries

In some districts of the South, Negroes do not even receive for their schools the amount which they have paid in school taxes. Furthermore, the school term averages thirty days less than for the whites, and the average salary paid white teachers is from two to two and a half times the salary of Negro teachers, which in some states is as low as \$300 per year.

D. Transportation

In five Southern states reporting on the transportation of pupils to consolidated schools, the extent of this service to Negro districts is negligible. Over 350,000 white pupils and less than 2,000 Negro pupils receive this service.

E. Retardation

Statistics on Negro pupils entering the public schools of Northern cities after having been transferred from four Southern states indicate that more than 20 per cent of the pupils were retarded three or more years. In recent years there has been some progress in holding pupils in schools, but 62 per cent of the Negro public school enrollment is below the fourth grade.

F. Public Schools in the North

The migration of approximately 22 per cent of Negro children of school age to Northern cities has resulted in a great improvement in educational opportunity. However, it has introduced a pressure for segregation. One of the chief factors underlying this pressure is the retardation of migrant children before leaving their native states. In New Jersey, for example, the number of separate schools for Negroes increased from 52 to 66 between 1919 and 1930.

G. Higher Education

Higher education among Negroes is conducted chiefly by private institutions. In 1913 there were 33 Negro institutions only three of which had sufficient equipment and teaching force to be regarded as colleges. In 1930 there were more than one hundred Negro secondary institutions exclusive of public high schools, thirty-three of which were standardized colleges. In 1932 nearly 20,000 Negroes were in college and about 1,500 degrees were granted. Approximately 2,000 of these students and 250 of the graduates were in the large universities of the North and West. There are now four important centers of higher education for Negroes - Howard University (Washington, D. C.), Atlanta University (Atlanta, Ga.), Fisk University (Nashville, Tenn.) and Dillard University (New Orleans, La.).

H. Vocational Education and Guidance

1. Education

More so than ever before is vocational education attracting the attention of the Negro population. The pioneering work of Hampton and Tuskegee and the localized activity of the seventeen Negro land grant colleges point the way to new developments in that field. The work could be greatly strengthened by a more equitable distribution of the Smith-Hughes Funds, in which Negroes do not share in proportion to their numbers, but are allotted part of the funds by the local boards.

2. Guidance

The Committee on Vocational Guidance and Child Labor of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection reported in 1930:

"There is a serious need for guidance among Negroes as a part of the educational program, particularly at the secondary school level; that public educational systems will have to scrutinize more carefully than they have in the past the occupational conditions in their local communities and elsewhere as a necessary preliminary to adequate and serviceable vocational preparation; and that industries and businesses will have to re-examine their policies as to types of employment available for Negroes as well as whites. The method of the National Urban League in undertaking careful studies of the actual situation is commended as affording the only sound basis for a better program of vocational guidance for Negro youth."

VII.

HEALTH

The Negro death rates are almost half again as high as the white.

The fact that Negroes had a higher death rate than the whites among whom they lived has only recently become a matter of general concern. Ignorance, poverty and an environment lacking in better health facilities have combined to cause high death rates from the diseases associated with them. So high are these rates that many have assumed a general racial predisposition to them. The most exhaustive recent study of the subject concludes:

"There is no adequate evidences that (the Negro) has any less capacity to resist disease than the whites. The mortality of the Negro is so greatly affected by his unfavorable environment and habits of life that for most diseases it is quite impossible to detect any influence of hereditary racial (1) factors which, nevertheless, may be present."

A. Life Expectancy

The life expectancy of Negroes is still ten years less for males and twelve years less for females than for white persons. In general, Negroes have the expectancy of life at birth which whites had thirty years ago - this, despite a tremendous improvement within the last decade.

(1) Holmes, S. J. "Differential Mortality in the American Negro," Human Biology, Vol. III, Nos. 1 and 2, pp. 71-106, 203-244.

B. Death Rates

Negro death rates are higher in the city than in the country and hence higher in the North than in the South, but the rate for certain Southern cities is higher than that for Northern cities. In 1927, the colored death rate in the Death Registration Area was 22.3 per 100,000 population, the white death rate was 11.8. Between 1910 and 1927, the Negro death rate decreased 15.8 per cent while the white rate decreased 23.9 per cent.

C. Tuberculosis

Free from the ravages of this disease before his contact with whites, but once exposed, relatively much more susceptible because of ignorance, unfavorable environment and low scale of living, the Negro suffers most from tuberculosis. In 1927, the death rate, in all registration cities, from tuberculosis of the respiratory system among Negroes was 242.4 and among whites 58.5 per 100,000 population. One-fifth of the Negro mortality in 1910 was due to tuberculosis; in 1928, about one-tenth. The National Tuberculosis Health League has recently inaugurated an energetic campaign against tuberculosis among Negroes.

D. Infant Mortality

Again, because of unsanitary housing conditions, malnutrition, etc., the Negro has a high infant mortality rate. Infant mortality eliminates from ten to fifteen per cent of the Negro babies during their first year of life. Though this mortality has declined very rapidly in Northern cities as a result of vigorous public health

measures, it remains more than 100 per cent of the white rate.

In the Southern states, there has been a less rapid decline. In 1928, the rate of infant deaths per 1,000 live births in the Birth Registration Area was 106 for Negroes and 64 for whites.

E. Special Diseases

The cityward migration of Negroes gave rise to an increasing pneumonia mortality. At times, this rate has equalled that of tuberculosis. Malaria affects the rural South and in many sections typhoid is not yet under control. Death from organic diseases of the heart are equally as high among Negroes as among whites.

F. Hospitalization

Future needs in this direction are indicated by the fact that of the 122 hospitals listed as "colored" by the American Medical Directory, only 17 are on the approved list of the American College of Surgeons, and only 14 are approved for internship by the American Medical Association. A study by the Julius Rosenwald Fund revealed that in North Carolina, for example, Negroes have only one-half the number of hospital beds per thousand persons as the whites and seven times as many persons per doctor. In South Carolina, where the number of hospital beds for Negroes is less than a third the number for whites, there are eighteen times as many persons per Negro doctor. (1)

(1) Negro Hospitals, A Compilation of Available Statistics. Published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago, 1931.

In the United States as a whole, one of the chief problems is that very, very few Negro internes and doctors have opportunities for hospital practice. Meanwhile, one Negro physician is available for every 3,127 Negro persons and one white physician is available for every 728 white persons.

G. The Federal Government

The Federal Government has contributed to the amelioration of these untoward health conditions through the United States Public Health Service. This branch of the Government has been particularly helpful in its annual cooperation of sponsoring National Negro Health Week. The magnitude of the problem demands increased work through this service.

VIII.

HOUSING

"In the housing of Negro citizens, our philosophy has proved to be inadequate."
- Robert P. Lamont.

The conditions of Negro housing in both urban and rural areas of the United States so comprehensively treated by President Hoover's recent Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership revealed the following factors making Negro housing a distinct problem:

1. The course of selection and segregation which, almost without exception, draws the Negro population into the most deteriorated residence sections of the city. This is in part the process of city growth, in part economic selection and segregation, and in part racial selection.
2. The accelerated rate of deterioration inherent in the character of Negro properties, due to age and use.
3. The depreciation of property values attributed to Negro occupancy or proximity. This is in part economic and in part psychological.
4. Segregation legislation designed to restrict areas of residence as a public measure.
5. Restrictive covenants and conventions, designed to restrict areas of Negro residence as a private measure.
6. Objections of white residents to the presence in certain areas, as registered in:
 - (a) Clashes,
 - (b) Bombings of property,
 - (c) Intimidation.
7. Exclusion of Negroes from new housing developments.

8. Limitation of facilities for financing of Negro home ownership.
9. Increased rentals with Negro occupancy.
10. Factors related to the level of culture of the majority population of the Negro group, as reflected in the care of property.
11. The relation of such physical factors as excessive congestion, and physical deterioration to correspondingly excessive rates of delinquency and mortality in Negro areas.

We wish here merely to commend four major recommendations of the Committee:

1. In view of the desperate conditions brought out in this study of Negro and other minority groups, we recommend that a National Housing Commission be appointed by the President whose function shall be to serve as a research commission, to encourage states to pass adequate housing laws, and to suggest administrative measures for enforcement of state and municipal laws.
2. In those states in which there are not adequate housing laws, we recommend that a state commission be appointed to secure adequate legislation and to investigate conditions with a view

to correction through various state and municipal channels. We further recommend that this commission be interracial, non-political and non-partisan.

3. We recommend that each municipality maintain a permanent commission whose function it shall be to investigate housing conditions and to present for adoption specific ordinances suited to the community housing needs, and to provide controls for the enforcement of these ordinances. In this connection, we recommend that interracial groups seek the cooperation of city officials and civic organizations to secure necessary improvements in Negro sections.
4. We recommend that there be sought the cooperation of all educational and welfare agencies interested in rural Negroes, for the purpose of stimulating practical interest by education and demonstration in housing.

IX.

RECREATION AND LEISURE

The necessity of providing wholesome recreation for the Negro should be urged on the general community not only on the basis of social justice, but on the basis of self-protection.

The question of recreational facilities is much larger than the mere matter of the exclusion or the admission of Negroes to playgrounds, parks, settlements and theatres. It involves the attitudes of the community toward the Negro and leisure time activities.

Generally, in the recreational field covered by playgrounds, parks, recreation centers, bathing beaches and swimming pools the Negro is denied wholesome recreational opportunities in large sections of the South, and in the North is being faced with increasing exclusion or segregation. Facilities are denied to Negroes altogether or greatly reduced because of segregation. A study of Negro recreational facilities in 57 cities - 40 Northern and 17 Southern - in 1928 revealed that "the sheer inadequacy of recreational facilities for Negroes has a great deal to do with the reputation for crime that the Negro has gained in many cities. He idles about the streets because he has no other place to go, and wanders into pool rooms and vicious places because he can find relaxation nowhere else."

In connection with this problem of recreation, it is becoming increasingly necessary that there be an indirect attack

upon undesirable amusements that are so prominent in Negro areas, by providing recreational facilities of a wholesome kind. Limited by economic resources, yet desiring to participate in diversions now more or less common to the American scene, the stable Negro group is increasingly threatened by demoralization unless definite improvements are effected in his opportunities for leisure time adjustment.

X.

DELINQUENCY

There is very little comfort for the native-white American in casting the blame for crime on the Negro----the causes that bring them to the commission of crime lie in the social structure for which the white American is partly responsible.

This one definite conclusion can be drawn from available crime statistics, namely, that all proportions being guarded, the Negro seems to be more frequently in contact with agencies of criminal justice than the white.

The following statement prepared by the National Urban League's Research Department for the Wickersham Commission summarizes this problem of delinquency among Negroes:

In all the materials on the phenomenon of crime among Negroes, one finds the presence of other factors which would tend to invalidate the opinion that high rates of crime among Negroes are due to an inherent racial criminality. The low economic status of the offender in many instances

prevents his paying a fine, so that he is forced to the alternative sentence of imprisonment. Poverty and the restrictive opportunity for securing employment contribute to the large number of cases of larceny and robbery.

In communities to which Negroes have migrated in large numbers the mere presence of an unusual proportion of males between the ages of twenty and forty-four who contribute the highest proportion of criminal offenders in all groups, would give a different interpretation to the situation. This same factor of migration is evident in the large number of maladjusted rural Negroes now living in urban communities.

Thus, when one views the congestion in poor dwellings in crowded neighborhoods; the lack of recreational facilities and the presence of unwholesome, artificial devices where Negroes may spend their leisure; the prevalent system of segregation and discrimination whereby Negroes are denied the privileges and conditions of citizenship compatible with the greatest good; the element of prejudice that enters into the administration and execution of the law, either subtly or overtly; the unequal distribution of occupational opportunities making Negroes the marginal workers, "the last hired and the first fired;" the total lack of scientific formula for guidance and training in vocations; a disfranchised working class which has been called "a menace not simply to itself, but to every group in the community," that will be diseased, criminal, ignorant, the plaything of mobs, and insulted by caste restrictions; in short, "a system of color caste having to do with separation in travel, in schools, in public accommodations, in residence, and in family relations, in the kind and amount of public-school education and in civil rights of various sorts and in courts, jails, fines, lynching, and mob violence;" such a one is forced to conclude that the experience so far gained indicates that the volume of crimes among Negroes is susceptible to vast improvement by effecting changes in the factors underlying this crime. (1)

(1) National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. The Negro's Relation to Work and Law Observance. Ira De A. Reid. Vol. VI, Part III, pp. 252-253.

XI.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The following legal discriminations against Negroes exist in violation of equivocal guarantees in the Federal Constitution. While chiefly chargeable to the Southern states, they are not wholly so:

1. In ten Southern states - North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas - the Negro may not vote, may not marry according to choice, and must accept separate accommodations in public schools and on public conveyances.
2. In all but twenty-one states of the Union, at least one form of the above legal restrictions is practiced.
3. In a Supreme Court decision in 1917 (Buchanan vs. Waverly) the Court held unconstitutional a residential segregation ordinance forbidding the sale of property by whites to Negroes in Louisville, Kentucky, because it invaded the civil right to acquire and to use property. Despite this ruling, other means have been devised. Chief among such instruments are restrictive covenants over which the Supreme Court has

disclosed itself without jurisdiction. The practice, therefore, has become general. Between 1926 and 1932 twenty Northern cities have had racial clashes over the question of housing and racial segregation.

4. Though civil rights are guaranteed by law to Negroes in eighteen states of the Union, personal privileges are limited for Negroes in every community where the population has grown. Segregation instead of lessening has become more widely distributed and over a larger area.

XII.

SUMMARY

The improvement of the economic and social situations covered in this memorandum is a matter in which the Negro is often found to take the initiative because of his exclusion from consideration at the hands of public authorities. Even today in too many communities public provision is made for the health, education, relief and recreation of whites to the gross neglect of Negroes. In some communities the Negro is prevented from using public institutions which he supports by direct taxes.

These problems are more social than racial. In approaching them no special provisions are asked except as the necessity of discrimination and exclusion has demanded them. The mere fact that rights which inhere in the very nature of citizenship must frequently be reestablished by law indicates the responsibility faced by the Government in this connection.