



Edited by PHILIP S. FONER  
and RONALD L. LEWIS

THE BLACK WORKER, VOLUME V

# The Black Worker from 1900 to 1919

*With a  
Foreword by*

**Keona K.  
Ervin**





THE BLACK WORKER

VOL. 5

THE BLACK WORKER FROM 1900-1919

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- II The Era of the National Labor Union
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- IV The Era of the American Federation of  
Labor and the Railroad Brotherhoods

# **The Black Worker**

A Documentary History from Colonial  
Times to the Present

Volume **V**

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# **The Black Worker From 1900 to 1919**

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Edited by  
Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis



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## FOREWORD

KEONA K. ERVIN

Philip S. Foner, Ronald L. Lewis, and Robert Cvornyek birthed a new generation of Black labor history scholarship with the publication of *The Black Worker: From Colonial Times to the Present*, eight substantial volumes of documentary history. Published over the course of six years, from the late seventies to the mid-eighties, the voluminous compilation of archival materials both anticipated and reflected its moment. Writing at a time of renewed interest in labor history, Black history, and social history, and no doubt deeply influenced by the upsurge of peace, Black freedom, women's, anti-imperialist, and workers' rights movements during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, Foner, Lewis, and Cvornyek helped to ensure that the emergent "history from below" included Black workers. This multi-volume documentary history is as wide as it is deep. It is the product of a massive, Herculean effort that involved compiling and organizing thousands of pages of primary source documents and making sense of the complicated and contradictory stories they tell. In the acknowledgements that open the first volume, Foner and Lewis thank no less than 23 libraries and historical societies across the United States. They, along with Cvornyek, would go on to thank many, many more in each successive book. Theirs was big, synthesis-style, social, political, intellectual, and institutional history that tried to capture as broadly as possible the patterns, trends, and themes that made race and class, and the Black labor experience, in particular, significant, shaping forces in United States history. With its compelling perspective on the salience of Black labor history along with its sheer breadth and depth, *The Black Worker* was and is required reading for students of labor and working-class history and African American history.

During the eras that preceded the publication of *The Black Worker*, a racially exclusive academic enterprise largely ignored the scholarship produced by Black labor scholars, preventing it from reaching a wider public audience. Mainstream (white) labor history's "Black problem" may best be defied as, simply put, erasure. Black workers were largely absent from or mere footnotes in established histories; dominant narratives presented a "house of labor" occupied primarily if not exclusively by white, male, industrial workers. What's more, these histories tended to frame the story of the making of the American working-class as one of American trade unionism, failing to provide a full examination of most unions' widespread practice of racial exclusion and discrimination, much less attempts by Black workers to organize their own labor. Of course, the absence of Black scholarship in mainstream accounts did not mean that Black labor scholars did not exist or were not producing works about Black labor history. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, Black social scientists such as Gertrude McDougald, Elizabeth Haynes, W.E.B. Du Bois, Abram L. Harris, Carter G. Woodson, Robert C. Weaver, and Charles H. Wesley created the field of Black labor studies.<sup>1</sup> But the Black scholars who used social science as a weapon against the racist ideologies of their time—ideologies, we should point out, that found their basis in pseudo-scientific arguments about the nature of Black labor—were largely overlooked, though not without significant resistance. Radical scholars like Foner, who were themselves confronting their own particular forms of marginal status within mainstream academic institutions, became key contributors to the opening of fields to marginalized voices. *The Black Worker* should be credited with playing an influential role in shaking up the "house of labor" such that its established residents had to, in some ways, make room for newcomers.

A deep and sustained examination of the history of Black workers was a fitting choice for the editors of *The Black Worker* because personal and professional commitments pushed them to challenge their field of study. Countering economist John R. Commons's and the Wisconsin School's theory of labor history, Foner and his co-editors argued that the history of the American working class was fundamentally one of class struggle: workers were aware of their oppression by capitalism; they should act in their own economic and political interests as a subjugated class; and trade unionism could be, with its potential fully realized, the most powerful engine of social democracy for the working classes.<sup>2</sup> *The Black Worker*'s editors pushed industrial unionism over craft unionism, political unionism over non-partisanship or bipartisanship, and the fundamental antagonism between labor and capital over shared interest between the two. The historical experiences of African American laborers powerfully articulated the legitimacy of such an approach. In this vein, one of the central arguments that emerges in the volumes is Black workers' militancy. From congressional committee hearings of the late nineteenth century in which Black workers discuss their living and working conditions and make a compelling case for national advocacy, to the labor organizing and economic activism of civil rights workers such as Coretta Scott King, A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin, and Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Black Worker* shows that Black workers' "class consciousness"—to borrow a term in vogue at the time of its publication—was an engine of social transformation. There was a "usable past" of working-class militancy starring American labor's neglected members, they seemed to say.

*The Black Worker* is a documentary history spanning from "colonial times to the present." At the opening of each new volume, the editors rightfully point out labor history's resurgence during the 1970s and count their work as "the first compilation of original materials which encompasses the entire history of Afro-American labor." Foner and Lewis were right to note that, while there had been a renaissance in Black history during the 1960s and 1970s, during which the field moved into the mainstream in unprecedented fashion, studies that explicitly emphasized the history of Black labor and reached similar magnitude as *The Black Worker* had yet to be published. In the introduction that opens the volumes, they state the clearly important and arguably undertheorized fact that "the vast majority of Afro-Americans are, and always have been 'workers'," and as such, were fundamentally central to the shaping of American labor history. An obvious point under even the most hasty of reviews of African American history, yes, but the statement was, in fact, hardly inconsequential. With this observation, Foner and Lewis, and others, issued a challenge to the field of American labor history, noting its glaring oversight of Black workers. One might also say that by pointing out the irony of the preponderance of Black laborers in American history, on the one hand, and the dearth of Black labor history in mainstream accounts, on the other, Foner, Lewis, and Cvornyek were making larger observations about and issuing challenges to the basic assumptions of their field. In other words, the presence of Black laboring bodies into the precious canon of (white) labor history would yield powerful new insights about the history of class in America in the broadest and most illuminating of ways.

Divided in two major parts, with the first four volumes dedicated to antebellum history through the end of the nineteenth century and the second four to the twentieth, *The Black Worker*'s central themes include, most principally, Black workers in industrial slavery and the skilled trades under slavery and following emancipation; free Black workers' experiences in the labor marketplace; Black unionism and Black

workers' role in strikes; race relations in labor unions, particularly white workers' racial hostility and intransigence and white labor leaders' acquiescence to such reactionary behavior; and debates over the at times fractious civil rights–labor coalition following the mid-1950s when the AFL and CIO merged and as the struggle for Black citizenship took a decidedly influential turn. The volumes also include the writings of prominent Black male political and social leaders such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Kelly Miller, Ira De A. Reid, A. Philip Randolph, and Paul Robeson, for example, as well as proceedings from Black gatherings such as the influential Black Convention Movement and the Colored National Labor Union of the nineteenth century along with sizeable compilations of important twentieth-century Black labor organizations. Documents on AFL proceedings, the organization of the CIO, and Communist trade unions, especially during the 1930s, provide a window into the ways that race and trade unionism were inextricably connected throughout the history of American unionism.

Among its greatest strengths, *The Black Worker's* rich collection of primary source materials makes possible the writing of many books on various topics within Black labor history. The history of Black labor during the antebellum period comes alive through articles pulled from local newspapers in, for example, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Louisiana, and South Carolina, and data pulled from field-defining scholars of slavery such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Edmund S. Morgan, and Ulrich B. Phillips. One learns, for instance, about the costs of maintaining industrial enslaved populations from a 1970 article published in *Business History Review* and about the occupations of free people of color in Georgia in 1819 from data pulled from Phillips' *A Documentary History of the American Industrial Society* (1910). Passages from famed abolitionists William Wells Brown and Frederick Douglass recount the experiences of the hiring out system and other firsthand accounts document the processes of escape and the means by which enslaved persons purchased their own freedom.

Records central to grasping collective understandings of work, uplift, and racial progress as defined by Black leaders and ordinary Black workers during the late nineteenth century, when debates about racial politics were especially rich, fill the collection's second volume. Proceedings of the Colored National Labor Union's inaugural national conference, its second and third conventions, and meetings from local and state chapters come from records such as *The Christian Recorder*, *The National Anti-Slavery Standard*, and *The New Era*, while papers from Duke University's Freedmen's Bureau Project, and statistics from the National Bureau of Labor suggest the critical importance of labor to Black organizational and political life. State Black labor conventions in the late nineteenth century tell the story of what occurred in places such as Richmond, New York, Saratoga, and Alabama. Documenting the rise of local Black militancy immediately following the Civil War, the sources depict striking Black workers across the South, including, for instance, the Galveston Strike of 1877 and a strike led by Black washerwomen. Testimony from Black workers about racial terrorism in South Carolina show the centrality of Black labor to the activities of groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, while Black labor radicalism, perhaps defined narrowly as Black socialism or Black Marxism, finds articulation in a section that includes an 1877 speech by abolitionist and socialist Peter H. Clark.

The documents that make up volumes three and four show the centrality of Black unionism to the debates about labor and capital that profoundly shaped national politics in the late nineteenth and turn of the twentieth centuries. They include, for example, the testimony of Black workers to the 1883 Senate Committee on Relations

between Labor and Capital and debates within the Knights of Labor about whether Black workers were influential political participants. The formation of the Knights and Black workers' organizing in the South is told through New Orleans local papers such as the *Picayune* and *Weekly Louisianian*. Also noteworthy are Frederick Douglass' address to the National Convention of Colored Men in Louisville, Kentucky and the work of writers who crafted editorials for the *New York Freeman*, *New York Age*, and *AME Church Review*. The proceedings of Knights of Labor conventions are found in local and national papers, the papers of Knights leader Terrence V. Powderly, and excerpts from his account, *Thirty Years of Labor* (1889). The Colored Farmers' National Alliance, a crucial organization that inserted Black farmers into the white-dominated and racially exclusive or discriminatory "southern alliances" such as the Farmers' alliance and the Populist or People's Party, holds a prominent place.

The fourth volume concerns itself primarily with the robust debate within the AFL over race and the inclusion of Black workers. The documents show just how racially exclusionary were the practices of AFL-affiliated unions. If Gomerism is proven limited in such accounts, then Black worker organizing and militancy, by contrast, is shown to play a decisive role. Key turn-of-the-century strikes, for example, the New Orleans General Strike of 1892 and the Galveston Longshoreman Strike of 1898, are depicted through local and national newspaper coverage. Documents about the United Mine Workers and their unique practice of including Black workers, Black coal miners and the debate around Black strikebreaking, as well as writings by labor leaders Albion W. Tourgee, Ignatius Donnelly, and Du Bois (in this case an excerpt from his important study *The Philadelphia Negro*), round out the list.

The collection aptly documents Black migration, including the Exodusters movement of the late nineteenth century and the better-known Great Migration of the early twentieth century. In this case, the editors draw upon records from the United States Department of Labor and studies included in the *Journal of Negro History*. Congressional committee reports on the East St. Louis Race Riot of 1917, records on the Chicago Race Riot of 1919 taken from the Chicago Commission on Race Relations study, and writings in the NAACP organ *The Crisis* and A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen's *The Messenger* tell the story of the precarity of Black workers' lives during the early twentieth century, but also the ways in which they organized to navigate and oppose it. The work of notable Black labor scholars in addition to Du Bois, finds a home in the middle volumes. For example, George E. Haynes, the first African American man to earn a Ph.D. from Columbia University and Director of Negro Economics for the United States Department of Labor, and Helen B. Irvin, an expert on Black women's labor, have writings that yield social-scientific insight. On the subject of Black women's labor history, volume six includes a rich collection, with studies on Black women industrial workers in Philadelphia from the U.S. Department of Labor and articles written by labor intellectuals including Helen Sayre, Mary Louise Williams, Nora Newsome, and Jean Collier Brown for publications such as the National Urban League's *Opportunity* and *The Messenger*, as well as for the Women's Bureau. The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has voluminous records dedicated to it. Numerous articles from *The Messenger*, *The New Leader*, *The Chicago Defender*, *The Pittsburgh Courier*, and records from the Chicago Historical Society capture the work of the historic Black-led labor union of Pullman Porters.

Volume seven is among the richest of the collection because of the high rates of labor union mobilization and worker self-organization that went on during the 1930s



and 1940s. The Congress of Industrial Organizations and its mass organizing efforts that included Black workers receives considerable attention. The organizing efforts of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, which we learn supported federal anti-lynching legislation, the National Negro Congress, and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union are documented through sources drawn from Black newspapers, Communist publications such as *The Daily Worker*, library archives, the records of civil rights organizations, and the papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt. A. Philip Randolph's March on Washington Movement of the 1940s and the fight over the Fair Employment Practices Committee and the series of AFL conventions in which Randolph introduced multiple anti-discrimination resolutions, reveal organizing efforts in the watershed years of wartime mobilization and the influence of industrial democracy as a widespread political aspiration. The postwar period concerns the organization of the National Negro Labor Council, which played an important role in infusing an emphasis on jobs and economic justice into a national civil rights platform, and the work of the activist Paul Robeson and the illuminating publication *Freedom*, his radical newspaper. The final volume delves deeply into the relation between civil rights and labor during the 1950s and 1960s. A notable collection of speeches by civil rights leaders Vernon E. Jordan, Thurgood Marshall, Martin Luther King, Jr., Roy Wilkins, and Benjamin Hooks at AFL-CIO conventions is also included. It concludes with documentation of the organizing efforts of Black and Brown hospital workers, an effort widely supported by the civil rights movement and the Black Power movement.

We should measure the significance of *The Black Worker*, in part, as a function of the life and times of its principal editor. The author of over 100 published works, Philip Sheldon Foner was an avowed and unapologetic Marxist labor historian.<sup>3</sup> The son of Russian immigrants, Foner earned a bachelor's and master's degree in History at City College and a Ph.D. in History at Columbia University under the direction of Allan Nevins, the famed two-time Pulitzer Prize winner and historian. Foner landed his first professorship at his alma mater. In 1941, City College officials fired Foner, who was one of 50 faculty members to lose their positions, and his brothers, Jack, who also taught in the history department at City College, and Moe, who worked in City College's registrar office. His brother, Henry, a teacher in the city's public schools, was also blacklisted. This was a prelude to a time, during the Cold War, when leftist scholars were routinely charged with Communist conspiracy and subjected to investigations, committee hearings, and expulsions from their places of employment. Although he was banned from mainstream academic institutions for more than 25 years, Foner continued to research, write, and publish during this time. Forty years after the dismissal, City College leaders issued him a formal apology.<sup>4</sup>

Following his stint at City College, Foner became co-owner of Citadel Press, weathering the turbulent McCarthy period as a self-employed writer and editor. After 26 years of being banned from employment in the academic profession, Foner became a professor at Lincoln University in Lincoln, Pennsylvania, a Historically Black College and University, where he worked during the 1960s and 1970s until his retirement. Lincoln's graduates included Black luminaries such as Horace Man Bond, Kwame Nkrumah, Melvin B. Tolson, Langston Hughes, Thurgood Marshall, Gil Scott-Heron, and Black Arts Movement architect Lawrence (Larry) Neal. For a historian of U.S. labor and working-class history and an exile of one the country's most important public higher education institutions, Lincoln University was a welcome home. One notes in Foner's body of work the influence of the Black educational institution, whose students

were undeniably influenced by and participants in the civil rights and Black Power revolution. A 1994 recipient of the New York Labor History Association's lifetime achievement award, Foner was also the author of the ten-volume *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker*, *Women and the American Labor Movement* and *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*. He is widely recognized by historians of American labor as a key thinker in the field.<sup>5</sup>

Although his co-editors' public roles did not match that of their colleague, Lewis's and Cvornyek's contributions and professional accomplishments were no less important. After earning a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Economics at Ohio University and a master's and doctorate in History at the University of Akron, Lewis joined the faculty at the University of Delaware, holding a joint appointment in African American Studies and History. He taught courses in African American history and produced scholarship that became an influential part of an emerging canon on race and labor. Lewis worked at the University of Delaware for the duration of the publication of *The Black Worker*. His 1978 co-edited volume with James E. Newton, *The Other Slaves: Mechanics, Artisans and Craftsmen*, obviously influenced the structure and content of *The Black Worker*'s volume one, which succeeded in complicating the history of Black labor under slavery by focusing on workers laboring outside the plantation regime. Following the publication of *The Black Worker*, Lewis published books on the history of Black coal miners and Appalachian studies and history. Earning his bachelor's in Political Science and History a year after Lewis's arrival to the University of Delaware, Cvornyek received a master's degree in History at Lewis's alma mater, the University of Akron, and later earned a master's of philosophy in History and a doctorate in History at Columbia University. After the publication of *The Black Worker*, Cvornyek published books and articles on African American sports history.

The desire of the editors of *The Black Worker* to promote research in Black labor history was realized. The volumes became a core contribution to the growth and development of the field of Black labor studies. *The Black Worker*, like other publications of its time, was an act of historical recovery that helped usher in and make possible the emergence of new, influential scholarship. It is commonplace for historians of marginalized persons to assert that telling the history of their subjects isn't simply an act of incorporation but is rather one of revision in that conceptual frameworks are rethought. Reflection on the significance of *The Black Worker* shows this incorporation to be no small or insignificant task. Inserting the voices and actions of the marginal into the canon of history was of monumental importance, and was a defining task of the volume editors' generation of envelope-pushing historians and progressive and radical intellectuals. By incorporating new voices into the standard chronology of American labor history, *The Black Worker* helped to push the field to revise its core keywords and conceptual underpinnings.

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## Notes

1. Francille Rusan Wilson, *The Segregated Scholars: Black Social Scientists and the Creation of Black Labor Studies, 1890-1950* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).
2. Melvyn Dubofsky, "Give Us That Old Time Labor History: Philip S. Foner and the American Worker," *Labor History* 26 (1985): 119-120.

## FOREWORD

3. Lawrence Van Gelder, "Philip S. Foner, Labor Historian and Professor, 84," *New York Times*, December 15, 1994.
4. Van Gelder, "Philip S. Foner, Labor Historian and Professor, 84," December 15, 1994; Robin D.G. Kelley, foreword to Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker, 1619–1981* (New York: Haymarket Books, 2017), xiv.
5. Kelley, xiv.





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## PREFACE

This is the fifth volume of the BLACK WORKER: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY FROM COLONIAL TIMES TO THE PRESENT. Recently there has been a surge of interest in working-class history, but this series represents the first compilation of original materials to encompass the entire history of Afro-American labor.

THE BLACK WORKER FROM 1900 TO 1919 begins with an assessment of the economic condition of black workers at the turn of the twentieth century by such astute observers as W. E. B. Du Bois, Kelly Miller, Richard R. Wright, Jr., and others. It examines working conditions in southern factories as well as the industrial status of blacks in the North. Special consideration is given to race relations within the labor movement, particularly the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated unions. Even though racial discrimination abounded within that movement, there are dramatic examples of interracial cooperation, and even unity, within the working class. They are illustrated in Volume V. Several key strikes demonstrate the complexity of racial schisms in the labor movement of that era. The 1908 United Mine Workers of America strike in Alabama, for example, revealed how black and white unity could be overcome by appeals to racism. The New Orleans levee strike of the previous year succeeded, however, because the strikers refused to be swayed by the appeal to racial solidarity over labor solidarity.

The industrial expansion which occurred as a result of World War I drew blacks to the North at the same time that severe poverty, discrimination, and racial violence forced them out of the South. The resultant "Great Migration" began the transformation of Afro-America from a nation of southern farmers to one of northern ghetto-dwellers. This wrenching social process created serious problems for blacks in the labor market and they are explored in Volume V.

This book begins a four-volume chronicle of black working-class life during the twentieth century. As with the preceding volumes, the documents presented are placed into historical context by introductions and notes, and original spellings have been retained except where they obscure the intended meaning.

The editors wish to express their appreciation to those who have been generous in their assistance toward the completion of this book, especially the staffs at the following institutions: American Federation of Labor Archives, Birmingham Public Library, Howard-Tilton Library of Tulane University, Hugh M. Morris Library of the University of Delaware, Library of Congress, National Archives, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and the U.S. Department of Labor Library. Also, we are grateful to Miss Lila Prieb for practicing her craft at the typewriter, and for her dedication to the series. Once again we thank Roslyn Foner for designing these books, and Susan Lewis for enduring the tedious hours of proofreading with good humor. Finally, we are thankful for the material assistance of the Black American Studies Program, and the financial assistance provided by the College of Arts and Science, at the University of Delaware.

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PART I

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE BLACK WORKER  
AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY

ECONOMIC CONDITION OF BLACK WORKERS AT THE  
TURN OF THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY

Contemporary assessments of the Negro's economic status at the turn of the twentieth century vary according to one's commitment to the perennial racial debate over heredity or environment as the key explanation for the depressed economic status of Afro-Americans. The author of an article published in *The Textile World*, a southern organ printed in Boston, demonstrated the prevalence of racial mythology in economic judgments when he claimed that only whites could be employed in cotton mills because "the hum of the machinery" would put blacks to sleep (Doc. 1). Although the prominent white sociologist Jerome Dowd agreed that Negroes were not without "aptness in the mechanical arts," he believed that black operatives produced defective work because of their "constitutional and hereditary physical and moral unfitness for the exactions of manufacturing occupations." Factory work called for "prolonged attention, patience, disciplined temper and social adaptability," and these qualities Negroes did not possess (Doc. 3). Dowd determined that these presumed defects were hereditary.

Blacks perceived the problem differently. "A Negro Woman" complained that too many whites "claim to know us thoroughly," but boast that they have no social intercourse with us. How could their judgment be taken seriously when they perceived Negroes as happy, unthinking creatures? In fact, the sensible Negro was restless, insecure, and almost "panic-stricken about the future" because of the caucasian's commitment to keeping him at the bottom of the economic ladder (Doc. 4). The black social critic Kelly Miller asserted that the weak position of the Negroes in the industrial sector does not argue against his "aptitude or inclination for such vocations. He is the creature, or rather the victim, of circumstances over which he exercises no control," for he is ground beneath the "iron heel of Aryan competition." White employers preferred employees of the same race when they were available. Therefore, blacks were hired only as a last resort (Doc. 6).

Even among Afro-Americans, however, there was wide-ranging debate regarding the appropriate strategy for improving the life of black workers. Many agreed with Booker T. Washington that racial uplift had to be an internal development achieved through training and industrial education. The strategy was based on the premise that if blacks were in possession of the requisite skills, a rational economic system could not long ignore them. Consequently, they denounced prejudice in the market place as a retrogressive barrier to the optimal operation of the system. As one self-help advocate argued, whites could not "legislate into us" the attitudes and skills required to succeed in the industrial world, but they should allow blacks a "free hand, a fair field, and a cordial God-speed" (Doc. 9).

Some pointed to the decline of black representation in menial jobs in the northern cities as evidence of occupational progress. In 1905 one observer of black workers in Chicago claimed that these jobs were going to new immigrants, and blacks were assuming a variety of occupations which "they never thought of doing twenty years ago. . . , there are no Negro beggars in our streets" (Doc. 10). But Ida B. Wells-Barnett (see note 16) drew a different conclusion about black employment in Chicago when she complained that white employers rejected black workers until by 1911 the city was filled with unemployed Negroes (Doc. 14). Observers in other cities agreed. In Boston, 73 per cent of black men were employed in unskilled, low-paying, and thus "inferior occupations" (Doc. 11). Similarly, in New York, blacks were losing previously Negro jobs, such as waiting on tables, to Irish, German, and Italian immigrants. "There are no colored artisans in New York," one writer claimed in *Harper's Weekly*, "the trades unions would prevent any such from receiving employment" (Doc. 12). William Bulkley, a black principal in New York, agreed that the unions had squeezed out skilled artisans in New York by barring membership and apprenticeship training to those of African descent (Doc. 13). Scholars, such as W. E. B. DuBois, found very few black craftsmen in the North, where they were politically freer, whereas, in the South he found a significant number of black artisans, particularly in crafts where they were traditionally employed (Doc. 15-22).

## 1. THE SOUTH

## LABOR QUESTION IN THE SOUTH

For idyllic relations between employer and employed, look to the South. That is the gist of an article in *The Textile World* (Boston) by Mr. Cuyler Smith, a Southern cotton manufacturer. No "wage slavery," no "class consciousness," seems to exist there, and all attempts of "labor leaders" to organize unions and start labor wars seem to have failed. Mr. Smith tells the reason for this as follows:

"The operatives of the new cotton-factories are the children and grandchildren of the men who fought in the Civil War, now gray veterans who spend the evening of their lives in the cottage chimney corners, oracles and Nestors for all the young folks gone up to town to handle the spinning-frame and loom.

"No sooner is a mill company organized by the progressive capitalists of the village than the old soldier, hearing the good news bawled over the fence by a passing neighbor, back from a day's trading in town, calls up his family and announces his intention of journeying 'ter town termorrer, an' I reckon the colonel will give yer er chanst ter help him run his factory.'

"The old man does go to the colonel, the same man who led him and his friends on the great battle-fields of that regrettable struggle. He takes his wealthy friend aside and bespeaks his 'takin' them chillun, ever one uv 'em, in yer new mill. Me and my ole woman need the support, Colonel, an' the chillun will sho' work yer way, sah, if yer'll only give um er chanst.'

"The mill is built, and the old man brings the hands to live in the clean, brightly painted cottage on the hill to begin a new life where all the family may work and earn more clear money in one month than they have made in twelve months on the cotton farm.

"The old man goes home to his cabin, but the young people are never away from his conservative influence, for Saturday night sees them going out for Sunday at the old home. Then all questions, especially the one now coming to the front, 'Shall we join a labor union?' are discussed. These old men advise against the joining of a union. Monday the operatives are at the mill, and turned a deaf ear to the organizer who was eagerly listened to last week. It is a combination of all these peculiar conditions that makes the growth of labor unions among Southern cotton-mill workers slow growth."

Another factor that makes for industrial peace in the new manufacturing South is the fact that the stock in the cotton-mills is owned by the local bankers, merchants, and farmers, large and small, so that "an operative is usually a cousin of some stockholder." The managers of the mills, too, feel a personal interest in the employees. Says Mr. Smith:

"One Georgian, who has made a large fortune by manufacturing, said, looking at his operatives passing out from the mill, 'I enjoy feeding and clothing these people more than all the money I have made.' Another said to me, 'I am taking all my operatives picnicking Saturday and footing the bills myself.' This man gives his young help half an hour off twice a day to play in the grove surrounding that mill.

"Many mills, like those at Pelzer and Piedmont, S.C., provided free schools and enforce attendance. These are the two largest Southern mills. House rent is usually gratis, or at the rate of 50 cents per room a month. Fuel is at a nominal cost, and not necessary, save for cooking, exceeding ninety days a year."

Wages, Mr. Smith says, are about ten per cent lower than in the East,

and the hours are longer, but "the operatives have so vastly improved their condition by working in the mill, not on the farm, that they are little inclined to ask for shorter hours or increased wages. They are the most uniformly contented and prosperous class in the South." The factory at High Shoals, for example, has been in operation forty years with labor drawn from the vicinity, and "no strike has ever occurred, not even a misunderstanding arisen." Trion factory in Northern Georgia, established by the Allgood family, affords another instance. It has been running fifty-five years, and "no strike, friction of any kind, or demand for change of hours or pay ever occurred at this large mill." Practically all the operatives are white, the blacks acting as servants in the operatives' households or draymen at the mill. (Some leaders among the Southern blacks have organized cotton-mills to be operated by negro labor, but this interesting phase of the Southern industrial situation is still in the experimental stage). It is Mr. Smith's opinion that "the negroes are going to return to farming when the whites come to the mill." He adds: "A negro can't work in a mill. The hum of the machinery would put him to sleep, and if he even got a dollar ahead he would loaf a week."

*The Literary Digest*, 21 (December 22, 1900):763-64.

## 2. AFTER ALL--THE CAUSES

The availability and value of colored labor in factories in the South have been frequently called in question. The manager of the Vesta cotton mill, Charleston, S.C., is, in this case, a competent witness. Captain Montgomery admits the failure of his Negro labor experiment, but ascribes it rather to local conditions than to any inherent defects in Negro character.

He is very clear and decisive in his statement that, while the public may call the Negro as a mill operative a failure, he does not believe it. He believes that a cotton mill located in a rural district, with tenements owned and controlled by the company, could be successfully operated with colored labor. Many Negro operatives in all departments of the Vesta mill proved themselves quite as efficient as white workers. The trucking business around Charleston interfered with mill labor. In the bean, and strawberry seasons, pickers were in great demand, and at higher wages than paid by the mills. Although these seasons are short, Negroes like those with regular jobs at the Vesta sought the fields and bigger pay.

Captain Montgomery's experience was that under local conditions at Charleston, it was quite as difficult to keep a white force as a Negro force steadily at work. Out of a Negro contingent of between 400 and 500, 200 were reliable. Experience had shown that a considerable number of white operatives were quite as unreliable as colored workers. The number of white unreliable was not indeed, so large, but still too ample for healthy working conditions.

*The Colored American*, March 9, 1901.

## 3. NEGRO LABOR IN FACTORIES

By Jerome Dowd<sup>1</sup>

About 1815 a ship arrived at Charleston, S.C., freighted with African slaves. Colonel Ephraim Brevard, who then conducted an iron foundry in Lincoln county, N.C., hearing of the arrival of this ship, proceeded to Charleston on horseback, followed by one of his wagons, and purchased and brought home a load of Negro boys. These boys were mere savages. They knew no English. They would kill and eat a pig without cleaning or cooking it. They fought like animals over their meals. It was some weeks before they



could be persuaded to use a plate or knife and fork. In a short time, however, they adopted civilized habits and became expert molders, and skilled in general mechanical work.

These facts, quoted from an article by Mr. B. F. McDowell in the *Charlotte Observer*, show the natural adaptability of the Negro and the rapidity with which he learns a trade. In my opinion there is no doubt about the Negro's aptness in the mechanical arts. In iron, tobacco, fertilizer, cotton and other manufacturing industries the Negro has fully demonstrated his capacity to do good work. Negro operatives have been employed for several years in a silk factory at Fayetteville, N.C., and the superintendent testifies that they are thoroughly competent. I have often watched the Negroes working in tobacco factories and have wondered at their deftness and general cleverness. Some of them are marvelously swift and expert. I have also seen the operatives in the Coleman cotton factory at Concord, N.C., and they seemed to be just as capable as the white help in other factories. The superintendent, who has had experience in cotton mills in Massachusetts, says that the Negro operative can do, if he has a mind to, just as good work and turn out just as good a product as the white operative.

Yet, from the standpoint of the interest of both the operatives and the capitalists, Negro labor has not been altogether satisfactory. Notwithstanding the skill of the Negro, there is something about his work that is deficient, giving rise to a prejudice against him for that sort of labor.

What is the defect? I think that it consists in constitutional and hereditary physical and moral unfitness for the exactions of manufacturing occupations.

The wear and tear of factory life tells on the most robust physique and is especially injurious to the lungs. It is well known that consumption is a disease peculiarly fatal to all of the dark races living in the temperate zone. This and other diseases peculiar to the Negro would necessitate frequent changes in the working force of a factory in which Negroes worked, and would also cause frequent absence from work. In the next place factory labor requires the exercise of moral qualities which are hardly sufficiently developed in the most civilized races. It requires men and women who lead stable lives and who can be depended upon to remain long in one community, to be at the post of duty every day in the week, to respond promptly to every blow of the whistle. Factory work requires prolonged attention, patience, disciplined temper and social adaptability. Again, the crowded nature of a factory community, and the necessity for relaxation after the working hours are over, beset the operatives with temptations and lead to forms of dissipation which the strongest character finds some difficulty in withstanding. Factory life has been a terrible demoralization to the white race and I sometimes doubt whether all the blessings of machinery and cheap goods overbalance the physical and moral damage which the factory has wrought.

The failure of the cotton mill at Charleston, which employed Negro labor, was due chiefly to the difficulty of getting a steady and permanent force of operatives. Charleston is a gay place, where street parades, festivals, dances, theatres, bar-rooms and other things tempt the Negro to squander his time and money; and similar temptations are found, more or less, in every manufacturing community. The Negro factory operative is inclined to work a few days of the week and idle a few. Chafing under the confinement, and prone to violent reactions from the day's restraints, at night he carouses, debauches, keeps late hours and the next day is unfit for work, drowsy and inattentive. He makes many excuses to get a few hours off, pleading that his grandfather, or his aunt has died and that he must attend the funeral.

The superintendent of a large tobacco factory writes me that the Negro "has skill in his work, but don't care. He can live on a very little and don't care to work only for enough to get bread." A superintendent of a hosiery mill writes me that some of the Negroes "are skillful, but have little care about them. Their chief drawback is from their natural disposition to be careless, unconcerned, and indolent, and some of them are much inclined to liquors. As factory hands they are unreliable. The work is too exacting and confining and too regular for them."

Work in manufacturing lines is becoming more and more intensive and requires for success, men who are not only skilled but who live an orderly life and have acquired special traits of character. Character is coming to be the paramount factor of success in all lines of activity. The chief difference between races, nations and individuals is in character, rather than in intellect. The Greeks were mighty in intellect, but they succumbed to the corruptions of the flesh. Even the French people acknowledge their own deficiency in ability to give the prolonged attention and to exercise the patience and self-restraint so necessary to factory life; and hence I do not hesitate to say that the Negro has not yet reached the stage of development which fits him for manufacturing occupations. This statement should not shock the most optimistic of the Negro race, for the reason that after a century of trial the white man is hardly yet qualified for such work.

The white man has developed through several economic stages; first, through the fishing and hunting stages, second, the pastoral, third, the agricultural, and he is now just entering the stage of manufacturing. The last stage is the highest and most difficult in which to live, requiring an intellectual and moral attainment which the highest race of mankind has certainly not fully reached.

One of the concomitants of the manufacturing era is a congested population. In order that people may survive who are so congested, it is necessary that they acquire sanitary habits. Knowing the past history of the Negro and the length of time which it required for the white race to become accustomed to sanitary living, it is not surprising to find that the death rate of the Negroes in all of our large cities is very high.

At the present time, therefore, I regard the employment of Negroes in factories as a step in the wrong direction. Even if it were profitable to the capitalists, it would be injurious to the wage-earners. For some years to come it should be the aim of the leaders of the Negro race to direct the energies of their fellows into those occupations which belong to the agricultural stage. The tilling of the soil and the mechanical arts connected therewith, are not only best for the Negro but also for the great majority of white people. There is a moral stamina that comes from farming and village life, which is necessary as a foundation for the more intensive labor and the more demoralizing atmosphere of the factory.

The great problem for the Negro, as for all races of men, is the building of character. It is only the moral race that makes progress. Teaching the Negro to read and write is not solving the problem of his destiny. He must be established in those occupations which correspond to his stage of development. With the proper industrial footing, he cannot have too much literary or other knowledge. The greatest mistake that the Negro has made in the past (a mistake made by most people) has been the attempt to start at the top instead of at the bottom. I think that the avenues should be kept open for any exceptionally endowed Negro to reach the very summit of human attainment, but for the great mass of the race, the most rapid lines of advance lie in the direction of agricultural pursuits.

*The Southern Workman*, 30 (November, 1902): 588-90.

#### 4. A NEGRO WOMAN SPEAKS, 1902

I am a colored woman, wife and mother. I have lived all my life in the South, and have often thought what a peculiar fact it is that the more ignorant the Southern whites are of us the more vehement they are in their denunciation of us. They boast that they have little intercourse with us, never see us in our homes, churches or places of amusement, but still they know us thoroughly.

They also admit that they know us in no capacity except as servants, yet they say that we are at our best in that single capacity. What philosophers they are! The Southerners saw we Negroes are a happy, laughing set of people, with no thought of tomorrow. How mistaken they are! The educated,

thinking Negro is just the opposite. There is a feeling of unrest, insecurity, almost panic among the best class of Negroes in the South. In our homes, in our churches, wherever two or three are gathered together, there is a discussion of what is best to do. Must we remain in the South or go elsewhere? Where can we go to feel that security which other people feel? Is it best to go in great numbers or only in several families? These and many other things are discussed over and over.

People who have security in their homes, whose children can go on the street unmolested, whose wives and daughters are treated as women, cannot, perhaps, sympathize with the Southern Negro's anxieties and complaints. I ask forbearance of such people. . . .

I know of houses occupied by poor Negroes in which a respectable farmer would not keep his cattle. It is impossible for them to rent elsewhere. All Southern real estate agents have "white property" and "colored property." In one of the largest Southern cities there is a colored minister, a graduate of Harvard, whose wife is an educated, Christian woman, who lived for weeks in a tumble-down rookery because he could neither rent nor buy in a respectable locality.

Many colored women who wash, iron, scrub, cook or sew all the week to help pay the rent for these miserable hovels and help fill the many small mouths, would deny themselves some of the necessities of life if they could take their little children and teething babies on the cars to the parks of a Sunday afternoon and sit under the trees, enjoy the cool breezes and breathe God's pure air for only two or three hours; but this is denied them. Some of the parks have signs, "No Negroes allowed on these grounds except as servants." Pitiful, pitiful customs and laws that make war on women and babes! There is no wonder that we die; the wonder is that we persist in living.

Fourteen years ago I had just married. My husband had saved sufficient money to buy a small home. On account of our limited means we went to the suburbs, on unpaved streets, to look for a home, only asking for a high, healthy locality. Some real estate agents were "sorry, but had nothing to suit," some had "just the thing," but we discovered on investigation that they had "just the thing" for an unhealthy pigsty. Others had no "colored property." One agent said that he had what we wanted, but we should have to go to see the lot after dark, or walk by and give the place a casual look; for, he said, "all the white people in the neighborhood would be down on me." Finally we bought this lot. When the house was being built we went to see it. Consternation reigned. We had ruined this neighborhood of poor people; poor as we, poorer in manners at least. The people who lived next door received the sympathy of their friends. When we walked on the street (there were no sidewalks) we were embarrassed by the stare of many unfriendly eyes.

Two years passed before a single woman spoke to me, and only then because I helped one of them when a little sudden trouble came to her. Such was the reception, I a happy young woman, just married, received from people among whom I wanted to make a home. Fourteen years have now passed, four children have been born to us, and one has died in this same home, among these same neighbors. Although the neighbors speak to us, and occasionally one will send a child to borrow the morning's paper or ask the loan of a pattern, not one woman has ever been inside of my house, not even at the times when a woman would doubly appreciate the slightest attention of a neighbor.

The Southerner boasts that he is our friend; he educates our children, he pays us for work and is most noble and generous to us. Did not the Negro by his labor for over three hundred years to help to educate the white man's children? Is thirty equal to three hundred? Does a white man deserve praise for paying a black man for his work?

The Southerner also claims that the Negro get justice. Not long ago a Negro man was cursed and struck in the face by an electric car conductor. The Negro knocked the conductor down and although it was clearly proven in a court of "justice" that the conductor was in the wrong the Negro had to pay a fine of \$10. The judge told him "I fine you that much to teach you that you must respect white folks." The conductor was acquitted. "Most noble judge! A second Daniel!" This is the South's idea of justice.<sup>2</sup>

A noble man, who has established rescue homes for fallen women all over the country, visited a Southern city. The women of the city were invited to meet him in one of the churches. The fallen women were especially invited and both good and bad went. They sat wherever they could find a seat, so long as their faces were white; but I, a respectable married woman, was asked to sit apart. A colored woman, however respectable, is lower than the white prostitute. The Southern white woman will declare that no Negro women are virtuous, yet she places her innocent children in their care. . . .

The Southerner says "the Negro must keep in his place." That means the particular place the white man says is his. . . . A self-respecting colored man who does not cringe but walks erect, supports his family, educates his children, and by example and precept teaches them that God made all men equal, is called a "dangerous Negro;" "he is too smart;" "he wants to be white and act like white people." Now we are told that the Negro has the worst traits of the whole human family and the Southern white man the best; but we must not profit by his example or we are regarded as "dangerous Negroes."

White agents and other chance visitors who come into our homes ask questions that we must not dare ask their wives. They express surprise that our children have clean faces and that their hair is combed. You cannot insult a colored woman, you know. . . .

There are aristocrats in crime, in poverty and in misfortune in the South. The white criminal cannot think of eating or sleeping in the same part of the penitentiary with the Negro criminal. The white pauper is just as exclusive; and although the blind cannot see color, nor the insane care about it, they must be kept separate, at great extra expense. Lastly, the dead white man's bones must not be contaminated with the dead black man's.

. . . . Whenever a crime is committed, in the South the policemen look for the Negro in the case. A white man with face and hands blackened can commit any crime in the calendar. The first friendly stream soon washes away his guilt and he is ready to join in the hunt to lynch the "big, black burly brute." When a white man in the South does commit a crime, that is simply one white man gone wrong. If his crime is especially brutal he is a freak or temporarily insane. If one low, ignorant black wretch commits a crime, that is different. All of us must bear his guilt. A young white boy's badness is simply the overflowing of young animal spirits; the black boy's badness is badness, pure and simple. . . .

When we were shouting for Dewey, Sampson, Schley and Hobson, and were on tiptoe to touch the hem of their garments, we were delighted to know that some of our Spanish-American heroes were coming where we could get a glimpse of them. Had not black men helped in a small way to give them their honors? In the cities of the South, where these heroes went, the white school children were assembled, flags were waved, flowers strewn, speeches made, and "My Country, 'tis of Thee, Sweet Land of Liberty," was sung. Our children who need to be taught so much, were not assembled, their hands waved no flags, they threw no flowers, heard no thrilling speech, sang no song of their country. And this is the South's idea of justice. Is it surprising that feeling grows more bitter, when the white mother teaches her boy to hate my boy, not because he is mean, but because his skin is dark? I have seen very small white children hang their black dolls. It is not the child's fault, he is simply an apt pupil.

Someone will at last arise who will champion our cause and compel the world to see that we deserve justice; as other heroes compelled it to see that we deserved freedom.

## 5. NEGROES OF FARMVILLE, VIRGINIA

## OCCUPATIONS, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS

Occupations	10-15 years	16-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41 yrs. or over	Age un- known	Total
<u>MALES</u>							
Apprentices.....	2	2	1	.....	.....	.....	5
Baker.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
Barbers.....	1	1	1	1	1	.....	5
Blacksmiths.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	2
Brakeman.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Bricklayers and plasterers.....	.....	.....	.....	2	1	.....	3
Brickmakers.....	1	6	6	.....	1	.....	14
Butchers.....	.....	.....	2	.....	1	.....	3
Cabinetmaker.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Canning factory employee.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1
Carpenters.....	.....	.....	1	2	11	.....	14
Clergymen.....	.....	.....	.....	2	4	.....	6
Clerk, Railway Mail Service.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
Coachmen.....	.....	.....	1	1	.....	.....	2
Coopers.....	.....	.....	.....	1	3	.....	4
Domestic servants...	7	2	4	1	2	.....	16
Farm laborers.....	1	1	1	1	9	.....	13
Farmers.....	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	2
Firemen, stationary engine.....	1	.....	.....	2	.....	.....	3
Hostlers.....	.....	.....	2	2	1	.....	5
Janitors.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	.....	3
Laborers.....	11	9	9	4	25	.....	58
Laundry proprietor..	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
Mechanics, wood turning.....	1	.....	2	5	2	.....	10
Merchant, wood.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Merchant, grocery...	.....	.....	1	3	1	.....	5
Painters.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	.....	3
Peddlers, candy, etc..	.....	.....	2	.....	2	.....	4
Porters.....	1	5	1	2	8	.....	17
Restaurant keepers..	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	2
Sawmill employees...	.....	1	1	1	.....	.....	3
Silversmith and clock repairer....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Shoemakers and repairers.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	4	.....	4
Teacher.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	1
Teamsters.....	.....	1	1	2	7	.....	11
Tobacco factory employees.....	19	35	39	9	25	1	128
Waiters.....	.....	2	1	.....	.....	1	4
Wheelwright.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Not reported.....	4	.....	1	.....	3	2	10
At home.....	14	3	2	1	5	.....	25
At school (a).....	58	4	2	1	.....	.....	65
Total males.....	122	74	81	47	131	4	459

<sup>a</sup>Children who do nothing but attend school. Many of the children work at service or in the tobacco factories a part of the year and also attend school. Such children are here enumerated under their occupations, and not as school children.

## OCCUPATIONS, BY SEX AND AGE PERIODS--Concluded

Occupations	10-15 years	16-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years	41 yrs. or over	Age un- known	Total
<u>FEMALES</u>							
Bookkeeper.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	1
Canning factory employee.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Day workers.....	4	11	9	5	4	.....	33
Day workers and housewives.....	.....	1	24	28	61	.....	114
Domestic servants...	6	18	27	6	8	.....	65
Merchants, grocery...	.....	.....	1	1	.....	.....	2
Nurses.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	2
Public cooks.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1	.....	2
Restaurant keeper...	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1
Seamstresses and housewives.....	.....	1	.....	4	5	.....	10
Teachers.....	.....	6	8	1	.....	.....	15
Tobacco factory employees.....	1	8	4	3	7	.....	23
Tobacco and canning factory employees and housewives....	.....	2	2	8	11	.....	23
Not reported.....	2	1	.....	.....	.....	1	4
Housewives.....	.....	3	20	15	29	.....	67
At home.....	16	6	.....	.....	12	.....	34
At school (a).....	54	14	.....	.....	.....	.....	68
Total females....	83	71	96	72	142	1	465
Total males and females.....	205	145	177	119	273	5	924

<sup>a</sup>Children who do nothing but attend school. Many of the children work at service or in the tobacco factories a part of the year and also attend school. Such children are here enumerated under their occupations, and not as school children.

## PER CENT OF NEGROES OF FARMVILLE AND OF TOTAL POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES AT WORK, ENGAGED IN EACH CLASS OF GAINFUL OCCUPATIONS

[The figures for Farmville are from schedules; those for the United States are from the census of 1890.]

Classes of occupations	Negroes of Farmville			Per cent	Per cent in the United States
	Males	Females	Total		
Agriculture.....	15	.....	15	2.30	39.65
Professional service.....	7	15	22	3.38	4.15
Domestic and personal service	91	217	308	47.31	19.18
Trade and transportation....	44	3	47	7.22	14.63
Total.....	359	292	651	100.00	100.00

Department of Labor *Bulletin No. 14*, January 1898, W. E. B. DuBois, "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia, a Local Study," pp. 15,16. [adapted by the editors.]

## 6. THE CITY NEGRO:

Industrial Status<sup>4</sup>

Kelly Miller

[Prof. Millér's first article in his study of "The City Negro" appeared in our April issue. Mr. Miller says that the urban Negro constitutes a larger proportion of the race than is generally supposed, and proceeds to show, by tables made up from the last census, how the race is distributed in the various cities of the United States. The most striking phenomenon presented by the city Negro population he declares to be the predominance of the female element. Ed.]

It was the desire of the writer to include in this article the data furnished by the twelfth census, but unfortunately this phase of the work will not be taken up by the Census Bureau for some time to come. Rather than interrupt the series on "The City Negro," it seemed best to proceed with the data of ten years ago. This course is adopted with less hesitation because it is confidently believed that the forthcoming information will not show any radical change in the Negro's industrial status. It is easily perceivable also that the value of an article of this nature consists rather in the general truth conveyed than in a microscopic presentation of facts.

In any well-regulated community the inhabitants will distribute themselves among the various trades and occupations along the lines of the needs of the community, and according to individual opportunity, aptitude or inclination. The position of the Negro in the industrial world, however, is an anomalous one. The fact that he does not figure in the higher lines of industrial activity by no means argues that he has no aptitude or inclination for such vocations. He is the creature, or rather the victim, of circumstances over which he exercises no control. In the cities, at least, he is ground beneath the iron heel of Aryan competition.

This is the age of combination, both of capital and labor. What the trusts are to capital, trades unions are to labor. This is truly the age in which the individual withers and the "combine" is more and more. Consolidation among whites always proves inimical to the interests of the Negro. The black workman is accorded a fair chance only in those localities where labor unions do not dominate. These trades unions do not treat with members of the colored race on the basis of individual merit, but wherever it is possible to do so, they simplify the situation by placing the whole race on the black list. They will not admit the Negro, in large numbers, on equal terms of rivalry. If any industrial fact is clearly demonstrated in our history, it is that white labor avoids open rivalry with black labor. Many poor whites of the South, rather than compete with the Negro workman before the war, betook themselves to the woods and pine thickets, where they dwelt in idleness and poverty, constituting that worthless class known far and wide as "poor white trash." Indeed, if we may accept the implication involved in the term "clay eater," some of them preferred to eat the earth itself rather than cultivate it after the manner of the black competitor. The fierce political struggles incident to the development of the Western States grew out of the competition of slave and free labor. But in the last analysis it will be found that even there color was a controlling factor. In all of our larger cities white men are driving Negroes out of their wonted employments. This is not so much, I am persuaded, because the Negro is incompetent, as it is an exemplification of the same old story of the driving out of the weak. When the stronger races have pressed against the limits of subsistence in their own area, they have always overrun the territory of their weaker neighbors. This is indeed the underlying spirit in the expansion movement which is just now so rife in all the powerful peoples of the earth. The Chinese are excluded from industrial competition, avowedly on the ground that they have too much skill, thrift and economy. It is thinly disguised argument that excludes the Negro because of a lack of industrial virtues and at the same time shuts out the Mongolian because of an excess of

them. It is too painfully plain that the same motive lies at the bottom of both cases. This is one way in which Aryan rivalry asserts itself. Negroes are ruthlessly shut out from vocations where no complaint has ever been lodged against their efficiency. It is a notorious fact that in all the large centres of population the positions of coachmen, waiters and barbers are being filled by white men. The aptitude and competence of the colored waiter has never been questioned; white men do not make more courteous, safe or reliable coachmen; while the whole world acknowledges that the Negro is an expert with the razor.<sup>5</sup>

All will agree that under present circumstances the Negro cannot compete with the Anglo-Saxon for political domination; he is equally unable to maintain the contest for industrial supremacy where the Aryan exerts himself to the utmost. The stronghold of the Negro hitherto has been his ability to do crude work along lines where the white man did not care to compete; but he has not been able to stand the onward march of skilled labor and machinery. As the population increases and as the pressure upon the several vocations becomes stronger, this industrial intolerance will bear more and more hardly upon the Negro. He must beware lest he be eliminated from the industrial equation by exclusion. Industrial rivalry is fierce and brutal. Kindness is not characteristic of sharp competition. It is needless to expect that the white man is going to surrender the advantage which his color confers and admit the Negro on equal terms. Human nature is not yet sufficiently sanctified for such sublime acts of self-surrender. This is indeed a dark picture, and one will say that such doleful descriptions smack of the wail of the pessimist. But what advantage is there in gain-saying the truth? The pessimism of truth is better than the optimism of falsehood. Let us see to what extent Negroes are employed in our largest cities.

*Negroes engaged in gainful pursuits*

City	Total Population	Wage Earners	
		Male	Female
Atlanta.....	28,117	7,916	6,857
Baltimore.....	67,296	19,342	18,676
Charleston.....	31,036	8,777	7,068
Chicago.....	14,870	7,025	1,946
Louisville.....	28,672	9,236	6,281
Memphis.....	28,729	7,161	6,010
Nashville.....	29,395	8,100	6,509
New Orleans.....	64,663	17,760	12,880
Philadelphia.....	40,374	13,650	9,258
Richmond.....	32,254	8,590	8,231
St. Louis.....	27,066	9,137	4,326
Washington.....	75,697	21,331	18,773

This table reveals the fact that about one half the colored race in the large cities are engaged in gainful occupations. The most striking lesson, however, that this table reveals is the large number of women who figure in the industrial equation. When we take into account that housewives who do not receive stipulated wages are not included in this list, it will be clearly seen what an important factor the women form in the industrial life of the city Negro. The colored woman has a much more certain and assured industrial status in the cities than the Negro man.

The eleventh census listed fifty occupations for men and twenty-five for women. Of these, colored men were confined largely to three or four lines of unskilled or menial pursuits while colored women were limited almost exclusively to domestic service and "taking in washing."



*Occupations of Negroes*

City	All Occupations	MEN		Teamsters Draymen Etc.
		Laborers	Servants	
Atlanta.....	7,916	2,357	1,134	775
Baltimore.....	19,342	5,498	3,507	2,586
Boston.....	3,614	498	1,254	88
Charleston.....	8,777	2,610	852	503
Chicago.....	7,025	850	3,323	234
Louisville.....	9,236	3,123	1,356	1,232
Memphis.....	7,101	1,143	990	1,052
Nashville.....	8,100	2,566	1,017	803
New Orleans.....	15,051	7,455	1,374	1,096
Philadelphia.....	13,650	3,541	3,387	1,224
Richmond.....	8,590	2,248	1,100	805
St. Louis.....	9,137	2,248	1,542	921
Washington.....	21,331	7,528	3,841	351

*Occupations of Negroes*

City	All Occupations	WOMEN	
		Servants	Laundresses
Atlanta.....	6,857	3,310	2,986
Baltimore.....	18,676	10,752	6,191
Boston.....	1,453	819	316
Chicago.....	1,946	1,114	386
Louisville.....	6,281	3,229	2,455
Memphis.....	6,010	2,973	2,783
Nashville.....	6,509	3,372	2,465
New Orleans.....	12,880	5,315	4,635
Philadelphia.....	9,258	6,848	960
Richmond.....	8,238	4,500	2,086
St. Louis.....	4,326	1,800	2,043
Washington.....	18,773	10,671	5,403

These figures carry their own comment. The men are found mainly in those pursuits which are placed at the bottom of the industrial ladder. Of course there are Negroes scattered among the other forty-seven occupations, but as a general thing there are not enough in any one pursuit to affect materially the general equation. When we consider the vocations followed by colored women the situation is much simplified. They are confined almost wholly to domestic and laundry service. In Baltimore there were 16,943 colored women in these two pursuits, against 1,733 in all other lines of gainful work. In Washington there were 16,074 colored servants and washer-women and only 2,699 such wage-earners in the other twenty-three listed pursuits. Each of these cities has an excess of something like 10,000 colored women. This makes it imperative that they should engage in remunerative work. Domestic service, including washing, is about the only field that is open to them. No human prevision can foresee the time when this condition will be materially different. These people should be made competent and efficient along the lines of work which inevitably devolves upon them. Any service can be dignified by putting intelligence, skill and character into it.

*Negroes employed in typical mechanical trades*

City	Carpenters	Brick Masons	Painters
Atlanta	503	247	74
Charleston	681	224	171
Boston	23	17	18
Baltimore	85	87	37
Philadelphia	61	42	28
Washington	316	159	141

It will be seen that the number of Negroes in the mechanical pursuits is quite considerable in the South, but fades away to the vanishing point as we proceed towards the North. We hear it said also that even in the South the Negro mechanic is fast giving way to the white workman. The forthcoming census will furnish data for an interesting study as to the growth or decline of the Negro workman along lines of higher mechanical skill.

The Negro has hardly as yet entered upon such pursuits as merchant, dealer and pedler, which is perhaps the chief business of the city. Indications are not wanting, however, to show that there has recently been considerable activity in this direction. The business league recently organized by Mr. Booker Washington gives promise of being of as great value to the city Negro as his more famous industrial policy is calculated to benefit the rural masses.<sup>6</sup>

*Negro merchants, dealers, etc.*

City		City	
Atlanta	114	Memphis	87
Charleston	188	Philadelphia	249
Baltimore	487	Boston	102
Chicago	77	Washington	500

Dressmaking and needlework afford an opening in which not a few colored women are engaged. This is the largest independent or semi-independent pursuit open to them. They are far more numerous than the school teachers, a class of which we hear a great deal.

*Dressmakers, seamstresses, school teachers*

City	Dressmakers, Seamstresses, Etc.	School Teachers
Atlanta	988	106
Charleston	77	1322
New Orleans	119	579
Memphis	84	341
St. Louis	96	147
Washington	1411	287
Baltimore	1025	108
Philadelphia	1394	326
Boston	142	6

I have so far dealt with the masses rather than with the individual exceptions who under any circumstances will make their way to positions of influence and honor. In all of the large centers there is a goodly sprinkling of Negroes known as men of standing and substance and dignified occupations. But the industrial status of a people is determined by the lowest common multiple rather than the highest common factor. In Baltimore there were 30,000 Negroes engaged in service and unskilled labor against a few hundred following independent pursuits. In Washington there were 16,000 colored

women in domestic service, and 287 school teachers. It is the industrial condition of the masses with which we are vitally concerned. The problem weighs heavily upon us.

Relief may be brought about through the following agencies:

1. Develop in the masses a sense of thoroughness and efficiency in whatever work they many find to do. Intelligence and character will count as surely in the lowest as in the highest forms of service.

2. The schools should impart such forms of industrial and domestic knowledge as the pupils will inevitably need in their future vocations. An adequate educational program to meet this situation is yet to be worked out in our city schools.

3. Moral appeal must be made to the intolerant spirit of the white man which denies the Negro an equal chance to work. Perhaps he will admit the plea.

4. Any movement looking to the withdrawal of surplus numbers from the cities to the country where they might become useful and willing agricultural workers should be encouraged. The Hart Farm School near Washington, D.C., is the pioneer in a movement which promises large results towards the solution of city problems.

5. The Negro must take the industrial initiative. Any people can make opportunity for themselves by catering to their own needs. In places of five thousand or more Negroes, they should conduct and patronize their own stores and co-operative enterprises.

*The Southern Workman*, 30 (June, 1903):340-45.

#### 7. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NASHVILLE, TENN., 1904

1. The first test related to the wage-earning employment of the negro. The information supplied by the city directory, indicating the distribution among certain general lines of employment, was supplimented by personal inquiries to ascertain the wages earned and the steadiness of employment. The following table sets forth the results:

*Black Males with Jobs in Nashville\**

KIND OF LABOR	NO.	WAGES	REGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT
UNSKILLED LABOR			
Laborers: Working on streets, ditching, etc.	3,970	One to two dollars per day.	Intermittent, hired by the job.
Porters, houseboys waiters, bootblacks, etc.	2,450	\$7 to \$7.50 per week without board, or \$15 per month and board.	Steady employment.
Expressmen, hackmen, drivers, and coachmen.	1,090	Drivers and Coachmen same pay as porters. Expressmen and hack drivers estimated as having the same net income.	Steady employment  Intermittent, by the job.
Stationary firemen.	100	\$2 per day.	Steady employment.
Carpenters	186	\$2.50 to \$3.50 per day.	

*Black Males with Jobs in Nashville (Cont'd.)*

KIND OF LABOR	NO.	WAGES	REGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT
UNSKILLED LABOR			
Stone masons.	135	\$2.50 to \$3.50 per day.	
Mechanics (mostly black-smiths).	116	\$2.50 to \$3.50 per day	
Bricklayers.	81	\$3.15, \$3.60, \$4.50 per day, according to ability.	
Plasterers.	61	\$2.50 per day.	
Painters.	82	\$3.50 per day.	
Barbers.	212	Receive a percentage of their earnings--difficult to estimate.	
Merchants (including hucksters and shopkeepers in about equal numbers).	230	Incomes varying with individual merit.	
PROFESSIONS			
Ministers.	88	\$455 per annum . . .	
Teachers	(19)†40	\$300 to \$540 for teachers, \$700 to \$1,200 for hall teachers and principals in the city schools.	
Doctors.	26		
Lawyers.	18		
Students (adult)	422	Some employed as house-boys, etc.	
All other occupations (clerks, printers, etc.)	525		
No occupation.	91		
Total in Directory.	9,923		
Total twenty years and over (census of 1900).†	7,818		
Number fifteen to nineteen years.	1,435		

<i>Females</i>			
KIND OF LABOR	NO.	WAGES	REGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT
Laundresses.	2,595	Average, \$10 to \$12 per month; maximum, \$15.	The greater freedom from restraints enjoyed by the laundresses will probably count as offsetting the smaller wages.
Cooks.	2,150	\$10 to \$15 per month and board.	
House girls and nurses.	850	\$8 to \$12 per month and board.	
Seamstresses.	230		
Teachers	(48)+80	\$300 to \$340 for teachers, and \$700 for hall teachers and principals.	
Students.	250		
All other occupations (storekeepers, boarding house keepers, etc.)	95		
No occupation (over one-half being widows).	960		Presumably supported by their children.
Total.	7,210		
Total twenty years and over (census of 1900).‡	10,666		
Number fifteen to nineteen years.	1,913		

\* According to the 1900 U.S. census, Nashville had a black population of 30,044. This table is based on information in the Nashville City Directory, 1902/3.

† In the city schools.

‡ The Directory includes a larger area than the census, which is limited to the bounds of the corporation. Census figures added by the editor.

2. The relation of the negroes to organized labor. The unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor are prevented by constitutional provision from barring the negro on account of race. In reality, however, negroes are frequently excluded by the "black ball."

The labor leaders of the city are in favor of organizing the negroes to control the formidable array of "scab" labor which this race might furnish in a strike and also to keep wages up, for the negro, being able to live so much more cheaply than the whites, could easily underbid the latter under free competition in the labor market.

It is generally considered preferable to have the negroes organized in separate unions, and to maintain the very necessary relation with them by allowing them representation in the city Trades and Labor Council. There are six unions composed exclusively of negroes--barbers, stone masons, carpenters, colored laborers, hod carriers, and stationary firemen. In the

bricklayers' and plasterers' unions both races are found.

The barbers' union has thirty-three members, with three delegates in the Trades and Labor Council. The barbers of this union cater to white trade exclusively, leaving the negro trade to the non-union shops. Their minimum wage is sixty per cent of their earnings. They provide a sick benefit of five dollars per week for not more than sixteen weeks, and in case of death a sixty-dollar burial benefit. The same general provisions exist in all of the unions. Thus the stone masons' union does not provide a burial benefit, but gives a sick benefit of two dollars per week for an unlimited time; and the bricklayers' union has no sick benefit, but provides a one-hundred dollar burial benefit. None of them omit altogether to make provision for mutual help in time of need.

3. Closely allied with this feature of the labor unions, and holding an important place in the life of the negro, are the benevolent organizations. There are a dozen or more of these which, beneath the surface of parade and show, have some features of real worth. The organization of the "Immaculates," which will serve as a good example of them all, has dues of fifty cents to seven dollars the year. The sick benefit varies from one dollar and fifty cents to seven dollars and fifty cents, according to the degree taken in the lodge. In case of death there is a fifty-dollar endowment, and funeral expenses are paid. Furthermore, these advantages are not limited to the men alone, for quite a number of the organizations have "branches" for women and for children. The women's branch is called the "Court" and the children's branch the "Juveniles," or the "Gem." . . . Relying chiefly upon the personal knowledge of the tax assessor, about 11.3 per cent of the total value of taxable property was gone over and it was found that about 2-1/2 per cent of it belonged to negroes. At the same rate the negroes would own \$742,068 in a total assessment of \$29,682,740. The \$83,950 actually ascertained to be the property of negroes was distributed according to size among one hundred and forty-two owners as follows:

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Under \$200	28 items; estimated for whole city	248 items
\$200 to \$399	49 items; estimated for whole city	221 items
\$400 to \$599	25 items; estimated for whole city	433 items
\$600 to \$999	23 items; estimated for whole city	203 items
\$1,000 and upward	17 items; estimated for whole city	150 items
TOTAL	142 items; estimated for whole city	1,255 items

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Most of the items are seen to be small, and none exceeded \$10,000.

It is an interesting fact that most of the property in the vicinity of Fisk University is owned by negroes. When we reflect that the property-owning negroes form the better class, we see in the circumstance mentioned a very strong indication, if not a proof, that the more enlightened negroes appreciate the institution, and are giving it their moral support.<sup>7</sup>

It is also to be noted that the property owned by the negroes is not usually of the poorest grade. The negroes who live in the meanest parts of the city are not able and have not the thrift to own their homes, but rent from some white owner. The negro who has succeeded well enough to own his home is not generally content to live in the lower quarters of the city, but moves to a better neighborhood.

4. Industrial education. In the higher institutions of learning for negroes in the city some instruction in manual training and the trades is given; in carpentering, printing, bookkeeping, and other similar trades for the men; and in dressmaking, plain sewing, housekeeping, etc., for the women. But the number of students in these institutions is not large, and most of them come from without the city and return thence. Manual training has not been introduced into the city free schools for blacks, indeed only tentatively into the free schools for whites. Altogether the facts show that a large percentage of the negro artisans in the city have learned their trades by practical experience in them. . . .

Richard Davis Smart, "The Economic Condition of Negroes in Nashville, Tenn.,"

*Vanderbilt University Quarterly (April 1904):108-13, as reproduced in Hollis R. Lynch (ed.), The Black Urban Condition: A Documentary History, 1866-1971 (New York:Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1973), pp. 72-76.*

#### 8. WHITE LABOR ONLY

Of far-reaching importance to industrial workers in the South and in the Pennsylvania mine and iron making fields, was the action of the War Department today in awarding a contract for the construction of two large dams in the Black Warrior River, Alabama, to the Pittsburg Corporation, known as the Dravo Contracting Company, at their bid of \$700,000. This corporation already has done much river and harbor work for the government, but it is now, with the knowledge of the War Department, about to engage in an experiment of great interest and importance to the South in undertaking to carry out this large project by the use of white labor exclusively. The basis for this decision is the fact that the contractors believe they can at the present time easily secure the necessary amount of high grade white labor in Pennsylvania and adjacent manufacturing States as a result of the existing industrial depression. The object of the dams is to open a slack water navigation in the Black Warrior River, giving access to the great coal fields that are expected to supply the large quantity of fuel required for the shipping that will frequent the Panama canal.

We shall watch with great interest the result of this experiment of using exclusively white labor in the construction of this work on Southern soil.

We remember it was once heralded to the world that no Negroes should fight in the late Civil War; and later that the Panama Canal was to be dug by white men, but later developments brought out a good many Negroes on both of these enterprises, and they were welcomed as a valuable aid in these great efforts. Let the Negroes go on with what work they are allowed to do and do it well. Prejudice sometimes breaks its own neck when given rope enough.

*The Colored American Magazine, 14 (February-March, 1908):87-88.*

#### THE NORTH

##### 9. THE TRAINING OF THE NEGRO LABORER IN THE NORTH

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"All nations have their message from on high,  
Each the messiah of some central thought,  
For the fulfillment and delight of man;  
One has to teach that labor is divine;  
Another Freedom; and another Mind;  
And all, that God is open-eyed and just,  
The happy centre and calm heart of all."

An English colonist of South Africa, writing about the future of the native African in that section, says, "The natives must go; or they must work as laboriously to develop the land as we are prepared to do." Ex-

President Harrison was accustomed to say, "The Indian has citizenship and a white man's chance offered to him, and must take it or perish." These two statements, I candidly believe, represent the attitude of the vast majority of the Anglo-Saxon race toward "retarded races." This attitude means that we, as a race, must "work as laboriously" and as successfully to overcome in the struggle for existence as the white man has done, or we must go--whether we dwell in dear old Africa or sojourn in other lands. What I should like to see expressed in every word and act of my race is the determination not to go--whether the going means annihilation or amalgamation. But, determining to stay, shall we labor to produce an imitation of a white man or a thoroughly developed black man? Shall our goal be an artificial flower or a naturally developed wild flower? Or, to be specific, shall citizenship *de jure* and *de facto* in these United States be the end of the colored man's efforts in social and political development, or the means by which he shall become the founder and builder of a developed African nation? Should the thoughtful colored men--whether pure black or mixed blood--come out into the open and answer honestly this aim-settling question, the Negro problem would become clarified and we could call a spade a spade, and the adjustment of the races would become an easier proposition. For myself, I stand for a developed African race in Africa and, to me, the United States is the greatest of the schools from which the founders and builders of this African nation are to be graduated. This race lesson, which I learned first at my mother's knee, has been confirmed by the observations and experiences of my life in this country, in Europe, and in Africa.

I accepted the honor of an invitation to take part in the discussion of the topic, "The Training of the Negro Laborer in the North," before this distinguished Academy, solely that I might, perchance, invite its thought to this view-point of the Negro problem and present some considerations which make the economic training of the Negro laborer a necessity.

I believe God has ordained of races, as well as of plants, that each shall bear fruit after its kind, and that the periods of maturity--fruit-bearing times--differ among races as they do among plants. I have, therefore, no patience with the sentimentalities, weak excuses, and grotesque imitations which flaunt themselves as solutions of a problem which, under God's Providence, must be solved by natural laws.

We have before us today the records of two and a half centuries of slavery in this country; the records of forty-three years of freedom in this country; quite an extensive knowledge of Africa and its peoples, and the records of the civilizations of the other races and peoples which inhabit the earth. The time has fully come for us to read our destiny in these records. We shall, however, most assuredly fail to discover God's purpose concerning us if we fix our attention upon any one, or any class of facts in our history or in these records. We must take in the whole range of His Providences if we would know by what path He leadeth us, and appreciate the design in any one of them.

Let me illustrate by the following story, which I heard while in Africa: A clerk in one of the European factories there was previously a member of a German military band. He carried his horn with him to Africa and regularly practiced alone the bass parts of the pieces which he had been accustomed to play at home. A native boy, who worked in the same factory, frequently expressed his surprise that the white man, who could do so many wonderful things, could not produce any better music than that which came from the clerk's bass horn. It chanced that one of the agents took this lad to Hamburg, where he heard a full brass band. On his return he said to the clerk, in the English of the west coast of Africa, "Daddy, your horn no be fit for something by himself; but suppose you can blow him one time with all dem horns; he be fine plenty." It is only in the harmony of all our experiences that we appreciate the music of any one of them. Joseph in the pit; a chatel in the Ishmaelite's caravan; Joseph a slave in Potiphar's house; Joseph a common convict in the Egyptian jail, are single facts in which there is no music; but these several facts blending and harmonizing in Joseph the Prime Minister of Egypt and the saviour of Israel from starvation, produce rapurous music which lifts us to "a height from which we anticipate better ages;" to a height from which we comprehendingly and joyously swell the chorus when Shakespeare sings:



"Sweet are the uses of adversity,  
Which like the toad, ugly and venomous,  
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

To this height I would have every thoughtful Negro climb today, and from it interpret our present condition and environment in this country and learn that misfortunes, single or many, unrequited toils, and terrific violences in the life of a race, do not indicate that God has no gracious purpose concerning it, but that these are but the chastisements of a loving Father, made necessary by the stiffneckedness of that race. Our view of the Negro problem, then would be comprehensive and racial. It would not be colored by impulses and desires born of selfishness and egotism, nor would it limit the time element of the individual reformer to the three score and ten years.

The development of a race or people is a process which requires not years, but centuries; the food on which it feeds requires such a long time to digest, and affords at each meal little real nutriment. Listen to this historical statement concerning the civilization of Europe. Says Guizot, "The history of the European civilization may be thrown into three great periods: First, a period which I shall call that of origin, or formation, during which the different elements of society disengaged themselves from chaos, assumed an existence, and showed themselves in their native forms, with the principles by which they are animated; this period lasted almost till the twelfth century. The second period is a period of experiment, attempts, groping; the different elements of society approach and enter into combinations, feeling each other, as it were, but without producing anything general, regular or durable; this state of things, to say the truth, did not terminate until the sixteenth century. Then comes the third period, or the period of development, in which human society in Europe takes a definite form, follows a determinate direction, proceeds rapidly and with a general movement toward a clear and precise object; this began in the sixteenth century and is now running its course."

I am disposed often to look upon the proscriptions, discriminations and prejudices which we are made to feel at every turn in this country as a chastisement necessary to accomplish in us what the chastisements of the wilderness accomplished in the Jews. And I fear that we have, as yet, but tasted of the bitter waters of Marah; the deadly bite of the serpent is yet to come, unless, happily, our necks prove not so stiff as theirs and we become persuaded by gentler strokes in this, the formative period of our development, to learn, among others, the following vital and indispensable lessons:

1. We must come to know God as the God of our fathers. He must become to us Jehovah, a God perfecting that which he has begun in us; a God fulfilling the promises which he made to our fathers. We must come to understand and believe that blessings dispensed by Him are equally efficacious, whether we picture Him dispensing them with ebony black or lily white hands. Yea, we must come to know of a truth that He says to us, as a race, "If you obey My voice you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me."

2. We must come to know ourselves. If the proper study of mankind is man, than we should specialize in the study of the black man. Our present progress has begun to create a demand for this knowledge, and the data for it is fast coming to hand.

When the Jew entered the wilderness all his types of civilization were Egyptian; but he did not wander long before he felt the necessity for types of his own: then he began to use the former as a means to an end. Like the old-fashioned pump-makers, he poured the water of the pumps in operation down the barrel of the new pump, to enable it to send forth its own. This lesson a kind Providence is teaching us now. All the lessons of civilization which we learned in slavery and are now learning in freedom must be regarded by us as the water from the pump in operation, to be poured into the barrel of the new one. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," is commanded of races as well as of individuals; and the inscription over the temple of learning is also the inscription over the gate which opens to the highway of a race's development, namely, "Know thyself."

It is, however, so much easier to live upon the crumbs that fall from the rich race's table than to raise the grain and make one's own bread that many are satisfied to eke out an existence in this way. But the time will come, under God's Providence, when these crumbs will produce nausea, and their starving bodies, minds and hearts will turn toward more appropriate and nutritious food. I am aware that this is a strange doctrine to those of my people who have grown fat on these crumbs and believe this fatness to be health. These men are not so wise as the foolish servant who wrapped his talent in a napkin and hid it. They give their talent at once to the man who has five, and are idiotic enough to believe that they will share the profits which he earns. If he who brought back all that his Lord gave him is accounted accursed, what shall be the lot of these? Tell me not that God has put millions of black men on this earth and given them a rich continent for no special purpose! Tell me, rather, what history teaches, that the black man has not yet reached that stage in his development where the idea of race mission enters--where races fall upon their faces and exclaim, "Lord, what will thou have me to do?"

3. We must come to know that the potentialities of a nation have been implanted in us. In Egypt Israel was a family and a tribe; in the wilderness she became a nation. God made the black race for a nation. He is the Father of all nations and will be glorified by their differences. He has appointed different nations for different missions in the accomplishment of His purposes in this world. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; diversities of workings, but the same God who worketh in all."

There is no malice against the white race in this view-point of the Negro problem, nor is there any antagonism to the effects of the white people of this country to assist in our peculiar development. A nobler and more Christ-like body of laborers never entered the field for humanity than the white philanthropists and teachers who started and, in many instances, are still carrying on the work of education among our people in the South--be these philanthropists and teachers northern or southern. On the contrary, their assistance from this view-point becomes more essential and effective, because it will touch our struggle only at points where the impossible, to us, presents itself. With the spirit of the Master before the tomb of Lazarus, these benevolent friends will do for us only that which we cannot do for ourselves, and they will require us to roll away the stone. Assistance rendered us in this wise will not interfere but hasten the accomplishment of the God-appointed mission of the black race. The duckling will take to the water, even though the hen furnish the warmth for its incubation. Confusion, incongruities and consequent waste of effort and means arise when the hen attempts to make a chick of the duckling.

We rejoice in the soul-stirring song which our white brother is still writing and singing to the world. What encouragement and enthusiasm it carries to those who are in the thickest of the struggle for life, and how the arches of heaven must ring with the strains of altruism which, ever and anon, burst forth to strengthen those who struggle for the life of others. But

"Because the nightingale so sweetly sings,  
Shall meadow-lark and hermit thrush be still?"

Give us not this song as a substitute for ours because ours is still unwritten. Rather, teach us the theory and practice of music and the art of composition, that we may write and sing ours. Teach us this in the spirit of the brotherhood of man, and we shall produce our song and sing it; not in opposition nor in competition, but as a part of that God-ordained variety which must be the charm of heaven as it is the spice of life on earth.

The Japanese who fifty years ago were known as little, harmless heathen, are today, in their same home, one of the first nations of the world. They gathered all over the western world the waters to start their pumps, and the life-giving and preserving value of the flow of these pumps has astounded the world. In God's appointed time the same will be true of the now heathen African, and the western waters which shall start the flow of his pumps will be carried back to Africa principally by American citizens of African descent. Already a band of Tuskegee graduates, under the auspices of the German

Government, has introduced cotton raising among the native Africans in Togo, Africa. I beg pardon for the personal allusion, but I consider it the greatest privilege of my life that, twenty years ago, I was permitted to furrow the ground for the seeds of industrial education in the Republic of Liberia.

In all due modesty, let me suggest that:

The soul which under the benumbing influences of slavery has given the world the Negro plantation melodies possesses a natural endowment too rich to be developed for any other mission than its own;

The slave who has supported and protected the wife and daughter of his master while the latter fought to perpetuate his slavery has too much altruism to sell his birthright at any price;

The man who has forgiven and forgotten so readily and willingly as has the Negro the most barbarous outrages on his wife and daughter has too much of the Christ-spirit to sail on the sea of life under any other colors than his own.

Let me affirm, in this connection, that the training in civilization, citizenship, and self-government which my people are receiving in this country will no more lead to the bugbear of Negro domination or the scare-crow of amalgamation than will a course in gymnastics lead to the change in the color of their skin. On the contrary, the desire to strike out for themselves will vary directly as this training.

Having stated my point of view, I wish now to refer briefly to the necessity for our training in the economic activities of your civilization. When I was in Africa I saw two farms; the first was worth twenty times its original purchasing price, and the second was worth simply its original cost. These farms had the same soil, the same climate, the same sunshine and rain, and were on the bank of the same river. What nature had done for one she had done also for the other; but the owner of the first farm had cleared it, set out coffee trees, cultivated them, cured and hulled the coffee bean, shipped the same to Europe and lived on the money returns; while the owner of the second farm had left it almost as he found it and lived on its wild products. When I came to know them, I found that these two men differed as much as did the farms. The difference in value between the two farms was due to the amount of work done on each by its owner, and the difference between the two men was due to the amount of work done on each by his farm. The first man was a strong, vigorous physical specimen of humanity; every stroke of the axe, every stroke of the hoe, every pull of the rake, reacted on his body and made his muscles supple and strong, his digestion good. This man was also considered a strong man mentally; he was considered by his neighbors as a well-informed man, a man of good judgment; in his efforts to plant and cultivate a profitable coffee farm he had read all the literature and sought all the practical advice obtainable on this subject; he had tested this information in the practical management of his farm; he had gone further and experimented along lines which his actual observations had suggested; he had purchased and used implements employed in other countries on coffee farms; he had reconstructed some of these and made others of his own. All the thought and manipulation that he thus gave to the cultivation of his farm reacted upon his mind and made him what his neighbors considered him. Further, this man was looked up to as a man of good principles, a morally strong man. In the purchasing of the things required for the development of his farm and selling the harvest of the same he had bargained with other men, had been cheated and cheated others; but, bent on success, he learned first, amid these experiences, that honesty is the best policy, and, later on, became a disciple of the Golden Rule.

As I thought of these two men it seemed to me that the difference between them was, in a general way, from an economic standpoint at least, the difference between your race and mine. We have, practically, lived for centuries upon the wild products of Africa, while you have cut down the forests, gone down into the mines, crossed the seas, captured the forces of nature, made them do your bidding, and are now the strong and the conquering race that you are, by reason of the reaction on you of the work you have done on nature. So tremendous, so complex, and so subtle have become your efforts that you have outgrown the capacity of the organs of your senses, the medium of communication between you and nature. Why, if the instruments

which you have invented to reinforce the natural capacities of these organs were destroyed, you would be as helpless in many departments of the activities of your civilization as a man deaf, dumb and blind. We have not yet reached the stage in our development which even suggests that the natural capacities of these organs are limited. The qualities contributing to social efficiency which you possess by reason of your achievements, viz., "such characteristics as strength and energy of character, probity and integrity and simple-minded devotion to conceptions of duty in such circumstances as arise," are attainable by us, and you, under God's Providence, have become our teachers and our trainers. You cannot legislate these qualities into us, nor can you preach them into us; but you can, and you should, secure for us "a free hand, a fair field, and a cordial God-speed" in the economic activities and avocations of your civilization; so that, struggling in these, we may develop such qualities. Work is the means by which you have succeeded and it is the only means by which we shall succeed. Our introduction to continuous work was in slavery in the Southern States. The climate was similar to Africa, vegetation was similar to the vegetation of Africa and the economic system was exceedingly simple. This condition permitted us to pass somewhat gradually from the work of gathering wild products to the work of cultivating these products. The reaction from the work in slavery produced the natural results, as benumbing and degrading as the system was. During slavery the mental element was a minimum and the moral element was present by precept only. I have no excuse to offer for slavery; nevertheless it has brought us into contact with a more advanced race, and whatever of civilization and development we now possess came to us by means of it. The blessings to Israel in Egypt were mightier than the hardships endured, and I am persuaded that we shall, by and by, acknowledge the same concerning our bondage in this country.

Since slavery the elements of self-help, self-direction and self-protection have entered into our work; but the change from unskilled labor to skilled labor has lagged far behind the natural and necessary demand on the part of my people for it. We have received about all the developing influences which can come to us as a reaction from unskilled labor, and we stand face to face today in this country with the tragic situation of a race shut out from the only economic means which will secure its natural development in its present stage--the opportunity to learn and practice skilled labor. As a class, my people are today restricted to the formulated knowledge of books treating of the economic activities of your civilization. Exercise in these activities out of which these books grow and by which you have been developed, is denied us. And yet many of you are surprised that we do not possess the social efficiency which is the effect of this exercise. The most serious feature of our condition in this country today is the lack of opportunity to engage in work which requires knowledge, thought and skill.

As the poor man in the midst of wealth feels his poverty all the more keenly, so the northern colored laborer, living in the section of discovery, invention, commercial enterprise, and all the other myriad forms of Yankee ingenuity, realizes more keenly this lack of economic opportunity. It is also observable that the benumbing and degrading effects of this deprivation are more pronounced in him by reason of this environment.

It does seem to me that the necessity to train the colored laborers in the North would follow also from considerations like the following:

1. The surest and quickest way, if not the only way, for him to get a working knowledge of your civilization is through systematic and continuous work in the scientific processes and with the devices, machinery, apparatus and the like, which are the useful applications of the formulated knowledge of your civilization. Or, if you please, in this way only can he learn to work your farm profitably to you and gain thereby the requisite knowledge and skill to eventually work his own farm. (I know there are people who, having read a book on electricity, think they can run an electric plant, but the man who owns such a plant never thinks so). This is the way the colored laborer of the North can catch the spirit of progress and thrift of the present day, and by skill, dexterity and excellence make the profits of his labor purchase other and better opportunities. Unless he is allowed the benefits of such training he will remain, as now, in the procession of your progress, but out of step.

2. Training in the economic activities of your civilization will best

enable the northern colored laborer to discover in work other returns than the wage. Such, for instance, as the satisfaction of having done a piece of work well, and the highest reward of all, the development which comes by reaction to the worker. At present he sees only the wage and takes the shortest cut to obtain it. Sometimes I wonder if you fully realize the amount of friction between us which this short-cut method is producing. It causes you serious vexations and it is lessening daily our opportunities for even unskilled labor. I tremble with anxiety when I think of the possible end to which this may lead.

3. The saddest and possibly the most serious feature of this lack of economic opportunity is the effect on the children of the laborer. Fancy a child pursuing a course of instruction every concept of which has been built up by another race and from first-hand facts, about which neither his parents nor his playmates know anything. This fact simply paralyzes the vital principle in education of apperception.

In this connection, let me testify that if ever there was a man sent of God to a needy people at the psychological moment, Booker T. Washington is one. And I would further testify that the support which the white people have given him is today the rainbow of promise that the door of hope will not be closed to the brother in black. Christian industrial Tuskegee, under a corps of colored executive officers and colored teachers, is today the most potent force at work in our development in this country. It was the realization of the importance of contact with these first-hand facts that led the Friends to establish at Cheyney, two years ago, a normal school which will supply these first-hand facts in the classroom.

We are further insisting, in this connection, at Cheyney, that the present condition of the colored people makes it necessary that the school teacher be able to give helpful precept and practice along all the lines of everyday activity. For many years to come the colored teacher will find parents' meetings a field for vital usefulness, almost as large and important as that of his school. Nicely prepared essays and speeches will not avail in these meetings; the developing influence for these meetings consists of the teachers' ability to actually perform, after the most approved and economic methods, the everyday activities of the housewife and the husband-man.

In conclusion, I wish to say that those of us who regret most the lack of these opportunities bear no malice to you, never dream of despair, and are firmly convinced that we shall secure a "free hand, fair field and a hearty God-speed" in these opportunities some day only by deserving them through our own activity and our own spirit of love. In this spirit would I remind you that you are the truant officers who have brought us into your own school, and beseech you in the name of our common Master and your sense of fair play to teach us after the laboratory method.

*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 27 (January-June, 1907):117-27.*

#### 10. MENIAL JOBS LOST, WE GO HIGHER

Bootblacks, Waiters, Barbers and Janitors Become Teamsters or  
Skilled Workmen, Clerks and Independent Businessmen--  
Dedication of Lincoln Center

CHICAGO, Ill. June 12. The timely discussion in THE AGE of our loss of occupations in the Northern cities may well include conditions in Chicago as a further illustration. Here every industrial and economic problem not only exists but takes on an intensity of meaning peculiar to Chicago. Even the everlasting Negro problem is a little different here from what it is in other cities. Everything in Chicago is quick-acting. No sooner do you arrive here than the question: What are you going to do and how long are you going to do it? confronts you for a speedy answer.

It is quite safe to say that in the last 15 years the colored people have lost about every occupation that was regarded as peculiarly their own. Among the occupations that seem to be permanently lost are barbering, boot-blackening, cooking, hotel and restaurant waiting, janitors in office buildings, elevator service and calcimining.

These occupations are so far lost that not more than about twenty per cent of the persons now employed in these industries are colored people. What is the cause of this loss to our people of these opportunities to make a living? The question is perhaps sufficiently answered by saying that white men wanted these places and were strong enough to displace the unorganized, thoughtless and easy-going occupants of them. When the hordes of Greeks, Italians, Swedes and other foreign folks began to pour into Chicago, the demand for the Negro's places began. One occupation after another that the colored people thought was theirs forever by a sort of divine right fell into the hands of these foreign invaders. This loss was not so much due to prejudices against color, as to the ability of these foreigners to increase the importance of the places sought and captured. The Swedes have captured the janitor business by organizing and training men for this work in such a way as to increase the efficiency and reliability of the service.

White men have made more of the barber business than did the colored men and by organization they have driven every Negro barber from the business district. The "shoe polisher" has supplanted the Negro bootblack and does business in finely appointed parlors with mahogany finish and electric lights. Thus a menial occupation has become a well organized and genteel business with capital and system behind it. But perhaps all this is commonplace, as it has been said again and again by such careful students of economies as Dr. Washington, Mr. Fortune and others.

The interesting question growing out of these observations is: What becomes of the Negroes who are thus pushed out of the occupations that were theirs almost by prescriptive right? Those of us who have lived in Chicago for any length of time and have watched the wholesale displacement of colored employees from the occupations mentioned, are ourselves puzzled to know what becomes of these losing men. The situation is almost paradoxical. Here are some peculiar facts: The Negro population is increasing in Chicago at a greater rate than in almost any Northern city. Outside of the sporting classes there is less idleness among the colored people than among any other class of citizens in the city. There are no Negro beggars on our streets. The landlords all say that Negro tenants pay a larger rent and pay more promptly than any other class of citizens of like grade. The question naturally arises as to what our people find to do to make the above statement possible since the old places have been taken away from them.

The answer to this question is altogether creditable to the pluck, the versatility and adaptability of the race. It can be truthfully said that one of the results of the conditions already described is that the colored people are employed in a greater variety of occupations and are doing things that they never thought of doing twenty years ago. In the wholesale districts of the city the ex-waiter and ex-bootblack and would-be barber are employed extensively as teamsters, porters, expressmen, foremen and, in some cases as shipping clerks, and here and there in increasing numbers, as regular clerks in stores and offices. Others are employers as laborers in building operations, hodcarriers, coachmen and watchmen, and thousands of them have found occupations at the stockyards where they do all grades of work from that of the common laborer to the highest priced positions for skilled work. Hundreds of young men are also employed in the post office, who, under old conditions, would be waiters in hotels and cafes where "fat tips," are to be had. Those who have trades are of course quite independent and do not suffer for lack of employment, either in or out of the unions.

There is still another outlet for the competent young men who formerly had no other opening, and that is the establishment of business enterprises. With the large increase of our colored population who are for the most part grouped together in certain parts of the city, there have developed opportunities for the establishment of small business ventures, such as grocery stores, printing offices, restaurants, haberdashers, manufacturers of ice cream, manufacturers of shoe polish, coal dealers, caterers, expressmen,

druggists, shoe-dealers, real estate brokers, undertakers and still others. Hundreds of young men and women also within the last five years have found employment, as well as a splendid business training, in these small business enterprises that have gained ground since the loss of the old occupations. These hundred or more little shops, stores, offices and factories constitute the most important and interesting part of Negro courage and enterprise in Chicago. It is not too much to expect that out of these small beginnings the future Negro merchant and capitalist will be developed.

I think it quite safe to say that more good than harm will come to the race by its being forced to widen its field of occupation and employment. It does not seem wise or well that we should be known only to certain kinds of employment. The opportunity to engage in a greater variety of occupations and thus be brought into a wider touch and contact with the white race will do much to lessen the tendency to proscription against us. In other words, experience in Chicago shows that the Negro is not going to be worse off by being forced out of grooves which were fixed for him in the days of servitude and by the limitations of prejudice. . . .

*New York Age, June 15, 1905.*

#### 11. BLACK OCCUPATIONS IN BOSTON, MASS., 1905

In 1900 there were in the city of Boston 11,500 Negroes. At present . . . there are probably about 15,000. In the metropolitan district, including Cambridge with its 8,000 there are perhaps 26,000.

. . . there are in the entire metropolitan district in the neighborhood of 9,750 and in the city of Boston. . . about 5,625 Negro men who can be and may be at work.

. . . in 1900, according to the census, no less than seventy-six per cent of the Negro males in Boston were in gainful occupations. . . .

. . . in the following discussion, the writer will attempt a rough presentation of the Negro's occupations according to grade, using . . . the census findings as a base. The presentation will comprise four groups: the first, certain inferior occupations in which most of the Negroes are found; the second, waged, salaried, or commissioned occupations of higher grade; the third, business proprietorships, and the fourth, the professions.

The first of these industrial groups comprehended, in 1900, the following occupations and number of individuals [table below]:

Well, in this group were comprised in 1900 no less than seventy-three per cent--3,288 out of 4,510--of the Negro males at work in Boston. . . .

Of the bootblacks, hostlers, messenger boys, railway laborers and porters, there is nothing to be said that the reader will not understand for himself. These occupations command, of course, only the wages of rough, unskilled work. Of the "laborers" and the "servants" a goodly proportion are what have already been referred to as "men-of-any-work"--floorscrubbers, window-cleaners, garden-trimmers, barbers' boys and what not--scatchers here and there for a living. As before mentioned, these Negro men-of-any-work constitute a large class in the city. Many of them are by training skilled artisans, but having come here to this Northern city they are forced to take what they can get. This is the class of industrial scavengers.

Bootblacks	36
Janitors	319
Laborers	665
Servants and waiters	1,676
Stewards	29
Hostlers	61
Messenger, errand and office boys	64
Porters (in stores)	404
Steam R.R. laborers	34
Total	3,288

The waiters and stewards are classes of skilled laborers--much more skilled than the uninformed would imagine--and their income, chiefly from tips, is such--in the case of waiters most fortunately situated as much as \$115 per month--as to constitute them the aristocracy of wealth in this particular industrial group. A number of the wealthiest Negroes in Boston are waiters. It is true, also that many of the leading Negroes of the country have risen from the ranks of waiters. The janitors, however, are the aristocracy of respectability. The responsibility placed upon them calls out their best . . . traits, their often resulting long tenure of position gives them a good place in the esteem of their employers, and altogether they are a steady, dependable class who are helping their race by the force of example.

There are these differences between the occupations in this group. But on all these occupations alike there is, in greater or less degree, this brand of inferiority. . . .

The . . . waged, salaried or commissioned occupations of a higher grade . . . was in 1900 constituted as follows:

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Barbers and hair-dressers	106
Miscellaneous "domestic and personal service"	65
Clerks, salesmen, agents, stenographers, etc.	152
Teamsters	167
Miscellaneous "trade and transportation"	48
Engineers and firemen (not locomotive)	53
Carpenters and joiners	37
Painters	25
Masons	30
Other building trades	43
Metal working trades	38
Printers	19
Tailors	26
Miscellaneous manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	66
Total	875

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. . . diversity is one of the striking features of the Negro's industrial situation here, showing as it does that at present there is no distinct relegation of the Negro to merely a few pursuits of this class.

There is the Negro barber, who once had such a grip in the North, but who now in Boston as elsewhere, is being excluded by the wide-spreading anti-Negro feeling, and the apparent economic incapacity of the Negro to set up as pretentious an establishment as his competitors of other races. There are no first-class Negro barber shops in Boston now. Many of the Negro shops, however, get a good deal of white patronage. Then there is the clerk class among the Negroes. There are many Negroes who by personal qualities, education and ability, are fitted for such positions as clerks, salesmen, and the like; but the difficulty usually is that the white employees raise objections to working with Negroes, and so the employer is not entirely a free agent. None of the department stores, for instance, ever employ Negro salesmen or saleswomen, for this reason. The teamsters, who are now a large and well-paid group, originally came into their position as strike-breakers. A few being called in some years ago to fill the places of strikers, they formed an opening for others of their race, who got into the unions and prospered. So far as the writer has observed they are on an equality with the whites in the teamsters' unions; a number of the officers of these unions are Negroes. The Negro carpenters, masons, painters, and the like, are mostly immigrants from the South, having the skilled trade, but being unable to get better than intermittent occupation here in the North, largely because white artisans dislike to work with them.

. . . In 1900 there were in this group 875 of the 4,510, or about twenty per cent of the working Negro men. . . . figures seem to show that in the entire state of Massachusetts the number of Negroes in this group is increasing, both absolutely and as a percentage of the total Negro male population. The writer . . . must say that all he has ascertained thus far indicates that the unions are treating the Negroes fairly and helpfully.

Now we come to the group of commercial and industrial proprietorships.



So far as the census represents the facts, this group was in 1900 thus composed:

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Agricultural proprietors	3
Boarding and lodging-house, hotel, restaurant and saloon-keepers	47
Hucksters	7
Livery stable keepers	3
Merchants (retail)	50
Merchants (wholesale)	3
Undertakers	1
Boot and shoemakers	20
Total	<u>134</u>

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Observation leads us to the belief that one cannot, however, get from the census an adequate representation of this group. . . . Doubtless 200 Negroes, or two and one-half per cent of the total, were in 1900 independent proprietors.

This is the most picturesque of the industrial groups. All over the city, chiefly in districts where Negroes live, of course, but also in the other districts, these Negro business establishments are found. A few are of such proportions as to stand out above the rest. For instance, one of the leading tailors in the city is a Negro who got his start by being especially clever in the making of the "bell" trousers in vogue a dozen years ago, and who became so prosperous as to be able to move into fashionable quarters. Again, the largest wig manufactory in Massachusetts is operated by a Boston Negro, and a very reputable undertaker of the city is a Negro.

Most of the Negro business establishments, however, are of unpretentious and humble proportions. . . .

Of Negro establishments . . . there are a number of barber shops, pool-rooms, restaurants, newsstands, tailor shops, a men's furnishings store, printing shops, and lodging houses. . . .

Finally, we arrive at the professional group, the make-up of which was in 1900 as follows:

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Actors and showmen	29
Artists and art teachers	3
Dentists	10
Engineers and surveyors	2
Lawyers	12
Musicians and teachers of music	31
Teachers	4
Architects and designers	3
Clergymen	13
Electricians	4
Journalists	5
Literary men	2
Officials (government)	1
Physicians and surgeons	12
Total	<u>131</u>

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Naturally, most of the prominent Negroes in the city are found in the professions. Boston has two Negro journalists of national name, a young poet of great promise, and several other Negroes of literary distinction. Among the dentists, physicians and surgeons are some most of whose practice is among the whites, and two, at least, who have attained high distinction in their professions. In the ranks of the lawyers are a number of not only prominent Negroes but prominent citizens. The number of Negroes in the professions is increasing from year to year.

These Negroes of the professions are admirably fitted, by education and present position, to be leaders of their race and interpreters standing

between the ranks of the Negroes and the white. But it seems to be true that many of the Negro professional men, and likewise of the Negroes who through other occupations have risen to positions above their fellows, prefer to use their position to get as far away as possible from their race, and as near as possible to the whites. . . .

John Daniels, "Industrial Conditions Among Negro Men in Boston," *The Negro in the Cities of the North* (New York: Charities Publication Committee, 1905), pp. 35-39, as reproduced in Lynch, *Black Urban Condition*, pp. 106-09.

## 12. THE NEGRO IN NEW YORK

### A Study of the Social and Industrial Condition of the Colored People in the Metropolis

By John Gilmer Speed

The prospect for the negro in New York city is not very encouraging. His race is not numerically very strong in the metropolis, and the number is not rapidly increasing either by births or by migrating from the South. The riot of August, when a mob attacked negroes in the streets without much, if any, restraint from the police, was even more of a surprise than it would have been at almost any time during the preceding quarter of a century. There have been no times when the negroes in New York were increasing with rapidity. At this time the opportunities of negroes are less in New York than they have ever been, and there does not seem any likelihood that present conditions will be immediately changed. This riot, however, has directed the attention of the people to the negro population, and if the truth be disclosed it may be that their present hard lot may in time be ameliorated.

The negro is not a new-comer in New York. He has been here for two centuries and a half. In the beginning and until 1785 he was a slave, but even during the time of bondage his condition was not much worse than now. The slavery that existed in New York was of a very mild sort, and the amiable Dutchmen who were the first slave-owners were very good and considerate masters. The English were not so gentle, and in the first half of the eighteenth century there were two severe disturbances, each marked with a loss of life. In 1709 there was so much traffic in slaves that a slave market was opened in Wall Street, and black men and women were dealt in as though they were cattle or swine. The negroes were quite numerous in proportion to the white population, and there was always apprehension that there might be a slave uprising. In 1712 a house was burned, the slaves attacked the whites, and after killing several, were suppressed by the Royal troops of the garrison. For twenty-nine years there was comparative quiet, though one-fifth of the population was black. In 1741 there were ten thousand inhabitants of New York. Of these two thousand were negro slaves. There was an epidemic of incendiary fires. The investigations were not more scientifically judicial than the witchcraft trials in Salem. The most improbable and contradictory stories were believed, and many negroes were condemned in consequence. Some were hanged and some were burned at the stake. It was an anxious time in the little island city, and the officers of justice seem to have lost their heads pretty completely. This anxiety made slavery itself unpopular, and in 1785 the new State was quite willing to abolish the institution. At that time there were about 22,000 negro slaves in the State, a considerable proportion of these being held in and around the city. This abolition of slavery in New York did not cause the death of the slave trade, however, for this was participated in by New York merchants until the whole wretched business was wiped out by the civil war and the emancipation proclamation. Free negroes continued to live in New York from the time of the abolition of slavery until now, but they have

always kept very much to themselves, living in colonies and engaged in a few special occupations in which they were reasonably prosperous. In 1850, when New York had a population of 515,547, there were 13,815 negroes in the city. This was not a formidable proportion, only about two and a half per cent., but the negroes then in the city were in many regards much better off than their successors are fifty years later. At that time the chief caterers of the city were negroes, as they continued to be in Philadelphia till a very few years ago. There were many barber shops manned by colored men. The whitewashing trade belonged almost exclusively to negroes. Negroes also were the private coachmen of the town, and not a few drove public hacks. The bootblack business was theirs, and very many, if not most, of the hotel dining-rooms and restaurants had negro waiters. This was half a century ago, when the opportunity for negro employment in New York was at high-water mark. From that mark it has been receding ever since. At first slowly, but in the past dozen years very rapidly.

In the decade between 1850 and 1860 the negro population in New York actually decreased. This was due to the immense influx of foreign population and the consequent competition in all the unskilled branches of labor, and also to the prejudice against the race incident to the fierce political passions which culminated in the Civil War. In 1860 the population of New York was 805,651, while of negroes there were 12,472, or one and a half per cent. The occupations of these colored people were just about what they had been ten years before. And, indeed, there was no appreciable change in this until after 1880. During the decade ending in 1870, there was a slight increase in the colored population, but a decrease in the percentage. The whole population was 942,292, and the negroes numbered 13,072, or one and one-third per cent. By 1880, the number had increased to 19,663, which was a little in excess of one and a half per cent of the total population of 1,206,299. This was the period when the decline in the industrial opportunities of the negroes in New York became very apparent. Nevertheless, they increased during the next decade both in numbers and in percentage of the whole. In 1890 the city's population was 1,515,301, and that of the negroes 25,674, or one and seven-tenths per cent of the total. By this time there were few callings open to the men of the race, and the women who worked were chiefly employed in domestic service. But the increase up to the present year was steady, and the population now is estimated at 35,000. The census of this year puts the population of the Borough of Manhattan (all of these figures have had to do with this borough and not with the Greater New York) at 1,950,000, so the percentage is now slightly higher than it was ten years ago, having increased about one-tenth of one per cent.

It will be seen from the figures given above that the negroes in New York do not constitute a very considerable proportion of the population. The Irish, the Germans, the Italians, the Russians, and even the Scandinavians out number them, in the order given, while they are about as numerous as the French. Why there should be any race feeling against such an insignificant element of the population seems superficially strange. It is quite true that the Irish seem to have a natural antipathy to the negroes, but the other north-of-Europe races seem to have no natural feeling of repugnance and the Italians are quite devoid of it. The strangest thing about this strange problem is that so many native Americans should feel hostile—not actively hostile, but in sympathy with the lawless negro-baiters. I heard many native Americans, even New Englanders, say after the riot that they would have been glad if many of the negroes had been killed. For this feeling, which there is no doubt of, there must be some other cause than mere race prejudice. It may be that this cause will be made clearer as I proceed.

Why, let us inquire, have the negroes in New York lost so many of the old-time opportunities for employment? Take the waiters in hotels and restaurants. This twenty-five and even twenty years ago was a great source of employment for negro men. Every middle-aged man can recall when very many of the best metropolitan hotels had negro servants. Some may continue to employ them. But very few. The trade of waiting, so far as negroes is concerned, has practically died out in New York. But why? The general introduction of French cooks had something to do with it, and the quicker intelligence of the white men who went into this trade had something more,

while fashion completed the revolution which has supplanted the negroes in this employment. Your French cook rarely knows English; your negro never knows French. So these two could not communicate, and the negro waiter and the French cook had to part company. The young Germans and Frenchmen who make up the great body of dining-room servants in New York are much better educated than any save very exceptional negroes, and they undoubtedly seem more in earnest in the work that they do. That the negroes should suffer by this competition was as inevitable as any of the laws of nature. Fashion began to frown on the negro in hotel and domestic service many years ago. This attitude was partly one of prejudice and partly due to a love of comfort. The pigment in the skin of the black has an odor which is not agreeable to delicate olfactory nerves. At any rate, the negro waiters were displaced by whites in one place and another until the trade was practically no longer open to them.

Fifty, thirty, even twenty, years ago there were a great many negro coachmen in New York, and in the social scale the coachmen ranked next perhaps to the caterers. When we began to use English styles of equipage, to bang and dock our horses' tails, then we also cultivated a preference for English and Irish coachmen and stable hands. There was no race prejudice in this; it was to a very great extent a matter of style. But in this occupation also white men are more efficient. They are not only better drivers, but they are better horsemen. The negro is often most careless of the horses in his charge, and when he is in a temper he is very frequently cruel. There are negro coachmen still in New York, but compared with the number employed in the sixties and seventies they are very few.

Now, the negro caterers used to be men of much consideration and substance. Several of the men who flourished a generation ago left comfortable estates to their progeny. There may be negro caterers still in New York, but I do not recall to have been to an entertainment in twenty years where one was employed. In the old days there were colored men who ranked as Sherry and Delmonico do now. There are none such now, because the men of the race do not seem to be able to keep step in the march of progress.

As New York grew richer the people demanded greater luxury and more elegance. The negroes did not have enterprise enough to see this, and they have dropped out of the race. Then again the taste has changed as to cooking. The homely things which pleased our fathers and grandfathers do not completely satisfy us, and we require a French cook in a white cap instead of an old black mammy in a bandanna turban. In this field, as in others, the competition has been too strong for the colored men, and so the old caterers who used to serve the people who dwelt in the fashionable precincts of Bleecker Street and Washington Square have either been gathered to their fathers or shut up shop; and they have left no successors.

There were also a great many negro barbers in New York twenty-five years ago. There may be some still, but they are most engaged in barbering the men of their own race. Prejudice probably had much to do with killing this trade, but the indisposition on the part of some white people to get close to negroes had also something to do with it. At any rate, the trade is dead.

Then the whitewashing business used to seem to belong to negroes as though it was theirs by right. But there are few negroes now employed in this trade in New York. The house-painters and decorators and paper-hangers have taken it up, and the peripatetic darky whitewasher might walk his legs off in the metropolitan streets before finding a job. The boot-blackening business also once was his. But the Italians now have it. They conquered it. They put up thrones on the street corners, paying in work for the privilege, and then by doing better jobs they drove the negroes out of business.

There are no colored artisans in New York. The trades unions would prevent any such from receiving employment. As common laborers they are received on almost equal terms with others, but this is not an attractive occupation for the ambitious negroes who have come to New York to make fortunes. Even the women are not as much in demand for household servants as formerly. This decadence is due no doubt to the change in fashion, and possibly somewhat to a greater efficiency on the part of white servants. But the women are not sought as they once were. Even the people who came here

from the Southern States, where negro servants are universal, prefer the Irish, German, and Scandinavian women as cooks, chambermaids, and waitresses.

In this rapid survey we have seen that the industrial opportunities for colored people have been lessening all the time, and now the sphere of their activities has become so narrow that it is a wonder that even thirty-five thousand of them can earn honest livings.

And they do not. The proportion of criminals among the negroes in New York is alarmingly large, and their influence is very dangerous. The birth-rate among the Negroes in New York is small and the death-rate is large, being thirty in a thousand, as against nineteen in a thousand for the white population. If it were not for accessions from the South the negro population in New York would by no means hold its own. It is in these accessions that there is great danger. The best of the race in the country know or soon learn that the opportunities in New York are limited in comparison with those in Southern cities, so they stay away. They are not influenced in the same way that white people are towards New York.

A white man of ability, when he feels his strength to be above that of his fellows in his own neighborhood, is much inclined towards New York, where success means so much more than it does in smaller places. New York's white population, therefore, is always being re-enforced by the strongest and hardest and most adventuresome of the men of the country. So also the particularly alert among the vicious and criminal know that their opportunities for wrong-doing are wider in the metropolis, and they hurry to it. The good negro in the South knows there is scantier chance for him in New York than at home, so he stays at home. The vicious and criminal negroes in the South know that their field of vice is broader in New York, so the more sturdy of these rogues come hither. The good stay away and the evil pour in. This is very bad but it is made a hundredfold worse by reason of the necessity which compels classes of negroes to huddle together in New York.

Property is not rented to negroes in New York until white people will no longer have it. Then rents are put up from thirty to fifty per cent, and negroes are permitted to take a street or sometimes a neighborhood. There are really not many negro sections, and all that exist are fearfully crowded. Nor are there good neighborhoods and bad neighborhoods. Into each all classes are compelled to go, and the virtuous and the vicious elbow each other in the closest kind of quarters. This is a great source of moral contagion, and vice spreads with great rapidity among the women of such quarters. During the day the decent men are at work. Then the vicious and the idle have full sway. If it were possible to make a census of the negroes and go into this phase of their social condition, I have no doubt that it would be found that more men of the race are idle and without visible means of support in proportion to the total number than in any other neighborhood in the world except those frankly given over to the criminal classes.

The testimony of clergymen and other religious workers among the negroes is to the effect that the harm done by the crowding is so serious that it is always threatening to undo the good work of the churches. This is very disheartening to the more intelligent among the negroes, and they see no remedy so long as this dreadful overcrowding continues. One clergyman said to me that when he saw the dreadful discomforts of the places that negroes in New York had to call home he could not in his heart blame them for drinking, if that mitigated the hardships of their unwholesome dwellings.

The landlords undoubtedly treat the negroes with very little kindness. They charge enormous rentals for very inferior houses and tenements, which yield more when the negroes have taken possession than they did in time of seemingly greater prosperity. Of course negroes in a neighborhood put a blight upon it, but the owners get a very large reward by reason of the higher rentals. Moreover, they make no repairs, and the property usually goes to rack and ruin. The negroes are not responsible for this, even though they are the cause. I knew a negro adventurer who took advantage of this prejudice against his people and made profit out of it. He would select a promising land-and-improvement scheme and through a white man would buy a lot. After a dozen houses had gone up he would appear on the scene with a gang of Italians and begin digging a cellar. The neighbors, always interested in new improvements, would ask who was to build. "I am," the negro would reply. "I am building a home for myself and family." In a little while there would

be consternation in that neighborhood, and the promoter of the scheme would be visited. His scheme would be ruined if the negro persisted. The negro would express great determination to go ahead. Then in self-defense the promoter would buy him out at handsome profit to the negro. He did this half a dozen times in as many years, making in the aggregate a handsome profit. As a rule, however, the negroes in New York are not beholden to the property-owners for anything except discomfort and extortion. If they stay in New York they are compelled to live in places where health, decency, and privacy are all but impossible. Housed as they are it is wonderful that they should be as good as they are; it is wonderful that they are not all entirely worthless.

Nearly all of the negroes in New York are literate--that is, nearly all can read and write. Few, however, have even a common-school education, and those who are liberally educated are but an insignificant remnant. Dr. DuBois of the University of Pennsylvania has made an exhaustive study of the negro in Philadelphia and also in other places further south. He says: "The great deficiency of the negro is his small knowledge of the art of organized social life--that last expression of human culture. His development in group life was abruptly broken off by the slaveship, directed into abnormal channels, and dwarfed by the Black Codes, and suddenly wrenched anew by the Emancipation Proclamation. He finds himself, therefore, peculiarly weak in that nice adaptation of individual life to the life of the group which is the essence of civilization. This is shown in the grosser forms of sexual immorality, disease, and crime, and also in the difficulty of race organization for common ends in economic or in intellectual lines."<sup>10</sup>

*Harper's Weekly*, 44 (December 22, 1900): 1249-50.

### 13. THE INDUSTRIAL CONDITION OF THE NEGRO IN NEW YORK CITY

By William L. Bulkley<sup>11</sup>

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During the nineteenth century the century the Afro-American population of New York State increased more than 300 per cent, or from 31,320 to 99,232. The greatest percentage of increase in any decade was from 1890 to 1900, or 70,092 to 99,392.

New York City has received the largest part of this increase, the population almost doubling in the twenty years from 1880 to 1900, or 36,134 to 65,984. In 1890 the Afro-American population of New York City was 42,816; to 1900 there was a gain of 23,000. In the whole State during the same period there was a gain of 29,000.

New York City now has a larger Negro population than any other Northern city, and stands fourth in the list of all cities of the United States.

This great influx is due both to the universal tendency to drift to urban centres (the larger the city the more attractive) and also to the intolerable civil, social, educational, and political conditions existing in various parts of the South.

But we are not to discuss the cause of their flocking to the city, but rather to discover what they are capable of, what they are now doing, and what hope is before them. Therefore,

(1) Is the Afro-American possessed of the necessary qualifications to hold his own in the strenuous industrial and economic conflicts of a city like New York?

(2) Are his opportunities for employment conducive to the development of the best of which he is capable?

(3) What kinds of employment are open to him?

(4) Is the prejudice increasing or diminishing? Is there reason to hope that he will find a satisfactory place among other craftsmen in the various lines of industrial endeavor?

(1) With regard to the first question, it would be needless to take time to touch upon it, if one would only remember that for two centuries almost all the labor of the South, both skilled and unskilled, was by the man of African lineage. He was not only the butcher that slaughtered the cattle, but also the tanner that prepared the hide, and the shoemaker that put it into shape. He was the laborer who felled the tree as well as he who sawed it into boards, and he who built the house. He was the brickyard hand who dug the clay and burned the brick; he was also the workman who put the finished product into buildings. Though his field is being now encroached upon by the native white man and the foreigner, he is still the ubiquitous artisan of the South. He comes to New York and other cities with this same skill of hand, ready and anxious to continue his trade. Where he has found employment he has given satisfaction.

(2) Such being the case, does he readily find employment? Or, rather, does he find employment as readily as the other immigrants to the city? Does he, a native of the United States, have an equal chance with the unnaturalized European immigrant, or does he suffer a disadvantage? Unfortunately and regretfully the last is the case. While there are many unions that are, in their constitution, open to all men, there are others which bar the doors tight against any man with an admixture of African blood. There is, further, a conviction that even the supposedly open unions do not always give the black brother a cordial welcome. As a result of these conditions there were reported in the last census only 4,419 men and 1,401 women engaged in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits out of a total population of 99,232 in the State. It is safe to assume that many of these so rated were only irregularly employed, working at their trades as odd jobs. An investigation of the rosters of trades unions would in all probability show only a minority of them as members.

(3) What, then, are the vocations in which the majority of Afro-Americans are to be found? The census of 1900 shows that there were in New York State 57,000 at work over ten years of age. Deducting from the aggregate those in professional service, such as physicians, dentists, teachers, clergymen, actors, musicians, etc., 1,342; trade and transportation, 1,021; manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, 5,820, we have left about 49,000 in service more or less menial. Between the 57,000 reported as at work and the 99,000 in population we have the difference of 42,000 to be accounted for as follows:

Under school age.....	7,000
In school.....	12,000
Mothers in charge of own homes.....	10,000

We would still have 13,000 to account for as in hospitals, institutions, unable to work, or idle.

Most of the skilled laborers among Afro-Americans in New York have migrated there after learning their trades in the South or the West Indies--fathers of families many of them; in some cases bringing their families with them; in others leaving their families till employment is secured. As deeply concerned as one may be about their welfare, of no less importance is the problem, what shall be done with and for the boys and girls that are growing up in our city?

Some one has remarked that, if a boy in the city of New York wants to learn a trade he must commit a crime, meaning by this that he would be sent to one of the reformatories where manual training forms an important part of the school curriculum. It may not be so bad as this, but this much is certain, the boy, whether white or black, finds it no easy task to learn a trade. For the white boy, however, this difficulty is counterbalanced, at least to some extent, by the many opportunities offered in business. The colored boy, on the other hand, runs sheer up against a stone wall here. As an illustration of the difficulties that confront a colored boy I may cite one case. I received a communication the other day from an electric company (possibly all other male principals received the same) stating that they could use some bright, clean, industrious boys in their business, starting them at so much a week and aiding them to learn the business. I suspected that they did not comprehend colored boys under the generic term "boys," but thought to try. So I wrote asking if they would give employment to a colored boy who

could answer to the qualifications stated. The next mail brought the expected reply that no colored boy, however promising, was wanted. I heaved a sigh and went on.

The saddest thing that faces me in my work is the small opportunity for a colored boy or girl to find proper employment. A boy comes to my office and asks for his working papers. He may be well up in the school, possibly with graduation only a few months off. I question him somewhat as follows: "Well, my boy, you want to go to work, do you?" "What are you going to do?" "I am going to be a doorboy, sir." "Well, you will get \$2.50 or \$3 a week, but after awhile that will not be enough; what then?" After a moment's pause he will reply "I should like to be an office boy." "Well, what next?" A moment's silence, and, "I should try to get a position as bell-boy." "Well, then, what next?" A rather contemplative mood, and then, "I should like to climb to the position of head bell-boy." He has now arrived at the top; farther than this he sees no hope. He must face the bald fact that he must enter business as a boy and wind up as a boy.

A bright boy came to me one day for his working papers. I was sorry to see him want to leave school, but he had no father, and his poor mother had the hardest sort of job to earn enough over the wash-tub to pay the rent for their two rooms and to buy their meager food and clothing. The boy earned what little he could by odd jobs in the afternoon, Saturdays and holidays. Still, I felt that if I could get him to stay till he could finish he might chance to find something better; but that would mean at least three years more of school. In reply to my urgent request that he try to battle through, with sad face he said: "I am old enough now to help mother; she needs me. And, again, there is nothing better for a colored boy to do if he finishes the course." The reply pierced my heart like a white-hot bolt. I shall remember that scene till my dying day. All the monster evils of prejudice passed before me in procession like the hideous creatures of an Inferno, and I thought of the millions of hopes that have been blighted, the myriads of human possibilities that have been crushed, the intellects that have been stunted, the moral lives that have been gnarled and twisted, all because the iron heel of this base, hell-born caste is upon the neck of every boy, of every girl who chanced to be born black.

(4) But should he despair? Is there any rift in the cloud? Can one catch here and there a ray of light, of hope, of encouragement through the oppressive pall?

Let me cite a few instances why we should not despair in New York City.

- (a) The liberal educational system.
- (b) The numerous stalwart friends of humanity in the pulpit, at the bar, in the press, on the rostrum, in business, and in the trades.
- (c) The influx of foreigners.
- (d) The spirit of our government.
- (e) The growth of socialism.
- (f) The determination of the people to rise.

(a) Our educational system. There is no such a thing as a caste public school in the whole Empire State. The two men who, as Governors of our State, did most to kill this vicious distinction in our public schools are the two men who deserve to rank through all time among our most distinguished Presidents--Grover Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt. Educate the children of our land together; the result is a better understanding of each other, a kinder feeling one for the other; a diminishing distrust; and an increasing mutual respect. Common interests in childhood are the seeds that develop into common interests in manhood. This system of mixed schools is to me one of the most hopeful means of a satisfactory solution of our civil and industrial problems. Further, through the liberal-mindedness of our excellent city superintendent and his aides and because of the fairness of our Board of Education and the Board of Examiners there are possibly more colored teachers in our public schools than in any city north of the Mason and Dixon line. They stand entirely on their merit, and are winning the respect and confidence of all who know them.<sup>12</sup>

(b) A powerful force for present and future good are the many men and women in the higher professions who stand for equality of opportunity, liberty, justice. They are legion. They are the sinew, the brain, the blood, the very life of every movement for the betterment of our people in this city. They



are too numerous to mention. To name even one would be unfair to the thousands of equal zeal and goodness. No false note there; their ring is always clear and true and forceful.

(c) The cosmopolitan nature of our population. The hundreds of thousands of Europeans who crowd our city have brought nothing against the black man. All that they know and feel has been learned and acquired here. It is skin-deep only; not born in them, soaked through the bone and marrow.

(d) The spirit of our constitution is all right. Whatever is wrong is but the flapping of the sail; the old ship is secure. The time must come when all men under the stars and stripes will enjoy the right to work as well as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness!

(e) The growth of socialism, as represented by such men as Eugene V. Debs, promises equal opportunity to all men.<sup>13</sup>

(f) Lastly, the determination of the people to rise is itself the highest and best encouragement. Even with all the keen opposition that a small business man feels, one finds scores, yes hundreds of small enterprises, mercantile and industrial, conducted by colored men and women in the city. They are increasing with normal rapidity.

A most encouraging evidence of the eagerness to know how to do something well, to be prepared for some sphere of industrial usefulness was the attendance this winter at our evening school for adults. We had expected to register possibly 200 people in the common branches (the three R's) and the industrial classes; but we registered 1,500 people, of whom about 1,300 were colored. The enthusiasm in the work, the faithfulness in attendance, the excellence of results, so pleased the Board of Education that they are planning to enlarge the plant next year.

To show the spirit that filled this school, permit me to draw a picture as I drew it some months ago in the press of New York:

#### FUTURE OF COLORED RACE

*To the Editor of the New York Times:*

While Dixon's "Clansman" is being played next door, Evening School No. 80, in which 1,000 colored men and women have registered, is industriously attending to business.<sup>14</sup>

Within thirty feet of my office, where I now write this, the curtain is possibly being raised at this moment in an effort to portray the negro race in the worst possible colors; within this building hundreds of the maligned race are at the same moment quietly but earnestly working at their books or in the trades.

So far as I can not, not one of them cares a straw what slanders any marplot may heap upon them; happy, hopeful, busy each and all.

What a refutation to all pessimism would it be if the audience in the theatre would take a recess for a few moments and go through our classrooms! Suppose they could see these men and women, up to sixty-seven years of age, present in full force this stormy night, hungry for knowledge, determined to learn some trade that will make them worth more to the community--what an object lesson it would be!

Not a room in the building is vacant. Even seats for baby pupils and kindergarten tables are occupied. Neither cold nor heat, snow nor moonshine, with all their attendant drawbacks or attractions, can keep these people away.

In the theatre the audience is looking at the past; these people are looking into the future. To the one crowd despair; to the other hope.

What may be the thoughts of the people who are witnessing the play I do not know, but of this much I am sure--there are not 700 happier people in any building in New York than those who are busy here tonight.

WILLIAM L. BULKLEY, *Principal*

New York, January 8, 1906

To be sure, we have our full share of worthless men and women who are a disgrace to humankind. May their tribe diminish! But, in my moments of quiet contemplation, I wonder not that there are so many Afro-Americans that are good for nothing, but that there are so few. It takes tremendous courage and determination to rise to the plane of respectability beneath such a Cyclopean weight of prejudice. A little charity towards the weak brother

and sister cannot surely be too much to ask.

In closing, let me appeal for the establishment of trade schools in the cities of the North to do work similar to that done in our industrial schools in the South. And, then, let this be held out before every boy and girl of all the races as one of the fundamentals of our constitution--*the right to work; opportunity to work; encouragement to work* in any sphere in which one may be useful.

*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 27 (January-June, 1906): 129-34.*

#### 14. THE NEGRO'S QUEST FOR WORK

The negro as well as every other race variety of our cosmopolitan civilization has come face to face with the problem of the unemployed. To his, especially, it comes with crushing force, for whatever obstacles handicap other working classes, no other of them suffer from the barrier of color. With all the others the question when seeking work is, "What and how much work can you do?" With him the primary question is, "Have you negro blood in your veins?"

This tendency is turning down the colored skilled laborer even more effectually than the unskilled. The man who has a trade at his fingers' ends finds all forces combined to prevent him from making a living thereby. First, the employer tells him that he has no prejudice against color, but that his employees will object and make his business suffer. If, perchance the negro gets by, is given a chance to make good, the employees in the office, factory and workshop combine to injure his work and to make life miserable for him. The unskilled laborer who has little of such competition is a shade better off, because his work is usually done alone; but even there he finds that the neighbors of his employer have white servants, and that neighbors and white servants look askance at a man who prefers negro help.

These conclusions are the result of investigations set on foot by the Negro Fellowship League. Hundreds of young colored men who congregate on the street evidently have no place in which to spend their leisure hours. Thus it was seen that what was needed was a reading room where men who had a few hours of leisure could spend them amid good and healthful surroundings. Chicago is a great railway center, and thousands of railroad porters make their headquarters there. Many of them have excellent homes, cultured families and are citizens of many years' standing. Others are unmarried men who have neither homes nor families here and therefore are thrown more on their own resources to find some place for social enjoyment. Some are here for different periods of time ranging from two to three hours to two to three days.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, it came about that through the influence of friends the league established the reading room and social center at 2830 State street one year ago the first of May. During that time 15,000 registrations have been made in this reading room by men and boys. Some come regularly to read the standard authors on the book shelves, others to read the daily and weekly papers that are on the tables; and others keep track of what is being said and done through the monthly magazines. There is still another large number who cannot read, but who come to the reading room to spend a few quiet moments socially and play a game of checkers. Two classes especially patronize the checker games; one of the other men who cannot read, the other, boys ranging from 12 to 18 years of age. Then, too, we have tables and apparatus for those who wish to write letters.

Personal inquiries of a large number of these boys and men develop the fact that while they are glad of this reading room there is with them a keen anxiety because their opportunities for earning a livelihood are so restricted. More and more, during the past few months, is heard the cry, "We cannot find anything to do!" The Pullman service is overcrowded; the

company has now a waiting list of more men than it can use. Hotels which employ colored help are gradually letting them out and supplying their places with workers of other nationalities.

The negro has no capital to invest in business and thereby provide employment for the scores of young men who are coming out of schools and from the farms into this great city of the west. Investigation shows that a large number of them are becoming embittered and hopeless. They feel that the world owes them a living, and they want to work, and in many instances can do the best of work; but always and everywhere the answer comes back to applicants: "We don't employ colored help."

Hundreds tramp miles in efforts to get work and come back with the despairing cry that they have not money enough even to pay for a bed to a 10-cent lodging house. When one suggests to them that they should have remained in the South or return there, they invariably tell some tale of horror, as of a lynching bee, which drove them off the farm or out of the town in which they were making a living into the North, where they might at least have freedom and protection.

One young man who learned to be a wheelwright in Booker T. Washington's school has tried for the last two weeks to secure employment at his trade in Chicago. He has not only failed, but has come to the point where he has been willing to wash dishes and do porter work for the sake of getting money with which to feed himself. Up to the present moment he has been able to get only a few days' work at the stockyards. This young man comes of a good family. His father is a pastor of a large church in the South and gives his children a fair education, and this young man went to Tuskegee because he has been told that men who knew how to work at some trade could always get work to do. Never before in his life has he ever known what it was to want bread, and it is pitiful to see the changes that are slowly taking place in him. Were it not that he has a married sister in the city who would share her last crust with him, probably he would have given up long ago. Another man is an electrician, who belongs to the union and has everything in proper shape. But wherever he gets a job of wiring a building or furnishing electricity for moving pictures he finds it hard to get enough men who know the business to help him, and the white workmen who can help him either refuse to work with him or "queer" his work. He claims that the supply men furnish him with inferior material which the inspector invariably condemns. In short, he was so hampered and harassed that he has given the business up as a bad job for the colored man in this city.

What then shall the black man do? What is Chicago willing to do to help reduce the number of idle men on the streets and to give them work? They are anxious as well as able. Idleness is the father of crime it is said. If our social forces drive men into idleness, do they not also drive them into crime? The jail, the penitentiary and the reformatory have a large number of this unfortunate race within their bounds. Many of them are there because they were refused a chance to earn a livelihood on account of their color. Would not the ounce of prevention be better than a pound of cure? Would it not better pay the State to help the large number in the black belt take care of themselves than make paupers and convicts of them and force the State to take care of them?

One place that is trying to answer these questions has found work for 141 men and boys and sixteen women. Clothing has been given twenty-four men and boys and four women and babies. Food to thirty-eight women and children. Money for beds or food, nineteen men, six women. And this without a systematic attempt,<sup>16</sup> facts or to get material help.--Ida B. Wells-Barnett in the Chicago News.

*New York Call, July 23, 1911.*

## BLACK ARTISANS AND MECHANICS

## 15. HANDICAPS OF NEGRO MECHANICS

Harry E. Thomas

There is perhaps no public statement made which is so harmful to the courage and aspirations of the colored youth in our industrial schools and other institutions as the oft-repeated declaration that the labor unions of the Northern states are debarring colored mechanics from the various mechanical vocations. There are numerous localities, both North and South, where the union movement has never existed, and yet we find the same scarcity of colored mechanics that we find in the union cities, especially in the trades requiring considerable skill.

Ten years as a workman in the North in various workshops, where I came in personal contact with the rank and file and also with the leading spirits of trade-union movements, and where I was often in the midst of disturbances in which brickbats and rocks served as means of vindication and arbitration, have convinced me that the power of the unions has been overestimated, and that statements concerning their strength have been too loosely applied. Nearly all of the hundred and twenty skilled colored mechanics with whom I am personally acquainted, live in the Northern cities, and each one of them is steadily employed at the standard rate of wages and work, where union men can see them. Of course it cannot be denied that a large element of the union movement is prejudiced against the colored men, and white men also, for I well remember quite a disturbance among my shopmates at one time over the employment of several white men who belonged to a certain religious organization. Four different times I have been called with the other workmen to consider and act against certain factions of workmen who were considered objectionable, and in each case those opposed were white men.

Any great amount of work on the part of labor unions to debar colored workmen would be time lost and energy wasted, since the number of colored skilled workmen is so small in the entire country as to warrant no consideration. I know a firm of colored men that hunted carefully over eight states to find a first-class colored plumber competent to erect and install modern fixtures in first-class buildings and residences, and I know another company that was in search of a colored pattern-maker for two years without success. Statistics show that during the last twenty years, less than three per cent of our colored youth have entered the mechanical arts and sciences to remain, while nearly forty-five per cent have made a choice of common vocations and have worked as porters and hotel employees, where the remuneration and intelligence required are meager. It is believed that much of the reason for the unwise choice of vocation on the part of our colored youth is that they have been discouraged by this groundless and unwise claim that the unions, or some other class of men without either means or motives, will defeat any effort they may make except in the lines of common labor or servitude.

There will always be in America an opportunity for the fittest, and the time is near at hand when there will not be countenanced or encouraged any attempt based on the prejudices or whims of any class of men to keep honest employment from any other class. Still, there are other reasons why so few colored youth have entered mechanical lines. First, in the sharp competition in the field of labor in recent years, not half of the white applications for apprenticeship have been favored by our workshops and factories; and the colored boy, having the least of influential support and consideration, has been left out. Second, in parts of the country where colored people are most numerous, the common-school system is so deficient and the attendance so poor that very few young men can pass the examination for apprenticeship for want of general intelligence. The restrictions which the labor unions have placed on the apprentice system are not placed there to debar colored boys, for they apply to all boys who may wish to be mechanics, whether white or colored. Some of the brightest white boys whom I have the pleasure to remember were kept out of the trades on account of the fact that the unions allowed at that time only three apprentices to every one hundred workmen employed.

There is beginning to be an earnest call for colored mechanics, and colored youth are coming to feel the need of learning something about the forces of nature. They want to work with the reaper, the steam engine and the dynamo. During last year I received a letter from a Northern firm asking that they be sent forty colored boiler-makers to work in a new addition to their works. A few months later, a well-known Chicago firm desired us to send them six graduate mechanics, and this year we received letters from Indiana, Pennsylvania and Alabama asking us to send colored mechanics in the metal-working trades to the number of eighteen. During the last three years we have been unable to furnish half of the colored youth called for in the mechanical engineering lines; and we are satisfied that they were not called to fill the places of strikers. In all cases the call came from men of force and standing who desired to give these opportunities to colored youth.

To those conversant with conditions in the industrial world, it is known that the handicap of the colored mechanic in securing employment is not so much due to labor organization as it is to prejudiced foremen in control of the various lines of work--men whose ability is in the direction of bulldozing and "driving" rather than in that of skilled management. I have known a number of instances where these "fossils of former days" have objected even to a colored man passing through their departments. Fortunately rapid improvements are being made in our industrial system, and many establishments are introducing ideas of social and industrial betterment among their employes which call for better and broader men as foremen and superintendents, and the "rapid drivers" are being replaced by young men of training and honesty of purpose. I have the honor to know personally one of these young men who last year took a position as superintendent of works employing two thousand three hundred men. Having received applications from four colored mechanics, he employed them, whereupon the union men of the department where the colored men were working started a strike, as a result of which they were told by the new superintendent that the time had passed in that shop when the color of a man would play any part in his employment or discharge. Two weeks of the rigors of a Northern winter persuaded them to go to work with the colored men, and it is reported that there has been no further trouble at these works since that time.

Certain classes of our colored youth are too well satisfied with these reports that they are locked out of the world of labor, since they have no special desire to enter any vocations where physical activity is a requirement. This class may be found in large numbers employed around our railroad stations, barber shops and pool rooms, but we never find them around the busy shops and factories seeking employment from the superintendents. I have often heard some of this class uproariously denouncing, fully three miles from his works, some superintendent or manager for his color prejudice when I knew they would not work five consecutive weeks at the best job within the gift of this manager. But there are other classes, industrious and eager to receive training, who do wish to work along industrial lines. To help develop the dormant power of these intelligent colored youth, some of the leading states and some generous Americans are furnishing means to equip industrial schools with workshops and laboratories. Most of these schools have a proficient teaching force and are being equipped with the needed tools and apparatus. There are few needs so urgent as industrial education for colored youth, and in the best schools much is being done to broaden the courses and provide the latest tools and devices, so as to keep in touch with the modern practices adopted by our leading captains of industry. A people without industrial status in this modern age is an undesirable incumbrance on any community.

*The Southern Workman*, 31 (November, 1902): 614-16.

## 16. NEGRO MECHANICS

The November number of the *Southern Workman* contained a many article by Mr. Harry E. Thomas, Instructor in the Machine and Engineering Department of

Tuskegee Institute, in which he says that the exclusion of young colored men from the machine shops of the North and South is not due so much to prejudice as to their inability to do the best work.

This fact finds easy explanation in the poor school advantages that the colored youth have in many cases received and in the lack of the inherited mechanical skill which one finds among foreign workmen; but it is refreshing to have a young colored man face the facts in the case. The trades unions are right in taking a stand against poor work, and as much of the work done by young colored mechanics hitherto has been of inferior quality, it is natural that the colored men should suffer.

Undoubtedly, too, race prejudice has existed, but Mr. Thomas is quite right in saying, "There will always be in America an opportunity for the fittest." Mr. Thomas is endeavoring at Tuskegee to make good mechanics, fit for the best positions, and is having, as we are at Hampton, far more applications than can be filled for thoroughly trained men.

It is true that the ardor of colored youth is dampened by the oft-repeated statement that the labor unions of the North exclude colored mechanics. Certainly every fair-minded person will sympathize with Negro youth in the difficulties that they have in their struggle upward, but to represent that there is no chance for them is to do them and the community injustice. A somewhat careful investigation into the condition of the peasant classes of Europe has convinced the writer that none of them have as good opportunities as belong to the poorer class of blacks in our country. As General Armstrong was accustomed to say, "The work of a young colored man in the South often receives even readier recognition from a white community than would be accorded a white man under the same conditions."<sup>17</sup>

*The Southern Workman*, 31 (December, 1902): 646-47.

#### 17. THE NEGRO AS A SKILLED WORKMAN

The impression entertained by many people that the negro is not well fitted for fine and skilful work seems to be confirmed, in some degree, by an investigation the *Chattanooga Tradesman* has been making during the last few months. A circular letter was sent to all the manufacturers in the South, asking how many negroes they employ, how many of them are skilled or semi-skilled, what kind of skilled work they do, what wages they receive, how they compare in efficiency with the white workmen, whether they are improving in efficiency, how much education they have had, what the effect of the education has been, and whether the employers intend to continue to employ skilled negro workmen. About five hundred replies were received, giving the most contradictory answers; but *The Tradesman* reaches this conclusion:

"In our investigations we find the negro more useful and skilled in the cotton-seed oil-mills, the lumber-mills, the foundries, brick kilns, mines and blast-furnaces. They are superior to white labor and possibly superior to any other labor in these establishments, but not in the capacity of skillful and ingenious artisans. It is more in the line of experienced assistants that they are valuable and almost indispensable. As brick masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, firemen, and engineers many of them become fairly expert, but in the textile industries, fine cabinet-work, watch-making, nice tool and machine constructing, and in the professions the number who have distinguished themselves is too small to be appreciable as affecting the possibilities of the race."

The replies of the manufacturers are summarized as follows:

"In formulating a summary of the information elicited concerning negro skilled or semi-skilled labor in connection with Southern manufactures, we shall deal entirely with facts and information received from those manufacturing establishments that reported the employment of this species of negro

labor--to wit, skilled or semi-skilled.

"We have ascertained that of 500 manufacturing plants that answered our inquiries 344 employ negroes. Of this number 209 concerns employing 27,000 persons of all kinds, both white and black, report the employment of 12,840 negroes, and of this number 2,650 negroes are skilled or semi-skilled."

"The highest wages paid to skilled labor is reported from Arkansas, where as much as \$4 per day is paid to skilled negro laborers, in some of the establishments, especially in the cotton-oil mills and the lumber-mills. The lowest wages paid to semi-skilled labor seems to be in Virginia, West Virginia, North and South Carolina, where they sometimes get as low as \$1 per day. The average rate prevailing, however, in most of the Southern States for skilled and semi-skilled labor is from \$1.25 to \$3 per day."

"Of the 209 establishments reporting the employment of skilled labor, in answer to question No. 9, 'How do they compare in efficiency with white workmen?' 105 concerns employing 12,060 men of all kinds say that they compare favorably, while 91 concerns, employing 13,310 men of all kinds, say that they compare unfavorably, and 13 concerns employing 1,630 men of all kinds fail to express an opinion either way. For heavy work calling for endurance nearly all unite in saying that the negro common laborer is far superior to the white labor that is procurable in the South."

"In answer to question 10, 'Are the negro workmen improving in efficiency?' 87 concerns, employing 13,880 men of all kinds, say 'Yes'; 91 concerns, employing 9,235 men of all kinds, say 'No,' and 31 concerns, employing 3,855 men of all kinds, either fail to answer the question or answer indefinitely."

"In answer to question 12, 'What effect has education had on your negro workmen?' 67 concerns, employing 6,855 persons of all kinds, say 'Bad'; 47 concerns, employing 10,090 persons of all kinds, say 'Good'; 95 concerns, employing 10,055 persons of all kinds, either fail to answer the question or their answers are that no effect is perceptible, or their answers are too indefinite to be considered."

"The only information elicited from question 11, 'How much education have your negro workmen received?' was that the number that were educated beyond the rudiments, reading, writing, and arithmetic was so small as to mark them as phenomenal instances and not more than 15 such were noted. About 40 per cent could read, write, and cipher, but the majority were untaught so far as regular schooling is concerned."

"In answer to question 13, 'Shall you continue to employ skilled negro workmen?' a very large majority expressed it as their intention to continue to employ them. The general inference drawn from the numerous answers of employers was that, in their experience, but little first-class skilled negro labor was to be had. In certain industries the semi-skilled negro was especially desirable, and as common laborers they were in almost every instance considered preferable to the Southern white labor."

*The Literary Digest*, 25 (November 8, 1902): 590.

## 18. THE AMERICAN NEGRO ARTISAN

What is Being Done to Replace the Artisans of Slavery Times--  
Thomas J. Calloway in *Cassier's Magazine*

The slavery system of training mechanics produced a type of Negro artisan which served the plantation needs fairly well, and to some extent supplied town carpenters and village blacksmiths. With the passing of slavery, however, that type of artisan is also passing, and the question now arises as to what extent post-bellum Negroes are finding their way into the trades. Industrial education, as the term has been generally employed in relation to Negro schools of the south, has meant a system of education serving not only to give the elements of academic learning, but likewise to train, in shop and farm, young people who may fill the demands of the industrial world for skilled labor, be that labor agricultural, domestic, or manufacturing.

Exponents and friends of the system have never claimed that the young people which it graduates can possibly be of that high degree of skill which results only from long application to a specialty; but the claim has been made, and, it is believed, proven by the results, that in an elementary and primary way the better-equipped industrial schools are fitting a superior grade of artisans for the trades to take the place of the slavery trained mechanics.

Each of the industrial schools gives instruction in all or a portion of the following trades: agriculture, horticulture, carpentry, blacksmithing, wheelwrighting, printing, painting, foundry and machine work, shoemaking, bricklaying, plastering, brickmaking, saw-milling, tinning, harness-making, tailoring, plain sewing, dressmaking, millinery, cooking, laundering, nurse-training, housekeeping, mechanical and architectural drawing, and perhaps others. The actual number of graduates from these schools who have entered into the trades is comparatively small, due to the greater demand for teachers and for persons to take other occupations for which a knowledge of the trades is a material aid. It has been estimated that the industrial schools have sent out about a thousand actual artisans,--not enough to man a single large manufacturing plant. As representing an awakening process, these thousand graduates must be regarded not so much for the actual proportion they represent to the millions of their race, but their true estimate is that of the compressed yeast cake which is leavening the infinitely larger race problems.

(The author gives the results of his observations of Negro artisans on a recent trip through the south). At Atlanta colored men were found doing skilled labor in the manufacture of fertilizers and chemicals, the making of bricks, as coopers, wagon and buggy makers, shoemakers, and as size-mixers and cotton-classers in the cotton mills. They were generally employed in all branches of the building trades. At Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama, and vicinity many thousands were employed in the mines and in the production of coke, pig iron, and steel. Colored men were observed to be holding the responsible positions of foremen, cupola men, furnace-keepers, and iron-graders. At Knoxville, Chattanooga, Richmond, and indeed at all the places visited, Negroes were employed as blacksmiths, blacksmiths' helpers, machinists' helpers, molders, puddlers, rollers, roughers, catchers, furnace men, and boiler-makers. At Knoxville, Tennessee, hundreds of Negroes were employed in cutting, shaping, and polishing "Tennessee marble"---a work requiring close attention and considerable skill. In the various places visited in North Carolina and Virginia colored men were engaged in tanneries and tobacco factories; and throughout the south they are almost entirely used in the cotton-seed oil mills.

Noteworthy examples are not wanting of individuals and enterprises that fully illustrate the upward strivings of the Negro in mechanics. The Coleman manufacturing company is a capitalized corporation composed of colored stockholders and is managed by a board of directors of the same race, of whom Warren C. Coleman, an ex-slave, is the president and general manager, as well as the largest stockholder. The company has built, equipped, and is conducting a cotton mill at Concord, North Carolina. As race pride and race improvement were the moving spirits in the enterprise, a special effort was made to employ Negro mechanics in all features of the construction and operation. The architect, the brick-makers and masons, the carpenters, and the factory employees now engaged in turning out a fair grade of cotton goods, sheetings, etc., are all colored. "Reformers' Hall," a business building, containing a theater, office rooms, an armory, etc., has just been completed in the heart of Washington, D.C., at a cost of a hundred thousand dollars, by an architect, J. A. Lankford, contractors, and mechanics, all of the Negro race.

R. R. Taylor, instructor in mechanical and architectural drawing at the Tuskegee institute, in Alabama, and the architect of the numerous buildings of that institution, is probably the best equipped in training and experience of any Negro architect in the United States. He graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology several years ago, and has designed a score or more of the buildings for the Tuskegee school, ranging in value from \$50,000 downward. A chapel seating 2,000 persons and a Carnegie library are his best designs. The United States patent office was able to



identify in 1900, through correspondence with patent attorneys, 357 patents issued to Negroes. Probably as many more existed which could not be identified.

*Public Opinion*, 36 (March 24, 1904): 365.

#### 19. SKILLED LABOR IN MEMPHIS, TENN., 1908

For several months it was the privilege of the author to visit factories of every character and note with his own eyes just what the opportunities of the colored people really are along the line of employment; and the results of his observations were as astonishing as they were gratifying. His investigations were particularly directed along the line of skilled labor. . . . He visited the candy factories and found some of their most efficient and reliable workmen colored men. In one of the factories the foreman is a colored man of intelligence and culture, Mr. Charles Taylor, and practically the whole working force are colored men. Very much the same may be said of the other candy factories in Memphis. Mr. James Wooten, Donald Hayden, Chas. Taylor and many others have been creditably identified for years with the candy making business and enjoy the confidence of their employers. Possibly the oldest candy maker in Memphis and the pioneer in that business is Mr. Charles Morton, who has made candy for nearly 45 years.

The author visited the broom factories and found some of their most expert operatives to be colored men. He found similar conditions in the mattress factories. It is hardly probable that two more efficient mattress makers than Maurice Larry and Garnett Hopkins can be found in the whole country; and there are others quite as skillful in the same line of work. The author visited several blacksmith and horse-shoeing shops and found no one white except the proprietor. In the great lumber yards he found many colored men holding the most responsible positions and that not a foot of lumber is carried out of these yards without their inspection. He visited the slaughter houses and found the veteran butchers to be colored. At one of the largest slaughter houses he found a colored man the foreman, Mr. Fred Smith, a very kind and courteous gentleman. He found that many of the engineers running the various plants are colored men of experience and ability. In many of the best white tailoring establishments may be found first-class colored tailors doing everything that is to be done in that business. Without further elaboration it may be repeated that the results of the author's observations were as astonishing as they were gratifying.

It is quite probable that no part of the great northern section of this country gives to the colored man such great opportunities along the lines of skilled labor. It is a common occurrence for colored contractors to erect buildings for white people, notwithstanding fierce competition from white contractors of ability who feel that racial considerations alone entitle them to the work. In the laying of brick and the erection of buildings in general skilled workmen of both races work side by side and no serious objection is made. . . .

In many respects the city of Memphis has a distinct advantage over most of the other cities of the South, but in few other respects is the advantage for colored people more pronounced than in business opportunities. Having the largest colored population in the far South, it is very natural that the business outlook for energetic, capable and shrewd business men should be of the most favorable character. . . .

In the past few years the colored people have awakened to the fact that it is commendable in them to patronize the business enterprises of their own people and there is at present a general inclination to do so. . . .

In the city of Memphis no serious effort has ever been made by the colored people to go into the dry goods business on a scale that would enable them to compete with the big concerns that are already in the field. It has always been a question of doubt whether the colored man would be able to

compete successfully with the Hebrews who seem to have an instinctive knowledge and mastery of the dry goods business. . . .

The colored people are well represented in the grocery business and have many examples of mercantile success. There are attractive drug stores, photograph studios, tailor shops, feed stores, restaurants, barber shops, blacksmith shops, undertaking establishments, jewelry stores, dental parlors, coal and wood yards, laundries, shoe shops, shoe stores, ice cream manufactories, shoe shining parlors, newspaper plants, printing offices, silk and lace cleaning establishments, harness making stores and many other kinds of business establishments in Memphis.

The greatest and most successful competitor that the colored businessman must meet is the Italian. We are not able to account for the Italian's complete mastery of the patronage of the colored people; but he holds it nevertheless as if in the hollow of his hands. The Italian lunch houses and grocery stores will be packed to suffocation with colored patrons while colored establishments of a similar character would be practically empty. . . . The general explanation. . . is that the Italian is much craftier as a businessman. He is a good mixer with colored people and a great jollier. . . .

G. P. Hamilton, *The Bright Side of Memphis* (Memphis: By the Author, 1908), pp. 11-17, as reproduced in Lynch, *Black Urban Condition*, pp. 79-80.

## 20. THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF NEGROES IN THE NORTH:

### THE NEGRO SKILLED MECHANIC IN THE NORTH

R. R. Wright, Jr.<sup>18</sup>

Negroes were known to have been in some of the Northern colonies within ten years after their introduction as slaves into Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619; and by 1650 Negro slavery was very generally recognized in New England and New York. The Quaker Colony of Pennsylvania had slaves from its beginning in 1682; and almost from the beginning there existed a conflict between white free labor and black slave labor. As early as 1708 this conflict is indicated by a protest which white workmen presented to the Pennsylvania Assembly against the practice, in which some masters indulged, of hiring their Negro slaves out, thus increasing the competition with white workmen. In Pennsylvania the practice continued, as did also the protest against it. In 1722 the General Assembly was again appealed to by white workmen, and it declared that "the principle (that masters could hire slaves to compete with free white mechanics) is dangerous and injurious and not to be sanctioned." We have, from time to time, sketches of Negro life in Pennsylvania, and these uniformly agree as to the difficulties in the way of Negroes following skilled mechanical trades. In 1838 in the Register of Trades of Colored People of Philadelphia, the observer writes: "We are aware that the greater part of them are engaged in the most menial service and the severest labor. They are met (in the higher branches of labor) with prejudices, with which they have to contend, which render it difficult for them to find places for their sons as apprentices to learn mechanical trades." In 1856 Benjamin Bacon, a Friend, who published "The Statistics of the Colored People of Philadelphia," reported that "less than two-thirds of those who have trades follow them. A few of the remainder pursue other avocations from choice, but the greater number are compelled to abandon their trades on account of the unrelenting prejudice against their color." At this time, however, Mr. Bacon enumerated 53 Negro brickmakers, 49 carpenters, 112 shoemakers, 248 barbers, 49 tailors, 588 dressmakers, 22 blacksmiths, also cabinetmakers, weavers, plasterers, sail-makers, etc. Not all of them, however, were following their trades. In 1898 Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, in his study of "The Philadelphia Negro," discussed "The practical exclusion of the Negro from the trades and industries of a great city like Philadelphia."

From the best information which we have at hand, there is today a smaller proportion of Negroes in mechanical trades in the North than there was before the Civil War. This is due largely to the introduction of machinery and the enlargement of the factory system, which has either absorbed or driven out of business a large proportion of those who were able to ply their trades alone.

For example, in 1856, there were 112 Negro shoemakers and 22 blacksmiths in the city of Philadelphia; while in 1900 there were in the same city only 60 boot and shoemakers and 30 blacksmiths and wheelwrights, notwithstanding the fact that the population had increased more than three-fold.

According to the Census of 1900, there were then 275,116 Negroes in manufacturing pursuits on the mainland of the United States. Of these, 51,144 were in Northern states and 223,972 in Southern states. In other words, there were 311 Negroes in this class of occupation to every 10,000 Negroes in the country; there were 562 Negroes following mechanical pursuits in the North to every 10,000 Negroes in the North, and 283 Negroes following such pursuits in the South to every 10,000 Negroes in the South. The table [presented below is] taken from the United States Census of 1900, gives the principal occupations pursued by Negroes of this class in the North and South.

PRINCIPAL SKILLED OCCUPATIONS OF NEGROES NORTH AND SOUTH CENSUS OF 1900				
Occupations	Conti- nental U.S.	North	South	Per Cent in the North
<b>Males</b>				
Total in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	241,934	43,991	197,943	18.2
Blacksmiths.....	10,083	1,140	8,943	11.2
Boots,shoemakers and repairers.....	4,506	707	3,799	15.7
Brick and tilemakers.....	9,931	3,489	6,442	34.1
Carpenters and joiners.....	21,067	1,664	19,403	7.9
Charcoal,coke, and lime burners.....	3,861	598	3,263	15.5
Coopers.....	2,953	185	2,768	6.3
Engineers & firemen (not locomotive. Iron & steel workers(not otherwise specified).....	10,215	2,531	7,684	24.8
	12,642	3,788	8,854	29.9
Machinists.....	1,258	427	831	39.9
Marble and stone cutters.....	1,252	295	957	23.6
Masons, (brick and stone).....	14,370	4,452	9,918	20.9
Miners and quarrymen.....	36,439	8,851	27,588	24.3
Painters,glaziers,and varnishers....	5,749	1,261	4,488	21.9
Plasterers.....	3,752	1,209	2,543	32.3
Plumbers,gas and steamfitters.....	1,192	317	875	26.6
Printers,lithographers,& pressmen, etc.	1,119	471	648	42.1
Saw and planing-mill employees.....	33,156	558	32,598	1.7
Tailors.....	1,531	413	1,118	26.9
Tobacco & Cigar factory operatives..	10,232	839	9,393	8.1
Turpentine distillers.....	5,688	2	5,686	*
Whitewashers.....	2,355	934	1,421	39.6
Woodworkers (not specified).....	1,518	221	1,297	14.6
<b>Women</b>				
Dressmakers.....	12,514	4,235	8,279	33.8
Seamstresses.....	11,451	1,724	9,727	15.1
Tobacco & Cigar factory operatives..	5,117	167	4,950	3.3

\* Less than one tenth per cent.

This table shows that in nearly every one of the more important mechanical trades in which Negroes are engaged, there is in proportion to the Negro population in each section, a larger number of Negro mechanics in the North than in the South. The Negroes of the North form a little more than ten per cent of the total Negro population, but in some trades they form more than four times as large a proportion of the Negro workers in these trades. More than two-fifths of the entire number of Negro printers and pressmen, and

almost as large a proportion of Negro iron and steel workers and of Negro whitewashers, live in the North; more than a third of the dressmakers, and of brick and tile-makers, and more than one-fourth of the stationary engineers and firemen, plumbers, gasfitters, and tailors are in the same section.

In the principal occupations the Negroes form a smaller percentage of the total number of Negroes in the trades, in the following occupations only; carpenters and joiners, in which they form 7.9 per cent; coopers, 6.3 per cent; tobacco and cigar factory operatives, in which they are 8.1 per cent; and turpentine distillers, in which only two Negroes were returned in the North. The results of this table are probably directly opposed to the observations of many people. But this is so because the observations have been largely in the cities. The large proportion of Northern Negroes is in the cities and the manufacturing and mechanical pursuits are largely city pursuits. A more accurate comparison between the North and the South would therefore consist of a presentation of conditions among Negroes in the cities of each section.

The tables on the next two pages show some interesting things: a comparison of the number of mechanics in the specified cities in 1890 and 1900, from which the increase during the decade can be easily deduced; and the number of Negroes in each specified pursuit for every 10,000 Negroes in each city respectively. Thus, confining the comparison to the cities, there is not the large preponderance in favor of the North as shown in the former table. Indeed, in most of the trades, the Southern cities still have a larger number of workmen than the cities of the North and also a larger proportion. But the increase in the number of mechanics in the Northern cities is more uniform than in the Southern cities. There has been a gradual increase of Negro mechanics in the Northern cities, while on the other hand the increase in the Southern cities is considerably slower, and in many cases there is actual decrease. In Boston, in only four of the trades mentioned was there a decrease; namely, among the blacksmiths and wheelwrights, boot and shoemakers, machinists, and tailors. In Philadelphia and Indianapolis, there was a decrease in two trades; namely, among boot and shoemakers, brickmakers, and potters in Philadelphia, and cabinetmakers, upholsterers, and marble and stone-cutters in Indianapolis. In Cincinnati, there was a decrease in only one trade, that of carpenters and joiners, while in Pittsburg and Chicago, there was a decrease of Negro workmen in none of the trades. The total decrease in the Northern cities was 279 as against a total increase of 2,366, being a net increase of 2,087 Negro mechanics during the decade from 1890 to 1900. On the other hand, of the Southern cities, Atlanta, Georgia, decreased in blacksmiths and wheelwrights, cabinetmakers, and upholsterers, carpenters and joiners, plasterers and printers, engravers, etc. Baltimore decreased in blacksmiths and wheelwrights, boot and shoemakers, brickmakers and potters, butchers, carpenters and joiners, plumbers, gasfitters, and tailors; Nashville, Tenn., decreased in blacksmiths and wheelwrights, boot and shoemakers, brickmakers and potters, butchers, carpenters and joiners, machinists, marble and stone-cutters, brick and stone masons, painters, glaziers, and plasterers; New Orleans decreased in boot and shoemakers, carpenters and joiners, iron and steel workers, machinists, tailors, and dressmakers; Memphis, Tennessee, decreased in plasterers and printers. Richmond, Virginia, decreased in blacksmiths and wheelwrights, boot and shoemakers, cabinetmakers and upholsterers, carpenters and joiners, iron and steel workers, machinists, marble and stone-cutters, painters, glaziers, etc., plasterers, plumbers, gasfitters, and tailors. The total decrease in the six Southern cities was 1887, while the total increase was 1754, a net decrease of 133 Negro mechanics in Southern cities. This comparison shows important tendencies; the North slowly but surely increasing, the South struggling to hold its own.

Although there has been a general increase of Negroes in skilled mechanical trades in the North during the past two decades, yet, as compared with the white population, the Negroes of the North fall far short of having their proper proportion of mechanics. The Negroes are 4.8 per cent of the total population of Philadelphia, but they form only 1.2 per cent of those in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits; 3.5 per cent of the Negroes of Pittsburg are engaged in this class of occupations, while the Negroes are 5.3 per cent of the population. In Boston the proportion of Negro population

CHIEF OCCUPATIONS OF NEGRO MECHANICS IN PRINCIPAL CITIES, NORTH AND SOUTH,  
IN 1890 AND 1900, AND PROPORTION PER 10,000 OF POPULATION IN 1900

NORTHERN CITIES

OCCUPATIONS	Boston			Chicago			Cincinnati			Phil.			Pittsb'g			Ind'polis		
	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000 1900
Blacksmiths & wheelwrights..	10	9	8	21	33	11	23	18	12	18	30	5	16	24	14	11	11	7
Boots & shoemakers.....	23	20	18	11	17	6	8	14	10	63	60	9	2	2	1	8	8	5
Cabinetmakers & upholsterers	3	9	8	8	15	5	0	3	2	73	76	12		6	4	7	2	1
Carpenters & joiners.....	23	37	33	37	55	18	33	21	14	61	96	15	17	26	15	49	54	34
Iron & steel workers.....	3	13	12	13	34	11	13	21	14	22	176	29	207	373	219	45	128	80
Machinists.....	7	6	5	16	30	10	4	7	5	9	47	7	3	9	5	4	9	6
Marble & stone cutters.....	0	8	7	4	6	2	3	4	3	11	37	6	5	11	6	16	2	1
Masons (brick & stone).....	17	30	27	20	73	24	18	111	74	42	308	48	19	216	127	14	143	90
Painters, glaziers, etc.....	18	25	23	50	138	46	13	24	16	28	57	9	8	21	12		25	15
Plumbers, gasfitters, etc....	1	9	8	2	12	4	1	5	3	4	21	3	2	3	2	7	21	43
Printers, lithographers, etc..	17	23	21	24	50	17	7	11	7	61	97	16	5	15	9	6	11	7
Tailors.....	54	35	32	14	52	17	7	18	12	38	38	6	3	6	4	3	14	9
Plasterers.....		3	2	21	43	17		14	10		24	4	17	25	15	25	29	18
Butchers.....		12	10	8	30	10	4	4	3	27	36	5	1	3	2	0		
Brickmakers & potters.....		1	1	8	8	3	2	5	3	406	185	29	35	97	57		8	5
Dressmakers, etc.....	142	170	154	232	561	187	136	152	101	746	855	108	55	101	59	62	90	57

## SOUTHERN CITIES

OCCUPATIONS	Atlanta, Ga.			Baltimore			Nashville			New Orleans			Memphis			Rich'd, Va.		
	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900	1890	1900	per 10,000, 1900
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights.....	140	113	32	35	32	4	113	99	33	116	147	19	120	159	32	139	117	37
Boots&shoemakers & repairers.....	120	134	36	88	55	7	82	72	24	366	253	33	47	64	13	123	102	32
Brickmakers & potters..	59			981	346	43	121	91	30				109			96		
Butchers.....	17	33	9	90	63	8	26	21	7	48	62	8	18	31	6	32	42	13
Cabinetmakers & upholsterers.....	16	15	4	59	69	8	19	25	8	92	122	16	21	32	6	28	15	
Carpenters & joiners...	503	372	106	85a	67	8	198b	153	34	603	598	77	369	462	92	150	125	39
Iron & steel workers...	43	57	17	46	56	7	19	20	7	17	5	1	25	59	12	293	191	59
Machinists.....	11	34	10	9	9	1	16	10	3	10	9	1	11	38	8	13	12	4
Marble&stone cutters...		16	4	128	106	13	69	21	7	495	14	2	126	14	3	20	17	5
Brick & stone masons...		223	63		325	41	335	293	98		518	67		228	46	73	125	39
Painters, glaziers, etc..	74	100	28	37	44	6	99	83	28	200	227	29	80	133	27	28	37	8
Plasterers.....	116	77	22		30	4	83	60	20	239	255	33	84	82	16	165	129	40
Plumbers, gasfitters, etc.	29	39	11	10	8	1	33	33	11		12	2	23	59	12	15	8	3
Printers, engravers, etc.	25	14	4	24	35	5	12	27	9	29	46	6	8	3	1	11	14	4
Tailors <sup>1</sup> .....	35	68	19	93	41	5	19	32	11	191	136	18	6	27	5	27	14	4
Dressmakers, <sup>1</sup> etc.....	197	248	70	814	858	109	271	396	132	1689	1450	188	341	557	111	270	379	118

<sup>a</sup>Also 78 shipbuilders<sup>b</sup>Also 27 shipbuilders<sup>1</sup>Includes females; all other figures for males only.

is 2.1 per cent of the whole population, while employees in manufacturing and mechanical trades are only 0.7 per cent; in Chicago the Negroes are 1.8 per cent of the total population, and 0.6 per cent of the total workers are in mechanical trades; in Indianapolis 9.4 and 3.2 per cent are the respective percentages of the Negroes in the total population and in mechanical pursuits; and in Cincinnati the percentages are respectively 4.4 and 1.5. Of these cities Philadelphia has the smallest proportion and Pittsburg the largest, other cities having about one-third their proper proportion of Negroes in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.

The cause of the scarcity of Negroes in the trades is often said to be chiefly race prejudice; but there are other causes which are much more easily described. In the first place, there are the very meagre opportunities for Negroes to learn trades. In the North there are but few schools where the Negro boy or girl can learn a mechanical trade. It follows that it is practically impossible for the large proportion of Negro children born in the North to learn trades. The North therefore has to depend most largely for its Negro mechanics upon Southern sources; and it remains a fact that the large proportion of Negro mechanics in the North are of Southern birth and training. Another reason why there are few Negroes in the North in mechanical trades is the competition that exists in the North. Negro workmen are not infrequently deficient in one or both of the things most necessary in competition--speed and accuracy. As a rule, the Negro who has learned his trade in slavery, and his son who learned under him in the South, cannot do work with the same accuracy and finish as the white workman in the North; or if they can do the work with the same degree of accuracy, they generally take a much longer time to do it. Still another reason is that in the North conditions of work contain less of the personal element, and every man is expected to work regularly, to report promptly, and to let nothing interfere with his work. Many Negroes who have had opportunities in the North have lost them because they have not learned the lessons of regularity and punctuality. A fourth very important reason has to do with labor organizations. As a rule Negroes are ignorant of the value of labor organizations, or, if they know their value, they are quite unable to organize themselves. They complain generally because they are excluded from, or rather not heartily invited into, labor unions; and their efforts have generally ended with their complaints. Yet they have not usually proved that they are desirable union members, either by organizing themselves or by any active, intelligent interest in labor union affairs in cases where they are admitted to white unions. They have not (largely because of lack of numbers but also because of former training and lack of industrial intelligence) made themselves a desirable quantity for the labor unions, except in some rare and notable cases; and the unions do not yet see that they should hand over to them the privileges and advantages which it has taken them years of struggle and agitation and organization to gain.

Notwithstanding the difficulties, there is a steady increase in Negro mechanics and they are gradually learning, in the school of hard experience, how to overcome many of the obstacles which now hinder them. The extent of the progress among Negro mechanics is not known to the public. For, in a city like New York, or Chicago, or Philadelphia, where tens of thousands of mechanics are employed, a hundred Negroes would hardly be noticed; and if they increased to a hundred and fifty the increase, though fifty per cent, would create no stir. If they were transferred, however, to a small Southern town they would be very conspicuous; but as it is now, a million or more people in the large city are absolutely ignorant of them and one finds out about them only through special investigation. Furthermore, if some of these Negro mechanics in large Northern cities should do the same amount of business in the Southern towns that they now do in New York, or Chicago, or Indianapolis, or Philadelphia, they would be rated as most successful contractors. But in the environment in which they are placed, where the building business often averages over a million dollars per week, they are practically lost, and it is difficult for the casual observer to measure their progress.

Yet, in a few trades in some cities of the North, Negroes form a larger proportion of the workmen than they do of the population. For example, in Pittsburg, where the Negroes are 5.3 per cent of the population, they formed at the Census of 1900 more than 20 per cent of the brick and tile makers,

about 9 per cent of the stationary engineers and firemen, 14 per cent of the brick and stone masons, 8 per cent of the plasterers, over 10 per cent of the paper hangers; and of the iron and steel workers, who constitute Pittsburg's chief skilled mechanical workers, the Negroes comprise 3.9 per cent. In Chicago 1.8 per cent of the population are Negroes, but 3.1 per cent of the plasterers, 5.5 per cent of the paper hangers, and 17.4 per cent of the white-washers are Negroes. In New York the Negroes are 1.8 per cent of the population but comprise 5.7 per cent of the stove, furnace, and grate makers.

The gaining of a foothold in the North has been no easy task for the Negro mechanic. Every Northern city has scores of men who were rated as mechanics in their Southern homes but who are now engaged in domestic and personal service. In Philadelphia, for example, there are fully twice as many Negroes, who claim to be mechanics, working in other lines of endeavor, as are following their trades. The fierceness of competition and the "struggle for existence" can be well illustrated by recounting the experiences of the Negro mechanic in the North. His chief problem is to *get work*. Often he has come from a section where there was plenty of work, and where he had but little difficulty in securing it, where every contractor knew him and he knew every contractor; or he may have been a contractor himself. But in the large city it happens often that there are two or more men who want every job. If he is not a first-class mechanic he generally gives up and enters one of the numerous avenues of domestic and personal service, where competition is not so great. Necessity drives him to this. If he has more than the average pluck and the average skill, he still continues to hunt work. Occasionally he succeeds as a journeyman. But in the majority of cases, if he is a carpenter, bricklayer, painter, plasterer, or connected with some other branch of the building trades, he becomes a "contractor" in that branch, and takes small jobs of repairing and altering. In the large cities there are scores of these jobbers who seldom hire anyone, and who rarely have any one job of as much as a thousand dollars. Yet they make a living. A good workman, even though he is slow, can in this way build up quite a trade, and when he is busiest can give work to the other jobbers and eventually hire one or two men regularly, or, as is sometimes the case, form a partnership with them. Thus accumulating capital and confidence, he may reach the point where he can launch out into business on a much larger scale; in some such way most of the Negro builders whom I have met in the North have gotten their start.

But there is another method which is not so long nor so tedious; but which is less highly esteemed and has brought Negroes into disrepute in some labor union circles. I refer to strike breaking, and the unions condemn Negroes for this. Strike-breaking is wrong from the point of view of the union just as the strike is wrong from the point of view of the employer. But it is one of the few methods which Negroes have used to force recognition from the unions, and has been possibly an economic necessity. For the Negroes are used by the employers, and generally solely for the employers' benefit; yet, from the point of view of the Negro the breaking of a strike is a crude kind of organization on the part of the Negroes which forces them prominently before the unions. And so far, much of the recognition which they have received from unions in the North has come in consequence of their being used to break strikes. In Chicago, for example, prior to 1900, the Negroes had practically no recognition in the building trades unions. But in that year, there was a great strike or boycott of the building trades. Negroes were employed to break the strike, and the unions found that they would be defeated. Therefore, as a last resort, the labor unions issued to the Negroes the following appeal: "The frequency with which unscrupulous employers of labor are of late supplanting white men by their colored brethren in times of industrial trouble is a question of most serious moment to the wage-earners of this country. In calling attention to this question it is not our intention to arouse sentiment which might lead to race prejudice or a race war, which would be deplorable in its results, but rather in a friendly spirit to lay before our colored brethren a statement of facts which we hope may convince them of their error. We do not even condemn them, believing they are more justly entitled to our sympathy and support. In slavery days, now happily gone by, when the traffic in human flesh and blood remained a blot on our civilization, the Negro was unable to free himself from bondage. His white brother arose in arms and declared that the slave should be free. Today the Negro is being used to keep the white man in industrial slavery. The colored man, more simple in his ways, with fewer wants and these more easily satisfied, is contented to work under



conditions which are irksome to the white workman, and he is today, perhaps unconsciously, being used to drag the white man down to a level lower than was the Negro before he was freed from slavery. *It is to remedy this that we appeal to him, to welcome him into our fold, to elevate him to our standards, and to better his condition as well as our own. The trades-union movement knows no race or color.* Its aims are the bettering of the conditions of the wage-earner, whatever his color or creed. In this spirit we appeal to the colored workman to join us in our work. Come into our trades unions, give us your assistance, and in return receive our support, so that race hatred may be forever buried and the workers of the country united in a solid phalanx to demand what we are justly entitled to--a fair share of the fruits of our industry."

Similarly in Chicago also, Negroes have gained entrance into other avenues; notably in the packing houses where a few years ago there were but few. The great strike of 1905 opened up many places to them. In the mining industry Negroes, as a rule, are loyal to the unions, which, so far as I can ascertain, have but little complaint against them. Yet they very largely won recognition after being used as strike breakers. In Buxton, Iowa, where there is one of the strongest and most loyal coal miners' unions west of the Mississippi River, the foothold was gotten thirty years ago by Negro strike breakers. Similarly in the steel industry, Negroes have gained places by breaking strikes. A few years ago, at their Cleveland meeting, the Amalgamated Association of Steel and Iron Workers refused to organize Negroes. But Negroes have worked themselves gradually into the steel industry of Pittsburg; and at the last meeting of the Amalgamated Association, at Youngstown, Ohio, it was resolved to attempt to organize Negroes because it was found that they were injuring the Association by being used as strike breakers.

It is in the strike, often attended as it is by riot and bloodshed, that we see the worst form of competition. Still, after all is said and done, it is probably true that the Negro has been the gainer. For not only has he in many cases secured a place, but he is gradually leading the labor unions and his race to appreciate the fact that the value of Negro labor is increased if it is organized. Heretofore, the spirit of the union has been more that of indifference than hostility. In some cases after a strike there has been left a bitter sting, and indifference has grown to hostility. But in many cases and especially from the leaders' point of view there is a growing sincerity in the matter of organizing Negroes.

There have been several attempts at independent organization of Negroes by Negroes. The largest of them was that attempted by James N. Davis of Pittsburg. Mr. Davis is a practical engineer and has charge of the plant at the Nixon Theatre, Pittsburg. Seeing the need of an organization he started an association among the men of his own craft, getting together about forty. So successful were they in obtaining and holding work that they attempted to organize on a larger scale; and in 1903 "The National Association of Steam and Gas Engineers and Skilled Workmen of America" was formed. This organization is yet weak, having only about a dozen local lodges. Another plan of organization has been undertaken from a philanthropic point of view by "The Committee for Improving the Industrial Condition of Negroes in New York." During last year, this committee sought out a large number of mechanics, chiefly carpenters. They were successful in getting the men to form an association and later to apply for a charter from the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; they were successful in their application and now have a separate local union composed entirely of Negroes. Similarly in Philadelphia, the Armstrong Association has been instrumental in organizing two crafts guilds--one of carpenters and the other of bricklayers, stone masons, plasterers, and lathers. But the most effective organization of Negroes will probably not be along the line of either of the above--along racial lines or along philanthropic lines. These may all lead the way and teach Negro workmen the value of organization. They cannot do more; for on the one hand the Negro race in the North is too small to maintain for any great length of time any effective independent labor organization; and on the other hand, philanthropy, backed largely by employers and persons not themselves mechanics, will find it difficult to take the point of view of the laborer in things most essential and fundamental. The final organization must be along purely industrial lines and must include workers of both races whose interests bring them together. In lines of work not requiring much skill this is already becoming true.

The asphalt pavers in New York and elsewhere have no color line; the hod-carriers make no distinction as to color. Possibly one of the wealthiest locals in Philadelphia is the Light Star Lodge of Hod Carriers, three-fourths of whose members are Negroes but which claims to know no color line.

There are many cases where Negroes have achieved more than ordinary success in some mechanical trade. I give, in conclusion, a few examples, confining myself entirely to Philadelphia. Frank Thompson, a Negro fifty-three years of age, came to Philadelphia about twelve years ago with about fifty cents in his pocket and a fair knowledge of his trade. He had been a slave and had not learned to read and write. After doing some odd jobs in the city he invested his first extra five dollars in a lot in Elmwood, then thought to be a most uninviting section of the city. The lot, which was bought on the easy payment plan--"five dollars down and two dollars per month"--did not remain vacant very long; for Frank started a house on it as soon as he accumulated capital enough to buy a few bricks and other material. To him possibly more than to any other man is due the "boom" in Elmwood. He has put up more than seventy buildings and has induced scores of Negroes to move into this section. He and his wife are highly religious and they gave a lot to the Baptists, putting up a church for them. They have no children but they plan to donate land and erect an orphanage. Mr. Thompson does much of his work himself but sometimes hires as many as ten men. I inquired of one of the leading men of Elmwood if he knew Frank Thompson, and he said, "Yes, I know the old man and am proud to call him my friend; for, besides being absolutely honest, he is one of the most level headed and practical men to be found in Philadelphia, and I would trust him with any amount of money."

The Booker brothers--Robert and Benjamin--are two young Negroes from Virginia, who have been in Philadelphia less than a dozen years. The following is the testimony of Robert Booker, the younger of the two brothers: "I have been a plasterer of some sort ever since I was eleven years old. My brother Benjamin taught me the trade. I came here a few years ago on a large job, working for another man. I learned how to do good work and to estimate carefully. About five years ago my brother and I started in an independent business. We are always busy, and sometimes hire as many as thirty men. We have plastered my contract more than six hundred houses since we started business, and we now have a force of fifteen men working on a contract for a hundred and five houses. Besides this we do odd jobs. I hire colored men generally but have frequently hired white men. I want mechanics when I do a job and can't be bothered about their color."

William Morrow is a very black man from Virginia and a cement contractor. He informed me that he had two contracts under way and that he employs twenty-three men. He came to the city without capital but with a knowledge of his trade and a determination to succeed. His discouragements as a journeyman were many, so he started business for himself as a "contractor" and has done well for about three years. He owns a good home in the suburbs and four or five brick houses which he rents. Alonzo Currington started in the plumbing business in Philadelphia less than a year ago and is rapidly succeeding. His previous experience had been at Bryn Mawr College, and at the University of Chicago; he did the plumbing in the Long Island residence of John D. Rockefeller and that in the residence of the Vice President of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The Gary Brothers--John, William, and Robert--came from Norfolk, Virginia, and went directly to painting. They now do a very extensive business of paper-hanging, painting, and decorating, and have secured several large jobs. Their store is at Seventeenth and Catherine Streets, and compares favorably with any of the smaller stores south of Market Street. . . .

## 21. THE COLORED WOMAN AS AN ECONOMIC FACTOR

By Addie W. Hunton

*It will interest our readers to know that the writer of this informing article is herself a colored woman who has studied at the University of Strassburg, taught in the South, been identified with club work among colored women since its beginning, and was for four years an organizer for the National Association of Colored Women.*

Much has been written concerning the marvelous economic progress of the Negro during the past fifty-two years. This particular line of his progress has even been heralded by many as the most eloquent promise of his final emancipation to full citizenship. The world has been content to know that he has made a remarkable economic advance. The factors concerned have not received much concern. The share of the colored woman in this economic advance has won but scant recognition thus far.

Ignorant, poverty-stricken and incomplete as was the best of his home life a half century ago, still all economic progress, made by the Negro had its foundation there. The man and the woman TOGETHER have sowed and cultivated and together they have reaped. In a short article no comprehensive view is possible of the rare capacity of the Negro woman for endurance and self-sacrifice as evidenced in her struggle for a normal standard of living. Whether working at her own fireside or engaged in outside pursuits, her actuating motive has been largely for race betterment--which means first of all individual and family betterment.

From the United States census of 1910 we learn that more than half of the almost ten million colored people of the United States are females and that 2,013,981 of these 5,000,000 are wage earners, grouped as follows:

Farm laborers.....	967,837
Laundresses.....	361,551
Cooks.....	205,929
Farmers.....	79,309
Dressmakers.....	38,148
School teachers.....	22,441
Nurses.....	17,874
Chambermaids.....	14,071
Laundry operatives.....	12,196
Housekeepers.....	10,021
All other occupations.....	284,594

Since more than 70 per cent of the Negro population of the United States is rural, it is natural that the great mass of Negro women should be found on the farm. More than half of the 2,000,000 wage earning women of the race are engaged in agriculture from its roughest and rudest forms to its highest and most attractive. Perhaps it is among this great army of toiling women we hear of the saddest cases of the exploitation of our womanhood and at the same time are lifted up by the most thrilling acts of heroism.

In spite of the "one crop," "credit" and "tenant" systems, there has been a phenomenal change from farm laborers to farm owners. The 15,792,579 acres owned and cultivated by Negroes, which with buildings and equipment and rented farm lands reach a valuation approaching a billion dollars, represent not only the hardihood and perseverance of the Negro man but the power for physical and mental endurance of the woman working by his side. Many of the farms owned by colored men are managed entirely by the women of the family while these men give themselves to other employment.

We recall the sad story of a successful and well-known teacher in one of our Southern schools. His wife, a woman of education and ability, so successfully managed their farming interests that they were the most important in their county, thereby arousing the envy and enmity of their less successful neighbors and finally led to the tragic death of the husband.

As a teacher in the South, I knew a number of women who were successful farmers and supported their children in a boarding school by their earnings.

A close touch with farm life and seeking to help it to higher standards

has ever been an important part of the work of a large number of our school teachers of the South. We will, however, more fully realize how largely this standardization has been in the hands of women, if we recall the fact that, of a total of 29,485 teachers, 22,450 are women. The country teacher has been, for the most part, more largely endowed with common sense and high aspirations than with any great amount of real book learning. She has, after her own way, been social worker as well as teacher, and highly successful in developing a spirit of self-reliance and initiative that have helped our farm life. The rapid advance in farm conditions, and ownership from 1900 to 1915 has been due largely to the farmers' institutes and the recognition of the value of efficiency in rural teaching by the Jeannes Fund. The fascinating story of the constructive work of Virginia Randolph, teaching in Henrico County, Virginia, approaches the ideal of a rural system of education.

There is still another group, comprising some 800,000 colored women, working for the most part in cities and ordinarily classified as domestics. The real economic contribution of this class is less easily seen, although highly important. City life, with its fierce competition, its constant and increasing demand for better service and its utter neglect of the the worker's environment, has a cruel method of listing those who faint and fall in the struggle, and of preserving no record of those who are developed by it into self-sacrificing, self-supporting and self-respecting women. . . . Among Negroes, as among other people, are the immoral element, and they are usually not far to seek. We have our parasites feeding upon the meagre earnings of unfortunate women. But it is to the honor of a half million Negro men that they own the homes that shelter their families and to another million and a half that they pay rent for their families.

Thirty-eight thousand dressmakers and 17,000 nurses, 2,500 of whom are trained, join our wage earners throughout the country.

Colored women are forging their way into the skill industries and into the professions. But it is here they meet the strongest opposition. Generally where anything worthwhile has been achieved there is attached thereto a story of bitter struggle against prejudice and its traditions.

Recently I talked with a young colored woman who had graduated with honor in medicine in the city of New York, but who had begged in vain for admittance to a clinic in the same city.

But, in spite of this, the census of 1910 is a gratifying surprise in the number of colored women listed both in skilled labor and in the professions.

Colored women are displaying surprising genius in conducting successful business enterprises. One of the most successful bank presidents of the race is a woman. A volume might be written on the achievements of the colored business woman. Evidences of her thrift and wisdom are being constantly increased. She displays keen ability in organization. A notable example of this is to be had in the National Association of Colored Women. From 1912 to 1914, 200 (of the several hundred clubs of this organization), with a membership of 10,908 and owning property valued at \$113,332.25, collected \$83,500. . . .

Alert to her opportunities, aware of her handicaps, struggling to protect herself and those dependent upon her, she must slowly but surely in God's own time and way, take her rightful place in the sisterhood of the nation.

*New York Call, February 27, 1916.*

## 22. THE NEGRO ARTISAN

By W. E. B. Du Bois

. . . For some years following the war the Negro mechanic still held undisputed sway. Three occurrences, however, soon disturbed the situation:

- (a). The competition of white mechanics.
- (b). The efforts of the Negro for self-protection.
- (c). The new industrial development of the South.

These changes were spread over a series of years and are not yet complete, but they are the real explanation of certain facts which have hitherto been explained in false and inadequate ways. It has, for instance, been said repeatedly that the Negro mechanic carelessly threw away his monopoly of the Southern labor market and allowed the white mechanic to supplant him. This is only partially true. To be sure, the ex-slave was not alert, quick and ready to meet competition. His business hitherto had been to *do* work but not to *get* work, save in exceptional cases. The whole slave system of labor saved him from certain sorts of competition, and when he was suddenly called to face the competition of white mechanics he was at a loss. His especial weakness was the lack of a hiring contractor. His master or a white contractor had usually taken jobs and hired him. The white contractor still hired him but there was no one now to see that the contractor gave him fair wages. Indeed, as the white mechanics pressed forward the only refuge of the Negro mechanic was lower wages. There were a few Negro contractors here and there but they again could only hope to maintain themselves by markedly underbidding all competitors and attaining a certain standing in the community.

What the Negro mechanic needed then was social protection--the protection of law and order, perfectly fair judicial processes and that personal power which is in the hands of all modern laboring classes in civilized lands, viz., the right of suffrage. It has often been said that the freedman throwing away his industrial opportunities after the war gave his energies to politics and succeeded in alienating his friends and exasperating his enemies, and proving his inability to rule. It is doubtless true that the freedman laid too much stress on the efficacy of political power in making a straight road to real freedom. And undoubtedly, too, a bad class of politicians, white and black, took advantage of this and made the reconstruction Negro voter a hissing in the ears of the South. Notwithstanding this the Negro was fundamentally right. If the whole class of mechanics here, as in the Middle Age, had been without the suffrage and half-free, the Negro would have had an equal chance with the white mechanic, and could have afforded to wait. But he saw himself coming more and more into competition with men who had the right to vote, the prestige of race and blood, the advantage of intimate relations with those acquainted with the market and the demand. The Negro saw clearly that his industrial rise depended, to an important degree, upon his political power and he therefore sought that power. In this seeking he failed primarily because of his own poor training, the uncompromising enmity and apprehensions of his white neighbors and the selfishness and half-hearted measures of his emancipators. The result was that the black artisan entered the race heavily handicapped--the member of a proscribed class, with restricted rights and privileges, without political and social power. The result was of course that he was enabled to maintain himself only by accepting low wages and keeping at all hazards the good-will of the community.

Even here however he could not wholly succeed. The industrial conditions in the country were rapidly changing. Slowly but surely the new industrial South began to arise and with it came new demands on the mechanic. Now the Negro mechanic could not in the very nature of the case meet these demands; he knew how to do a few things by rule of thumb--he could build one of the rambling old-fashioned southern mansions, he could build a slave shanty; he could construct a rough sugar hogshead and resole a shoe; in exceptional cases he could do even careful and ingenious work in certain lines; but as a rule he knew little of the niceties of modern carpentry or iron-working, he knew practically nothing of mills and machinery, very little about railroads--in fact he was especially ignorant in those very lines of mechanical and industrial development in which the South has taken the longest strides in the last thirty years. And if he was ignorant, who was to teach him? Certainly not his white fellow workmen, for they were his bitterest opponents because of strong race-prejudice and because of the fact that the Negro works for low wages. Apprenticeship to the older Negro mechanics was but partially successful for they could not teach what they had never

learned. In fact, it was only through the lever of low wages that the Negro secured any share in the new industries. By that means he was enabled to replace white laborers in many branches, but he thereby increased the enmity of trades-unions and labor-leaders. Such in brief was the complicated effort of emancipation on the Negro artisan and one could not well imagine a situation more difficult to remedy. . . .

When the Civil War opened and the fall of slavery seemed imminent, some of the earliest suggestions for educating the blacks insisted on industrial training. The development, however, was slow and interesting. We may indicate the evolution of the Southern industrial school somewhat as follows:

1. Janitor work and chores performed by students.
2. Repair work and equipment by student labor.
3. Teaching of ordinary housework to girls.
4. Teaching of house-service for the training of servants.
5. The school of work; co-operative industry for gain, by use of student labor.
6. Teaching of trades.
7. The industrial settlement.
8. The social settlement.
9. Manual training.
10. Technological education.

## LOCATION OF FORMER STUDENTS KNOWN TO BE FOLLOWING THEIR TRADES

		Blacksmiths	Bricklayers	Carpenters	Engineers	Harnessmakers	Machinists	Painters	Printers	Shoemakers	Tailors	Tinsmiths	Wheelwrights	Wood-working machinists	Manual training teacher	Total
Virginia.....	Working	11	2	20	4	1	2	4	6	5	13	1	2	3		74
	Teaching	1	1	5		2			1	1			1			12-86
Alabama.....	W								2							2
	T			3		1				1			1			6- 8
Washington, D.C.....	W	1			2				1	1	1					6
	T															0- 6
Georgia.....	W			1		1										2
	T															0- 2
Kentucky.....	W	1		1												2
	T			1												1- 3
Louisiana.....	W	1														1
	T				1											0- 1
Maryland.....	W						1	1								2
	T			1			1									2- 4
North Carolina.....	W	1		1							1		1			4
	T			1					1				1			3- 7
So. Carolina-Tennessee.....	W															0
	T			2												2- 2
Texas.....	W	1					1						1			3
	T															0- 3
In the North.....	W	1		3	2	1	1			2	3					13
	T															0-13
In the West.....	W								1							1
	T															1- 2
In the U.S. Navy.....	W						1									1
Total working at trades....	W	16	3	26	9	3	6	4	11	8	18	1	4	3	0	112
Total teaching trades.....	T	1	1	13	0	3	1	0	2	2	0	0	3	0	1	27
Total heard from .....		17	4	39	9	6	7	4	13	10	18	1	7	3	1	139

No report is available as to dress-makers, nor as to graduates and students who are earning a living partially as artisans. In tailoring and blacksmithing the graduates have experienced no difficulty in obtaining work, and in other trades "no serious difficulty." They do not as a general thing join trades unions.

*Tuskegee Institute, Ala.*

"We have been keeping a record only of our academic graduates and those who have certificates from the industrial department. I send you under separate cover today our catalog which contains our alumni record. The institution cannot be fairly judged only by those who are referred to in the catalog as there are many others who have been working regularly at their trades of whom no record is made."

In the catalogue the occupations of graduates of the school are given as follows:

Total graduates.....423

Painters	1	Harnessmakers	1
Tinners	5	Plasterers	1
Dairymen	2	Shoemakers	2
Butchers	1	Wheelwrights	1
Tailors	11	Machinists	1
Brickmasons	8	Blacksmiths	3
Carpenters	4	Milliners	4
Dressmakers	2	Firemen	1
Artisans			48
Teachers of Trades in Industrial Schools			28
Students in Industrial Schools			2

Persons who work at their trades when not employed at some other principal occupation:

Carpenters	8	Wheelwright	1
Dressmakers and Seamstresses	16	Plasterers	1
Blacksmiths	1	Painters	1
Shoemakers	2	Printers	1
Mattress makers	1	Tailors	1
Total			33

Other occupations of graduates\*:

Cashier	1	Farmers	9
Bookkeeper	1	Trained Nurses**	7
Teachers†	157	Railway laborers	1
Students	31	Steward	1
Pharmacists	4	Laundress	1
Physicians	8	Miners	3
Preachers	11	Drayman	1
School officials other than teachers	9	Merchants††	6
Other professions	6	Clerks	8
Newspaper work	2	U.S. Army	4
Civil Service	6	Housekeepers†	29

Summarized we have:

Artisans	48
Teachers of trades	28
Students of trades	2-- 78
Casual artisans, (33, recounted below).	
Teachers, students and school officials	197
Professional men	44
Merchants, Clerks, etc.	16
Farmers	9
Miscellaneous	40
Dead, unknown and at home	39--345
Total graduates	<u>423</u>

\* Including the 33 who work at their trades only a part of their time. They are here counted under their principal occupations.

\*\* Including 3 who also keep house.

† Including 27 who practice trades in vacation, 16 who teach and keep house, 4 who teach and keep store, 9 who teach and farm, and 2 who teach and preach.

†† Not counting 4 who teach and keep store.

‡ i.e., Housewives?



*Claflin University, S.C.*<sup>19</sup>

The following graduates and former students have been sent out with trades:

Carpenters	16	Iron and steel workers	6
Blacksmiths	6	Shoemakers	3
Masons	22	Painters	6
Engineers	2	Plasterers	20
Dressmakers	11	Tailors	2
Harnessmakers	1	Machinists	2
Teacher domestic science	1		

Total 98; 60 of these are following their trades. 12 or more graduates besides these earn a living partially as artisans, usually combining teaching and farming with the trade. Fourteen of the graduates\* are instructors in industries.

These artisans are working principally in South Carolina. They are usually preferred by contractors and have had no difficulty in obtaining work. They do not usually join trades unions, as there are not many unions in the state.

*A. & M. College, Ala.*

This institution has no record of its undergraduates. The following have graduated as artisans:

Carpenters	15	Shoemakers	6
Blacksmiths	10	Painters	2
Engineers	3	Tailors	3
Dressmakers	25	Printers	10
Iron and steel workers	10	Total	84

The number of these who are following their trades at present is not known; some of these combine teaching with their trades, but the exact number is not stated. The chief difficulty encountered by these artisans is the "Trades Unions, which, in some localities, control labor and will not admit them to membership." In any case they seldom join the unions. Ten teach industries in schools.

*Bishop College, Texas*

This institution sends a partial report. "The incompleteness of the report is not due to lack of students at work as artisans, but to the lack of method in keeping track of them."

Carpenters	3	Printers	10
Blacksmiths	1	Total	15
Brickmakers	1		

*A. & M. College, Greensboro, N.C.*

This institution which graduated its first class in 1899 reports as follows:

Carpenters	4	Earning a living partially as	
Machinists and architects	3	artisans	6
Teaching trades in schools	2		

"One of our graduates--a machinist with less than two years' experience--is employed in a Northern factory at \$5 a day."

Most of the other graduates are located in North Carolina. The six mentioned above usually combine teaching with their trade. They do not usually join trades unions and have no difficulty in getting work save "their own imperfections or lack of energy."

\* Probably included in the above 60. The report is not explicit on this point.

*Tougaloo University, Miss.*

"While we have done much industrial work we have not had special graduation from industrial courses, but have co-ordinated the hand work with the other as part of an all-round education. Until comparatively recently the call for artisans has not been so strong in this state as in some others. It is predominantly an agricultural state."

The artisans reported are:

Carpenters	18	Dressmakers	4
Blacksmiths	7	Iron and steel workers	2
Masons	1	Painters	3
Engineers	3	Total	38

Three in addition teach industries in schools. They do not join trades unions and find work with but little difficulty.

*Schofield N. & I. School, S.C.*

This school returns "a partial list, but there are many more who have entered and are following trades." The following are known to be pursuing these trades:

Blacksmiths	5	Painters	20
Brickmakers	10	Harnessmakers	20
Masons	15	Plumbers	5
Tailors	3	Printers	15
Carpenters	30	Total	123

"Very many" others are following their trades, but there are no exact records; 6 are teaching industries in schools.

These persons are located in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Some are in the North.

*Barrett C. & I. Institute, N.C.*

This institution has trained 157 artisans, chiefly blacksmiths, masons, dressmakers, plasterers and carpenters. Of these "about 10 or more" are earning their living entirely as artisans. Others are combining their trades with teaching. They do not join trades unions and meet little difficulty in getting work.

*Haines Institute, Ga.*

"Ours is simply a manual training school and makes no pretense at teaching trades. The following are earning a living at their trades, not having studied them elsewhere than here."

Printers	2	Dressmakers and Seamstresses	6
Tailors	2		

They are in Georgia, New Jersey and District of Columbia.

*Knoxville College, Tenn.*

This institution reports among its graduates:

Blacksmiths	1	Dressmakers	2
Masons	1	Iron and steel workers	4
Civil Engineers	1	Total	9

Eight are teaching industries in schools. Others, formerly students are working as artisans, and "a large number" are gaining a living by combining a trade with teaching or other pursuits.

*Institute for Colored Youth, Penna.*

This institution reports:

Carpenters	8	Tailors	6
Brickmasons	16	Printers	8
Shoemakers	8	Plasters	4
		Total	50

Two teach industries in schools.

Most of these artisans are at work in Philadelphia and vicinity. They do not join the trades unions.

*Fort Valley H. & I. School, Ga.*

This institution reports:

Carpenters	5	Shoemakers	2
Masons	1	Painters	1
Dressmakers	4	Coopers	1
Tailors	1	Total	15

One is teaching industries.

17 are earning a living partially as artisans. They are located in Georgia, have no trouble in getting work, and do not join Trades Unions. "Our industrial departments have not been established long enough for us to make a very good showing in the industries yet."

*State Normal School, Montgomery, Ala.*

"This institution has graduated 320 in the past twenty-two years. Of this number twelve had died, sixty-four women are married and housekeeping, 185 are teachers, four merchants, one millwright, eight medical doctors, twenty-one farmers, one house plasterer, two carpenters, one each, dentist, blacksmith, house painter, two in Government service, three bookkeepers, eight dressmakers, two teachers of music, seven students in higher schools."

This makes 14 artisans in all. Three others teach trades. About 25% of the graduates and former students practice their trades casually. They often combine teaching or farming with the trade. They have no difficulty in finding work and are located mostly in Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala. They usually join trades unions.

*Ballard Normal School, Ala.*

One graduate of this school is an architect and builder at Norfolk, Va.; another learned his trade after leaving and was instructor in tailoring at Tuskegee. Most of the graduates teach.

*Alcorn A. & M. College, Miss.*

The industrial departments here are of recent establishment and only two or three classes have been sent out. There are among these:

Carpenters	3	Shoemakers	8
Blacksmiths	9	Painters	2
		Total	22

*Washburn Seminary, N.C.*

This school reports:

Carpenters (combined with general labor	4
Teacher of industries	1

*Clark University, Ga.*

This school gives among its graduates, as published in its catalogue:

Dressmakers	6	Teachers of industries	5
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*Avery Institute, S.C.*

The catalogue of this school gives the following artisans:

Shoemakers	1	Blacksmiths	2
Carpenters	6	Plumbers	2
Bricklayers,	2	Tailors	2
Barbers	6	Butcher	1
Pattern-makers	1	Machinist	1
		Total	24

Apparently none of these were trained at this school, but took up the trades after leaving. The principal was unable to give any accurate information.

*Rust University, Miss.*

This institution reports:

Carpenters	7	Dressmakers	10
Brickmakers	1	Shoemakers	5
Masons	3	Painters	5
Engineers	6	Plasterers	5
Firemen	7	Coopers	2
Tailors	2	Total	53

Two teach industries in schools. They do not join trades unions.

*Arkansas Baptist College, Ark.*

This institution has trained in all 79 artisans, but does not report the number of these following their trades. They meet color prejudice in getting work and their own "lack of superior preparation" is a disadvantage.

The following institutions sent no reports, but on consulting their catalogues a list of artisans has been made out as there given: Benedict College, S.C.; Lincoln Institute, Mo.; Wilberforce University, O.; Biddle University, N.C.; Walden University, (Central Tenn. College), Tenn.; Tillotson College, Tex.; Orange Park N. & I. Schhol, Fla.; State Normal School, Miss.; Knox Institute, Ga.; LeMoyne Institute, Tenn.

Among the graduates of these schools are:

Printers	2	Students of industries	2
Carpenters	5	Mason	1
Civil Engineer	1	Barbers	2
Machinist	1	Blacksmith	1
Dressmakers, etc.	3	Milliners	1
Photographer	1	Tailor	1
Teachers of industries	5	Total	26

Two urgent requests for reports were sent to all other industrial schools but no replies were received. It may be taken for granted that most of them have very little real trade teaching and no records of the few graduates who have acquired trades after leaving them. A few others have only manual training and the record of their graduates is interesting in this connection only as showing how far such training turns students' ideals toward trade-learning. The most conspicuous of the larger institutions with manual training and without trade departments are Shaw University,\* N.C., and Atlanta University. The latter has among its graduates and former students:

1. Superintendent of Industries, Biddle University, N.C.
2. Superintendent of Mechanical Department, Prairie View State Normal School, Texas.
3. Instructor in Manual Training, Knox Institute, Ga.
4. Instructor in Carpentry, Brick N. & A. School, N.C.
5. Superintendent of Manual Training, Talladega College, Ala.
6. Instructor in Manual Training, V. N. & C. I., Va.

\* The report from Shaw University unfortunately arrived too late for insertion.

7. Instructor in Bench Work, LeMoyne Institute, Tenn.
8. Instructor in Printing, " " "
9. Instructor in Carpentry, Kowaliga I. Acad., Ala.
10. Instructor in Manual Training, Haines Inst., Ga.
11. Teacher of Sewing, Fort Valley H. & I. School, Ga.
12. Teacher of Cooking, " " " " "

Three others are heads of industrial schools but ought to be counted as teachers than as artisans. Several former students are artisans but the exact number is unknown. . . . No report at all is made of other than trade school graduates. Tuskegee gives no record of her trade graduates before 1890, and Claflin's report of 60 at work is an estimate and not a detailed report. However, we may make the following table:

Tuskegee:	Total graduates, 423, or 100%.
	Of these 11% work at trades,
	and 6.5% teach trades.
	Total trade graduates, about 150*, or 100%.
	Of these 32% work at trades,
	and 19% teach trades.
Hampton:	Total trade graduates, 217, or 100%.
	Of these 51.5% work at trades,
	and 12% teach trades.
Claflin:	Total trade graduates, 98, or 100%.
	Of these about 47% work at trades,
	and about 14% teach trades.

Possibly it would be fair to say that in the best industrial schools something less than a quarter of all the graduates, and about three-fifths of all the trade graduates, actually practice their trades or teach them.

If to the 743 artisans working and teaching we add for the school at Normal, Ala., and the Arkansas Baptist College an estimated number of 60 additional artisans, we have 803 artisans. The unreported artisans would bring this number up to at least 1,000, so that it would be a conservative statement to say that the hundred schools giving industrial training have in the last twenty years sent one thousand actual artisans into the world, beside a large number who combine their mechanical skill with other callings.

*Local Conditions: Indianapolis, Ind.,* (by W. T. B. Williams.\*\*\*) All the figures I give below were obtained in June, 1900, from foremen and mechanics and from the offices of large manufacturing plants. Though they are meager, yet I think they are thoroughly reliable. They come, too, from representative establishments and laborers.

Indianapolis had, in 1900, a Negro population of 15,931 in a total population of 169,164.

The mass of Negro population has come to Indianapolis from the South during the last thirty years. The greater part are fairly recent comers. Many of the whites are also from the South. In fact, Indianapolis is in some respects very much of a Southern city. Being in the North, however, the relations existing between the whites and blacks relating to labor savor of both sections.

By far the great majority of Negro laborers are unskilled. But representatives of the ordinary trades are found in appreciable numbers.

The following are the results of my investigations. They refer to the city only:

#### BLACKSMITHS

Four shops run by Negroes	
Boss Mechanics.....	6
Journeyman.....	2
General work.....	1
Carriage work.....	1
Special Horseshoer.....	1
Total.....	11

\* i.e., 134 since 1890 and an estimated number of 16 before that time who finished their trades.

\*\*\* Submitted through the courtesy of Mr. A. F. Hilyer, of Washington, D.C., at whose suggestion the study was made.

The Blacksmiths' Union is open to Negroes. J. K. Donnell, a Negro, is corresponding secretary of the union. He is also a member of Master Horse-shoers' Protective Association.

#### FOUNDRIES

Moulders.....	3
Moulders' helpers.....	2
Cupola tenders.....	5
Furnace men melting iron.....	12
Total.....	<u>22</u>

I found also

Firemen.....	2
Common laborers.....	125

My conclusion after visiting a number of foundries is that there is no uniformity in their attitude toward Negro laborers. Most foundries employ no Negroes. Some employ a few. Most claim that no Negroes apply as skilled laborers. One admitted having received one application which was rejected only because there was no vacancy. Wherever Negroes were employed they were spoken of as efficient and satisfactory.

Negro foundrymen do not belong to the unions. Employers, however, say no trouble comes from that. Whites and blacks in all cases are given work together.

#### CARPENTERS

Boss Carpenters and Contractors.....	5
Journeyman.....	20
Total.....	<u>25</u>
Besides the above there are men who make a living at carpentry, but who are not thorough mechanics.....	30

Carpenters' Union admits Negroes, but the Negroes do not join. They say that while they may join the unions yet the boss carpenters will not look out for work for them and that white carpenters will not work with them, though they are union men. Negroes gain in times of strikes by not belonging.

#### BRICKLAYERS

Boss Mechanics and Journeymen.....	14
------------------------------------	----

Bricklayers' Union admits colored men but none join for the same reason given by the carpenters.

#### PLASTERERS

Boss Plasterers.....	10
Journeyman.....	20
Total.....	<u>30</u>
Galvanized iron and cornice workers.....	1
Running planing machine.....	1
Turners.....	<u>2</u>
Total.....	<u>4</u>

Very good feeling seemed to exist at the factory where the two turners worked. The foreman declared that the factory could not tolerate interference from unions and that men were advanced according to merit.

#### CEMENT WORKERS

Making walks, cellars, sewers, etc.....	34
---	----

No organization in city.

#### HOD CARRIERS

Number in city.....	350
" " union.....	200

Union mainly composed of Negroes, but a few whites belong.  
This union is not affiliated with the National Association.

#### PAPER HANGERS

Can not give exact figures, but not more than...	6
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Indianapolis has a fine industrial training school with good courses in wood-work, i.e., making of joints, etc., and turning, and in iron forging

and machine fitting, etc. An appreciable number of colored boys attend this school, but I was unable to learn of anyone's having applied to any of the factories or foundries for work. Some mechanics felt that the school has not been in existence long enough to have exerted any marked influence upon the quantity or quality of skilled laborers in the market.

From all I could learn Negro carpenters are decreasing in number. But in every other trade there is an increase. This is very marked though the gain in actual numbers is small in the factories and foundries.

A probable cause of the increase of skilled laborers in this locality is the steady emigration northward of the Negro from the South. It is not due to any considerable number of younger men of the city entering the trades. This will probably be changed in a few years for the industrial training offered by the city in one of its high schools seems to appeal strongly to the colored youth who enter the high school. And though there is much prejudice against the Negro as a skilled laborer yet I think he has a fighting chance in Indianapolis.

*Alabama.* The state of Alabama had 678,489 Negroes in 1890 and 827,307 in 1900. In 1890 there were reported the following skilled and semi-skilled laborers:\*

## MALES

Lumbermen	415
Miners	3,687
Quarrymen	369
Engineers(civil,mechanical,etc.)	16
Barbers	520
Engineers and Firemen (stationary)	452
Boatmen, pilots, etc.	223
Steam railroad employees	4,591
Telegraph and Telephone operators	3
Apprentices	73
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	891
Shoemakers	272
Brick-makers	514
Butchers	136
Carpenters	1,703
Charcoal and lime burners	499
Textile mill operatives	281
Iron and steel workers	1,749
Machinists	54
Marble and stone-cutters and masons	619
Mechanics	64
Millers	166
Painters, etc.	280
Printers	40
Saw and planing mill employees	1,163

## FEMALES

Telegraph and telephone operatives	1
Textile mill operatives	22
Dressmakers, milliners, etc.	859
Printers, etc.	3
Tailoresses	16

A special report from Tuskegee says that a "consensus of best opinions" agree that in that region the Negro artisan "is gaining for the past six or eight years." Up to that time and since the War he had been losing. His

\*These figures include a negligible number of "Chinese, Japanese and civilized Indians." The figures given here and in succeeding sections are from the census of 1890, volume on population, part 2. Just how far these are accurate there is no means of knowing. In some cases I have had grave suspicions of their validity, in others they seem reasonable. At any rate they are the only available figures and are given for what they are worth. The plan followed in these state reports was to select those occupations most largely represented in the state; in this way it often happens that those occupations given are not necessarily those in which Negroes are most largely engaged. This should be borne in mind.

losses were due to neglect and reaction. Today inefficiency and increased competition still hamper him. "Competent colored laborers are too few for the demand." The sentiment among the colored people are in regard to entering the trades has "greatly changed in this and surrounding states" during recent years. Prejudice still is an obstacle before the young mechanic and yet the difference in wages is due largely to the fact that competent colored laborers are too few to supply the demand, hence cannot command highest wages; and also to the further fact that colored laborers' standard of living is lower and they are consequently willing to work for less. These Negro mechanics can and do join the labor unions, some 5,000 being members throughout the state, chiefly in the United Mine Workers. They have separate local organizations however. There are at Tuskegee, including the teachers at the Institute, the following artisans:

Shoemakers	4	Blacksmiths	3
Harnessmakers	2	Wheelwrights	2
Brickmasons	11	Pattern-makers	1
Tinsmiths	2	Seamstresses & Dressmakers	5
Tailors	3	Architects	3
Printers	4	Electrical Engineers	1
Carpenters	14	Mechanical Engineers	3
Woodturners	1	Bakers	1
Painters	3	Milliners	1

Unfortunately no detailed report is available from the great industrial centers like Birmingham, Anniston, etc.

*California.* There were in California 11,322 Negroes in 1890, and 11,045 in 1900. The colored artisans reported in 1890 include both Negroes and Chinese:

## MALE

Lumbermen and Raftsmen	94
Miners	4,871
Engineers (civil, mechanical, etc.)	1
Barbers and Hairdressers	817
Engineers and Firemen (stationary)	32
Boatmen, Canalmen, Pilots and Sailors	73
Steam Railroad Employees	2,044
Apprentices	14
Bakers	72
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	65
Boots and Shoemakers	1,269
Butchers	220
Carpenters and Joiners	141
Iron and Steel Workers	24
Machinists	39
Marble and Stone Cutters and Masons	43
Painters	60
Plumbers	4
Printers	43
Saw and Planing Mill Employees	191
Tailors	2,139
Tobacco and Cigar Factory Operatives	2,380

## FEMALE

Cotton and Other Textile Mill Operatives	2
Dressmakers, Milliners, Seamstresses, etc.	239

There are four colored carpenters in San Francisco in a Union of 2,500, and about 100 colored members among the teamsters', stablemens', longshoremen's, seamen's and laborers' unions. In Pueblo there are a few lathers, building laborers, plasterers and stationary engineers, and also barbers. In Stockton there are a few longshoremen and hod carriers; in Los Angeles there are a few cement workers, plasterers, lathers and painters. Fresno has a butcher and several mortar mixers. On the whole a Negro mechanic is a rare thing in California.



*Colorado.* There were 6,215 Negroes in Colorado in 1890, and 8,570 in 1900. There were reported in 1890 the following artisans, including a few Chinese, etc.:

## MALE

Lumbermen and Raftsmen	11
Miners	142
Engineers (civil, mechanical, etc.)	2
Barbers and Hairdressers	193
Engineers and Firemen (stationary)	12
Steam Railroad Employees	106
Telegraph and Telephone Operators	2
Bakers	1
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	19
Boot and Shoemakers	7
Brickmakers, etc.	37
Butchers	2
Carpenters and Joiners	27
Iron and Steel Workers	4
Machinists	4
Marble and Stone Cutters and Masons	33
Painters	17
Plasterers	49
Plumbers	1
Printers	2
Saw and Planing Mill Employees	2
Tailors	5
Tinners and Tinware Makers	3

## FEMALE

Confectioners	1
Dressmakers, Milliners, Seamstresses, etc.	51
Printers	1

Nearly half the Negro population of the state is in Denver. Here a special report says that the artisans are chiefly in the building trades, although there are not many. The leading artisans include 3 bricklayers, one of whom is a contractor, 7 plasterers, 4 carpenters, 1 ink-maker, 1 machinist and 4 printers. "Master mechanics can enter the trades but there is no opening for apprentices."

*District of Columbia.* There were in 1890, 75,572 Negroes in the District of Columbia, and 86,702 in 1900. This is in many ways a remarkable population, nearly three-fourths being in domestic and personal service and the other fourth containing a considerable number of clerks and professional people. The census of 1890 reported:

## MALE

Engineers, (civil, mechanical, etc.)	10
Barbers and Hairdressers	450
Engineers and Firemen (stationary)	122
Boatmen, Canalmen, Pilots, and Sailors	82
Steam Railroad Employees	89
Street Railway Employees	23
Apprentices	54
Bakers	17
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights	121
Boot and Shoemakers	234
Brickmakers, etc.	442
Butchers	62
Cabinetmakers and Upholsterers	55
Carpenters and Joiners	316
Iron and Steel Workers	16
Machinists	15
Marble and Stone Cutters and Masons	188
Painters	141

Plasterers	152
Plumbers and steam-fitters	76
Printers	64
Tailors	16
Tinners and Tinware makers	36

## FEMALE

Barbers and Hairdressers	15
Stenographers and Typewriters	4
Telegraph and Telephone Operators	6
Apprentices	13
Confectioners	18
Dressmakers, Milliners, Seamstresses, etc.	1,411
Printers	17

The Union League Directory, compiled by Mr. Andrew F. Hilyer, reported the leading Negro artisans as follows. This is not an exhaustive list, but gives the more prominent men in 1902:

Bakers	4	Electricians	1
Barber shops	142	Locksmiths	1
Barbers	411	Painters, contractors	5
Bicycle shops	9	Painters	56
Blacksmith shops	13	Paper hangers	1
Blacksmiths	27	Photographers	3
Shoemakers	74	Plumbers	1
Bricklayers, contractors	4	Printers, shops	9
Bricklayers	91	Printers	34
Cabinet maker	1	Stove repairers	3
Carpenters, contractors	4	Tailor shops	9
Carpenters	29	Tailors	57
Cement workers	1	Roofers	1
Cigar manufacturers	1	Tinners	4
Building contractors	17	Trussmakers	1
Dressmaking shops	89	Typewriters, etc.	5
Dressmakers	140	Upholsterers	9
Dyers and cleaners	11	Kalsominers, etc.	46

It is probable that a list like this is more reliable as a guide to actual effective artisans than the census of 1890, where helpers and casual artisans and those claiming to be artisans are set down under the various trades. The directory referred to has a further study of these artisans by Mr. George W. Ellis, as follows:

## YEARS AT WORK

Trades	Under a						Total
	Year	1-3	3-5	5-10	10-20	Over 20	
Barbers.....	3	31	25	27	28	17	131
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights.....	1	1	3		3	3	11
Shoemakers.....		6	3	11	15	19	54
Bricklayers.....			3	5	24	11	43
Carpenters.....			1	2	7	9	19
Dressmakers.....	10	4	11	23	14	7	59
Dyers and Cleaners.....	1	2	1	2	3	1	10
Painters.....			1	1	10	15	27
Plasterers, Kalsominers, etc.....			4	3	9	7	23
Printers.....	1	2	2	2	2		9
Tailors.....	1	2	3		2	1	9

## NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES, CAPITAL AND RECEIPTS

Trades	Employees	Capital	Annual Receipts
Barbers.....	407	\$56,490	\$ 200,800
Blacksmiths and Wheelwrights.....	27	4,575	11,800
Shoemakers.....	74	9,950	28,570
Bricklayers.....	91		
Carpenters.....	29	2,850	15,750
Dressmakers.....	140	8,445	23,170
Painters.....	56	2,015	22,800
Printers.....	34	10,700	18,050
Tailors.....	57	9,325	25,900
White-washers, etc.....	46	752	15,730

In his report to the Hampton Conference in 1899 Mr. A. F. Hilyer said: "In Washington there are over 500 skilled colored workmen not including barbers. There are about 100 bricklayers, 75 carpenters, 80 painters, 75 plasterers, 100 stationary engineers, 100 of various other skilled occupations. There are also many skilled brickmakers. Only the engineers and barbers are organized. \* \* \* During the last ten years over 500 houses have been built in Washington almost entirely by colored labor, some of them costing as high as fifteen thousand dollars. Many of them are fine specimens of the mechanic's art."

Florida. There were 166,180 Negroes in Florida in 1890, and 230,730 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported the following Negro artisans:

## MALE

Miners	323	Carpenters and joiners	988
Engineers (civil, mechanical)	9	Cotton and other textile mill operatives	183
Engineers and Firemen (Sta.)	169	Machinists	31
Barbers and hairdressers	263	Marble and stone cutters and masons	211
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, and sailors	570	Millers	62
Steam railroad employees	1,536	Painters	165
Telegraph and telephone operatives	2	Printers	26
Apprentices	67	Saw and planing mill employees	858
Bakers	51	Tobacco and cigar factory operatives	937
Blacksmiths & wheelwrights	150		
Boot and shoemakers	95		
Butchers	91		

## FEMALE

Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, etc.	593	Starch makers	22
Printers	2	Tailoresses	12
Saw and planing mill employees	7	Tobacco and cigar factory employees	97

There were in the Florida labor unions in 1902 about 2,000 Negro cigar makers, 1,000 carpenters, 1,200 building laborers, 200 painters, 800 long-shoremen, 200 bricklayers and 300 plasterers. In Jacksonville a prominent Negro contractor and builder reports that there are a "great many" Negro skilled laborers, and that the Negroes are represented in more trades than formerly. The 33 leading Negro artisans include 7 carpenters, 9 masons, 2 blacksmiths, 2 engineers, 4 tailors and 8 tanners. The Negro is gaining in skilled trades, and in the trades mentioned meets little opposition. Usually, too, there is no discrimination in wages, but this is not always true. These are the following Negro union men in Jacksonville:  
 Bricklayers..... 75    Painters..... 50    Carpenters..... 250?

In some of the unions there are a number of colored women.

In Pensacola the skilled work is about evenly divided between black and white. Of the 169 leading Negro mechanics there are 95 carpenters, 19 painters, 7 blacksmiths, 23 plasterers and bricklayers, 5 tailors, 8 cigar makers, 7 shoemakers, 2 tinner and 3 cabinet makers. There is "no perceptible loss or gain here," the Negro mechanic "is measurably holding his own." Almost all the artisans "have come up as apprentices" and there are few from the industrial schools. As to general conditions Mr. M. M. Levy reports: "Carpenters and bricklayers work side by side and receive the same union wages; sometimes, and quite usually, Negroes are the contractors on private and business buildings. Blacksmiths, stonecutters, tailors and shoemakers do a good business here without the semblance of friction between the races. There are several noted cases of Negroes doing contract for large firms." In St. Augustine there is a colored painters' union of 30 members and a Negro members of the masons', plasterers' and carpenters' unions. In Tampa there are 20 colored carpenters in the union, and a number of cigar makers.

Georgia. There were 858,815 Negroes in Georgia in 1890 and 1,034,813 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported the following Negro artisans:

## MALE

Lumbermen and raftsmen	412	Cotton and other textile mill operatives	771
Miners	402	Iron and steel workers	270
Barbers and hairdressers	899	Machinists	71
Engineers and firemen, (Sta.)	520	Marble and stone cutters	101
Steam railroad employees	7,440	Masons	1,243
Telegraph and telephone operators	5	Mechanics	154
Apprentices	247	Millers	160
Blacksmiths & wheelwrights	1,328	Painters	676
Boot and shoemakers	632	Plasterers	398
Brickmakers	977	Printers	78
Butchers	299	Saw and planing mill employees	2,471
Carpenters and joiners	3,761	Woodworkers	198
Coopers	363		

## FEMALE

Stenographers and typewriters	2	Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, etc.	1,632
Telegraph and telephone operators	7	Printers	1
Cotton and other textile mill operatives	139	Tailoresses	33

There are about 1,500 Negroes in the unions of Georgia, chiefly carpenters, masons, stone-quarrymen, lathers and plasterers. At Greensboro the leading 13 colored artisans include 4 blacksmiths, 6 carpenters, 1 mason and 2 shoemakers. There is neither gain nor loss in number, and the artisan "might do better if his opportunities in early life had been more favorable." Industrial schools "are cultivating a higher respect for manual labor." The chief obstacle of the Negro is his own inefficiency. At Milledgeville the 10 leading artisans include 1 contractor, 2 masons, 2 stationary engineers, 2 tinsmiths, 1 blacksmith and 2 painters. The Negro artisan in this town "is gaining. All the painters and blacksmiths are colored and they are in the majority in all the trades." So far as industrial schools are concerned the report says: "I cannot yet see the result of industrial training which I would like to see. Many of our artisans are young men and some of them have attended industrial schools but preferred to complete their trades at home." As to obstacles the report continues: "In my opinion he has no obstacles in the South and especially in small towns and villages. The whole field is his. What he needs to do is to equip himself and occupy it." At Washington, there are about 35 Negro artisans, the 8 leading ones being 3 masons, 1 carpenter, 3 painters and 1 kalsominer. As to numbers "there may be some falling off due to lack of work." There is little interest manifested in industrial training. "The Negroes at Washington do excellent work but there is not sufficient work to keep them all employed. Some are in Augusta, quite a num-

ber in Crawfordsville, and some in South Carolina at work." At Marshallville there are a few artisans, chiefly carpenters, masons and blacksmiths, and they are gaining. "There were only two Negro artisans here before the civil war, now there are fourteen." Albany, Ga., there are many skilled laborers; the 17 leading artisans include 6 carpenters, 3 blacksmiths, 1 carriage maker, 6 masons and 1 painter. "In this community the Negro seems to be losing in skilled work," chiefly because of the "great growth of the South in industrial lines; the poor white man is taking to the trades in large numbers." Moreover, "there are very few young men here who have had the advantage of industrial school training. Some are now in these schools. Most of the younger men in the trades, however, entered under the apprenticeship system." Competition and color-discrimination are considerable obstacles for the Negro. "The discrimination is very marked in wages; white artisans receive from one-fourth to one-third more for the same kind of work."

All of the above towns are small semi-rural communities. In the larger cities of Georgia--Atlanta, Savannah, Macon and Augusta--the Negro artisan is conspicuous. In Savannah there are 7 trades unions composed entirely of Negroes:--the bricklayers, carpenters, coopers, building laborers, lathers, painters and tinners. There are also colored members in some of the other unions. Both Macon and Augusta have large numbers of artisans. The condition of all of these may be judged from the special study of the Negro artisan in Atlanta given below.

Some general information as to the three chief sections of Georgia has come to us by correspondence. Miss E. E. White says:

"From a gentleman who has spent much time in South-western Georgia I learn that this section of the state being devoted to fruit, turpentine, and cotton does not require many artisans, and those who follow the carpenter and brick mason trades are unemployed for perhaps six months. In several places there is very little discrimination shown toward good workmen, although sometimes the wages of colored are less than those of the whites; in other places there is much prejudice toward colored workmen and most of their dealings must of necessity be with their own race."

In Northeastern Georgia the following wage scale for 42 artisans was reported by the artisans themselves; they could all read and write and were from 30 to 40 years of age:

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	WAGES
Engineers	2	\$ 8.00 a week
Tinners	1	1.50 a day
Contractors	1	1.25 a day
Brick and Stone Masons	4	2.00 a day
Blacksmiths	2	
Florists	1	450.00 a year
Machinists	2	300.00 a year
Harness-maker	1	
Bridge builders	1	2.00 a day
Barbers	4	
Tailors	1	2.50 and 2.75 a day
Paper-hangers	1	
Painters	2	1.00 a day
Firemen	4	30.00 a month
Shoemakers	7	
Carpenters	8	2.50 a day
Total	42	

From eastern Georgia, Miss L. D. Davis reports:

"The relations with the whites in most communities are friendly. Few communities have trades unions. In Athens Negroes can join some of the unions with whites; none are organized among themselves. Augusta has several Negro trades unions. The painters, brickmasons and carpenters are well organized. Negroes cannot join white unions in Augusta.

"At first I had a little trouble to get the question of wages received answered. Negroes do not receive the same wages as whites, there were some exceptions, but generally whites receive from 25¢ to 50¢ more than Negroes.

(1.) Carpenters get from \$1 to \$2.50 a day. (2.) Brick masons and stone cutters get the same wages of whites in the same trade, from \$2.00 to \$4.00 per day. (3.) Plasterers get 33-1/2¢ per hour. Barbers, tailors and blacksmiths conduct their own business, and did not as a general rule tell their profits."

"Those reporting who own real estate, by trades, were: Barbers, 0; Blacksmiths, 6; Printers, 1; Shoemakers, 0; Tailors, 1; Plumbers, 1; Plasterers, 3; Tinners, 4; Painters, 4; Mechanics, 4; Telegraph linemen, 0; Brick masons, 15; Carpenters, 16."

Atlanta, Ga. In the spring of 1902 a number of seniors from Atlanta University were given sections of the city to investigate as to the number and condition of Negro artisans. Extracts from these reports are appended and form the best general picture obtainable of industrial conditions as seen by young observers.

Mr. H. H. Pace says:

"The first person from whom I obtained any real information was a brick-mason who received me cordially and who was inclined to talk. He was at home then (the middle of the afternoon) and said that it was the season when he never did much. He was a Union man and said that colored brickmasons were well received by the white unions 'if they knew their business,' although the initiation fee was larger for colored men and the sick and death benefits much smaller for them than for whites. I next saw a machinist who lived in a tumble down house in a rather poor locality. But he said he owned the house. I found a carpenter who was almost totally despondent. He couldn't get work, he said, and was sorry he ever came to Atlanta. 'I own a farm in Jackson county,' he said, 'but quit farming and came here thinking to do better at my trade. But if things don't change soon I think I'll go back to it.'"

"The next thing of particular interest to me was a gang of men, white and black, at work upon ten or twelve three-room houses. The person in charge of the work was a colored man who gave his name and address as Tom Carlton, Edgewood, Ga. He talked to me himself but refused to let me talk to his employees. He was willing to give me plenty of information about himself, still I was unable to persuade him to let me interview those at work. He said he could join the white union now, they were after him every day to do so. But he wouldn't, because once awhile back when he was working for wages he was refused admission. As soon, however, as he became his own boss they wanted him."

"A tailor, who conducted a small shop at . . . told me that he cleared one hundred and twenty dollars a month from his business. But from his confession that he owned no real estate, the appearance of his shop and its location I concluded that he did well to collect one hundred and twenty dollars altogether in six months. In comparison with this shop was another tailoring establishment farther up the street which was neat and progressive. The proprietor told me he had been there only six months and averaged now, from his business, an income of about fifty dollars a month. He had another man at work and seemed to have enough work on hand to keep him employed for some time."

"Of the whole number questioned except, of course, shoemakers and tailors who ran their own shops, all had worked at some time or did work sometimes with whites in the same work. The painters said that the white painters were not very friendly disposed toward them, and did not allow them to join their union under any circumstances. The plumbers were under somewhat the same ban."

"Not one of the artisans in my territory had been to a trade school. Nearly everyone had simply 'worked awhile under a first-class brickmason or 'carpenter,' etc. Several had learned their trades during slavery and followed them ever since. One had learned his trade of blacksmith in the U.S. Army. None answered 'Yes' to the question of any 'higher training.'"

"The most interesting bit of information in regard to color discrimination was obtained from a colored fireman on the Southern Railway. He said the Company refused to sign a contract and wage scale with his union but did sign one with the white union. Moreover, he said, 'If I take a train from here to Greenville, S.C., I get for that trip \$2.60, the white engineer gets \$6.00. But if that same train had the same engineer and a white fireman, the engineer would get his \$6.00 just the same but the fireman would get \$3.25.'

He gets 65 cents more for doing the same work I do. At the end of the run we have to make out our time on a card, which, with the other necessary wording has two spaces marked 'white' and 'colored' respectively. I cross out the "colored" and get \$2.60; he crosses out the 'white' and gets \$3.25. That's all the difference there is between our work."

Mr. Pace interviewed 67 artisans in all. Mr. J. F. Lemon studied 89 artisans. Twelve per cent of them owned property, 5% owned several pieces of property; 27% were married, 4% were illiterate, 25% had respectable homes and 10% were first-class workmen. He says:

"During my tour of research, I did not find many high-class artisans, most of the shoemakers, carpenters, and barbers, being hardly more than 'botchers.' There were, however, among the brickmasons, carriage-workers, painters, etc., some good workmen. Most of them are married and have families to support."

"About one-fifth of the artisans lived in nice homes of their own, well furnished, and comfortable; another third lived in fair homes of three or four rooms fairly well furnished, but the remaining half of the total number of artisans lived in homes too poor and ill-kept to warrant their being called artisans who might earn enough to decently support a small family."

"Most children in the public schools. Many of the wives of male artisans are laundresses, helping to earn the needed running expenses, while a few wives are in good paying work, as school teachers, etc."

"Many of the men belong to secret orders, but I found only two who belonged to any labor union, although they knew of the International to which Negroes are admitted."

"Only three of my artisans attended trade schools, most of them having learned as helpers, apprentices or 'picked it up.'"

"Almost all could read and write, but only about half a dozen had any higher training. I found several who had attended Atlanta University, Spelman, and other schools, none, however, being graduates. I found two enterprising and successful contractors, who do the best work, have plenty to do and own property themselves as a result of their success."

"Many of the poorer artisans are old ex-slaves and some cannot read or write and they are no credit to their trades. The better class of artisans are the young who were born since slavery."

"The different trades pay, per day, from an average of 75¢ for the seamstress to about \$3.00 for brickmasons and carriage-workers, the others varying between these figures. The wages of whites in like trades are slightly better in most cases."

Mr. A. C. Tolliver was "very much surprised at the poor condition of some of the artisans' homes, particularly of men whom I know to be good workmen and engaged nearly the year round."

"Very few, if any, of the artisans, as you will see from the statistics, learned their trade at a Trade School. I found one, a glazier, at Woodward Lumber Co., West End, who had attended Tuskegee. Everything seemed to be learned by apprenticeship."

"The plasterers all seemed to have served under the same man, who was a noted workman in his day. The molders whom I found worked at the Southern Terra Cotta Works. Of the 53 artisans I studied, 35 were illiterate."

"The following table shows a comparison of the average wages of the white and colored artisans engaged in the same trade, per day."

Trade	Per day Average wages of colored	Per day Average wages of white
Painter	\$ 1.80	\$ 2.30
Molder	1.95	2.05
Rock-mason	2.40	2.70
Carpenter	1.82	2.07
Blacksmith	1.83-1/3	2.25
Tile-layer	1.25	2.50
Electrician	3.50	5.00

"The wages of the whites are computed as given by the colored men themselves; in a few instances I think the amount given is a little too large."

It seems to be the opinion of every colored artisan that he gets from 25 to 75 per cent less than his white brother for his work."

"Very few artisans seem to own any real estate, and if they do, they will not always tell you of it for fear of the tax collector; of the 53 artisans of my district only 8 owned any property. Those houses from outside and inside appearance were in very good condition."

"The fellow who gave his trade as an electrician learned what he knew by correspondence. I questioned him very closely. He can only put in electric bells, which he worked at all of last summer, but for a living and regular work, he cleaned cars in the Southern Railroad shops. Yet he makes extra money by putting in electric bells when the days are long."

The number of Negro artisans by age, conjugal condition and trades was reported by the canvassers as follows:

## ATLANTA ARTISANS

## CONJUGAL CONDITION AND AGE--MALES

Conjugal Condition	Under 20	20-30	30-40	40 & over	Unknown	Total
Single	17	83	32	19		151
Married		118	223	263	9	613
Widowed		8	10	24		42
Separated		3		5		8
Unknown	3	4	5	7	10	29
Total	20	216	270	318	19	843

## FEMALES

Conjugal Condition	Under 20	20-30	30-40	40 & over	Unknown	Total
Single	4	7	3			14
Married	1	3	6	6	1	17
Widowed		2	1	6		9
Separated		1		1		2
Unknown		1	1		1	3
Total	5	24	11	13	2	55

Those designated as "separated" are not divorced and not in all cases permanently separated, although usually so. About thirty per cent of these artisans are under thirty, and about sixty per cent are under forty years of age.

We may now separate these 900 artisans according to the trades they follow.

## OCCUPATIONS OF ATLANTA ARTISANS--MALES

	U. 20	20-30	30-40	40 & O.	Unknown	Total
Painters	1	10	7	13	4	35
Plumbers		3	6	8	1	18
Barbers	1	30	33	17	1	82
Blacksmiths	1	7	16	31	2	57
Shoemakers		14	17	52	1	84
Carpenters	3	25	55	92	3	178
Masons	1	17	27	24	4	73
Tailors	3	20	12	3	1	39
Plasterers	2	9	16	24	1	52
Bakers	1	9	2	1		13
Moulders	1	1	3			5
Lathers	1	4	2	2		9
Machinists	1	4	5	6		16
Candy-makers	1	6	4			11



## OCCUPATIONS OF ATLANTA ARTISANS--MALES Cont'd.

	U.20	20-30	30-40	40 & O.	Unknown	Total
Broom-makers	1	1				2
Mattress-maker	1	1	1			3
Dyers	1		2			3
Firemen		11	15	12		38
Telegraph linemen		1	1			2
Paint-makers		1				1
Tinners		1	1	1		3
Electricians		1				1
Glaziers		2	1	1		4
Contractors & builders			5	2		7
Iron workers			1			1
Gun-makers			1			1
Wheelwrights			1	2		3
Harness-makers			1	1		2
Miscellaneous		36	32	26	1	95
Total	20	214	267	318	19	838

## FEMALES

	U.20	20-30	30-40	40 & O.	Unknown	Total
Dressmaking	3	11	7	7	1	29
Tailoring	1			1	1	3
Seamstresses	1	12	3	2		18
Pastry-cooks			1			1
Milliners				1		1
Miscellaneous		1		2		3
Total	5	24	11	13	2	55

The chief artisans are carpenters, shoemakers and barbers; after these come masons, blacksmiths and plasterers, tailors and painters. The firemen are both stationary and locomotive; the plumbers are usually helpers and not many are masters of the trade.

The wages of artisans in the city are reported as follows:

## ATLANTA ARTISANS: WAGES PER MONTH

	U.\$15	\$15-24	\$25-29	\$30-39	\$40-49	\$50 & O.
Painters		6	9		8	7
Plumbers		2	1	7	3	2
Barbers	1	17	4	7	27	12
Blacksmiths		7	1	16	13	11
Shoemakers	1	18	7	16	19	5
Masons		2		5	7	50
Carpenters		4		46	76	42
Tailors		3		3	7	12
Plasterers		1	1	5	7	32
Bakers	1	5		1	3	
Molders				1	2	
Lathers		1			6	2
Machinists		2	2	3	6	1
Candy-makers		2	2	2	2	
Broom-makers		1				1
Mattress-makers		1				1
Firemen		1	1	15	8	8
Dressmakers & Seam-stresses		7	1	5	5	1
Miscellaneous		10	6	21	21	11
Total	3	90	36	153	220	198
Percentage	5%	13%	5%	22%	31.5%	28%

Probably in the wages of \$50 and more there was exaggeration due to the desire to appear prosperous. On the whole, however, the returns seem reliable and the earnings of the Negro artisan are seen to be small.

There is no very satisfactory way of ascertaining the growth or decline in number of the Negro artisans in Atlanta. One method tried by the class in economics in Atlanta University was to count the number given in the directories for a series of years. The directories, however, are inaccurate and especially careless in regard to Negroes. The following table, however, is of some interest:

REPORTED NUMBER OF NEGRO ARTISANS IN ATLANTA

	1885	1890	1895	1902
Carpenters	208	245	199	181
Barbers	84	93	139	158
Shoemakers	80	103	127	113
Masons	77	98	96	91
Blacksmiths	65	95	59	50
Painters	30	9	26	43
Tailors	9	29	20	30
Plasterers	17	54	38	28
Firemen	15	21	50	58
Bakers	4	25	9	10
Printers	4	10	4	3
Machinists	1	7	9	6
Plumbers	1	4	10	7
Contractors and builders	4	7	10	3
Other trades	39	60	93	67
Total	638	860	889	848

The apparent slight decrease in number of Negro artisans is offset by two considerations; 1st. The increased competition of later years has had the effect of sifting out the poorer Negro artisans so that the survivors in 1902 are probably better artisans on the average than those of 15 or 20 years earlier. 2nd. There is in South Atlanta a settlement of Negro artisans and home-owners centering about Clark University who are really a part of the city life. The number and wages of some of these artisans is reported as follows in 1902:

ARTISANS AND MONTHLY WAGES--SOUTH ATLANTA

	\$20-29	\$30-39	\$40-49	\$50 & O.
Bakers	1			
Barbers		5		1
Blacksmiths			2	
Candy makers			1	
Carpenters		3		9
Engineers		1		
Firemen		1	1	
Harness makers				1
Masons		1		5
Plasterers				7
Plumbers			1	1
Shoemakers		2	2	
Dressmakers	1	3		
Total	51	2	16	24

The artisans of Atlanta proper reported that 301 of them are accustomed at times to work with whites at these trades; 594 were not. 238 artisans work usually for white patrons; 101 for Negroes, and 266 for both; 210 of the artisans were illiterate, 631 could read and write; 53 had some higher training; 290 own real estate, 494 own none, and 111 gave no answer; 26 had attended trade schools at Spelman Seminary, Tuskegee Institute, Clark University and Atlanta University. Only 85 artisans reported themselves as belonging to

	Under \$20	\$20-30	\$30-40	\$40-50	\$50-60	\$60 & O.
Masons and plaster- ers			1	6		10
Shoemakers	2	3	2		1	4
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights		5	5	5	1	1
Engineers and firemen	1	3	2			1
Barbers	1	3	3	1		2
Painters		2	2	7	1	4
Tinners		2	2	1		1
Tailors						
Mechanics		2	7	2	1	
Miscellaneous	1	6	7	7	4	
Total (males)	5	26	31	29	8	23

251 of the men were accustomed once in awhile to work along side of whites in pursuing their trade; 59 never worked thus. 148 work primarily for whites, 35 for Negroes, 157 for both; 69 belong to trade unions, 240 do not; 98 said they could join the same trade unions as the whites, 128 said they could not, 180 did not know; 274 could read and write; 44 had had some higher training; 240 owned real estate, 125 did not, 49 gave no answer.

The following extracts from letters and reports give an idea of the condition of these artisans:

LaGrange--Bridge Builder. "For 20 years I have worked for the LaGrange Bridge Co. Have done very well. Save but little. Live very well. Have 6 girls, all in school."

Darien--Tailor. "There is but one other tailor in this locality. Our town is not very large, hence we two workmen do the work of our town. Neither of us hire others."

Augusta--Tinsmith. "I started at the trade in 1853 as an apprentice, and served some five years. From that time I worked by the day until 1867 at \$2 per day. Since that time I have been engaged in business of my own up until the present. I also have a son who learned the trade under my instruction, and is now in business with me. He is 33 years old. I have been successful in my business up to the present time. Since I have been in business I have turned out 72 good workmen that served under me at the trade."

Bricklayer. "We, as Negroes, have to work mostly for what we can get, and the whites always get the best of all."

Augusta--Brickmason. "I have saved with my labor in cash \$800 and that with what I have in real estate all makes a total of \$1,200."

Gainesville--Brickmason. "I have helped to build 'Vesta' and 'Pacelot' mills here, and also was a foreman over both colored and white in Spartanburg, S.C., on Enaree mill."

St. Mary's--Brickmason and Plasterer. "Mr. \_\_\_\_ was among the mechanics that laid the foundations of Atlanta University, and worked there until the building was ready for use, working for \$3.00 per day, and also for \$3.50 on the Kimball House."

Athens--Carpenter. "No contracts from whites are given to colored carpenters in Athens, but colored and white carpenters work together."

Augusta--Carpenter. "I am not contracting this year. I am foreman for one of the leading contractors in this city. Prejudice is very strong between the white and colored mechanics here. Even the architects are against us. I get there just the same."

trade unions; however, there are some others who also belong. They reported as follows as to their work:

Trades	Works for himself	Hires Others	Wks. for wages	Works for him- self & wages
Painters	3	3	18	1
Barbers	6	11	47	1
Blacksmiths	7	9	23	1
Shoemakers	36	9	20	
Carpenters	33	17	88	2
Masons	8	6	40	4
Tailors	6	8	6	
Plasterers	6	8	25	2
All others	18	15	155	
Total	123	86	422	11

*Other Towns in Georgia.* Detailed reports covering over four hundred artisans were received from other towns in Georgia. The ages of these artisans were as follows:

Years of Age	Male	Female	Total
Under 20	5	1	6
20-30	89	1	90
30-40	111	3	114
40 and over	159	2	161
Unknown	37	13	50
Total	401	20	421

Their trades were as follows:

## MALE

Brickmasons	17	Firemen	5
Carpenters	86	Telegraph linemen	3
Painters	18	Electric linemen	2
Printers	5	Horse shoers	2
Tailors	11	Mortar mixers	1
Barbers	31	Florists	1
Blacksmiths	32	Tie cutter	1
Shoemakers	31	Glazier	1
Engineers	3	Dyer	1
Plumbers	7	Stationary firemen	2
Mechanics	14	Cabinet maker	1
Wheelwrights	3	Baker	1
Machinists	7	Wood worker	1
Plasterers	13	Paper hanger	1
Bill posters	1	Jeweler	1
Tinners	9	Musician	1
Contractors	5	Trained nurse	1
Basket makers	1	Crockery worker	1
Bridge builders	1	Undesignated	25
Harness makers	2	Total	401

## FEMALE

Tailoress	3	Printer	1
Seamstress	11	Undesignated	3
Dressmaker	2	Total	20

Of these 426 artisans, 6 had attended trade school. The wages received by 122 men were as follows, per month, not counting unoccupied time:

Athens--Carpenter. "Work almost entirely for non-union white contractor, who employs and pays white and colored alike. There has arisen within the last three years a feeling on the part of white union carpenters against my present employer for using on equal terms and wages, white and colored mechanics."

Carpenter.--"I have been working at the trade for 40 years and can do any kind of finishing, and can get a reputation from any contractors who know me. I have worked both North and South."

Augusta--Painter. "The Negro painters are doing well."

LaGrange--Carpenter and Contractor. "I learned my trade under my father. I have been a contractor and bridge builder for 30 years. My contracts for 1901 amounted to \$10,000."

Augusta--Plasterer. "Negro workmen have very little competition in this line of work, as this kind of work is too hard for whites."

Eatonton--"I am a painter at \$1.50 per day. The white men get \$2.00 per day. I work 10 hours per day, and keep pretty busy all the year. I began work in 1889."

Buena Vista--Turner and Glazier. "This boy is a fireman, glazier and turner. I have been knowing him some 12 or more years as a fireman. He has the certificates of his trade."

Quitman--Carpenter. "I am employed almost the entire year, mostly for whites. I work with white and colored. There is very little discrimination shown toward good workmen."

Thomasville--Tinner. "We have several skilled workmen here, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, and shoemakers."

Marietta--Blacksmith. "In the year 1890 I went to work at the American Marble Co., as a yard hand, and in three weeks I was sent to the shop as a helper to make and dress marble tools and in three months I was given a forge. In the year 1894 I was made foreman and machinist. My first wages were 90¢ per day. Then my wages were \$1.25 during the part of the year 1894. Afterward I went to Canton, Ga., to work for the Georgia Marble Finishing Works for \$1.50 and my expenses of travel paid. In the year 1895 I went into business of my own. In 1897 I was offered \$2.00 per day by the McNeal Marble Company of Marietta, Ga. Now I am working for the Butler Brothers, of Marietta, Ga., and others."

Fort Valley--"The town is being benefited no little by the different trades that are taught the boys and girls at the Fort Valley High and Industrial School."

Athens--Carpenter. "I fail to work about one-third of the year. I get \$1.50 up to \$2.00 per day. There is a white union here but the colored do not belong to it."

Darien--Contractor and Builder, now Post Master. "This is my third term as post master, but I continue with my trade. I have men working now. I pay them \$1.00, \$1.50 and \$2.00 per day."

College--Mason and Plasterer. "I am instructor in Ga. State College. Have erected \$20,000 brick dormitory with student labor. Under my supervision students work for both white and colored around the College."

Wrightsville--Carpenter. "There is some discrimination as to color where the colored mechanic is not of high standard."

Savannah--Contractor. "When I first went out to learn the trade I received 50¢ per week; as my trade advanced, wages advanced, and now I am foreman of my work."

Augusta--Bricklayer. "I am a bricklayer by trade. I have been working for the leading contractor of Augusta for 20 years. I work regularly when it is so we can work."

Eatonton--Contractor of Brick, Tile and Plastering. "I own property and real estate. I am a competent and active contractor and have been engaged in it for 35 years. I have learned nearly 50 young men to be first-class workmen, together with my two sons."

LaGrange--Blacksmith and Machinist. "I worked in one shop two years, and where I am now I have been working 13 years, and I am the only colored man in the shop, and I stand equal to any man in the shop; if you need any references you can get them."

Roberta--Carpenter. "I have been engaged in this trade for about 14 years and follow it about half of my time now. I farm and carry on my trade whenever called on to do a job of work."

Valdosta--Painter. "As to unions, we can have separate branches and co-operate with whites in cases of a strike or regulation of hours per day or wages, by a committee."

St. Mary's--Carpenter. "I have contracted for work and worked quite large gangs, both colored and whites, but have been working for \_\_\_\_\_ for 10 years at Cumberland Island, Ga."

Augusta--Plumbers. "There is no union among the colored laborers here at all. I wish there were. At the shop where I am employed, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and myself are the only two that are reliable. We both work right along by the side of the white men. We do gas and steam fitting just the same as the white men. But still we don't get the same wages for the work. Of course, there are a great many others that will work, but they work only as helpers with white men."

Marietta--Plumber. "I have been a steady workman under others for nine years. I can do tin work of any kind; I can set bathtubs, toilets, rough a job on new houses; can fit up any kind of steam work in the line of plumbing; make steam quirls, can wipe a pretty good joint, and most any work in common plumbing. I am sorry I cannot give you a more interesting sketch. A man must have a good head to run that trade for himself to make anything out of it. I have a home, and I like the farm and the country the best. I have no idle time through the year, for when I am out of the shop I am in the field."

Marietta--Plumber. "I have worked at the trade for ten years, and have found many discouragements. It is a known fact that the whites do everything they possibly can to prevent a Negro from getting into the plumber's trade, and after he gets in he can get no employment in a white shop. I have been doing business for myself as a plumbing and tinning contractor for 2-1/2 years and have had as much work as I can do."

Illinois. The state of Illinois had 57,028 Negroes in 1890 and 85,078 in 1900. Over a third of these persons (30,150) live in the city of Chicago. The census of 1890 reported the following artisans:

## MALE

Miners	556	Carpenters and joiners	128
Barbers and hairdressers	762	Coopers	19
Engineers & firemen, (stationary)	243	Harness, saddle & trunk makers	9
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots & sailors	73	Iron and steel workers	67
Steam railroad employees	243	Machinists	27
Street railway employees	3	Marble and stone cutters, masons	110
Telegraph and telephone operators	4	Painters	79
Apprentices	22	Plumbers	16
Bakers	17	Printers	29
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	103	Saw & planing mill employees	85

Boot and shoemakers	35	Tailors	20
Brick makers, potters, etc.	69	Tinners and tinware makers	8
Butchers	32	Tobacco and cigar factory opera-	
Cabinet makers and upholsterers	15	tives	54
		Wood workers	26

## FEMALE

Telegraph and telephone operators	1	Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses	329
Apprentices	2	Printers	5
Cotton and other textile mill operatives		Tailoresses	2
	6	Tobacco & cigar factory operatives	2

The Negroes are found in the trades as follows in various towns:

In Chicago there are carpenters, bricklayers, blacksmiths, stationary engineers, plasterers, butchers, coopers, etc. They are slowly gaining in the trades. The lack of leading contractors and the restrictions on apprentices keep the Negroes out of the trades, as well as their own lack of appreciation of the advantages of mechanical trades. In Springfield there are over 400 Negro miners and a number of hod-carriers, plasterers and barbers. In Centralia, Streator, Pontiac, Rock Island and Danville many Negro miners are reported; at Alton there are hod-carriers and a few firemen and masons; at Peoria, barbers, building laborers and firemen; at Galesburg, building laborers.

*Indiana.* There were 45,215 Negroes in Indiana in 1890, and 57,505 in 1900. Over a fourth of these persons live in Indianapolis, which has already been spoken of in § 22. The census of 1890 reported the following Negro artisans:

## MALE

Miners and quarrymen	185	Cotton & other textile mill operatives	34
Barbers and hairdressers	699	Glass workers	56
Engineers & firemen (stationary)	154	Harness, saddle & trunk makers	5
Steam railroad employees	128	Iron and steel workers	162
Telegraph and telephone operators	2	Machinists	15
Apprentices	24	Marble & stone cutters & masons	92
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	81	Millers	12
Boot and shoemakers	31	Painters	40
Brickmakers, potters, etc.	130	Plasterers	90
Butchers	12	Printers	14
Cabinet makers and upholsterers	18	Saw and planing mill men	124
Carpenters and joiners	133	Tailors	7
Carriage and wagon makers	9	Wood workers	39
Coopers	11		

## FEMALE

Stenographers and typewriters	1	Tailoresses	2
Textile mill operatives	6	Tobacco & cigar factory operatives	1
Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses	161	Wood workers	2

Indiana has but a small number of Negro artisans and the opposition of Trade Unions is strong. A report from Mount Vernon says there are several bricklayers, masons and engineers there and that the Negro is gaining in the trades. The chief obstacles are "prejudice among the masses and the hostility of organized white artisans." There is some discrimination in wages and Negroes are barred out of the unions. Before the war there were no artisans in the place. Since then artisans have come from the South, the most conspicuous one from Alabama. "He is a very fine mechanic and engineer."

*Indian Territory and Oklahoma.* These two territories had a Negro population of 21,609 in 1890, and 55,684 in 1900. Oklahoma with 2,873 Negroes in 1890 had the following artisans:

## MALE

Engineers, (civil, mechanical, etc.)	1	Carpenters and joiners	10
Barbers and hairdressers	18	Confectioners	1
Steam railroad employees	1	Marble and stone cutters	1
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	11	Masons	6
Boot and shoemakers	2	Painters	1
Brick makers	2	Plasterers	4
Butchers	1		

## FEMALE

Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, etc. 1

A report from Ardmore, Indian Territory, says there are not many skilled Negro laborers there; the leading ones include 3 blacksmiths, 4 carpenters, 2 printers, 2 shoemakers and a type-writer. The Negro mechanics are gaining, however, and young men are entering the trades. Only lack of skill hinders the black artisan. There are no trade unions and "white men have been let out of jobs for colored mechanics of greater ability."

*Iowa and Kansas.* Kansas had 49,710 Negroes in 1890 and 52,003 in 1900; Iowa had respectively 10,685 and 12,693. There were the following artisans reported in the two states in 1890:

## MALE

Miners	815	Lead and zinc workers	108
Barbers and hairdressers	637	Machinists	7
Engineers & firemen, (stationary)	91	Marble & stone cutters & masons	234
Steam railroad employees	287	Millers	25
Telegraph & telephone operators	4	Painters	43
Bakers	2	Plasterers	151
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	151	Printers	27
Boot and shoemakers	27	Tailors	7
Butchers	37	Tinners and tinware makers	14
Carpenters, joiners and coopers	157	Apprentices	5
Carriage and wagon makers	3	Brickmakers, etc.	13
Harness, saddle & trunk makers	10	Saw & planing mill employees	19
Iron and steel workers	45		

## FEMALE

Stenographers and typewriters	1	Dressmakers, milliners, seam-	
Cotton & other textile mill		stresses	141
operatives	9	Printers	2

In Atchison, Kansas, there are very few Negro artisans, and they are chiefly blacksmiths. Nevertheless, the Negro is gaining and numbers of young people are entering the industrial schools. In Kansas City there are a number of stationary firemen and beef-butchers. The trade unions are the chief obstacles. In Iowa there are a large number of Negro miners and many in the building trades. In Ottumwa there are hod-carriers, steel and metal workers, plasterers, carpenters, and miners in considerable numbers.

*Kentucky.* In 1890 there were 268,071 Negroes in Kentucky and 284,706 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported the following artisans:

## MALE

Lumbermen, raftsmen, etc.	114	Cotton & other textile mill	
Miners	976	operatives	225
Barbers and hairdressers	657	Harness, saddle & trunk makers	19
Engineers and firemen	359	Iron and steel workers	240
Steam railroad employees	2,492	Machinists	27
Apprentices	36	Millers	77
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	592	Marble & stone cutters & masons	586
Boot and shoemakers	143	Painters	181
Brickmakers, potters, etc.	401	Printers	23



Butchers	80	Saw and planing mill employees	312
Cabinet makers and upholsterers	29	Tailors	19
Carpenters and joiners	886	Tinners and tinware workers	31
Coopers	169	Tobacco & cigar factory operatives	857
		Wood workers	54

## FEMALE

Apprentices	7	Dressmakers, milliners, seam-	
Boot and shoemakers	2	stresses	576
Cotton and other textile mill		Printers	1
operatives	29	Tobacco & cigar factory operatives	162

The chief artisans are miners, tobacco workers, hod-carriers, marine firemen, carpenters, railway men, etc. At Paducah there are many artisans; the 22 leading ones include 9 carpenters, 3 bricklayers, 4 plasterers, 3 painters and 3 blacksmiths. The black artisans are gaining here. In Lebanon there are carpenters, blacksmiths and masons, but they are losing ground on account of inefficiency. "Old artisans are dying out and no young men are taking their places." At Danville, Ky., the leading artisans include carpenters, masons, painters and plasterers. They are gaining as a result of industrial training and the entrance of young men into the trades. In Georgetown the leading artisans include 2 contracting carpenters, 4 contracting masons, 1 cabinet maker and 1 paper hanger. Young men are entering the trades and the Negro is gaining. In Louisville there are perhaps 500 artisans of various kinds. They are not gaining perceptibly.

Louisiana. There were 559,193 Negroes in Louisiana in 1890, and 650,804 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported the following artisans:

## MALE

Lumberman and raftsmen	484	Carpenters and joiners	1,611
Engineers (civil and mechanical)	37	Coopers	605
Barbers and hairdressers	369	Textile mill	
Engineers and firemen (station-		operatives	263
ary)	309	Iron and steel workers	30
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, sailors	660	Machinists	24
Steam railroad employees	1,593	Marble & stone cutters & Masons	766
Apprentices	190	Painters	280
Bakers	145	Printers	39
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	699	Saw and planing mill employees	948
Boot and shoemakers	438	Tailors	70
Butchers	141	Tinners and tinware makers	44
Cabinet makers and upholsterers	111	Tobacco & cigar factory employees	539

## FEMALE

Apprentices	6	Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses	656
Bakers	18	Tailoresses	45
Cotton & other textile mill		Tobacco & cigar factory opera-	
operatives	22	tives	21

In New Orleans there are large numbers of artisans in the building trades and in shoemaking, cigar making, blacksmithing, coopering, etc. The impression seems to be that the Negro artisan here is either gaining or at least not losing. There are about 4,000 Negroes in the trade unions. The influx of white mechanics is increasing the competition, however, and "the brief life, so far, of the industrial school among the colored people will not permit one to see any large results as yet. It is promising, however, and ought to be encouraged." There is no apparent discrimination in wages in this city and the trade unions are open to Negroes in most cases. One report says: "There is no way of telling the number of Negro artisans in this city. The directories do not distinguish them from others. Before and since the war they have built some of the best structures of our city. They work in various shops and in cigar factories, but have been lately crowded out of machine shops. The new stone library of Tulane University is now being erected by Negroes entirely."

Another report says: "The city of New Orleans comprises among its population Negro artisans who receive recognition in their respective trades, are widely employed and paid remunerative wages. Contractors of public buildings and private work appreciate the Negro workmen and a majority of the most imposing structures in the city were built by colored men. The number of artisans has increased since the war, and their condition is better. A large proportion of them are property-holders." Baton Rouge is said to be "an exceptionally good community for Negro artisans" and they are gaining there. "The old slave time plasterers, masons and carpenters trained up an array of youngsters to fill their shoes and they are doing it most admirably." Among the buildings erected entirely by Negro mechanics are a \$25,000 dormitory, a \$25,000 public school building and a \$10,000 bank building.

There are many strong Negro trade unions in Louisiana, especially the Longshoremen's Benevolent Association, the Screwmen, the Cotton Yard men, the Teamsters and Loaders, the Excelsior Freight Handlers, the Round Freight Teamsters, etc.

At Shreveport there are carpenters, hod-carriers and bricklayers organized in unions. On the whole the Negro artisans seem better organized and more aggressive in this state than in any other. The colored secretary of the Central Labor Union says: "By amalgamation of organizations and through International connections we expect to have the color line in work removed."

*Maine and Massachusetts.* These two states have a comparatively small proportion of Negroes: Maine had 1,190 in 1890, and 1,319 in 1900; Massachusetts had 22,144 and 31,974. The report of artisans in 1890 for both states was:

## MALE

Lumbermen, etc.	83	Cotton & other textile mill oper.	89
Engineers (civil, mechanical, etc.)	12	Gold and silver workers	2
Barbers and hairdressers	390	Iron and steel workers	22
Engineer & firemen (stationary)	53	Leather curriers, dressers, tanners,	
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, sailors	156	etc.	42
Steam railroad employees	83	Machinists	46
Street railway employees		Marble and stone cutters	12
Apprentices	15	Masons (brick and stone)	90
Bakers	11	Painters	59
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	34	Paper mill operatives	16
Boot and shoemakers	159	Piano and organ makers	5
Brickmakers, potters, etc.	18	Plumbers	16
Butchers	20	Printers	30
Cabinet makers and upholsterers	27	Rubber factory operatives	11
Carpenters and joiners	103	Tailors	66
		Woodworkers	28

## FEMALE

Stenographers and typewriters	3	Printers	4
Boot and shoemakers	38	Rubber factory operatives	2
Textile mill operatives	64	Straw workers	1
Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses	271	Tailoresses	51

In Portland, Maine, there are five skilled workmen in the unions and they stand well.

In Massachusetts the meat handlers, longshoremen, and building trades are represented and a great many are in the unions. In Boston the Negroes are in the building trades, cigar makers', meat handlers', and a few in the machinists' unions. In Springfield there are masons and mason tenders and barbers; but not many. They are good workmen. Brockton has a few electric linemen, stationary firemen, boot and shoemakers and laundry workers. In the smaller towns there is here and there an artisan.

*Maryland.* There were 215,657 Negroes in Maryland in 1890, and 235,064 in 1900. There were reported in 1890 the following artisans:

## MALE

Miners	139	Iron and steel workers	68
Barbers and hairdressers	480	Machinists	13
Engineers and firemen (sta.)	220	Marble & stone cutters & masons	231
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, sailors	1,085	Millers	76
Steam railroad employees	467	Painters	59
Street railway employees	4	Plumbers	13
Apprentices	57	Printers	27
Bakers	21	Saw & planing mill employees	230
Blacksmiths & wheelwrights	206	Ship and boat builders	96
Boot and shoemakers	155	Tailors	22
Brickmakers, potters, etc.	1,143	Tinners and tinware makers	68
Butchers	130	Tobacco and cigar factory oper.	18
Carpenters and joiners	96		
Cotton and other textile mill operatives	57		

## FEMALE

Apprentices	9	Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses	90
Confectioners	3	Hat and cap makers	1
Cotton and other textile mill operatives	10	Meat, fish, and fruit packers, canners, etc.	19
		Tailoresses	7

The Negro population of this state centres in Baltimore, where over a third of the colored people live. Here the Negroes have had an interesting industrial history. Before the war the Negroes made brick, shucked oysters, loaded ships and did the caulking; there were also carpenters and blacksmiths. Then came foreign competition and the war until gradually by skill and prejudice the Negroes were more and more forced out. There are still painters and building laborers, brickmakers and other artisans, but the trades unions have largely confined these to job-work. The hod-carriers are still strong and there was a strong union of caulkers in 1890. The brickmakers, too, are well organized and have white and black members.

There have been in Baltimore some interesting experiments in industrial co-operation, the most noted of which was that of the Chesapeake Marine Railway. There was a brickmakers' strike after the war which led to colored men organizing a brick yard which flourished awhile and died. A strike against colored caulkers and stevedore followed which forced most of them out of work; as a result the Negroes raised \$10,000, bought a ship yard and marine railway and several hundred caulkers went to work. The capital was soon raised to \$30,000. The venture was successful until it was found that instead of having been purchased outright the yard had only been leased for 20 years and at the end of that time the yard passed into the hands of whites and left the Negroes with nothing but the two or three dividends that had been paid.

As an example of the situation of Negro artisans in the country districts in Maryland we may take the village of Sandy Spring with about a thousand Negroes. There were here in 1900:

2 barbers	1 miller
6 blacksmiths	3 shoemakers
2 carpenters--\$1.25 a day	1 shingle maker
3 engineers--\$12-\$24 a month	2 masons--\$2-\$2.50 per day

Five of these own their homes.

*Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.* Michigan had 15,223 Negroes in 1890 and 15,816 in 1900; Minnesota had 3,683 and 4,959 in those years, and Wisconsin 2,444 and 2,542. The following artisans were reported in these states in 1890:

## MALE

Lumbermen and raftsmen	235	Coopers	39
Miners	4	Textile mill operatives	6
Barbers and hairdressers	731	Harness, saddle & trunk makers	8

Engineers and firemen (sta.)	85	Iron and steel workers	28
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, sailors	82	Machinists	15
Steam railroad employees	56	Marble & stone cut'rs & masons	111
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	40	Millers	3
Boot and shoemakers	18	Painters	55
Butchers	19	Printers	16
Cabinet makers & upholsterers	7	Saw & planing mill employees	82
Carpenters and joiners	122	Tailors	9
Carriage and wagon makers	2	Tobacco & cigar factory opera-	
Wood workers	13	tives	7

## FEMALE

Telegraph and telephone oper.	2	Dressmakers, milliners, seam-	
Cotton and other textile mill		stresses, etc.	194
operatives	7	Tailoresses	3
		Wood workers	3

In Michigan there are about 500 barbers, engineers, plumbers, bricklayers and coal-miners in the unions. In Grand Rapids there are building trades laborers; in Detroit there are longshoremen, engineers, and carpenters. This is one of the few cities where there are several colored motormen and conductors on the street railways. They were forced in by political influence but have proven excellent workmen. In Sault Ste. Marie there are several good mechanics. "We have no toughs in the race here." There is an excellent Negro plumber at Flint, and several good mechanics in Ann Arbor. One in the latter city does considerable small contracting. In Kalamazoo there are bricklayers and masons.

In Minnesota there are few Negroes and fewer artisans; there are a number of barbers in the twin cities, a few cigar makers, printers and carpenters.

In Wisconsin there are few artisans except barbers here and there. In Milwaukee there are a few cigar makers.

*Mississippi.* There were 742,559 Negroes in Mississippi in 1890 and 907,630 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported these artisans:

## MALE

Lumbermen and raftsmen	192	Charcoal, coke & lime burners	94
Barbers and hairdressers	326	Cotton & other textile ops.	76
Engineers & firemen (sta.)	203	Machinists	41
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots, sailors	275	Marble & stone cutters & masons	296
Steam railroad employees	2,736	Mechanics	85
Telegraph and telephone ops.	1	Millers	63
Blacksmiths & wheelwrights	665	Painters	153
Boot and shoemakers	130	Printers	22
Brickmakers	355	Saw & planing mill employees	1,387
Butchers	128	Tinners and tinware makers	16
Carpenters and joiners	1,476	Woodworkers	53

## FEMALE

Basket makers	26	Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresss,	
Cotton and other textile mill		etc.	759
employees	8	Printers	5

A report from Westside says: "Our population is mostly rural, but the towns are growing constantly in number and importance; and, whereas heretofore few skilled artisans were needed in Mississippi the demand for them grows constantly.

"As there are no trades unions in the state to interfere colored mechanics find work without difficulty. There appears to be few labor organizations in the state; there is one at Vicksburg. I presume it was instigated by white mechanics, who induced colored men to organize with them in order that they, the whites, might then more easily obtain work where they were thrown into competition with colored mechanics. They thus procured work through the aid of colored men. There is no trouble whatever on the part of colored men to obtain work in this state as carpenters, blacksmiths, brickmasons, brickmakers, shoemakers, painters or plasterers.

"There is a brickmasons' union at Meridian, Miss. The colored masons are allowed to join it, there being only two such masons in the city. There is somewhat of a dearth of colored masons in the state. This fact being appreciated by the authorities of this institution arrangements are now being made to give instructions in brickmaking and brickmasonry."

A report from Ebenezer mentions blacksmithing as the chief trade and thinks the status of artisans is about the same as in the past although they "may be gaining." There is general lack of efficiency, but students from industrial schools are entering the trades. There is some color discrimination in wages. In Woodville the leading 14 artisans include two builders and contractors, two carpenters, four blacksmiths, one smith and carpenter, three machinists, and two painters. They are competing with white labor and are gaining. The effect of industrial training is apparent; but there is a lack of leading contractors with capital. In all lines but brickmasonry there is discrimination in wages. There are so few white masons that the differences do not extend to this trade. Gloster has a number of carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, engineers and bakers. The writer of the reports "cannot say the Negro is losing as an artisan, but his gains are not satisfactory." There is a demand for better artisans, but there are no industrial schools near and young men are not entering the trades. There is very little discrimination in wages. "We have no organized unions but the colored men generally confer and have certain mutual understandings with each other." The great drawback is lack of sufficient skill and education to follow plans and specifications and do the highest grades of work. Mound Bayou has a number of blacksmiths, engineers, surveyors, carpenters, printers and masons. The artisans are gaining fast here. "This is a distinctively Negro town and colony comprising 2,500--3,000 inhabitants, with 20,000--39,000 acres of rich land. We have three cotton gins, two of them with saw-mill attachments. There are three blacksmith shops and one printing press. These are handled exclusively by Negro labor and Negro managers. The settlement was established about 1887 and the inhabitants are chiefly cotton-growers."

At Holly Springs many young men from the industrial schools are entering the trades; there are several carpenters and masons. There is discrimination in wages. At Grace the Negro artisans are gaining. The leading artisans include 3 carpenters, 1 engineer, 4 masons and a blacksmith. Young men are entering the trades.

Missouri. There were 150,184 Negroes in this state in 1890 and 161,234 in 1900. The census of 1890 reported these artisans:

## MALE

Lumber, raftsmen, etc.	157	Harness, saddle & trunk makers	8
Miners	915	Iron and steel workers	177
Barbers and hairdressers	909	Machinists	19
Engineers and firemen (sta.)	321	Marble and stone cutters	50
Steam railroad employees	703	Masons	231
Street railway employees	7	Millers	35
Apprentices	25	Painters	66
Bakers	13	Plasterers	262
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	206	Printers	32
Boot and shoemakers	52	Saw & planing mill employees	233
Butchers	65	Tailors	9
Cabinetmakers & upholsterers	12	Tinners and tinware makers	11
Carpenters and joiners	263	Tobacco and cigar factory opers.	222
Coopers	22		

## FEMALE

Stenographers & typewriters	2	Printers	59
Telephone & telegraph opertors	4	Tailoresses	294
Cotton & other textile mill opers.	106	Tobacco & cigar factory opers.	199
Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, etc.	1,835		

As to industrial training, "there has been manual training departments in the colored schools for more than ten years but I have not heard of any

thus trained who have got positions thereby." In St. Joseph, on the other hand, there are 65 or 70 Negro artisans and they are gaining. The nine leading artisans include one paper hanger, one kalsominer, three carpenters, one painter, one mattress maker, one plasterer and one tailor. "Trade unions have to a great extent hindered the Negroes' progress" and they are barred from nearly all the unions. At Kansas City Negroes are reported by a leading trade unionist to "have done good work at bricklaying, plastering, painting, carpentry and paper hanging." Only the hod-carriers, however, are in the unions. At Joplin there are a few masons and stone cutters; at Commerce there are carpenters, blacksmiths and engineers, but the Negro is losing. The chief obstacles are "trade unions, prejudice and the lack of capital among our people."

*Other New England States, (N.H., Vt., R.I., and Conn.)* The states of New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut had altogether 21,246 Negroes in 1890, and 25,806 in 1900. Over half these Negroes live in Connecticut. The census of 1890 reported the following artisans in these states:

## MALE

Miners and quarrymen	7	Gold and silver workers	8
Barbers and hairdressers	159	Gunsmiths, locksmiths, bell hangers	9
Engineers and firemen (sta.)	36	Hat and cap makers	
Boatmen, canalmen, pilots & sailors	30	Iron and steel workers	44
Steam railroad employees	31	Machinists	21
Apprentices	15	Marble and stone cutters & masons	142
Blacksmiths and wheelwrights	38	Metal workers	16
Boot and shoemakers	54	Painters	59
Brass workers	39	Plumbers	10
Butchers	31	Printers	16
Cabinetmakers and upholsterers	18	Rubber factory operatives	8
Carpenters and joiners	76	Tailors	15
Clock and watchmakers	2	Tool and cutlery makers	4
Cotton & other textile mill oper.	82	Wood workers	15

## FEMALE

Cotton & other textile mill oper.	38	Paper mill operatives	2
Dressmakers, milliners, seamstresses, etc.	281	Printers	1
		Tailoresses	9

There are very few Negro artisans in these states except barbers; Rhode Island has a few printers, longshoremen and masons. New Hampshire has a few in the building trades. Connecticut seems to have very few if any artisans.  
...

W. E. B. DuBois, *The Negro Artisan*, (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1902), pp. 22-23, 31, 71-77, 79, 104-32. Footnotes have been eliminated from the text by the editors.

PART II

ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE BLACK WORKER  
BEFORE WORLD WAR I

## II

### ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE BLACK WORKER BEFORE WORLD WAR I

The status of the black worker in the American labor movement during the era from 1900 to 1920 frequently was a contradiction of ideals and practice. Although the American Federation of Labor called for the organization of all workers "without regard to creed, color, sex, nationality, or politics," and barred the admission of unions with restrictive clauses in their constitutions, by 1900 the firm imposition of these ideals had been either convoluted or ignored. Thus, where white unions refused admission to blacks, they either remained unorganized or were organized into unions chartered by the AFL rather than the union with jurisdiction over the particular trade. The pitfalls in this policy are illustrated by the efforts of the black AFL organizer James E. Porter to get a charter for an all-Negro council of dockmen's unions in New Orleans. When their white counterparts in the city objected, the AFL refused the charter (Doc. 24-28). Samuel Gompers' acceptance of discrimination did not go unnoticed by black workers, however. Booker T. Washington outlined the reasons for their disenchantment with the American labor movement in a widely circulated article which criticized unions for barring Negroes, and then abusing them for becoming strikebreakers. Under these circumstances blacks had a moral obligation to reject such unions (Doc. 22).

In New Orleans, blacks and whites were equally divided on the docks and levees. Consequently, neither race could extract concessions from their employers without the cooperation of the other. Following the Civil War, the two groups had successfully formulated work-sharing agreements, and a central labor council in which unionists worked out a common strategy for labor-management relations. This type of racial coalition among workers came under serious challenge in 1907 when 10,000 black and white levee workers went on strike. The city's major newspaper characterized Negro strikers as "uppity" anarchists, while the employers refused to negotiate with a racially-mixed strike committee. When the labor unions refused to break under the pressure, however, the employers were forced to yield to the strikers' demands (Doc. 36-42).

Such was not the case with the 1908 United Mine Workers of America strike in Alabama, a classic illustration of how a union could be destroyed by the race issue. Half of the UMWA membership in Alabama was black, and a Negro served as district vice president, while several others held seats on the district board of directors. Labor solidarity, however, soon was transformed into an issue of "social equality." The populace was horrified by the specter of idle black men meeting openly with their white counterparts, and white unionists were dismayed when armed black deputies showed up to guard the picket line. The Birmingham Age-Herald further aggravated the apprehension by focusing on racial cooperation among the strikers. Ultimately, abhorrence of "social equality" sapped public support for the miners, and produced a climate which enabled the governor to order in the militia and assist the companies in crushing the strike (Doc. 43-83).<sup>20</sup>

The Georgia Railroad Strike of 1909 dramatically illustrated once again the potential effects of injecting the race issue into a labor dispute. The strike began as a protest by the white Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen that the line employed too many blacks as firemen. Because the BLFE excluded Negroes, and since Negro firemen earned less than white firemen, the union's wage structure was depressed. Rather than open its membership, however, the BLFE decided instead to "drive all the colored firemen from the southern roads." Against a background of white violence against black firemen, the company resisted the elimination of its cheap labor, and reminded the BLFE that they could be replaced completely by blacks. The strategy backfired, however, because the union was all white and public opinion was against the employment of blacks in jobs desired by whites. Therefore, the labor dispute polarized public opinion against the company, and forced the railroad to undertake a gradual replacement of black firemen with whites (Doc. 84-114).



## RACE RELATIONS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT

## 1. RACE FEELING CAUSES A STRIKE

White Employees of a Glass Company  
Object to Working With Colored Men

Stroudsburg, Pa., Sept. 13--All the white employees of the Black Diamond Glass Company South Stroudsburg quit work yesterday, giving as their reason the employment of colored men as blowers. The following statement was given out: "The white men employed at the Black Diamond Glass factory quit work because of the employment of colored men as blowers. We were given to understand that the colored men were not to be put to work today, but as they were assembled at the office, we resolved to quit. The men claim that they don't object to the colored men as helpers, but when it comes to have them handle the same tools, etc., they thought it was too much to ask." Milton Yetter, one of the company officers said: "It was our intention to operate the South Stroudsburg plant with colored men, and a number of whites at the factory were aware of it. I am at a loss to know what the quitting of the men is for."

*Boston Evening Transcript, September 13, 1900.*

## 2. STATUS OF THE NEGRO IN TRADES UNION MOVEMENT

In view of the action of the Alabama State Federation of Labor in electing to its first and second vice-presidencies colored unionists, and there demonstrating their position toward colored workers, as toilers and wage-earners, and the mooted question in our beautiful southland of the competition of negro labor with white labor, the following from the American Federationist, the official journal of the A.F. of L., will be read with interest.

"For years the American Federation of Labor has declared in favor of, and the necessity for, the organization of all workers, without regard to creed, color, sex, nationality, or politics. In making the declaration for the complete organization of all workers, it does not necessarily proclaim that the social barriers which exist between the whites and blacks could or should be obliterated; but it realizes that when white and black workers are compelled to work side by side, under the same equally unfair and adverse conditions, it would be an anomaly to refuse to accord the rights of organization to workers because of a difference in their color."

This is an excerpt from a lengthy article on this subject which goes into many of the difficulties, and it states unmistakably the position of the American Federation of Labor.

Among the difficulties are mentioned some that arise from self-exalting meddling persons who think that the colored workers when organized should be taken under their superior wing, given special privileges, and otherwise fostered and fondled and given protection from the designs of the unions of white workers, which exist only in the imagination, or the fell purpose of these egotists and self-seekers.

The Federationist further says:

"For their protection, as well as for the promotion of their interests, the colored workers should organize and in all cases become affiliated with the organizations of white wage-earners or form colored workers' unions in full sympathy and co-operation of the white workers unions.

"At the Louisville Convention of the American Federation of Labor authority was granted to organize and grant charters to separate local and central bodies of colored workmen, wherever such two bodies would promote the interests of all the workers.

"The American Federation of Labor has a large number of unions affiliated, composed exclusively of colored workers, who feel that their interests are safeguarded by the officers of our movement as justly and wisely as the organizations of any other toilers.

"Again, we have unions composed of whites and blacks, and generally these work together without any friction at all.

"When a white man desires to become a member of an organization he is proposed for membership and is required to submit to rules which experience has demonstrated to be necessary. Certainly, no greater privilege can be conferred upon a negro simply because of the color of his skin. We repeat that he ought to ask and be accorded equal rights and privileges; certainly, no more."

This is cleancut and covers the whole ground. This has been our opinion for a long time, and as we have no copyright on our opinions we are glad to see the Federationist express them so clearly and so forcibly. In this district, where the whites and blacks are organized in one union or meet in mass conclave, both parties to the arrangement are well satisfied, and it is certain that the colored element would not change it were it in their power, while in the case of the whites it is a problem of conditions to which there is no other solution, and they accept the inevitable with ready grace and strive to better the condition of the negro by every means, knowing that in so doing this is the only way to better their own condition. The only friction that occurs or is likely to occur--and for the life of us we can't recall a case in point at this time--is when social equality is expected or sought, and to the credit of the colored man can it be said that those worthy of having in the movement do not seek or expect this unobtainable boon.

The only thing that remains is for the colored race to wake up to the benefits of unionism, and embrace the opportunity offered with a full sense of what he is doing and a determination to live up to his obligation, without fear of discrimination on account of color, creed or political beliefs.

*Birmingham Labor Advocate, April 27, 1901.*

### 3. ALBANY, NEW YORK

The strike of the railroad employees in this city resulted from the refusal of the company to discharge a number of non-union men who have been working (some of them) for the company for years. Among them, I understand, is a colored man, a speel winder, who thoroughly understands his business and because the company refused to pay 20 cents per hour to all motormen, linemen, and 17-1/2 cents per hour to pitmen's helpers. The company was firm in its refusal to accede to these demands. Its employees were equally firm in their refusal to work for less. To operate the road to accommodate the public, the company sent for outside help. Their presence in the city and in places of its former employees, resulted in the strike and the loss to the company of thousands of dollars and to the business interests of the city of other thousands of dollars, to say nothing of the losses of the working men themselves in wages. The money thus shamelessly wasted on all sides would more than pay the increase in wages demanded by the strikers, and their demands would doubtless have been acceded to could the company have foreseen the consequences of the strike.

The importation of troops into the city to put down lawlessness will cost the county of Albany from \$50,000 to \$100,000.

The strikers, however, have triumphed (?), as the company has agreed to meet their demands for an increase in wages and to do other things "stipulated in the bond."

Public sympathy was with them, and they very naturally feel that they have won a great victory. An important clause in the agreement signed by the strikers' representatives and the company's representatives is one giving it the right to employ non-union labor and to retain all such employees now in the service. This is the joker in the agreement. It reads as follows: "Seventh. The right which already exists, it chooses, and to discharge any union for cause

The United Traction Company represents millions of dollars. Without it there would be no strikes in this community among street railroad men. The tendency of strikes of this character is to discourage capital from investing in communities where strikes are fashionable. Unionized communities, like lynching communities, make capital timid and are more injurious than beneficial to the greatest number. The labor barons are not only autocratic and ever-bearing, they are narrow, dictatorial and full of prejudice. By their dicta no Negro, however well qualified, can be employed either as a motorman or conductor on the street railway systems of the great cities. The employment of one Negro in such capacity would precipitate a strike and tie up all the street railways in this country. Herein is discovered the prejudice and narrowness of the white labor unions. They deny to the negro laboring man the right to labor, and to capital the right to buy his labor when it wants to.

The leaders of the labor trust in America are largely men of foreign names and antecedents. Men who are intolerant of the rights of others and insistent upon securing for themselves and those they represent what they are pleased to denominate as their rights. Who gives them the right to discriminate against the Negro in the labor market? To make him an industrial Pharaoh when he is ready and willing to work? The trade and labor unions are the greatest enemies of the Negro in America and are doing more to foster and encourage race hatred and the caste spirit than any other agency I know of. They are not honest, and hence not fair, for honest and fair men believe in honest methods and fair practices. I have no sympathy with strikers anywhere and the time is coming in this country when the American people will lose all sympathy for and patience with these disturbing elements, whose sympathizers, with their knowledge and consent, destroy public and private property, disturb trade conditions, injure business prosperity, and tear down that which they have neither the intelligence nor the capacity to build up.

The average intelligence of the striker is below par and in these periodical strikes, in which they engage when one of their number is discharged or when they want an increase of pay or to divide profits with employers, one does not have to scratch far below the epidermis to find a social iconoclast or a treacherous demon. In a given number of years, ten, I think, it has been shown that the amount of public and private property destroyed by white workingmen in strikes is \$10,000,000. While professing to be opposed to lawlessness and disorder they have winked at all the crimes that have been committed in the name of outraged labor and have profited by them. My objection to labor unions is based on their opposition to the Negro. They are against the Negro and I am against them.

Their power is increasing in this country and they are becoming more and more dangerous year by year to the peace and perpetuity of government of the people, by the people and for the people. The greatest trust in this country today and the most dangerous to the interests of the common people is the labor trust, which shuts its doors in the face of every Negro who seeks to earn his bread as God commands, "by the sweat of his brow," and it is a sad commentary in this green land, where every man is said to be the peer of every other man, that the barriers in the domain of labor are raised by men of foreign birth or ancestry and that these men, through their organizations, can arbitrarily stop at their own sweet will every industry which contributes to the greatness and glory of the Republic, by going on strike, and that the great captains of industry, whose capital is invested in the countless enterprises which make this country the great commercial center of the Western world are compelled to stand and deliver to these highwaymen who rob the Negro of the right to work--go broke, go out of business, or go to Europe.

The Albany strike will have a deteriorating effect upon the business and commercial future of this city. It will throw it back a dozen years or more and will be a warning to men with money to invest in business and manufacturing enterprises to steer clear of a city in which an irresponsible mob may at any moment, for real or imaginary causes, assert its right to dictate terms to employers of labor, and to interfere with the orderly discharge of business involving the loss of thousands of dollars daily to the country and State and to the men who are necessary to their existence. Most of these strikers come from countries in Europe, where starvation wages are paid and would remain in those countries if they could do half as well as they do in America in the matter of wages. Employing capital will ultimately combine against this restless element, and this will precipitate the fiercest and bloodiest and bitterest

revolution that this country has ever witnessed. All signs point to it and nothing is more surely written in the book of fate than that the irrepressible conflict of the future will be that between capital and labor, and that the Negro, the "stone that the builders rejected" will become the head of the corner--the bulwark of the Republic. "God's purposes are ripening fast," etc.

*Colored American, May 25, 1901.*

#### 4. LESSONS OF THE STRIKE

Providence never creates a vain thing. The great steel strike is not without divine purpose. It is serving a mission, the extent of which is not perceptible. The fact is being demonstrated that in the hour of trial, the Negro is the safest American. He is always on the side of law and order, and is the handmaiden of the standard interests of the country. The mischief makers, walking delegates, union tyrants, anarchists, socialists and enemies to the peace and dignity of society are invariably white men. When capital is in distress, when corporations in the assertion of their rights as owners desire to fill contracts for their patrons, and when agitators grasp them by the throat merely because they can, the magnates appeal at once to the Negro for help. The Negro responds to the call, because he needs the bread that labor will bring to himself and loved ones at home. It is not that he wishes to defeat any just demand made by white workmen. It is not that he is the servant of those who would grind the poor to powder. He is not the tool of soulless operators. It's because the white labor organizations refuse to make common cause with him and decline to give him the opportunity that is rightfully his to provide for his family. It is because his sympathy is alienated by treatment that drives him to the capitalist in self-defense. The corporation offers bread. The labor unions turn him away with a stone. Who can blame the Negro for thanking the Almighty for the situation that grants him what the unions deny, and establishes his power as a labor factor among those who think more of quality of service than of the color of the servant. We are glad that the steel strike has taken place despite the loss and suffering it must bring to the business interests of the land. The contention of the workers is poorly founded, and is the outgrowth of the tyranny that is making for the undoing of unionism. Two of the greatest men in the world are J. Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller. The Negro is their friend, because they rise above the pettiness of race prejudice, and ask for merit, pure and simple, rewarding it regardless of the hue of skin. When we can rally such forces to us, and can invoke their aid in the matter of protection while enjoying the right to work, we have scored a point that will shake the industrial world from center to circumference. The entering wedge is sinking deep. If the laboring unions are so besotten that they cannot see their folly in ignoring the skilled Negro, they deserve the disaster that is rapidly overtaking them. If we are not permitted to make common cause with the middle classes, we must, in the light of self-preservation, cast our allegiance with the rich.<sup>21</sup>

The steel strike is a boon to the black people. It may mean an alliance of the capitalist and Negro North and South against the reactionary forces that would govern intelligence and wealth by mere numbers and disregard of law. The hand of God is in it all.

*The Colored American, August 31, 1901.*

#### 5. LABOR UNIONS AND THE NEGRO

The Negro labor question will not down. This fact is amply evidenced by the cowardly evasion of the real issues within the past few days by the

great assembly of the American Federation of Labor at Scranton, Penn. Separate unions may deter the settlement of the problem of industrial relations between the races, but there can be no permanent settlement until the adjustment is effected upon right lines. There can be no peace until every industrious man is given the fullest opportunity to acquire a knowledge of the trades and business callings and is permitted to reap the rewards of his skill, untrammelled by restrictive laws.

The Negro boy is denied the white boy's chance as an apprentice by the dictum of the labor organizations. By the same token, the Negro who happens to pick up a trade, largely by working with those of his own race, is not generally permitted to utilize his talent in the printing offices controlled by unions, or in the massive buildings that are going up every day in our great commercial centers. A Negro bookkeeper, salesman, telegraph operator or section chief, in the employ of the rich corporations, is so rare as to make the few successful ones the subject of widespread remark. It is the protest of the white labor organizations that keeps them out. These bodies are powerful in politics, and a boycott at their hands can cause great financial loss to business men who dare to oppose them. But they are given a fictitious value by the abject fear of legislators and employers. If the heavy corporations--wealthy enough to be independent and fair--would "take the bull by the horns" and employ Negroes at will, and back their action by all the strength of their money and prestige, the labor unions would be compelled to submit, or allow their places to go to men of greater liberality of opinion on the color question. The white men who now work uncomplainingly beside Negro clerks in the departments at Washington would raise a terrible "fog" if they were asked to do the same thing in a State business house. They yield to the situation in the government service because they cannot help themselves. They would yield to the private employers if the latter would stand together as manly men and display a rigid backbone. The Negro is not half as much in need of charity as he is of an opportunity to work. He is the most reliable American, and his contribution to the moral forces of the land is growing larger as the years go by, despite the obstacles placed in his pathway. The Negro, to the manor born, certainly deserves to be shown as much consideration as the foreigner who finds a congenial home upon our shores and who is granted an equal chance in the battle for bread.

This is an important question and the American Federation of Labor must develop more breadth and a kindlier spirit of brotherhood for all wage earners if it would live up to what it professes to be.

*The Colored American, December 28, 1901.*

## 6. DUTY AND INTEREST OF ORGANIZED LABOR

In the industrial schools the colored people are being taught to become good members of the working class. They are taught to think of themselves as negroes, rather than as workingmen. The idea of class consciousness is carefully avoided and suppressed. They are taught to regard the capitalist as their friend and by implication, to regard the trade union as their enemy.

A great responsibility rests upon the white workingman, North and South, in dealing with this question. The negroes are here and they are here to stay. It is for the white workers to say whether they shall be friends or enemies. The responsibility rests upon the white worker, and more especially upon the trade unionists, because they have already learned that the colored workers have had no chance to learn the lesson of the solidarity of labor--that whenever one set of workers are badly paid or overworked, the white working class must suffer for it, that the true interests of all workingmen are always identical and opposed to the interests of the capitalist class, and that organized action of the working people of all trades, without regard to race, sex, or religion, is necessary for the advancement of their own common interests.

The trade unions of all crafts and in all parts of the country can do much to solve the negro problem by putting aside the race prejudice which some

of them will entertain and regarding the colored people simply as fellow workmen, having exactly the same rights and duties as themselves; by making especial efforts to organize them and teach them how foolish and how shameful a thing it is to act as a "sucker" or a scab for the capitalist, and how much better for themselves as well as for the white workers it will be for them to act as class-conscious workmen; by encouraging them in the defense of their rights and lending them active aid in every attempt to improve their condition.

The organized working class alone has the interest as well as the power to settle the race question by the exercise of patient and class-conscious intelligence and the teaching and practicing of proletarian solidarity. It is gratifying to know that many trade unions have already recognized this interest and duty and are accomplishing good results. Undoubtedly the work will be carried on, and Socialists should lend all the aid in their power.

*The Worker, May 18, 1902.*

## 7, ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

The coal strike ought to be an inspiration to the Negro to organize for self-protection, and to sustain capable and honorable leadership. We have churches and secret societies galore, and their influence could be wielded to immense advantage, both in holding on to what we have, and in gaining more. We have repeatedly urged ministers and grand masters to use their followers as a lever for temporal and general race elevation, but they have not taken kindly to the idea--presumably for the reason that they regard politics and business apart from their sphere of action. Be that as it may, it is our opinion that by inaction along material lines they are frittering away an incalculable amount of kinetic energy, and neglecting a great opportunity.

Considering organization abstractly, it is now essential to any large undertaking, and to produce concrete results the united counsel and services of many shrewd leaders are needed. We have the organizations in embryo, and we have the timber for leaders, but we are just as near having a building as a pile of stone; brick, mortar and lumber constitute a temple. We have resources in abundance but to be effective they must be put together in a comprehensive and symmetrical form. Our organizations are working independently, and frequently shooting into the air. Our leaders are advising at cross purposes, and we are jealous and suspicious of one another. No lasting good can come to the race as long as this is true.

Look at John Mitchell, the head of the United Mine Workers! Was his success due to his own unaided efforts? Not at all. His strength was in the massive organization behind him, standing like a stone wall. His wisdom came in his capacity to receive and act upon the concentrated wisdom of his advisers. A composite army of determined men, bent upon a set purpose, and prepared to sacrifice even life itself, gave the miners their power to hold up the entire coal output for five months.<sup>22</sup>

Why cannot ten millions of aggressive, earnest Negroes, by union of forces, do something to better their condition, just as these miners have done? We can organize as compactly as those men, and we have leaders as intelligent as Mitchell and his cabinet. What is the matter with us anyway? Here is a vast field--a magnificent opportunity for the National Negro Business League and for the National Afro-American Council.<sup>23</sup>

For instances: A federation of our business men, waiters, cooks, porters, mechanics, farmers and laborers generally, on the one hand, and our ministers, educators and professional men on the other, could accomplish results almost beyond imagination. Not only could industries be developed by the patronages of the race itself, but by reciprocity where possible, and by withholding custom from undesirable firms of the other race when necessary, we could secure paying places in mercantile establishments, lower prices for goods, new openings in the labor world, a more liberal sentiment on the part of newspapers, and control legislation for our benefit, politically and civilly.

Are we to continue this neglect of an opportunity that is ours?

Are the lessons the white man is learning daily to be wasted upon us?

Are we to forever remain blind to the *practical* value of an organization and leadership that *mean something*?

*The Colored American, November 8, 1902.*

## 8. THE GREAT STRIKE

The great coal strike is not settled by any means. The commission has been hearing a mass of testimony of every kind bearing upon the situation and promises to reach a conclusion soon.

In the meantime, actual suffering is evident in many localities. In New York the supply of coal is so meagre that it is difficult for many poor people to obtain it even by the bucket or basket.

The Reading Railroad is the great coal road of this section and it has not been able to meet the demand.

The unusual cold weather of the past few days has intensified the suffering and at the same time has sent the price of coal soaring upward.

Where and when will this serious condition end? The President asked that commission to be as expeditious as possible, but it has allowed long-winded attorneys to prolong its sessions and the end is not yet in sight.

Enough evidence has been produced to show the justice of the miners' demands. The dangerous character of coal-mining, the inadequate wages paid, the system of cheating the miner by wrong measurements, etc., have all been fully demonstrated before the commission. It has been clearly shown that the tone of coal which the miner gets paid for digging, weighs several hundred pounds more than the tone which the operators sell to the dealers. But the inquiry still goes on and anyone can now see that the operators' aim is the total destruction of the Miners' Union.

To do this they are perfectly willing to let the innocent public suffer. Mr. Baer, the head and front of this fight on the part of the operators, in a speech in New York last week, clearly intimated that the fight was against the Union.

No one can blame the miners for fighting to preserve their Union, for it means everything to them. No one but the operators will deny to labor the right to organize. If the Congress will act favorably upon the President's recommendations regarding trusts, there will be fewer such conditions as we are now experiencing.

If capital can organize for protection, why cannot labor do the same? The spirit of fair play, common to all Americans, will side with the miners in this fight and the day may not be far distant when that spirit will take things in its own hands and right the wrongs of the oppressed.

This strike should be ended at once, for the public should not be made the victims of conditions for which it is in no way responsible.

*The Christian Recorder, December 18, 1902.*

## 9. THE NEGRO AS A BLESSING

A good many Northern people will probably be surprised to learn that "the negro is a blessing to the South," and that "the Southern people would not consent to his removal"; yet we are assured by *Dixie*, an Atlanta monthly devoted to Southern manufacturing interests, that such is the case. The editor declares:

"There is no spirit of antagonism between our people and the negro. On the contrary, there is mutual understanding and mutual regard. The trouble, when such exists, comes from outside influences, from the meddling of well-meaning but mistaken citizens of other sections, or else from meaner sources,

too frequently from designing men who seek to use the negro to gain selfish ends, and when these ends are gained the negro, debauched and degraded, is left to his own resources, and thus he becomes a burden, not so much upon the white man as upon his own race, for every mischief-making, worthless negro stands as a stumbling-block in the way of race progress; for every such negro helps to destroy the confidence and good feeling that exists between the white man and the black man, and without this mutual confidence there can be no progress for the Southern negro.

"The white men of the South will work out their own salvation. Let alone, the negro will share in the general progress. If false prophets shall lead him away from the white man, his fate is sealed. The white man can do without the negro, but the negro is too near the jungle to stand alone; barbarism is only a few generations behind him, and it would be still fewer generations ahead of him without the white man's uplifting influence."

The negro is a blessing to the South because his presence there "is a permanent guaranty against vicious labor organization." The editor explains this statement as follows:

"Labor organization must deal with three separate and distinct classes: First, the worthy artisan, capable, sober, and industrious; second, the lazy craftsman, who is without ambition, and works merely that he may live; the envious man, whose mean nature breeds anarchy and socialism. These three classes make up the great army of workmen that must be reckoned with today in the consideration of any and all industrial problems.

"We have two of these classes here in the South. The third, thank God, has remained away, and the presence of the negro will hold us free forever from this objectionable factor in the industrial problem. Indiscriminate and unguarded foreign immigration has cursed many sections of our good land, but its blight has never fallen upon the South, and it never will, for the negro will be with us always.

"Left to work out the problem, the whites and the blacks of the South will labor in harmony. There may be labor organization, and it is well that there should be. But labor organization, minus the man of socialistic tendencies, will not retard industry. Leave out the embittered, envious outcasts of Europe, and the labor organizations of the land would be useful agencies for the nation's progress. But so long as these organizations are led and controlled by men who seek only to destroy, who depend upon brute force rather than right argument to carry their cause, just so long will labor organizations be harmful alike to the men who work and to the men who pay.

"But we have no fear of wild-eyed anarchists here in the South. Occasionally one finds his way across the line. But the problem of organization of the sort he desires, is a staggering proposition. If he organizes the whites, the negro stands ready to turn the wheels of industry, not so well as the white man would do it, but well enough to keep the ball rolling. If the negro be organized--but the thought of such a thing is ridiculous. The negro is not serious enough for that. He is not vindictive, he is not ambitious, and having neither of these qualities the doctrines of anarchy are not for his consideration.

"But what is most astonishing about this talk of deporting the negro is the fact that advocates of the plan do not seem to consider the very important questions of the negro's citizenship. He is a citizen of the United States. He has constitutional rights that must be respected, and his right to remain here, if he chooses to do so, cannot be questioned by any sane person."

*The Literary Digest*, 29 (February 7, 1903): 176.

#### 10. THE SOUTH: A COUNTRY WITHOUT STRIKES

"There is no section of country in the world embracing so large an amount of territory, employing in proportion to the population so many wage-earners, and where such extensive money interests are involved, which has



been so free from labor strikes." Thus *The Tradesman* (Chattanooga) remarks in an editorial in which it shows that labor and capital are working harmoniously in the South. We learn from the same paper that with the exception of four minor disagreements during last year, the South has been practically exempt from strikes, boycotts, lockouts, and other labor disturbances. What brings about this harmony between labor and capital in the South? The most important factor, we learn, is the presence of the negro. Next in importance is the gathering in, in the ranks of labor, of thousands of white women and children of once wealthy families, mountaineers and "piney-woods and sand-hill people" known as "Crackers," to work in the textile plants. In the third place, wage-earners are generally well satisfied with their wages, because a dollar in the South will buy as much of the necessities of life as \$1.50 will in the North. The land is cheaper and more fertile, and many work their own farms. In the fourth place, labor-unions have made little headway in the mining portions of West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama; and an additional fact is that most of the Southern laborers work on farms. Just how these conditions affect the labor problem is shown by *The Tradesman*. In regard to the presence of the negro:

"There are more than 2,000,000 negro laborers tilling the cotton, corn, sugar-cane, and rice-fields, in the timber-forests and lumber-mills, in the cotton-seed oil factories, in the iron and coal-mines, in the brick and coke-making establishments, and in all vocations requiring muscular strength and physical endurance.

"In all of the above-named kinds of work they are far superior to white labor, and possibly superior to any other labor in the world. Racial antipathy and social ostracism prevent admission of the negro to white labor organizations. Unsystematic, and not being an organizer himself, the negro is a free lance in the labor field, and stands as what the labor-unions designate a 'scab,' an irreconcilable and constant menace to the trade-unions.

"The negro wage-earner is a strenuous believer in the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. He is for number one against the world, and when, by his labor, he is earning from \$1 to \$5 per day, according to his skill and industry, with that labor always in demand, he cannot understand why he should voluntarily tax himself for the benefit of a less thrifty workman. Improvidence is his greatest weakness, and the rainy day has no terrors for him until it arrives, and then the clouds are soon dispelled through the medium of sated hunger. Amiability is a prominent characteristic when he is in his normal state, and when he is at peace with himself and with the world, the blandishments of the walking-delegate cannot propagate in his breast seeds of dissatisfaction toward his employer."

Speaking of the workers in the textile-plants, *The Tradesman* declares that "they have found their employment in the cotton-mills far more satisfactory and superior to the conditions that confronted them in their impoverished and isolated homes." Under previous conditions they barely managed to live and "were without educational advantages, refining or sanitary enjoyments, religious or civilizing influences." Happy and contented in their new surroundings, "they are loath to antagonize their employers, and show scant courtesy to labor agitators who would engender strife between them." That the labor organizations have been unable to make any progress among the agricultural element is attributed to the size of the plantations and to the fact that the farm hands are too widely scattered for cooperation. Besides, these laborers have little education and are satisfied with their present lot.

But how is the South to guard against the labor agitators and maintain the present peaceful understanding between labor and capital? *The Tradesman* says on this point:

"It is to meet these new and inevitable conditions that the Southern employer must show wisdom, tact, and justice, meeting the pending aggressiveness of the labor-unions in a spirit of kindness and concession. . . . Instead of inciting enmity and passing laws for the destruction of corporations, let the Southern people take heed lest they destroy themselves and retard the progress of their unexampled prosperity. Let labor and capital grasp hands and reconcile their constantly conflicting interests by amalgamating their interests. Both sides, capital and labor, must be content to make concessions

--to give and to take. Capital should be satisfied with a reasonable annual return, and labor should be satisfied with such a reasonable compensation for its services as is justified by its intrinsic productive value to the employer, and by the great law of supply and demand."

*The Literary Digest*, 26 (May 2, 1903): 643.

# 11. GOVERNMENT'S UNION MEN

## Labor Organizations Strong in Executive Departments at Washington

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25.--The agitation that has followed the reinstatement of Miller, the assistant foreman in the bookbindery of the Government Printing Office, gives interest to the data which have been collected by one of the officials of the Federation of Labor about the number of union men in Government employ in Washington. It has been rumored that a settled policy of repression has been decided on among the various department heads, and that wherever the labor unions attempt to dictate to a member of the Cabinet or to the President about rules in regard to employees, or as to who shall be permitted to work, there will be a firm and uncompromising resistance to such encroachments on official prerogatives. This is a matter that is being discussed among the unions.

The strongest union in any government bureau is the typographical union known as Columbia No. 101. There are over 1,000 members. Allied to Columbia No. 101 is the Bookbinders' Union, embracing 700 members, of whom 400 are women and 300 men. In the pressmen's union are 250 members; in the stereotypers 40, in the electrotypers 30, and in the feeders 100.

There are fifty carpenters, plumbers, and electricians also in the printing offices and the departments who belong to labor unions. The strong labor organization at the navy yard is Washington Lodge No. 138, which has about 1,000 members, a large part of whom are employed in the yard. In the Bureau of Engraving and Printing the plate printers' union has 150 members. There are 200 printers' assistants, all women; 50 pressmen, and 100 feeders in the bureau who belong to the union. Connected with the Library of Congress are said to be 500 printers, binders, and mechanics of various sorts who belong to unions.

In view of the strength of the unions in these different branches of the government service the labor leaders are talking of taking their grievances to Congress next winter and insisting on an investigation.

*New York Call*, August 26, 1903.

# 12. THE 1904 MEAT PACKING STRIKE IN CHICAGO

By John R. Commons<sup>24</sup>

On September 9, 1904 the Executive Board of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America "called off" the strike of their 50,000 members against the five packing companies. In the Chicago stock yards, where 22,000 came out, followed by 8,000 allied trades, this was the third general strike. For fifteen years after the Knights of Labor strike in 1886 every man or woman who ventured to start an organization was discharged; and after 1890, when the "combine" of packers became effective, many of them were black-listed. The strike of 1894 was sympathetic and unorganized. The strike of 1904 was a mistake on the part of the union; for the employers had offered arbitration sixteen hours before the men went out, and arbitration was what the leaders had asked for. They were out eight days, and went back on an

agreement to arbitrate, but were again called out after an hour's work on the ground of discrimination. This was in violation of the agreement just made, which bound them and their employers to submit discriminations and all other grievances to arbitration. The mistake was natural. It followed a history of grievances on both sides, and a conviction on the part of the workmen that the packers were determined to destroy their union. . . .

Perhaps the fact of greatest social significance is that the strike of 1904 was not merely a strike of skilled labor for the unskilled, but was a strike of Americanized Irish, Germans, and Bohemians in behalf of Slovaks, Poles, Lithuanians, and negroes. The strike was defeated by bringing in men from the companies' own branch houses for the skilled occupations and negroes and Greeks for the unskilled occupations.

This substitution of races has been a continuing process for twenty years. At the time of the strike of 1886 the men were American, Irish, and German, and the strike was defeated by splitting their forces rather than by introducing new nationalities. After that date the Bohemians entered in large numbers, although a few of them had begun to work as early as 1882. Bohemians have worked their way forward until, of the 24 men getting 50 cents an hour in two of the cattle-killing gangs, 12 are Bohemians, and the others are German, Irish, and American. The Bohemian is considered to be the coming man in the business. The Americans as wage-earners have practically been driven out of the stock yards, and are being followed by the Irish and Germans. Those who have accumulated money leave for something more certain. The Germans are held mainly by the large number of homes they have purchased in the neighborhood; and this has seemed to be the future of the Bohemians and Poles, who have been purchasing homes for several years, and of the Slovaks and Lithuanians, who have begun during the past two years. The feeling of security since the union was established three years ago has stimulated the tendency to home ownership among all these nationalities, although as yet there are many Slovaks and Lithuanians who return with their savings to their native land. The Irish show wide diversities of character, noticeable in contrast with the uniformity of other races. In general there is a rising class and a degenerating class. Neither class shows any inclination towards home ownership. But the Irish of the rising class have a much stronger desire than the Germans or Bohemians to educate their children rather than put them to work. This class of Irish have been leaving the industry, except as held back by a foremanship or skilled trade or by a salaried position in the union, of which they have been the aggressive organizers and leaders. With the defeat of the union, doubtless many more of them will leave. The other class,--the degenerating Irish,--displaced by the Slav, have become casual laborers, without definite place in any industry.

The older nationalities have already disappeared from the unskilled occupations, most of which now are entirely manned by Slovaks, Poles, and Lithuanians. The Poles began to appear at about the same time as the Bohemians, though not in as large numbers; and they have not advanced in the same proportion. The Slovaks and Lithuanians were first seen in 1899. One Slovak who has been in the yards ten years has worked himself up to a 50-cent job; but he is exceptional, and these two races have as yet only shared with the negroes the unskilled positions. The negroes first came during the strike of 1894, when many were imported from the South and large cities. An intense race hatred sprang up among the Americans and Europeans, who thought the negroes were favored by the employers; and this seemed to be leading to a race war. The conflict was averted by the union, which admitted the negroes on equal terms with the whites. This hatred has been renewed during the recent strike, when several thousand negroes were again imported. Notwithstanding the alleged favoritism towards the negroes, they have not advanced to the skilled positions, mainly because they dislike the long apprenticeship and steady work at low pay which lead to such positions. As strike breakers, they were attracted by the easy work, free board and lodging, and wages of \$2.25 day instead of the \$1.85 asked by the union; but in times of peace they are not steady workers at the low wages of the Slav.

Italians have never found a place in the trade; and the experience of the Greeks, who first appeared in 1904, has been curious. Several hundred Greeks in Chicago have established themselves as fruit dealers. When 300 of their countrymen, recently landed from Macedonia, entered the yards, these storekeepers were boycotted, and several of them bankrupted. Through the Greek

consul and the Greek priest the merchants endeavored to persuade the Greeks to withdraw from the yards; but they did not leave until the strike was settled, and then they went in a body to another part of the country.

It will be seen that the mingling of races in the stockyards is similar to that in other large American industries, and the problem is a trying one both for the civic neighborhood and for the union organizers. Unlike the union in 1886 under the Knights of Labor, the present organization sprang from the butcher workmen themselves: the former had been officered from without. In the union meetings the speeches are translated often into three or four languages, and much trouble has been occasioned by dishonest or prejudiced interpreters, though with experience these are weeded out. The races are brought together; and, where four years ago scarcely a Polish, Slovak, or Lithuanian family had a member who could speak or understand English, now nearly all have each at least one such member. Race conflicts were infrequent because the races were kept apart by language, distrust, and the influence of the priests; but there were frequent factional fights between religious societies of the same race, especially among the Poles, each society having its own patron saint. There were also many arrests for drunkenness, wife-beating, and neighborhood quarrels. Curiously enough, these disorderly acts dropped off entirely from the date when the strike took effect, and the arrests fell off 90 per cent. The strike continued eight weeks, and the police inspector in charge of the district is reported as saying: "The leaders are to be congratulated for conducting the most peaceful strike Chicago has ever had. Compared with other big strikes, such as the railroad strike of 1894, the teamsters' strike of 1902, or the stock yards strike of 1886, there was no violence."

The substitution of races has evidently run along the line of lower standards of living. The latest arrivals, the Lithuanians and Slovaks, are probably the most oppressed of the peasants of Europe; and 18 cents for a day of 12 or 14 hours in the Carpathian foot-hills becomes 18 cents an hour in the stock yards. Even with only four days work a week the Slovak's position is greatly improved; for in Uhrosko he had no work in winter. Yet his improved position shows itself, not in more expensive living, but in fabulous savings gained by packing sometimes as many as 12 persons in 3 rooms, taking in boarders, and sending his children to work. The new arrivals of this class of labor swell the ranks of the thousands waiting at the packing-house gates every morning, and to them there is little difference between 18 cents and 16 cents an hour. Yet it is most remarkable that those already on the ground came out with the union, and did not go back until the strike was declared off.

It is not surprising that, with wage conditions, racial elements, and former grievances such as they were, the union, when it acquired power, should have carried a high hand. Besides the restrictions themselves, the manner in which they were enforced was irritating. Every department or division had its "house committee" of 3 stewards, who often acted as if they had more authority than the foreman or superintendent; and frequently, when a union rule was violated, they stopped the work "in the middle of the game." When it is stated that the superintendent of one of the largest firms had to deal with 120 of these committees, it need create no surprise to learn that he felt relieved when the strike came. The principal grievance was the violation of their own constitution and agreements, which forbade locals or house committees to stop work and required all matters to be referred to higher officers for settlement with the company. The rank and file and the lower officers were insubordinate. Yet the superintendents observed that the unions, as they gained experience, were electing more conservative leaders and that petty troubles were being more easily handled. This encouraging prospect for the union was blighted by the blunder and disaster of the strike.

"Labor Conditions in Meat Packing and the Recent Strike," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 19(November 1904): 1-2, 28-32.

### 13. WOMAN'S LOCAL IN THE STOCKYARDS

It was a dramatic occasion on that evening, when the first colored girl

asked for admission. The president, an Irish girl whose father . . . had left his job because a colored man had been put to work with him, was naturally expected to be prejudiced against the reception of a negro woman. Hannah, as doorkeeper, called out in her own social way, "A colored sister is at the door. What'll I do with her?" "Admit her," called back the president, "and let all of ye's give her a hearty welcome." The tall, dignified, good-looking, well-dressed colored girl, much frightened walked down the center aisle of the gymnasium, while the room rang with cheers and the clapping of hands. One felt that here was a law stronger than that of Roberts Rules of Order.

Soon after a meeting, when the question in the ritual "Have you any grievances?" was put to the house full of girls, black and white, Polish, Bohemian, Irish, Croation, and Hungarian, a shy sensitive colored girl (morbidly sensitive black girl) arose and said "A Polish girl was always taunting her on her color." The union demanded that the Polish and the colored stand and each give a reason for this unseemly conduct. "Well," says the Polish girl, "I did tease her, but she called me a Polock, and I won't stand that." The hearty, good-natured laugh from their fellow workers cleared the international atmosphere, and they were told to cease teasing each other. "Ain't you ashamed of yourselves?" said the President. "You promised in the union to be sisters and here you are fighting. Now shake hands and don't bring any more of your personal grievances here. Tell it to your shop steward and remember this is where only shop grievances are to be brought."

Mary McDowell Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

#### 14. UNITY

On last Thursday [July 5, 1906] New York was treated to the extraordinary spectacle of white union men striking to compel a company of contractors to recognize the Afro-American members of the union.

The Cecelia Asphalt Paving company, which has the contract for paving the square around Cooper Union, began by filling the places of the Afro-American pavers and rammersmen with Irish and Germans. Immediately Mr. James S. Wallace, the Afro-American agent of the International Union of Pavers and Rammersmen, reported to the officers of the union that his men were not getting a square deal.

"Then we'll call out all of our union members," replied the officers; and in a short while nearly all the white workmen laid down their tools.

The superintendent of the company hustled to the spot posthaste and tried to persuade the white men to go back to work.

"Beat it," replied they, "unless you give us a written guarantee to recognize all the members of our union, black as well as white."

"I'll give you the letter tomorrow at 10 o'clock," conceded the contractor.

"Then we'll go back to work tomorrow at 10 o'clock," said the union men.

The next day the letter was forthcoming, and all the men triumphantly went back to their tools.

*New York Age, July 12, 1906.*

#### 15. VIEW OF A BLACK UNION OFFICIAL

Since I [James S. Wallace] have been brought in touch with so many prominent men of both races who seem to be engaged in uplifting the Negro race, and as each seems to have a different idea to express, it seems that I am called upon to say something on a question which most of our well-wishers seem to overlook or ignore. Years of experience have impressed upon my mind that a mutual understanding between the white and Negro men whom you may call the

laborers and mechanics or the common people, would have a good and wholesome effect upon both races. . . .

There are in New York many unions, viz., plasterers, carpenters, printers, teamsters, pavers, engineers, drillers, longshoremen, cigarmakers, etc., and I find in no instance that a Negro has committed any breach of etiquette. These unions have a large Negro membership, and they are treated as men. Labor and capital will never be reconciled, and he who advances the capitalist ideas cannot be looked upon as a friend of labor. . . . When the millions of poor working people recognize that the interest of one poor man is the concern of all, and that a blow struck at the Negro's progress affects the entire working class; when they agree to stand for one object, and let that object be better conditions, racial troubles will be reduced to the minimum. . . . In the paving industry Negroes, Italians and other nationalities are in an international union with a Negro Third Vice-President, myself, in New York, and a Negro Fifth Vice-President in Chicago, Mr. Theodore Payne. Wages are now unprecedented for the Negro--\$4.96 per day of 8 hours. Engineers, plasterers and all men who have joined mutually in unions are getting good wages, but still nonunion advocates menace the interest of all.

*New York Age, August 30, 1906.*

#### 16. THE INNER MEANING OF NEGRO DISFRANCHISEMENT

The *Laborer*, (Dallas, Tex.) Feb. 20.--There is now before the House of Representatives at Austin a proposition to establish an educational test for voters in Texas. This can be done only by amending the constitution by an election, but if the question is submitted it will have a very good chance of carrying. The machine politicians will support it, for there is nothing they fear like real democracy, real people's rule. The franchise grabbing capitalists will favor it, for they can handle a select number of men [the United States Senate] so very conveniently. The capitalist newspapers will advocate it, for what their masters, the big capitalists, want, they, too, want and work for. Yet not one good reason can be alleged for the restriction, if we take as our point of view that of a believer in the people's rule. . . . The "Negro domination" fraud has been worked out. In combination with misrepresentations as to the real purpose of the poll tax amendment, the Negro vote was used to fool many an unthinking voter eight years ago. Now many a working man who voted to cut out the Negro vote has found that the same poverty that keeps the Negro from paying \$1.75 for a vote, keeps him also. And this in the face of the fact that we have never had any danger of "Negro domination." The real reason for this proposition of an educational test is the same as the real reason for the poll tax infamy. It will cut out some voters. Every single voter so cut out is a working man. The capitalist class is daily assuming more complete control of the State of Texas, and every workingman's vote destroyed, makes the complete control by the owning class easier. Every working man, every ideal or union of workingmen in Texas, ought to agitate and protest against this proposed infamy.

*The Public, March 12, 1909.*

#### 17. EXPECT NEGROES TO CHECK UNIONS

Taft and His Colored Henchmen Tell Views at Commencement Exercises

Washington, D.C., June 19.--John Brown's body must have turned a few times in its grave yesterday when one of President Taft's henchmen made the open declaration which practically amounts to stating that the negro kept in a state of subjection as a producer means the elimination of the labor problem

in the south. Taft was present at the time and afterwards praised his henchman's speech.<sup>25</sup>

Taft handed out diplomas to the graduates of the local colored high school.

Charles W. Anderson, colored collector of internal revenue, played upon the old theme of education, while veiling his statement that the educated race of the south must rule the south, and that the negro must bear the burden and prevent the invasion of organized labor.<sup>26</sup>

Anderson admitted that the educated negro was all right, that such negroes as he had appointed to office were all right, that the educated negro should have everything, but the uneducated negro--well, he should be made to play the part of the strike breaker and the destroyer of workingman's homes.

#### Must Be Taught Hope

President Taft told the graduates that the great problem of the colored races was with the great uneducated part of the race in the south, who "must be taught hope, and that each negro carries in himself the power to make the race respected by the whites."

Referring to Anderson, who is collector of internal revenue in New York city, who had delivered an address previously, the president declared that he was "proud to have him in his administration and that he was as good a collector as he was an orator."

The former spoke of the colored laborer as compared with the foreign laborer, declaring that he is of more aid to business prosperity because he spends his money more freely and because he is not hoarding any of it to take out of the country. He said that as long as the south used negro labor it would not have the union and the walking delegate to disturb its industrial peace.

*Chicago Daily Socialist, June 19, 1909.*

#### 18. NIAGARA MOVEMENT ADDRESS<sup>27</sup>

The annual address of the Niagara Movement (vol. xi, p. 587), authorized by the convention, held at Sea Isle City, N.J., August 15-18, has just been published. It describes the purpose of the Movement as being--

to make ten million Americans of Negro descent cease from mere apology and weak surrender to aggression, and take a firm unfaltering stand for justice, manhood and self-assertion.

Pointing to the progress of the Negro-American, this address explains:

We are accumulating property at a constantly accelerating rate; we are rapidly lowering our rate of illiteracy; but property and intelligence are of little use unless guided by the great ideals of freedom, justice and human brotherhood. As a partial result of our effort we are glad to note among us increasing spiritual unrest, sterner impatience with cowardice and deeper determination to be men at any cost. Along with undoubted advance and development within, there continues without unceasing effort to discourage and proscribe us. We not only travel in public ignominy and discomfort, but at the instance of some of our weak-kneed leaders, the Interstate Commerce Commission has recently sought to make a pitiful apology for this disgrace. Our right to work is questioned not only by some who are attempting to fight the great battles of labor, but even by those very people who declare us fit for nothing else. We are glibly told to deserve before we complain; yet those of us who do deserve are proscribed along with the least, by men who know that ability and desert come oftenest through freedom and power.

Turning to the labor question in its relation to the Negro-American, the address makes this impressive appeal:

Do men forget that the wages of white Americans cannot permanently rise far above the wages of black Americans? And do they not know that the half-drunken Senator who can today slap a black laborer's face may tomorrow kick white laborers down stairs? And yet who are they that too often lead the fight against us? Poor and ignorant whites, spurred on by the richer and more intelligent who hide behind the mob and fatten on its deeds. Small wonder that Negro disfranchisement is practically coincident with those regions where white ignorance, political fraud and murder are greatest. That black men are inherently inferior to white men is a widespread lie which flatly contradicts, and the attempt to submerge the colored races is one with world-old efforts of the wily to exploit the weak. We must therefore make common cause with the oppressed and down-trodden of all races and peoples; without kindred of South Africa and the West Indies, with our fellows in Mexico, India and Russia, and with the cause of the working-classes everywhere. On us rests to no little degree the burden of the cause of individual Freedom, Human Brotherhood, and Universal Peace in a day when America is forgetting her promise and destiny. Let us work on and never despair. Though pigmy voices are loudly praising ill-gotten wealth, big guns, and human degradation, they but represent back eddies in the tide of time. The causes of God cannot be lost.

*The Public, September 10, 1909.*

#### 19. NEGROES AND THE LADIES WAIST-MAKERS UNION

Regardless of our [Blacks] opinions as to the merits of the particular case of the recent strike of the Waist-Makers in New York and Philadelphia, it cannot be gainsaid that the matter of the attitude of "Union Labor" toward our people, and of our people toward it, is of great and growing importance.

The following letter from one of the officers [Elizabeth Dutcher] of the Women's Trade Union League speaks for itself and should be carefully pondered, especially by those persons and editors who, some unwittingly are assisting in the present insidious effort to make our people Ishmaelites in the world of labor.

February 23rd, 1910

To the Editor of the *Horizon*,

Dear Sir:--I note in an issue of the *New York Age*, of Thursday, January 20th, 1910, an editorial on the Waist-Makers Strike. In this editorial it was stated that the editor of the paper had refused to induce colored girls to join the union and had also refused to dissuade other colored girls from taking the place of those on strike because they had no assurance that the union would in the future admit without discrimination colored girls to membership. The editorial goes on to say that "Trade Unionism is hostile to the colored race and that the Negro will continue to be the pivot upon which future strikes will turn so long as labor will ignore his right to work and thwart his ambition to advance in the mechanical world." I cannot help feeling that the editor of the *Age* was misinformed. In both Philadelphia and New York, some of the most devoted members of the Ladies Waist-Makers Union are colored girls. In Philadelphia several of the girls going on strike were colored girls and two of these were the best pickets the union had in that city. They were not only able to persuade the girls of their own race and color from acting as strikebreakers, but they were able to keep wavering white girls from going back to work.

In New York, colored girls are not only members of the union but they have been prominent in the union. One colored girl has been secretary of her shop organization all through the strike and has been very frequently at the union headquarters doing responsible work. The editor should also know that meetings were held during the strike at the Fleet Street Methodist Memorial Church (colored) in Brooklyn and St. Marks Methodist Church in Manhattan and that in both, members of the Ladies Waist-Makers Union said definitely and publicly that colored girls were not only eligible but welcome to membership.

...

It is not our purpose now to discuss, with those who may be inclined to



doubt, the advisability of our people joining the ranks of "Union Labor" but to throw a little light on the question brought forward by the [N.Y.] *Age*, whether or not, as is persistently claimed, "Trade Unionism is hostile to the colored race," and the further claim that the Unions will not take us in.

*The Horizon (Washington, D.C.), 5 (March, 1910): 9.*

## 20. DISFRANCHISING WORKINGMEN

The Wheeling (W. Va.) Majority (official organ of the Ohio Valley and Belmont Trades Assemblies and Tin Plate Workers' International Protective Association of America), Aug. 11.--Twenty thousand more American citizens have been deprived of their vote. This time it is in Oklahoma. And the shame of it is that the people themselves are guilty. Twenty thousand workingmen have been disfranchised by their fellow workingmen. A referendum vote so amending the constitution carried by a small majority. Members of both old parties voted for the amendment. This means that the working men did it. They voted to disfranchise 20,000 of their number and thus put themselves 20,000 votes farther away from getting what they want by political action. Of course, they had a racial reason. The 20,000 were Negroes. The white working men thought that a sufficient reason for taking away their votes. They thought that, somehow, they were better than the black men; that God in his wisdom had made them capable of governing themselves, and had denied that ability to the black man. But by this action they have shown themselves incapable of governing themselves. The black men are workingmen. The time is rapidly coming when the working men will need every vote they can muster. They have now cut themselves off from just that much of their strength. And they so sadly need it all! When the white workingman deprives a black workingman of a vote he is depriving himself of half a vote. For the black men are not capitalists. This is in the line of economic truth. It is a cold materialist proposition. It is clearly beside sentiment, though sentiment should be enough. A man without a vote is a slave, for his vote is that which gives him voice in the conditions under which he must live, and without that voice he is a slave of those conditions, whether the master is a capricious man or a money-making machine.

*The Public, September 16, 1910.*

## 21. "TAKE UP THE BLACK MAN'S BURDEN"

By J. Dallas Bowser

Don't curse him in advance  
He cannot lift a white man's load  
Without a white man's chance.  
Shut out from mill and workshop  
From counting room and store  
By caste and labor unions  
Is closed Industry's door.

Excerpt of Poem in *Cleveland Gazette, April 5, 1913.*

## 22. THE NEGRO AND THE LABOR UNIONS

By Booker T. Washington

When the Negro boy from the Southern states leaves the plantation or the

farm and goes up to the city, it is not work, in many cases, that he is looking for. He has labored in the field, beside his father and his mother, since he was old enough to hold a hoe, and he has never known the time when he, and every member of the family, could not find all the work they needed and more than they wanted. The one thing of which he has always had plenty at home has been work. It is very likely that a promise that he would earn more and do less has turned his steps from the farm; but at bottom it is not the search for easier work or higher wages that brings the country boy to town; it is the natural human desire to see a little more of the place he has heard of over yonder, beyond the horizon--the City.

The thing that takes the country boy to the city, in short, is the desire to learn something, either through books and in school, or in actual contact with daily life, about the world in which he finds himself. One of the first and most surprising things the country boy learns in the city is that work is not always to be had; that it is something a man has to go out and look for. Another thing he very soon learns is that there is a great deal of difference between skilled and unskilled labor, and that the man who has learned to do some one thing well, no matter how small it may be, is looked upon with a certain respect, whether he has a white skin or a black skin; while the man who has never learned to do anything well simply does not count in the industrial world.

The average Negro learns these things, as I have said, when he comes to the city. I mention them here because in considering the relation of the Negro to the labor unions it should be remembered that the average Negro laborer in the country districts has rarely had the experience of looking for work; work has always looked for him. In the Southern states, in many instances, the employment agent who goes about the country seeking to induce laborers to leave the plantations is looked upon as a kind of criminal. Laws are made to restrict and even prohibit his operations. The result is that the average Negro who comes to the town from the plantations does not understand the necessity or advantage of a labor organization, which stands between him and his employer and aims apparently to make a monopoly of the opportunities for labor.

Another thing which is to some extent peculiar about the Negro in the Southern states, is that the average Negro is more accustomed to work for persons than for wages. When he gets a job, therefore, he is inclined to consider the source from which it comes. The Negro is himself a friendly sort of person, and it makes a great deal of difference to him whether he believes the man he is working for is his friend or his enemy. One reason for this is that he has found in the past that the friendship and confidence of a good white man, who stands well in the community, are a valuable asset in time of trouble. For this reason he does not always understand, and does not like, an organization which seems to be founded on a sort of impersonal enmity to the man by whom he is employed; just as in the Civil War all the people in the North were the enemies of all the people in the South, even when the man on the one side was the brother of the man on the other.

I have tried to suggest in what I have said why it is true, as it seems to me, that the Negro is naturally not inclined toward labor unions. But aside from this natural disposition of the Negro there is unquestionably a very widespread prejudice and distrust of labor unions among Negroes generally.

One does not have to go far to discover the reason for this. In several instances Negroes are expressly excluded from membership in the unions. In other cases individual Negroes have been refused admittance to unions where no such restrictions existed, and have been in consequence shut out from employment at their trades.

For this and other reasons, Negroes, who have been shut out, or believed they had been shut out, of employment by the unions, have been in the past very willing strike-breakers. It is another illustration of the way in which prejudice works, also, that the strikers seemed to consider it a much greater crime for a Negro, who had been denied an opportunity to work at his trade, to take the place of a striking employee than it was for a white man to do the same thing. Not only have Negro strike-breakers been savagely beaten and even murdered by strikers or their sympathizers, but in some instances every Negro, no matter what his occupation, who lived in the vicinity of the strike has found himself in danger.

Another reason why Negroes are prejudiced against the unions is that, during the past few years, several attempts have been made by the members of

labor unions which do not admit Negroes to membership, to secure the discharge of Negroes employed in their trades. For example, in March, 1911, the white firemen on the Queen and Crescent Railway struck as the result of a controversy over the Negro firemen employed by the road. The white firemen, according to the press reports, wanted the Negro firemen assigned to the poorest runs. Another report stated that an effort was made to compel the railway company to get rid of the Negro firemen altogether.

Shortly after this there was a long controversy between Public Printer Donnelly and the Washington Bricklayers' Union because, so the papers said, Mr. Donnelly would not 'draw the color line' in the employment of bricklayers on a job at the Government Printing Office. It appears that an additional number of bricklayers was needed. Mr. Donnelly drew upon the Civil Service Commission for the required number of men. A colored man was certified by the Commission, whereupon the white bricklayers struck, refusing to work with a Negro. Other Negroes were hired to take the strikers' places. The labor union objected to this and threatened to demand that President Taft remove Mr. Donnelly. These are some of the reasons why Negroes generally have become prejudiced against labor unions.

On the other hand, many instances have been called to my attention in which labor unions have used their influence in behalf of Negroes. On the Georgia and Florida Railway the white and colored firemen struck for higher wages. Mobs composed of both white and black men held up trains. It was reported that the Negroes were as violent in their demonstrations as the whites. In this instance the strikers won. A recent dispatch from Key West, Florida, stated that the white carpenters in that city had struck because two Negro workmen had been unfairly discharged. The members of the white Carpenters' Union refused to return to work until the Negroes had been reinstated.

At the 1910 National Council of the American Federation of Labor, resolutions were passed urging Negroes and all other races to enter the unions connected with the Federation. Since that time I have learned of activity on the part of the Federation in organizing Negro laborers in New Orleans, Pittsburg, Pensacola, Richmond, and several other Southern cities. In spite of the impression which prevails generally among colored people that the labor unions are opposed to them, I have known several instances in which Negroes have proven enthusiastic trade-unionists, and in several cases they have taken a leading part in organization and direction, not only in the colored, but in the white unions of which they chanced to be members.

Notwithstanding these facts, some of which seem to point in one direction and some in another, there seems to be no doubt that there is prejudice against Negroes among the members of labor unions and that there is a very widespread prejudice against labor unions among Negroes. These are facts that both parties must reckon with; otherwise, whenever there is a strike, particularly among those trades which have been closed to Negroes, there will always be a considerable number of colored laborers ready and willing to take these positions, not merely from a desire to better their positions as individuals, but also for the sake of widening the race's opportunities for labor.

In such strikes, whatever disadvantages they may have in other respects, Negroes will have this advantage, that they are engaged in a struggle to maintain their right to labor as free men, which, with the right to own property, is, in my opinion, the most important privilege that was granted to black men as a result of the Civil War.

Under these circumstances the question which presents itself to black men and white men of the laboring classes is this: Shall the labor unions use their influence to deprive the black man of his opportunity to labor, and shall they, as far as possible, push the Negro into the position of a professional 'strike-breaker'; or will the labor unions, on the other hand, admitting the facts to be as they are, unite with those who want to give every man, regardless of color, race or creed, what Colonel Roosevelt calls the 'square deal' in the matters of labor, using their influence to widen rather than to narrow the Negro's present opportunities; to lessen rather than to magnify the prejudices which make it difficult for white men and black men to unite for their common good?<sup>28</sup>

In order to get at the facts in reference to this matter, I recently sent a letter of inquiry to the heads of the various labor organizations in the United States, in which I asked the following three questions:--

What are the rules of your union concerning the admittance of Negroes to membership?

Do Negroes, as a rule, make good union men? If not, what in your opinion is the cause?

What do you advise concerning the Negro and the Trade-Unions?

I confess that I was both interested and surprised by the number and the character of the replies which I received. They not only indicated that the labor leaders had fully considered the question of the Negro laborer, but they also showed, in many instances, a sympathy and an understanding of the difficulties under which the Negro labors that I did not expect to find. A brief summary of these letters will indicate, better than anything I can say, the actual situation.

In reply to the question, 'What are the rules of your union concerning the admittance of Negroes?' nine unions, all but two of which are concerned with transportation, stated that Negroes are barred from membership. These unions are: the International Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees, Switchmen's Union, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, Order of Railway Conductors of America, Order of Railway Telegraphers, American Wire Weavers' Protective Association, and the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America.

Fifty-one national labor organizations, several of which are the strongest in the country, reported that there was nothing in their constitutions prohibiting the admittance of Negroes. In fact, many of the constitutions expressly state that there shall be no discrimination because of race or color. This is the case, for example, with the Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' Union. The constitution of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners contains the following statement: 'We recognize that the interests of all classes of labor are identical regardless of occupation, nationality, religion or color, for a wrong done to one is a wrong done to all.'

Mr. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, replying to the question concerning the admission of Negroes to labor unions wrote: 'Realizing the necessity for the unity of the wage-earners of our country, the American Federation of Labor has upon all occasions declared that trade unions should open their portals to all wage-workers irrespective of creed, color, nationality, sex, or politics. Nothing has transpired in recent years which has called for a change in our declared policy upon this question; on the contrary, every evidence tends to confirm us in this conviction; for even if it were not a matter of principle, self-preservation would prompt the workers to organize intelligently and to make common cause.'<sup>29</sup>

With two exceptions the answers to my question, 'Do Negroes in your opinion make good Union men?' were that they do.

Mr. Ralph V. Brandt, of Cleveland, secretary-treasurer of the Wood, Wire and Metal Lathers' Union, wrote: 'I regret to say I must answer "no" to this question. We have had several locals in the South,' he continues, 'where the membership was made up either exclusively of Negroes or a large majority, and we have had only two out of the entire number that have made a success. One of these locals is in Savannah, Georgia, and the other in Charleston, South Carolina, and, as it happens, both of these are among the earliest locals chartered by our organization. I have had this situation come under my personal observation in our locals in this city, of which I am a member, and I must say that the Negro lathers in Cleveland have failed absolutely in meeting the general requirements of union men.'

The letter goes into details, describing the various efforts, all of them unsuccessful, which the local unions made to induce the Negro lathers to re-affiliate. They were promised recognition in the governing board of the union and, at the suggestion of some of the colored lathers, one of their number was recognized as a contractor, but these measures also failed of their purpose.

Another letter to much the same effect was received from the secretary of the Tobacco Workers' International Union. The secretary wrote: 'Our experience has been that very few of them have turned out to be such [good men]. They have a large union in Richmond, Va., all colored men, and only a few of the whole membership are what I would call union men. They do not seem to grasp the significant feature of the trade-union [movement].'

Mr. B. A. Larger, general secretary of the United Garment Makers of America, said: 'I think the Negroes working in the trades do make good union men,

but I do not think that the Negro waiters make good union men, as I have had some experience in trying to organize them. They would be well organized and apparently have a strong organization, but in a short time it would go to pieces. Among them there would be some good loyal members, but not sufficient [in numbers] to keep up the organization.

'I am unable,' he adds, 'to give a definite reason except, perhaps that it might be the fault of the head waiter, who would induce some person to go into the organization and break it up. Nevertheless, it is true that they are the most difficult to organize of any class of people.'

A somewhat different light is thrown upon the situation by a letter from Mr. Jacob Fisher, general secretary of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union. This letter is so interesting that I am disposed to quote from it at considerable length. 'In my opinion,' Mr. Fisher writes, 'Negro trade-unionists make as good members as any others, and I believe that the percentage of good trade-unionists among the Negroes is just as high as of any other class of people; but the percentage of Negroes of our trade belonging to our organization is not as high as among other classes. One of the greatest obstacles we have to confront, in inducing and urging the Negroes to become members of our organization, is a general current rumor that the white barbers are trying to displace and put out of business the Negro barbers. There is no foundation whatever for the rumor, but it has become generally spread among the Negro barbers, and this feeling has been urged upon them more strongly than it would otherwise be, by Negro employers, who do everything they can, as a general rule, to keep their employees from joining our trade-union. We have tried for years to impress upon the minds of Negro barbers that their best hope for better conditions lies in becoming members of our organization. But the feeling that exists among them has been so impressed upon their minds by no one else except the Negro employer, as to make it a very difficult matter to induce individual Negro barbers to become members of our organization.'

Mr. Fisher adds that a few years ago a large percentage of the barbers were Germans. In more recent years Jews and Italians have been getting into the barber business in large numbers. Barbers of all of these nationalities are 'rapidly becoming educated' in the trade-union movement, and are active in bringing other members of the trade of their nationalities into the union. 'On the other hand,' he continues, 'the Negro barbers, while loyal to the movement and active in the affairs within the organization, do not direct their attention to the unorganized Negro barbers and use their endeavors to educate them in trade-union matters.'

The Mine Workers' Union has the largest Negro membership of any of the labor unions. Mr. John Mitchell, the former president, states that, 'while there are no exact statistics as to the number of Negro members of the United Mine Workers of America, it is safe to say that not less than 30,000 of the 300,000 members are Negroes. Many important offices are filled by colored members.'

'The Negroes who are mining coal in the Northern states,' he adds, 'make first-class union men. In the Southern states where Negroes are employed in large numbers in the mining industry, unionism is not so strong. This, however, is in part accounted for by the fact that the mine-owners oppose strongly the organization of their workmen, and the miners are so poor that they cannot contend successfully against the corporations unless they are supported financially by the organized men in other states.'

Mr. Edwin Perry, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America, replying to the question, 'Do Negroes make good union men?' wrote: 'I say unequivocally, "yes," and point with pride to the fact that the largest local branch of our organization has at least 80 per cent colored men. It is progressive and up-to-date in all things. This local is located in my home state at Buxton, Iowa.'

'It is possible,' he adds, 'that misguided individuals may, in some isolated instances, discriminate against the Negro, but when our attention is called to the same, we endeavor to overcome that condition by the application of intelligence and common sense. The time is not far distant when the working men and women of our country will see the necessity of mutual cooperation and the wiping out of existence of all class lines.'

Mr. John Williams of Pittsburg, president of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, stated that the laws of his association provide that 'all men working in and around rolling mills are eligible to membership.' No line of demarcation is drawn. He was of the opinion that

Negroes, if given the opportunity, make good union men. He also advised that Negroes should be educated in the principles and ideals for which the labor-union movement stands.

In view of the newspaper reports from time to time concerning the discrimination against Negro chauffeurs, the statement of Mr. Thomas L. Hughes, general secretary-treasurer of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers, concerning Negroes in labor-unions is particularly interesting.

'I have had considerable dealing with colored men as members of our trade-unions,' he writes. 'In every instance where the colored men have been organized, we find them to be loyal to our union in every shape and manner. To say that they make good union men is only putting it too lightly. We have local unions composed entirely of Negroes in certain parts of the country that are a credit to our international union.'

In many localities Negroes, Mr. Hughes asserts, belong to the same organization as white men and get on satisfactorily. In many of the large local unions, where there are both, the colored membership is large. The officers of the organization are also colored.

The secretary of the Amalgamated Meat-Cutters and Butchers' Workmen, replying to my question, 'Do Negroes make good union men?' said, 'I will say that the Negro averages up with the white man and I cannot see any difference, as it is all a matter of education. Both classes improve as they become more familiar with the work. I might say, incidentally, that one of the best and most conscientious officials we have is a Negro member of our local union in Kingston, N.Y. He is a man who not only has the entire confidence of his associates in the organization, but is held in the highest esteem by the entire community and, as an officer, stands second to none.'

The answers to the question, 'What do you advise concerning the Negro and Trade Unions?' were practically unanimous in advising that the Negro be organized and educated in the principles of trade-unionism. Even the leaders of those unions which bar out the Negro advised that he be organized. The president of the Switchmen's Union, Mr. S. E. Heberling, wrote: 'The laws of our union will not permit Negroes to join, the constitution using the term "white." However,' he adds, "I advise that the Negroes in all trades organize to better their condition. This organization, in reference to Negroes following the occupation of switchmen, has advised the American Federation of Labor, with whom we are affiliated, to grant the Negroes charters as members of the Federal Labor Union. I hope your race will take advantage of the opportunities afforded them.'

Mr. H. B. Perham, of St. Louis, president of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers, wrote: 'The Order of Railroad Telegraphers is a white man's organization, that provision having been in its constitution since its inception twenty-six years ago. I advise the organization to help the poor man to a better standard of living, better education, resistance of injustice and the like. As the Negro, generally speaking, is poor, he needs organization.'

Mr. John J. Flynn, of Chicago, secretary and treasurer of the Brotherhood of Railroad Freight Handlers, wrote: 'I believe that a campaign of education should be started among the Negro workers of the country, this education to dwell principally on the fact that in organization there is strength and that the surest way to rise above their present condition is to become members of labor organizations that their craft calls for. In short, the best way for the Negro to improve his present condition is to become a member of a branch of the labor movement which covers his craft.'

Mr. James Wilson, general president of the Pattern Makers' League, said: 'I would advise that the Negro be taught to join the union of whatever occupation he is following, and if there is no union of that calling, that he organize one, for there is no greater educational movement in the country for all wage-earners than the trade-union movement.'

Mr. E. J. Brais, general secretary of the Journeyman Tailors' Union, wrote: 'Our opinion is and our advice would be that the Negroes should organize trade-unions by themselves under the jurisdiction, of course, of the American Federation of Labor, being governed by the same rules in all their trades as the white mechanics. We believe in that case, if they organize into separate locals in the various trades and insist upon the same scale of wages as their white brethren, it would be a source of strength to both elements.'

Mr. James Duncan, international secretary of the Granite Cutters' International Association of America, replied in substance as follows to my inquiry: 'I advise concerning Negroes and trade-unions, that they be organized the same as white people are organized, mixed with white people, where that is advisable, but in local unions by themselves where circumstances make it advisable for white people and Negroes being in separate organizations.'<sup>30</sup>

Mr. Duncan stated that the rule did not prohibit Negroes joining the union, but throughout the South granite-cutting was usually considered a 'white man's trade.' Because of the feeling in the South he believed that Southern granite-cutters would not be disposed to work at that trade with Negroes.

'This,' he added, 'is sentiment, and forms no part of the rules of our association.'

I have quoted at some length the statements made by the labor leaders, because it seemed to me that these statements not only disclose pretty accurately the position of the labor organizations as a whole, in reference to the Negro, but indicate, also, the actual situation of the Negro at the present time in the world of organized industry. In this connection it should be remembered that the labor unions are not primarily philanthropic organizations. They have been formed to meet conditions as they exist in a competitive system where, under ordinary circumstances, every individual and every class of individuals is seeking to improve its own condition at the expense, if necessary, of every other individual and class. It is natural enough, under such conditions, that union men should be disposed to take advantage of race prejudice to shut out others from the advantages which they enjoy.

The leaders of the labor movement, however, see clearly that it is not possible permanently to close, to the million or more Negro laborers in this country, the opportunity to take the positions which they are competent to fill. They have observed, also, that race prejudice is a two-edged sword, and that it is not to the advantage of organized labor to produce among the Negroes a prejudice and a fear of labor unions such as to create in this country a race of strike-breakers. The result has been that in every part of the United States where Negro laborers have become strong enough in any of the trades to be able to hold their own, the Negro has been welcomed into the unions, and the prejudice which shut him out from these trades has disappeared.

As an illustration of this fact, I cannot do better than quote a few paragraphs from the report of the English Industrial Commission in 1911 in regard to labor conditions in the Southern states, which gives a very clear and, I think, accurate description of local conditions in cities to which it refers.

Concerning the Negro labor unions in the Birmingham district, the English Industrial Commission reported: 'It is not owing to the existence of any very sympathetic feeling between the white men and the Negroes that the latter are allowed to join the union; it is simply because the white men feel that their interest demands that colored men should be organized, as far as possible, so as to prevent them from cutting down the rate of wages. Wherever a sufficient number of colored men can be organized, they are encouraged to form a union of their own, affiliated to the white man's union, but where there are not enough to form a separate union, they are allowed in the South to become members of the white man's organization.'

'The building and mining industries,' the report continues, 'are the two in which the white and colored races come into the most direct competition with each other, yet it cannot be said that in either of these industries a situation exists which occasions friction. No doubt in both industries the white men would like to monopolize the skilled work for themselves, but they recognize that that is impossible and make the best of the situation. . . . The white men make it quite clear that their connection with the colored men is purely a matter of business and involved no social recognition whatever. It is in the mining industry that the relations between the two races, though working side by side, in direct competition, are smoothest. They acted together in the great strike of 1902, and in fact the good feeling between the whites and the colored men was used with great effect by the opponents of the strikers, who charged the white miners with disloyalty to their race.'

In New Orleans the Commission found a very interesting situation which is described as follows: 'It is probable that in New Orleans there is a larger number of white and Negro people in very much the same economic position than in any other American city, or anywhere else in the world. The industries of

New Orleans are of a kind which employ mainly unskilled or semi-skilled labor, with the result that both white men and Negroes are found doing the same kind of work and earning the same rate of pay. . . . The various unions combine in maintaining the Dock and Cotton Council, which dominates the entire business of compressing, carting, and loading cotton. . . . By arrangement between the Dock and Cotton Council and the employers, work has to be impartially apportioned between the white compress gangs and the colored gangs.'

In the letters from which I have so far quoted the writers have been content, for the most part, simply to answer the questions asked them, and sometimes, when they have not come into contact with the racial problem involved, have been disposed to discuss the advantages of labor organizations in the abstract. More interesting are the letters which I have received from labor men who have come into close quarters with the problem, in their efforts to organize Negro labor in the face of existing conditions.

As these letters indicate better than any discussion on my own part, the way the problem works out in practice, it will be well, perhaps, to let the writers speak for themselves.

One of the most interesting letters which I received was from Mr. M. J. Keough, of Cincinnati, acting president of the International Moulders' Union. Mr. Keough wrote that one of the national officers of the Moulders' Association, who was a Southerner by birth, had been devoting a very considerable part of his time in trying to organize the Negro Moulders of the South. In Chattanooga, for example, there were between six and eight hundred moulders, whom they had been trying, with no great success, to get into the union.

'Of course you are aware,' he continues, 'that there is a certain feeling in the South against the Negro, but we have succeeded in overcoming that, and have educated our members to the fact that if the Negro moulder of Chattanooga is not brought up to the level of the white men, he, the Negro, will eventually drag the white man down to his condition. It is our purpose to continue the agitation in order to have a thorough organization of the Negro moulders of Chattanooga.'

'We find there is considerable opposition on the part of the employers in Chattanooga to the Negro moulders joining the union. I might state we have a shop on strike in which practically all of the men were Negro moulders and are being supported by our organization. The employers are having these Negro moulders out on strike arrested for loitering, etc., and have put us to considerable expense in keeping our Negro members, who are on strike, out of jail. In conclusion let me state that we are very anxious that the Negro moulders should become members of our organization and enjoy all its rights and privileges.'

Another important letter in this connection was received from Mr. John P. Frey, editor of the *International Moulders' Journal*. He said: 'As I made many earnest efforts to organize Negro moulders in the South some twelve years ago and met with almost complete failure, owing to what appeared to be the Negroes' suspicion as to the genuineness of our intentions, it is but natural that I should still be interested in the question. While a Northerner, I have spent sufficient time in the Southern states to become familiar personally with the several phases presented by the question of the Negro status, both socially and industrially.'<sup>31</sup>

In his further reply to my question, Mr. Frey referred to an editorial in a recent issue of the iron-moulders' official organ. In this editorial the statement was made that the fact that there were so few Negroes in the Moulders' Union was due largely to race prejudice.

'As the years rolled by,' the editor continues, 'our members in the South realized that the question of Negro membership was an industrial one. The castings made by the Negroes were worth as much as those made by white men, but they might be sold for less in the open market because the Negro was forced to work for much smaller wages. It was not a question of social equality, but a question of competition in the industrial field. Other trade-unions in the South have faced the same problem and have been even more ready, in some instances, to take the Negro mechanic or laborer into their ranks. Not long ago the largest union in the South, No. 255, of Birmingham, Alabama, gave the question thorough consideration, with the result that it decided to take qualified Negro mechanics into membership. Their action may not have been in line with the sentiment of twenty years ago, but it was in line with justice to themselves and to the Negro who had learned the trade, for industrial



competition pays no heed to questions of social equality. In our trade, the Negro has become an industrial factor in the South, and the wise policy of giving him the benefit of membership in our organization will not be of value to him alone, but to every one who works at moulding. To expect that race prejudice and social questions will be eliminated or adjusted in a generation or two, is to expect too much; but the question of the Negro moulder is neither one of race nor of social equality; it is purely one of industrial competition.'

Mr. Frey referred, also, to an article by Mr. Nick Smith, who is a Southerner by birth and training, has worked all his life as a moulder in the South, and is now organizer of his union. In this article Mr. Smith said in part: 'If we want to make the Negro a good union man, we will have to grant him the same privileges and the same treatment in the shop that is enjoyed by the white moulder. Treat the Negro square; allow him to work in our shops when he presents his union card, and we will take away from the foundryman his most effective tool, the Negro strikebreaker. Refuse the Negro this privilege and the foundryman will continue to use him to trim us with when we have trouble. The Negro is here, and here to stay, and is going to continue to work at moulding, and it is for us to say whether he shall work with us as a union moulder, or against us as a tool in the foundryman's hands and a strikebreaker. When a Negro comes to your town, do what you can to see that he gets a job, and is treated as a union man should be treated. Refuse to do this and you force him to allow the foundryman to use him as a club to beat us into submission. The I.M.U. has spent considerable money and time to get the Negro moulder educated up to the point where he is today, and the refusal of the white moulder to work with the Negro will undo all that has been accomplished. Brothers, it is up to us to think it over.'

Mr. William J. Gilthorpe of Kansas City, secretary-treasurer of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers, said: 'Being a Southern man myself, in breeding and education, I naturally think that I am acquainted with the colored people. I served, in 1880, in New Orleans with the colored delegates to the central body, and I want to say that the colored delegates were as true and loyal to the principles of true labor movement as any delegate in that body. They make the best of union men. There is no trouble with them whatever. In answer to your question I say this: The rules of this organization do not permit them to be initiated into this order. Now I am one of those who advocate the organization of the colored men, as well as the white men. I possess a few followers, but this is a principle that is going to live, and it is going to be an established fact, in this order, sooner or later. As far as my advice goes, and humble efforts, I would say organize them in every case where they are eligible.'

Mr. Frank Duffy, general secretary of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, wrote: 'I wish to inform you that we do not draw the color line in our organization, as is evidenced by the fact that throughout the Southern states we have in the United Brotherhood twenty-five unions composed exclusively of colored men. We have found in our experience that where there are colored carpenters in great numbers, it is an absolute necessity both for their advancement and for the welfare of the white carpenters as well, to organize them. We have a colored organizer in the South, Mr. J. H. Bean, who has done splendid work in getting the colored carpenters together.'<sup>32</sup>

In order to find out what were the experiences and views of colored union men, I communicated with Mr. Bean and received a very interesting reply. He wrote that he had been connected with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America for more than twelve years and had been a delegate to every national convention but one since 1902. Since October, 1908, he has been continually engaged as general organizer for colored carpenters in nine Southern states. 'During that time,' he added, 'I have met with some opposition from both races, until they saw that one carpenter is largely dependent upon another, and to organize our forces in the right way is not only helpful to one but to all engaged in similar work. Then their opposition ceased.'

One of the easiest things in the world, I have found, is prophecy, and there have been a good many prophecies in regard to the Negro. Some persons have said there is no future for the Negro, because in the long run, he cannot compete with the white man, and, as a consequence, in the course of time the Negro will be crowded out of America and forced to go to some other country.

Other persons say that the future is dark for the Negro because, as soon as it appears that the black man is actually able to live and work alongside

of the white man in competition for the ordinary forms of labor, racial prejudice will be so intensified that the Negro will be driven out of the country or he will be reduced to some form of industrial servitude and compelled to perform the kind of work that no white man is willing to do.

While the letters I have quoted do not tell the whole story of the Negro and the unions, they at least throw some light upon the value of the predictions to which I have just referred. They indicate, at any rate, that the Negro, as a matter of fact, can and does compete with the white laborer, wherever he has an opportunity to do so. They show also that, on the whole, the effect of this competition is not to increase but to lessen racial prejudice.

It is nevertheless true, that the prejudice of the Negro against the unions, on the one hand, and of the white man against the black, on the other, is used sometimes by the unions to shut the Negro from the opportunity of labor, sometimes by the employer to injure the work of the unions. In the long run, however, I do not believe that, in the struggle between capital and labor, either party is going to let the other use the sentiment of the community in regard to the race question to injure it in an industrial way.

When, for example, the capitalist, as has sometimes happened, says that Negro and white laborers must not unite to organize a labor union, because that would involve 'social equality,' or when, as has happened in the past, the white laborer says the Negro shall not work at such and such trades, not because he is not competent to do so, but because he is a Negro, the interest in 'social equality,' so far as it refers to those particular matters mentioned, tends to decrease.

So long as there is any honest sentiment in favor of keeping the races apart socially, I do not believe the unions or the public are willingly going to permit individuals to take a dishonest advantage of that sentiment. On the contrary, so far as the labor unions are concerned, I am convinced that these organizations can and will become an important means of doing away with the prejudice that now exists in many parts of the country against the Negro laborer. I believe that they will do this not merely, as Mr. Gompers has said, from 'principle,' but because it is to their interest to do so. At present, however, that prejudice exists and it is natural that individuals should make use of it to their own advantage. If proprietors of Negro barber shops seek to prejudice their workmen, as is reported, against the white unions, so that they may pay them less wages, it is likewise true that some white unions take advantage of the existing prejudice wholly to exclude colored men from some of the trades in which they are perfectly competent to work.

There is, in my opinion, need for a campaign of education not only among Negro artisans but among white artisans as well. With every such effort of the labor leaders to create a sentiment among white men, as well as colored, which will permit both races to work together for their common good, I am heartily in sympathy.

In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, we are making progress in the solution of this, as of other problems connected with the relations of the races in this country. To say that we are not is pretty much the same as saying that, in spite of all our efforts, the world is growing worse instead of better. Justice, fair play, and a disposition to help rather than to injure one's fellow are not only good things in themselves, but in the long run they are the only things that pay, whether in the case of an individual, a group of individuals, or a race.

It seems to me that the letters to which I have referred in this article show clearly that the leaders of the labor organizations fully realize what the masses of laboring men must inevitably come to see, namely, that the future belongs to the man, or the class of men, who seeks his own welfare, not through the injury or oppression of his fellows, but in some form of service to the community as a whole.

*Atlantic Monthly*, 101 (June, 1913): 757-67.

### 23. NEGRO PRESS AND UNIONISM

Just why the Negro Press Association at its last meeting in Nashville

made as its main business a slap at unionism among colored people is a question that calls for much pondering. But let no one believe it expresses the opinion of all the colored newspapers.

No one should know better than newspaper men the effect that organization has had upon labor in this country. In setting themselves squarely "against all forms of unionism and economic radicalism" whatever, the executive committee, headed by Editor B. J. Davis, Atlanta, Ga., attempts to yield body and soul to the interests in this country bent on keeping the working class in a state of economic slavery.<sup>33</sup>

For the last five years there have been insidious influences at work to keep Negroes out of the unions and use them as scabs to retard the progress of unionism. We wonder did not this influence in some way reach the resolutions committee of the Press Association.

The majority of Negroes belong to the working group. Their first battle was to whip union labor into including them into its organization. Now that this has been done it is to the interest of every working man and woman in this country that they join some organized movement to force better wages and better working conditions.

Unionism, organization and the strike might not be the best method, but experience has proved them to be an effective method of loosening the grip of the exploiters. If capital is organized, and it is, the only way to meet it with a fighting chance is with organization. That's what unionism is.

*Baltimore Afro-American, March 14, 1914.*

#### THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND THE BLACK WORKER

##### 24. JAMES E. PORTER TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, APRIL 20, 1900

New Orleans, La.

Dear Sir:

I wrote two letters relative to having a trades council of which I am Secretary of composed of five of the largest colored organizations in the city affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. You wrote me that you would consult with the representatives of labor in my city regarding same. If you will kindly write me what to do, or what can be done, as I have anxiously waited for some information to carry to my body. We are not antagonistic to our white brethren, but only want to be under your protection. We are working in perfect harmony, and have a joint committee between four organizations, Cottonyard Men and Longshoremen Associations.

James Porter,  
Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

##### 25. JAMES LEONARD TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, MAY 18, 1900

New Orleans, La.

Dear Sir & Bro.:

I have had some talk with James Porter in regard to organizing a colored central body here. He says he has several organizations ready to organize with, and also that matters can be arranged with the two branches of freight handlers. I am of the opinion that a good central body of colored workers can be organized here in time, but would ask you not to act until I return from Baton Rouge, as I wish to start them right and prevent any conflict between the white and colored associations, which will certainly

occur if the proper precautions are not taken. . . .

James Leonard,  
General Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

26. JAMES E. PORTER TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, MAY 19, 1900

New Orleans, La.

Dear Sir:

In reply to your letter of April 25th, I desire to state that I have consulted with General Organizer James Leonard and also President Hughes of the Council in my city and they both heartily agree as to the benefits that will be derived in the formation of the Council, and there is fear that we cannot harmoniously work together by having a conference. In regards to the . . . freight handlers . . . I explained to Mr. Leonard that they have ceased to exist and so far as the Union of Longshoremen not being affiliated with the national union, we have the matter under consideration. I can say that the white Longshoremen's Union, which is part of the white council is not affiliated with the national union. Mr. Hughes the president of the Council is Recording[Sec[retary] of the white Longshoremen's Assoc. Mr. Leonard informed me that he would write you. My people are very anxious for the organization of the Council. We are having our regular meeting and I hope you will endeavor to communicate with me as soon as possible regarding the matter pertaining to the formation of the Council because there can be no possible reason for misunderstanding because the best part of the organizations that will be in both Councils are now working jointly together. You will greatly favor me and my associations which I represent if you can answer me before the fourth Sunday in May which is our meeting. Also please send me an organizers outfit as in moving, my folks through mistake in burning up old papers and books, destroyed mine.

Hoping this will straighten matters.

James Porter,  
Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

27. JAMES E. PORTER TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, JUNE 15, 1900

New Orleans, La.

Dear Sir:

I wrote to say that I have waited and have seen Brother Leonard, and we have talked the matter over relative to the formation of the Council composed of Colored workmen. The Council of whites have not taken any definite action as yet. Bro. Leonard states to me that they will consider same at their next meeting.

My members are very impatient and I cannot understand the remark you made in your letter of May 23 to me that there is no use kicking against the pricks, and we cannot overcome prejudice in a day. I did not understand that there is prejudice where the wages and interest are the same, and can only be upheld by concert[ed] action.

Sir I wish you would tell us something definite as the seven organizations that I am representing are anxious to understand what you will do as they are all in Council, and if they cannot be affiliated, they want to know because I have given them all the information, shown them all your letters.

I have seen the white labor leader Mr. Hughes, the President of the Council, and he is very anxious but it seems that if objections are stated they must come from a few.

You will please write something definite as they meet the fourth Sunday in this month [of] June and I must give them an answer what they can expect in accordance with a motion passed in their meeting.

Hoping to hear from you, I am

Fraternally yours,  
James Porter,  
Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

28. JAMES LEONARD TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, JUNE 29, 1900

New Orleans, La.

Dear Sir & Bro.:

Yours of the 18th came to hand some few days ago, and in answer will state that I have been attending to the matter of organizing a C.L.U. [Central Labor Union] of the Colored Workers. The feeling here against a project of this kind is so great that I am afraid it would cause a great deal of trouble at this particular time. At the meeting of the C.L.U. this morning I brought the matter up for the second time and one delegate offered a resolution protesting against having anything to do with the colored workers. After some discussion, however, it was resolved to postpone action in the matter until the next meeting of the Council. In the meantime I was instructed to wait on Porter and get the letters you have written to him on this subject. It is a very delicate question to handle, considering the prejudice that exists here against the negro. I thought at one time that it could be accomplished, but I am very much afraid that the chances are growing worse every day. While I think the Central Union is not acting wisely, at the same time the conditions are such that if they are organized in defiance of them it will result in disorganizing the Central to a great extent. However, I am in hopes that some kind of an agreement may be reached whereby both races will act harmoniously together, but as I said before the chances are very poor at present. I will let you know what action is taken at the next meeting of the Central Union.

. . . .

James Leonard,  
General Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

29. H. H. SPRING TO FRANK MORRISON, DECEMBER 16, 1900<sup>34</sup>

Savannah, Ga.

Dear Sir & Bro.:

It's been some time since you have received a letter from me, about fourteen months ago. I started an agitation here among the colored men in this city when there wasn't one organization of the building trades in the city at that time. Shortly afterward the white men organized & they all made a demand for the nine hour work day which almost resulted in a victory for the bosses leaving only two organizations at present working nine hours.

Now there's one very important question. . . . I want to organize a body of colored carpenters & mechanics under the A.F. of L. & it is essential at this time that they be organized. I have the honor of setting up six colored in this city fourteen months ago & these organizations want to affiliate with the A.F. of L. Should this meet your approval you can send me one blank direct.

H. H. Spring,  
Organizer

Incoming Correspondence, A.F. of L. Archives.

30. C. H. BLASINGAME TO SAMUEL GOMPERS, JANUARY 1, 1901

Atlanta, Ga.

My dear Sir & Bro.:

As I have been located in Lithonia, Ga., and hold a commission from you as organizer for that locality, is my commission valid at this place? This being my home at present. As I am the only Negro organizer in Georgia it is often that I could be of some benefit in organizing unions among my people in other cities if I was only able to go. What must I do on such occasions?

I am at present president of Laborers Protective Union #8485 and I believe we will make a mark in this city that will be an honor to organized labor though we are Negroes.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

C. H. Blasingame,  
Organizer

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

31. JOHN T. WILSON TO FRANK MORRISON, NOVEMBER 2, 1903

St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Sir and Brother:--

Replying to your favor of the 14th ult. I note with pleasure your statement relative to the progress the A.F. of L. has made during the past few years, and hope the time is not far distant when all of the National and International Unions on the Continent, will be affiliated.

In regard to organizing the colored section men. There could be no objections to the A.F. of L. organizing them and educating them along the lines of Trades Unionism. While I consider selling labor a business proposition, I realize that a large percent of our people on the Southern Roads, would refuse to hold membership in their craft Organization, were we to admit the colored men to membership, but the world moves; bye and bye they will adopt practical ideas instead of being governed by race prejudice and local social sentiment that is equally detrimental to white and colored men, who are compelled to sell their labor for a living. . . .

John T. Wilson,  
President,  
International Brotherhood of  
Maintenance-of-Way Employees

Incoming Correspondence, A.F.L. Archives.

32. J. C. SKEMP TO FRANK MORRISON, JULY 9, 1904

LaFayette, Ind.

Dear Sir & Bro.:

I have your favor of July 7th informing me that you have received an application for a charter from Moberly, Mo. from a union of colored men with just enough members to secure a charter, that is seven, and one of the applicants is a painter.

I also note you state that Organizer Willott of Moberly, who forwarded the application states that there is no objection upon the part of the Local Unions in the trades at which these men are employed, to their organizing in direct affiliation with the A.F. of L., and you have the assurance that if there are no objection upon the part of our Local Union in the city of Moberly to the admitting of the colored painter in the Federal Labor Union, we have no objections at these offices.

I am writing our Local Union at Moberly by this mail in reference to the matter and just as soon as I hear from them I will notify you.

I am of the opinion, however, that by admitting this colored painter to a Federal Labor Union, it will cause some trouble for our members there, as he would put up the claim that he was a union man affiliated with the A.F. of L. and entitled to all the privileges with the right to work upon any job regardless of where it may be, or who were employed thereon. If he becomes a member of the Federal Labor Union, he will certainly be required to demand the same scale of wages which is paid to our Local Union in the city of Moberly, Mo.

Fraternally yours,  
J. C. Skemp,  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Brotherhood of Painters,  
Decorators, and Paperhangers  
of America

Incoming Correspondence, A.F.L. Archives.

33. SAMUEL GOMPERS TO THE BROWN & WILLIAMSON COMPANY,  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA, AUGUST 18, 1904

Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

I am in receipt of information from the Tobacco Workers' International Union, to the effect that they have been endeavoring for some time to have your firm agree to unionize its establishment, but thus far you have been disinclined to consider the proposition favorably, as your employes are mostly colored, and you are under the impression that they are incapable of assuming the responsibility of a Union. I beg to state, however, in this regard, that there are a number of firms in your industry employing colored labor, conducting union establishments on an entirely satisfactory basis. While there may be an irresponsible element among this class, yet this fact should all the more urge the advisability of organizing them. A well-ordered union seeks to establish the highest satisfactory relations between a firm and its employes, and the existence of agreements, which it is the aim of a union to place in operation, restrains the employes from precipitous action, and thus insures the firm against strikes. Further, these locals are subject to the laws of the International Organization, the officers of which exercise a supervision and care to see that the locals live up to their agreements, and to have the members realize their full duty to the firm, as employes.

It is the object of the American Federation of Labor to organize the wage workers, irrespective of class, race, or creed; and as the competition of colored labor in all fields of industry is steadily growing, it has been necessary to give special consideration to the organization of this class, and provision is made for the formation of separate unions to comprise colored workers exclusively, where it is deemed to the best interests of the trade union movement to do so.

While of course this letter is written in the interest of the Tobacco Workers' International Union, which is engaged in the effort to promote the general welfare of the workers of the craft throughout the country, yet if your firm will give an opportunity to the officers of this organization to take this matter up with you, I have no doubt that they will be able to fully demonstrate the advantages of such a step from the standpoint of the interests of your firm.

Trusting that you will see your way clear to give this your favorable consideration, and thus actively manifest your sympathy with the cause of labor, I am,

Fraternally yours,  
Samuel Gompers, President,  
American Federation of Labor

Samuel Gompers Letterbooks, Library of Congress.

## 34. EDITORIAL

Atlanta, Ga.

## EDITOR AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST:

After spending four months of active work in the south, I feel that I am in a position to appreciate the condition of the general movement in that section of the country.

The international organizations have paid little and in some instances no attention to the south, treating that territory as though it were a plague-stricken spot, and where organization does exist there it is maintained in the face of heavy odds.

There is no section of the country that needs organization more, or where the crafts are more willing to organize, than in the south. Nor is there anywhere any class of laboring men or women who think more of their organization, or who adhere more strictly to the principles of trade unionism, than our southern trade unionists. Not only are few attempts made to organize the unorganized, but frequently we find locals rather neglected by their internationalists.

The existing conditions are assuming dangerous proportions, and unless some decided effort is made by our international unions to organize the south the entire movement in that section will be seriously jeopardized.

There is another matter of grave importance to this section which should receive consideration. That is the organization of the negroes. The trade union movement of today specifically declares against discrimination on account of creed, color, or nationality.

It is well to impress upon the international organizations the fact that the greatest competition we have in this section is the negro. In many instances the negroes are skilled workmen and unorganized. This places a dangerous weapon in the hands of the employer.

I trust the question of the organization of the south will receive the careful consideration of the international organizations, and that shortly steps will be taken to build up and strengthen the trade union movement of the southern states.

GEORGE B. SQUIRES

*American Federationist* (June, 1904): 507.

## 35. EXCERPT FROM A SPEECH BY SAMUEL GOMPERS IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

The speaker declared he was always ready to assert his patriotism on behalf of the colored man, saying: "Tis true that some white men have been angered at the introduction of black strikebreakers. I have stood as a champion of the colored man and have sacrificed self and much of the movement that the colored man should get a chance. But the caucasians are not going to let their standard of living be destroyed by negroes, Chinamen, Japs, or any other."

*American Federationist* (September, 1905), p. 636.36. EXCERPTS FROM CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE TEXAS STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR  
RELATING TO BLACK WORKERS

## Item

P. Abner, a colored delegate from Groveton Federal Labor Union No. 11,444, and the only one in the convention, gave the convention a touch of flowery oratory and then settled down to a recital in terse diction, of great interest to the convention, of the virtual chattel slavery conditions which today afflict



labor in the piney wood of Texas. He said wages average from 80 to 90 cents per day. That since the visit of Organizer C. W. Woodman the bosses had given up the metal check system and now issued a paper check for wages which is discounted 10 per cent for merchandise and 12-1/2 per cent for cash. The speaker said the Negro, when organized, is a loyal union man. He has nothing but his labor power to sell and in that way he is equal to any other laborer with naught but muscle. In cities where organized, the Negro will stay out in labor trouble until starvation comes to him and his family to protect the white union man's cause. He said that in the piney woods now the married men of that section during the winter never see their wives and children as the hours of labor are so long. He offered some strong resolutions dealing with the labor question in the lumber camps.

*Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1904, p. 32.*

#### Item

Mr. Lawhon: I would like to say a word in behalf of these colored members of Denison. They are the only colored league in the State, and I suppose in the United States. They are doing good work, and I want to say that I believe they are doing better than our white league. This man has attended conventions and paid his own expenses, and he has also organized unions,--five, I believe --in the last year. I would like to see this convention help the negroes to organize all over this country, and in this State especially. We have these colored workers, and we ought to have them in an organization. It is going to take time to do it. It is going to take education. We must first educate them up to what organization can do for them. At the present time there are so many of them, and they take striking workers' places. We should assist them to do what we can. Now, we have another colored organization in Denison, the Barbers. I tried to get them to send a delegate down here. They promised me they would, but so far they have not sent him. I think this convention should seriously consider the organization of the Negroes. Whenever they come to your city, help them out in every way you can. If it is within the province of this convention, I would like to see some means adopted whereby we could arrange to give financial assistance in organizing our colored workers.

*Proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1911, p. 48.*

#### *Report of B. F. Shearod, general organizer for the Black Workers of Texas to the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1912*

"This makes the fifth time I have attended the convention. I have attended them regularly every year since I have been in the work. I am going to lay down my life for my race. I was raised in the white people's houses. I am certainly glad that I have lasted until now. Since I have been serving in the labor movement I find that everything that is produced is produced by labor. I wish to say that my race of people are in bad condition."

He then thanked the convention for what the Federation had done for him in the past, and expressed the hope that it would continue to assist him in the future

*Proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1912, p. 61.*

#### *A resolution presented to the Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1914*

Whereas, The Legislature of the State of Texas has passed the separate coach law of this State prohibiting whites and blacks from riding together upon the common carriers of this State, namely, railroads, and street cars; and

Whereas, The law is plain and explicit in saying that equal accommodations are to be given to both races alike, which means equal rights; and

Whereas, This part of the law is not being enforced in regards to the Negro traveler, not even when the lawmakers or railroad commissioners' attention are called to this fact, but on the contrary, are continually forcing the Negro and his family to ride in smoking cars and day coaches, and charging him at the same time the same percentage per mile as is charged the white brother who is at liberty to ride in chair cars and sleeping cars and on street cars alike in all of the cities of this State, which under the law and according to our fares charged, should be given us also if the law stands for anything at all which law applies to both races alike.

First, as a Negro, second, as a citizen, qualified under the laws of this State and on behalf of Local No. 851, of which I am a member and a delegate, we denounce such actions as are forced upon us in regards to our railroad accommodations, not only upon the common carriers, but at the railroad stations, restaurants, ticket offices, waiting rooms throughout this State, and ask the coöperation of this convention to assist us in removing these evils that are not in keeping with the State law.

We are not asking the elimination of the separate coach law, we rather prefer it; but only want equal accommodations in all departments in order to provide comfort to ourselves and families when traveling, and especially when we are charged the same per cent per mile to travel.

In the street cars of this State, there are no partitions used, but signs; this is done in order to cut the expense of the company and is not in keeping with the law. As Negroes, we are forced to fill in from the back seats, while our white brother is allowed to sit all over the car, notwithstanding the city ordinance is based upon the State law, which requires that both white and black fill from each end to the center of the car.

Therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That our labor representative at Austin or those who are asking the support of the laboring people in the future of this State and who will also pledge themselves to this convention to look after the interest of labor and the laborers in general along all lines, be instructed to urge, and if possible enforce this law for the people and by the people of this State.

Samuel T. Browning, Delegate  
Local No. 851, Galveston;

Monroe Brown, Bar Porters Union  
Delegate, Local No. 873, Waco.

*Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1914, pp. 114-15.*

*A report by B. F. Shearod, Negro organizer for the American  
Federation of Labor, to the Eighteenth Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor*

Mr. President, Officers and Delegates: I beg to submit the following report:

What I want to say I cannot say it. I would like the best in the world to be in this convention, then I could speak for myself. But I am grateful for the fair amount of support I received from the Waco and Austin Trades Councils. So now I want this body to know that I am a union man, and will be until death.

The Waco convention adopted a resolution to help me organize my people in Texas. I have never got any support from it yet, so now if that be true look it up and see if you can give me a little support. You can find that resolution on page 48 in the proceedings of the Fourteenth Annual Convention

that was held at Waco, Texas, April 5, 1911. I ask this convention to take the matter up with the American Federation of Labor. I can do much good with a little help. I have two or three unions on the way in Austin, but I am not able to be there now. It is going to take some time to educate my race to let them know what organization can do for them. So now I ask this convention to receive this little report, and think my condition over. With best wishes, I am, fraternally yours,

B. F. Shearod, Organizer  
A.F. of L., Waco, Texas

*Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1915, p. 122.*

*A resolution presented to the Eighteenth Annual Convention of the  
Texas State Federation of Labor, 1915*

Whereas, Most Hod Carrier Unions of the State of Texas have been having such hard times to be properly recognized: We take this method of calling it to the attention of those who are interested in Unionism.

It is not a question of race or color. As a citizen qualified under the laws of this State and in behalf of Local No. 268 of Hod Carriers, of which I am a member and a delegate to this convention; as a Union Organization, founded from the International standpoint, and being affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, we denounce such actions that are forced upon us, for we have not yet received a square deal along these lines according to the stipulated rules of Unionism.

*Be it resolved*, That our delegates should be seated in the Central Body as all other central bodies recognize the same. We think we are entitled to the same recognition.

We have sent a committee to the Building Trades Council at three different times from about May 1st to July 1st, 1914, with fees of \$1 per month to pay monthly dues, but were refused at each time.

We Pray this convention will give this matter their earnest consideration.

Fraternally yours,

G. W. Jones, Delegate of Local  
No. 268  
I.H.C.B. and C.L.U. of A.

Referred to Grievance Committee.

Committee recommends that this resolution be referred back to Local No. 268 of the Hod Carriers, with instructions to take the matter up with the American Federation of Labor through their International Union.

Adopted.

*Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Convention  
of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1915, p. 105.*

*A resolution presented to the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the  
Texas State Federation of Labor, 1916*

Resolution No. 52 was reported by the Resolutions Committee and, there being no objection to the report, same stood adopted. Said resolution and report are as follows:

To the Officers and Members of the Texas State Federation of Labor here assembled, Greetings:

We, the colored delegations from various parts of the State for the betterment of union labor feel that this convention should go on record as placing a colored organizer in the field.

Whereas, In the State of Texas there are more than 150,000 colored wage

earnings, who in their daily occupations are in competition with the white wage earners, and

Whereas, In the competitive field of Texas this means there is a trend at all times toward lowering the standard of living, the standard of wages and the standard of hours; be it

*Resolved*, That the Texas State Federation of Labor, in nineteenth convention assembled, appoint one organizer of this race, who shall be regularly employed for a period of twelve months, this in order for the benefit accruing from the organizations of the colored race be carried into every community where such wage earners may be found.

We, your committee, beg to recommend that every effort be made by the incoming executive board to assist the colored brothers in their efforts.

Report of committee adopted.

*Proceedings of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Texas State Federation of Labor, 1916, p. 93.*

#### NEW ORLEANS LEVEE STRIKE 1907

#### 37. TO RISE TOGETHER<sup>35</sup> By Oscar Ameringer

Work in breweries is slack in winter, heavy in summer; work on the levees, or docks, is heavy in winter and slack in summer, so many dock workers found employment in breweries during the summer, while many brewery workers were to be found at the docks in winter. Out of this situation developed the exchange of union cards. By simply depositing his dock worker's card with the Brewery Workers' Union, the dock worker became a brewery worker in good standing and entitled to all the rights. By the same token, brewery workers who deposited their cards with dock unions became dock workers in good standing.

The Brewery Workers Union, true to its international faith, admitted Negroes, although up to then all A.F. of L. international unions, except the United Mine Workers, barred them. There was one other exception. On the docks of New Orleans, Negro unions affiliated with the A.F. of L. had reached a working agreement with white unions affiliated with the A.F. of L. They had, after many bitter struggles, been driven together by the inexorable law of survival. At one time the whites had owned virtually all the jobs on the docks. The all-white port bosses had broken one of their strikes by the importation of Negro strike breakers from cotton and sugarcane fields of the Delta. Thereafter Negroes held the dock jobs. Now Negroes certainly have stomachs just like white folk, and these stomachs, strange as it may seem, preferred chicken to swine's bosom. So when the blacks had established their monopoly on dock jobs they banded together in unions and struck for chicken.

When the Negroes struck, the cry went up from the white man's sanctum, rostrum and pulpit: "White men, assert your supremacy, rescue your jobs from the niggers," and the white dock workers asserted their supremacy by scabbing and breaking the strike. This went on until both whites and blacks got down to sow-belly wages. In one of the last of these affairs, the white-supremacy strikers killed some ninety black strike breakers, whereupon the white-supremacy militia of white-supremacy Louisiana shot hell out of a similar number of white supremacy strikers.

The upshot of the shooting was that whites and blacks agreed to quit scabbing on each other, to recognize one another's unions, and go fifty-fifty on dock jobs.

Now the united black, white and yellow brothers were striking for chicken by way of a minimum wage of five dollars a day. The all-important task in this situation was to preserve the newly gained solidarity of the strikers. And as I the red-hot internationalist, had no prejudice against the black brethren, but, on the contrary, liked them, the board of strategy delegated to me the task of keeping the black boys in line.

What a book, what a whole library of enlightenment that experience was to me! It gave me my first insight into the true nature of the thing called

the race problem. Among the many, many things I learned was that these black men were men even as you and I. Beneath their black skins beat the same ' hearts, gnawed the same hunger, circulated the same blood. Below their kinky hair lodged the same dreams, longings and aspirations. Like you and me, they sought pleasure and evaded pain. What they asked from life was living. Happiness within four walls, a loving mate, children, and the chance to rear them better than they had been reared. Health, laughter, beauty, peace, plenty, a modest degree of security in sickness and age.

Some were good, some bad; some stupid, some crooked. They were wise and foolish; there were heroes and cowards. Most of them were a combination of all these faults and virtues. Each had inside him his inherited angel and devil warring for supremacy.

The Negroes were more easily moved to song and laughter than their white fellow slaves. Beneath their monkeyshines was the wisdom born of suffering. For the submerged, it is wiser to amuse than to assert. Mentally they were the equal of the white strikers, and by the way, let me caution the reader that the poor whites of the South are not mentally inferior to other people. They often lack the balanced and sufficient diet to develop the energy and health required to withstand languor and disease, but mentally they are no more inferior to the average American than Swedes are to Norwegians, or vice versa. In some respects the blacks even surpassed the whites on their own economic level. Rules of the union required recipients of strike benefits to sign their names beside the amount stated on the books. And on those books I found a smaller percentage of "his mark" among the black strikers than among the whites.

One of my duties was to visit the Negro union in their own labor temple and urge them to hold out until victory was achieved. There was, let me say, considerably less danger of the Negroes deserting the whites than of the whites deserting the blacks. However, the white end was in other hands.

The Negro unions were conducted on the pattern of secret lodges. There was a great deal of ritualism to be observed. Coming to the door, behind which the union was in session, I would rap three times. A shutter would open. Through the round opening, two large white eyeballs and a husky voice would inquire who was the stranger knocking at the door, and what was his mission? The stranger was not a newcomer. The large white eyeballs had often beheld him through the same round opening.

There followed some sharp knocks on an inner door. More mysterious whispering. By and by, someone gave a little marble-topped table a number of sharp knocks with a wooden gavel, and shortly thereafter, four guards armed with long spears appeared at the outer gate and escorted me into the inner sanctuary. On my arrival in front of the presiding high mogul, the congregation arose. The mogul ceremoniously introduced the visiting brother to the audience for the tenth time, and I started to speak.

As the audience warmed up, there came responses such as "Now he's talking, now he's talking. Tell 'em. Tell 'em." Their responses were harmonized somewhat in the manner of Negro spirituals. An eerie picture, these chanting black men, their white eyeballs shining under flickering gas jets. But once I heard them chanting, I knew they would stick for another week. Their unionism was far more than a matter of hours and wages. It was a religion, and their only hope of rising from the depths of a slavery more cruel in many respects than chattel slavery. For dock work is back-breaking work. It wears men out rapidly, is extremely seasonal, and at the wages these black men received before unionism came to their rescue, their standard of living was but little, if any, above that of the chattel slave. What emancipation had given them in mobility it had taken from them in security.

It was a good strike, as strikes go. There were a few breaks on the part of the white men; none on the Negro side. The railroad companies hauled in strike breakers in great numbers, but as fast as the railroad companies brought them in on the cushions, the railroad workers sent them out in box car and caboose on passes secured from the strike committee. Passes bore the inscription, "This is to certify that the bearer of this card was brought to New Orleans on the promise of a legitimate job. Discovering on his arrival that he was to act as strike breaker, he refused. We kindly ask all good union brothers to assist him in returning to his home in \_\_\_\_\_."

Most of the strike breakers came from the slums of northern cities, mainly Chicago. They were recruited from the human flotsam around the cheap employ-

ment agencies, in flop houses, Salvation headquarters and jails. There were some professional thugs and strike breakers supplied by the Thiel, Pinkerton, and Burns detective agencies, but the bulk of them was composed of unfortunate men to whom most any job anywhere held out the promise of three meals per.

The method by which some of these people were hired is illustrated by the following case. The I. C. Railroad had brought in a large consignment of "American heroes," as President Eliot of Harvard had termed the most miserable of all Americans. In order to prevent contact between the new arrivals and the strikers, the "heroes" had been interned on a steamer anchored in the middle of the Mississippi River and after some days of confinement they got out of hand and were landed under police protection. Among that terrible, ragged, ill-smelling, unwashed rabble I spotted a small, delicate man, wholly unfit for dock work. He stank to high heaven, and his face had not seen a razor for some days, but his clothes were whole and there was no question but that they had been made by an excellent tailor. I was interested in the prospective dock walloper in tailor-made clothes, and asked him how he happened to get mixed up with that crowd.<sup>36</sup>

"How did I get mixed up with that bunch of bums?" he burst out in broken English. "That's what I want to know. I'm from Chicago. I'm a respectable married man, with a wife and three kids. I own my own home. I'm a cutter in the most fashionable merchant-tailor establishment in Chicago, and here I am with that lousy, stinking bunch of hoboes to do what? Work on the docks loading ships--to break a strike? Me loading ships--me a strike breaker! Me, secretary of my union! Me, a class-conscious proletarian member of the Socialist Party! Me breaking a strike!"

The indignation of the good fellow was refreshing. As I pieced his story together in the nearest restaurant, the man had attended a birthday party. He must have drunk a little too much, as he put it. Something must have happened to him on his way home, for when he came to, he was in jail. Then, before he could collect his badly befuddled wits to ask for a lawyer or notify his people, the cops had loaded him and his jailmates into a closed van, pushed and jostled them into a waiting train, and here he was. In the process, somebody, in all likelihood the Chicago cops, had relieved my socialist comrade and union brother of purse, watch and chain. He gratefully accepted the few dollars I offered him for a shave and bath and to wire to his no doubt distracted spouse for transportation. He waited at the telegraph office for the reply, identified by the name and address he had luckily sewed in the breast pocket of his tailor-made coat, repaid the few dollars, and we parted *auf baldiges Wiedersehen*. . . .

The agreement between the black and white dock unions stipulated an equal division of jobs. This included equal wages and working conditions for both races. But the white and black unions still met in separate places, and out of this developed misunderstanding and friction. A unifying central body was needed in which both races were represented. Thus the Dock and Cotton Council came into existence, a representative body composed of an equal number of white and black delegates.

The seventy-two delegates, half white, half black, represented thirty-six unions of dock workers. And just as jobs on the docks had been divided fifty-fifty, between the races, so the offices of the Dock and Cotton Council were divided fifty-fifty. Delegates addressed each other as "brother." The division of officers was on the following order: President--white, Vice-President--black; Financial Secretary--white; Corresponding secretary--black; and so on. At each annual election, the rotation of officers was reversed. From which it may be gathered that everything was done to preserve the equality and solidarity of the central body and to prevent friction between the two races. This was not a question of either social or political equality. Its basis was economic equality. The driving force was neither idealism nor sentimentalism, it was necessity. The two races could fight each other and go down together; or help each other and rise together. They preferred to rise together. The eternal urge for life, liberty and happiness had driven these men together and wiped out the Jim Crow law in the chief centers of their lives--working place and union hall.

Somewhere in the second month of the nine-week dock strike the legislature of Louisiana appointed a committee of eight to meet a committee of eight to be selected, or elected, by the Dock and Cotton Council, to find a

basis for settling the strike. The legislative committee was composed of four members of the lower and four members of the upper house. The committee finally elected by the Dock and Cotton Council was composed of four white and four black brothers.

The hew and cry that followed the announcement of the make-up of the workers' delegation came near to bringing the stars in their courses to fall on Louisiana.

"What! Meet with niggers in the same room, around the same table, discussing a problem concerning the superior race exclusively?" Was it not terrible enough to meet common dock walloppers, water rats, white trash, in the same room, around the same table, to discuss as equals--well, almost equals--the weal and the woes of an industry in which the workers had not invested a red cent? Was it not terrible enough that men could no longer run their own business as they saw fit? Now that riffraff had the effrontery to ask white gentlemen, honorable law makers of the great State of Louisiana, to meet with "niggers" in the same room, around the same table!

The real purpose of this turmoil was to destroy the solidarity of the two races. With sixteen white men behind closed doors and thousands of unrepresented Negroes on the outside, what could be easier than to make a deal on the inside leaving the blacks on the outside for keeps? What could be easier for the emissaries of the employers than to spread the idea among the blacks on the outside that they were being sold out by the conspiracy of white men behind closed doors? Isn't the Negro always sold out when white men put their heads together? Don't be fools, black men. Get your jobs back before those white men behind closed doors take yours. And hurry--hurry!

The Dock and Cotton Council stood pat. It had learned by bitter experience that once the two races permitted themselves to be divided, their strike was lost.

In an effort to persuade the council to withdraw the four Negro delegates, Mayor Baerman had appeared at one of its meetings. Mayor Baerman was well liked in labor circles. He had been fair to Labor. He made a subtle approach in this speech. To begin with, he had not come as the representative of the harbor bosses. He spoke for the city of New Orleans, at large. The whole population was suffering grievously on account of the strike. Tens of millions of dollars had already been lost to capital, labor and business in general. The great port of New Orleans was in danger of losing its position of importance in the United States. Shipping was being diverted to other ports. The loss inflicted might well cripple New Orleans for all time to come.<sup>37</sup>

He had no prejudice against Negroes. (I believe Mayor Baerman spoke the truth. He was a Jew, and there are no other people, unless it be the French, less susceptible to that particular aberration.) It was not the fault of the Negroes, the Mayor went on, that they were in this country. It is not their fault that they worked on the docks. White men had imported them in previous dock strikes to break the strikes of white dock workers. They had as much right to make a living as other people. They were hard-working, law-abiding folk and entitled to the same wages and working hours as white men performing the same labor. He was not asking the white delegates of the Council to withdraw the four black delegates. He asked the black men present to sacrifice their representation temporarily, in order that the peace, tranquility and prosperity of New Orleans might be restored.

The audience listened attentively to the plea of Mayor Baerman, and at its conclusion warmly applauded the speaker. A Negro delegate arose, asked for the privilege of the floor, and moved to reconsider the previous action, that is, the selection of the four Negroes. Another Negro delegate seconded the motion. In the discussion that followed, every white speaker declared himself opposed to the withdrawal of the four Negroes. Only a few Negroes had spoken in favor of it. There was no need for a roll call. The motion for reconsideration was almost unanimously defeated. All white men present had voted nay, and only a few Negroes had voted aye, some of those merely as a matter of confidence in the sincerity of the white brothers.

Shortly after this amazing exhibition of solidarity, the committee of eight selected by the legislature met with the committee of four white and four black dock workers elected by the Dock and Cotton Council.

In the capacity of editor of *The Labor World* and chief scribe of the great strike, I attended most of the meetings of the Committee of Sixteen. The outstanding personalities at those meetings were three: Ellis, a mulatto;

State Senator Cordell; and Dan Scully, president of the longshoremen's union, a red-headed Irishman in every sense of the word.

Ellis stood no more than five-feet-five and weighed about a hundred and ten. In his youth he had been a jockey and in that capacity had seen much of the world. When he had become too heavy for jockeying, a disaster which overtook him during a European tour, he secured a job on one of the boats of the Hamburg-American Line. His intention had been to desert after landing in God's Country, but liking his job, and having no other in prospect, he had stuck. Later he had become a member of the German Seamen, the reddest of the German unions, had acquired a fair smattering of German, and more than a fair understanding of the Communist Manifesto. He had swallowed whole the theory of the class struggle and uncompromisingly regarded the Gompers notion of the identity of interest between capital and labor as high treason to the proletariat of the world.<sup>38</sup>

Dan Scully's outstanding characteristics were a good dash of Irish wit coupled with an uncontrollable temper and an ingrown hatred of bosses, irrespective of race, nationality, religion, and state of moral turpitude.

Senator Cordell was the composite portrait of the Kentucky Colonel seen in whiskey advertisements. He was topped by a shock of beautiful silvery hair. He sported a silvery mustache and goatee. He had a florid complexion, suffered from high blood pressure, fell frequently into the role of Shakespearean hero, such as Mark Antony declaiming over the body of Caesar, and for the balance had a temper as uncontrollable as that of Longshoreman Scully, though somewhat more culturally restrained. The scene most frequently enacted by the three leading characters was something like this:

Senator Cordell, violently rising from his chair at the conference table, violently tearing his hair, and violently striding around the conference room:

"The ideah! The ve'y ideah! White men conspirin' with niggas against the honah and prosper'ty of the gre-at po't of N'yol'ns; against the honoah and prosper'ty of the gre-at State of Louisianah itself! The ideah, the ve'y ideah, white gen'lemen of honah compelled to heckle like penny-pinchin' tradas ovah a few pennies mo'hless with a pa'cel o' watah rats and niggas. Ah shall not continya this disgra-ceful, shameless bickerin' fo' anotha second. I am leaving. . . ."

Ellis: "Please sit down, Senator. We're not here to save the honor and prosper'ty of the great State of Louisiana. We is here to settle the strike. That's what they sent you down here for. Your job is to see to it that we work the longest possible hours at the least possible pay. Our job is to make your crowd pay us the highest possible wages for the lowest possible amount of work. Let's get down to business. What's more, we've won the strike already, else you gentlemen wouldn't be here to talk compromise, honor, and prosperity."

Dan Scully: "Oh, we're water rats, are we? And white trash, are we? But you can't run your goddam port without us. Can you? I guess before long you'll call us nigger lovers, too. Maybe you want to know next how I would like it if my sister married a nigger? Well, go ahead ask me. But take it from me, I wasn't always a nigger lover. I fought in every strike to keep the niggers off the dock. I fought until in the white-supremacy strike your white supremacy governor sent his white-supremacy militia down here and shot us white-supremacy strikers full of holes. You talk about us conspiring with niggers against the honor and prosperity of the state. But let me tell you and your gang, there was a time I wouldn't even work beside a nigger. You got 'em on the loose. You made me work with niggers, eat with niggers, sleep with niggers, drink out of the same water bucket with niggers, and finally got me to the place where if one of them comes to me and blubbers something about more pay, I say, 'Come on, nigger, let's go after the white bastards.'"

Oscar Ameringer, *If You Don't Weaken: The Autobiography of Oscar Ameringer* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940), pp. 195-201, 214-19.



## 38. GENERAL STRIKE OF ALL LEVEE UNIONS IS NOW ON

Nearly 10,000 Men Quit Work Last Evening  
Under the Cotton Council Order

Central Body, After Stormy Session, Determined  
to Call Out All Dock Workers

Beginning of the Great Struggle for the  
Parity of This Port Among Shipping

Ship Agents Will Import Men to Work Vessels  
and City and State Authorities Asked  
to Provide Protection

NUMBER OF MEN INVOLVED

White Screwmen.....	800
Negro Screwmen.....	1,000
White Longshoremen.....	1,400
Negro Longshoremen.....	2,100
White Cotton Yardmen.....	523
Negro Cotton Yardmen.....	700
Coal Wheelers, all negroes.....	310
Teamsters and Loaders, all negroes.....	200
Freight Handlers, mixed, whites, and negroes.....	1,100
Cotton Inspectors and Markers, all white	110
Scale Hands, negroes.....	60
Stave Classers.....	300
Total.....	8,603

The levee troubles culminated yesterday afternoon in the Dock and Cotton Council ordering a general strike, and the order became effective at 6 o'clock last evening, at the hour when the men usually knock off from the day's toil.

It marked the real beginning of a struggle which may prove the battling of powerful forces, and which may be protracted until one side or the other is forced to acknowledge itself beaten, thoroughly beaten.

The levee presented an unusual scene when the men quit work at dusk. Policemen were everywhere, and the Screwmen, already out, were standing at the corners of the streets which begin close to the wharf, in knots and bunches. The sailors were lining the taffrails of the vessels tied to the docks, private watchmen were taking their posts around stacks of tarpaulin-covered cotton, and the picture, to those familiar with conditions, suggested preparations for the combat.

The Dock and Cotton Council's defiance is being met by complete preparations on the part of the steamship agents and stevedores to have this vast work on the levee done by non-union labor. The Illinois Central Railroad Company is standing with the agents and stevedores, and will have all the men needed to do the work at the Stuyvesant Docks, and, all things considered, the fight was practically on yesterday.

The Dock and Cotton Council went into session at 10 o'clock yesterday forenoon, at Screwmen's Hall, Exchange Alley and Bienville Street. There were present representatives from all the unions affiliated, the two Screwmen bodies, the two Longshoremen, the two Cotton Yardmen, the Teamsters, the Coal Wheelers, the Stave Classers, the Cotton Markers and inspectors, and the Scale Hands, and the delegates before going into session stood in groups in the alley, discussing the alarming situation.

James Byrnes, President of the Council and President of the Screwmen, was in the chair, and after calling the meeting to order he explained the object of the special session. Mr. Byrnes very carefully went over the situation, and in conclusion laid the case before the delegates. General discussion followed, and all of those speaking, with the exception of two, advocated

of the Levee. Delegate Ellis, of the negro Longshoremen, took a determined stand against a general strike, and boldly voiced his opinions, although some of the delegates endeavored to hush him up. Delegate Ellis contended that a general strike would be disastrous to the port and that it would entail suffering on thousands.

A well-known cotton yardman spoke against the general strike move, seeking to protect the interests of his employers, who were in no way responsible for the course the agents were taking against the Screwmen, and with whom the men had always maintained friendly relations.

After the discussion had lasted several hours the question to strike or not to strike was put to the house through a resolution offered by a delegate not a member of the Screwmen. The resolution was offered in writing and was lengthy and well worded. President Byrnes called for a vote and the radicals won by 9 1-2 to 2 1-2. The half votes are represented by splits in individual union delegations. The Cotton Yardmen and the Stave Classers cast the negative votes, and all the other representatives cast affirmative ballots.

After the determination had been reached to call the strike the question of when the walkout should become effective was briefly discussed. As three of the steamship lines were already working their sailors, and other lines were to begin in the morning, it was decided to strike against all the ship agents and stevedores who had not or would not sign up with the Screwmen on their second demand of 160 bales a day for gangs of five, at \$31 a gang. Some were in favor of declaring the general strike Monday morning, but it was pointed out that by that time the strikebreakers would have arrived and they would be practically locked out all along the line.

The meeting adjourned and the delegates came downstairs, disbursing in groups and pairs, and left the vicinity. The men seemed to be in the best of spirits and

#### ALL WERE OPTIMISTIC

and confident of final victory. None of those approached would make a statement or say what had been done at the meeting, but the facts gradually filtered out, and soon it was known in Carondelet Street, where the ship agents and stevedores have their headquarters, and all over the city.

Delegate Ellis, of the negro longshoremen, although opposed to a general strike, voted with his union to tie up the levee, sacrificing his own views to the sentiments of the majority. President Byrnes had no statement to give out. He said that the employers, and not the men, had forced the issue and that the men would hold out to the last, believing that they had right and justice on their side. Mr. Byrnes reiterated that the screwmen and other laborers would remain within the law and do nothing toward interfering with any labor the bosses might secure.

"All this talk about what the screwmen and the rest of us will do when strikebreakers come to town is nonsense," declared Mr. Byrnes. "We intend to stand to one side and do nothing, and if there is any disturbance it will not be of our making."

Mr. Byrnes repeated that he thought the screwmen had been unjustly criticised and called bad names when they had done absolutely nothing to deserve it.

Another prominent member of the Dock and Cotton Council, when seen, said: "If the steamship agents and stevedores think that by importing strikebreakers they are going to drive the men to start a riot they will be fooled. We are not going in for any kind of violence, but during the period of enforced idleness we will get along as best we can and have our little outings and pleasures. Sometimes strikebreakers themselves start a row and blame it on the workmen. Well, we are going to guard against the possibility of any deal of that sort as best we can."

The

#### STEAMSHIP AGENTS

held several meetings yesterday with Mr. Ross of the Head Line, in the chair. The meetings were all executive, but it is understood that the employers perfected their plans for having their ships loaded and unloaded.

Mr. Ross gave out the statement last evening that the ship agents were not going to have their ships lie idle at the wharves, and that provisions had been made to do the loading and unloading. From an official source it

was ascertained that an order had been placed with the Pinkerton and Thiel Agencies in Chicago for 500 men to start loading and unloading the ships tied at the wharves Monday morning.

The men, with a sufficient guard to protect them, will leave Chicago tonight in all probability, and reach Harahan Sunday night. At Harahan they will be placed aboard a ship on which they will be lodged during their stay in the city, and Monday morning brought down to the docks. The men will be first placed where they are most needed, and will gradually be distributed to the different ships which are waiting either to receive or discharge freight.

It was also learned that the same agencies, the

#### PINKERTONS AND THIELS

are ready to furnish an additional thousand laborers if they are needed. The imported men will be used until confidence is restored and the agents are able to get local laborers to take their places. The men furnished by the agencies will be returned to the places from which they shipped as soon as the strike is over.

Nearly all of the ships at the wharves will start work this morning with their crews, and any outside labor that the stevedores are able to secure. It is not thought however, that just at the present local labor will be plentifully secured, as some doubt exists as to the expressed docility of the screwmen and of the ability of the police to protect non-union labor.

Mr. Delphine Vila, agent for Spanish ships, started to load the Juan Forges at Third Street, yesterday, with the vessel's crew. In three-quarters of a day the sailors put aboard 510 bales of cotton, some of it screwed, equal to an average of 170 bales a day, in gangs of five. The Juan Forges will continue to load today with her sailors.

Mr. Vila is seriously considering sending his other ship, the Wilferdo, to Galveston, and sent a telegram to the Island City yesterday making inquiries.

Mr. Cosulich's Austro-American Line boat, the Eugenia, in the past four days has

#### STOWED 4,000 BALES

of cotton with her crew, directed by Mr. Terrence Smith, the stevedore; Mr. Smith found that the sailors worked very well indeed, and, as green hands, clearly demonstrated that an average of 200 bales a day to gangs of five was easy.

Mr. J. B. Honor finished the United Fruit Company ship Ellis yesterday with union longshoremen, and was working the Norheim, and the Principessa Laetitia, consigned to Mr. Hendren's Texas Transport and Terminal Company, with the same labor, the ships taking only general cargoes.

Although Mr. Honor has not attempted to load cotton the longshoremen with whom he signed a three years' contract, even before the settlement of the longshoremen's troubles, several weeks ago, will refuse to work for him today, and he will have to use the ships' crews and what outside labor he can secure.

Mr. W. J. Kearney started to work the Ballaura, a Harrison Line ship, at Stuyvesant docks with sailors yesterday, stowing cotton. The Ballaura needs 1,000 bales to complete her cargo. Mr. Kearney will start on the Mechanician today with sailors, stowing 1,500 bales of cotton and 1,000 casks of tobacco. Mr. Kearney, who is one of the best posted men on levee conditions in the city, was well satisfied with the work of the sailors.

The Malin Head, one of the Head Line boats, lying at Eighth Street, began taking cotton with her crew yesterday, and the longshoremen knocked off not only on her, but on the Angola, another of Mr. Ross' ships, which was taking general cargo as well.

The steamer Success has been worked by Stevedore Peters at Chalmette, discharging coal, for the past four days. On the Head ships the Harrison ships and at other points as well, where it was known sailors were to be employed today,

#### THE COTTON TEAMSTERS

and the freight handlers refused to work.

As the freight handlers employed by the Illinois Central Railroad at

Stuyvesant docks will not work today the Company will bring down from Harahan, where they have been housed for several days, between four and five hundred working men, to take the strikers places. The Stuyvesant docks will be carefully guarded by the railroad specials from now on until the trouble is settled.

A well-known official of the road stated yesterday that the Illinois Central would have all its work done and would stand with the ship agents in the present fight.

It was generally understood yesterday that one of the issues of the fight would be the life of the Screwmen's Union. The employers again stated as individuals yesterday that the Screwmen would probably be done away with entirely in the fight and things would be reconstructed on a basis that would do away with the different classes of labor.

Mr. Hendren, of the Texas Transport and Terminal Company, stated yesterday the Atlantian, the Leyland Line boat, consigned to his firm, had completed her cargo of cotton with sailors and gone to sea.

When told yesterday afternoon that a general strike had been ordered Mayor Behrman expressed regret that the interests directly concerned had not been able to agree on some common ground, and so prevent a tie-up of the port. He said, however, that he was prepared for any emergency that might arise, and having anticipated the action of the Dock and Cotton Council on the proposition of the agents and stevedores, had sent for

#### INSPECTOR WHITAKER

and talked the situation over with him.

The Mayor went on that, appreciating the inadequacy of the police force as at present organized, he had authorized the Inspector to employ such additional force as he might deem necessary to deal with any situation that might arise.

"I will make every effort consistent with my duty to enforce the law," the Mayor declared, "and nothing will be left undone to protect those who might be employed to do the work."

Mr. Behrman expressed the hope that there would be no trouble, and that the strike would run its course, without scenes of violence and disorder, which generally come with such conditions.

Robert E. Lee, President of the Central Trades and Labor Council, and Commissioner of Labor Statistics, had the following to say in regard to the present difficulty:

"On summing up the situation it appears to me that the condition was brought about by Messrs. Sanders, LeBlanc and Ross, agents for the big lines. They claim organized labor is to blame, and we lay the responsibility on their shoulders. If there is any extortion or overcharge in this great port the ship agents have brought about the condition themselves, and they should not place it at the door of labor.

"If the statement Mr. Harrison, of the Screwmen makes, and his statement I might say is backed up by figures, carefully compiled, the profit of the Steamship Agents is enormous and

#### OUT OF ALL PROPORTION

to the gains made by legitimate manufactories or industrial enterprises.

"Consider the conditions under which the people live today. Rents have increased all over as a result of the installation of a modern water system; the cost of living has increased over 50 per cent, and if any sacrificing is to be done, it should be by those who are able to bear it.

"The Screwmen are one of the oldest and best-known organizations in the country, and in this city, from year to year, the exactions on them have been greater and greater. . . .

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 5, 1907.*

## 39. SCREWMEN AGREE ON 180 BALES; SHIP AGENTS REJECT OFFER,

CLAIMING UNION'S PROPOSITION IS AMBIGUOUS AND  
MADE NO REFERENCE TO WAGE SCALE

Mayor Behrman Appeared Before Joint Meeting of Cotton  
Workers Urging the 180-Bale Limit, Together With  
Arbitration and Investigation

As was predicted in the Picayune, the joint conference of the screwmen offered to compromise the main differences involved in the Levee strike by stowing 180 bales of cotton yesterday, but the shades of night had not yet fallen when the steamship agents and stevedores had rejected the proposition in a manner that bespoke solidarity, and the opposing sides are still tugging and straining in what looks like a death grapple.

The screwmen offer to stow 180 bales as a final settlement, and the agents' final settlement, in their communication to the Mayor, means that the labor question under the contract must be a closed issue while the contract lasts, and no arbitration of claims or investigation of conditions are entered into. . . .

The screwmen assembled in force at their hall, Exchange Alley and Granville Street, at 10 o'clock yesterday forenoon, and when President Byrnes, who was in the chair, called the meeting to order the place was crowded.

Mayor Behrman was announced and the city's chief executive was greeted with cheers. The men look on the Mayor as one who has been their friend, and heartily granted him a hearing. . . .

Mayor Behrman's address was listened to carefully and the unionists seemed greatly impressed, especially the negroes, who have been just a bit more inclined toward peace all along than the whites. When the Mayor had departed the matter was taken up for discussion, and President Byrnes asked for motions and opinions.

It is said that a great majority of the men were for offering to submit to arbitration and compromise pending arbitration and investigation on a 180-bale basis, and the matter would have been put through as the Mayor had desired it had it not been for the eloquence of one prominent white leader, who fought against arbitration, and who urged that 180 bales be offered as a final settlement. The leader was opposed, but finally he had his way, and it was "180 bales as a final settlement."

The following letter was sent to Mayor Behrman announcing the conclusion reached at the meeting:

New Orleans, October 17.

"To Hon. Martin Behrman, Mayor of New Orleans City: Dear Sir--Acting upon your suggestion and request, the Screwmen's Benevolent Association and the Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1. colored, at their joint meeting held this morning, have decided to agree to handstow 180 bales of cotton for a day's work as a final settlement. Yours respectfully,

James Byrnes, President, and Thomas Harrison, Secretary, Screwmen's Benevolent Association; Thos. Woodland, President; Nelse Shepard, Secretary, Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1."

The Mayor later had a conference with Messrs. Byrnes and Harrison and some of the negro unionists, but the best the men would offer was 180 bales without arbitration as a final settlement.

Immediately after the screwmen's meeting the Dock and Cotton Council assembled in Screwmen's Hall and indorsed the action taken by the two unions.

The screwmen and the Dock and Cotton Council late yesterday afternoon issued the following statements to the public:

Screwmen's Hall,

Exchange Alley and Bienville St.  
New Orleans, La., Oct. 17, 1906

To the Public: At the earnest solicitation and request of His Honor, the Mayor of New Orleans, Martin Behrman, a special meeting of the Screwmen's Benevolent Association and the Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1. Colored, was this day held in the Screwmen's Hall, and under the plea of His

Honor, the Mayor, that the present difficulties with the stevedores and ship agents could be settled on the basis of one hundred and eighty bales of cotton hand stowed, as a final settlement, the said Associations agreed thereto, and His Honor, the Mayor, was instructed in accordance therewith. It being necessary that this settlement should be submitted to the Dock and Cotton Council, the following communication was addressed to them:

"To the Officers and Members of the Dock and Cotton Council: Dear Sirs and Brothers--At a joint meeting of the Screwmen's Benevolent Association and the Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1, Colored, held this day, it was determined that the two organizations above referred to, at the earnest solicitation of His Honor, the Mayor, would return to work and agree to stow one hundred and eighty (180) bales of cotton, hand stowed, as a final settlement. Yours respectfully,

JAMES BYRNES,

"JAMES BYRNES,  
"President Screwmen's Benevolent  
Association  
"THOS. HARRISON,  
"Recording Secretary Screwmen's  
Benevolent Association  
"T. P. WOODLUND,  
"President Screwmen's Benevolent  
Association No. 1, (Colored)  
"NELSE SHEPARD,  
"Recording Secretary, Screwmen's  
Benevolent Association No. 1,  
(Colored)."

At a subsequent meeting of the Dock and Cotton Council the said proposition as a final settlement was approved.

In order that there should be no disagreement concerning the terms of settlement, the above communication is printed, because a counter proposition now appears in the shape of a concession of one hundred and eighty bales as a preliminary condition to arbitration.

Our position has always been understood to mean that we would resume the old conditions of one hundred and sixty bales of cotton, hand stowed, pending an arbitration of investigation, because it is only by such investigation that the reasonableness of our charges can be compared with those of the stevedores and ship agents. We had hoped that this compromise would have been met in the spirit in which it was sent, but it has been rejected and the situation allowed to stand as existing heretofore. Under the circumstances it will appear that we have done everything reasonable to bring about a resumption of business and a peaceful and final settlement. We trust that the public will appreciate our efforts in this direction and attribute a further continuance of the conditions to the stevedores and ship agents. Respectfully,

JAMES BYRNES,  
President Screwmen's Benevolent Association  
T. P. WOODLUND,  
President Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1,  
(Colored)  
C. SCULLY,  
President S. and L. Benevolent Association  
E. S. SWAN,  
President Longshoremen's Protective Union  
J. KLINDT,  
President Cotton Yardmen's Benevolent Association  
I. G. WYNNE,  
President Cotton Yardmen's Benevolent Assn. No. 2  
DAVE KNOCKHOM,  
President Teamsters' & Loaders' Benevolent Assn.  
P. PEARSON,  
President Coal Wheelers' No. 45  
E. DUFFY,  
President Orleans Freight Handlers, No. 293

E. J. BROWN  
President Orleans Freight Handlers, No. 439  
JOHN B. MARQUE, JR.  
President Stave Classers' Association  
JOS. MOORHEAD,  
President Scalemen's Union  
CHAS. GIRAUD,  
President Cotton Employes' Benevolent Association  
JAMES BYRNES,  
President Dock and Cotton Council  
C. P. BECK,  
Recording Secretary Dock and Cotton Council

After his conference with the dock workers, Mayor Behrman sent the following brief communication, inclosing the screwmen's letter, to the steamship agents and stevedores:

New Orleans, Oct. 17

"W. P. Ross, esq., and Members of Ship Agents and Stevedores' Committee, City: Gentlemen--The inclosed official communication from the Presidents and Secretaries of the Screwmen's Benevolent Associations Nos. 1 and 2 has just been handed to me. For your information I transmit same herewith.  
Respectfully,

MARTIN BEHRMAN, Mayor."

When the letter reached Mr. Ross's office Mr. Ross, Mr. Sanders, Mr. Hendren, Mr. Nathan, of the Steamship Agents Committee, and Colonel William C. Dufour, the agents and stevedores' attorney, were in conference. The agents gave the proposition of the screwmen but small consideration, and mutually agreed to stand firm and continue the fight for a parity with Galveston.

The communication of the screwmen was ambiguous in that it stated that the men would go to work stowing 180 bales, but did not set forth the wage scale. The screwmen some weeks ago, when the Commercial Conference decided that they should stow 200 bales as a fair compromise between the old figure and Galveston conditions, raised their demands, and said that in the future they would stow 160 bales for \$31 a gang instead of as before for \$26 a gang. Yesterday the agents presumed that the men were agreeing to the 180 bales at the rate of increase in pay asked, but such was not the case; the 180 were to go as a final settlement under the old pay, \$26 a gang.

Mr. Ross sent the following reply to Mayor Behrman:

New Orleans, Oct. 17

"Hon. Martin Behrman, Mayor of New Orleans, City: Dear Sir--I am in receipt of yours of even date, inclosing communication from the Screwmen's Association. It has been decided before replying to refer letter to the Conference of the Committees of the Exchanges. Very respectfully,  
W. P. ROSS, Chairman."

The steamship agents forwarded the following letter to the Conference of Exchanges:

"New Orleans, Oct. 17, 1907

"E. F. Kohnke, Esq., Chairman of Commercial Exchanges, Dear Sir--We herewith inclose letter addressed and signed by the presidents and secretaries of the Screwmen's Associations to His Honor, the Mayor, and transmitted by him to us, reading as follows:

"Acting upon your suggestion and request, the Screwmen's Benevolent Association and the Screwmen's Benevolent Association No. 1, Colored, at their joint meeting held this morning have decided to agree to hand stow 180 bales of cotton for a day's work as a final settlement."

As throughout this matter the agents and stevedores have acted upon the advice of your committees as representing the commercial community. It is

felt that this communication should be submitted and your views sought before a reply is made to same. The screwmen present this proposition for a final settlement on a basis of 180 bales and apparently of wages at \$31 per gang, whereas the investigations of your committees found that to put us on a parity with Galveston, it required the storage of 230 to 240 bales at \$26 per gang, and this after considering the evidence submitted by the screwmen. It would appear that neither the personal appeal of the Mayor in his address to the screwmen at their meeting this morning, nor the general sentiment of the community and press urging arbitration of this matter has had any weight whatever with the screwmen.

As it is now made clear that the screwmen have no intention of placing New Orleans on a parity with Galveston, the steamship agents have no alternative except to continue doing their business with other labor. Yours truly,

W. P. ROSS,  
Chairman Executive Committee

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 18, 1907.*

#### 40. COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE PORT CHARGES NOT CHOSEN

Plan to Put Negroes on Tribunal Objected to as  
Likely to Nullify Movement

Ship Agents Will Select Men Outside Their Body, and  
Suggestion Is That Screwmen Do the Same

The committee to investigate all port charges to be composed of four representatives of the Steamship Agents and four of the Screwmen, with an umpire elected by Mayor Behrman and President Smith, of the Cotton Exchange, the arrangement upon which the recent general strike was settled, was not appointed yesterday, according to schedule, but it is very probable that the agents at least will name their representatives today, and it is also likely the Screwmen will also make their selections.

The Ship Agents held a brief session yesterday, presided over by Mr. W. P. Ross, the Chairman, at which the matter of naming the employers' half of the committee was taken up. The names of quite a few gentlemen were considered but no definite action was taken, and the matter went over until today.

At the meeting of the Screwmen held at Screwmen's Hall, Bienville Street and Exchange Alley, last night, President James Byrnes, who so successfully led the strikers in the recent strike, laid the matter of the committee before the assemblage. It was generally understood that as the screwmen's contentions about the number of bales that should constitute a fair day's work had proven the cause of the strike, which involved the Longshoremen and all the other Levee labor unions, the Screwmen would have the right to name four of the members of their organization to serve on the committee. The Screwmen and other Levee unions go on the half-and-half principle--that is, all work is equally divided between the white and negro unions, and when committees are to be named to arbitrate any question or transact any business they are made up of an equal number of whites and negroes, generally with a white chairman and a negro secretary. Such being the case, it was concluded that the labor half of the committee to investigate port charges would be composed of two white men and two negroes.

As the committee is to go carefully and deeply into subjects and conditions of the utmost importance, and as much may depend upon the result of the committee's workings, the plan to have as a part of its constituency two negroes never from the first seemed a popular or a logical one. The ship agents were mute on the subject and would not express themselves, being parties to the issue, but generally in business and commercial circles such a move as placing

#### NEGROES ON THE COMMITTEE

was cried down, and declared to be not only impolitic, but almost out of the question.



One well known gentleman identified with the shipping and commercial interests of the port said yesterday afternoon that, in his opinion, if negroes were appointed there would be no investigation at all and that the committee would fail in its mission entirely. The gentleman further contended that he thought it would be fair for the Screwmen to appoint outsiders on the committee, as the Steamship Agents intended doing. Neither agents nor stevedores will be on the committee; they will be represented by gentlemen entirely disinterested, and it is thought by many that the Screwmen would work to a better end were they to pursue the same course and select disinterested gentlemen to serve for them.

Individual members of the cotton yardmen and longshoremen were contending yesterday that the section of the Investigation Committee from the labor side should be a general one, selected from the several unions of the Dock and Cotton Council, and not from the screwmen alone. Port charges generally are to be investigated, and they hold that as questions affecting all the thirteen unions in the Council are likely to crop out of the investigation, the Committee should be variously selected from among the best men of the organizations affiliated in the Council.

John T. Callahan, a well-known member of the cotton yardmen and a delegate from that union to the Dock and Cotton Council, it was stated yesterday, was being urged by his friends to seek a place on the committee of investigation that the Legislature will probably create.

It was stated yesterday that there was likely to be trouble in the Council as the result of the action of the Cotton Men's Protective Association in blackballing several well-known applicants for membership.

The cotton men were out on a strike for some time during the late summer and early fall, and when they effected a compromise agreement with the employers it was stipulated that they would admit to membership certain markers and inspectors who had remained at work during the strike.

It appears that most of the applicants were thrown down hard when they tried to become members of the Union, and the brokers and buyers were beginning to complain. Trouble was likely for a time, but it was averted by the Union promising to reconsider the applications of the blackballed.

#### THE COAL ROLLERS' TROUBLES,

as a result of the floating elevator companies continuing in their employ the thirty-six non-union negroes, have not yet been adjusted. But the week given by the Dock and Cotton Council is still young, and there is every probability of an early adjustment of the difficulty.

President Byrnes, of the Dock and Cotton Council, and Secretary Peter Clark of the cotton yardmen, delegate from his union to the Council, called at the City Hall yesterday and presented Mayor Behrman with the following resolution of thanks for His Honor's untiring work in settling the recent general strike:

New Orleans, La., Oct. 24, 1907

Extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Dock and Cotton Council, held this day:

On motion of Chris Scully, seconded by James Porter, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Be it resolved, That the sincere thanks of this body be extended to the Hon. Martin Behrman, Mayor of the city of New Orleans, for his untiring efforts to bring to a satisfactory settlement the difficulty recently existing on the levee front of this city.

Be it further resolved, That, recognizing the position he occupies, by reason of his exalted office as Mayor of the City of New Orleans and the fact that he was compelled, therefore, to act in a fair and impartial manner without prejudice to either side in the controversy just ended, the hearty congratulations of this body are hereby extended to him for the earnestness, zeal and fairness with which, through his instrumentality, a culmination satisfactory to both sides was effected.

Be it further resolved, That these resolutions be spread on the minutes of this meeting, that a copy of them, under the seal of this Council, be presented to him and a committee for that purpose be appointed by the Chairman.

A true copy.  
DOCK AND COTTON COUNCIL,  
Per James Byrnes, President,  
C. P. Beck, Recording Secretary.

Mayor Behrman thanked Mr. Byrnes and through him those whom he represented for these appreciable resolutions. At the same time he took occasion again to express his gratification for the splendid manner in which the laboring men preserved law and order by waging their contest. . . .

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, October 29, 1907.*

#### 41. LEVEE LABOR PEACE IS AGAIN THREATENED

Negro Screwmen Named on Committee Against  
Advice and Protest of Mayor Behrman

President Smith of Cotton Exchange, Demurs on Umpire--  
Longshoremen Accused of Bad Faith--Ship Agents Name Men

The situation created by the recent labor trouble, which cleared so nicely during the past week, again assumed an ugly cast last night through the determination of the negro to force himself to a place on the Investigating Committee which will have many important matters concerning port charges to look into, and to quote from the remarks of a gentleman well known in business and shipping circles, because of the "colored brother's" forwardness, it looks like everything might go "up in the air" again.

Mayor Behrman did everything he possibly could to prevent negroes from claiming a place on the Committee, and even went so far as to appeal before the Dock and Cotton Council, the great labor body in which all the Levee labor unions are affiliated, last night, and urge that the Screwmen appoint only white men. The Mayor sagely pointed out feelings and conditions in this section, but despite the logical contentions he made, the negro stood firm, demanded his place, and the Council backed him up.

"I think the move a most unwise one," Mayor Behrman said when he came from the Screwmen's Hall, with Mr. William Ball, his Secretary, after his wishes in the matter had been disregarded.

The negro question was not the only issue that clouded the horizon yesterday, as there was also

#### A DEADLOCK OVER THE UMPIRE,

and rumors of more trouble growing out of the failure of the Longshoremen to keep faith with the ship agents, and altogether things generally appeared at sixes and sevens.

Mayor Behrman suggested the name of Hon. Paul Capdevielle as umpire, but Mr. W. Mason Smith, President of the Cotton Exchange, who according to the terms of the agreement upon which the strike was temporarily settled, must agree to the umpire, did not like the selection, for the reason, as it is understood that Mr. Capdevielle is a State officeholder, and is out to succeed himself in office.

All appreciated that Mr. Capdevielle was a man like Chevalier Bayard, "sans peur, et sans reproche," but quite a few of the gentlemen representing shipping interests took Mr. Smith's view of the selection, and held that the umpire should in no manner be connected with politics.

Mayor Behrman suggested Mr. Capdevielle's name Tuesday, but Mr. Smith would not agree to it, having submitted other names, and yesterday afternoon Mayor Behrman addressed the following letter to the President of the Cotton Exchange:

"As you are aware, the umpire, who will sit as Chairman of the Committee on Investigation of the Port Charges, must be determined upon by you and me not later than tomorrow, I would be pleased to hear from you as to whether the

name of the Hon. Paul Capdevielle will be acceptable to you as said umpire. As I explained to you this morning in persons, I really had no preference in this selection. Any fair, reliable, upright man, known throughout the community, would have been acceptable to me. At the time you and Mr. Clark called in reference to this matter you told me that you had no one in view, and it was then that I mentioned the name of the Hon. Paul Capdevielle. Because of Mr. Capdevielle's eminent standing in this community as an absolutely fair and impartial man, you may readily appreciate that I cannot withdraw his name. Please let me hear from you at the earliest possible moment."

The letter was sent to Mr. Smith by special messenger, and the gentleman's reply reached the Mayor late in the evening. The reply was as follows:

"In answer to your note of the 31st inst., I repeat what I said this morning: That while the Hon. Paul Capdevielle is a gentleman of the highest standing in the community, I thought his position as a candidate for an elective office in the State made it inadvisable, both to the community and to himself that he should be accepted as umpire on a Committee on Investigation of Port Charges. I cannot see any reason why you should not withdraw his name, as I understand you simply submitted it to me for my consideration, in the same manner as I have

#### SUBMITTED OTHER NAMES

to you. I should not hesitate to give my reasons to Mr. Capdevielle, nor do I think he would think any the less of me for the opinion that I hold. I submit again to you, as I did this morning, a list of names, any of whom would be acceptable to me as an umpire in the case, viz: Chief Justice Breaux, Judge E. D. Saunders, W. D. Bloomfield, James T. Hayden, John T. Gibbons, T. J. Woodward, G. W. Bolton of Rapides, and J. T. McLellan, of Madison.

"I submit this list of names from different parts of the State, and of men of different occupations, the opinion of any one of whom on a simple, clear-cut proposition, I feel confident, would be accepted with respect by everyone, and benefit mutually the commerce of our city, while doing justice to all."

Nothing further was done in the matter last night, and today, the last day upon which the umpire can be accepted under the terms of the agreement, may bring further developments. The ship agents spoken to yesterday afternoon refused to discuss the question brought up by Mr. Capdevielle's selection, but all were unanimous in speaking of Mr. Capdevielle personally in the highest of terms. The ship agents finally agreed upon their representatives for the Investigating Committee yesterday forenoon, and, contrary to expectations, two of the four named are steamship agents.

In this regard, however, the agents did not break faith with anyone, and only sought, by appointing two men who were thoroughly acquainted with the matters to be investigated, to conserve their own interests. The agents at first announced that they would appoint outsiders as their representatives, but as the screwmen chose to name as their representatives four men of their own calling, the agents thought it would be only fair to have at least two of their number on the Committee. The gentlemen

#### SELECTED BY THE AGENTS

are Ernest T. George, Vice President of the Seaboard Refining Company, Limited; J. C. Febiger, Jr., broker; William H. Hendren, Manager of the Texas Transport and Terminal Company, and Matthew Warriner, Manager of the Elder-Dempster Steamship Company. The selection of Mr. Hendren is generally thought to be a wise one, as Mr. Hendren, as manager of several of the big steamship lines involved in the recent general strike, was present at all the conferences with the screwmen and dock laborers, and is familiar with conditions. Messrs. George and Febiger are well known in the business world, and highly thought of, and Mr. Warriner has been prominent in shipping circles for years. Altogether, the selections of the agents were deemed most excellent ones.

President James Byrnes, of the Screwmen's Association, called at the City Hall yesterday forenoon and handed Mayor Behrman the names of the two representatives decided upon by the white screwmen. Those selected were James Jamison and Edward Nestor. Mr. Jamison is generally well known, and has a

large following among the union men. At present he is a market inspector in the Department of Police and Public Buildings. Mr. Nestor is a leading screwman, and for some time filled the office of President of the Association very satisfactorily. The negro screwmen weren't overlooking any bets, and notwithstanding the sentiment against men of their race being on the Committee generally expressed during the past week, they got busily to work Thursday, and had their choices picked by yesterday morning. The selections fell upon Edward Gray and John D. Granderson, and yesterday Nelse Shepard, the Secretary of the negro Union, called at the City Hall and very gravely handed to Mayor Behrman the appointments.

"This won't do, Shepard," said the Mayor, "Take these names back to your Association and let the members know that interests demand that there

#### SHALL BE NO COLORED MEN

on the Committee."

Shepard looked neither shocked nor surprised; he simply scratched his head reflectively and asked: "Would we get a square deal, do you think, Mr. Mayor?"

The Mayor, with a smile, assured the sable-hued Secretary that such was his thought, and Nelse departed, not altogether cheerfully.

When Shepard got back among his Senegambian brothers and told them the Mayor's wishes, there was a storm of indignation, and lots and lots of black clouds belched forth rumbling thunder. Nelse had to traipse back to the hall with his precious appointments in his hand and again lay them on the Mayor's desk. "They wants representation, Mr. Mayor," was all Nelse said, and he went away a second time.

It was too much for the negroes to yield; with their usual desire to sit in the seats of the mighty, they couldn't let a chance to gain recognition, such as the Investigating Committee afforded them, to pass, so they stood bravely to their guns.

Mayor Behrman, seeing that the negroes were obstinate and not to be moved from their position, concluded to go before the Dock and Cotton Council, which was to hold a session later in the evening, and make a strong appeal to that body.

The Mayor and his Secretary, Mr. Ball, reached Screwmen's Hall shortly after 8 o'clock, and Mr. Behrman sent up word that he desired to speak to the Council. Both the Mayor and Mr. Ball were admitted, and the Mayor was given the floor.

Mr. Behrman, without mincing words, stated the object of his visit. He came, he said, to advise against colored men being appointed on the Investigating Committee. Such a course would be unwise, the Mayor declared, and he stated further that he would publicly take the stand of being opposed to it, were his wishes disregarded.

The Mayor and Mr. Ball retired and waited downstairs, while the Council, over which Mr. Byrnes presided, discussed the question. The negroes, it is understood, urged their claims to recognition, and the matter being put to a vote, the Council decided that negroes had the right to serve. A well-known white longshoreman, and a mulatto, whose reputation as an agitator and a leader of the disturbing element among the screwmen is wide, were the committee who came downstairs to inform the Mayor that his mission had borne no fruit.

#### MAYOR BEHRMAN,

spoken to after the meeting, did not hesitate to voice his disapproval of the action taken. His Honor spoke as follows:

"I tried to make these people understand that they would display bad judgment should they insist on colored men being on the Committee. As a matter of fact, there are many other interests to be investigated than the wages and amount of work to be done by screwmen. I told them very plainly what the sentiment of this community is as to having colored men figuring so prominently in public matters. I suggested that surely there must be some white men in whose hands they might intrust their case. It did not matter whether the white men whom they might select to represent them would be screwmen, longshoremen, cotton yard men or men from any other walk of life. Despite all that I said to them, however, they have persisted in being represented by

men of their own race. Of course, under the terms of the agreement for the investigation, they cannot be denied this representation. My sole purpose was to try to have them appreciate the sentiment of this community on a question of this kind."

Mayor Behrman, after leaving Screwmen's Hall, repaired to the City Hall and sent the following communication to Mr. William P. Ross, Chairman of the Steamship Agents and Stevedores' Committee:

Dear Sir:--I have yours of even date informing me that the shipping interests have selected as their representatives on the Committee to investigate the port charges: Messrs. E. T. George, J. C. Febiger, Matthew Warriner and W. H. Hendren.

For your information I would state that the screwmen have selected as their representatives: Edward Nestor, James Jamison, Edward Gray and John D. Granderson. I regret to say that the last two named are colored men appointed against my earnest appeal to the organization. Respectfully,

MARTIN BEHRMAN, Mayor.

How the whole matter will end it is hard to say, but many thought last night that some of the white men on the Committee would refuse to serve with negroes, and that the Committee would go to pieces.

The white labor leaders spoken to last night would not express themselves for publication, but it was generally whispered in labor circles that the majority of the whites were of the opinion that the

#### NEGROES HAD ACTED BADLY

in the matter, and that they should have withdrawn, when it was evident that they were not wanted.

#### THE LONGSHOREMEN,

by demanding work that never belonged to them, are liable to make trouble for themselves and for the entire port. Mr. Hendren, Manager of the Texas Transport and Terminal Company, received a committee from the longshoremen yesterday. The Committee was made up of President Chris Scully, of the white organization, and President E. S. Swan, of the colored union. The longshoremen came to claim the work of piling the rice byproducts, work they never had before, and work, which it was understood, was to be performed as hitherto.

The rice byproducts are rice husks, rice bran, rice polish and rice meal, and they are shipped by local shippers to be used as animal food. The shippers make the contracts with the consignees and not with the local agents, and under the terms of the contracts they pay for the piling of the stuff. As the margin of profit on husks, etc., is very small, the shippers have the work done by their own labor at a rate of pay just half the wages paid the longshoremen, and for years the system has been followed without interruption. When the last strike of the longshoremen was settled the workers admitted in the presence of Mr. E. F. Lonke, Chairman of the Conference of Exchanges and Commercial Organizations, and Mr. Jeff Harding, of the Levee Board that the Longshoremen did not claim the rice byproduct work, yet in the face of this, the Committee demanded of Mr. Hendren that such labor in the future, be done by longshoremen. Mr. Hendren refused to be held up in such an arbitrary manner, and informed Presidents Scully and Swan that he would take the matter to court, to the Federal Court if possible.

The longshoremen are also demanding eight men to a hatch, whereas in the past, two, four, six, or eight men have been used, according to the amount of work being done and the number of trucks run. They say it must now be eight men at all times, and the agents and stevedores will fight the extortion, and if necessary seek the courts for relief.

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, November 1, 1907.*

#### 42. PORT INQUIRY GOES DEEPER INTO LEVEE LABOR TROUBLES

Declaration That City Will Never Again Suffer a  
Repetition of Last Fall

Commissioners Tell Labor Leaders Some Plan Must Be Adopted  
for Preventing Annual Tie-Ups--Swan on Slavery

The Port Investigating Commission delved deeply into the causes that are working an injury to the port of New Orleans yesterday, and while the testimony adduced had largely to do with labor charges and the like, further light was thrown on the alleged complicity of the steamship agents in the plan to do away with organized labor on the Levee.

All the Commissioners were present at the session, and Messrs. Sanders and LeBlanc and other steamship managers, leading business men and a great many laborers attended the session, which began a few minutes after 10 o'clock.

E. S. Swan, President of the Colored longshoremen, was questioned by Mr. Parkerson. Swan told of the agreement existing between the longshoremen and the steamship agents and the time allowed men who are taken to Chalmette, Westwego and Friscoville and not put to work. He was questioned closely on the big strike of last autumn, and said that before ordering a sympathetic strike the Dock and Cotton Council always thoroughly investigates a situation. The unions are not supposed to handle freight that has been unloaded from a ship by nonunion labor, but, Swan maintained, they do not interfere with others handling it.

Mr. Parkerson questioned Swan about the De Montmollin incident, and the longshoremen's President told of the meeting the agent of the Mobile and Gulf Steamship Company had had with Messrs. Byrnes and Scully and himself. Mr. De Montmollin said that he intended to bring 200,000 to 300,000 bales of cotton here during the season, and wanted to know if he could handle the staple with his crew. The labor representatives told him he could superintend his work if it was done by union labor and so do away with a stevedore. Mr. De Montmollin told the laborers that he was satisfied, and left them with the impression that he was under the opinion that he could do his work cheaper with union labor than with his crew and a stevedore. The unionists wanted him to use his sailors as the big ships use their men--not work them when they were in port.

Mr. Parker asked Swan if Mr. De Montmollin could have had his freight removed if he had put it on the levee by his crew, and wanted to know whether the teamsters would have hauled the cotton. Swan hesitated a minute and then replied: "Mr. Parkerson, I don't like to shake hands with the devil till I meet him; that matter ain't been tested yet."

Mr. Parkerson insisted upon a direct reply, and Swan finally admitted that he didn't think

#### THE UNION DRAYMEN

could have well hauled the cotton away, but he could have had it removed by other draymen. Mr. Parkerson wanted Swan to mention a few of the draymen who would have hauled the cotton, but Swan was unable just at the time to recall any of the names.

Swan insisted that the longshoremen wanted to be fair in the matter altogether, and didn't want to take any work that did not belong to them. Mr. Parkerson mentioned that the longshoremen had tried to get the sewing of sacks, work that had always been done at 15 cents an hour, but Swan replied that the laborers were willing at any time to give up that class of their proposed tariff, and only held out in the main for the old contract. In speaking of the strike, Swan admitted that much cotton had been diverted from the port and that the Levee looked like a cyclone had struck it, just as it looks today, he added, there being very little business doing at present. A great deal of the cotton that should have come to this port went to Galveston, Savannah, Mobile and Pensacola. Swan thought, but he held at the same time that in the four cities mentioned the laborers were little better than slaves, because the white men and the blacks are fighting each other, and each side strives to load more than the other.

"And they beat you to a frazzle don't they?" asked Mr. Parkerson, and Swan answered that from what he had heard they might stow a little more than the local men, but he added that the cotton out of New Orleans was stowed better than in any other port. Swan said further that he had read in the papers that the railroads were discriminating against New Orleans, and sent more cotton to Galveston than Galveston wanted. Swan declared that the way he

looked at the whole matter there seemed to have been no reason at all for the strike, and that much harm was done the port. Swan thought that it would be impossible to put New Orleans on a

#### PARITY WITH GALVESTON

for the reason that there was slave labor in Galveston.

"Eliminating the slave labor question," Mr. Parkerson questioned, "could a gang of five of the local screwmen stow 252 bales in a day?"

"No, sir, not like it should be stowed," was Swan's answer. "They might throw it in promiscuously."

"Could five good men average 200 bales a day?"

"No, sir."

"If you were told that on thirty-one ships in Galveston the men stowed on an average 200 bales, would you believe it?"

"I wouldn't think it could be done; I'm told that in Galveston sometimes seven and eight men work in a gang."

"They work five in a gang. I have in my hand a statement from President of the Galveston white screwmen, which shows that on thirty-one ships, an average of 200 bales a day was put in by the men. On twelve of the ships screws were used, and the average was eighty-seven bales, and on the other nineteen the cotton was hand-towed, the average being 200 bales per gang, and the cost of loading per bale was 15-1/3 cents. Do you think that is a fairy tale?"

"No, sir, but the same might have been done here. I knew the time when the whites wouldn't work with the negroes, and when they found that they were up against it, the two sides agreed to take separate parts of the ship and work. The Negroes had the forward hatches and the whites the aft hatches, and the bosses used to go to the niggers and say, 'Niggers, them white men is beating you two to one; if you don't do better, we'll give all the work to the whites.'

"Then they'd tell the same thing to the whites, and they kept war to the knife, and knife to hilt, between the two races, and a riot was likely to break out at any time. Then the two races amalgamated."

"Well, how many bales did they stow then?"

"It would take a god to tell that; the negroes, to compete with the whites, worked seven and eight men in a gang, and they sent men to the hospital every day. They might have stowed 200 bales, and they might have stowed more, and the whites were doing the same thing at the time. It was a

#### CASE OF SLAVERY

the agents wanted to break up the unions, and the agents and stevedores were getting all the money. Even as it is, there's more trade here now than then."

"But New Orleans is now third, I believe, in cotton, when she was first once."

"But, Mr. Parkerson, you must think of other things; that Stuyvesant Dock fire, and the fever, both in the same year. Ships were driven away from here that never did come back."

Swan was then questioned about the strikes of recent years, Mr. Parkerson first informing him that Galveston had not had a strike since 1881. Swan said at one time on the Levee, it was white supremacy, another time it was negro supremacy. The negroes were shot and driven off the Levee, and soldiers were sent out there to protect them.

Mr. Parkerson then took a few minutes to once more denounce the action of the steamship agents and laborers in tying up the commerce of the port. "The people most heavily," Mr. Parkerson said, "they suffered all sorts of ways and you can safely say that the people are not going to stand for such a condition again. It is well for you both to understand this."

Swan then stated that everything was going up but the price of labor; house rents were high, and living almost at a price beyond the working man. "Now, Mr. Parkerson, if we don't stand with the whites what are us niggers going to do? You brought us here from Africa, and we've been here so long that it's just as though we were in our fathers' house. We have to stay with the white men no matter what they do to us."

"But Swan," objected Mr. Parkerson, "black or white, men must do a fair

day's work, and 160 bales of cotton is child's play from what we have seen in other places."

Swan then told of the organization of the unions, and said that when the white men threw the negroes' screws into the river in the early part of 1895, Mr. Sanders bought more screws for the black men, and charged them for them on the installment plan. Swan did not know whether Mr. Sanders had to smuggle the car in which the screws were carried into the city. Swan also stated that Mr. De Montmollin, when trying to arrange to have his ship unloaded, seemed satisfied with conferences held with the labor unionists.<sup>39</sup>

"Do we understand you to say," asked Senator Cordill, "that in Galveston and other places where the whites and negroes work separately, a condition of slavery exists? Can you give us an instance in history where the Anglo-Saxon allowed himself in subjection?"

"No, sir, I can't do it," was Swan's answer.

"Yet, you say," Senator Cordill pursued, "that an Anglo-Saxon must lower himself to the

#### GRADE OF A NEGRO

to be free?"

Swan was excused from the stand and Mr. Parkerson stated that on Monday the Steamship interests would be taken up. Before recess for lunch could be ordered, Senator Cordill recalled Swan and asked him what he meant by the statement as accredited to him in the morning paper at the time of the strike, a statement in which he said that the white men were up against the Blue Ridge Mountains in breaking from the negroes or something to that effect.

Swan explained that he had not meant to say any such a thing, and had only sought to intimate that the Steamship agents and stevedores were up against the Blue Ridge Mountains with ten thousand laborers against them. Swan denied that he meant the negroes wanted to force the white people to the wall.

Once during Swan's testimony Mr. Parkerson cautioned the witness that he was only a negro and that he should not overlook the fact. Swan who had really no offense, had said in a rather jocular way, which is characteristic with him, when asked if he had the interest of the port at heart, "You bet your life I have."

At 1:45 the afternoon session was convened and Senator Cordill a second time recalled Swan. The Senator asked Swan if he would be willing to use his influence with his union to have the contract with the employers signed in May at the end of the cotton season, instead of in September at its beginning. Swan answered that he would certainly do it, as he thought it was only right and proper.

Chris Scully, President of the White Longshoremen, was then called. Mr. Scully stated that he had been President for three terms and had worked on the Levee fourteen years. He told of the De Montmollin incident. With Presidents Byrnes and Swan he went to see Mr. De Montmollin. Mr. De Montmollin told the three about a ship on which he intended to bring cotton to the city. Mr. De Montmollin said that he would have to discharge his ship with his own labor, and wanted to know whether he'd be interfered with. The laborers told him they had nothing to do with the matter. Mr. De Montmollin asked if his cotton would be handled by the union teamsters, and his visitors informed him that they could not answer that.

Mr. Scully continued that Mr. De Montmollin told him and his companions about having had some work done by a stevedore. The stevedore charged him \$1.10 a ton, when he could have had the work done in Mobile

#### AT 25 CENTS A TON.

Witness gave the ship agent a copy of the Longshoremen's tariff, and Mr. De Montmollin said that he had to go before his Board of Directors that night in Mobile and wanted to know if he could tell them that he could discharge his ship in the city at 40 cents a ton. Mr. Scully informed him that he could discharge the vessel at 27 cents a ton and make money. Mr. De Montmollin asked the labor leaders to keep the conference between themselves and say nothing about it, but, Mr. Scully declared, the gentleman himself went out and found a newspaper reporter and stated to him that the unionists were trying to hold him up.



Mr. Scully continued that Mr. De Montmollin seemed well satisfied with the interview. Mr. De Montmollin said nothing about being placed on an equal footing with steamboat packets, whose laborers discharge and load freight; steamboats were not even mentioned.

Mr. Parkerson asked Mr. Scully if he had a copy of the contract the Longshoremens signed with the Ship Agents, and while the witness did not have the document, Mr. Sanders drew one from his pocket and let the attorney for the Commission use it for the time. The contract was read, and Mr. Scully identified his signature to it, after which the longshorman explained that the screwmen stow tobacco and cotton. Mr. Parkerson read three communications which had been handed him earlier in the day by Mr. Scully. One of the letters was from Ross & Heyn, dated Sept. 30, offering the longshoremens the cotton and tobacco work; the second was from Alfred Le Blanc, of the Harrison Line, calling upon them to stow cotton and tobacco aboard a Lamport and Holt boat, according to their contract, and the third was from the Texas Transport and Terminal Company requesting that the longshoremens load cotton and tobacco aboard the ship Atlantean at the Mandeville wharf. Mr. Scully said that the offers were not accepted; that the steamship agents, in making the offer, were trying to break up the Screwmen's Union.

"You know there was trouble brewing between the screwmen and the agents at the time, now don't you? Mr. Parkerson asked of the witness, who had seemed reluctant to answer the questions put to him, having no doubt the natural suspicion that labor unions feel for all outside agencies.

"Yes, sir, I do," returned Mr. Scully.

"Don't answer me reluctantly, Mr. Scully," advised Mr. Parkerson. "Your attitude is hostile to me, but I don't want to hurt you. If the tree falls on the agents, it's got to fall on them; if it falls on you, it must crush you. All we want to do is to

#### CUT THE TREE DOWN,

and whoever is under it had better get clear of the trunk. Now, as a matter of fact, the difficulty was brewing?"

"Yes, sir," again answered the longshoremens's President.

"And you had already signed your contract, which excluded cotton and tobacco?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yet they wanted you to take the cotton and tobacco as a part of your work?"

"Yes, sir."

"When they made the offer you believed that they were violating the spirit of the contract previously entered into with you?"

"Yes, sir; we felt that it was their aim to break up the Screwmen's Union."

Mr. Parkerson then asked Mr. Scully to make clear why he had taken Swan with him to meet Mr. De Montmollin, and the witness explained that he had thought that maybe the agent of the Mobile and Gulf Steamship Company wanted to discuss matters having to do with work on the levee. Mr. Scully was then questioned about the sack-sewing proposition which caused so much trouble last September before the longshoremens's contract was signed, and Mr. Parkerson took occasion to say: "There's something rotten about the steamship business here; what it is I don't know, but we are going to find it out."

Mr. Scully told of the incidents of the big strike, and claimed that the laborers tried ineffectually to meet the agents on some common ground and effect a compromise. Mr. Scully promised Senator Cordill to use his influence with his organization to have the contract signed in May instead of September.

To Representative Lee, Mr. Scully said that the longshoremens made only about two days and a half a week during the entire year. The longshoremens had no chance to save money and very few of them owned their own homes, and those who did own them hadn't gotten them working on the levee.

To Mr. Parkerson the witness said he did not believe that the steamboat packet men had any agreement by which they were compelled to hire organized labor to load and unload their boats. The work was done by negro roustabouts. Mr. Scully said that he, as an individual, could not possibly object to Mr. De Montmollin running small ship and discharging and loading her with her crew.

"I wanted you to answer that question," Mr. Parkerson said, "because there are a great many people.

## KNOCKING NEW ORLEANS

and saying that labor is killing the port."

Mr. A. K. Seago, the sugar, molasses and rice broker, was called to the stand. Mr. Seago showed the following letter he had just received:

Mobile, Ala., March 12, 1908

Dear Sir--Yours of the 11th inst., relative to rates quoted by our agent to Quincy and Tallahassee, received, and in reply beg to say that we were forced out of your port on account of excessive port charges, charges for stevedoring and other expenses which were out of reason. We operated the steamship Manteo out of New Orleans for about five months under a heavy loss, and until such time as the merchants can offer us sufficient business, with privilege of using our own crew for loading and discharging cargo, we will have to look to Mobile and Pensacola for support. We are negotiating with a line which is operating out of your city, and if we can make proper arrangements for handling business on the west coast of Florida, we will be glad to handle your cargo through Mobile, at which time we will advise you.

Yours truly,  
E. R. Cobb  
General Freight Agent Mobile and Gulf  
Steamship Company

The Mobile and Gulf Steamship Company is the firm represented by Mr. De Montmollin, whose alleged troubles with stevedores and labor unions have been carefully looked into by the Port Investigation Commission. Mr. Seago stated that he had written to the Company on Wednesday for rates, as he had a cargo of sugar to ship to Tallahassee, and the letter given above was the reply he received. Mr. Seago is now holding his sugar to see what rates he can get through Mobile.

Senator Cordill announced that Swan wanted to explain something, and the President of the negro longshoremen again took the stand, the Commissioners informing him that they would give him three minutes in which to have his say, as the hour was growing late.

Swan explained that he had been misunderstood in his previous statement. He did not mean to say that a white man had to lower himself to the level of a negro to be free, but wanted to convey the impression that the two unions had amalgamated for protection

## AGAINST THE BOSSES.

"A white man is a white man all over the country," declared Swan; "he has always had the supremacy and he always will have it, and there is no question of equality here. Is that satisfactory, Mr. President?" Swan concluded, bowing to Senator Cordill.

"Swan, I didn't want you to make any statement," said Senator Cordill. "I told you that you were preaching something that Booker T. Washington didn't preach, and you asked me to put you back on the stand so that you might explain."

"Booker T. Washington preaches one thing in the South and practices another in the North," observed Mr. Parkerson.

"I don't do that," insisted Swan; "I believe in the white man."

"You've been here fifty-nine years, Swan, I believe you told us," said Senator Cordill, "and you know that whenever your people have a controversy with the whites, they come out at the small end of the horn."

"I certainly do," answered Swan.

James Daugherty of the Screwmen's Union, the last witness of the day, was on the stand for over an hour. Mr. Daugherty told of the last strike and of how the laborers tried to continue working under old conditions pending an investigation. He gave a history of the labor troubles of thirteen years ago, and claimed that the Leyland and Harrison Lines were responsible for the amalgamation of the negroes and whites, driving the negroes to ask the whites to join forces with them by tolerating on their wharves the usurious brokerage system. Mr. Parkerson said that if the Screwmen had gone to meet the ship agents and to save the city, agreed to work as they wanted pending an investigation, they would have jammed the ship agents harder than they ever jammed a

bale of cotton.

Mr. Daugherty said that the screwmen had a constitutional right to organize into a union and strive for better conditions, and Mr. Parkerson agreed with him; went further than that, and said that he believed in organization, but at the same time, the lawyer held that the screwmen, by exercising their right, throttled the other three hundred thousand people in the city. Mr. Daugherty said that he thought that the strike had not caused the port to lose such a vast amount of cotton; that the crop was late in 1907, and little cotton was moving when the Levee was tied up.

Mr. Gilmore, after closely cross-questioning Mr. Daugherty, spoke to him as follows:

"These questions which I am asking you are asked for the purpose--and I propose to ask the ship agents their side just as freely as I am asking your side--for the purpose of finding out who was in fault, or who was most in fault in bringing about the unfortunate condition of affairs that occurred here last year, whereby the public suffered so much. We must find a remedy to prevent occurrences such as happened in the year 1907 in this port. . . .

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, March 14, 1908.*

#### 43. PLACING THE BLAME FOR LABOR TROUBLES ON THE LEVEE

Stevedore Honor Charged That Whites and Blacks  
Had Been Pitted Against Each Other

His Evidence Directed Against Manager M. J. Sanders, of Leyland  
Company, and Other Big Liners--Commission Takes  
Recess to April 15

The Port Investigating Commission had more of the negro question thrust upon it yesterday, and additional light was thrown on the very unsatisfactory situation on the levee front, Mr. John B. Honor, the well-known stevedore, was an important witness, and Mr. Honor, in no uncertain language, placed the blame for present labor conditions on Mr. M. J. Sanders, Manager of the Leyland Line.

The Commission, after having been sitting three weeks consecutively without an intermission, adjourned at the close of yesterday's session until April 15, to allow Messrs. Gilmore and Terriberry the time to go to New York and Washington to attend to important law cases in which they are interested. At the Commission's next meeting sessions will be held night and day to complete the vast amount of work that is still to be done.

The session yesterday began at the usual hour, 10:30 o'clock in the forenoon, and Mr. Hunter C. Leake, attorney for the Illinois Central Railroad, asked leave to take the stand to make an explanation. Mr. Leake said that he had investigated the car service at Harahan since signing his testimony on the previous day, and found that very little if any delays were experienced by consignees getting their cars from the point. To big dealers who were known to the Company the cars were sent to their usual points of delivery in the city, and consignees whose wishes were not known were notified as soon as their cars reached Harahan, and the cars were delivered promptly at any point directed. Mr. Leake said that he had heard of frequent complaints of discrimination in rates, etc., in a general way, but whenever a complaint was made direct it was investigated and relief granted, if a discrimination was found to exist. Mr. Leake said that the Company had to fix attractive rates to this city to bring trade here. The Illinois Central looks to New Orleans as one of its very important points, and is doing everything to develop commerce and trade.

Mr. Honor was then called, and the gentleman's examination took up the whole of the morning session, with the exception of the short time consumed by Mr. Leake. Before the interrogation of Mr. Honor was taken up Mr. Parkerson stated that he wanted to get into the record that the letters in the Graham alleged

DISCRIMINATION CASE

were given the Commission, not by Mr. Graham, but by the Cotton Exchange. Mr. Graham had not asked for an investigation, but when summoned by the Commission he had to tell his story as was demanded of him. Mr. Honor, questioned by Mr. Parkerson, said that he had been in the stevedoring business for a great many years, and man and boy had worked labor for thirty years. Most of the ships he loads take screwed cotton, and the screwmen put away ninety bales a day. Sometimes he has had storing, and the screwmen, in gangs of five, according to their latest contract, store 180 bales.

Mr. Honor told of having made the offer to store all the cotton coming into the port at 18 cents a bale. He made two offers: the first was at a meeting of the agents and stevedores during the big strike of last autumn. Mr. W. P. Ross & Heyn, managers for the Head Line and Maclay-Prentice Line, said at the meeting that his line was paying 18 cents and 20 cents a bale to store cotton at Galveston, and it was then that Mr. Honor got up and made his 18 cents offer. Mr. Sanders contended that Mr. Honor's proposition did not make definite the number of bales to be stored in a day, and declared that he would listen to no proposition that did not have as its basis a certain number of bales. Mr. Honor explained that it would be his (Mr. Honor's) lookout to see that the bales in a satisfactory number were put in the hold and the ship given dispatch. Still Mr. Sanders would not listen. Mr. Sanders, before the meeting adjourned, proposed that everyone present be sworn to secrecy so that the matter would not get in the newspapers. Mr. Le Blanc made the motion and it was carried and the matter was not placed before the public, as it should have been.

At another meeting of the steamship agents and the Illinois Central people Mr. Harriman, of the railroad contingent, said that he thought 18 cents should be the figure paid for storing cotton, or something to that effect. Mr. Honor, who was present, promptly repeated the offer he had made to the steamship agents. Mr. Sanders objected to the proposition, and Mr. Honor accused the Leyland Line manager of attempting to

#### CLOUD THE ISSUE

Mr. Honor did not intend to take all the work for his own company, but put his 18 cents a bale project at the meeting of the Stevedores' Association. The stevedores agreed to stand by Mr. Honor in the matter. The affair was given extensive publication in the Picayune, and the Picayune and the States both had strong editorials which in Mr. Honor's opinion, led up to the settling of the strike. Mr. Honor stated that his firm, which does a business of about \$150,000 a year, pays the city \$240 annually in license, while Mr. Sanders, who represents interests above \$400,000, does not pay a nickel. Mr. Honor declared that he was willing at that minute to sign a contract with the screwmen for three years for 180 bales a day at \$5 and \$6. He thought 180 bales was a very fair amount of cotton for one gang to store. Mr. Honor considered the 1 o'clock rule complained of by Mr. Le Blanc as being rather obnoxious, but the rule had been modified by the men and the custom now is for the men to go to work at 1:30 if a vessel is five or ten minutes after 1 in arriving. But, held Mr. Honor, the obnoxious rule was made possible by the manner in which the men were treated by the Leyland Line. Often fifty or sixty gangs would be ordered to Chaimette, or some other distant point, to work and the ship would not arrive. They would have to go home, and lose not only their time, but pay out of their own pockets their car hire. The men also resent the employment of foreigners as superintendents by the Leyland Line. The superintendent does the stevedoring work. Mr. Honor laid stress upon the fact that he meant nothing at all against Captain Brysson, the Leyland Line's present Superintendent. Captain Brysson is a gentlemen and no word can be said against him.

Mr. Honor said that he understood that the whites and blacks had been pitted against each other by Mr. Sanders. Mr. Sanders, Mr. Honor declared, was

#### RESPONSIBLE FOR A RACE RIOT

by his action. (Mr. Honor was referring to the reign of terror on the Levee in 1895, when a dozen or more negro laborers were slaughtered by the whites.) He caused the riot by attempting to break up the white unions and give all the work to the negroes. Mr. Honor, in going over the labor troubles of the

90's, told about the work of the steamship conference. The steamship conference was composed of Messrs. Sanders, Le Blanc, Stoddard and other agents, and the object was to break up the white unions. From 1898 to 1900 the whites were taken back by the Leyland and the Harrison Lines, and the negroes were promised half the space and did not get it. They went to the whites and asked them to amalgamate.

"If something is not done to check the insane desire for power and ambition of certain people on the river front," boldly stated Mr. Honor, "more damage will be done to cotton than ever the boll weevil has done."

"What do you mean by certain people?" asked Mr. Parkerson.

"I believe," answered Mr. Honor, "that Mr. Sanders has been trying to make trouble since he's been here, and it's his aim to crush out the white screwmen for his own benefit."

Mr. Parkerson asked Mr. Honor where the better cotton was, at the city front or the terminals and Mr. Honor said that he thought the cotton at the city front was better as to condition.

"Well, then," Mr. Parkerson wanted to know, "how do you account for this; out of 918,000 bales at the city front 30,000 were condemned by

#### THE MARITIME BRANCH

of the Board of Trade and out of 500,000 at the terminals only 2,200 were condemned?"

"Guess Mr. Sanders can answer that," was the witness' brave rejoinder.

Mr. Honor went on to state that he had had no personal misunderstanding with Mr. Sanders, and that he and the gentleman exchanged greetings when they met. He thinks that the Leyland and Harrison Lines are practically one, and holds that 180 bales is a fair day's work.

Answering Mr. Gilmore, Mr. Honor said that he thought our wharf laborers compared with the wharf laborers of any port, but while the workman at Galveston are in perfect harmony with one another and their employes, the laborers here have constant friction in the ranks, and at times it seems that a man is afraid even to tell you his name on the Levee. Mr. Honor feels confident that his 18 cents a bale offer would put New Orleans on a parity with Galveston. There is no string to the offer; it is open yet to the steamship agents if they want it.

Mr. Honor went over the old labor troubles again, and repeated that the cause of the difficulties was the negroes were being worked in to put the white men out. The division of the races was brought about by the Leyland Line through political influence, Mr. Sanders being promised certain things if he would take the whites back, Mr. Honor stated. Mr. Sanders worked the whites against the blacks and the blacks against the whites.

"I'd like to say this," remarked Mr. Honor, "I recognize Mr. Sanders as a brilliant man and a progressive citizen and an ornament to New Orleans; he's a fighter, and does his

#### FIGHTING IN THE OPEN,

and when he rings his little bell, all the other steamship agents and the stevedores have to kneel down. He has his own air to breathe, and it's sterilized."

Mr. Honor then went on that seriously speaking, the condition on the Levee should be changed, and he held that Mr. Sanders could scare a "nigger" better than anybody he'd ever seen. The black man has all the characteristics of a child, and he believes in the white man, but in some white men on the Levee he believes in no more because of broken promises. Messrs. Sanders and LeBlanc found it to their advantage to employ negroes, as they could work them overtime and on Sundays and holidays without extra pay, which they could not do with the whites.

"What's your experience with the laborers?" asked Mr. Gilmore. Mr. Le Blanc said that they broke faith, they were not to be depended upon, and that they deliberately robbed their employers; has that been your experience?"

"I don't think Mr. Le Blanc wanted to say that," assured Mr. Honor. "My experience has been very gratifying with the laborers, the Screwmen have always kept their promise to me, and the Longshoremen are the best class of workmen I have ever seen," Mr. Honor said further that if the Leyland and Harrison

Lines employed all negroes there would not be enough work on the levee for the whites, as the Leyland and Harrison Lines do the bulk of the business.

"What did you mean when you said a moment ago that you could not compare the Leyland and Harrison Lines, Mr. Honor?" Mr. Terrberry wanted to know.

"I meant by that, to use the language of the race track, that Mr. Le Blanc was not one, two, three with Mr. Sanders."

"You mentioned political reasons as the cause for Mr. Sanders employing the whites, what are we to infer from that?" Mr. Terrberry further questioned.

"Well, it's only what I heard. Do you want me to tell you what I heard?" Mr. Honor gave reply.

"Yes, we'd like to hear it."

"I heard Mr. Sanders was promised the mayoralty if he would take back the whites."

Mr. Honor, while admitting that he did not believe the stories told by the black man Ellis, of money loaned on usurious interest, said he'd heard it rumored about the transactions. Mr. Honor complained of

#### SEVERAL OBNOXIOUS RULES

and of agitators at work on the levee influencing the good working men. The Conference Committee, composed of twelve whites and twelve negroes, raises all the h\_\_\_ it can in as short a time as possible. The Conference Committee practically controls things and fine the foreman when the latter don't suit.

When asked what he thought about working the races together, Mr. Honor said:

"I'm a Southern man; you don't have to ask me that. I

#### BELIEVE IN WHITE SUPREMACY."

"It doesn't elevate the negro and it degrades the white man," said Senator Cordill.

"Remove the cause, and we won't have the whites and the blacks together," advised Mr. Honor.

"What is the cause?" Mr. Gilmore asked.

"M. J. Sanders!" cried Mr. Honor; "ask him to take his hands off the labor movement."

"Well, you believe that if Sanders had never blasted this city with his presence, as you view it, there'd be no necessity for the amalgamation of the races?" Mr. Parkerson asked.

"There'd be no necessity, without the Leyland and Harrison Lines."

Mr. Honor said that under some circumstances he would employ negroes instead of whites--that is, to do such work as shifting coal.

While Mr. Honor was on the stand the Commissioners aired their views generally on the negro question, and were of one accord in saying that such equality of the races as exists today on the Levee was a disgrace to a Southern city.

A recess was taken until 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon, and when Senator Cordill had again called the Commission to order, Captain P. W. Treleaven, Superintendent for the Elder-Dempster Line, was called to the stand.

Captain Treleaven stated that the screwmen for his line generally hand-stowed about 178 bales. On one occasion they stowed 181, but on another went as low as 175. The Captain thought that nothing less than 200 bales hand-stowed, was a day's work. The men work about seven or eight hours and put into practice some very exacting and unreasonable rules. He told of one very unpleasant experience he'd had with the ship Hern, under

#### 1 O'CLOCK RULE .

The vessel's stern touched dock in time for the after gangs to get aboard and open the hatches, but her hawser parted and her bow went out in the stream, making it impossible for the forward gangs to get aboard. Meantime the 1 o'clock whistle blew and, although the ship was berthed in five or ten minutes, the forward gangs not only refused to go to work, but compelled the aft gangs to quit.

Mr. Gilmore questioned Captain Treleaven about the Liverpool trade. His line had had no ships to Liverpool in years. Elder-Dempster ships clear from Mobile for Liverpool.

Mr. Terrberry questioned the witness about coffee ships. The Captain said that more room would not hurt, but the space was sufficient provided the ships did not come in too fast. The coffee trade is growing at a great rate. To Mr. Gilmore Captain Treleaven said that the 1 o'clock rule had been modified to the extent that the Screwmen will go to work at 1:30 now. Captain Treleaven said in conclusion that he received \$200 a month salary. It costs his line something like 17 cents to put a bale on board ship.

William J. Kearney, stevedore for the Harrison Line, was an interesting and important witness. Mr. Kearney went over the labor situation on the levee from 1894 to the present time, covering the stormy periods of rioting and bloodshed and giving a brief though complete history of the movement. In the early days the white screwmen had a very good thing, screwed and hand-stored 75 cotton bales a day to a gang, at \$31 a day. Because there were so few white men the agents had to employ negroes. After 1900, when the whites were taken back to work on the Leyland and Harrison Lines, the screwmen stored on an average of 280 bales a day. After the strike of 1903 the screwmen stored 160 bales. After the amalgamation of the races in 1902 they stowed only 120, which fact brought about the lockout of 1905. Mr. Kearney said that when the men were storing 280 bales a day they did not go for whisky at 3 o'clock as now.

Mr. Kearney stated that after the screwmen had accepted the 180 bales, they determined to do no more skilled work, but just put the bales in loosely. If the men were to store the 180 as they stored the 160, "marrying and tomming" the bales, the limit would be a very fair one, and 180 bales would be a good day's work. Storing cotton as they do now, they

#### SHOULD PUT AWAY 200 BALES

quite easily. Mr. Kearney took from his pocket a little wooden box and five tiny bales of cotton and on the table proceeded to show the Commission how marrying and tomming was done. His demonstration was quite interesting, and he showed that when the bales were "married and tommed" the vessel could economize space.

Mr. Kearney told of some of the difficulties he had had with the screwmen and longshoremen, and how he had been compelled several times to pay out sums of money that he did not justly owe to keep from having his ships tied up. When Mr. Kearney and a committee from the Stevedore Association went before the screwmen to argue points involved in the last strike, they were grossly insulted and ordered out of the hall. Mr. Kearney related some of his costly experiences with the longshoremen, and said that the stevedores had absolutely nothing to do with the work; that it was all in the hands of the foremen, who were members of the Union and were governed and tyrannized over by the Conference Committee of twelve whites and twelve negroes. Mr. Kearney said that the laborers were so very arbitrary that he was not even allowed to put his own brother to work.

Mr. Kearney's men do not stow 180 bales as they promised to, and since the strike have introduced the following obnoxious rules:

"Thirty-five bale limit, night work; twenty-bale limit, dinner hour; every quarter to stand alone--that is, the men are to store forty-five bales in the quarter, and if, through some accident, the stevedore fails to give them the number, they do not make it up in the next quarter.

Mr. Kearney did not think the cotton at the terminals with the exception of the Westwego terminals, was better than cotton at the city front. His line practically did without cotton inspection.

Senator Cordill remarked that, perhaps the reason there were less condemnations at the railroad terminals was that the steamship agents were afraid they might lose the business if they put it on too heavy.

Mr. Kearney sees the Cotton Inspector walking by at Stuyvesant Docks; on the city front he is a whole lot busier; but on the public wharves he has to look after cotton markings as well as density.

Mr. Kearney repeated that the foremen of the levee gangs were absolutely figureheads, altogether in the power of the Conference Committee.

"Do I understand you to say that twelve white men and twelve negroes dominate the commerce of this port?" Senator Cordill asked.

"Yes, sir," answered Mr. Kearney.

"Well, we are practically under negro government," was Senator Cordill's comment.

Mr. Kearney was forced to admit at this portion of his testimony, by questions put by both Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Parkerson, that the screwmen had proposed to the stevedore to modify the 1 o'clock rule to the extent that they would work if they were paid a quarter day's time when they were ordered to a place and there was not work for them. The Screwmen delegates present in the hall, in whispered conversation with the two attorneys, said that they had offered Mr. Kearney to stay all day--that is, from 7 o'clock in the morning until after 1 in the afternoon--if assured the quarter. The stevedores would not accede to the demand, and they enforced the 1 o'clock rule to protect themselves.

Mr. Kearney could not find in the rulebooks of either the Screwmen or the Longshoremen rules which gave the Conference Committee power over the foreman.

Mr. Honor was recalled to the stand and questioned by Mr. Parkerson, said that when he first entered the stevedoring business, he had employed only negroes. He had found the Screwmen

#### WOULD KEEP THEIR CONTRACTS,

and admitted having had trouble with the Longshoremen which resulted in his firm filing suits against the organizations.

Captain W. J. Bryson, Marine Inspector for the Leyland Line, was then sworn. Captain Bryson said that he did not do the stevedoring work himself; that he had a practical stevedore under him, a Mr. Briede. When Captain Bryson first came here, in command of one of the Leyland vessels in 1898, the men were storing 250 bales a day. Captain Bryson considered 180 bales a good days work, provided the bales were well stored. The average number of bales stored by the screwmen at the Leyland wharf is 173. The cotton today is too loosely stored and ships don't get the benefit of their tonnage. It costs the Leyland Line about 17-3/4 cents a bale to store cotton.

Mr. Kearney was asked by Mr. Parkerson how much it cost him to store cotton. Mr. Kearney replied that his contract price with the Harrison Line was 19 cents a bale, but he had the cotton put aboard ship at a cost of 19 cents.

The Commission then adjourned until Wednesday morning, April 15.

When the Commission resumes its work it will take up lumber interests, and then the Cotton Exchange, cotton factors, cotton presses, pilotage, and other phases of the labor question.

Messrs. Salmen, Barret and Lee have gone to their homes in other parts of the State; Major John M. Oge will leave for St. Landry in the morning; Mr. Westfeldt will prepare for examinations in the Supreme Court, having passed law examinations in other States, and only Mr. Parkerson will remain in the city.

*New Orleans Daily Picayune, March 28, 1908.*

#### 1908 ALABAMA COAL STRIKE

##### 44. STRIKE SITUATION IS UNCHANGED

Several Furnace Mines Have Closed Down, and Companies  
Claim They Are Getting Out Plenty of Coal

The mining situation yesterday was without special features. The United Mine Workers' strike is causing some of the furnace mines to shut down, but officials of the Tennessee company, the Sloss-Sheffield company, the Republic company, the Birmingham Iron and Coal company, the Alabama Consolidated and all the other iron concerns say they feel confident of their ability to mine all the coal they need regardless of the strike. Profiting by their experience in the long and bitter strike which began in 1904, the operators are employing



at the start special deputies to protect their mining camps. Thus far no acts of disorder have been reported, but Sheriff Higdon has sworn in 25 deputies to be distributed to the different companies.

Organizers of the Miners' union have been visiting the camps of the furnace companies and at Blocton, Blossburg and Pratt City quite a number of men who had been working at "open shop" mines have joined, but it is said by representatives of the operators that the great majority of their miners are well satisfied with conditions and will never join the strikers. An official of the Sloss-Sheffield said yesterday that his company was getting out more coal than it could use, and was ready to sell the surplus to other furnace concerns.

Coke is now being brought into the district from West Virginia at about what it costs to make it here. On the whole the operators say they are of the opinion that the strike will be of short duration. They point to the fact that conditions now are far less favorable to a strike than they were in 1904.

The union miners held a meeting at Pratt City last night and the night before, but the proceedings were kept secret.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 8, 1908.*

#### 45. A CARD

In order to correct certain false rumors now being circulated, the undersigned Coal Operators desire to announce publicly and positively their adherence to "OPEN SHOP" principles and their determination to maintain these conditions without further delay.

All those desiring employment will be fully protected.

TENNESSEE COAL, IRON & RAILROAD CO.

By Frank H. Crockard, Vice Pres.

SLOSS-SHEFFIELD STEEL & IRON CO.

By J. C. Maben, Pres.

ALABAMA CONSOLIDATED COAL & IRON CO.

By Guy R. Johnston, Vice Pres.

SAYRE MINING & MANUFACTURING CO.

By J. H. Adams, Vice Pres. & Gen. Mgr.

REPUBLIC IRON & STEEL CO.

By W. A. Green, Treas. & Auditor, So. Dist.

CENTRAL COAL & IRON CO.

By J. W. Schook, Vice Pres.

BESSEMER COAL, IRON & LAND CO.

By H. L. Badham, Pres.

WARRIOR PRATT COAL CO.

Harold R. Sanson, Gen. Mgr.

ABERNANT COAL COMPANY

YOLANDE COAL & COKE COMPANY

WOODWARD IRON COMPANY

By A. H. Woodward, Vice Pres.

RED STAR COAL COMPANY

By Walter Moore, Pres.

PRATT CONSOLIDATED COAL CO.,

By G. B. McCormack, Pres.

DeSOTO COAL MINING & DEVELOPMENT CO.

By D. A. Dosenbach, Secy.

BIRMINGHAM COAL & COAL IRON CO.

By James Bonnyman, Gen. Mgr. & Treas.

BRILLIANT COAL CO., EL DARADO COAL CO.

By G. W. Sherling.

SHORT CREEK MINING CO.

By James Bonnyman, Gen. Mgr. & Treas.

ALABAMA FUEL & IRON CO.

By Henry F. Debardeleben, Vice Pres.

EMPIRE COAL COMPANY

By Frank Wilson, Jr., Pres.

SAMOSSET COAL COMPANY

By Harry I. Jenkins, Pres.

NEW CONNELLSVILLE COAL & COKE CO.

BLACK CROW COAL & COKE CO.

By G. B. Crowe, Pres.

WALKER COUNTY COAL COMPANY

By W. J. Gilmore, Pres.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 12, 1908.*

#### 46. SHERIFF HIGDON AGAINST THEM

The miners' strike which is now in its second week is moving on very satisfactorily to the miners. They have added over 8000 new members since the first of July which makes the organization stronger today in Alabama than ever

before, and new members and new locals are being added hourly. Eight small companies have signed contracts with the miners.

The biggest drawback the miners have is the little czar who presides over the sheriff's office and his little insignificant satellites whom he has commissioned as deputies. They are in the different camps violating the law, trying to force the ignorant miners back to work by discharging their pistols, using violent and harsh language, and abuse and heaping all kinds of indignities upon the man who is trying to take care of himself and his family. It is high time that the people of Jefferson county were looking into the sheriff's office and see what kind of a man they have for sheriff. He should be impeached, for no man of his calibre, who is waiting in fairness, justice and equity should be allowed to preside over the welfare of this great county. He is an anarchist for the reason that he and his deputies are today violating the laws of this state. Scarcely a deputy has complied with the twenty-four inch pistol law, and then the negro pimps picked up from the very worst dives are given deputy sheriff's badges, O! for a man, and honorable man for sheriff of Jefferson county.

The people should arouse themselves and demand simple justice for the miners. A few years ago we read with horror the outrages publicated on the people of Colorado and Idaho. The same outrages are being perpetrated today on the citizens of Alabama in the name of enforcing the law.

The following statement made by National Board Member W. R. Farley last Wednesday explains the conditions as they now exist in the great Birmingham district.<sup>40</sup>

"A Reign of Terror" was the brief characterization of the strike situation made by the leader of the miners, W. R. Farley.

Continuing his discussion of the conditions, Mr. Farley said:

"Deputies and guards are arresting men without warrants. They are breaking up meetings and taking our men by force, under threats of shooting them, to force them to go to work. We have been in conference with Sheriff Higdon and expect that he will be able to prevent and stop this lawlessness practiced by the deputies and guards. One deputy sheriff is now in jail for shooting Mr. Merriweather on his own property simply because the miners had been holding their meetings on his land. Mr. Merriweather is shot through the neck, but is still living.

"We are of the opinion that this violence on the part of the deputies and guards is done as an instigation. There has been no violation of the law by the miners since this strike began. Their conduct has been equally as law-abiding as during the last strike of over two years.

"Brutality is the order of things at Yolande and Acton basin. Men have been deprived of their shelter, among them some who were sick. They are cut off from communications. They cannot get their mail and if the situation is not relieved I shall appeal to the Postmaster General.

"Thirteen of our men were driven into the city by deputies without warrants. We have always understood that men, unless caught doing unlawful acts, could not be arrested unless a warrant was issued. It is quite clear to us that the deputies and guards are acting from instructions issued by the coal companies to their officials. From the conference with Sheriff Higdon this morning I am hopeful that this lawlessness practiced by deputies and guards will cease.

"The conditions here now are equal to those prevailing in the Colorado and West Virginia troubles. We as American citizens do not propose to tamely submit to this treatment and any breach of the peace will be definitely prosecuted."

*Birmingham Labor Advocate, July 17, 1908.*

#### 47. TROOPS OUT FOR STRIKERS

##### Two Workmen Are Killed in Clash with Deputies

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., July 17. The coal strike has developed into a serious situation today. Trains and vans carrying strike breakers to the mines have been

held up at the point of shotguns, the strikebreakers forced into membership in the unions, fights with deputies have taken place, at least half a dozen lives have been lost, and the well-armed, well-fed, and well-housed strikers are in command of the situation. Sheriff Higdon has been unable to handle it, although employing hundreds of special deputies.

The strikers have professed respect for the law and only this morning convinced Gov. Comer, who made a tour of the mines in an automobile with Sheriff Higdon, that they were anxious to obey the law. At 2:30 o'clock this afternoon both the Governor and Sheriff said publicly that they saw no reason to call out the troops. At 3:15 Sheriff Higdon, at the request of his deputies at Blossburg, was compelled to call for three troops of the local militia. Charles Gardner, a special deputy, had been fatally wounded in a clash with strikers, the deputies had exhausted their ammunition and were in a state of terror. A negro miner's house at Pratt City was blown up.<sup>41</sup>

In a melee at Blossburg Thursday night, Sam Passfuno and Allen Dennis, two strikers, were killed. Hundreds of strikers gathered about the convict mines in Pratt City, and threatened to turn loose the convicts as they were being conveyed from the mines back to prison, and only strong reinforcements prevented this action. Gatling guns and ammunition have been sent from Montgomery, and the troops there are held in immediate readiness to come to Birmingham.

The strikers started the strike with only 4,000 union men. They have probably added 8,000 to their ranks from the open shop mines of the iron corporations in the past two weeks. The present strike started July 1, when the Commercial Mines demanded the open shop scale of the union men. A compromise offered by the miners was rejected. Then the National organization, through President Lewis, not only ordered the union men to strike, but called on all Alabama mines to join in a desperate fight for recognition of the union.

*New York Times, July 18, 1908.*

#### 48. WITH 1000 VOLLEYS RANG MOUNTAIN AROUND JEFFERSON

Deputy Gardner Falls Mortally Wounded and Rioters Have Losses

Train Leaves Hamlet in Hail of Bullets

Deputy Courson Has Most Strenuous Day--  
Time Was When Dropping of Hat Might Have  
Cost Score of Lives

After a most exciting battle, which knows few equals in Alabama since the Civil War, a train load of 30 deputies escaped through a tunnel in the mountain yesterday, leaving Jefferson, the little junction beyond Brookside on the Southern railway, in the hands of nearly a thousand sympathizers of the striking miners.

The deputies carried with them Charles Gardner, perhaps fatally wounded by the first shot, and the "other side" is probably nursing a half dozen or more seriously wounded men.

The battle at Jefferson yesterday afternoon, from authentic descriptions brought in Birmingham, would make a picture worth painting.

A train loaded with men blazing forth volley after volley from Winchester rifles; the hills on each side and the slope above the tunnel in front literally swarming with armed men, constantly firing from behind rocks and trees, were the picturesque and awe-inspiring circumstances.

#### 1000 Shots Fired

More than 1000 shots were fired during the skirmish. The deputies, who were heavily armed had exhausted their ammunition, and the hills were still ablaze with firing when the engine pulled out through the tunnel and sped away to Blossburg.

The history of the difficulty begins early yesterday morning. Deputy Courson left Jasper on a special train carrying strikebreakers and other deputies. On arrival at Adamsville they were met by a large crowd of some 700 men who are said to have attempted to entice the strikebreakers to join their ranks.

It is stated that twice a negro in the crowd raised his gun, preparing to fire. As many times the deputies drew a bead on him, and but the snapping of a trigger would have resulted in a fight.

#### Four Prisoners Taken

However, the men were delivered at the mines. The train made a loop back to Birmingham and out again toward Blossburg. Jefferson is only a junction where a branch line runs out to Blossburg, and the main line goes through a tunnel. The mountain surrounds it on all sides.

On the first trip in the morning Courson found the miners holding a meeting in the tunnel and a threatening crowd on every side. However, the trip was safely made and returning to Birmingham the train started out with another load of deputies at noon.

On this train were George Courson, Maj. S. D. Dodge of Ensley and 14 deputies, including Charles Gardner. Just beyond Pratt City the train was rocked and the deputies, jumping off, fired several times, captured four prisoners, and after a short delay proceeded toward Blossburg with their prisoners.

Before their arrival at Jefferson, a party of strike-breakers located there, becoming frightened by the threats, prepared to board the train. The engine after stopping a few moments prepared to pull out.

#### Gardner Fatally Shot

Just as Mr. Gardner was swinging up the step a gun was fired from the switch tower, it is believed, burying 13 shot in his back, neck and head. He was carried to the train for dead, and the battle began.

For some 15 minutes the firing continued. The deputies believe they shot four men, and are not certain about others.

The "sympathizers," who were on the hill, overshot their marks, and although the windows were shattered and the car peppered with shot, none of the deputies was injured, but Major Dodge received a slight wound in his face.

Finally, when all the ammunition was out, the engine started toward the tunnel, but found a switch thrown wrong. This caused another delay, but the train crew managed to get away toward Blossburg without additional peril.

This was the final violence of the day. It is believed that it was begun by a negro. No reports have been forthcoming from Jefferson, and the condition of the wounded cannot be learned. Deputy Gardner was brought to Birmingham over the Frisco from Adamsville and taken to St. Vincent's hospital at 8 o'clock last night. While he has never spoken, there is some hope of his living. The deputy who accompanied him gives a graphic description of the fight.

While there were no other serious disturbances yesterday, several houses were dynamited in Pratt City Thursday night, and a fight occurred at Lewisburg yesterday morning, when the tools carried by brick masons on their way to work were snatched from their hands and they, themselves, were roughly treated.

However, after the visit of the Governor, the western mines have quieted down, and late reports are to the effect that no further disorders are expected.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 18, 1908.*

#### 49. DEPUTIES WOUNDED BY LEADEN MISSILES

##### FEW MEN IN FIGHT

But 'Twas Lively While It Lasted. Special Carries  
Members of National Guard to Scene

## Officers Will Recover

In a conflict on the hill at Johns, in the Blue Creek mining field in the southern part of Jefferson county, on the Birmingham Mineral Railroad, shortly before 11 o'clock Tuesday, one negro was shot to pieces and two deputies were wounded.

The deputies are Messrs. Newsom and Whatley and have been on duty since the strike of the miners began.

While the information from Johns is rather meagre, the account of the shooting is as follows: "The deputies were doing duty on the hill when two negroes came along, both armed. The deputies called to the negroes and told them to stop parading the road with weapons. The negroes are said to have pulled their guns when the deputies did likewise. One of the negroes made off through the woods while the other stood up and gave the deputies a fight, firing at them with considerable precision.

The negro was literally punctured with shot.

Deputy Newsom was shot in the shoulder and Deputy Whatley was struck in the thigh. Physicians were summoned immediately to give the wounded men attention.

Word was immediately sent to the general offices of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad company in the city, and from there sent to the sheriffs' office.

The sheriff immediately took steps to send assistance to the Blue Creek region and communicated with Deputy Jones, at Bessemer, and elsewhere.

The arrangements for sending forty members of the military to the Blue Creek region had been made previously and they will be in that section of the mining field by 3:30 o'clock.

The advice received in the city after noon was to the effect that everything was again quiet in the Blue Creek region, though wild rumors were heard for miles around that a serious battle had taken place and that there had been a number of men killed and wounded.

*Birmingham Labor Advocate, July 21, 1908.*

## 50. MASKED MEN BEAT YOLANDE PUMPER TO INSENSIBILITY

Non-union Miners' House Dynamited At the Mines Yesterday

MORE ACTIVITY SHOWN AT WALKER COUNTY MINES

Big Meeting Held in Bessemer Last Night--  
All Reported Quiet in Jefferson County at Midnight

The scene of trouble resulting from the coal miners' strike changed to Tuscaloosa county yesterday, the town of Yolande figuring in two incidents.

The first one occurred yesterday morning, when a pumper was attacked by four masked men and beaten into insensibility. The pumping station is situated about a mile from the mouth of the mine, and the pumper was alone when attacked. While he was severely beaten it is not believed that his injuries will prove fatal.

At 9 o'clock last night the house occupied by Bob Carter, a non-union negro miner at Yolande was dynamited, a heavy charge having been set off under the house. While the house was badly damaged, none of the occupants were hurt.

Dr. G. B. Crowe, president of the Yolande Coal and Coke company, said last night: "There have been a number of intimidating threats made toward our men, and I cannot but believe the wanton acts in the district are inspired from some central source. Our coal output is increasing every day, and we are also continually bringing in new men. These facts seem to have inflamed some of the union miners. We have only three deputies stationed at our mines."

### Quiet in Jefferson

Quiet reigned throughout the Jefferson county coal strike district, not a single mix-up of any kind having been reported to the sheriff's office up to midnight.

The military situation remained the same last night as it did on the night before. Colonel McKleroy took active charge of the troops yesterday. Two trains of imported miners were handled during the day, but without any violence. Quite a crowd congregated at Adamsville, when one of the trains bearing the newcomers stopped there. This crowd did not attempt any disorder. Instead they resorted to moral suasion.

Cries of "Get off and join us and we'll feed you and give you \$5 a week," were made to the men. Several of the negroes accepted the proposition, and jumped off the train. The number doing this amounted to about 10.

The men brought in were scattered around to a number of the mines, the number arriving Tuesday night and yesterday amounting to about 300.

### Serious Shooting Affair

An investigation into the shooting up of L. V. Evans' house, on the Mary Lee road, Tuesday night, proved the affair to have been much worse than had been reported. It appears, according to statements of neighbors of Evans, that some 20 or 30 men gathered on one side of his house and fired a volley. Then, moving around, they fired another volley at the house. Then they moved off up the road, stopping short distance from the house to fire still another volley.

The house was riddled completely. Mr. Evans, his wife and children were asleep at the time, and only good fortune saved their lives. The bullets found their way completely through the house and struck all around the beds upon which the family were sleeping. Several struck the mattress.

As soon as the first shots were fired, Mr. Evans placed his wife, child and self in a closet remaining there until after the shooting had ceased.

The affair aroused the indignation of the people living in that community, and Sheriff Higdon has several deputies working on the case. The identity of several of the men implicated in the shooting is said to be known, and arrests are expected to follow.

### Situation in Walker County

Walker county is also figuring in the limelight as regards the strike. The operators in this particular county appear to have had the best of the argument during the past few years. A strenuous effort is being made by the union to organize the various mines, Carbon Hill especially being affected in this respect.

While the miners around Carbon Hill are not organized, the companies there have been paying wages ranging close to the union scale. In order to prevent their men from joining the United Mine Workers the operators resorted to a ruse. One mine had its negro diggers organize a Knights of Labor local, some 150 miners joining it. When the United Mine workers entered the field they found this organization, and now the two organizations are pulling against each other.

The Great Elk company at that place posted a notice yesterday advising that this company would, beginning with yesterday morning, resume the price they were paying before the cut was made. This notice also states that they have plenty of orders and that all of the old men and their friends will be given all the work they want.

### Large Gathering at Bessemer

Bessemer was the scene of a large gathering last night, several hundred miners holding a union meeting. A report was received at the sheriff's office that the crowd was planning mischief, and Deputy Sheriff Jones of Bessemer was detailed to investigate it. He did so and reported to Sheriff Higdon that it was a peaceable meeting, without any suggestion of violence.

The large number of deputy sheriffs on duty is fast being worked into a systematic organization. The weeding out of the undesirable men who may

have been commissioned is being done. Deputy Sheriff Sid Cowan, is in complete charge of the deputies in the field.

Birmingham was treated to a sight of army camp life yesterday afternoon, when Company G went into camp in West park, at Fifth avenue and Seventeenth street, north. The soldiers pitched their tents and slept there last night.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 23, 1908.*

# 51. MORE DISTURBANCES IN MINING DISTRICT CAUSE SOME ALARM

Possibility of Declaration of Martial Law  
Given Expression By Day's Events

## ONE GUARD IS WOUNDED BY ARCADIA AMBUSCADE

Dynamite Thrown at Wylam Mines,  
Militia Forced To Use Bayonets  
To Protect Men at Adamsville

Affairs took on an ugly hue throughout the coal strike district yesterday and a continuation, it is believed, will result in the declaring of martial law in the section affected by the strike. There were a number of incidents, the disturbances occurring in several places.

The first hostility displayed toward the National Guard was shown yesterday morning at Adamsville. This was followed by some trouble at Bessie mines during the early afternoon, an ambushade at Arcadia, in which one man was wounded, the dynamiting of the guards' camp at Wylam Mines No. 4, and a number of other slight mix-ups.

A feature of the day was the arrest of nine men in connection with the attack upon a train of imported men at Jefferson some two weeks ago. So far this attack holds the record for violence in this particular strike, over 1000 shots being fired by the men attacking the train and the deputy sheriffs. This was where Deputy Sheriff Charles Gardner was badly wounded.

Of the nine men arrested one was the town marshal of Cardiff, being none other than Dow Belcher. The other eight men were Miles Screws, Will Huey, George Zollcoffer, John Smith and Walter Nichols, white, and John Hughley, John Perry and Ed. Washington.

No resistance was offered by any of the men and they were brought to Birmingham and lodged in the county jail. Each man has eight different charges docketed against him, there being a total of 72 warrants for the nine. These charges are for assault with intent to murder, breach of the peace, shooting into passenger train, shooting across public road, using gun in public place not in self-defense, unlawfully presenting firearms, trespassing after warning and carrying concealed pistol.

Chief Deputy Sheriff Lucian Brown, Deputies Sid Cowan, George Courson, T. J. Kennemar and Charlie Helton effected the arrests, the nine men being arrested in three different places--Togo, Cardiff and Mineral Springs. Company G made the trip with the deputies, but took no hand in the arrest of the men, simply guarding the men after they were arrested. Owing to the demonstration in this vicinity during the morning it was thought best to have the soldiers on this occasion. These arrests were made during the afternoon, the prisoners being brought to Birmingham about dark.

The Adamsville affair developed when the car load of imported negro miners who were brought to Birmingham late Monday night, were taken to Murray mines yesterday morning. Companies B and G, who have been stationed in Birmingham, were aroused early yesterday morning and sent with the imported men to Murray mines, leaving Birmingham at 5:30 o'clock. At Adamsville they were met by a detachment from the battery at Blossburg.

Nothing occurred on the way beyond a few jeers at one or two of the stations on the way. At Adamsville, however, a large crowd, composed mostly of negroes, had gathered at the depot and endeavored to persuade the imported men to join their ranks.

As soon as the soldiers had detrained they formed a line. The imported men followed them and as they alighted the crowd surged closer. The soldiers' guns were bayoneted and they held these on the crowd. This deterred most of them, but some kept pushing forward and the soldiers had to tickle their ribs with the bayonet points before they desisted.

The crowd grew exceedingly noisy and a number of ugly remarks were made. The imported men were finally formed into line with the soldiers forming double lines on each side and the march to Murray mines made. When the mines were reached the soldiers reversed and came back to Birmingham.

Arcadia mines, some three or four miles from Mineral Springs, figured in the excitement when a group of the working miners and guards were ambushed near the mouth of the mine about 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon. Twenty-five or 30 shots were fired and the foreman of the mine crew wounded, a bullet cutting a gash under his chin.

The men were close to the mine entrance when several shots were fired at them from the woods. The guards returned the fire and bullets flew thick and fast for several moments. After this settled down things grew quiet and a strong effort is being made to locate the parties making the assault.

About three o'clock yesterday afternoon W. R. Fairley and J. R. Kennamer of the United Mine Workers advised Sheriff Higdon that some 50 shots had been fired upon union men at Bessie mines. Sheriff Higdon immediately telegraphed to Bessie, asking about the trouble and received a telegram from L. H. Lathem stating that no one was hurt, and that the person or persons firing the shots could not be located. Exact details of the affair could not be learned.

Wylam Mines No. 4 was the place at which dynamite was used, two sticks of it being thrown into the guards' camp and exploding shortly after 8 o'clock. No one was injured, but the affair caused a great deal of excitement. Several parties are said to have threatened the guards at this place and arrests are expected to follow in connection with the dynamiting.

Reports from other places told of slight troubles at a number of places, and several men were arrested for trespassing after warning, intimidation and similar charges.

Rumors were afloat all day and night, many reputable persons reporting disorders, which, when investigated, proved to be fake with absolutely no grounds.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 29, 1908.*

## 52. NEGROES ARRESTED ON GRAVE CHARGES

Held for Acts of Violence In Connection With Strike

### STEEL PLANT FULL FORCE

Rail Mill is Coming Close To Record Production These Days--

Ensley is Full of Politics--Personal and General

Ensley, July 30.--(Special)--Constable Lee White this morning arrested Henry King, a negro charged with being one of the men that dynamited several houses in Wylam Wednesday night. The officers claim they have evidence of eye witnesses that will convict the negro. This evening Constable Lee White and Deputy Sheriff R. E. Bera arrested Charles Starkey, a negro, on a warrant sworn out before Judge J. M. Donaldson charging him with assault with intent to murder, and another charging intimidation. The officers also docketed a charge of resisting an officer. Starkey, it is claimed, previous to the explosion had made threats against the people living in the houses that were dynamited. It is said that Starkey is a member of the coal miners' union and a leader among the negroes belonging to the local.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 31, 1908.*



## 53. MORE LAWLESSNESS RESULTS IN DEATH IN MINING FIELDS

Three Negroes Shot During Day and  
Airshaft at Wylan is Dynamited

## HIGDON MAY RECOMMEND MARTIAL LAW AT ONCE

Believes Many Men Would Return To Work Were it Not  
for Fear of Assassination--Negroes Chief Offenders

The killing of a non-union miner, the wounding of a non-union and a union miner, the burning of the home of a non-union miner, a number of assaults upon non-union men, the dynamiting of an airshaft, a demonstration at Mary Lee and a number of other incidents, together with a large number of arrests in connection with the Jefferson ambuscade, the Arcadia shooting of Tuesday night and several other affairs tell yesterday's story of the coal miners' strike.

It was apparent early yesterday morning that the ugliness which had been displayed throughout the district on Tuesday was still bubbling out. Sheriff Higdon stated last night that unless it ceased immediately he would recommend to Governor Comer that martial law be declared in the district affected at once.

## Martial Law Probable

Said Sheriff Higdon last night in this connection: "There have been a large number of ambuscades since the strike was inaugurated. During the latter part of last week matters assumed a quiet tone, but on Sunday the lawless element began to assert itself and has continued to do so. Several non-union men have been wounded and one killed, while there have been any number of ugly demonstrations.

"Such a state of affairs as this cannot be tolerated, and I will recommend to Governor Comer that martial law be declared unless it ceases at once. In this connection I wish to state that it is my opinion that the better class of white union miners have not been implicated in any of the trouble at all. I believe there are a great many of these men would return to work at once but are afraid of assassination. This is especially true in regard to the men who own their homes."

## Negro Killed at Pratt City

The non-union miner was a negro Lige Nelm, who worked in No. 7 mine at Pratt City, the scene of the crime being but a short distance from the mine on the macadamized road leading to it. It occurred late in the afternoon, and the killing is claimed to have been done by a group of negroes, one being arrested in connection with it.

Nelm worked on the night shift at the mine, and was on his way to work. A crowd of negroes were playing baseball on a hill just above the road while a group were by the side of the road. As Nelm passed these men they attacked him, and from what can be learned Nelm was getting the best of the argument when the men were reinforced by others from the ball game. The fight finished by Nelm receiving three bullet wounds in the chest, death resulting almost immediately.

Officers were on the scene in a few moments, the shooting having attracted great attention. The negroes had disappeared, but a trail of blood from the place where Nelm's body was lying in the road. This was followed and led to a negro house, where a negro named E. Miller was found in his jaw. Another bullet had also greased his back.

He was placed under arrest by Chief of Police Hartzfeld of Pratt City, and brought to Birmingham, where he was placed in the county jail. He states that he was not mixed up in the fight, but that he had been at the game and started down to the road where the trouble was going on. His wounds he claimed were received while he was walking down the hill.

The dead negro had a number of cartridges in his pockets but no gun. It is not known whether he had a gun during the mix-up or not.

## Air Shaft Dynamited

The dynamiting at No. 4 mines at Wylam Tuesday night was followed early yesterday morning by the dynamiting of the air shaft of No. 5 mines at that place. This explosion caused great excitement but did no damage to the shaft. A number of guards were placed around it after this incident. Several arrests are expected to follow in this connection.

Shortly after the negro Nelm was killed another negro non-union miner was shot in the back and near the same place, the shots coming from the side of the road. The person shooting, however, was some distance away and the shots did not injure the negro much. A shotgun was used, a large number of small shot perforating the negro's skin.

At the Mary Lee mines a large crowd of union men assembled yesterday morning and closed in on the non-union men as they started into the mine. They were not armed but by force of moral suasion attempted to get the men to quit. The crowd grew somewhat boisterous and was finally driven back by the guards. No other trouble was reported from there during the day.

Preparations have been made at the Mary Lee mines to prevent any attack. For some distance around the mine opening and buildings a space has been cleared and at night it is brilliantly lighted with electric lights, making it almost impossible for anyone to get close to the place without the guards seeing them.

Construction work on the stockade at this place is going forward at a rapid pace and it will probably be completed during the next week or ten days. This will accommodate over 100 additional men. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, July 30, 1908.*

## 54. MINERS AFRAID TO RETURN TO WORK AT SHORT CREEK

Sixty Farmers Are Drawing Supplies From the United Mine Workers' Commissary--Mulga a Model Mining Camp--Idle Men Buying Large Quantities of Ammunition

By Frank V. Evans

Short Creek, July 31.--(Special)--Peculiar conditions exist here at this isolated mining town in the rugged hills of southwest Jefferson. It cannot be accounted a strike. It is simply a "quit" at this place. Its only resemblance to a strike is the appearance of bunches of idle men, all apparently in good humor; and the grinning faces that appear at the free ration car of the United Mine Workers. This car has just arrived and its contents are now being transferred to a country wagon drawn by two farm mules, the appearance of which said animals indicates that they have worked hard, "laid-by" the crop and are today utilized as dispensers of charity to, not only striking miners, but even to community farmers, from the bounteous store of the United Mine Workers.

## Out for a Day

This mine is practically shut down today. It happens in this way: Several days ago a local was organized here, its charter membership consisting of two white miners, five negro miners and about 60 farmers. Some few of these farmers had worked in the mines for one or two days and then worked themselves into the union; and "struck" for the free bread baskets. The purpose of this affiliation is made plain by the innocent prattle of a little child. This child, the daughter of one of the "striking" farmers, said to one of the officers here: "I am so glad the union is coming to Short Creek, 'cause papa has laid by his crop and will join and get things to eat free." Hence the rapid recruiting of the Short Creek miners' local. Excellent matter for encouraging reports of progress.

## Only a "Quit"

The "quit" at these mines, which I say cannot be accounted a strike, was brought about by absolute intimidation in this wise: A negro unionist, who was a real striker entered through a private, unused narrow passage into the mines and told the negro miners that they had better cease work immediately, otherwise their lives and their homes would be in danger; that the strikers had sworn vengeance upon all who continued work here. Through intense fear these negroes forthwith laid down their tools and left the mines, reporting to the foreman and the superintendent that they had done so, not as union men, but because they feared violence. Today these men are on the grounds of the company, many of them sitting on the front porch of the superintendent's office, as if really seeking protection. Some few are anxious and willing to take the chances and return to work, but this number is not sufficiently large to accomplish much good today and there is a shut down at Mine No. 1. The coke drawers, however, are boldly and vigorously at work. The only difference here is that these men work in the day instead of at night, as heretofore. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 1, 1908.*

## 55. ARREST IN ENSLEY FOR DYNAMITING

Two Mounted Officers on Duty Last Night

## INTENT ON KEEPING ORDER

Authorities Will Call for Troops if Necessary--  
Howling Dog Comes Near Causing Panic in Theatre

Ensley, July 31.--Officers John Wren and H. White tonight arrested a negro by the name of Jones Colbert on suspicion of being implicated in the dynamiting of the house of George Banks Thursday night. The police department is doing everything possible to capture the guilty parties. In order to prevent a repetition of last night's occurrence Chief of Police James Merriman, under instructions of the mayor, has increased the police force. Two mounted policemen are patrolling the city tonight. This is a new feature in Ensley. The city is very quiet and the chief of police is determined to keep peace in the city at all hazards and all citizens, union or non-union, will be protected. No more trouble is anticipated, but the officials and citizens of the city will not tolerate any lawlessness, and if necessary a request for the troops will be made.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 1, 1908.*

## 56. MORE NEGROES ARE HELD ON SUSPICION

Five Arrests Were Made In Ensley Yesterday

## REAL ESTATE PICKING UP

Important Announcements Are To Be Made at Meeting of  
Ensley Commercial Club Tuesday--Personal and General

Ensley, August 1.--(Special)--Five negroes, Jones Colbert, Ben Garry, Dave Gaines, John Sawyer and Jim Wright, are being held at the city jail on suspicion. The police suspect that these men are implicated in the dynamiting of the home of George Banks, a negro miner, in Ensley on Thursday night. The city since this occurrence has been very quiet, but Chief of Police

James Merriman is prepared for any emergency. Tonight he swore in several additional police.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 2, 1908.*

## 57. MINERS' UNION INVADES WALKER WITH THE FIGHT

Continued Meetings Held at Dora and Other Points Are Causing  
Unrest and Even Fear in Breasts of Those Who Want To Work

By Frank V. Evans

Dora, August 2.--(Special)--Conditions here are not such as are most desired by law-abiding, peaceful and industrious citizenship, and yet the wheels are turning and the stacks belching forth smoke.

For about 30 years this Horse Creek valley has been peaceful, orderly, industrious and progressive, but now the effects of the coal miners' strike have touched this point with damaging attack and disturbed the equilibrium of a community of several thousand people and property values of immense proportion.

There are six mining companies doing business at this place, to wit: Red Star, Sloss-Sheffield, Samoset Coal company, Burnwell Coal company, the Pratt Consolidated and West Pratt. These companies give employment to about 2000 miners.

### Disturbance Very Recent

Not until a few days ago was there any interference or disturbance at this place. Miners were busy and contentedly at work. Then the organizers came among them, fired many of them up and induced the organization here of a local. Then came a feeling of anxiety and fear on part of the miners. Comparatively few of them joined the union, but many discontinued work, giving as an excuse that they had been threatened with violence by members of the union if they did not quit the work.

I was informed yesterday that about half the normal force of miners here are "out," but not one-fourth the number have aligned themselves with the union. It appears very clear that intimidation has been the instrument of the union men in inducing these men to lay down their picks.

Intimidation being an offense against the law, I asked some of the mine officials here why the perpetrators were not detected, arrested and punished, and the answer is that warning notices and threats have come to the miners in disguise, and it has, thus far, been impossible to detect who are the guilty men. As an illustration, yesterday morning a little boy approached the fireman at the engine of one of the mines here and stated to him that "some men on the hill had sent him word that unless he quit firing those boilers and leave the place he would be killed or his home blown up."

### Majority Fear Threats

Your correspondent has met several men here today who relate similar instances. Some men do not fear these threats, but continue at work, but most of them do, especially negro miners, many of whom own their own homes here and fear the loss of their property. The question naturally arises: Is there really any danger to these threats? On my visit to one of the dynamited houses at Wylam last week I asked the man who occupied that house, and whose life came so near being taken away, whether or not he was frightened. He answered that he was, but that he would continue to work in the mines under the rules of the company and without any consideration of the miners' union. "I had received threats of violence at the hands of unknown persons, in case I should continue to work" continued the man, "but I paid but little attention to the threats, not believing really that violence would be done me, but it was, as you see, and this is part of the programme of many striking miners and their pals. I believe it will require the strictest vigilance to safeguard

the men and their homes. These threats are not all idle talk."

#### Troop C Preserving Order

Troop C, Alabama National Guard, under command of Lieutenant Calhoun, with 40-odd men, is stationed here to assist Sheriff Long with his 30 deputies in preserving peace and order. These soldiers are comfortably quartered in a large commissary and office building, and as yet have not been called upon for acute action. It is quite an easy matter to prevent any outward demonstration as long as these soldiers and deputies are on the scene, but that is not the danger. It is the midnight prowler, the ambushed villain, the devilish dynamiter and the egging, intimidating and demonstrative assemblies that bring fear and trembling, and that disturb peaceful pursuit. This can be prevented by an application of martial law speedily. . . .

#### Rally at Jasper

There was a mass meeting held at Jasper yesterday at the same time the one was in blast at Dora. In fact, Walker county seems to have been the point of attack Saturday by the emissaries of disorder. At Jasper a brass band led a parade through the streets--the farmers were invited, negroes as well as whites bore red flags, and black men were among the principal speakers. The affiliation of the two races proved repugnant to the taste of the white men of Walker, and I am informed that there was but little sympathy in evidence by the farmers of Walker.

The negro, Campbell, who was imported from the west to fire up the race antagonism, is said to have been one of the principal speakers at Jasper, and there is a general feeling of disapproval of the miners' union bringing him here and of his dangerous expressions.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 3, 1908.*

#### 58. DYNAMITE UNDER BRIGHTON HOUSE

A house dynamited, the arrival of several "Texas Ranger sharpshooters" to be used as special deputies, a large number of imported men placed at various mines, and a few minor disturbances caused the strike situation to assume a more serious aspect last night.

The dynamiting took place at Brighton, the house of a negro non-union miner named Findlay Fuller being partly demolished, though none of the occupants was hurt. Fuller is an employe of the Woodward Iron company and works at Dolomite, about two miles below Brighton. This particular section has been free from disorder since the strike began, this being the first trouble reported from the Woodward mines.

Fuller's house is what is commonly known as a "gunbarrel" house, consisting of three rooms and a back porch. Fuller has a wife and three children, the latter being asleep at the time of the explosion, which occurred about 10:30 o'clock. Fuller and his wife were sitting in the front room at the time. The dynamite was thrown or placed on the back porch, completely destroying it and the last room, which was used as a kitchen.

Deputy Sheriff George Jones of Bessemer was notified and went to the scene with a number of other deputies. A pack of bloodhounds were taken along and a trail struck easily. At the last report the dogs were running this trail splendidly. The Woodward Iron company has offered \$250 for the arrest and conviction of the guilty parties.

The number of sharpshooters being brought to the Birmingham district from the western states is about 60, about half of whom have arrived in Birmingham. The 60 men were taken in a bunch to New Orleans, from which place they have been straggling to Birmingham in small groups and quietly placed at the different mining camps.

## Additional Men To Pratt

A detail of 19 soldiers was dispatched to Pratt City last night to join the troops stationed at No. 1 mine, under Capt. George Todd of Montgomery. This particular captain and men have been having the time of their lives at Pratt City during the last few nights. Every night either a mob would assemble near the camp or innumerable persons would try to slip through the lines.

His command was weakened somewhat during the early part of last week by some of the men being transferred to other points, and for the past several nights he has been like the Macedonian who called "come over and help us." His plea was at last acceded to last night and the additional men sent to Pratt City.

Two carloads of imported men were taken to Mary Lee yesterday morning, the men arriving over the Louisville and Nashville and being switched at Boyles to the Mary Lee tracks. A squad of soldiers and deputy sheriffs escaped the men to the mines. No trouble was experienced.

Imported men in small groups were carried to a number of other mines, but nothing in the shape of violence was attempted by the strikers. In most of the places the strikers tried by moral suasion to get at the men to join their ranks, the slogan of "\$5 a week and rations" winning a few over to their side.

## Reports From Banner Mines

Kicks are said to have been made by union officials to the effect that men were being forced to work against their will in the Banner mines. Under instructions from Sheriff Higdon. Deputy Sheriff A. S. Cowan went to Banner to investigate this while the union officials were requested to send a man along. J. B. Kennemar, president of local No. 20, was named by the union men to set in this case.

Sheriff Higdon received a telephone report from Deputy Cowan last night to the effect that he had been to Banner, and that the men working in the mines had been asked if any of them were being detained against their will. He stated that none of them replied that they were, though 15 decided to leave; 72 men remained at the mines. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 4, 1908.*

## 59. GOVERNOR COMER COMMENTS ON STRIKE SITUATION

"It is nonsense to suggest the bringing of the federal troops to the Alabama mining district, and a reflection on our state officers and troops who are loyal to the state and who would discharge any duty assigned to them," said Governor Comer yesterday in regard to the coal strike situation. Continuing, he said, "They are not only capable but are anxious to maintain the peace and dignity of the state.

"I was quoted in Chattanooga as having said the strike here was a small affair. This was an error, as I regard the strike as exceedingly serious. When we have men who will at night dynamite a house, endangering the lives of men, women and children, when we have men who will dynamite the property of law-abiding citizens, when we have men who will shoot down and threaten to shoot down citizens engaged in peaceful occupations, when we have inflammatory speeches made to arouse undue passion, and in a measure "sic on" unthought persons to violate the peace and safety of the citizens and of the property of the state, then with all good citizens I regard these matters as very serious.

"In conference today with the sheriff, Colonel Higdon, and Major Noble, commanding our military, I advised them to take increased methods and means to insure that these things shall not be. To accomplish this it may be necessary to bring more troops, it may be necessary to curb viciousness in speaking, and to restrain the assembling of people who are together for the purpose of illegally taunting both state officers and soldiers and of intimidating people from going about their lawful business. To take more radical means, disarm every combination, whether of men or guns, gotten together for the purpose of intimidation, or of dangerous conditions or anything else that looks like the

breaking of the peace and the safety of the citizens.

"I understand that there are a great many negroes being gotten together in unlawful assembly, and are being madly advised. I wish to remind them that prior to 1894, with very bad leadership, both scalawag and carpetbagger, they greatly injured themselves and the state, and I want to caution them against such leadership now. The state could not allow it then, and will not allow it now; and I would advise them that the law is for the protection of those inclined to live in peace and order and work, and not to allow by inaction the violations of that right of every citizen to live in his own home, whether rented or owned, and to do his own work in his own way. I earnestly insist with every citizen that the state officers and the state troops should have their co-operation to accomplish these desired ends."

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 5, 1908.*

#### 60. NEGROES ARE ACQUITTED

The five negroes who were arrested in connection with the recent dynamiting of the house occupied by the negro, Banks, were acquitted in police court this morning. The defendants offered no testimony, there being not the slightest evidence connecting them with the outrage. Immediately after the trial a representative of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad company swore out a warrant before Judge J. M. Donaldson, charging intimidation against Jones Tolbert, one of the negroes acquitted.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 5, 1908.*

#### 61. TWO DEPUTIES IN BRIGHTON ARE HELD FOR LYNCHING NEGRO

Man In Jail On Dynamiting Charge Quietly Taken Out and Swung To Tree

#### EXCITEMENT RUNS HIGH OVER LATEST OUTRAGE

Brighton Citizens Hold an Indignation Meeting and  
Vigorously Condemn Lawless Act--Other Arrests Expected

By J. F. Lee

Bessemer, August 5.--(Special)--Resulting from the coroner's investigation into the lynching which took place at Brighton at some time before day this morning, Lon Tyler and Bruce Tyler, two brothers, who were acting as special deputies, were arrested on charges of murder, and carried to the county jail, and will not be allowed bond.

None of the evidence taken during the investigation has been made public but from information gathered on the outside, it is shown that Tyler possessed, or had in his possession prior to the lynching, a key to the jail, and the statement of Town Marshal Toumerlin went to show that there were only two keys in existence, he having had one of them. Toumerlin's statement, made before the coroner's jury was empaneled, is as follows:

"When I had locked the negro in the jail I telephoned Chief Deputy George Jones at Bessemer that I had the prisoner, and I was instructed to lock him up and Deputy Bob Jones would come for him early this morning. About 11 o'clock, just before going home for the night, I opened the door and put a bucket of water on the inside for the prisoner, relocking it, and went home. I knew nothing of his having been taken out and hanged until I arrived at the jail about 6 o'clock this morning, and found the door open and the lock hanging unlocked in the staple. I began to inquire about and learned that a negro had been seen hanging in the woods down toward the furnace, and went to the place and found him hanging to the limb of the tree. Strange to say,

when I returned to the jail shortly afterwards the lock was missing, and I have been unable to find out anything about its disappearance.

"There are only two keys to the lock, one is in my possession and the other was held by George Love, a deputized constable. My key has never left my possession; about the other I cannot say."

Deputy Constable George Love's statement follows:

"Last night as I was passing near W. D. Bush's home, at Smith's crossing, I was met by Lon Tyler and two other deputies, Long and Chitwood. Tyler told me that he had heard that an attempt would be made to dynamite a house next to the one that was blown up night before last at Parker Springs, and that he wanted me to take a good man with me and patrol that territory, and for me to particularly watch the houses adjoining the Fuller house. I asked him who was going to patrol up around Brighton, and he replied that Lee Cox would be on up in that territory. I selected Chitwood, and he and I stayed around Parker Springs until morning, when I went home and went to bed, and did not know anything of the lynching until about 10 o'clock, when my wife told me of it. Before leaving me Tyler asked for the jail key, and I gave it to him."

Jess Howell, the deputy who had charge of the dogs that trailed the negro prisoner, made the following statement:

"I stayed around the jail until about 2:30, when I left on the train that carries the workmen to Dolomite, and knew nothing of the lynching until about 9 o'clock this morning. Deputies Long and Lee Cox both went on the train with me to Dolomite, leaving Deputies Lon Tyler and Bruce Tyler at Brighton."

It is understood that no statement could be gotten out of the Tyler brothers after their arrest, other than that they were innocent of the charge that had been preferred against them.

It is highly probable that at least two more arrests will be made, but it is not believed that more than four or five people took part in the lynching.

It was thought for a time that the prisoner was killed and then hung but when his body was taken down his neck was found to be broken. His tongue was also protruding from his mouth while hanging, and it is said that he had been dead when swung up, this would not have been the case.

Kennedy Bros. took charge of the body of the negro, but were instructed by the coroner to hold it until Friday or Saturday.

### The Lynching

William Millin, the negro miner who was arrested last night and locked up in the city jail at Brighton on a charge of assault with intent to murder, which grew out of the dynamiting of a house occupied by Findley Fuller at Parker Springs, night before last, was taken from the jail at some time between 2 and 5 o'clock this morning and lynched. Other than those who composed the lynching party no one suspected that such action was even being considered, and the entire community was shocked when the news was spread that the negro had been found hanging to the limb of a pine tree within 100 yards of the dirt road leading from Brighton to Woodward furnaces, almost within a stone's throw of the thickest settled part of the town of Brighton.

The negro was brought to the jail about 10 o'clock last night, just as a mass meeting of the citizens of the town was breaking up, at which the outrage of night before last, the dynamiting of the Fuller home, was severely condemned, and a vigilance committee appointed to keep down lawlessness, and that what is considered one of the greatest outrages that can be perpetrated on a law-abiding community should occur immediately following such a meeting is deeply deplored by the entire populace, and expressions of indignation could be heard on all sides.

When it became known that the negro had been lynched and was still hanging to the limb of the tree, awaiting the arrival of the coroner, crowds began flocking to view the ghastly sight, and within a very short time nearly 1000 people were gathered in a semi-circle around the tree, a guard having been placed to keep the crowd back 50 feet from where the corpse was hanging, swaying with the wind, suspended from the limb of the tree by a piece of insulated copper wire, the feet within 13 inches of the ground, which were bound together with a piece of the same kind of wire by which it was hanging.

No one was allowed to approach the corpse, as it was thought that blood-hounds would be brought to the scene with the view of being put on trail of the lynchers, but it was impossible to secure the dogs and the body was cut



down about noon today.

Excitement was at a high pitch, and it was rumored around that another negro had been found dead over in a pasture near by, some saying that he had been shot and others saying that he was also hanging to a tree, but it was found to be not true.

Coroner Paris arrived on the scene about 9 o'clock, and after some delay in selecting six competent jurors, started investigations right on the spot, continuing at the city hall in the afternoon after the body of the negro had been taken down.

Secret examination of many witnesses went on through the entire day, with the result shown at the beginning of this story, an adjournment taking place about 6 o'clock until Tuesday, August 11, when the jury will again convene at Brighton.

#### The Arrest

Night before last, just after the dynamiting of the house at Parker Springs, bloodhounds were carried to the scene, and after running for some time they lost the trail where rubber-tired print seem to show that a buggy had been in waiting, and the hunt was about to be abandoned, when the older of the dogs, one belonging to Lou Howell of North Birmingham, and said to be one of the best in the district, took up the trail again and followed it directly to the house occupied by Millin, where it ran up on the front porch and bayed. It was then about 1 o'clock, but it is said that neither the negro nor his wife had removed their clothes preparatory to retiring for the night. The negro was called to the door and questioned as to where he had been the forepart of the night and answered that he had not left his house since 12 o'clock noon. No arrest was made at the time. Yesterday a negro testified that he had overheard Millin remark to his wife, while seated on his front porch, "It's a mighty long time going off," just prior to the explosion of the dynamite. A miner by name of George Taylor is also said to have testified that Millin approached him and remarked that he would hate to hurt him, but if he did not quit work he was going to kill him.

This was considered sufficient evidence on which to make the arrest, and he was carried to the jail about 10 o'clock last night.

#### Mr. Woodward's Comment

A. H. Woodward was seen during the day, and in referring to the matter stated that no one deplored the affair more than did the officials of his company. "Every one knows, or should know, that we will not countenance any lawlessness on the part of any of our men, and should any of the men in the employ of the company be so unfortunate as to have become mixed up in such an outrageous affair they will have to stand the consequences. You could have knocked me down with a straw when I was advised of the matter this morning in Birmingham."

#### Indignation Meeting Held

Citizens of Brighton held a large indignation meeting tonight and unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

"We, the law-abiding citizens of the Brighton community, assembled in mass meeting, take this means of expressing our indignation at the lynching of Will Millin, a negro, which occurred between midnight and daylight this morning from the Brighton jail.

"Be it resolved, That we condemn all such conduct and all disregard for law and all mob law of any kind, be it further

"Resolved, That we, the citizens of this community, do most heartily desire the arrest and punishment of the guilty party or parties and pledge our support in bringing the guilty ones to justice. Respectfully submitted by your committee,

J. A. EASTERS,  
S. B. SMITH,  
W. S. BROWN.

## 62. STRIKING MINERS RALLY NEAR MINES AT DORA

Mr. Fairley Orator of the Day--Good Order Observed--  
Evidence of Racial Danger--Mines in Operation

By Frank V. Evans

Dora, Aug. 7.--(Special)--If the public assembly of striking miners with their women and children, which occurred at Dora today is characteristic of other gatherings in the district, I fail to discover any very dangerous feature in the public assembly proposition.

This correspondent came out on the train this morning which numbered among its passengers Mr. Fairley, who I was informed was to be the orator of the day at a great gathering of his followers in a wooded place a short distance from Dora. By my own invitation I attended that meeting, and numbered myself one of an audience of about 500 people, among them white men, black men, white women, black women, and children of both races.

#### Fairley Talks

Mr. Fairley's speech was just such an address as would ordinarily be delivered by any other paid attorney in defence of his client. The most objectionable features of his remarks were his personal reference--and his harsh criticism of men who differ with him, and of the governor of Alabama. The speaker urged the striking miners to stand fast to the proposition they had laid down and to yield not one point. Said he: "If you lose this strike, not a decent miner, not a man of you who has any self-respect, should remain in Alabama." He took occasion to speak in opposition to the importation of foreigners to this district, upbraided Governor Comer (who says he is opposed to foreign immigration) for allowing them to come and forgot the fact that he uttered his sentences in the dialect and tongue of a man from across the sea--he himself being a foreigner.

When I suggested to a bystander that I had heard nothing incendiary in the remarks of Mr. Fairley, it was stated to me that it is not the open meetings, but the star-chamber gatherings where fiery utterances are delivered and from which is breathed forth dangerous contagion.

#### Racial Danger

Other speakers addressed the assembly, following in the Fairleyite line and ideas, it was left for a negro preacher from Empire to take the stand and give utterance to remarks which cannot prove conducive to a readjustment of conditions and resumption of peace and order. It is a lamentable condition that incites and permits ignorant leaders to address assemblies of white women and children as social equals, advising as to moral and social questions, and alluding to those delicate matters of social status which can only be discussed properly with fair women in the private home and by husband and father.

It was a third of a century ago or more that the people of Alabama by rigid force and even the shedding of blood stopped the advance of a threatening peril which endangered our social fabric. It was the inculcation in the minds of blacks the idea of social equality. The terrible poison then was sought to be applied for political purpose by carpetbaggers from the north, and for a time the cloud seemed ominous, but the Caucasian blood of this state was aroused to resentment and to the defense of the home fireside.

When today this correspondent saw the comingling of whites and blacks at Dora, where he beheld the sympathetic arms of a negro extended toward and embrace a white speaker to impart to him a secret of his bosom, in the very presence of gentle white women and innocent little girls, I thought to myself: has it again come to this?

#### Hymn Singing

One interesting feature of this meeting today was the singing of a hymn by the assembly. As Mr. Fairley took his seat a "square note" music teacher led the sacred warning hymn, "Are you ready for the judgment day," and white and black, male and female joined in concert.

Just what hearing the musical introduction of this all-important question has upon the present status of affairs at Dora I do not fully understand, but I thought as I looked upon the assembly of idle men, heard of dynamite fury and beheld the presence of armed officers, civil and military, and saw the glittering of handcuffs here and there, that the question is not inappropos at this time.

#### Mines Are Running

The casual observer does not see or hear disorder at Dora today. Every mine except Samoset is working. Rumor that the Red Star (Walter Moore's) mines are closed down is without foundation. Mine No. 1 of this company is today producing more coal than it has any day for a month. In fact the output there is normal. Mine No. 2 is also in motion, but the output is as yet small. These Red Star mines and Walter Moore, their owner, seem to have centered upon them all of the animosity and venomous wrath the orator of today's meeting has to apply to Walker county for in his speech today he gave vent to his feeling toward Mr. Moore in a manner which might cause other than strong and brave men like Walter Moore to weaken his position by resenting personal attack in a strenuous time like this.

#### No Marching

There was no marching at Dora today, no large bodies of men passing to and from the meeting. Sheriff Long had given notice that there should not be and whenever there was the least appearance of numbers in marching order they were required to separate and go and come as peaceful citizens. The soldiers are still here; Troop C, under command of Lieutenant Calhoun is stationed still at Dora, and a detachment of Battery D, under command of Lieutenant Hardman, at Burnwell, two miles distant. These soldiers were ready for any emergency today, a number of them doing picket duty.

#### General Conditions

From close observations I do not regard the conditions in Walker county as alarming as in other parts of the district. I have today mixed, mingled and conversed freely and openly with a number of the leading men among the strikers--some of them officers of the union--and I am persuaded that the principal reason for their declining to return to work is that they have been persuaded to believe that they can really win this strike by continued persistence. In conversation they insist that their union shall have recognition at the hands of the operators. They strenuously protest against being charged with violations of law.

With rigid application of the rule against public demonstration, the patrolling of the highways to prevent the prowling of suspicious stragglers and the continued presence of the soldiers I believe that within a short time normal labor forces will be restored to these mines. Whether this be by the return of the old men or the bringing in of new ones I do not know, but I do believe that everything points to a determined purpose on the part of the operators of Walker county to produce full outputs of coal.

#### Will Peace Then Follow?

But, I am not sure, nor do I really see any hope for an immediate restoration of law and order, even after the mines are in full commission. The resentful spirit of union miners, who have been imbued with the idea that their rights have been taken away from them, the poisonous venom produced by idleness, the encouraging utterances of bad leaders have created an unhappy condition, a dangerous sentiment, which will break out somewhere or in some shape, as soon as the miners and the property are left without watch-care. The presence of soldiers and of deputy sheriffs cannot be dispensed with simultaneously with the resumption of normal mine production.

This is a painful, yet a truthful fact. It means a long continuation of unrest and of fear. It means heavy financial cost. It means that the state of Alabama should take strong hold of the situation and adjust the difficulties with which the people of the commonwealth are confronted.

## 63. NEW TROOPS TAKE UP DUTY IN THE STRIKE DISTRICT

Yesterday witnessed an entire change in the personnel of the troops on strike duty. The day's record also showed one non-union man killed by dynamiters. This killing took place in Shelby county, while Jefferson county experienced a day of absolute quiet.

The dynamiting occurred early yesterday morning at Acton, the mines at this place being operated by the Alabama Fuel and Steel company. Four houses were dynamited, and one of the occupants, a negro boy named Terrell, was killed. All of the houses were occupied by non-union men.

A number of deputies were on duty at the time, and they state that they saw several men running from the direction of these four houses immediately after the explosions. Sixteen men have been arrested and charged with the crime. Four of them are white and twelve are negroes, all being striking miners. It was stated last night by officials of the company that some of them have made a confession as to having participated in the dynamiting.

## Local Troops Relieved

By 12 o'clock last night all of the artillery and cavalry troops on strike duty had been relieved by men from the First and Second infantry regiments, who arrived from Chickamauga late Friday night, where they were encamped with the regulars for about ten days.

The new troops relieving the artillery and cavalry number nearly twice as many as the ones they relieved. The First regiment numbers about 730 men, while two companies from the Second regiment swell the number close to 900. The number of troops that have been on duty was under 500.

The officers in command are Colonel DuMont and Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard of the First Regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard being actively in command at present. Colonel DuMont arrived from Chickamauga Friday night and is a guest of Governor Comer. He has not been well for the past two or three days, and will return to his home in Mobile today. It is probable that he will return to Birmingham within a few days.

Major Noble, who has been in command during the past ten days, having relieved Colonel McKleroy of the Third Infantry when this regiment was relieved of strike duty and sent to Chickamauga, has been instructed to report to Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard, and will be retained here. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 9, 1908.*

## 64. THREE ARE DEAD AND ELEVEN WOUNDED IN OUTRAGE AT BLOCTON

Twenty-seven Men Were Arrested Yesterday, Four of Whom  
Confess to Complicity in Firing Upon  
Train from Ambush

Crossties Had Been Placed on Track to Stop Train and Thus  
Make the Midnight Assassination More Effective

## The dead:

Conductor Joseph T. Collins  
Deputy Sheriff O. Z. Dent  
Willard Howell, imported miner

## The wounded:

Major F. C. Dodge, Tennessee company official, wounded in leg and hand.  
E. E. Cox, general superintendent of mines Tennessee company, slightly wounded.  
A. E. Cross, chief clerk superintendent's office, slightly wounded.  
Deputy Sheriff J. C. Johnson, slightly wounded in side.  
Deputy Sheriff A. C. Bryant, slightly wounded in side.  
W. H. McAuly, soldier, slightly wounded. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital.

M. A. Pearson, soldier, slightly wounded. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital.  
Deputy Sheriff J. C. Martin, wounded in head, back and arm. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital.

Deputy Sheriff J. B. Cornett, wounded in back. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital.

Robert Sigmon, imported miner, wounded in arm and breast. Taken to St. Vincent's hospital.

A. J. Myer, imported miner, wounded in leg.

In one of the most cunning ambushes ever arranged, three men were killed and 11 wounded at 1:30 o'clock yesterday morning by an attack upon a special Louisville and Nashville train near Blocton, in Bibb County. In connection with this attack 27 persons had been arrested at a late hour last night and locked up at Blocton, while officers there were also looking for a number of others who are suspected of complicity.

A special train of three cars, in charge of Conductor Collins and Engineer Vincent and loaded with imported men, deputy sheriffs and soldiers, left Birmingham Saturday night shortly before 11 o'clock for Blocton. The attack took place about one mile from Blocton in a small cut at the bottom of the hill.

#### Ties Across Track

The train was traveling rapidly when Engineer Vincent suddenly spied a number of crossties stretched across the track a few hundred yards ahead of him. He instantly slackened the speed of the train, but it continued to travel forward at a somewhat rapid pace.

He had scarcely put on brakes when volley after volley of hot lead was poured into the side of the car from the top of the cut, three men being killed almost instantly. The track at this point runs in a small cut, the ground rising from the edge of the cut to the top. The edge of this cut is on a level with the lower part of the car windows, rising gradually until it attains a great height.

The assailants, of whom it is believed there were at least 50, spread themselves close to the edge of the cut, and as soon as the train slackened up they proceeded to fire all manner of guns at them.

This fire was replied to by Major Valden, who was in charge, and Captain Townsend, both of whom shot pistols. When the first shot was fired Major Valden was standing in the aisle, and when the next reports came he ordered his men to lie flat on the floor. This action probably saved many lives. The position of the assailants was such that they could draw deliberate aim on the windows of the coaches.

#### Coolness of Engineer

The cool-headedness of Engineer Vincent also had much to do with the handling of the situation. When he saw the crossties on the track he slackened the speed of the train. Then a heavy volley of shots rang out. He allowed the engine to run on into the blockers, scattering the ties like so much paper.

While the soldiers on the train had their guns and plenty of ammunition they had not filled the magazines of their rifles prior to the time of the shooting, and could not return the fire at once.

The entire train from the smokestack to the rear platform is a silent testimonial to the number of shots fired by the assailants. Practically every window on one side is broken, while the woodwork is also badly damaged.

After shoving the blockade off the track Engineer Vincent put on full speed and in a few moments Blocton was reached. Here telephone connection with Birmingham was established, while the surgeons with the company exerted themselves in trying to care for the injured. The soldiers on the train composed Company L of Uniontown and were under command of Major Valden and Captain Townsend.

The train which was fired upon remained at Blocton until daylight, when it began its return trip to Birmingham, arriving here shortly after 8 o'clock with the dead and injured. The train was met at the Eighteenth street crossing by ambulances from Shaw & Son, Lige Loy and the Green Undertaking Co., the badly wounded men being rushed to St. Vincent's hospital.

## Pitiful Scenes at Train

A sight like the one presented when the train proceeded to unload at Eighteenth street was one which Birmingham has not experienced in years. There were men with clothes covered with bloodstains, many swathed in bandages, and a sigh of pity from the large crowd went up as each wounded man was helped out of the cars.

Shortly after this train arrived another special train bearing Company L of Troy with Captain Morris, Lieutenants Prary, Pilcher, W. E. Mickle, and Valden, left for Blocton, carrying all camping paraphernalia and also bloodhounds.

When the place where the train had been attacked was reached a stop was made. A number of deputy sheriffs under Sheriff Oakley of Bibb county were in waiting with several saddle horses.

The hounds were turned loose and while the trail was nearly 10 hours old it was taken at once. It led for some distance, breaking several times, but always being picked up again, and finally ending in a small settlement.

Here a number of houses were searched and rifles, shotguns and pistols taken in hand. Four negroes were arrested early in the day and at one time things took on a squally look, a number of persons suggesting that they be lynched.

## Total of 27 Arrests

A total of 27 people had been arrested by 9 o'clock by Sheriff Oakley, this number being composed of eight negro men, one negro woman, and the balance Slavs. Of the Slavs five are said to have confessed to having taken part in the shooting.

Another incident in connection with this trail is that a sock was found on one of the crossties which had been placed across the track and later in the day the sock was matched with one that was worn by one of the men arrested. Sheriff Oakley was commended on every hand for the able manner in which he handled the situation.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 10, 1908.*

## 65. ARREST 30 MINERS FOR TRAIN MURDERS

President Hayes of Mine Local at Blocton, Ala.,  
Is Among the Prisoners

## MINERS' LEADERS IRONICAL

Citizens Discuss Deportation of Mine  
Strike Leaders--Situation is Serious--Miners Out Since July 6

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Aug. 10.--Thirty arrests have been made at Blocton of men alleged to have been engaged in the ambush of the Birmingham mineral train early Sunday morning, when three men were killed and eleven injured. One of these is Robert Hayes, President of the mine local at Blocton.

It develops that the strikers have, by their excellent detective system, been enabled to anticipate arrivals of strikebreakers hours ahead of time, and this was done in the case of the Birmingham mineral train, although its route was changed shortly before it left the city.

Most of the men arrested at Blocton are foreigners, and were themselves strikebreakers in 1894. Blocton has been a non-union mine of the Tennessee Company ever since. Seventeen arrests have been made at Acton, where four non-union negro houses were blown up on Saturday and one negro killed.

Representative citizens of the Birmingham district met this morning and discussed the deportation of nine strike leaders, but nothing was done beyond the appointment of a Committee of Twenty-five to consider the situation and suggest a remedy for the outrages.

Miners' leaders deplore the Blocton outrage, but at the same time are ironical in public cards, in which they declare no one has deplored the deaths of "innocent strikers" shot down by Deputy Sheriffs.

The coal operators, at a meeting held today, put themselves on record as against deportation. John P. White, Vice President of the National miners' organization, arrived today. He said that the Alabama situation was in a good way because the National union had no other big strike on hand, and he complimented the Alabama miners on having increased their membership from 3,500 to 14,000 since the strike began.<sup>43</sup>

Before his arrival it was reported that the National organization would cut off the very liberal support being given now if it developed that the miners could not achieve victory in a short time. They evidently cannot, hence great interest attaches to White's future course.

The strike started July 6, and is no nearer an end now than then. The situation is well-nigh desperate with the miners. The operators are equally obdurate. Every one else is longing for cold weather to induce the idle miners to return to work.

*New York Times, August 11, 1908.*

#### 66. LAWLESS ACTS AGAIN REPORTED

One Man Shot, Another Drinks Poisoned Whisky

WHITE MINER HELD UP

Two Special Trains Carried Men To Mines Yesterday  
Under Military Escort--Another Dead Negro Found

Lawlessness bubbled over again yesterday in the coal strike district, one striker being shot by another striker because he expressed his intention of returning to work; a non-union miner being held up with guns and advised that if he did not quit work that he would be killed during the next few days, another non-union negro dying from drinking poisoned whisky, together with a few slight disturbances, making the day rather lively.

The shooting affair occurred at Banner mines, which are operated by the Pratt Consolidated Coal company. A negro, Tom Watkins, who is said to have gone on the strike, is said to have remarked in the presence of Ned Harris, another negro striker, that he was going back to work. Harris is said to have cursed at this, and replied that any man who would do that ought to be killed. Then, it is said, Harris pulled a pistol and shot Watkins.

Deputies at Banner heard the shooting and investigated, but Harris had made his escape. A search was instituted, but up to a late hour last night he had not been apprehended. The negro Watkins is said to be seriously wounded.

A white non-union miner named Williams reported that he had been held up by two negroes and told to quit work or be killed. Williams lives at Crocker, but works at the Jett mines, two miles away, on account of the Crocker mines being shut down. He was riding home on a mule when the two negroes stopped him, the men being armed and stepping out from behind some bushes in front of him.

At Sayreton a negro named George Wilson, said to be a non-union miner, went home yesterday, walked into the garden and fell dead. He is said to have purchased whisky from two hop jack stands and drank it not less than 15 minutes before his death. Coroner Paris will hold an autopsy over the remains to find out if poison was used.

Coroner Paris returned from Bessie mines yesterday, where he had been to investigate the finding of a dead negro in the woods between there and Blossburg. The body had been tied to a log and set on fire, being partially destroyed, and burned beyond recognition. Papers on him showed that he had traded with J. D. Hanby of Pratt City, and he is supposed to have been D. Shannon, alias Andrew Hemphill. Shannon is said to have been a labor agent working for the coal operators, and is said to have been missing.

Shortly after his return Coroner Paris left for Mineral Springs to investigate the finding of another dead negro in the woods there. The Pratt Consolidated Coal company operates the mines at Mineral Springs.

Two special trains carrying imported men were run yesterday under military escort, and the men delivered safely at the mines without trouble or interference. The first train went to Republic guarded by a detachment from Company F of Albertsville, with Lieuts. W. T. Clemens and Leon Schwarz in charge, and the second train carried a large number of men to Wylam. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 14, 1908.*

#### 67. GOVERNOR CONFERS WITH COL. HUBBARD

General Quiet In Mining Camps Yesterday

PRELIMINARIES ARE HELD

Several Men Bound Over to the Grand Jury in Connection  
With Recent Acts of Violence in Jefferson County

The strike situation was quiet at midnight, no report of any disorder having been received up to that time. Something is expected to occur around military headquarters today, but everything there was peaceful yesterday. Governor Comer and Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard held a conference at the governor's residence at a late hour last night, but the nature of the conference was not made public.

Several additional arrests have been made in connection with a number of the various incidents of the strike. Mims Harden has been arrested in connection with the Jefferson battle and a large number of charges docketed against him.

A preliminary hearing was held yesterday morning before Justice W. S. Russell for the men arrested in connection with the killing of Lige Nelms, a negro non-union miner, near Pratt mines, some two weeks ago. Arnold Miller, Dave Roebuck and Charles Crenshaw, all negroes, were bound over to await the action of the grand jury, while another negro named Ellis Hollis was arrested after the trial had started. Harry Doggett, Monroe Hunter and E. Barron were released. The first three and last three men named were arrested shortly after the killing upon warrants sworn out by Coroner W. D. Paris.

Nelms was killed near Pratt mines while on his way to work late in the afternoon. A crowd of negroes were playing baseball in a field close by the road he was walking down, and when he passed they attacked him. Nelms, from all accounts, put up a stiff fight and had about worsted his antagonists when some one started shooting, the affair winding up by Nelms being shot almost to pieces.

A hearing will be given before Judge H. B. Abernathy on next Saturday of the deputies charged with having assaulted with intent to murder Jake Burros, who was arrested some ten days ago, in connection with the dynamiting of a non-union miner's house at Wylam. Burros was bound over by Judge I. H. Benners on this charge, his arrest being followed by the arrest of the deputies who had captured him. Burros alleges that the deputies took him from his house and hung him to a tree for several moments.

Company K, the provisional company made up of Birmingham national guardsmen, will go into their new camp quarters either today or tomorrow. These quarters are located at Tenth avenue and Twenty-sixth street, right at the edge of Norwood. Electric lights and telephones will be installed in the camp, while the sanitary conditions will be of the best. Capt. E. H. Jackson of the Montgomery Greys is in command of this provisional company.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 18, 1908.*



## 68. NEGRO MASONS ADVISED TO STAY OUT OF UNIONS

Mobile. August 18.--(Special)--Grand Master Henry Claxton Binford of Huntsville made his annual address today before the 31st annual grand lodge of Alabama, Ancient Free and Accepted Colored Masons. There are 500 members of the grand lodge representing 388 chartered subordinate lodges, composed of more than 12,000 Masons. The address was enthusiastically received.

He spoke among other things bearing on the strike question in Birmingham and the colored Masons who are miners, saying in part:

"I have warned you before that unions must not enter our portals; the deplorable conditions now in the Birmingham district makes it necessary for me to say more. Every man has a right to quit work when he pleases. If you are not getting the wages you want, quit and go somewhere else; but for a man to quit work, continue to live in the company's house and say that others shall not work is wrong, both in the sight of God and man, and Masons must not be guilty of it; and when an organization resorts to murder and other means contrary to law and order to accomplish its purpose that organization is not fit to live and should be put down by the strong arm of the law.

"I advise you to stay out of these unions and have nothing to do with them. In the north the whites will not allow you folks to be in them and in the south you are only taken in because they cannot accomplish their purpose without them. Stay out of the unions."

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 19, 1908.*

## 69. CAMP OF THE BLOCTON SOLDIERS IS INSPECTED

Recurring Disorders In District Call For More Soldiers and  
Preservation of Order At Any Cost--Some Results of the  
Present Disturbed Conditions

By Frank V. Evans

Blocton, August 19.--(Special)--The train on which I came to Blocton this morning had as passengers 14 black people seeking employment at these mines, and, in order to safely land them here it was deemed necessary to have them accompanied by 30 soldiers and six deputy sheriffs. Just before reaching this point several detachments of soldiers from Major Valden's command were met, having been sent out by that officer to make sure a way clear of bushwackers from the camps of enemies to law.

Now, look at the picture: About 40 strong, vigorous, intelligent white men employed for a day to protect 14 black people in their effort to enter upon honorable and useful work. What heavy expense to the mine operator and to the taxpayers of Alabama. But, the constitution of this state guarantees protection to the lives and property of all the people, even the humblest negro, in their pursuit of happiness, employment and comfort; and, if it required the entire armed military force of the state to safely conduct these few black people to the Blocton mines, it was nothing more than the duty of the state to do so at any and all cost.

Do You Ask Why?

Does the reader ask why the necessity for all this? Where is there danger? And the answer comes, remember the bloody deeds committed by the ambushed villains on this spot just a few days before. The sovereign state simply declares such deeds shall not again be committed.

And yet it is hard, very hard that the act of ordering, fostering and encouraging a coal miners' strike should cause such conditions to arise as to make necessary this burden upon the whole people. Somebody is to blame for it all. . . .

## Crime Continues

Pending even an answer to that petition an object lesson was presented which ought to impress every reasonable mind with doubt as to whether or not even arbitration would stop the criminal tendency and dynamitic fury of those who are the guilty ones in these offenses against law and order and peace. I refer to the firing into an inoffensive shovel crew at Coalburg and the dynamiting and attempt to murder innocent men and women and destroy property at Pratt City last night. These workmen at Coalburg were not union miners. Those innocent young women at Pratt City were not the daughters of a union miner. The question is, who did that shooting and who fired the deadly dynamite?

## Held Without Bail

It has been the boast of the leaders of this strike that of the numerous men who have been arrested, charged with these dark and damnable crimes nearly all have been released on preliminary examination; but now we have it that at the preliminary trial of the 17 striking miners charged with dynamiting four houses at Acton mines and killing one of the inmates, all but two were held without bail in jail, the presiding magistrate deciding that the evidence of guilt was strong. This 15 of alleged murderers are now safely ensconced in the county jail at Columbiana. Thirteen of them are negroes and two are whites --all loyal members of the miners' union, so I am informed. The two white men are Ed Barrington and R. D. Stacener, the secretary and treasurer of the local at Acton mines. I venture the opinion that in all future trials of like cases the much offended state of Alabama will make most diligent inquiry turning suspects loose to prey upon the fair soil of this district in its present perturbed condition.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 20, 1908.*

## 70. SHATTER HOMES AND SPREAD TERROR

A Fight On Frisco Passenger Train Causes Alarm Among The Passengers

## FIFTEEN MEN HELD FOR UGLY MURDER AT ACTON

Several Threatening Reports Received By Sheriff Last Night Caused Extra Men To Be Sent Out Hurriedly

The quiet which has prevailed in the strike districts during the last few days was broken early yesterday morning by the dynamiting of two houses in Pratt City. One house was occupied by Thomas Duggan, mine boss of No. 12 mine, and who has been connected with the Tennessee company for the past 20 years, while the other house was occupied by Anthony Davis, a negro, who lives in a few hundred yards of Mr. Duggan.

Three negroes were arrested in connection with the crime, the negro Davis identifying them as the men who dynamited his house. Sheriff Higdon announced last night that he would pay a reward of \$250 for the arrest and conviction of the guilty parties.

So terrific was the explosion at Duggan's house that it woke up people nearly three miles away. The front part of the house almost completely demolished and two daughters of Mr. Duggan who were sleeping in the room next to the end of the front porch where the dynamite was thrown, were rendered unconscious by the force of the explosion.

## He Received Warnings

Mr. Duggan stated that he has received a number of letters during the past month warning him to cease work and for this reason he has been sleeping with his shotgun close to his bed. All of the windows in the house have been left open by the family during the recent hot nights and Mr. Duggan was sleeping next the window.

He stated that the letters had made him somewhat uneasy and that he had tried to sleep lightly. Shortly before 1 o'clock he heard something strike the porch and sprang out of bed, but before he had scarcely touched the floor there was a tremendous explosion. In the room with Mr. Duggan were his wife and baby boy, three sons and a little daughter occupied another room, while his other two daughters occupied a front room. The house is a five-room dwelling with a hall.

The young ladies screamed immediately and when the other members of the family reached them they were unconscious. They soon recovered, however, and physicians state that they were not injured, but simply shocked and would be all right in a day or two.

Mr. Duggan kept the ground clear around the house so that a trail could be taken by the dogs and then communicated with the prison officials and dogs were sent to the place at once.

#### Followed By Second Explosion

About 30 minutes after this explosion and before the dogs arrived the air was rent with another explosion, the negro Davis house being the one attacked this time. Davis and his wife had been awakened by the other explosion and were awake when the dynamite was thrown at their house. In fact, Davis stated to Chief of Police Hartsfield of Pratt City and Guard Singleton, who appeared on the scene shortly after the explosion, that he saw the men and had his gun drawn on them at the time of the explosion.

Without any trouble the dogs took a trail from Mr. Duggan's house. This trail passed through the front yard of his brother's (Mike Duggan) house to the Davis house. Mike Duggan stated that he heard the parties rush by his house immediately after the explosion.

From the Davis house the trail led to a negro settlement, directly to a house occupied by Albert Jones, Walter Finney and Finney's wife, all negroes. At the time of their arrest none of them is said to have been undressed with the exception they had taken their shoes off. The two men are members of the miners' union and went out on the strike.

The affair created a great sensation around Pratt City and a large crowd had collected by the time the three negroes were arrested, and it was feared that trouble might be experienced in getting them to jail. Beyond a few strong remarks, however, nothing was attempted.

They were taken before Davis, who said emphatically that they were the right ones. They were also taken before Duggan. Attempts were made to get the negroes to talk, but they maintained a sphinx-like silence all the while.

#### Reports Last Night

Matters were taking on a slightly ugly looking appearance last night, according to reports received from a number of places, and extra deputies were detailed to several of them. No reports of trouble had been received up to midnight, however.

Yesterday also witnessed the change in location of the military headquarters, Colonel Hubbard with Major Thurston, Major Noble and the other members of his staff moving from the Metropolitan hotel to the field camp at Twenty-sixth street and Tenth avenue, North.

Several small lots of imported men were placed yesterday, but without incident.

The preliminary hearing of the 17 men charged with dynamiting four houses of negro non-union miners at Acton, in which a negro youth lost his life, was finished yesterday at Columbiana. Two of the men were released, while the other 15 were bound over to await the action of the grand jury.

#### Fight on Passenger Train

A fight between a special deputy and a union miner created quite a sensation on a Frisco passenger train yesterday morning. The deputy was A. D. Rollins and the miner J. W. Dobbins.

According to reports received here both men boarded the train at Palos, and shortly afterward Dobbins expressed his opinion to Rollins as to what he thought of a man who would be a special deputy under existing conditions. He is said to have used a foul epithet in his description, and to have followed

it up with a smashing blow in Rollins' face. Rollins hit back and a spirited fight followed, the two men moving up and down the aisle. The train was traveling at a clipping rate and the coach was crowded. The men soon reached the door, and it was with great difficulty that the other passengers kept them off the platform.

Deputy Sheriff Vaught was on the train at the time, having in charge John Elliott, who is charged with the murder of John Hurley at Coal Creek several days ago. He forced himself into the crowd and placed the two men under arrest. At the time he did not know that Rollins was a special deputy.

Both men were beaten up badly and Dobbins was turned over to the authorities at Adamsville to receive medical attention. Rollins came on to Birmingham and swore out a warrant against Dobbins, while a charge of affray was also docketed against him.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 20, 1908.*

#### 71. WHY SHOULD LEADERS BE PERMITTED TO REMAIN?

Estes Says It Is Time Something Was Done to Show Insolent  
Violators of Peace and Dignity of State That  
Alabama Is No Place For Them

To the Editor of The Age-Herald:

As one of the citizens of Birmingham whose business is suffering from the coal miners' strike, I wish to enter my protest.

Let us look at the facts. Up to July 1 our business was gaining in volume steadily, and we felt that the end of the hard times was in sight. On July 1 the United Mine Workers of America called a strike--for what? Judging by the articles which have appeared in the press, and my long residence in the district, I say, unhesitatingly, that it was for the purpose of enforcing unionism in the mines of this district. Certainly it could have been no question of wages, because I know that a miner who was willing to work could make \$100 and over net per month in any of the mines, and I am reliably informed that the average wage was higher in this district than in the Connellsville district in Pennsylvania. Furthermore, there were mines like the Empire which had never reduced the wage scale, and at which strike conditions reign. From all of this it would appear that the strike was called for the purpose of again bringing the business of coal mining under the thumb of Messrs. Fairley, Kennamer, Clemo, et al.

It seems to me that such condition of affairs is monstrous! Why should we, the innocent third party, be made to suffer because Fairley wants to run the district, and in order to do so permits his thugs to dynamite houses, shoot into trains and intimidate men who want to work?

Why should we suffer this fellow, a foreigner by birth, to upset our commercial prosperity, arraign our governor and our sheriff, and bring on the name of our grand old state?

And this fellow White, why should we permit him to come into our country and organize the negroes against the white people of this district, and destroy the good feeling that has existed? Would it not be well for him to go to the mines of Illinois, where the white miners will not allow the negroes to work? Do we want a "Springfield riot" in our midst, started by this carpet-bagger?

It is time something was being done to show these insolent violators of the peace and dignity of our state that Alabama is no place for them. Colorado citizens showed what they thought of Fairley and how he should be treated. Are we less men than they of Colorado?

Yours truly,  
G. H. ESTES  
Birmingham, August 19, 1908.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 21, 1908.*

## 72. SOCIAL EQUALITY TALK EVIL FEATURE OF STRIKE

Since Operators Refuse Positively to Recognize Union, the  
Strike Leaders Are Only Persons Benefited by  
Continuation of the Fruitless Struggle

By Frank V. Evans

That was a wise and timely warning given to negro Masons by their grand master, Henry C. Binford, when he announced to them that if any negro Mason is killed while affiliating with the miners' union his heirs will not be entitled to benefits from the endowment department; and especially when he further said that he considered every member of his order in the Birmingham district connected with this union fighting the laws of the state a murderer.

This man Binford is a negro of intelligence and of property. He is well known in Birmingham and throughout the state and enjoys the confidence and esteem of numbers of white people. His advice to his race should be heeded. It is more wholesome advice than that given the negroes by the white leaders of this coal miners' strike, who are daily instilling into the minds of the blacks ideas of social equality, which if they do take root soon will result in a worse condition than even now exists--a condition of bloodshed and absolute annihilation. A worse page will be written in history than the stories recounted in the late 60s and the early 70s, when political carpetbaggers came among us to disturb the amicable relations which had existed in the south between the white and black races. The spirit of socialism anarchy are even more dangerous and damning than political error, blunder and darkness.

#### The Negro and the Union

Speaking on this matter, Hon. A. T. London said to me:

"My information is that over half of the miners in this district are negroes, and a large percentage of these people have been admitted into the union. I am also informed that north of the Ohio river negroes are not permitted to join the miners' union; and if this is true I think Mr. Fairley and Mr. White are called upon to make known why this discrimination is made against the negro miner elsewhere, and why it is that a negro union miner in Alabama ceases to be a union man when he crosses the Ohio river."<sup>44</sup>

"Is the present an adroit move to get rid of the negro miners, and if they are eliminated from the Alabama district does anyone imagine that the district of Alabama would be improved?

"We have shut our eyes to the fact, unconsciously, perhaps, that the future success of the coal mining business in this state rests very largely upon negro labor, and, apart from say, sentimental sense of duty, but from a purely economic standpoint, it is at once our duty and interest to protect these people in the exercise of their right to earn a living; and Mr. Fairley and Mr. White should both be made to understand that neither they nor any other men can come into Alabama and, by the creation of a combination and the inauguration of a reign of terror, not only dominate labor but break down the government.

I can already hear the cry made that I am simply giving vent to the claims of property. This cry is specious, for if its truth were conceded the labor of a miner, white or black, is just as much property at the mine owned by the operator, and he is entitled to just the same right to sell his labor to whom he desires, and on such terms as he pleases, as is the operator to sell his coal. Once destroy the right of property and you have practically no liberty left. The government rests upon this very foundation and personal liberty is just as much involved in the right to contract as it is in the right of exemption from wrongful incarceration in jail."

#### Woman's Auxiliary

I am reliably informed that the latest movement of the leaders of the strike in this district is to organize the women of both races whose husbands, fathers and brothers are members of the union in female unions known as the "Woman's Auxiliary."<sup>45</sup>

If this be true, the fact presents a still greater dangerous picture. Knowing as I do a great many strikers, members of the miners' union, as simply misled followers of false teachers, but respectfully inclined as native whites of this section, it is hard to believe that these would thus permit such social admixture, no matter how strongly urged to do so by the agitators who have come among them to wreck their homes and their social status for the purpose of getting gain. I am sure that the caucasian blood of this state would rebel against such desecration of the home fireside for any purpose. And yet, evidence can be presented that the organization of these "women's auxiliaries" is being urged as part of the iniquitous plan of those who have brought about this disorder.

#### Here and Elsewhere

Information comes from East Tennessee that racial feeling runs high against the negro miners there, and that they are ordered out of the mines by whites who object to their presence. Last Monday morning notices were found posted in Tennessee ordering the negroes to leave, and notifying the manager that if the negroes were not removed at once his blood would pay the price. The sheriff was called to protect the negroes, and the white miners, all armed, fired many shots during the night and placed a search light on the mines at intervals. It required a posse of 200 deputies to protect the negroes. The story goes that the white miners, fearing to attack such a well-guarded mine, left. It is said that the whole trouble lies in the fact that the negroes will not join the union.

And this is the way the white union miners of East Tennessee treat the negro for whom they here express such devotion.

#### The Negro's Value

No reasonable man, white or black, can doubt for a moment that the negro is a valuable asset of these southern states. As a race they are useful, productive, and when exempt from the false teachings and domineering influence of bad white men, they are always in a happy condition. I mean so long as the social line is strictly drawn between whites and blacks.

In the south they have their separate churches, their separate schools, their separate fraternal orders and lodges, and in all the unions composed of skilled mechanics this line is distinctly and wisely drawn.

The leaders of this miners' strike are attempting every day to obliterate this line. They are causing close social affiliation between men and women and children at their public gatherings, and are sowing the seeds of discord, which may fructify, if cultivated, and bring forth terribly more social disorders than we have even at this time. During this strike I have seen white men and white women and fair and promising white girls closely mingling and listening not only to the false teachings of white leaders, but to social advice uttered by the fiery tongue of ignorant and vicious blacks. I have heard one of the chief white leaders of this strife fire the minds of ignorant blacks with the statement that under the contract system the negro was doing all the work and the white man getting the pay. I have seen a negro place his arms around the neck of a white speaker in the presence of fair white women and children and apparently prompt him in secret as to what next to say to fire up the hearts of the ignorant blacks.

All this, I say, tends to demoralization, and unless checked can only prove harmful to social conditions and end in the damnation of the blacks who are brought under the veil influence. It is criminal. It is sinful. It deserves the most severe condemnation.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 22, 1908.*

#### 73. NON-UNION MINER SHOT FROM AMBUSH NEAR PRATT CITY

Anthony Davis Is Negro Who Recognized Men  
Who Dynamited His House

## ASSASSINATION PLANNED AT THE ARCADIA MINES

Deputies Are Fired Upon and One Man's Horse is Instantly Killed.  
Excitement Caused By Last Night's Shooting

Another non-union miner was shot from ambush last night, this one being Anthony Davis, the negro whose house was dynamited a few nights ago at Pratt City. The shooting occurred about 8 o'clock while the negro was walking along the Birmingham Southern drift track toward his home. He received three wounds in the leg, but none is considered dangerous.

The house occupied by Davis and his family is close to the house of Mine Boss Thomas Duggan, which was almost demolished by dynamiters. Davis' house was dynamited some 20 minutes after Duggan's house, and Davis claims to have seen the parties who threw the dynamite at his house. He afterward identified three negroes who were arrested after bloodhounds had taken a trail to their door.

After the dynamiting Davis moved to the company camp and was returning to his house last night to secure some things he had there. He was walking along the drift track and had almost reached his home when several shots rang out from a corn patch on the left side of the track. Three of the shots took effect.

The shooting attracted attention and the sheriff's office and military headquarters were notified. Colonel Hubbard sent a detail of troops to the scene from the military camp at No. 1 mines, while Chief Deputy Sheriff Lucien Brown sent a flying squad of special deputies out in an automobile. Deputy Sheriff Gilbert and Chief of Police Hartsfield of Pratt City had also been notified and sent out immediately.

## Dogs Take Trail Quickly

A pack of bloodhounds was taken from Ensley and struck a trail immediately. This trail ran for about 150 yards to a poolroom in a small settlement. The deputies on their way to the place where the negro was shot stopped at this poolroom and inquired as to where the shooting had occurred and then rode on. When they stopped there were about a dozen negroes at the poolroom, but when the dogs bayed and took the trail these negroes scattered.

After scenting around the poolroom for several minutes the dogs started off again. The trail this time led around the hill for three-quarters of a mile and stopped at a negro cabin. Inside were found two negro women and a sick negro man. The officers examined the man closely and satisfied themselves that he was really ill and that he could not have taken part in the affair. An effort was made to strike another trail, but without success. No arrests were made in connection with the shooting.

Peter Wallace, the white man who was arrested Thursday and lodged in the county jail with a charge of assault with intent to murder docketed against him, it being alleged that he had participated in the dynamiting of Thomas Duggan's house, was released yesterday under \$1,000 bond.

News of last night's shooting spread rapidly in Birmingham and quite an amount of excitement was occasioned by it. The spot where it occurred is less than a mile from the heart of Pratt City, and the people there were greatly wrought up.

## Outrage at Arcadia

Reports were also received yesterday morning of a general shooting up of the deputies camp at Arcadia late Thursday night. It developed that the telephone and telegraph wires had been cut and communication was not established with the sheriff's office until after 7 o'clock yesterday morning.

It appears that a plot had been made for the shooting up of the non-union miners' camp at Arcadia and the massacre of the deputies when they started toward the non-union camp. According to plans a meeting was to have been held in an old house at Arcadia. This meeting was to have lasted until midnight, when those in attendance were to divide into two squads. One squad was to have shot up the non-union houses while the other was to lay in wait along the road which the deputies would have to walk down to these houses.

The sheriff's office received wind of these plans and proceeded to forestall them. A flying squad was sent from Birmingham about 8 o'clock Thursday night with instructions to join the other deputies at Arcadia, surround the house in which the meeting was to be held and arrest every man in it.

For some reason, however, the shooting began earlier than the set time. From the hills surrounding the deputies camp shot after shot was fired, the total number fired passing the 100 mark. None of the deputies was injured, but one of the horses was killed and another so badly shot in the hoof that it may be necessary to kill it.

One of the company guards went to a spring for some water, carrying a lantern with him. He instantly became the target, several shots clipping close to him. The shots continued coming in his direction until he put out the light in the lantern.

Reports from the flying squad of deputies sent to Arcadia were expected shortly after midnight, and much uneasiness was felt around the sheriff's office when nothing was heard from them. The deputies there found it impossible to get connection with Birmingham, however, and with the approach of daylight discovered that the telephone and telegraph wires had been cut.

#### Strikers' Rally Today

The strikers' rally to be held at Lewisburg today is expected to assemble several thousand of the striking miners. The programme was not announced, but it is known that Vice President John P. White and National Committeeman Fairley will speak as will a number of other union officials. A barbecue will be held in connection with the rally.

The various justice of the peace courts and divisions of the inferior court were busy yesterday hearing different strike cases. The negro Willie Hollis, who had been held in connection with the murder of the negro Lige Nelms near Pratt City, was given a hearing yesterday before Justice Russell and given his liberty, the judge deciding that there was not sufficient evidence to hold him.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 22, 1908.*

#### 74. ARRESTS MADE IN STRIKE DISTRICT

Several arrests were made yesterday in connection with strike disorder. One particular incident of note occurred at Arcadia where two men were arrested by the deputies there for being armed. These men stated that they were company guards at Coalburg, but they were told that they had no right to be moving about the country armed; that they could not pass beyond the property lines of the particular place at which they were employed.

Three men were placed in the county jail for trespassing after warning and other charges. They were Charles Averyhart, a negro, who has charges of violating the prohibition laws, trespassing after warning and carrying concealed pistol docketed against him; J. M. Morrow, white, with three charges of violating the revenue law, opposite his name, and Ben White, a negro, for malicious mischief and trespassing after warning. A negro woman, Minnie White, was also arrested on a charge of malicious mischief.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 23, 1908.*

#### 75. TWO SPEAKERS ARE PUT UNDER ARREST AT FULTON SPRINGS

Chief Deputy Brown Is Also Arrested on Charge of Assault

PREACHER STOPPED IN MIDST OF HIS ADDRESS



Had Asserted That the Only Enemies the Miners Had Were "Higdon's  
Dirty Deputies"--Big Crowd Attends the Rally

Three arrests were made yesterday at the strikers' rally at Fulton Springs, near Lewisburg. One arrest was that of the Rev. W. A. Lewis by Chief Deputy Sheriff Lucien Brown; another that of G. F. Howie, editor of the Birmingham Register, which was made by the soldiers at the request of Chief Deputy Brown; and the third arrest being that of Chief Deputy Brown himself, on a warrant sworn out by W. D. Smotts.

More than 3000 persons attended the barbecue, which was said to have been given to the strikers by the members of the Farmers' union in Jefferson county. Practically all of those in attendance were whites, a group of blacks being assembled on a small hill back of the speakers' stand. The negroes took no part in the proceedings, nor mixed with the crowd. The feminine sex was well represented, and, with the exception of the arrests, the day was one of general jollification.<sup>46</sup>

The speaking began at 2 o'clock, with the Rev. W. A. Lewis, presiding. The speakers were W. R. Fairley, national committeeman; National Organizer Pasco, Mr. Parkerson of Lewisburg, G. F. Howie of Birmingham, and Curtis Shugart of Birmingham.

Trouble Begins Early

Trouble began with the opening of the meeting. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Lewis, after which he proceeded to make an introductory speech. In this talk he remarked that the soldiers were the miners' friends and that the only enemies the miners had were "Higdon's dirty deputies."

Chief Deputy Sheriff Lucien Brown, Deputy Sheriff Sid Cowan and a large force of deputies, with 100 soldiers, were at the meeting. When Mr. Lewis made his references to the deputies Chief Deputy Brown proceeded to arrest him, pushing through the crowd to the stand. The preacher made bond on the spot, and the meeting continued.

Shortly afterward Chief Deputy Brown was placed under arrest by Constable Ellard on the warrant sworn out by W. D. Smotts. This warrant charged assault upon a widow woman, Mrs. C. E. Chambers, it being alleged that the chief deputy had knocked her over a bench while making his way to Lewis. He made bond immediately.

When asked about the occurrence last night Major Brown stated that he did not know on what grounds the charges were based. He said that while he was going to the stand that by accident he brushed by a woman, who was sitting on a bench, but that he did not knock her over and that he apologized to her.

The other speakers followed in quiet succession until Mr. Howie's turn. Their talks were full of encouragement to the strikers and similar to many other talks which have been made by the union leaders and sympathizers.

Howie's Remarks Resented

Mr. Howie proceeded to tell of the Brighton lynching and one or two other incidents, remarking in connection with them that neither the governor nor sheriff had offered any reward for the arrest and conviction of the persons guilty of these crimes. He then referred to the recent shooting to death of a negro prisoner who was escaping from the courthouse, and remarked that he was shot in the back while handcuffed. "The men who did this shooting are still in the employ of the sheriff," said he and his arrest immediately followed.

This arrest was made by the soldiers at the request of Chief Deputy Brown, the soldiers marching to the stand and escorting Mr. Howie a short distance from it. Mr. Howie wanted to make bond and was told that the military officers could not allow it and he would have to be turned over to the sheriff of Birmingham.

Mr. Howie replied that the sheriff's chief deputy was on the scene and called on several persons to witness his demand upon the soldiers that he be turned over to Chief Deputy Brown. After a good deal of consultation among the deputies and military officers it was decided to put him in Major Brown's custody. This was done and Mr. Howie made bond at once, a large crowd of men surging around wanting to sign the bond.

Another speaker followed Mr. Howie, and the speaking was finished. It was still early in the afternoon and the crowd indulged in dancing in the pavilion until a late hour, there being no further excitement.

Chief Deputy Brown also had another warrant sworn out against him, the Rev. Mr. Lewis swearing out one charging him with interrupting public worship. It appears, however, that this warrant was not served on Major Brown.

The troops at the scene were composed of men from the provisional company, which is camped at Norwood, and of Companies being brought in from their respective camps. They numbered about 100 and were under the command of Captain Maddox, Lieutenant Colonel Hubbard. Major Noble and other members of his staff also arrived at the springs while the speaking was going on and remained there for some little time.

Outside of this rally there was nothing but quiet in the coal strike district. No imported men were sent out under military escort, and reports from different places indicated that quiet reigned.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 23, 1908.*

## 76. THE SOCIAL EQUALITY HORROR

As appalling as have been the murders and dynamitings growing out of the strike of the United Mine Workers in the Birmingham district, the worst thing yet done because of its far-reaching evil effect, is the teaching and practical illustration of social equality in the mining camps. Soon after the strike began it became known that union leaders had promised the negro miners and their families social equality with the white miners and their families, but few persons imagined that here in a southern community any set of white men would dare to attempt a movement so repulsive or so damnable.

But Women's Auxiliaries, composed of whites and blacks, are said to be actually in existence while in a number of the mining camps the public has a hideous object lesson in social equality as illustrated in tented life. Every intelligent negro understands that white and black can live side by side in the south and be mutually helpful, but that the two races can never meet on social equality and that miscegenation in the southern states is a felony. The barrier has been fixed and it will remain forever.<sup>47</sup>

Every intelligent person not only comprehends this question but every right-minded negro appreciates the reasonableness of this race wall. Were the barrier to be broken down a silent tragedy, more terrible than that of torch or sword, would fall upon our fair southland--more terrible because it would mean the decay and obliteration of our white civilization.

But why discuss this matter further? The worst of organized crimes is being committed before our eyes.

Social equality between Caucasian and negro does not set very well in northern communities where the blacks are comparatively few and where the race problem is practically unknown. Here in Alabama it will not be tolerated at all. This social equality movement among United Mine Workers must be stopped at once. It can hardly be that the better class of striking miners of either color will countenance anything of the kind.

It is certain that the public in general feels outraged and that it will not allow this social equality infamy to continue.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 24, 1908.*

## 77. EVERYBODY KNOWS WHO IS TO BLAME FOR CONDITIONS

Moore and Johnson Say That Social Equality Between White and Black  
Miners as Established Under Fairley's Leadership  
Is Direct Insult to Southern Traditions

To the Editor of The Age-Herald:

Fairley called a strike that has bathed this district in blood. Social equality has been established and sacred traditions trampled in the dust.

This strike was called without provocation or justification. We have a state of lawlessness and anarchy seldom experienced in civilized communities. No man's life is safe, business is paralyzed, property values disturbed, and the end is not yet.

It is needless to discuss further the responsibility of the present deplorable state of affairs in this district, because every intelligent man in Jefferson county knows that the responsibility rests directly on the heads of Fairley and his associates.

The establishment of social equality between white and black miners is a direct insult to our southern traditions, and under Fairley's leadership it seems the limit has been reached.

Foreign agitators, not content, are now organizing white women and black women into unions called the Woman's Auxiliary. The effect of this is certain to result in degradation of our citizenship and in race riots.

The question arises, just how much damage to life, property and morals this Agitator Fairley and his associates have a right to inflict on this community before the deadline is reached. It surely seems that we are short on law or manhood, if not both.

WALTER MOORE,  
GUY R. JOHNSON.

Birmingham, August 23, 1908.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 24, 1908.*

#### 78. SPIRIT OF DEVILTRY CAUSES THIS DISORDER AND CRIME

Mines at Carbon Hill Busily in Commission--Racial Dangers  
Threatening--Vice President White's Movements  
Indicate Beginning of the End

By Frank V. Evans

Booker Washington's Race

I see where Booker T. Washington, the negro leader of the better class, is up east talking about the horrors of lynch law. His utterances on that subject find indorsement here; but there are worse crimes being committed right here in the state which affords a dwelling place for Tuskegee Institute than lynching, and this is the time and this the place where the voice of Booker Washington should be applied before his race in unmistakable and vigorous manner. Lynch law seldom oppresses an innocent victim. Here in Alabama idleness has made bomb-throwers, midnight assassins, cut-throats and murderers of the innocent out of members of Booker Washington's race and I say that if he desires to do good, he should turn his batteries in this direction and not waste ammunition in informing eastern civilization of these things which are of no such moment now, as the reign of terror which is disturbing this section of Alabama--terror produced by the cunning, the avarice, the chicanery, the wickedness of devils in disguise, who are misleading not only viciously inclined white men, but ignorant members of Booker Washington's race. Strenuous orators should appear when the state is in jeopardy and when the people are at issue with the enemy.

Devils Are Here

Politeness makes the devil, as the theologians have made the angels, always masculine, ever since devilish qualities were ascribed to the poor women burned as witches in Salem or elsewhere, who were supposed to fly to the devil and converse with him. Naturally, today in this district we behold pluralism in the sex of devils, embodied in male and female. At Sayre the

other day one of these black she-devils kicked and cuffed and bruised the wife of a non-union negro miner because, forsooth, her husband labored daily for bread and raiment. Who instilled that spirit of the devil in the woman? Whose voice of disruption, agitation and misguidance is responsible? Who are the emissaries of the devil, the very incarnation of the evil spirit among us?

It was Milton who pictured Satan as an arch-angel, thrust forth as rebellious from heaven, but still magnificent--

"High on a throne of royal state, which far  
Outshone the wrath of Ormus and of Ind."

But the plainer devils have come to this district, plain men have brought and instilled them in the brains that are ignorant and hearts that are fitting receptacles for their abiding place.

And these devils have sought to teach the negro that he should affiliate socially with white men and with white women. These devils have caused organizations known as "Women's Auxiliaries," composed of white women and black women; these devils encouraged a negro speaker to tell negro miners in the early part of this strife that they were as good as white men, and should demand high places of honor and of trust; these hellions have poisoned the minds of ignorant blacks to be fired up against law and order and peace; to apply dynamite to peaceful shelters; to crouch and cower in ambush and draw the murderous trigger against innocent men and helpless women.

#### The Result

Led into temptation by vain promises given by this satanic spirit, ignorant whites and blacks alike have been idling away these many weeks. The idleness is costing, not only money of the state, but the participants and their families fears and anxiety and sorrow. It has caused the burning of bridges, the slaughter of innocents, and the shedding of blood.

The announcement made that Vice President White of the mine workers, after a brief stay and examinations of conditions in this district, has left the state suggests the beginning of the end of this strife. He is generally accounted a man of intelligence. If so, he has seen and he knows that a continuation of this unholy warfare can only bring more sorrow, more tears, more cost of money and of blood, that the ultimatum of the operators means all that it says, that only few are fattening on the marrow of this sorrowful condition; and that there is a daily prayer for peace, and for order ascending to heaven from every righteous man and woman in Alabama. He knows that not a single furnace has been shut down by the operation of this strike; he knows that on the other hand two furnaces that were idle on July 1 have been started up; he knows that the wheels of every engine in this district are running; and he knows that miners are entering the mines every day, and the output is increasing.

And, knowing these things, Mr. White surely sees the handwriting on the wall. If there be one spark of humanity, of justice, and of righteousness in his soul (and surely there must be), he will not, if in his power to prevent, suffers a continuance of this useless and sinful warfare against the commonwealth of Alabama.

Therefore, I say that soon the light will break forth and the clouds of darkness pass away. Soon civilization, law and order will assert their sway, and industrial and social peace shall reign again.

#### Encouragement Offered

And when this peaceful condition is restored we shall hope to see many of the toiling thousands who have been affrighted and misled re-enter upon a discharge of the honorable and profitable labor from which they have been drawn by that evil spirit; and a resumption of those amicable relations between miner and operator which for so long a time have been enriching this state and affording happiness, comfort and wealth to men of muscle and willingness and to men of brain and capital. There must be no exodus of worthy labor, because, forsooth, it has been for a season misguided. But, the vicious spirits, the ringleaders, the dynamiters, the cut-throats, the assassins should not find

lodgement here after the dove of peace hovers once again over this fair section.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 25, 1908.*

#### 79. PUT DOWN ALL ATTEMPTS TO OVERTURN SOCIAL STATUS

J. V. Allen Says If Fairley and His Associates Had Been In  
South Alabama A Coroner Would Now Be Needed

To the Editor of The Age-Herald:

Birmingham has won the admiration of the world for its enterprise, splendid achievements and the ability of its citizens to do things, but in the present coal miners' strike she has been a distinct disappointment to all liberty-loving Alabamians.

If Fairley and his black co-conspirators had invaded south Alabama and perpetrated the same damnable deeds he has inflicted on the people of Jefferson county, nothing further would be needed but the coroner.

The time for discussing the promoters and directors of this guerilla warfare, who have brought shame and disgrace on the state and wrought wreck and ruin to this district, should be past; the time for action is at hand. Our property interests, our personal liberty, the happiness and lives of our people are involved. What more is necessary to arouse a brave people against the instigators of assaults from the midnight assassin? They seem willing and anxious to sacrifice this entire community, even the blood of innocent women and children, for personal gain. They are guilty of an attempt to overturn our social status and break down barriers sacred to the whole south. They construe liberty to mean license and long suffering of our people as cowardice.

There is not an intelligent man in this district who does not know that the work of the trouble-maker, the dynamiter and midnight assassin has been directed by a conspirator located in the very heart of this city. This community has gone through an ordeal that few communities would suffer. The people have been patient to the limit.

We are told of a message from Indianapolis from President Lewis asking a conference with the coal operators, with a view of arbitration. The operators will accept no compromise and the people want no compromise.<sup>48</sup>

No right-thinking man can tolerate the thought of seeing his fellow-citizens coerced into signing any kind of contract or agreement. The idea is repugnant to every sense of justice and is abhorrent to all honest and brave men.

Let's start things up!

J. V. ALLEN

Birmingham, August 25, 1908.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 26, 1908.*

#### 80. RACE QUESTION IMPORTANT ISSUE IN MINERS' STRIKE

Time For Calling Out Men Inopportune and Act Was Cruel.  
Must Be Sifting of Good From Bad--Strike Is Collapsing

By Frank V. Evans

I insist upon it that the race question is an important issue in this season of discord. Here in this country there happens to exist race prejudice to a harmful degree. There are some white men who hate the negro and negroes who hate white men. The negro-hating white man, generally speaking, is the ignorant white man, and the negro who hates Caucasian blood is the vicious fellow whose prejudices can easily be aroused by the voice of agitators of

either race. Left alone to work his own way the southern negro has never caused trouble in a general way. Naturally he is submissive and easily influenced by whites.

In Springfield, Ill., the other day, when the racial disturbance occurred the cry went up from the white populace--"Kill the nigger!" Down here in the south when the white people are aroused by disorders committed by both races and when the avenging hand is to be raised to stop disturbances the first impulse and inclination is to dispose of the white villains who seek to disturb the community. . . .<sup>49</sup>

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 27, 1908.*

## 81. RACE QUESTION BOTHERING THE STRIKE LEADERS

Report Says Fairley Left Indianapolis for Home Last Night

COAL OUTPUT AT ALL THE MINES SHOWS BIG GAIN

Lewis Says He Can See Nothing To Justify the Belief That the Strike Will End Soon

Indianapolis, Ind., August 27.--(Special)--President Lewis of the United Mine Workers, reached headquarters here at an early hour this morning and immediately went in conference with National Executive Board Member Fairley, Vice President White and Secretary-Treasurer Ryan, regarding the situation in Alabama, where some 18,000 miners are on strike. All the details of the situation were carefully gone over but the conference refused to discuss what had occurred except to say that the Alabama situation was under discussion.

When President Lewis was asked if there be any truth in the report that the strike might be called off at an early day, he shook his head and said he could see nothing that would justify a belief that it would end soon.

Mr. Fairley said today that some prejudices against the union miners' officers had been aroused. They had been charged with advocating social equality of blacks and whites and the miners' causes had lost ground by reason of this fact. He explained that negroes had been taken into the union and left the impression that organizers now in the field have been soliciting negroes brought in to take the strikers' places to join the union.

It is thought that the attitude of the miners toward the negroes was the chief topic of discussion in the meeting today as Mr. Fairley seemed to think that taking them into the union was prejudicing the miners' cause in the minds of people.

No amount of questioning could bring out anything more from the conferences than the mere fact that the Alabama situation had been discussed. Fairley left for home tonight. . . .

As is seen by the special dispatch from Indianapolis the social equality question as it relates to the Alabama miners' union was discussed by the executive board yesterday. The white people of Alabama have been greatly outraged at the attempt of the leaders of the United Mine Workers to establish equality between the whites and the blacks in the mining camps, and in view of what was happening in this district as a result of the teachings of the agitators, Fairley's efforts to explain the matter away and his evident worry over the harm that he and his associates had done in precipitating race trouble, will be readily understood. . . .

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 28, 1908.*

## 82. "SOCIAL EQUALITY" SIDE OF THE MINERS' STRIKE

What the Women Think of It--The Distressing Situation--  
A Plea For Southern Traditions

By Dolly Dalrymple

Into the recent distressing conditions, existing in this district from the strike, a note has crept that has caused the women to shudder, at the very thought. A note of madness, a note of sorrow, a note of resentment, that into the sacred precincts of our time-honored southern traditions, a suggestion of such a thing as "social equality" should be tolerated--or even countenanced.

Most of us of the Southland have many pleasant memories of dear old, black "mammies," crooning their sweet, gentle songs over us, in our childhood days, loving and fostering us, watching us, and ministering to us, as tenderly as though they were our own "kith and kin." Black mothers indeed they truly were, and mine dated back to a remote generation--for she was my mother's "mammy"--a black "mammy" truly, for she tended her as a "baby"--and afterwards when she grew into womanhood--and then, when she was married, she went to live with her, as cook--that is, she managed the pantry, the garden, the house, the other servants, in fact, everything, and my mother and father. In other words the place couldn't get along without "mammy."

In all the years of tender affection and maternal care, there was never the faintest question of "social equality." "Mammy" knew where she belonged, and what her rights were.

My mother and father regarded her--(and then when the "little stranger" who was none other than myself, appeared in after years)--I too, looked upon "Mammy" as a faithful friend, part and parcel of the little nest which was so dear in the making--as used to be cared for, as much as any other member of the family.

When "Mammy's" children grew up along with all of us (for there were more little ones, who came to brighten the home and make it sweeter by their presence, as the years went by)--they were looked after and given homes--provided with work and suitable surroundings. Some of them are still in the employment of members of our family. Pardon this little retrospect--but I indulge in it because of the conditions now existing in our minds.

It seems absolutely inconceivable to me that any man, or association of men, should deliberately set about to upset the primary social laws of our beloved south.

If, as has been intimated in the daily press, these men have brought other men into the district to preach the doctrine of social equality, and all for the sake of their own gain, then words fail to express my indignation! It is monstrous!

In conversation with one of the operators, I was commenting upon this horror and said I could not believe it. Whereupon I was promptly told that in one camp on a small tract of leased land there several hundred men, women and children, white and black, and that this camp was one of several, where equally bad conditions exist.

All hail to our governor that he has taken his manful stand against this unspeakable crime.

When I hear of white miners eating side by side with black men; of women's auxiliaries where white and black women meet on an equal footing, my heart swells to the bursting point.

Men of our glorious southland, will you stand idly by and see these infamies committed? Has the pursuit of money so tarnished your chivalry that you are willing to see such conditions go unpunished? Or is it that you are simply biding your time, to show the world that in your veins still runs the blood that for generations has had no peer?

White women and black women meeting on the basis of "Social equality" indeed! White men holding umbrellas over negro speakers! Black men addressing white men as "brother!"

The women of our fair southland resent it! They deplore it! Their hearts ache over such a condition of affairs! And whether the strike is nearing the end (which we earnestly pray is the case) or not, every true-hearted southern woman in this district makes an appeal for the amelioration of the "social

equality" side of it, at least.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 30, 1908.*

### 83. STRIKE CALLED OFF; ORDER GOES FORTH

Officials Yesterday Signed Document Which Will Be  
Read By Every Striking Miner In District This  
Morning--Governor's Ultimatum Brought Things to Head

Miners' Officials Held Long Conference Yesterday and  
Took Final Action--Lewis Left for North Last  
Night--Text of the Order Kept Secret

The miners' strike is a thing of the past.

The executive order calling it off was signed yesterday by the same officials that called out the miners of Alabama on July 6--President T. L. Lewis, Vice President J. P. White and Secretary-Treasurer W. D. Ryan--and is now being sent to the union locals of the district. With this order goes a statement which, it is understood, sets forth some of the reasons for the action taken.

President Lewis, Vice President White, Secretary-Treasurer Ryan and several members of the national board arrived here from Indianapolis last Friday morning. They held conferences with local officials of the miners' union and afterwards the president and vice president conferred with Governor Comer and two or three prominent business men.

At a conference which the governor and the union officials held Friday afternoon W. P. G. Harding, president of the First National bank, was present; and at a conference between the governor and Mr. Lewis Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock Gen. E. W. Rucker was present by invitation of the governor. At 6 p.m. Saturday the governor and Mr. Lewis held their final conference.

Strike conditions and the temper of the public had been fully discussed at all these conferences, most of which were held in the directors' room of the First National bank. Governor Comer, Mr. Harding and General Rucker had each impressed upon President Lewis the idea that a continuance of the strike would be altogether futile from the miners' point of view and that the sooner it were called off the better.

Saturday evening when Gov. Comer met Lewis for the last time, his ultimatum was to substance this: If the strike is not called off by 10 a.m. Monday, August 31, I will immediately call a special session of the legislature for dealing with the situation. While neither Gov. Comer nor Mr. Lewis gave out a statement concerning this ultimatum, it is believed the state's chief executive stressed the fact that if the legislature had to be called its work would be extremely drastic in dealing with the strike.

President Lewis seeing that the governor was determined to parley no further, got busy and called a conference of his associates for 11 o'clock yesterday. He stated to a representative of The Age-Herald Saturday night that conditions were so grave as to cause him to do what he made it a rule not to do--namely to hold a business meeting on Sunday.

The conference yesterday was held at the Southern hotel on Twentieth street. Informal conferences between some of the officials were held later in the afternoon. The greatest secrecy was maintained throughout the day.

President Lewis left for Indianapolis over the Alabama Great Southern late in the afternoon. Vice President White and Secretary-Treasurer Ryan remain in the city. The latter has charge of the distribution of the official statement or circular which was agreed upon by the conference. Mr. Ryan said last night that he would not be at liberty to give out a statement before today.

It was decided, it is understood, that nothing official should appear in the press until the union locals had been informed of what had been done. This, it was stated, was a matter of courtesy to the strikers.

The operators had refused to recognize the union; had stated over and over again since the strike was ordered that they were unalterably committed



to the open shop policy, and such being the case there was no possibility of arbitration or compromising. It is said that Mr. Lewis had hoped up to a late hour Saturday afternoon to meet a representative of the operators' association, but that when Gen. Rucker told him the operators meant exactly what they said, he gave up that hope. And when the governor delivered his ultimatum, there was, it is said, nothing left but to quit.

Operators who were seen last night said they had not learned the result of the United Mine Workers' conference, and it was nearly midnight before owls about the clubs and hotels began to discuss the calling off of the strike.

It is needless to say that the news will be received this morning with great joy, not only in business circles, but in many strikers' families. It is said that a large percentage of the men who were on the strike will be re-instated by the operators.

The ending of the strike will mean the starting up of at least two blast furnaces that have been idle since last winter, and as the iron market is active it is probable that three or four additional furnaces will be blown in before November.

As an ironmaster remarked yesterday, the outlook for a revival of prosperity is bright indeed.

*Birmingham Age-Herald, August 31, 1908.*

#### 84. STRIKE CALLED OFF BY OFFICIAL ORDER

Following is the official order calling off the miners' strike in Alabama: To the Mine Workers of Alabama:

On July 1, 1908, the organized mine workers of Alabama were asked to accept a reduction of 20 per cent in their wages and other conditions that were intolerable. Rather than accept you refused to work. Since then the unorganized miners of Alabama joined the United Mine Workers and declared for living wages and the right to belong to a labor union. This right was denied by the employers and the offer of the miners to arbitrate has been refused by the operators with scorn.

Your refusal to work has resulted in a general suspension of mining. No strike was ever more effective in suspending the operation of the mines.

The operators used every means at their command to defeat you in your efforts to secure better wages.

You were ordered not to carry arms and, like good citizens, obeyed. You were directed not to march on the public highways and you promptly complied with the order. You were evicted from your homes and with your wives and children you left without a murmur. You were furnished by the United Mine Workers with tents in which to live, upon ground secured by a sympathetic people in the mining community.

By the order of the state authorities many of those tents were cut down and ordered moved away. Other tents have been cut down and taken possession of by the soldiers. Many miners and sympathizers have been arrested and thrown into jail without due process of law.

Through this state the miners of Alabama have struggled nobly and manfully for better wages and conditions that would bring some comfort and happiness to your homes. No miners in the world have stood more loyally than you; no men have suffered greater hardships and endured greater privations.

The climax of this state of affairs was reached when the governor of Alabama said that the miners shall not be permitted to live in tented camps and that public meetings shall not be held in the mining communities of the state during this strike. In other words, the strike must end, regardless of the cost to the miners or any rights they have in the premises.

The United Mine Workers of America is a law-abiding institution. It is a defender of law and order. It believes in the maintenance of the peace and tranquillity of every community.

Since the state authorities have decided to end the strike there is nothing for the United Mine Workers to do but to bow in submission to the mandate. Recognizing the futility of continuing the strike under those circumstances we have decided to declare it off September 1, and take this means of

notifying you that the strike is to brought to an end and you are advised to secure employment.

No one can regret more keenly than ourselves this ending of the strike in Alabama.

The United Mine Workers, as an organization, will do now as it always has done for its striking members--assist those in need, and help those who cannot secure employment to go elsewhere. Fraternally yours,

T. L. LEWIS, President,  
JOHN P. WHITE, Vice President,  
W. D. RYAN, Secretary-Treasurer,  
United Mine Workers of America

*Birmingham Age-Herald, September 1, 1908.*

#### 85. GEORGIA RAILROAD STRIKE, 1909

##### NEGROES CAUSE STRIKE

ATLANTA, Ga., May 17.--Every white fireman and hostler employed on the Georgia Railroad went out on strike tonight as a protest against the employment of negroes by the company. Knowing that the men intended to strike, the railroad has been discharging them all day as fast as they came in from their runs. It is said that negroes are being employed by the road to take the places of the white men who have been discharged and who have struck. The officials of the road say that the strike will not interfere with the operation of trains.

The trouble between the road and the white firemen over employment of negroes has existed for some time. The white men allege that they were discriminated against in favor of the negroes and that the Georgia Road intended to man its trains with negro firemen entirely.

There is a good deal of public feeling against the road because of its action. The white firemen are backed by the Brotherhood of Firemen, and Eugene Ball of Toronto, Vice President of the order, is here directing the strike. It is said that the engineers will refuse to work with negro firemen and may become involved in the strike. The Georgia Railroad is leased to the Louisville & Nashville, and the strikers intimate that unless their demands are granted trouble will spread over the system.

*New York Times, May 18, 1909.*

#### 86. UNION WARS ON NEGROES

##### Georgia Railroad Strike Only the Beginning of It, Says Line's Manager

ATLANTA, Ga., May 18.--The labor unions are planning to abolish the negro as an industrial factor, according to General Manager Scott of the Georgia Railroad, which is crippled by a strike of white firemen because of the employment of negroes by the road.

"This strike," said Mr. Scott, "is the skirmish of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers in their plan to drive the negro out of employment on railroads altogether.

"The plan has been smoldering for five years and this strike is just the first stop I have reason to believe that the same demand will in time be made by officials of this union to every other railroad in the South."

Assistant Grand Chief Burgess of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, who is here, announced that the Brotherhood will not aid the striking firemen,

but will force the engineers to keep their contracts with the roads.

*New York Times, May 19, 1909.*

87. VIOLENCE CONTINUES ON GEORGIA RAILROAD;  
FEDERAL AUTHORITIES ARE URGED TO ACT;  
GOVERNOR AGAIN ASKED TO PRESERVE ORDER  
SITUATION BECOMES MUCH MORE SERIOUS

District Attorney Akerman and Second Assistant Postmaster  
General Informed of Interference With Mails Yesterday

GOV. SMITH WAS IN FITZGERALD YESTERDAY<sup>50</sup>

Armed Guard Pulled From Train at Thomson--He, in Statement, Asserts He was  
Disarmed and Hit Severely While Overpowered by Angry Men--Passengers, Mail  
and Baggage Tied up by Intimidation of Firemen--Fast Freight With Perishable  
Fruit On Sidetrack

The firemens' strike on the Georgia Railroad is becoming more serious.  
Violence continues. The railroad is making statement to officials at Atlanta  
and at Washington and is urging vigorous measures for the preservation of  
order and for protection of the mails.

General Manager Thomas K. Scott has requested mediation under the Erdman  
Law.

Men are being driven from the engines, despite the presence of the guards.  
In one instance a guard was driven from the engine on which he was placed.  
He was rescued by the sheriff.

The railroad authorities, in statements to reporters and in formal state-  
ments to the public, show how serious the situation is. At least one mayor  
and one sheriff have admitted that they cannot protect the roads employees.

Attack On an Armed Guard

Violence is becoming more pronounced. An attack at Thomson on an armed  
guard was very sensational, according to his statement. He is C. Ross Wall,  
of Boneville, a few miles distant from Thomson. To a reporter for the  
Chronicle yesterday he said:

"I was a guard on the Buckhead train (No. 92) Friday morning. When the  
train arrived at Thomson I was on the engine. I was there for the purpose  
of keeping unauthorized persons from getting on the locomotive and to keep  
anyone from interfering with the property or the employees.

"When the train arrived and came to a stop in Thomson, there gathered a  
large crowd of excited and seemingly infuriated people. Immediately after  
the train stopped Mr. Horace Clary, of Thomson, made an effort to get on the  
engine. I pushed him off. He made another effort and cursed me and told me  
that I did not have the nerve to shoot him. I replied that I had the nerve  
enough to keep him from getting on the engine. I called his attention to the  
fact that I was not interfering with him in any way and tried to reason with  
him and to pacify him.

"Finally he went away and I thought him gone. The crowd in front of me  
continued to make angry demonstrations against me. I was keeping an eye on  
them and was keeping myself in position to keep them from getting on the  
engine. I was depending on the other guard to protect the other side of the  
engine. But he allowed Clary to get on the engine and to pass him. Clary  
surprised me by seizing me from the rear and pointing a pistol in my face.  
I made effort to disengage myself and called on the other guard (Thompkins)  
to assist me, which he did not do.

"Meanwhile others of the crowd got on the train on my side of the engine  
and took hold of me and held me while Clary wrenched my pistol from my hand.  
They ordered me to get off the engine, and as I was powerless, I did so. As  
soon as I was on the ground I was seized by several parties and forcibly

marched off in the direction of the depot. Mr. Clary followed me up, and while I was in this situation, he struck me, raining two or three blows over my head with a pistol.

"Sheriff E. W. Hawes and Justice of the Peace W. A. Hoss came up about this time and advised the crowd to let me alone. They escorted me to the train and I came on to Augusta.

"The people in Thomson seem to have gotten it into their heads that I am in favor of running a negro over the white man. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am simply in favor of the supremacy of the law. I have always been and with the help of God, always will be."

Clary, when seen by a reporter, showed signs of his punishment. There were wounds in his head. His clothing was bloody.

After the assault on the guard the crowd made an assault on the negro fireman and ran him away from the train. However, they did not make an assault on the white fireman who was also on the train and he fired the train into the city, there having resulted a delay of about forty-five minutes.

Gov. Hoke Smith has been repeatedly urged to insure order along the line of road. He has instructed the sheriffs in the counties where there has been marked disorder to insist that order shall be kept. Governor Smith is not in Atlanta, but in Fitzgerald. It is not known that he will be in Atlanta today.

Reports that there had been a homicide on the Georgia Road last night were false. . . .

*Augusta Chronicle, May 22, 1909.*

#### 88. GEORGIA ROAD NOT TRYING TO ESTABLISH NEGRO SUPREMACY SAYS MAJOR JOSEPH B. CUMMING

Shows That White Firemen Not Only Receive 30 Per Cent More Pay, But are the Only Ones Given Opportunity to Become Engineers--Thinks Vice President Ball Purposely Misrepresents the Situation

The following card from Major Joseph B. Cumming, concerning the Georgia Railroad firemen's strike, will be generally read with interest.

"To the Public:

"An assertion, however absurd, repeated and reiterated, if uncontradicted, will in the end, by mere force of reiteration, get itself believed. The assertion in mind as this sentence is written is in substance that Mr. Scott as general manager of the Georgia Railroad is seeking to establish negro supremacy over white men, or at least negro equality with white men in certain department of Georgia Railroad work. This is the war cry of the foreign gentleman, who is directing the strike of the Georgia Railroad white firemen. Under the slogan 'white supremacy,' 'This is a white man's country,' and such rallying cries, he has managed to delude and excite a number of misinformed and thoughtless young men at various places on the Georgia Railroad who would not indulge in acts of lawlessness if they were not misled by a false appeal to race feeling. It is very difficult to believe that the party raising this cry and shouting it more and more vociferously as the days go on honestly believes that he is proclaiming a truth. If he can persuade himself of the truth of this charge, he is hardly the kind of person to be entrusted with the power and discretion over the vital interests of worthy and well meaning citizens of Georgia.

"What is the central fact in the differences which have arisen between white firemen of the Georgia Railroad and the general manager of that railroad? The Georgia Railroad employs some negro firemen. So does every Southern railroad. These negro firemen can never be promoted from that position to the higher position of engineer; under no conceivable conditions is he eligible to that position. There are 'runs' of different degrees of desirableness. These runs are distributed to all firemen, white and negro alike, according to seniority. The negro can be assigned to these runs when the

seniority of the negro is coupled with efficiency and faithfulness. This is the sum and limit of the favor shown the negro firemen--and this is the ostensible reason for the white firemen's strike.

"Now what is the status of the white fireman on the Georgia Railroad? In the first place he receives, however short his experience, wages thirty per cent more than the most experienced and efficient negro fireman. But the white fireman is a fireman at all only that he may eventually become an engineer. This any white fireman can be and no negro fireman possibly can be. No negro fireman blocks the way to any white fireman's goal of ambition, the position of engineer. Every negro fireman must stand aside while the white fireman passes on to the position to which the white fireman alone may aspire. What more striking and emphatic exhibition of "white supremacy" could there be than the relative position of a white and negro fireman on the Georgia Railroad?

"The charge that Mr. Scott is trying to establish 'negro supremacy' or 'negro equality' in the operation of the Georgia Railroad stands out in still more conspicuous absurdity when it is born in mind that he is not a foreigner, that he is born in the South when negro slavery days existed here, that he has lived always at the South and has had from very early days knowledge of the railroads of the South.

"But the fact which goes far beyond any words in negating the assertions of Mr. Ball and the firemen is that Mr. Scott's policy has always been to keep ample supply of white firemen in the service in order to create out of them engineers, as he prefers to 'make' engineers out of white firemen who gain their experience on the Georgia Railroad. There was a time, and not so very long ago either, when the majority of the engineers on the Georgia Railroad, and many in the South generally, preferred negro firemen to white firemen, because it curtailed the supply of material out of which to make engineers, thereby decreasing the possible competition of those who were already engineers.

"Indeed, so preposterous is the charge that every reasonable mind is forced to the conclusion that it is not the real reason of the strike. There must be some other reason which as yet is held back. Let that reason--whatever it may be, whether the beginning of a movement to drive the negro out of railroad work altogether, or some other reason--be put forward honestly and openly and this absurd clamor about 'negro supremacy' be dropped.

Jos. B. Cumming"

*August Chronicle, May 22, 1909.*

#### 89. MOB NEGRO FIREMEN ON GEORGIA RAILROAD WHITE ENGINEERS IN PERIL

Brotherhood Chief Threatens to Call Them Out Unless  
Road Stops Stoning of Trains--Road Crippled

ATLANTA, Ga., May 22.--Violence continues to mark the strike of white firemen on the Georgia Railroad against the employment of negroes. The negroes are being taken from trains at many points on the road and are being whipped. Gov. Hoke Smith has wired the Sheriffs at the various counties through which the Georgia Road passes to prevent violence, but the Sheriffs have answered that they cannot handle the situation.

At Augusta tonight a mob of 250 gathered in the Union Station, trying to get at a negro fireman. Police reserves were called out to protect the negro.

A remarkable feature is that the white strikers are not responsible for the violence. The negro firemen are being mobbed by citizens along the line of the road, who object to the preference given negroes over white men. The road is badly crippled. Hardly any freight trains are moving, and it is difficult to get passenger trains through. There are twelve dead engines at Union Point alone, and about sixteen freight trains are tied up along the road.

To add to the trouble of the road Assistant Grand Chief Burgess of the

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers threatens to call out engineers on the ground that they are not being protected by the road according to contract. "This would not be a strike," stated Mr. Burgess. "It would be a simple act of protection to our men, and one they are entitled to. The engines are being stoned and the lives of our men endangered. I have wired General Manager Scott that unless adequate protection is offered to engineers they cannot be expected to man their engines."

AUGUSTA, Ga., May 22.--Blood flowed at Athens tonight and a small mob gathered here, the former disturbance being over a white fireman and the latter over a negro fireman.

The engineers were called out shortly after midnight when word was received that trains had been stoned at Lithonia and at Conyers, Georgia today, and that the engineers had been struck by rocks intended for the firemen. The order calling out the engineers was temporary, and was issued by Assistant Grand Chief Burgess of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, who is in Atlanta. He intimated that if adequate protection should be afforded the engineers, the order for them not to take out their trains might be revoked. Meanwhile passenger train No. 4 for Augusta with nearly every coach full, stood in the train shed at Atlanta with its time for pulling out past due and no engineer to be found to handle the throttle.

Gov. Smith was in conference about midnight with Sheriff Clark here who assured the Governor that the negro who had been threatened was safe and that things were quiet for the night.

The Governor believes that careful handling is necessary to avoid stirring up race issues.

*New York Times, May 23, 1909.*

#### 90. ANTI-NEGRO STRIKE TIES UP RAILROAD

Engineers on the Georgia Road Refuse to Take Out Trains  
with Colored Firemen

#### VAIN APPEAL TO GOVERNOR

Hoke Smith Refuses to Order Out Troops to  
Stop Rioting, and Suggests Arbitration

ATLANTA, Ga., May 23.--Over the 500 miles of the Georgia Railroad, including main line and branches, not a train has moved since 6 o'clock last night as the result of the strike of white firemen against the employment of negroes.

The tie-up became complete when Assistant Grand Chief Burgess of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers declared last night it was unsafe for engineers to take trains out with negro firemen, and ordered them to refuse to make runs. This is not a strike of engineers, Mr. Burgess says, but is simply an act to force the road to protect the Brotherhood men, as it is bound to do by its contract.

Preceding the tie-up negro firemen were dragged from engines and mobbed at every town along the line of the road. The striking white firemen have committed no violence, the mobbing having been done by citizens along the line of the road, who objected to white men being supplanted by negroes.

Thriving towns like Greensboro, Covington, Athens, Warrenton, and other places have received no mail all day and have suffered many other inconveniences, but the citizens are not complaining, as they are determined to prevent the employment of the negroes. Telegraphic reports say that certain kinds of food are running short in towns along the line, but the people say they will manage to get along.

General Manager Scott of the Georgia Railroad has asked Gov. Hoke Smith to order out troops, but the Governor will not do it. He says the State has not enough troops to patrol 500 miles of railroad, and while they might keep

order at one place, trouble would break out somewhere else, as it is really a fight of the people along the line against the road. Gov. Smith sent Attorney General Hart to investigate and as a result of Mr. Hart's report, he will recommend that the road and the strikers choose three Georgians to arbitrate the matter.

Gov. Smith, however, wired the Sheriff of McDuffie County to co-operate with the municipal authorities and to summon all deputies necessary to protect life and property. It is in this county that a crowd issued their ultimatum last night that no trains should pass carrying either non-union firemen or negro firemen. The Governor also has wired the Sheriffs of Rockdale and De Kalb Counties, giving them information that engineers claim to have been stoned at Conyers and Lithonia, and urging upon them prompt action for the protection of the railroad's employees and property.

From the offices of the Georgia Road here tonight it was announced that all freight accumulated at Atlanta for Augusta and all points beyond would be moved tonight by the Central of Georgia and the Seaboard Air Line. The Georgia Railroad freight station here will be opened tomorrow for the moving of freight to consignees, but shippers are required to withhold all shipments until further notice.

Automobiles are being used extensively along the line of the road by people who want to make short trips, and the owners of the machines are making profits.

The Rev. S. R. Beck of Atlanta, who had an engagement to preach at the commencement service today at the college at Covington, forty miles from Atlanta, had to use an automobile to keep the engagement.

The company takes the position that it has every means to continue business but it will not try to move trains until assured of protection.

It is reported that a party of strikebreakers from the North reached here today, but General Manager Scott says no attempt will be made to operate trains until protection is afforded. It is said Mr. Scott has left for Louisville to confer with President Milton Smith of the Louisville & Nashville, to which the Georgia road is leased.

*New York Times, May 24, 1909.*

#### 91. NEILL OFFERS MEDIATION

##### Labor Commissioner to Try to Settle Controversy Over Negro Firemen--Strike May Spread

ATLANTA, Ga., May 24.--Charles P. Neill, United States Commissioner of Labor, is expected here tomorrow, and the hope of a speedy settlement of the strike of firemen on the Georgia Railroad centres on his arrival. Gov. Hoke Smith proposed today a commission of six Georgians, three to be selected by each party to the controversy, and Vice President Ball of the Locomotive Firemen accepted the suggestion. General Manager Scott of the Georgia Railroad, however, replied that he could not agree to the proposal until Commissioner Neill had taken some action. He made the same answer to an offer of mediation from the Augusta Chamber of Commerce.

Meanwhile the situation along the railway is growing serious and there is danger of actual famine in some of the towns. Not a wheel has turned on the Georgia Railroad since Saturday, and there is no immediate prospect of a resumption of service. Many places report that they are short of flour and that the fresh meat supply has given out.

Twenty-five business men of Crawfordville today wired the State Railroad Commission: "For God's sake do something, as we are threatened by famine." In many other towns the situation is just as serious, but the people who have created the situation by mobbing the negro firemen show no disposition to recede from their position.

The railway management, according to the strikers, recognizes that the people along the line are responsible for the tie-up and is willing that they should be punished by isolation.

One feature of the situation is that the strike has prevented the interment of several corpses in Atlanta. Relatives wished to bury them at their old homes along the Georgia road, but cannot procure transportation for them.

The immediate cause for the strike was the discharge of ten white firemen from the Georgia terminals and the filling of their places with negroes. The firemen now demand that negroes be eliminated as far as possible by the Georgia road. They will probably not insist upon the dismissal of those who were employed as firemen before the strike, but they will ask that white men receive the preference. They will ask, too, that whenever possible a negro will be replaced by a white man.

The strike is not confined to the Georgia Railway, but extends to the Georgia terminals, a distinct organization, which is owned jointly by the Georgia, West Point & Louisville and Nashville Railroads. The threat was made today by E. A. Ball, Vice President of the firemen, that if other railroads receive freight shipments diverted from the Georgia Railway the strike of firemen will be extended to them.

He argues that the receipt of freight diverted from the Georgia Railway by other roads makes them the allies of the Georgia Railway and the opponents of the firemen, and that consequently they are liable to be drawn into the strike.

According to an official of the Georgia Railway, it is diverting his freight over the Southern Seaboard, Louisville & Nashville and Central Georgia Railroads. Attorney General Hart, who made a trip over the Georgia Railway, at the request of Gov. Hoke Smith, to investigate conditions, was very rudely treated, as the people thought he was in sympathy with the company. At several points he was abused as a "nigger lover," and was kept busy explaining that he was simply investigating, and was not taking the part of the negroes.

The railroad authorities assert that they are informed that the crowds of citizens at Thompson, Camak, and other points are still in a bellicose attitude. A large number of strike breakers are here and at other points on the road. Preparations are under way by the Post Office officials to establish an automobile mail service between Union Point and Athens, Ga.

*New York Times, May 25, 1909.*

## 92. THE STRIKE IN GEORGIA

The strike of white firemen on the Georgia Railroad is the first general labor disturbance of racial origin in the history of the South. It is significant in that Georgia is the State in which the negroes have shown the most hopeful advancement. The South has warmly supported BOOKER WASHINGTON in his attempts to uplift the negro industrially. It has denied him political and social equality, but in occupations that do not directly involve social distinctions it has never denied to the negro the right to earn his living. The reason for this was thus cogently stated last week by The Augusta Chronicle:

Inasmuch as the negro constitutes the bulk of the South's laboring population, to take away from him his right to labor--"side by side with white men," when necessary--would place the heaviest possible handicap upon the South itself; for it would not only have a surplus of idle negroes to contend with, but a scarcity of labor in all industrial pursuits.

The strike of the firemen, therefore, is not simply an act to curtail the industrial freedom of the negro, it is a direct blow at the economic prosperity of the South. It expresses the newly developed sentiment of the population along the line of the Georgia Railroad, who have mobbed the negro employees of the company. This sentiment is reflected, too, in Gov. Hoke Smith's refusal to order out troops to guard the railroad's property and traffic and to protect the lives of its employees.

Owing to the inefficiency of the negroes in the South it suffers from a universal labor famine. The peonage system and the Southern treatment of foreign immigrants on a plane with negroes have discouraged white immigration there. Now the State of Georgia declares, in effect, that wherever negroes rise sufficiently to compete with white laborers they shall be thrust back



to their former condition of sloth and degeneracy--a continuing menace instead of a means of prosperous uplift.<sup>51</sup>

*New York Times*, May 25, 1909.

### 93. RACE PREJUDICE MIXED WITH ECONOMICS

There seems to have been something more to the strike on the Georgia Railroad than a disinclination on the part of the white firemen to have negroes in like positions. That has been endured for a long time on many of the Southern railways, and nobody minded it very much or made any effective efforts to abolish this particular division of labor. But recently the wages of the white firemen--who had been getting 50 cents a day more than the black men doing the same work--were reduced from 50 per cent of an engineer's pay to about 47 per cent of it, and naturally they didn't like that.

To assist in getting back the missing fraction, they summoned the Vice President of their union from Toronto, and he, after viewing the situation and consulting with the officers of the road, told the firemen that their only hope of a restoration lay in a strike in which the race issue was made prominent. The advice, whether wise or not, was shrewd, for its utilization aroused the keen sympathy of the people living along the line, and they proceeded to make against the negro firemen the vigorous manifestations of dislike which have resulted in bringing the operations of the road to a complete standstill and threaten to extend the trouble widely through the South.

The quarrel as it stands is an extremely complex one, and the towns where the inhabitants have maltreated the negro firemen are appealing with amusing vehemence for somebody to do something at once to save them from the inconveniences in the shape of short food supplies and suspended mail facilities which they have brought upon themselves by making the running of trains impossible. A more serious element of the case is its oblique refutation of the claim so often made, that while the South denied social and political equality to the negro, it did not, like the North, restrict his opportunities for making a living.

The present movement is certainly a restriction of the most pronounced sort, as there is no charge, apparently, that the negro firemen are not competent. That they work more cheaply than white men seems to be their only offense. One would almost think that they should get more than the white firemen, since promotion to places as engineers is not for them. The reasons for this discrimination are easily imaginable, but perhaps they will pass away in the course of time.

*New York Times*, May 26, 1909.

### 94. MAY ARBITRATE GEORGIA STRIKE

Race Prejudice Was Not Cause. Question of Seniority Involved

ATLANTA, Ga., May 26:--How less than one hundred striking, Georgia railroad firemen were able to stop practically all train service in a territory 170 miles long and from 25 to 100 miles wide, was the knotty problem into which United States Commissioner of Labor Charles P. Neill plunged here today.

As emissary of the National Board of Mediation he faced an announced wish of many persons in this section to have Georgians settle this question by arbitration and the necessity of moving the United States mails immediately.

Within two hours after his arrival last night Mr. Neill was in conference with General Manager Scott, of the Georgia Railroad.

What a remarkable feat this handful of union firemen accomplished and what power was behind them became apparent when a considerable section of this

state was compelled to rely upon automobiles for passenger, mail and express service, and when the transportation of even food depended upon wagons and even pack animals.

A settlement by arbitration should not be difficult so far as the strikers' demands are concerned. Vice president Ball, of the Firemen's organization, stated today. The men struck because ten negro firemen were given seniority over white firemen. The railroad officials declare that the negroes were put in these positions as rewards for faithful service, and that they are within their legal rights in such action.

The officials of the road are in almost continued conference, and it is reported that some of the directors strongly favored Governor Smith's proposition for each side to select three Georgians as arbitrators. General Manager Scott would not say whether this offer would be accepted.

Handcars, automobiles and trolley cars made little impression upon the 3,000 pounds of delayed mails in the Atlanta postoffice. Here and there in the strike district a rural postmaster shouldered a sack of outgoing mail and after hours of hard work riding and walking managed to reach an unaffected railroad station.

The strikers have announced that they are willing to fire engines to carry mails only and not passengers.

*New York Call, May 26, 1909.*

#### 95. THE GEORGIA FIREMEN'S STRIKE

The present strike on the Georgia Railroad is a pitiful example of the evil effect of race prejudice on the labor movement.

The railroad company undertook to put on negroes along with white men as firemen on its road. The white firemen objected and at last went out on strike.

Public opinion along the line--that is, white public opinion, for no other sort is recognized down there--is strongly on the side of the strikers. This is unusual in the South. Labor organizations are not looked on with favor in that region. Many a union organizer has had to leave town in a hurry to avoid getting a coat of tar and feathers at the hands of the "best citizens. Bourbon conservatism can stand for cold-blooded feud murders and can applaud an occasional burning at the stake. But it draws the line at labor strikes. Those are crimes it will not tolerate.

That is, it will not tolerate a strike of laborers against capitalists. But a strike of white laborers against black laborers is a different thing. Bourbon conservatism can swallow the indignity of a body of workingmen going on strike in consideration of the fact that they are actuated by race hatred, which is a sacred institution in the eyes of the rulers of the South and of those who take their opinions from the ruling class.

Probably the strikers have better reason for objecting to the introduction of negroes than they care to tell. It is safe to say that the company is not putting in colored firemen just out of devotion to the principle of racial equality. Corporations do not do business that way.

The railroad company would like to reduce wages. It would like to render its employees helpless and docile. It wants to introduce negroes side by side with white men, first as firemen, later as engineers, because it knows that the negroes are likely to accept lower pay, are likely to remain unorganized for a time, and are pretty sure to hate the white workers as much as the white workers hate them. If it can only break in a force of colored men and make competent railroad workers of them, the company figures that it will be safe from labor troubles for a good time to come. It can play off blacks against whites and whites against blacks and individual against individual, and have no effective opposition to its will.

The strikers may keep negroes out of the firemen's trade for a while, thanks to the sympathy of the nigger-hating populace.

But they cannot win permanently along that line. They have got to learn to bring the colored workers into their organizations, just as they have

already learned to bring immigrant whites into their organizations, and treat them as equals in the labor movement.

They may and should follow their own choice in the matter of social intercourse. That has nothing to do with the question. But in industrial affairs, their only choice will be either to have their organizations smashed by the competition of negro labor mobilized against them by the capitalists or else to give them the hand of brotherhood and enlist them in the fight for labor against capital.

*New York Call, May 26, 1909.*

#### 96. GEORGIA STRIKE AT A DEADLOCK

##### Railroad Manager Refuses to Yield Mails Still Tied Up-- Strikebreakers Complain

ATLANTA, May 27.--After many conferences in which United States Commissioner of Labor Neill and Governor Hoke Smith participated, the Georgia Railroad's firemen strikers and road authorities are today about as far apart as ever and the prospects for an early resumption of traffic seem dim.

While a large part of the communities along the line demand even more steadfastly than the strikers that negroes be not given the best runs on the road, General Manager Scott refuses to yield.

Meanwhile in Augusta and Atlanta, great piles of mail have accumulated. The railway mail service is making every effort to get this out to the points affected by the strike, and as not a train is yet moving, a handcar loaded with mail from Athens started on the way to Union Point, a distance of thirty-nine miles. This car was in charge of a regular railways mail clerk.

The visible means of transportation in most of these towns consist of traction engines traveling nearly a mile and a half an hour, automobiles with dangerous roads and mule teams with negro drivers and cracking whips.

It was reported that under an old law said still to be found on the statute books Governor Smith may take charge of the road and operate the trains in the name of the state.

Six strikebreakers complained to the police that they had been brought here by misrepresentations and had been practically prisoners for several days in a hotel, finally dropping notes from windows to the strikers.

*New York Call, May 27, 1909.*

#### 97. TO RUN MAIL TRAINS WITH NEGRO FIREMEN

ATLANTA, Ga., May 27.--The Georgia Railroad will start twelve mail trains tomorrow morning. A dispatch from Augusta tonight says that the crews that will go out from there will be about half of negro firemen and half of white firemen, not members of the brotherhood. The mail clerks will all be negroes. The gravest concern in this breaking of the ice by the first train run in five days in a community which has supported the racial contention of the strikers is felt here tonight among the men, who for forty-eight hours have been continuously working for some solution of the difficulty.

Post Office Inspectors will accompany each of the trains to be sent out tomorrow. This announcement was made tonight following a conference between George M. Sutton, Inspector in charge of the Atlanta Division, and United States District Attorney Tate.

Mr. Sutton said it was deemed wise to have experienced Inspectors accompany each of the trains for the purpose of making observations, ascertaining the sentiment of the people along the line.

General Manager Scott in announcing the resumption of mail service

refused to answer questions about the personnel of the engine crews. "I consider this a great concession for the road to make," was his only comment.

He would not say whether the road would accept the service of the brotherhood firemen as proffered indirectly yesterday by Vice President Ball. Assistant Grand Chief Burgess of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers said he told Mr. Scott tonight that he understood that the Government assured adequate protection for the engineers.

Reports today from the strike districts showed that where three days ago communities were sending out appeals for necessities of life, there now exists a wagon and automobile service so well developed that the last vestige of want has disappeared.

At Thompson, Ga., today, every merchant was running a line of wagons to Augusta, thirty-seven miles away, and a traction engine and car were working under lease at the rate of \$25 a day. By carriage and by automobile the round trip to Augusta was from \$3.50 to \$7 per head, according to class. A carload of provisions opened at Camak, near by, became exhausted today, and the price of provisions advanced. However, enough eggs and vegetables were to be had to keep the people from suffering.

Costington, which is on the line of another road, had plenty of provisions and an opportunity to sell to less fortunate neighbors. Automobile fares from there to Atlanta were \$5 to \$10 for forty miles. This fare was about the highest rate in the strike district.

Another crisis is the fate of arbitration. By noon tomorrow it may be known. No official announcements have been made, but the assertion that United States Commissioner of Labor Neill has notified General Manager Scott of the railroad that he must make final decision whether he will accept arbitration has been repeatedly made in authoritative sources throughout the day. It is significant that tomorrow morning for the first time a complete conference on arbitration will be possible.

The Georgia Joint Terminal Company controls the tracks on which the Georgia Railroad enters Atlanta, and the switchmen insist that any agreement to arbitrate must include the terminal company. Three Directors control this company, and up to today there has not been a majority of them present in Atlanta to act in concurrence with the Georgia Railroad.

*New York Times, May 28, 1909.*

## 98. ANXIETY IN WASHINGTON

Regular Troops Will Be Used, If Necessary, to Move Mails

WASHINGTON, May 28.--Throughout the Administration, and especially at the White House and in the three departments directly concerned there is the most acute realization of the dangerous possibilities in the strike situation on the Georgia Railroad. It is recognized that there is a political powder mine in the conditions that have developed out of the strike of the white firemen of that concern, and that the spark to set it off may be generated at any moment.

The matter was the subject of earnest consideration at the Cabinet meeting today, and after the meeting Secretary Nagel of the Department of Commerce and Labor, and Postmaster General Hitchcock remained in consultation with the President for some time. When they left the White House they joined Attorney General Wickersham, and the three department heads had a conference which continued well along in the afternoon.<sup>52</sup>

It had been decided at the Cabinet meeting that Martin A. Knapp, Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission, who, as one of the Government arbitrators under the Erdman act, has collaborated with Labor Commissioner C. P. Neill in settling a number of labor disputes, should go to Atlanta to join Mr. Neill, who has been there for two or three days. It was also determined that Second Assistant Postmaster General Stewart, who has charge of the Railway Mail Service, should go. They left late this afternoon. Meantime the Administration continued to hope for favorable news from Mr. Neill, who has been

working vigorously ever since his arrival in Atlanta to bring about a compromise.<sup>53</sup>

There is no doubt that the Administration is prepared to face the worst developments that may come, but it is striving to the utmost to prevent such developments. Officially it is contenting itself with urging both sides to get together in some kind of a compromise. But unofficially it is understood Mr. Neill has been proceeding with exceptional vigor in his efforts to secure an adjustment at the earliest possible moment.

In case it should devolve upon the Federal Government to safeguard the movement of the mails the first efforts would be made through the process of the Federal courts. An injunction would be sought restraining everybody from interfering with the mails and then Deputy United States Marshals would be sworn in in such numbers as might be necessary to prevent any violation of that injunction. Should they be unable to prevent interference with the mails unquestionably the regular troops would be sent to Georgia to take control of the situation. There is already a regiment of infantry--the Seventeenth--at Fort McPherson, near Atlanta, and more could be hurried forward.

The employment of regulars, however, would undoubtedly cause such an outburst of rage throughout the South that no one in the Administration cares to discuss the possible results. It would be made to appear that President Taft was employing the regular army to uphold negroes against striking white union labor, and race hatred would be inflamed to a high degree.

*New York Times, May 29, 1909.*

#### 99. MOB ATTACKS TRAIN CAUSES NEW TIE-UP

ATLANTA, May 28.--Because of an assault on an engine which was carrying a negro fireman at Lithonia this evening the engineers of the Georgia Railroad have given notice that they will not take out even the mail trains tomorrow unless they have a guarantee of complete protection. This action may force the Federal interference in the strike which the State and Federal officials have been trying to avoid. By an arrangement made last night mail trains were run today over all the lines of the railroad, and with this arrangement in effect the Federal officials were content to give the railroad and the striking white firemen every opportunity to arrive at a settlement of their differences. If no mail trains are run tomorrow there is no telling what may happen.

After the mail trains had run all day with no molestation from the crowds that gathered at various places, the railroad company late this afternoon set out to save perishable freight in cars that had been stalled at Lithonia. An engine under charge of Engineer Downing and carrying Supt. John D. Patterson went from here. A negro fireman was on it. It ran into Lithonia at full speed just before 6 o'clock, rushed on to the side track, coupled up to the waiting train, and started out.

#### Stone Injures Engineer

Assurances had been given for several days that in the interest of local shippers, whose valuable cars were tied up, no demonstration would be made against hauling these cars to Atlanta. The 200 persons at the station were angry over the negro firemen on mail trains. Just as this train was getting under headway, it is said, a stone flew in the cab window and hit the engineer, hurting him severely. Several men boarded the cars, set the brakes, and cut off the air, causing the last car to break loose from the train. They also uncoupled the engine, leaving its load stalled. According to the railroad's statement, no attempt was made by local authorities to interfere with the attack.

Engineer Downing jumped out with a bar of iron in his hand, and shouted, "I'll kill the next man that throws a rock." Then he jumped into the cab and attempted to start his engine. But the crowd on top of the cars held the brakes, and after several ineffectual attempts to pull out the engine was cut loose from the train and sped away in the direction of this city.

The engine arrived here tonight with Engineer Downing in bad condition. He was hit in the side right over the lungs by a large rock and at the Piedmont Hotel tonight had hemorrhages.

The freight now blocks the main line and the progress of the mails. The railroad officers declared tonight that the incident was the work of strike sympathizers, while a county official wired the Governor's office that it was merely an accident.

Assistant Chief Burgess of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers made an inquiry, and when he found that Downing was seriously injured, he wrote to General Manager Scott, saying he had forbidden engineers to take out trains until complete protection was guaranteed. This was declared to mean even the mail trains.

#### Mail Trains Not Molested

With a negro fireman stoking it, the first of the mail trains over the Georgia Railroad left Atlanta this morning for Augusta. It carried about 6,000 pounds of mail, which is three times the weight of the usual cargo. The name of the negro fireman who made the run is "Joe" Brown. He has been working as fireman for the Georgia Road since he was "knee high to a duck," as he puts it, and is one of the negro employees who the striking firemen say are put senior to them.

Before the train pulled out, striking white firemen of the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen were at the Union Station ready to go out with the mail, but their services were not asked. The crew consisted of engineer, conductor and white flagman, negro fireman, Post Office Inspector Bannerman, and four railway mail clerks, three of whom are negroes. No passengers, not even newspaper reporters, were allowed on the train and no express was carried.

Dispatches show that the mail trains with negro firemen, which ran on all the railroad lines, were not molested, although they were met by great crowds at the various stations. Much indignation was expressed by the people at the action of the road. It was the general opinion that General Manager Scott was deliberately using negro firemen on these trains in the hope of provoking violence, so as to cause Federal interference.

If there is not a restoration of service on the Georgia Railroad within the immediate future, it is strongly believed that the State will take definite action looking toward the operation of trains. The Georgia Railroad and Banking Company, according to the charter of the road, is responsible for the maintenance of service over the lines as the ownership company, and if it takes no action, the State may.

That the State has authority to act in the matter is the opinion of Representative Hooper Alexander of De Kalb County, who made this statement tonight:

"The exclusive privilege of the Georgia Railroad and Banking Company to operate trains over its lines expired in the year 1881, thirty-six years after the completion of the road, and now the State can operate trains over the lines, legally, the same as the lessees."

Gov. Smith is likely to take advantage of this condition as he believes that General Manager Scott has deliberately created and continued a situation which involves the possibility of a grave racial conflict.

#### People With White Firemen

It is not overstating the case to say that 90 per cent of the white people along the line of the road feel that it is an outrage to supplant white firemen by negroes. Merchants, professional men, farmers, laborers, and women and children are united in this.

They represent the best element and stand for order and decorum, yet they have decided that the negro firemen must go or the trains shall not run. They are suffering from the tie-up, but are hopeful and cheerful.

Something stronger even than racial feeling binds some of the whites who are backing the striking firemen. These firemen and other employees have been largely recruited from the community which the railroad serves, and in consequence many a blood relation is standing by his kinsman in standing by the strike.

It was reported tonight that there was talk of holding mass meetings at several places to voice indignation at the railroad's action in putting negroes

today on what the public has dubbed "neutral trains."

While there is still plenty to eat in the strike district luxuries are exhausted. The one thing which the people feel the need of most keenly is ice. Checkers and marbles, wired a correspondent from the strike district, are at present the principal diversion of most of the male population.

*New York Times, May 29, 1909.*

#### 100. FEDERAL OFFICIALS END GEORGIA STRIKE

White Firemen Resume Work and Dispute Over  
Negroes May Be Arbitrated

AUGUSTA NEGRO IS BEATEN

People Served by Georgia Railroad Plainly Showed  
They Would Still Uphold White Firemen

ATLANTA, Ga., May 29.--Pressure brought by Federal officers put a sudden end this afternoon to the strike of white firemen which has tied up the Georgia Railroad for seven days.

Had there not been a settlement of the strike this afternoon it can be stated that Federal interference was imminent. It is reported that both sides were notified that some adjustment must be reached by 6 o'clock or the Federal courts would take cognizance of the situation. This probably would have meant injunctions, which in the present temper of the residents of the strike district almost certainly meant resistance and possible violations of the injunction and speedily thereafter the arrival of United States troops.

Chairman Martin A. Knapp of the Interstate Commerce Commission, who arrived from Washington this morning, fresh from talks with President Taft and Cabinet officers, and Labor Commissioner Neill held conferences with T. K. Scott, General Manager of the railroad, and E. A. Ball, Vice President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen. It was announced at 2 o'clock that a settlement had been reached.

The white firemen reported immediately for duty. Within ninety minutes the first passenger train left Augusta, with a negro fireman in the cab. Before many hours trains were moving rapidly and the piled up traffic was being straightened out.

The terms of the settlement were not officially given out, but it was learned that they were substantially as follows:

The men to return to work under conditions existing at the time the strike began until final adjustment is made.

All negro firemen at the terminal stations will be dispensed with.

All discharged Brotherhood firemen will be reinstated.

Three other points are yet to be decided. They are under discussion and if no settlement is reached they will be settled by arbitration under the Erdman law. They are:

First--Whether negro firemen shall be eliminated from the road.

Second--If not eliminated, what percentage of negroes there shall be.

Third--Seniority of negro firemen over white firemen.

It is generally understood that the railroad agrees to recognize the seniority of white firemen, and that the employment of certain negro firemen who have been with the road many years will be continued. After they are retired no other negroes will be permitted to fire.

The settlement of the strike was announced in a statement signed by Messrs. Knapp and Neill. It said:

An amicable adjustment of the differences between the Georgia Railroad and its employees who have been on strike has been reached on a basis eminently satisfactory to both sides. The strike has been called off, and complete train service is to be resumed immediately.

Commissioner Neill said that both sides made concessions. He added further that he did not believe a complete statement would be made before next week.

General Manager Scott had refused to make concessions or even to arbitrate, but it was said that he was finally brought to see that 90 per cent of the people along the line of the Georgia Railroad were resolved that white men should not be replaced by negroes and that to continue the policy was inviting serious trouble.

Just as the order calling the strike off was being sent out Gov. Smith was preparing a proclamation ordering all peace officers to see that the trains had ample protection. It was not sent out, because the agreement was reached before he had completed his task.

The communities through which the Georgia Railroad passes are delighted at the settlement, and believe the firemen have won all the disputed points. They add, however, in many towns that whether the firemen agree or not to negroes in the cabs, the citizens themselves will not consent to any such arrangement on any but mail trains.

Before the settlement was reached there were plenty of evidences that trouble would come if any attempt was made to move anything but mail by the use of negro firemen.

The mail trains went out, the engineers receiving assurances that they would not be molested, but attacks on them were withheld only because of the fear of Federal interference.

Crowds were at the stations, and when the firemen were seen to be negroes resentment was plainly shown. In many cases prominent citizens turned away with expressions of anger. Many of them openly declared that the moment the Georgia Railroad attempted to move passengers or freight with negro firemen life and property would be destroyed, and that certainly a dangerous condition would result. In a few communities, such was the strike fervor, that religious revival services were under way.

A negro fireman was badly beaten at Augusta this morning, and two others were driven from yard engines, but before there were serious consequences the police interfered and arrested two white men.

The State this morning announced that a posse, if necessary, would be furnished to the Sheriff of De Kalb County to move freight cars at Lithonia, where last night there was a small riot. The strike sympathizers at Lithonia, however, declared they would not permit anything but perishables to move, and consequently there was great anxiety over the outcome until the settlement came.

Dispatches from Crawfordsville this afternoon said that only sympathy for the strikers prevented the people from attacking the trains used solely for carrying the mails. At Crawfordsville, Union Point, and Thomson strong parties of men announced that neither freight nor passenger trains should pass manned by negroes.

The week of strike put the people along the Georgia Railroad to an amount of inconvenience almost unbearable. The mails were interfered with for several days, and people along the line were cut off from news of the outside world and intercourse with it. Persons who had business in Atlanta or adjoining towns had to come in automobiles, wagons, and other vehicles, or make long detours on railroads. Merchants were cut off from supplies and real distress was experienced in many places.

The strike began May 17 and lasted thirteen days. It was caused by the attempt of the company to put negro firemen on the best runs in place of white firemen, to whom were given inferior runs. The men presented a new agreement to General Manager Scott, demanding that he recognize the seniority of white firemen, and thus practically do away with the negro in the cabs. Scott refused, asserting that he had no authority for such an agreement. The men looked in vain for some official who had authority, and failing to find one, struck. General Manager Scott retaliated by practically annulling all trains, and thus tying up traffic.

The panic of ignorant negroes from the backwoods is pitiful. Reports were circulated by a few superstitious negroes that the strike was a forerunner of a race riot, which would make their race extinct. The white people everywhere, however, showed consideration for the feelings of negroes, and made it plain that the race issue extended only to those negroes who were firing Georgia Railroad engines.



## 101. CONFERENCE TO AID NEGROES

National Meeting Will Try to Remedy  
Discrimination of Labor Unions

At the reception given last night by Miss Lillian D. Wald of the Nurses' Association at the Henry Street Settlement to the speakers of the National Conference on the American negro, which is to be held in New York this week, it was announced that an attempt is being made to bring two negro firemen from the South to tell of the recent discrimination made against negro employees by the Southern labor unions.<sup>54</sup>

Bishop Turner of Atlanta has been delegated to select two men who can explain the trouble to the conference, and it is said that these men will be employed in the North thereafter if their evidence makes it impossible for them to return to the South.<sup>55</sup>

The reception was attended by a large number of the speakers and others, including Profs. Livingston Farrand and John Dewey of Columbia University, Prof. Burt G. Wilder of Cornell University, Bishop Alexander Walters of the Zion Methodist Church, Mrs. Celia Parker Wooley of Chicago, Mrs. Ida Wells Barnett of Chicago, Joseph C. Manning, editor of *The Southern American*; John Spencer Bassett of Smith College, Prof. E. B. D Bois of Atlanta University, Prof. and Mrs. Vladimir Simkovitch, John E. Milholland, Chester Aldrich, Prof. and Mrs. E. R. A. Seligman of Columbia, Louis R. Ehrich, Dr. John B. Elliott of the Ethical Culture Society, and James B. Reynolds.<sup>56</sup>

The conference will begin tomorrow in the Charities Building, and in the evening there will be a mass meeting in Cooper Union. Educators, scientists, jurists, business men, and officers of State and National Governments have gathered here to discuss the negro question from both points of view. Resolutions presented to the Assembly will undoubtedly call upon the Taft Administration to commit itself in one way or the other on the question of equal rights and privileges.

Men and women of National prominence will address the conference on the issues now before the Northern and Southern States, the discrimination of the labor unions against the negro firemen in the South, the disfranchisement of the negro, the non-enforcement of the laws for the equal protection of whites and blacks, recent lynchings, assaults, and the peonage system in Southern convict camps.

The Rev. Frank Oliver Hall, rector of the Divine Paternity, struck a blow yesterday for the black race from his pulpit.

"It is not a fair deal," he said, "when the black man of the South is denied equal privilege to work by the side of his white brother."

*New York Times*, May 31, 1909.

## 102. OUSTING OF NEGROES IS STILL DEMANDED

ATLANTA, Ga., May 30.--Officials of the Georgia Railroad and of the Brotherhood of Firemen spent nearly the entire day in conference over those points in the strike agreement which remain to be settled. Commissioner Neill, Chairman Knapp, and Assistant Postmaster General Stewart were present. It seems very likely that the disputed questions will have to go to a Board of Arbitration finally under the Erdman act.

The stumbling block in the path of settlement is the retention of the negro firemen in any capacity. There is no doubt that all other points will be adjusted without arbitration.

There are several reasons why the race question is so important. The Georgia Railroad is considered a home institution, employing Georgia men only. Its firemen, engineers, conductors, and brakemen are all natives of towns through which its trains run. These men have intermarried until nearly whole communities are related. One engineer told Commissioner Neill that there was not a town on his run between Atlanta and Augusta in which he did not have

blood relatives.

Many of the men come from old and highly respected families, and the idea of working with a negro is abhorrent to them and to their relatives, and to this feeling is attributed the stand taken by entire communities against the railroad.

Should the negroes win in the final settlement of the dispute many believe that there will be strong sentiment against permitting them to continue at work. This feeling does not exist so strongly in the larger cities, and it is possible that the problem may be solved by employing some of the older negroes only in the yards of the cities.

The conference will be resumed tomorrow, and will be continued until an agreement is reached or it is left to arbitration. Meantime, train service on the Georgia Railroad has reached normal conditions, except in the freight department, and the officials say that by Monday noon all freight trains will be moving on the old schedules.

*Special to The New York Times*

WASHINGTON, May 30.--The settlement of the strike on the Georgia Railroad, according to the meagre information received here, is another victory for the Bureau of Labor of the Department of Commerce and Labor. While the method used in getting the railroad company and its white employes together is not yet known in Washington, the fact that they were induced to end the industrial war is set down to the credit of Commissioner of Labor Neill and Martin A. Knapp, Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Mr. Neill, it is understood, labored with the strikers throughout Friday night, and his efforts were crowned with success when Mr. Knapp reached Atlanta on Saturday morning and reinforced him.

Aside from the relief experienced by the Post Office Department in getting the mail schedules straightened out again, the Administration is delighted at the turn the affair has taken. It was recognized that the Republican plan for the pacification of the South was in the gravest danger if the strike grew to such proportions that Federal interference would be necessary. This phase of the matter is said to have given President Taft and his advisers many anxious hours during the progress of the trouble.

Mr. Taft, however, showed no inclination to shirk the responsibility of sending Federal troops into the disaffected districts where their presence might be found necessary. The War Department had made a canvass of the situation, and the entire strength of infantry, cavalry, and coast artillerymen in Georgia could have been moved on a half hour's notice. The President was prepared to follow the example of President Cleveland when the latter sent Federal troops into Chicago to protect property and restore order during the great railroad strike of 1894.

Both Mr. Knapp and Commissioner Neill will remain in Atlanta for a few days until the last sign of friction has been removed.

*New York Times, May 31, 1909.*

### 103. THE GEORGIAN STRIKE

#### A Southern View of Its Racial Complications

*To the Editor of The New York Times:*

Reading the comments of the THE TIMES and of other newspapers on the strike of the white firemen on the Georgia Railroad, they seem to me to ignore so completely obvious facts underlying an ugly situation that I ask space to put before your readers this view.

The problems of "organized labor" are interlaced with the negro question in the South precisely as they are with the Oriental race question on the Pacific. I hold no brief for "organized labor," but I accept it as a fact of American social and industrial life to be reckoned with. The immediate and concrete aim of the labor unions is to raise wages. The price of labor is

fixed by demand and supply, modified by trades union rules. Either negro firemen must be admitted into the unions or they will underbid white firemen, and the white unions will be stripped of their power. The Brotherhood of Firemen is National. The white firemen of Montana competes with all firemen in America, whether in Georgia or Texas or New Hampshire. His wage is affected by the wage of the negro fireman in Georgia. The negro fireman who accepts a wage 20 per cent less than that of the white fireman in New York cuts the New York fireman out of a job; local conditions do not apply to the transportation business. If the supply of white firemen be insufficient in Georgia, it may be filled within sixty hours from New York. The Southern negro's standard of living is far lower than that of the white man, just as is that of the Japanese or Chinese coolie. In the nature of things, therefore, the negro is potentially a strikebreaker. The frequent importation of negroes into the North to "break" strikes and their violent treatment by white union men, you must be familiar with. In the Southern village the white and black carpenters work side by side in amity, that is the result of custom; they so worked even when most of the negroes were slaves. In other words, trades unionism is not seriously considered in the South, except in those trades whose members have slight local affiliations. To the journeyman printer or telegrapher the whole country is his workshop, but that is not true of the village carpenter or blacksmith in an agricultural region.

I therefore throw out the suggestion that the Georgia Railroad strike springs from a recognition of these conditions by the white firemen of America, and that the New Yorker is not less responsible for it than the Georgian. Presumably, the great majority of union firemen are Northern men. Shall they accept the negro fireman and unionize him, undertaking to lift him to their own standard of living, or shall they treat him in the South precisely as (I think) they treat him in the North? What is geography to the transportation workingman?

The ethical question whether the white unionist should undertake the elevation of the negro laborer by assimilating him as fellow-union man or should leave him to his own devices. I do not here discuss, except to say that the elbow touch of the white unionist would be a powerful, if not the most powerful, leverage for the negro's industrial advancement that could be applied at this time. But the Southern white workingman is not expected to apply it alone, nor is it likely to be applied in the North in the near future. Anyway, I am brutal enough to say that I hope it will not be.

Additionally, it is fair to bear in mind that the locomotive fireman is the apprentice workingman to the locomotive engineer. When the engineer is disabled at his post, his fireman seizes the throttle and drives the engine home. It is well enough to say that the rule in the South is that the negro fireman is never given an engine, and has never been given one; what is the word of a Superintendent or group of Superintendents, that such a rule will forever prevail, worth? The master fireman can run an engine. One thousand black firemen in the South, non-union men, would be no slight menace to the white Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers on strike, ten or twenty years hence. Can the printers' union be expected to allow a negro apprentice to learn the operation of the Mergenthaler because the employer promises that the apprentice shall never have a machine?

I do not defend the Georgia Railroad strike; I regret that it has occurred; but nothing is to be gained by blinking the truth that it is not a manifestation of Southern race prejudice, and that it has probably been inspired from the North. I confess, however, that I am so much saturated with Southern "race prejudice," if the phrase be agreeable, not to wish the negro unionized, and the admission is inevitable that he must be unionized or else excluded from those trades in which he is in direct competition with white men the country over.

W. W. BALL

Charleston, S.C., May, 1909.

*New York Times*, June 1, 1909.

## 104. WOMAN HALTS A MOB

Saves Negro Fireman From Fury of Georgians Who Had Beaten Him

Special to THE NEW YORK AGE

AUGUSTA, Ga., May 31.--For protecting Joe Bryant, a Negro fireman, from a mob, Mrs. Margaret Sylvester, a prominent woman of this city, is acclaimed as the heroine of the Georgia railroad strike.

The attack on the Negro fireman was made late Saturday afternoon before it was generally known that the strike had been settled. A mob assaulted the Negro in the railroad yards and beat him badly. The Negro broke away and ran with the mob in pursuit. The chase led near the home of Mrs. Sylvester and when she saw the Negro she called to him to come in. The fireman obeyed and the mob tried to follow, but Mrs. Sylvester barred the way and denounced the mob for its brutal attack on him. She told the mob that if any member tried to enter her house she would shoot. Her attitude cowed the mob and it retreated. Mrs. Sylvester then had the fireman's wounds dressed and turned him over to the police for protection.

*New York Age, June 3, 1909.*

## 105. THE GEORGIA RAILROAD STRIKE

At last the race problem has become involved in a labor dispute. The combination is full of menace. As the consequence of the strike of white firemen over the employment of negroes, no regular trains ran over the tracks of the Georgia Railroad for the most of last week, communities have been in danger of want, and thousands of people have been stirred to unreason by the passions inflamed in the controversy.

On many railways in the South it has been the custom to place negro firemen in the engine cabs beside white engineers. The situation in the railway industry is in this respect similar to that in other industries in the South. White man and black man work in amity and co-operation side by side. In the case of the men in the engine cab, however, there is one feature that is distinctive. Ordinarily the engineer who drives an engine over a route has, before becoming an engineer, traveled over that route again and again as a fireman. It is nearly essential that if he is to be responsible for the safety of his train, he must know every yard of the track; and he can know it only by repeatedly going over that track before he assumes responsibility. The employment of negroes as firemen, and only white men as engineers, makes it difficult, in many cases virtually impossible, for the engineer to get the experience he ought to get on the route over which he drives his engine. The more negro firemen a railway employs, the more difficult does it become for the engineers of that road to enter on their duties trained as they should be. On the other hand, the negro will work for less wages than the white man. Therefore the railway managers undertake to save money by employing negroes as firemen instead of white men. Some time in April an official of the Georgia Railroad, desirous of saving his company about five dollars a day, removed from regular employment and placed on an "extra list" ten white "assistant hostlers" (members of the firemen's union) and replaced them with negroes at lower wages. The General Manager of the road declined to rescind this order of his subordinate. The white firemen employed on the road (less than a hundred) saw in this action a menace to their standard of wages and standard of living. They therefore struck. When, however, the railway undertook to replace these striking white firemen with negroes, the people along the route of the railway made violent protest. They made it clear that public sentiment would not tolerate any attempt to lower wages by filling the places of white workmen with negroes. And this sentiment was reinforced by the public opinion which has long been forming concerning the risk to travelers involved in the practice of employing white engineers who have been kept from a proper training because of the employment of negro firemen. Thus a strike which started as a protest against

reduction of wages became a bitter race issue, with public sentiment enlisted on behalf of the white strikers. As a consequence of the strike, scores of towns have been without mail or an adequate supply of provisions. Indeed, a large part of the State of Georgia has been undergoing the privations of seige. How much violence has accompanied the strike it is impossible to ascertain. Rumors of brutality are floated and then are denied. Fear of violence, however, has been indubitable.

This is the first time that an industrial contest has followed the lines of racial struggle to a serious degree. Heretofore the two problems in acute form have been kept distinct. In the North, where strife between organized labor and capital has been frequent, the comparative smallness of the negro population has kept it free from racial complications. In the South, on the other hand, where racial strife has been frequent, the comparatively unorganized condition of white labor and the comparatively unadvanced condition of negro labor have kept it free from finding expression in strikes or lockouts. Now, however, with the progress of organized labor in the South and the progress of the negro in industrial efficiency, there has arisen an occasion on which the labor problem and the race problem, each a spring of passion, have mingled.

The question in this strike is not as simple as one might think. It is not a mere question of white against black; of the members of a strong race attempting to rise by the degradation of a weaker race. It is a complication of racial and economic questions that requires careful study. Four points, however, are clear:

Violence, in the first place, in a contest of this kind is inexcusable and detestable. How it can be put down, appearing in many towns throughout a big State, we do not pretend to say. It is, however, the first duty of public executive officials, from Governor down, to exercise all the authority and influence they have to quell it.

In the second place, the suspension of the whole operation of distribution in the course of a quarrel of this kind is barbarous. We ought by this time to have reached a stage of civilization in which such questions were determined not by methods of war but by methods of reason and judicial procedure.

In the third place, the past practice of the railways in employing the principally negro firemen and only white engineers is bad. It affords an excuse for depressing wages, and it increases the dangers of travel.

In the fourth place, the only possible solution is not the elimination of negro firemen; a possible solution is the employment of trustworthy negroes as engineers. If this strike means the attempts by any considerable portion of the Southern people to close the door of industrial advancement against the negro, it is full of danger to the South. It has been the pride and boast of the South that there negroes have the fairest possible chance to make the most of themselves by hard work. If the South forgets that boast, it will bring calamity upon itself.

*The Outlook (June 5, 1909): 310-12.*

#### 106. RACE STRIKE ON GEORGIA RAILROADS

A strike of railroad firemen on the Georgia Railroad which began on the 16th and settled on the 29th, involved the employment and seniority recognition of Negro firemen. No other question was at issue, and this question was not a social one. It turned upon the fact that Negro firemen keep white men out of jobs. By the 22d not a wheel turned on the entire line, and the postal service was at a standstill. The United States Commissioner of Labor and the chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission went to Georgia on the 25th to secure a settlement. At that time the strikers had offered to fire engines to carry mails, but only mails--neither freight nor passengers. There was violence at Lithonia on the 28th. Ten trains carrying mails having been sent

over the road without interference on the morning of that day, although fired by Negroes, the General Manager attempted to resume freight traffic, but a crowd gathered and attacked the train. Some damage was done, and the engineer sustained personal injuries. The violence stopped when the attempt to run trains was abandoned. The terms of the settlement, which was effected on the 29th, are not officially published, but are reported by press dispatches to be as follows:

The men to return to work under conditions existing at the time the strike began until final adjustment is made.

All Negro firemen at the terminal stations will be dispensed with.

All discharged Brotherhood firemen will be reinstated.

Three other points are yet to be decided, as follows: (1) Whether Negro firemen shall be eliminated from the road. (2) If not eliminated, what percentage of Negroes there shall be. (3) Seniority of Negro firemen over white firemen.

*The Public, June 6, 1909.*

#### 107. THE GEORGIA COMPROMISE

The compromise under Federal pressure of the critical firemen's strike on the Georgia railroad is cause for much general satisfaction. The situation becoming more tense every day was rapidly approaching a climax. Public sentiment among the cracker whites was becoming inflamed to the point where the employment of Negro firemen in the future was problematical under any circumstances. Interference by the Federal government would have meant the opening of the old sectional wound to a degree not approached since the days of Reconstruction. The progress of friendly relations between the races in the South would have been retarded many years. From the standpoint, therefore, of the larger and present good, the compromise of the situation is especially beneficial to the Negro race. Better still is the fact that the men will return to work under the conditions existing at the time the strike began until the final adjustment is made.

It is to be hoped that this tentative proposal will obtain in the final settlement. The Federal government as the directing party to the compromise cannot compromise on the fundamental rights of the Negro in the matter. Nothing short of the Negro's right to work and his employment on Southern railroads are at stake. If it be agreed, with the Federal government consenting, that Negroes will not hereafter be employed in the terminals and as senior firemen, it means the gradual elimination of the Negro on the Georgia road. It means the eventual elimination of the Negro from every railroad in the South. It would mean industrial discouragement to the Negro.

Any other settlement than the recognition of the Negro's right to work on the railroad and the railroad's right to employ Negroes, would be as temporary as it would be unjust. The tyrannous demands of the Union and its diabolical walking delegate must be met by the firm stand of the railroad and the government. The best interests of the South and the Negro are involved.

*New York Age, June 3, 1909.*

#### 108. WHAT SHALL THE NEGRO DO?

Conflicting press reports have led to a widespread misunderstanding in regard to the actual outcome of the Georgia Railroad strike. It is not true that the railroad has given in on the essential point--the employment of Negro firemen. It conceded a number of unimportant points and signed an agreement to arbitrate six questions under the Erdman act. The first of these is the important one, for it raises the color issue in three-fold form:

Shall all Negro firemen be barred from employment on the Georgia Railroad; if employed, what percentage of the total number shall they constitute; and shall they retain their present privilege of promotion by seniority over white firemen?

The railroad stood its ground to the end with admirable firmness; on the arrival of Mr. Knapp of the Interstate Commerce Commission it yielded to the extent of consenting to arbitration. The important race question is, therefore, unanswered. Should the arbitration be swayed by the race issue, the outcome would become a precedent for limiting the employment of blacks in other directions. It would, therefore, have been better if the strike could have settled without arbitration--but that would have had to come about by the complete surrender of the union. The railroad had absolute justice on its side, and fought tenaciously for employees of proved worth and of long service, whose sole offense was the color of their skins.

*Baltimore Afro-American, June 12, 1909.*

#### 109. NEGRO FIREMEN UPHELD

Arbitration Decides That Georgia Must  
Treat Them the Same as Whites

ATLANTA, Ga., June 27.--The award of the Georgia Railroad Strike Arbitration Board, which was announced early this morning, is against the seniority of white firemen over negroes, and provides that the Georgia Railroad when using negroes as firemen, hostlers, or hostler's helpers, shall pay them the same wages as white men in similar positions. Arbitrator Hardwick dissented from this.

Firemen in the line of promotion to the position of engineer must have three years' experience before being promoted to the position of engineer, and are to be promoted in the order of their seniority. If they refuse or fail to pass the first examination they will be reduced to freight service without losing their seniority. Failing on the second examination they will be reduced to the bottom of the extra list or disposed of as the company desires. Firemen now in the service who are physically incapacitated for service will not be subject to this rule.

Mr. Hardwick, in a dissenting opinion from the proposition fixing negroes' wages the same as those of whites, said:

"In so far as the above finding permits the continued employment of negro firemen I dissent, because I believe from the evidence that such employment is a menace to the safety of the traveling public."

The arbitrators, chosen as a result of the recent strike of the white firemen, were ex-Secretary of the Navy Hilary Herbert for the road, Congressman Hardwick for the white firemen, and Chancellor Barrow as umpire.

*New York Times, June 28, 1909.*

#### 110. GEORGIA FIREMEN SATISFIED

Feel That with Equal Pay Whites Will Get Jobs from Negroes

ATLANTA, Ga., June 28.--The award made by the Board of Arbitration in the Georgia Railway strike case is declared to be satisfactory to the road as well as to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen. No appeal will be taken by either side.

Vice President Ball, speaking for the white firemen, said last night:

"The firemen never asked for the discharge of the negroes from the Georgia Railroad. When the board ruled that both races should receive the same

pay for the same work, I am inclined to think they gave us all we asked, eliminating that seniority section. When you place the white man and the negro man on the same pay basis, it is certain that the employer will secure the most competent laborer, not the cheapest."

The negro firemen were highly pleased when they learned that they are to get a substantial increase in pay, which they had not even thought of demanding.

*New York Times, June 29, 1909.*

#### 111. HOPE FOR THE NEGRO

The sequel to the Georgia firemen's case promises to be more interesting than the case itself. Only those directly interested can care about the wages or conditions of employment of a comparatively small number of men, but all Americans are interested in the maintenance in good faith of an award obtained in accordance with statutory process and involving racial and political issues of fundamental importance.

A Georgian and an Alabaman, both men of distinction, have agreed that the striking white firemen were wrong, and they award the negro firemen something where they asked for nothing. They are to keep their places, and their wages are to be increased on a scale, as it is said, of equal pay for equal work. The wages may be equal, but it is sure that the whites would not accept the same money with a disqualification for promotion. Negroes cannot become engineers, and this was one cause of the trouble. By long and faithful service as firemen they displaced whites and acquired privileges as firemen which the whites coveted. This is a purely economic matter thus far, the political and racial aspects being created by outsiders. It was alleged even in an argument before the arbitrators that an overwhelming public sentiment would not tolerate such a decision as has now been reached, and that it would be nullified by bloodshed.

This is not a question of the right of the negro to social or political equality. It is a question of his right to live, for the right to work is the right to subsistence. There is no constitutional right of the whites to any particular mode of livelihood, but there is a constitutional right of the negro to earn his living in any lawful way. The railways also have their right to exist economically, that is, by the employment of any laborers suitable to the work, at rates mutually satisfactory. These are the conditions which were disturbed by a lawless element of the community expressing prejudice which should be checked primarily by public sentiment, and if necessary by the strong arm of the State.

Doubtless the sentiment of the South is divided upon the subject, which makes it all the more necessary that the better element of the South and the general sentiment of the North should support each other. There has at no time been evidence that the sober and responsible Southerners were hostile to the negro firemen, who are important merely as the representatives of negro wage earners in general. For it is evident that if the negroes are to be expelled from one position of right they are weakened in respect to all their rights. The case illustrates BOOKER WASHINGTON'S argument that North and South would not everlastingly fight over the negro. Politics, religion, and education had not succeeded in solving the negro question, but Mr. WASHINGTON thought that business would solve it. Business draws no color line. The commission awards an equal right to equal pay for equal work, and an equal right to work.

*New York Times, June 29, 1909.*



## 112. WANT NO NEGRO FIREMEN

## Georgia Trainmen to Ask Legislature to Exclude Them

ATLANTA, Ga., June 29.--The preparation of a bill to exclude negroes from employment as firemen and trainmen in this State was begun today by a committee representing the firemen and trainmen of the Georgia Railroad.

The bill will be presented to the Georgia Legislature, now in session. Already a bill has been introduced into the House requiring an educational test for negro firemen.

*New York Times, June 30, 1909.*

## 113. THE GEORGIA STRIKE

The most dastardly labor union strike in the history of the Southland was that called by Vice President of the Enginemen's Association E. A. Ball, of Canada, in Georgia in the latter days of May. The strike of the white firemen on the Georgia Railroad was because of the layoff of ten white firemen, whose places had been taken by Negro firemen. The strikers, under the excited backing of the mucker populace of Georgia, became arrogant in their demands, asking for the discharge of all Negro firemen, and especially of the "senior" Negro firemen, who, through long and efficient service, had gained the zenith of their railroad career--"the better runs on the road." Under Federal pressure, Messrs. Knapp, chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and Neill, United States Labor Commissioner, brought the belligerent sides--the strikers and the railroad president, Mr. Scott--together. The white firemen were restored, and the other points in contention will be arbitrated by a commission of three, one appointed by either side and one chosen by the two thus selected.

The loose, intemperate discussion of the strike by members of the Negro Race Conference recently held in New York and men of similar reactionary persuasion has greatly confused in many Negroes' minds the issues involved therein. But the strike has changed the situation not one whit. At bottom the strike was a typical diabolical union strike to enforce its mad demands. Added to this was the tinder-box element of Georgia "crackers," whose fire had been drawn by the walking delegate's cry of "Negro seniority." The strike has been another evidence of the passion and depravity of the poor whites. It demonstrated the courage and strength of the friendship of leading Southern people, like President Scott, for the Negro. It advertised the patience and progress, through it all, of the Negro race. It demonstrated that the poor Southern whites must be "lifted up or they will drag us down." Therein lay the great menace to the Negro, the South and the nation.

*The Colored American Magazine, 16 (June, 1909): 330-31.*

## 114. THE BLACK SPECTRE IN GEORGIA

Once more has the Banquo's ghost obtruded itself upon national attention. . . . As is the habit of ghosts, this black spectre reappears at shorter and shorter intervals as time goes on. . . . Last month, the Georgia railroad, with 500 miles of track, was for a week tied up almost completely and the use of federal troops seemed at one time to be imminent because a strike immediately affecting only seventy men was aggravated by its combination with the race question. For years, practically all the Southern railways have employed both white and black men as firemen. Hitherto the custom has caused no disturbance of any consequence. The Georgia railroad began to employ Negro firemen six or eight years ago, increasing their number gradually, until it has had about

thirty black to about eighty white firemen. The blacks performed their duties in a manner satisfactory to the railway officials, and the engineers for whom they stoked were apparently satisfied. The firemen on this road two years ago were paid one half the wages of the engineers--\$1.75 a day. A wage agreement between the railroad and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers terminated in 1907. The engineers and firemen in the Brotherhood then demanded an increase. The engineers, all of whom are white, got the increase. The firemen failed to get it. The Brotherhood officials attributed this failure to the fact that the Negro firemen, who were not in the union, were willing to work for less than the union men demanded.<sup>58</sup>

There was still another fact that aggravated the union men. As the white firemen became proficient, they were promoted to be engineers but the black firemen, not being eligible, under the rules of the railroad, to such promotion, have gradually come, by the rule of seniority, into the best "runs" on the road, and there they stay, since they are not allowed to go any higher. The white firemen, consequently, have found it more and more difficult to reach the higher posts from which alone they could hope to be promoted to be engineers. The black firemen formed a block at the top of the ladder, over which the white firemen could not climb. Then, a few weeks ago, came the act that proved to be the spark in the powder magazine. Ten white "assistant hostlers" (firemen employed about the terminal, in the round house, etc.) were displaced by ten black "assistant hostlers" who were willing to work for less than the union wages. The displaced "hostlers" took the matter before their union. The rest of the seventy or eighty white firemen, already restive, took up the case of the hostlers and a strike was declared by the Brotherhood.

The people along the line of the railroad looked upon the struggle as a race issue. When the railroad undertook to fill the places of the strikers or to run any of their trains with Negro firemen, crowds collected at the stations, stoned the cabs and cars, set the brakes, and assaulted the firemen. Governor Hoke Smith refused to supply protection, pleading excuse that he had not enough troops to protect 500 miles of track. For a week hardly a car wheel turned. Perishable freight perished. The mail was not carried. Supplies of food and fuel were exhausted in various towns, and, as one writer express it, ante bellum scenes began to reappear in some localities thus deprived of all intercourse with the rest of the world. Threats were made to extend the strike to other roads connecting with the Georgia and handling its freight. The unusual feature of the situation was that the railroad is owned and officered by Southern men, while the Brotherhood official, Vice President Ball, who had charge of the strike, is a Northern man, hailing from Toronto, Canada. There was thus a labor controversy transformed into a race issue, in which Southern officials were fighting to retain Negroes in their jobs, while a Northern man, assisted by the Southern rabble, were fighting to oust the Negroes. The general manager of the railroad, Thomas K. Scott, in an interview, thus construed the meaning of the contest: "This strike is the first step of a movement which is planned to eventuate in the abolition of the Negro as an industrial factor. It is the skirmish of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and the Enginemen in its plan to drive the Negro out of employment on railroads altogether. The plan has been smoldering for five years. This strike on the Georgia railroad is just the first step. I have reason to believe that the same demand will in time, be it soon or late, be made by officials of this firemen's union to every other railroad in the South."

The termination of the struggle was effected, temporarily at least, by the aid of federal officials. Charles P. Neill, U.S. labor commissioner, and Martin A. Knapp, chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission, were sent from Washington to offer their services in effecting a settlement, Uncle Sam's special interest in the affair being to see that the mails were carried. They secured an "amicable settlement . . . on a basis entirely satisfactory to both sides." The strike was called off, the trains resumed their running, the populace along the line calmed down, and the usual course of existence was resumed. But the terms of the settlement, as unofficially reported, are interpreted to be a virtual victory of the white firemen, who are to displace the blacks, it is assumed, but to do so gradually, not all at once. The issue raised remains unsettled in the opinion of most commentators. Says the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*: "The settlement leaves the fate of the Negro firemen undetermined, with the chances decidedly against them. So the white

strikers against Negro labor on the engines win out. Their success is not likely to stop here, but may extend over other Southern roads employing Negro firemen. It thus becomes a great victory for the industrial suppression of the Negro following his political suppression. Yet only a few days ago President Taft was congratulating the colored race on their rise or admission to greater opportunities for advancement than they ever knew before." The New York *Sun* censures the federal administration for its part in bringing about the settlement. "A state administration," it says, "sympathizing with mob rule and a national administration apparently more willing to accept humiliation than to uphold the law have won the Georgia strike for the union." The New York *Globe* thinks the settlement of the strike in no way disposes of the big question: "It remains, and will return in more and more vexing form. Intelligent Southern men realize that the problem raised is the most serious since emancipation, and there is a special call for wisdom."

Some particularly significant utterances on the contest have come from the Southern press. Reading them, the New York *Evening Post* is persuaded that the strike has been one of the best things that has happened in the South, inasmuch as "it has not only brought about a split among Southerners on a race issue, but it must be bringing home to many thousands of intelligent men among them a clear understanding of how far unrestrained race prejudice may carry their section of the country." The *Chronicle*, of Augusta, for many a month engaged in blacking the course of Hoke Smith, the governor, for his "deliberate and wanton refusal to do his duty," and concerning the underlying issues it remarks: "Inasmuch as the Negro constitutes the bulk of the South's laboring population, to take away from his right to labor--'side by side with white men,' when necessary--would place the heaviest possible handicap upon the South itself; for it would not only have a surplus of idle Negroes to contend with, but a scarcity of labor in all industrial pursuits. Any other policy . . . would be nothing short of suicidal."

The New Orleans *Times-Democrat* refuses to regard the contest as in any proper sense a race issue, for in that case it would not be confined to one road. It was simply, in this journal's opinion, a labor dispute--"the competition of laboring classes whose living standards are radically different and the desire of the employer to obtain its labor as cheaply as possible." The Richmond *Times* thinks that, while the contest was in its inception nothing but a labor dispute, the Georgia populace soon lost sight of the real grievances, and "the broad issue of race" resulted, in a form which it regards as of "large and critical moment." It goes on to say:

"In a broad sense, the issue here is simply the Negro's right to earn a living. If the Georgian Railway discharges its colored firemen, it can hardly be long before other Southern railways will be asked to do the same thing. If stoking an engine is added to the list of things that a Negro may not aspire to do, any other form of occupation may be similarly closed to him at the discretion of his white co-laborers. We shall thus be in a fair way to establish the general principle that no Negro may hold any job which any white man wants or thinks that he wants.

"The South has repressed the Negro socially, and it was right to do so. It has repressed the Negro politically, and it was right to do so. But it has always declared that it gave the Negro a square deal and an even chance industrially, and this declaration has been the truth. To oust Negroes from positions which they are filling efficiently and without personal friction is to repudiate this wise policy and to start a program the logical result of which is the continuing multiplication of the idle Negro, the most dangerous element in the social body of the South."

"What has come to the South," asks the Florida *Times-Union*, "that there should be such intestine troubles in Kentucky, Tennessee and in Georgia; is there a common cause behind these outbreaks?" The question refers evidently not to the race issue in particular, but to the outbreaks of lawlessness that have recently swept over sections of these States. The *Times-Union* does not attempt to answer its own question; but an attempt to answer the question in part is made in a Northern paper--the New York *Sun*--in an editorial apparently written by a Southern man and professing to tell what is "perfectly well understood" throughout the Southern States as to the relations now existing between blacks and whites. Says *The Sun*:

"The Negro stands today very much as he did in the days before the civil war. His friends and sympathizers then were of the class to which his owners

belonged. His friends and sympathizers today are the descendants of those owners and their social congeners, whereby we mean the great mass of the cultivated, together with the land holders and the taxpayers. The Negro's enemies 'before the war' were the Crackers, the sand hillers and the wool hatters who were treated as less important than a well-fed slave Negro and resented it accordingly. His enemies today are the descendants of those ancient antagonists. In the emotions and proclivities of the South there has been no change of importance in three hundred years. . . . The 'Cracker' of the present times hates the progeny of the former slave with all the ancient passion.<sup>59</sup>

"There is nothing else in it. Not more than one in ten of the mobs that have beset the Georgia railroad stations wants to work or would know how to do it if he had the chance. They want to banish the Negro from his occupation, and the railway companies may go hang for all they care. On the other side are the preferences and sympathies of the substantial and responsible elements of the population. They are restrained in the matter of their demonstrations by a sense of accountability to society, but their feeling is deep seated, earnest, traditional, and in emergency available. . . . The struggle is gathering. It will spread beyond Georgia, and the end of it no man may prophesy."

*The Colored American Magazine* 17 (August 1909): 97-101.

#### 115. GEORGIA RAILROAD STRIKE

The strike on the Georgia Railroad was an endeavor on the part of the white firemen to drive the Negro firemen from their places. That there should be contest between the two races is quite natural. In slavery days the white workman protested against the Negroes being brought into the country because it injured him and his chances to labor. The old feeling still remains. The encouraging feature in the situation is that Southern sentiment, as voiced by the Southern press, seems to appreciate the fact that if the Negro is to remain in the country he must at least have a chance to work. The Richmond "Times Dispatch" puts the case well. "In a broad sense," it says, "the issue here is simply the Negro's right to earn a living. If the Georgia Railway discharges its colored firemen, it can hardly be long before other Southern railways will be asked to do the same thing. If stoking an engine is added to the list of things that a Negro may not aspire to do, any other form of occupation may be similarly closed to him at the discretion of his white co-laborers. We shall thus be in a fair way to establish the general principle that no Negro may hold any job which any white man wants, or thinks he wants."

The "Times Dispatch" says further that the South has always prided itself upon the industrial opportunities afforded the Negroes. "To oust Negroes from positions which they are filling efficiently and without personal friction, is to repudiate this wise policy and to start a program, the logical result of which is the continued multiplication of the idle Negro--the most dangerous element in the social body of the South."

The "Chronicle," of Augusta, Ga., takes the same stand. "Inasmuch as the Negro constitutes the bulk of the South's laboring population, to take away from him his right to labor side by side with white men when necessary, would place the heaviest possible handicap upon the South itself, for it would not only have a surplus of idle Negroes to contend with but a scarcity of labor in all industrial pursuits."

These editorial remarks, and others that might be quoted, show an increasing appreciation on the part of Southern men of the value of their Negro labor. Mr. Andrew Carnegie had frequently called attention in his public addresses to the tremendous value to the South of their black workmen. If the South is to hold its own industrially, this labor must be encouraged and protected. The "Chronicle" is most severe in its denunciation of Gov. Hoke Smith for his refusal to protect that labor.<sup>60</sup>

For a time the Southern employer of labor looked to foreign countries and immigration to supply the needs of its market. He is coming to understand

that the tide of immigration is not likely to turn toward the South to any great extent for years to come, and that the immigrant is not in all respects desirable. One result of his coming into the South has been to turn the heart of the white man back to his black brother. Mr. Washington is accustomed to call attention to the fact that however much the Southern orator may speak against the Negro he is at heart very fond of him. The Atlanta riots brought this devotion to light. There were numberless instances where white men and women at much self-sacrifice protected their black brothers. This railway strike, while in many ways it was most unfortunate, has developed the same feeling of mutual dependence. It helps to divide the solid South on the race question. We are dwelling much in these days on the conservation of our resources. Most valuable of all are men and women, and by no means least valuable are our Negro men and women. Whatever helps to conserve their resources and improve them is of the greatest possible good to the community.

*The Southern Workman*, 38 (August 1909): 419-20.



PART III

THE GREAT MIGRATION

### III

#### THE GREAT MIGRATION

The migration of southern blacks to the northern cities was marked by dramatic changes in the demography of Afro-America. From 1860 to 1900, the black population demonstrated no marked shift in its traditional concentration in the South. In 1865 blacks represented about 1.7 per cent of the total population in the north, and about 1.8 per cent in 1900. Even though blacks remained a southern folk during the first two decades of the twentieth century, the rate of growth was only 12.5 per cent in the South, while it reached nearly 100 per cent in the Northeast, and 60 per cent in the north-central states. Black scholar R. R. Wright, Jr., found that, of the pre-1900 migrants he interviewed, about 60 per cent came North for economic reasons (Doc. 1).

The explanation for the sudden migration during the second decade of the century is to be found in a complex set of social developments which congealed at the time. The machinery of segregation had been installed by 1900, and the accompanying economic intimidation, violence, and lynching constituted further evidence for blacks that the South held no future for them. At the same time, industry in the northern urban centers was stimulated by the production of the armaments for World War I. Simultaneously the demand for labor increased at a time when European immigration ended and white Americans left their factory jobs for the battlefield. Blacks fought in the war as well, and many simply refused to return to their rigidly segregated southern hometowns, preferring instead to remain in the anonymous northern cities. In addition, the South was economically devastated during the period by an unusual epidemic of boll weevils and floods which brought financial ruin to farmers of both races. Many tenants and sharecroppers were weary of being cheated by their white landlords (Doc. 2-5). A headline in the Norfolk Journal and Guide summed it up: "To North--Bad Treatment, Low Pay" (Doc. 6).

While much of this movement was the result of unorganized and spontaneous individual or family decisions, perhaps 10 to 20 per cent of the black workers were transported north by labor agents. Sometimes these agents simply backed a train into a southern city and invited blacks to a free trip North with the promise of a better job once they arrived. To escape his undesirable circumstance, the worker merely signed an agreement to work for the company which had given him passage. A sample "Freedom Ticket" is reproduced in Document 8.

It is important to bear in mind that the social significance of the demographic changes represented by the Great Migration lies in the human drama of a people compelled to abandon the security of the familiar, however restricted, for an unknown future. Documents 10-14 reveal that drama by reproducing a sample of letters written by the migrants themselves. Emmett J. Scott gathered these letters from the files of the Chicago Defender, a black newspaper which acted as a clearinghouse of information for the migrants. Scott was a Texas newspaper editor who in 1897 became Booker T. Washington's secretary. Later he was elected secretary of the National Negro Business League, and, when World War I broke out, became a special assistant to the Secretary of War. Primarily concerned with what initiated their actions, the letters Scott gathered represent the broad spectrum of those motives, the patterns of urban settlement, the new work in which the migrants were engaged, the significance of southern violence, and the conflict with white workers in the North.<sup>61</sup>



## EXODUS TO THE NORTH

## 1. THE MIGRATION OF NEGROES TO THE NORTH

By R. R. Wright, Jr.,

## I. THE EXTENT OF NEGRO MIGRATION TO THE NORTH.

There is no way of directly measuring this migration, as in this country there is no registration of persons who go from one place to another, as there is in some European countries. Hence we are left largely to approximate measurements afforded by the figures of the United States Census.

According to this authority, the movement of the center of the negro population during the past century has been steadily toward the southwest over four hundred miles, and during the two decades from 1880 to 1900, thirty-one miles from Walker County, Georgia, to Dekalb County, in northeast Alabama. The northern movement is directly opposite to this tendency, and in the past forty years has been so great as to transfer from the South to the North 2.5 per cent of the entire negro population.

In 1860 there were 344,719 negroes in the North, and in 1900 911,025, an increase of 164.3 per cent, as against an increase of 93.4 per cent for the negroes of the South during the same period. The following table gives the growth of the negro population of the North and the South from 1860 to 1900 by decades:

<i>Negro Population by Decades, 1860 to 1900 (U.S. Census).</i>					
	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
The North	344,719	459,198	626,890	728,099	911,025
The South	4,097,111	4,420,811	5,953,903	6,760,577	7,922,696
Total	4,441,830	4,880,009	6,580,793	7,488,676	8,833,721

  

<i>Percentage of Increase.</i>					
	1860-1870	1870-1880	1880-1890	1890-1900	1860-1900
The North	33.3	36.5	16.2	25.1	164.3
The South	8.8	34.7	13.5	17.2	93.4
Total	9.9	34.9	13.8	18.0	98.9

Forty years ago only 7.8 per cent of the negroes were in the North; today more than 10.3 per cent. This increase is due almost entirely to migration; for the available statistics seem to show that the birth rate of the Northern negro barely equals the death rate, making a natural increase practically impossible.

The following table will show the nativity of the negro population by divisions of States, according to the United States Census:

*Per 10,000 Distribution of Native Negro Population in each Division, by Division of Birth (Census Bulletin No. 8, 1900).*

Division of Birth	Division of Residence					
	North Atlantic	North Central	South Western	South Atlantic	South Central	United States
United States	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
South Atlantic	4,439	910	2,012	9,879	549	4,682
South Central	156	2,406	2,597	81	9,372	4,640
North Atlantic	5,198	115	351	15	4	239
North Central	112	6,448	2,149	6	46	398
Western	14	16	2,660	--	--	10

This table shows that of every 10,000 native negroes living in the North

Atlantic division 4,439 were born in the South Atlantic division, and 156 in the South Central States, 5,198 in the North Atlantic division, and 126 in the North Central and Western divisions. In other words, 53.24 per cent were born in the North and 45.95 per cent were born in the South. Of every 10,000 native negroes living in the North Central States in 1900, 6,448 were born in that division, 2,406 were born in the South Central division, 910 in the South Atlantic division, while 131 were born in the North Atlantic and Western divisions; that is, about one-third of the negroes of the North Central division were born in the South. Of every 10,000 negroes living in the Western States, 2,660 were born in that division, while 2,500 were born in the other Northern States, and 4,609 were born in the South. Of the total number of native negroes who live in the North, about forty per cent are migrants from the South.

The above table also shows something of the course of migration, which is along the line of the least resistance. The South Atlantic States send negroes up the seaboard to the North Atlantic, and from the South Central division they come up the Mississippi Valley to the North Central States; and from both Southern divisions they go West, some coming up the Mississippi and crossing over through Missouri and Kansas, and others going around the Southwest through Texas.

But, to be still more definite, they are the so-called border States which furnish most migrants to the North, as the following table will show:

State of Residence	State of Birth							
	Born outside of state Number	%	Mary- land	Vir- ginia	N.Caro- lina	S.Caro- lina	Ken- tucky	Ten- nessee
New York	50,518	52.8	2,864	24,118	6,587	2,724	690	291
New Jersey	37,026	53.4	4,430	15,965	3,908	806	176	104
Penna.	85,002	54.5	17,415	40,870	5,206	1,009	657	835
Ohio	39,796	41.3	732	9,983	2,189	437	13,970	2,327
Illinois	53,768	63.7	693	3,473	1,073	649	10,587	10,237
Indiana	31,829	55.4	97	1,232	1,817	185	19,379	3,459
Kansas	29,814	57.4	152	1,441	618	389	5,638	5,131

From Virginia, North Carolina and Maryland come about two-thirds of the negro migrants of New York and New Jersey, and more than two-thirds of those of Pennsylvania, while these States furnish only about one-third of the migrants to Ohio, and less than one-tenth to Illinois, Indiana and Kansas. On the other hand, from Kentucky and Tennessee come about 72 per cent of the migrants of Indiana, and about two-fifths of those of Ohio and Indiana, while these States furnish about one-fiftieth, one-sixtieth and one one-hundred and thirtieth of the migrants to New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey respectively.

But the movement has not been uniform to all portions of the North, for between 1880 and 1900 five Northern States decreased in negro population, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Nevada and Wisconsin; and between 1890 and 1900 the two Dakotas, New Mexico, Oregon and California did the same. The Northern migration has been a movement to the Northern cities, and to the great cities particularly. Within the two decades from 1880 to 1900 the negro population of cities of 4,000 inhabitants and over more than doubled, while the rural population actually decreased more than one-tenth. The rural districts of most of the Northern States east of the Mississippi River decreased, while the cities of 100,000 inhabitants or more increased over three times more rapidly in negro population than in whites.

Today two of the four largest urban aggregations of negroes in the world are north of Mason and Dixon's line, and are increasing, as the following table will show:

*Northern Negro Population in Cities and Rural Districts, 1880 and 1900*  
(U.S. Census.)

	1900		1880		Increase 1880 to 1900	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cities of 100,000 Pop.	335,531	36.8	122,203	19.5	213,328	175.5
Cities of 25,000-100,000	102,055	11.2	57,787	9.2	44,268	76.8
Cities of 8,000-25,000	192,624	11.3	64,773	10.3	37,851	58.6
Cities of 4,000-8,000	65,555	7.2	42,198	6.7	23,357	55.3
Cities of at least 4,000	605,765	66.5	286,961	45.7	318,804	111.1
Rural districts	305,260	33.5	339,929	54.3	*34,669	*10.1
Total (North)	911,025	100.	626,890	100.	284,135	39.6
*Decrease						

*Increase of Cities 1890-1900 (U.S. Census).*

	Negro Population		Increase	Total
	1900	1890	Negroes	Increase
City North				
Philadelphia	62,613	39,371	59.0	23.6
New York	60,666	23,601	157.8	126.8
Chicago	30,150	14,271	111.2	54.4
Boston	11,591	8,125	13.3	25.1
Cleveland	5,988	2,939	100.0	46.1
Pittsburg	17,040	7,850	117.1	34.8
Cincinnati	14,482	11,655	24.3	9.8
Newark	6,694	4,141	61.6	35.3
Indianapolis	15,931	9,133	74.4	60.4
City South				
Washington	86,702	75,572	14.7	29.7
Baltimore	79,258	67,104	18.1	30.7
New Orleans	77,714	64,491	20.5	12.0
Memphis	49,910	28,706	73.9	92.0
Louisville	39,139	28,651	36.6	30.2
Atlanta	35,727	28,098	29.3	75.2
Richmond	32,230	32,330	0.3*	28.0
Charleston	31,522	30,970	1.8	9.9
Nashville	30,044	29,382	2.3	75.7
*Decrease				

These comparisons show a remarkable amount of migration to the Northern cities, when it is considered that from the most reliable data the birth rate is low and the death rate high. For example, the death rate of New York negroes exceeded the birth rate every year from 1895 to 1904, and in 1904 it was 10.43 per thousand in excess, while the same was true for the ten years in Indianapolis, where the excess of deaths in 1904 was 3.2 per 1,000, and in Cincinnati, where it was 30.9 per 1,000. Had there been no migration to these cities the negro population would have decreased very considerably.

*Temporary Migration.* The census figures used above give at best only the minimum figures, and a very crude measurement of the permanent migration at two points, namely, the birthplace and the place of residence at the time of the census. It gives nothing as to the temporary migration as such, nor can we do more than form an estimate of this. We may describe the temporary migrants as summer migrants, winter migrants and roving or irregular migrants. The summer migrants are made up of those who come North every summer to work in the hotels and in domestic service chiefly at the seashore resorts. They come chiefly from Maryland and Virginia, but also from the States as far down as Florida and Louisiana, and are scattered along the seashore from New Jersey to Maine, often doubling, and even trebling, the negro population of a given place in a season. Among these are hundreds of negro students who earn their next year's school expenses in the North during the summer. There is also another

class, which comes generally from the small towns and rural districts to work on the farms of Pennsylvania and Maryland, where they are in great demand. The employment agents of Philadelphia find it extremely difficult to secure the Southern negroes wanted by farmers in the vicinity of that city, and often the farmers, not trusting to agents, go down to the boats themselves in order to persuade incoming negroes to go to farm work. These summer migrants, or a large part of them, return South when the winter's cold comes the students go back to the Southern schools, a large number of waiters, porters, and other domestic workers go to work in Southern winter resorts in Florida and other States, and many go back to their former labor.

In the winter there come to the large cities many unskilled laborers, who find work scarce in the small cities and on the farms. Many of these have been farm laborers during the summer--some as tenants on Southern farms. Among them are many married men, who leave their families behind and go back to them in the spring. From both classes of these temporary migrants the permanent residents of the North are recruited. Some remain, having come to the city for the first time, while others go regularly from North to South each season for a dozen years or more before becoming permanently settled in the North.

There are also many temporary migrants who roam from place to place living in one section only a very short time. They are unskilled laborers, of the unsteady type, and roving is made easy because of the demand for unskilled labor in the large cities. These migrants are from sixteen years of age to forty. After forty there are very few "rovers."

*Sex and Age of Migrants.* In the total negro population there is an excess of females, but in the Northern negro population the males are in the majority, there being 1,025 males to each 1,000 females. The large cities of the East, however, have an excess of females, except Pittsburgh and Boston, due to the fact that few women go to rural districts, while there is great demand for men on the farms.

As to age, the migration begins at about fifteen years and extends to forty, being greatest between eighteen and twenty-eight for men and fifteen and twenty-five for women. The following table of 512 persons questioned by me as to the age of leaving their birthplace and the age at coming to Philadelphia illustrates this point:

Age periods	Age at leaving birthplace				Age at arriving in Philadelphia			
	Males		Females		Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 10 years	27	10.0	41	16.9	9	3.4	11	4.5
10 to 14 years	40	15.0	47	19.4	15	5.6	27	11.1
15 to 19 years	74	27.5	59	24.3	69	25.6	66	27.1
20 to 29 years	79	29.4	62	25.5	109	40.5	75	30.9
30 years and over	22	8.1	22	9.0	56	20.8	56	23.1
Unknown	27	10.0	12	4.9	11	4.1	8	3.3
Total	269	100.0	243	100.0	269	100.0	243	100.0

The above table shows that considerable time elapsed between that of leaving home and arriving in the city of Philadelphia. Only about half of the migrants came directly to the city, while the other half lived in various places covering a period which averaged over eight years. The large number of children (sixty-eight) who are reported as leaving their place of birth under ten years of age, and most of them from ten to fourteen, were with their parents or guardians. After fourteen the migration is generally of individuals.

The census brings out clearly the effect of this migration, as a comparison between the population of Pennsylvania and Virginia shows:

Age Periods	Negro population of			
	Pennsylvania		Virginia	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Under 15 years	19,421	20,526	132,720	134,690
15 years to 29 years	27,108	28,589	90,422	98,994
30 years to 44 years	20,778	17,193	48,676	53,051
45 years to 59 years	8,674	7,425	31,641	31,251
59 years and over	2,916	3,429	18,771	18,151
Unknown	451	335	1,229	1,126
Total	79,348	77,497	323,459	337,263

The sudden drop after fifteen years in the case of Virginia is due to emigration, while the rise at fifteen for Pennsylvania is due to immigration.

## II. CAUSES OF MIGRATION

As a general rule migration proceeds from the country of greatest density, most highly developed resources, greatest competition and highest cost of living, to that of less density, comparatively low cost of living, and undeveloped but rich resources, especially where there is an opportunity for exploitation. On this principle, millions of Europeans left their native shores for the American continent, and upon this principle thousands of the men of the East went to the West, and thousands are today going to the Northwest and the South. The negroes, however, seem to be going contrary to this principle, so far as they are coming from the undeveloped South--the land of opportunity and future wealth--and crowding to the highly developed Northern cities where competition is severest, and cost of living highest. As we have seen, very few Northern-born negroes migrate South, while many Southern-born migrate North. To get the point of view of the migrants themselves I submitted to several hundred of them the question, "Why did you leave the South?" Their answers are given in the following table:

### *Causes for Leaving the South*

Causes	Males		Females		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Desire for higher wages	120	44.6	96	39.5	216	42.2
Higher wages and travel	12	4.5	10	4.1	22	4.3
Higher wages and protection	14	5.2	6	2.5	20	3.9
"To better condition"	25	9.3	31	12.8	56	10.9
"Tired of the South"	9	3.3	13	5.4	22	4.3
"Wanted to make a change"	27	10.0	22	9.0	49	9.6
Came with parent or guardian	29	10.8	40	16.5	69	13.5
Old persons, to be with children	3	1.1	6	2.5	9	1.8
Parent died, left home to work	2	.7	5	2.0	7	1.3
Had position in the North	3	1.1	3	1.2	6	1.2
Ran away from home	1	.4	0	---	1	.2
Brought away by soldiers	1	.4	0	---	1	.2
To attend school	3	1.1	0	---	3	.6
Not given	20	7.5	11	4.5	31	6.0
Total	269	100.0	243	100.0	512	100.0

Over fifty per cent gave as their reason for leaving the South the desire for higher wages; about eight per cent wanted, beside higher wages, protection and travel; 10.9 per cent wanted "to better their condition," while 4.3 per cent left because they were "tired of the South;" came with their parents, and 9.6 per cent left simply because they "wanted to make a change." These answers, though not very profound, leave us without doubt that the chief cause for the movement northward is economic--and is seen from the migrants' point of view in the higher wages offered in the North.

A comparison of the wages which these persons received in the South and those which, according to their testimony, they are now receiving in the North makes even clearer the force which higher wages has in the migration from the South. The following table is based upon the answers of 512 migrants:

*Number of Negroes Receiving Specified Wages per Week  
in the South and in the North*

Weekly wages	South			North		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
"Board and clothes"	6	4	10	---	---	---
50 cents to \$1.99	8	26	34	---	1	1
\$2 to \$2.99	22	48	70	---	11	11
\$3 to \$3.99	26	34	60	---	16	16
\$4 to \$4.99	12	11	23	10	46	56
\$5 to \$5.99	21	14	35	11	31	42
\$6 to \$6.99	47	6	53	23	12	35
\$7 to \$8.99	24	1	25	35	9	44
\$9 to \$11.99	5	0	5	64	7	71
\$12 to \$13.99	1	0	1	23	4	27
\$14 to \$15.99	1	0	1	3	0	3
\$16 and over	1	0	1	7	0	7
Working for self	5	0	5	4	1	5
Not working	19	24	43	5	19	24
Not reported	71	75	146	84	86	170
Total	269	243	512	269	243	512

The wages generally paid to the women in the South were \$1.50 per week (\$6 per month) to \$3 per week in the small towns, and from \$2 to \$4 in the cities; while men received \$2 to \$3.50 in the small towns and on the farms, and from \$5 to \$9 in the cities. These wages are bettered by from 75 per cent to 150 per cent in the North. Domestic servants among women earn in Philadelphia from \$3 to \$6 per week, averaging about \$4.50; while men earn from \$6 to \$12 per week, averaging about \$9, with more, however, receiving \$12 per week than \$6.

These figures are corroborated so far as the South is concerned by special local studies published by the United States Government. The Bulletin of Labor, January, 1898, says of domestic service in Farmville, Va: "The men receive from \$8 to \$10 a month; the women receive from \$1 to \$5, according to age and work; a general servant in an ordinary family receiving \$4, a nurse girl \$1 to \$3 and a cook \$5." Laborers in Farmville receive from 30 cents to \$1 per day. In Sandy Spring, Md., (Bulletin of Labor, January, 1901), "the wages range from 'victuals and clothers' and lodging (in two cases) to \$10 a month. The usual wages for a young nurse girl is from \$1.50 to \$4 a month, generally \$3; for a housemaid, from \$4 to \$7, generally \$6; for a cook \$6 to \$10, generally \$7 or \$8."

This same contrast holds good for farm labor in the North and in the South.

According to the report of the United States Department of Agriculture, the following table represents wages paid to negroes in typical Northern and Southern States:

*Wages of Negro Farm Labor per Month, by the Year, Without Board and with Board;  
also per day, ordinary labor, 1898 and 1902*

State	Per month, by the year				Per day, ordinary labor			
	Without board		With board		Without board		With board	
	1898	1902	1898	1902	1898	1902	1898	1902
New Jersey	\$22.30	\$25.89	\$12.85	\$15.27	\$1.24	\$1.32	\$0.93	\$1.00
Pennsylvania	20.59	24.94	12.58	14.31	1.08	1.30	.80	.92
Ohio	19.54	22.31	13.26	15.21	1.01	1.15	.77	.92
Indiana	19.26	21.17	12.45	14.42	.93	1.03	.72	.82
Kansas	21.03	24.43	14.47	16.49	1.10	1.30	.91	1.01

State	Per month, by the year				Per day, ordinary labor			
	Without board		With board		Without board		With board	
	1898	1902	1898	1902	1898	1902	1898	1902
Connecticut*	\$27.65	\$28.59	\$16.00	\$17.56	\$1.40	\$1.45	\$1.02	\$1.05
New York	23.01	26.13	15.71	18.01	1.23	1.38	.95	1.05
Maryland	16.63	17.29	10.36	11.15	.86	.92	.60	.67
Virginia	13.18	14.97	9.16	10.06	.67	.76	.48	.56
No. Carolina	11.10	12.77	7.48	8.84	.56	.64	.43	.49
So. Carolina	9.48	10.79	6.73	7.61	.49	.53	.41	.43
Georgia	10.36	12.24	7.25	8.50	.56	.62	.44	.49
Kentucky	15.05	16.19	10.71	11.62	.75	.81	.57	.61
Tennessee	12.83	13.94	9.06	9.71	.65	.73	.51	.55

\*Connecticut and New York make no separate returns for the labor of negroes; all the other States do.

We notice that New Jersey pays the highest price to negro labor on the farm. There is also more migration of farm labor to this State, which according to the report quoted above, is the State most affected by the incoming of negro farm laborers.

Another cause, not entirely economic but having very definite economic bearing, is that suggested in such answers in the above table as "tired of the South," "desire for higher wages and protection," "to better one's conditions." There is no doubt that the social unrest resulting from the discriminations against negroes in the South is having the effect of driving an increasing number of them from that section. The South has known the negro chiefly as a slave without political, social or even personal rights, save those which whites condescended to give. And by erecting double standards of morality, legality, social and economic efficiency, the white South seems determined that the blacks shall share in its economy to the least degree possible. On the other hand, growing intelligence on the part of the negroes demands more and more of appreciation, and when this is not given, the unrest becomes intense. This is not the desire which some wish to denote by the much misused term "social equality." It is that fundamental desire of human nature which Professor A. W. Small, of the University of Chicago, says the sociologist must assume as natural to every individual. "Each man," he says, "embodies a claim to be an undiminished unit among like units. . . . The Germans talk of '*persönliche Geltung*,' 'counting for all that one is essentially worth,' and this again seems to be an utterance of the native human instinct. The privilege of standing over against his fellow, with the assured franchise of equal freedom of self-expression, is an explicit demand of every unspoiled man. The demand is not primarily an assertion of 'equality' in the sense in which the idea is notoriously abused by pseudo-democrats. It is the demand that such as I am, with such sort and size of merit as I personally possess, I may be permitted to assert myself without suppression or subversion by the arrogation of others." "The root of the matter," continues Professor Small, "is not to be socially discounted in accordance with any fictitious scale." (*American Journal of Sociology*, Sept., 1900). This inability on the part of negroes to secure this "*persönliche Geltung*" is one of the most serious factors in the progress of the negro and of the South, and needs thorough and unbiased study. At present free speech on the subject is not allowed to negroes or whites in the South, and Northern students of social conditions are not inclined to look the matter squarely in the face.

The two general causes for migration to the North are higher wages and opportunity for freer self-expression. These are the arguments which thousands of negroes now living in the North use in their letters to their friends in the South whom they are endeavoring to persuade to come North. These are the arguments which employment agents have used to bring thousands of negroes from their Southern homes. It is very quaintly summed up in the expression of a South Carolina negro who said to me: "The white folks respects you up here. You ain't no worse than any other working man. You get what you'se worth, that's all. Down where I come from, you are all right among your own color, but when there's a white man in it, you's sho' goin' to get left."

There has been, in recent years, no wholesale emigration from any part of the South, but simply a steady flow, which in some sections is causing a slow depopulation. The young people leave first. If a young man, he sends for his

brother, uncle, father or other relative, and friends. He tells of the many advantages, he compares the life in the country town with that of the Northern city, mentioning often in detail every superiority of the latter over the former, but he generally does not tell of his struggles, disappointments and sorrows. The young women write in the same strain. They persuade their relatives and friends to come North, often "just for a summer;" they secure places of employment for them, and thus the migration begins and continues. I have written dozens of letters for migrants from the South to their Southern friends and relatives, and not a few times have I had to suggest to the author not to paint the picture of Northern conditions too beautiful, which they were often inclined to do.

They are not the best negroes, from the economic point of view, who come North, just as they are not the best Russians or Italians who come to America. They are the ill-adjusted. We may divide the negroes of the South into four classes: First, the property-holders, which include most of the professional class, business men, the most intelligent artisans and farmers; second, the tenant farmers, the artisans, domestic servants of skill and intelligence, who do not own their homes; third, the unskilled laborer of the city, and the country farm hand; fourth, the vagrant and criminal class. Of these four classes, the majority of migrants to the North come from the third class, who first feel the economic stress, and who find it more difficult to get work enough to support them in the South than in the North. The second and fourth classes furnish respectively the next largest number, while the first class furnishes the fewest migrants.

This might lead one to ask why do not the best negroes leave the South? for they, more than all others, ought to feel the pressure of their Southern environment. The reason can be found in the policy of race separation, which tends to develop among the negroes an upper class, who hold their places not so much because of superior efficiency as because they are negroes. Thus negro teachers, preachers, doctors, and leaders in small business concerns have been developed. It would be difficult for these, who have gotten their places under a limited competition, to hold the corresponding place in the economic system of the North as of the South. For example, the South has twenty negro college presidents, who would hardly hold the same position if they migrated to the North. But there is an increasing amount of migration even among this class. Ministers are being transferred. Many students who study in the North fail to return South, and negroes are gradually working into the public school system and in business in the North.

Since I have been gathering information with regard to migration a surprising amount of material has come to me of a type of negro who, because of his inability to use free speech in the South, has come North, where almost invariably he has proved useful. A few examples of this type are: A Georgia negro editor who was forced to leave his native city because he too strongly denounced lynching, now conducts two successful printing offices in New York. He is a college graduate. Another negro who was forced to leave the same place where he engaged in teaching is now the secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in a New Jersey town. A Tennessee woman who edited a negro newspaper was accused of teaching unwholesome doctrine to the negroes of her vicinity and had to leave to save herself from bodily harm. She is now a most useful woman in social reform work in Chicago. A South Carolina negro says: "After a dispute with a white man who became angry with me over a trivial matter, I thought that he might kill me and there would have been no redress whatever; after thinking of my three little girls who might grow to virtuous womanhood, but whose virtue had no protection in public sentiment, I decided to take my chances in a freer, though harder climate." This man is now head of one of the largest schools in a metropolitan city of the North. Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Buffalo, Chicago, and nearly every large Northern city contains many such of these "exiles" from the South.

### III. SOME EFFECTS OF NEGRO MIGRATION TO THE NORTH

What, it may be asked, are some of the effects of the migration of negroes to the North--on the North, on the South, on the negroes?

(a) The effect on the North has been but slight. The immigration of foreigners has so balanced the migration of negroes to the North that in the



forty years from 1860 to 1900 the proportion of negroes to the total population has remained about the same.

*Percentage of White and Negro to total Population for each Geographical Division of the North, from 1860 to 1900 (U.S. Census)*

Division	1860		1880		1900	
	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro
North Atlantic	98.5	1.5	98.4	1.6	98.1	1.8
North Central	97.8	2.0	97.7	2.2	97.9	1.9
Western	89.0	.7	91.2	.7	94.7	.7
The North	<u>96.7</u>	<u>1.7</u>	<u>95.2</u>	<u>1.9</u>	<u>95.8</u>	<u>1.8</u>

In 1860 the negroes were 1.7 per cent of the population of the North, and in 1900 1.8 per cent.

Industrially the negroes have affected the North only in isolated places and in unskilled labor and in domestic service. As has been seen, there are enough negroes in New Jersey to affect the farm labor of the Southern district. In the large cities negroes furnish a great proportion of the unskilled labor about mills and factories. Negroes are the chief laborers in the laying of asphalt pavement; they are quite a considerable factor in domestic service, and in some cities they compose as high as one-fifth of the workers in domestic and personal service. Negroes have been used effectively as strike breakers in unskilled work, notably in the Chicago stockyards' strike of 1904 and the Chicago teamsters' strike of 1905, and have been able in isolated cases to demand recognition from labor unions.

(b) The South has suffered economically from the migration of negroes, for this is the time when laborers are needed, and especially on the farm. There was afforded last winter a striking example of the effect of migration on the South by the fact that the State of Virginia made a special bid for workers from abroad. The State is in sore need of laborers; negroes form a large part of the laborers. They are leaving by the thousands, while "thousands of acres of agricultural land is now going to weeds." In the past twenty years, i.e., from 1880 to 1900, two-thirds of the counties of the State decreased in negro population. The census of 1900 reports over 250,000 negroes who were born in Virginia and are now living in other States, while only 35,000 negroes had migrated to Virginia from other States. In other words, the minimum figure would put Virginia's loss of negroes at 215,000. These negroes leave, as we have seen, after the age of fifteen years, to spend the years of their economic efficiency in other States. If we use Dr. Farr's method of determining the economic loss due to emigration, we may place the loss of Virginia, because of the emigration of negroes, at not less than \$215,000,000, allowing an average of \$300 as the lowest estimate of the social loss in maintaining the individual up to the age of fifteen years, and \$700 as an estimate of the lowest average gain to the community by the presence of the individual negro. Other Southern States have suffered proportionately, as they have needed and have lost negroes. Some of these States have sought to reduce to a minimum, if not to prohibit, the emigration of negroes by excessive license fees required of "emigrant agents." Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama have such laws; but they do not prove very effective.

(c) The effect upon the negroes. In preparing this paper, I have read many articles bearing upon the condition of negroes in the North. Most of these articles claimed that the North was bad in its effect upon negroes; and some advised negroes not to migrate North. I have talked with thousands of Southern-born negroes, who now live in the North, and while with rare exception each said that he was prospering in the North far better than the South, the general opinion was that the Northern negro was degenerating. It is here we have the individual and social point of view in greatest contrast.

Considering the Southern negro in the North from the point of view of social development, there can be no doubt at all that the North has been of benefit to the negro and the negro has profited by it.

The reasons why the Northern Negro does not appear to have made as rapid strides as the Southern negro are many, a few of which may be mentioned: First, the records of the races are not separated, as in the case of property lists, school attendance, etc., and therefore do not stand out so prominently; second,

the extremes of poverty and wealth are greater in the North than in the South. A negro owning \$10,000 in the South is rated rich; a negro drug store or grocery, though small, is easily seen in the South; but in the North no one especially notices a \$10,000 man, even though he be a negro, and drug stores and groceries are so common that when a negro establishes one there is but little comment.

But there is an upward and a downward tendency among the negroes as a result of migration to the North. The increased amount of crime, which is slightly in excess of the South, and the high death rates--often greatly in excess of births, as in New York--indicate a downward tendency. Tuberculosis and pneumonia take away thousands of negroes from the large cities each year. Competition and the cold climate are relentless in driving the weaker negroes, the more ignorant and shiftless, to the very lowest round of the social ladder. New opportunities for crime and vice, indeed, the very opportunity for fuller self-expression, tend to develop a class of criminals, loafers and street loungers, who are all too prominent in the negro sections of any great Northern city.

But if sociology has been unfortunate in any particular with regard to its method, it has certainly been quite unfortunate, especially at the hands of the so-called practical sociologist, in giving far too large a place to pathological conditions. This has especially been true in studying the negroes. Crime, disease and degeneracy do have a place, but they have only a very small place in determining the course of social development as a whole or of a particular group. It should never be forgotten by the social student that the normal is more important than the abnormal, and especially when the abnormal is a very small percentage of the whole. Yet even in social pathology an interesting study of crime in the North might not be unprofitable, if it would reveal to us just how much is a result of degeneracy, or ill-adjustment to the new environment; how much is a result of that freedom of expression permitted in the North, which is the one great requisite for the highest social activity, though it sometime leads to anti-social actions.

There are, however, many positive evidences of a healthful effect and an upward tendency among the negroes of the North. Physically they are improving; the death rate is decreasing, and the birth rate increasing in most of the large centers. If we keep in mind the class of negroes from which the immigrants generally come and note their condition here and that of the negroes of their class in their native homes, the progress in the north is quite remarkable. Only a few points which need more thorough investigation can be given here.

The Northern negro is intellectually improved. The illiteracy of the negro of the North is 18.1 per cent; of the South it is 48. In fact the Northern negro under thirty is less illiterate than the Southern white, as the following table shows:

*Illiteracy of Negroes of the North, and Whites and Negroes of the South by Ages, According to Census of 1900*

Age Period	Northern Negroes	Southern Negroes	Southern Whites
Ten to fourteen years	4.1	32.2	9.8
Fifteen to twenty years	6.4	35.3	8.9
Twenty-one to twenty-four years	8.4	38.4	9.2
Twenty-five to thirty-four years	11.4	44.1	9.9
Thirty-five to forty-four years	20.8	57.6	13.2
Forty-five to fifty-four years	36.5	72.8	15.9
Fifty-five to sixty-four years	48.3	82.6	16.1
Over sixty-five years	61.8	88.3	20.9
Unknown	41.1	57.9	19.9
All ages	18.1	48.0	11.7

Good schools, compulsory education, free libraries, cheap newspapers, free entry to theatres, museums and other places of amusement and enlightenment, are great stimuli to the mental activity of the negro of the North, and the whole Northern environment, unlike the South, puts a value upon intelligence and demands it as a requisite for success in the negro as well as in the white man.

Competition has raised the standard of negro efficiency in every line of

endeavor. Employment agents who have placed over 100,000 negro domestic servants in the past fifteen years are almost a unit in declaring that the servant who comes from the South, even with good recommendations is rarely efficient, and that the change in two years is remarkable. It is often remarked that the concentration of the Northern negro in domestic service shows that he is losing rather than gaining; but when it is considered that these persons were very poor servants, or largely farm hands, and casual laborers in their Southern home, the concentration in the North in a higher grade of domestic service is really a gain for the negro rather than a loss. But not only in domestic service has the negro gained a higher efficiency, but in business and in the professions. It takes more for negroes to succeed in the North in the professions or in business than it does in the South, because the competition is greater. In the South a negro competes with negroes for negro patronage; in the North he competes with all men for all the patronage he can get. One would suppose that most negro business and professional men would go where the race is represented in greatest numbers, but that this is not the case, as the following table, based on the United States census for 1900, seems to indicate:

*Number of Negroes in Business and Professions and the Proportion of the same to every 1,000 Negroes in the North and South, Based on U. S. Census 1900*

Professions	Number		Per 10,000 Negroes	
	North	South	North	South
Lawyers	280	438	3	4/10
Dentists	109	96	1	1/10
Clergymen	2,600	12,764	28	13
Government officials	141	2,454	1	1/2
Physicians and surgeons	474	1,100	5	1
Actors and showmen	1,335	685	15	2/3
Teachers	2,319	18,948	25	19
Musicians	2,118	1,797	23	1-2/3
Other professions	805	750	9	7/9
Total	10,184	37,038	112	37

Business Occupations	Number		Per 10,000 Negroes	
	North	South	North	South
Agents	618	1,487	7	1
Bankers and brokers	81	144	1	1/7
Bookkeepers & stenographers	2,986	4,056	33	4
Merchants	2,156	7,087	23	7
Undertakers	93	346	1	3/10
Manufacturers, etc.	411	754	5	7/10
Photographers	115	115	1	1/10
Printers	471	648	5	6/10
Salesmen	902	1,897	10	2

When the competition which one has to undergo to succeed is taken into consideration, it should be expected that the highest individual efficiency would be found in the North, and so it is. The largest businesses, the oldest and largest newspapers, and five out of eight negro magazines, are in the North. The majority of negro inventors and the best authors were either born in the North or migrated to the North. If the following tables, from Bulletin No. 8 of the United States census, are correct, the average size and value of the negroes' farms in the North are above those of the South:

*Number and Acreage of Negro Farms*

Division	Number of Farms		Acreage		Per cent Improved
	Total	With Bldgs.	Total	Acreage per farm	
Continental U.S.	746,715	716,512	38,233,920	51.2	23,362,786
No. Atlantic	1,761	1,724	84,407	47.9	55,079
No. Central	12,255	11,665	787,071	64.2	566,073
Western	337	324	76,005	225.5	20,850
So. Atlantic	287,933	278,308	15,573,561	54.1	8,874,506
So. Central	444,429	424,491	21,702,876	48.9	13,846,274

*Average Value of Property on Farms of Negroes, 1900*

	Average value per farm				
	All farm property	Land & improvements (except bldgs.)	Bldgs.	Implements and Machinery	Live stock
Continental U.S.	\$ 699	\$ 434	\$ 96	\$ 25	\$114
No. Atlantic	2,712	1,513	832	117	250
No. Central	2,008	1,463	239	59	247
Western	3,117	2,133	329	107	548
So. Atlantic	566	369	93	20	84
So. Central	690	443	91	27	129

The average size and value of the Northern negro's farm even exceed the same for the Southern white's farm.

The Northern negro earns more, as we have seen in the comparison wages. He is, therefore, able to maintain a higher standard of living. His expenses are a great deal higher, but not for the same things, but for better things. He lives in a much better house by far, and he pays sometimes two or three times as much rent for it; he wears better clothing; he has more leisure; he has more amusement; and with all his high expenses he is able to save more. Of the 373,450 homes owned by negroes in 1900, 45,913, or 12.3 per cent, were owned by the negroes of the North, who compose 10.3 per cent, of the negro population. If the farm homes are excluded, the Northern negroes would own 22 per cent of the remaining.

The North has taught the negroes the value of money; of economy; it has taught more sustained effort in work, punctuality and regularity; it has taught negroes even a greater race respect and race loyalty. And though the negroes, with the weight of the inheritance of slavery (for perhaps 95 per cent of the Northern negroes are descendants of slaves), and with the weight of ignorance and poverty, together with the great inconvenience they suffer because of their color, from the American point of view, are only beginning to be real Americans; and though they are greatly handicapped in the struggle in the North, I think I can safely say that the North is indeed the great and hard school for them, where they are learning their best and often their first lessons in American thrift and industry, and the true dignity of American citizenship.

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## 2. THE NEGRO EXODUS FROM THE SOUTH

By W. T. B. Williams

For a number of years it has been apparent to even the casual observer that a stream of Negroes has been flowing into the North from the border

southern States. Some have been going from the lower South also, but that section has not hitherto been greatly affected. However, recent extraordinary occurrences--the war in Europe, with the consequent shortage of labor in the North, the ravages of boll weevil and flood conditions in the South--have set on foot a general movement of Negroes northward that is affecting the whole South.

No southern State is entirely free from the loss of necessary and desirable Negro labor due to this movement. Such States as Texas, Louisiana, the delta section of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, where the cotton crop of 1916 was good, seem to have suffered less than the others. In the States most affected certain sections have been harder hit than others. It seems quite clear that the exodus had its main start and recruited its largest numbers in those sections which suffered most from the boll weevil and the floods and in those where the general treatment of the Negro has been at its worst.

With the floods of 1916 everything in large sections of Alabama and Mississippi, where for several years previously the cotton had been a failure owing to the ravages of the boll weevil, the banks, merchants, and planters were unable or unwilling to make further advances to the Negro laborers on the farms. Many of the employers turned the Negroes out with nothing to live on. Some urged them to go away to find work, and for the most of them it was a matter of go or starve. Fortunately the unusual demand for Negro labor in the North at that time gave many of the colored people a chance to secure remunerative employment. Thus the exodus had its beginnings.

In the midst of these conditions some planters were wise enough to inaugurate movements for employing and keeping their labor. They set about improving their farms, digging ditches for better drainage, building fences, etc. Such men invariably held on to their labor. Dougherty County, Ga., furnishes an interesting example of the effect of consideration and kindly treatment of the Negroes on the part of the whites. This county has lost few Negroes in comparison with the counties all about it. The Jews are the dominating influence here to a greater extent perhaps than in any other county in the South. The Negroes declare they "are not a cruel people" and that they "never stop 'advancing.'" They treat the Negroes kindly, leave them a large share of freedom, and do not harass them on the plantations. All the Jews want apparently is their money, of which they doubtless get as much as any other planters or merchants, but they keep the Negro happy while delivering it.

Many of the large corporations employing Negro labor have lost but few men owing to the care they take of them and to the advances they made in wages to meet the rapidly rising cost of living. The Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Co., in Virginia, which employs nearly 4,000 colored men, is another great corporation which, through considerate, appreciative, and fair treatment of its Negro workmen, has not been disturbed by the exodus, though the attractive wages in the North have carried off many thousands of Negroes from Virginia.

Though Negroes may go from a section in large numbers, as from Lowndes County, Ala., for example, which was severely affected by the boll weevil and the floods, yet few, if any, usually leave the neighborhood of a good school in such a locality. About the Calhoun Colored School, in Lowndes County, Ala., there are perhaps a hundred Negro farmers, who, through the instrumentality of the school, have been able to buy and pay for their lands. Not one of these men has been attracted away by the opportunities in the North; and other Negroes in this neighborhood, though living under hard conditions on great plantations, declare that they remain on account of the good school for their children. A number of other similar illustrations could be given.

However, the exodus has carried off a surprisingly large number of Negroes from many sections. The movement has been confined to no one class entirely; the ignorant and the intelligent, the inefficient and the capable Negroes have gone, and they have left both the city and the country. They have taken positions in the North mainly as common laborers on the farms, on the railroads, and about the great industrial plants, while a considerable number are employed as mechanics.

The less reliable class of Negroes, especially from the cities and towns, were among the first to go, owing to the indiscriminate methods used by some of the railroads in gathering up laborers for their lines. In some instances they simply ran trains into towns and offered to take anyone who was willing to go. Some of the larger cities, like Birmingham, for instance, at first rejoiced to be

thus easily rid of their less desirable element of Negroes. But even these men in some instances were attracted by the large amount of money they could earn by working steadily, and set about making good. The more industrious, steady one, forced out of the country district, naturally did well. The alluring reports from these pioneers, together with the eloquent promises of labor agents, set up a movement among the conservative, dependable portions of the colored people which is going steadily forward and even promises to increase in some sections as soon as the present crops are gathered.

The exodus is carrying off in considerable numbers not only the common laborers from the farms and industries of the South but also many of the skilled Negro mechanics from the larger cities, like New Orleans, Montgomery, Birmingham, Savannah, and Charleston; many of the trained workers with less skill; and even Negro business men, ministers, and physicians. For example, in several sections I found cotton-oil-mill men in doubt as to whether they would be able to find enough of their trained hands to operate the mills to advantage when they planned to begin work. A certain Negro medical college publishes a striking list of its graduates who have recently moved from the South to the North. Five out of one class are reported to have gone to Chicago. I know personally of several colored physicians with fine practices and good standing in southern cities who have pulled up within the last 18 months and gone North.

This abnormal movement among the colored people is striking in many ways. It seems to be a general response to the call of better economic and social opportunities. The movement is without organization or leadership. The negroes just quietly move away without taking their recognized leaders into their confidence any more than they do the white people about them. A Negro minister may have all his deacons with him at the mid-week meeting, but by Sunday every church officer is likely to be in the North. They write the minister that they forgot to tell him they were going away. They rarely consult the white people, and never those who may exercise some control over their actions. They will not allow their own leaders to advise them against going North. A Rev. Mr. Carter, of Tampa, Fla., who was brave enough to attempt such advice from the pulpit, was stabbed next day for so doing. They are likely to suspect that such men are in the employ of white people. An influential Negro newspaper in Virginia made an earnest effort at the outset to stem the movement northward. Its supporters brought such influence to bear upon it that, according to the report of its editor, it was forced to change its attitude. In fact, very little positive effort of any kind within the race is made to check the movement. Most Negroes have, of course, no idea of leaving the South themselves. They know that for many reasons the greater part of the race will likely remain better off in the South than in the North. But practically all are convinced that this exodus will result in great good for Negroes generally. It is the universal feeling, in fact, that good has already come out of it.

The exodus has pointedly called attention to the value of Negro labor to the South and to the South's dependence upon it. Accordingly the Negroes remaining in the South are being given a consideration never before accorded them. Influential white men are coming to the conclusion, they told me in a number of cases, that they must give the Negro better treatment and a more nearly square deal. Owing to the scarcity of labor, a Georgia farmer near Albany this year laid aside his whip and gun, with which it is reported he has been accustomed to drive his hands, and begged for laborers; and the more progressive men are seeing, too, that if they would keep the colored people on their places they must give them better houses and more of the ordinary comforts of the home. The exodus has carried off the surplus labor which has existed in so great abundance that the South has been prodigal and contemptuous of it. The result is less competition among the Negroes for the work the South has to offer and an increased demand among employers for labor. Wages, though still low, are advancing. A North Carolina editor complained of the "outrageous wages" (\$1.25 per day) which certain farmers had found it necessary to pay Negro farm hands. The commissioner of commerce and labor of Georgia reported two instances of Negro farm hands receiving \$1 and \$1.10, respectively, per day, which, he admitted, was far above the average pay.

Negroes are not alone in approving of the exodus. A number of southern white men also, for various reasons, look with favor upon the movement. Many of them feel that the Negro can better his condition by going and that he ought

to be free to go. A greater number by far feel that the Negro is making a mistake, and many of them would go to any length to prevent his leaving. Some white men see that if enough Negroes leave the South the masses of white men will be put to work. They are eager to have this brought about. Others, including the commissioner of agriculture of Alabama, believe, too, that the going of the Negro in sufficient quantities means the breaking up of the big plantations. This will enable more whites, and also the Negroes who remain, to get land and become responsible citizens. Some whites feel, too, that they are being demoralized by the excessive employment of Negroes under existing conditions. The competition for Negro labor often becomes so keen that the whites will do anything to get it. They wink at all kinds of wrong and crime, and so debauch themselves. A State officeholder in Alabama confessed to me that he had once got a murderer out of jail to work on his farm. And there are southern whites who declared that they would like to see the Negroes scatter over the North, so as to give that section a taste of the Negro problem. Some feel, as did the editor of one of the leading dailies of South Carolina, that it is undesirable to have a preponderating number of Negroes in a number of southern localities and in States like South Carolina and Mississippi. So not only have many Negroes been forced out of some sections by unfavorable natural causes, and are being lured off from others by better wages and the promise of wider opportunities in the North, but they are also being encouraged to go by many Negroes and some white people. Meanwhile, comparatively little positive effort is being put forth to check the movement, which has grown to threatening proportions.

#### SIZE OF THE EXODUS

As to the number of Negroes who have left the South in this movement all sorts of figures have been given. They are mainly, however, mere guesses, few reliable figures being available. In fact, the States interested seem to have no means of promptly gathering such data. The commissioner of commerce and labor of Georgia reported 50,000 as a reasonably correct figure for the number that had left his State. These figures were obtained from the auditing departments of the several railroads handling the traffic out of Georgia. In Alabama the commissioner of agriculture gave figures derived from similar sources. In that State, according to this authority, the exodus of Negroes has reached 90,000. In Mississippi the Negro insurance companies, which keep in pretty close touch with movement among colored people, estimate upon a conservative basis that 100,000 Negroes have gone from that State. The editor of the Daily News, Jackson, Miss., put the number at not less than 75,000.

It does not seem probable that any of the other States not mentioned have lost as many Negroes as Georgia. More may have been shipped from Virginia, but the bulk of them came in all probability from farther South, where in many cases obstacles have been placed in the way of a direct movement to the North. From these sections Negroes have come to Richmond; then they take a new start either upon their own initiative or with the aid of labor agents. As a sample of the difficulties to be overcome by any large number of these migrants, the Southern Railway, according to the Montgomery Advertiser of June 5, 1917, ordered that no special coaches or other facilities be placed at the command of the labor movement. However, there can be little doubt that several hundred thousand Negroes, mainly men, have left the South in this movement. The wives and children are swelling the lists of those that are still leaving. And the end is not yet in sight.

#### SOME EFFECTS OF THE EXODUS

Naturally so great a movement of labor from one section would have some harmful effects. The loud and widespread objections to the exodus raised by the farming and industrial interests of the South indicate that the losses and interruptions to business have been considerable and significant. In a comparatively few and isolated cases farming and even industries have been paralyzed, as, for instance, in eastern Mississippi and western Alabama. In a number of industries production has been "slowed down," owing to the necessity of breaking in new men to take places of experienced men, as in the lumber mills all over the South, in the mines, on the docks, and, as is likely to prove, in the cotton-oil mills. But on the whole the evil effects are not so great as

one might have expected. Most of the industries have managed, with some extra effort no doubt, to keep steadily at work, and the crops in the South have rarely been better.

The boll weevil is slowly bringing about a change in methods of farming. Fewer acres of cotton are now planted to the plow and diversification of crops is gradually gaining headway. Farming under these conditions requires fewer laborers than formerly; then, too, planters are putting more and more of their land "under wire" for cattle raising. So it was not so difficult, when put to the test, to grow good crops this year, even with a loss of labor. In fact, with such methods gaining ground, it was simply a matter of time anyway, in all probability, before many Negroes would have been forced out of the South for profitable employment elsewhere. The actions of a large planter in Lowndes County, Ala., are suggestive in this connection. He called together a group of his Negro tenants, showed them a handsome Hereford bull, which he had just unloaded from the car, and threatened them that unless they worked harder he would, through breeding cattle, drive every one of them off his plantation.

Seriously costly effects of the exodus are not hard to find in many places. In every State from the Carolinas to Mississippi thousands of acres of land are reported to be lying idle that would have been cultivated had labor been available. And even where good crops have been grown it is a question in many places as to whether sufficient labor for gathering them can be secured. From Abbeville and Greenwood Counties, in South Carolina, Negroes have streamed northward. Large plantations in the neighborhood of Sumter in the same State are reported to have been seriously crippled by the exodus. At Dillon and other points severe measures were used by the authorities to prevent the movement from the State. The Georgia commissioner of commerce and labor reported that farming had been "especially but not disastrously affected" by the exodus from his State. The editor of the Times Record of Americus, Ga., reported that there were 2,000 acres of land usually cultivated lying idle within a radius of 3 miles of Americus. The president of the chamber of commerce, Valdosta, Ga., declared that the migration of the colored people had seriously affected the situation in that section. He said: "It has made the change from a surplus of labor to a scarcity. Every man that goes now creates a vacancy and is missed."

At Uniontown, Ala., the president of the Planters and Merchants' Bank told of a 2,000-acre plantation near by that had only two or three Negro families left on it. Other plantations in this section were in more or less the same condition. The whole southwestern portion of Alabama has been hard hit by the exodus; and particularly have suffered the large plantations that are owned by absentee landlords, whose agents usually had no authority to care for the suffering tenants after the destruction caused by the boll weevil and the floods. Similar conditions are to be seen in northern and eastern Mississippi. For the region about Meridian, the chamber of commerce reported that the acreage cultivated had been reduced. At Okolona an officer of the First National Bank said many thousands of acres formerly cultivated thereabout were now lying idle. The editor of the Okolona Messenger, many colored business men, farmers, and tenants confirmed the banker's report. Some farms hereabout are turning to dairying; but, as the editor pointed out, they will need many laborers even for that work. He felt, too, that there was little likelihood that cotton growing would be materially lessened for any great length of time. So the loss of labor was keenly felt in any event. He did not blame the Negroes for leaving. Many whites, he reported, had gone for the same reasons--boll weevils and floods, and the chance to better their condition. Other farming sections of eastern Mississippi are said to have suffered even more than the region about Okolona, and the sawmill industry, the big business of southern Mississippi, was reported seriously affected.

From the cities and towns all over the South a great many colored women and girls have gone North in this movement. This means that many of the best trained domestic servants have been lost to southern homes. That causes more acute suffering of a kind than the loss of the men laborers. New servants from the towns and from the country have taken the places left vacant, but they lack the training of the old servants, and, above all, are not known to nor trusted by their employers, as were the old ones. This means a real hardship for wives and daughters, from whom come the loudest complaints against the migration of the Negroes.



## UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE EXODUS

From the average white man one hears only of the attractive wages offered the Negro in the North and the work of labor agents in the South as the causes of the exodus of Negroes. Both have had their effect, but there are other significant, underlying causes. The North needed labor sorely and sought it where it was available. The South has done little to meet this competition except to complain and to argue that from 50 cents to \$1 a day is worth as much to the Negro in the South as the pay of from \$2 to \$4 and over per day is worth to him in the North. The Negro, however, seems not to be convinced. He appears to be interested in having some experience with from four to six times as much pay as he has ever had before, whatever the conditions. This increased wage, to many almost fabulous sums, has without doubt been the immediately impelling influence that has taken the Negro suddenly into the North in such large numbers. "Better wages" has been the universal response from black and white alike to my inquiry as to why the Negroes are leaving the South. In responding to the call of better wages, the Negro has done as labor usually does and as white men about him in the South are now doing. I ran across a number of white men in industrial plants who explained to me that only their family relations, property holdings, etc., kept them from the better wages to be had in the North. A leading citizen of Tuskegee, Ala., reports that 500 white men from his county have recently gone North. At least 50 of these are employed in one plant at Akron, Ohio. And Negroes from the South report the presence of large numbers of southern white men in a wide range of northern industries.

I have already indicated the effect of the boll weevil and floods in driving the Negroes out of the South. They were "starved out of Alabama," as a well-informed Negro in one of the affected districts put it. This condition of affairs made the work of the labor agent easy; but he did little more than point the way out of the unfortunate situation.

The Negro's success in the North has been far more effective in carrying off labor than agents could possibly have been. Every Negro that makes good in the North, as thousands are doing, and writes back to his friends that "everything is pretty," starts off a new group to the "promised land." It is this quiet, effective work that leads the whites to think that labor agents in large numbers are working secretly still. Then, too, a great deal of money has been sent back into the South by the migrants, and this attracts no end of attention. There are little towns in Alabama, for instance, where colored people are reported to be handling more real money now than ever before in their lives, it having come from friends and relations in the North. It is said that at the Selma (Ala.) post office the special delivery letter and money-order business among Negroes has increased to such an extent that the delivery boys who formerly earned \$35 or \$40 per month now earn from \$75 to \$100. A Negro minister whose son is thus employed assured me that his earnings amounted to \$75 per month.

The unusual amounts of money coming in, the glowing accounts from the North, and the excitement and stir of great crowds leaving, work upon the feelings of many Negroes. They pull up and follow the crowd almost without a reason. They are stampeded into action. This accounts in large part for the apparently unreasonable doings of many who give up good positions or sacrifice valuable property or good businesses to go North. There are also Negroes of all classes who profoundly believe that God has opened this way for them out of the restrictions and oppressions that beset them on every hand in the South; moving out is an expression of their faith. Unfortunately the South gives the Negro abundant occasions for wanting to leave. As some one has put it, it is not only the northern pull but also the southern push that is sending so many Negroes out of the South.

The treatment accorded the Negro always stood second, when not first, among the reasons given by Negroes for leaving the South. I talked with all classes of colored people from Virginia to Louisiana--farm hands, tenants, farmers, hack drivers, porters, mechanics, barbers, merchants, insurance men, teachers, heads of schools, ministers, druggists, physicians, and lawyers--and in every instance the matter of treatment came to the front voluntarily. This is the all-absorbing, burning question among Negroes. For years no group of the thoughtful, intelligent class of Negroes, at any rate, have met for any purpose without finally drifting into some discussion of their treatment at the hands of white people.

The average white man, however, seems to have little knowledge or appreciation of this feeling among Negroes. Few think apparently that anything but money, or the novelty of change, or desire for what they call "social equality" has anything to do with the migration from the South; but they are greatly deceiving themselves. Even so well-informed a man as the leading editor of one of South Carolina's foremost dailies assured me that the treatment of the Negro in the South would include only 10 per cent of the reasons for the exodus. Such positive ill-treatment as lynching, beating, and other physical abuses he evaluated at 2 per cent, and he gave 8 per cent to such negative treatment as the white man's neglect of the Negro, including his lack of concern about the way the Negro lives, for the kind of house he gives him, for his inadequate and ineffective schools, and his indifference toward the Negro's general welfare and development. The other 90 per cent of the reasons he thought were covered by the effects of the boll weevil, the floods, and the desire for better wages. Indeed, it was rare to find a southern white man who felt, or would at least admit to me, that the South's treatment of the Negro had anything to do with the exodus. However, the editor of the Albany (Ga.) Herald said: "The Negro is leaving because he thinks he is not getting a square deal; and he is not. We have got to treat him better." The representative of the Montgomery Advertiser, Farm Department, reported as effective causes bad housing conditions and poor wages; but he thought he recognized a recent tendency to overcome these unfavorable conditions on the part of employers. The editor of the Evening Star, Meridian, Miss., said Negroes were leaving because they think they are not treated fairly in the matter of wages, in civil affairs, and in the courts. He declared, however, that the South regards the Negro as a servant and will not under any conditions think of him otherwise. "This is the nut," he added, "that must be cracked before any situation agreeable to both whites and blacks can be established."

A State official of Georgia said: "Negroes suffer as dependent people always suffer. There is no question about their being wronged and cheated by many whites, who, however, would wrong and cheat anyone they could. Suspicion and hate of the Negro has been sown by the white man. The Negro has responded in kind." The secretary of the chamber of commerce of an important southern port recognizes the justice of many of the Negro's grievances, and said: "We must change the point of view toward the Negro. He is human and must be given consideration as such. We must drop the attitude of 'Oh, well, he is just a nigger.' We must pay him better. The South just must meet northern competition." As attorney for the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, a lawyer of distinction and a large plantation owner, ascribed a lack of education on the part of the Negro as a cause of the migration. If Negroes were better educated, he argued, they would not believe the flattering promises of the labor agents, they would understand the laws, would know how to keep accounts, and would be less likely to think they are cheated and wronged. In reply to my question, "Why, then, does not the South educate the Negro?" he said, "The South has to be educated to this."

Because Negroes have made few public complaints about their condition in the South, the average white man has assumed that they are satisfied; but there is a vast amount of dissatisfaction among them over their lot. There seemed to be no escape and little remedy for it, so there was no point in stirring up trouble for themselves by publicly railing about their plight. The easiest way was the best way. The opportunity to make a living in the North, where hitherto no considerable number of Negroes were wanted, gave them the chance long looked for to move out and to better their condition. Nevertheless these migrants love the South; many of them write back longingly of their homes; still they break their old ties and face a new life in a strange land for the sake of the larger, freer life which they believe awaits them and, particularly, their children. It has taken something more than money to move these masses of people, though money is a necessary condition for the movement and is the immediate occasion of the exodus; but the Negro's list of grievances that have prepared him for this migration is a long one.

The effect of the Negro press in making the Negro actively conscious of his condition is little known outside of the Negro race. At least two of these publications have exercised a tremendous influence in arousing Negroes to this movement from the South. One of these Negro newspapers in Chicago makes its lurid appeal to the lowly class of Negroes. It has increased its circulation in

the South many fold during the last year. In some sections it has probably been more effective in carrying off Negroes than all the labor agents put together. It sums up the Negro's troubles and keeps them constantly before him, and it points out to him in terms he can understand the way of escape. It neglects to mention the new troubles he is likely to meet, but plays up the advantages open to him in most inviting style.

One of the most serious of the long-standing grievances of the Negro is the small pay he receives for his work in the South. Even now, with a comparative scarcity of labor, common laborers on southern farms receive from 50 to 75 cents and rarely \$1 per day. Women and children receive 35 and 40 cents per day. Only in some instances are meals given with these wages; more often than not no meals are given. The following are typical of the wages for common laborers in such industries as saw mills, cotton-oil mills, etc.:

Newbern, N.C. -----	\$1.50 to \$1.90
Americus, Ga. -----	1.25
Jackson, Miss. -----	1.25 to 1.75
Laurel, Miss. -----	1.65 to 2.00
Hattiesburg, Miss. -----	1.40 to 1.65

As tenant, the Negro works under varying conditions from State to State and in different sections of the same State. In typical portions of South Carolina, the tenant furnishes the stock, plants, cultivates, and gathers the crop for one-half of everything except the cotton seed of which he gets none; or, if he merely furnishes his labor, he gets one-third of everything except the cotton seed.

Similar conditions for tenant farming obtain in the sections of eastern Mississippi which I visited. But many of the Negro tenants feel that it makes little difference what part of the crop is promised them, for the white man gets it all anyway. In the portions of Alabama and Georgia which I visited conditions are apparently easier, for there the tenants get half of the cotton seed as well as half of everything else.

Commenting on conditions like the above the Charlotte Observer says:

The real thing that started the exodus lies at the door of the farmer and is easily within his power to remedy. The Negro must be given better homes and better surroundings. Fifty years after the Civil War he should not be expected to be content with the same conditions which existed at the close of the war. We cannot blame him for no longer countenancing life in the windowless cabin, nor with being discontented with the same scale of remuneration for his labor that prevailed when farmers were unable to do anything better for him. If, as is represented, it is the custom of farmers not to divide the cotton seed with the Negro tenant, then a hitherto undiscussed cause of grievance is brought to light, and reveals an injustice to the Negro which no landowner could defend. Cotton seed is now the important part of the bale. That the Negro's share of the money-producing crop should be withheld from him ought to be in itself regarded as justification for immediate migration from the farm upon which such a system is in operation.

In certain parts of Mississippi, at any rate, Negro renters fare but little better than tenants. They are subject to the overseer's driving and directions, and must respond to the landlord's bell, just as the other hands do; and when the renter has made his cotton crop he cannot sell it. According to the law of the State, only the landlord can give a clear title to the cotton sold. This gives rise to the frequently deferred settlements of which the colored people complain bitterly. Apparently, in order to secure his labor, the landlord often will not settle for the year's work till late in the spring when the next crop has been "pitched." The Negro is then bound hand and foot and must accept the landlord's terms. It usually means that it is impossible for him to get out of the landlord's clutches, no matter how he is being treated. In many cases the Negro does not dare ask for a settlement. Planters often regard it an insult to be required, even by the courts, "to go to their books." A lawyer and planter cited to me the planters' typical excuse: "It is unnecessary to make a settlement, when the tenant is in debt." As to the facts in the case the landlord's word must suffice. It is not easy to get capable lawyers to take

Negroes' cases against landlords, even when it is quite apparent injustice is being done. It not infrequently happens that the Negro who obviously makes money and gets out of debt is dismissed from the plantation, a common expression being that as soon as a Negro begins to make money he is no longer any account.

Another form of injustice that has long been preparing the Negro to escape at his first opportunity is the charging of exorbitant prices by the merchants and planters for the "advances" to the Negroes, and the practice of usury in lending money to them. For example, the tenant contracts for his money advances from the 1st of January. He usually receives no money, however, till the 1st of March and none after the 1st of August. But he must pay interest on the whole amount for a year, and sometimes even for the extra months up to the time of the deferred settlement. This practice has become so common that the Comptroller of the United States Treasury, I was reliably informed, has warned all Southern banks that such practice is usury, and if it is continued, he will close the banks indulging in it.

Other common practices that keep Negroes stirred up and tend to drive them away are carried on in many places to an extent hardly believable. In a number of the small towns and villages Negroes are roughly handled and severely punished by the whites. The beating of farm hands on the large plantations in the lower South is so common that many colored people look upon every great plantation as a peon camp; and in sawmills and other public works it is not at all unusual for bosses to knock Negroes around with pieces of lumber or anything else that happens to come to hand. A "poem" written by a southern Negro descriptive of conditions as he sees them in the South and printed several times has two lines bearing on this point:

If a thousand whites work at a place,  
Each one there is my "boss."

On the whole, the plantations or industrial camps that have given any attention worth considering to the housing and general comforts of their employees are rare.

In the cities and towns, Negro sections are usually shamefully neglected in the matter of street improvements, sewer facilities, water, and light. Most of the larger southern cities not only exclude Negroes from their fine parks, but make little or no provisions for the recreation of the colored people. Harassing, humiliating "Jim Crow" regulations surround Negroes on every hand and invite unnecessarily severe and annoying treatment from the public and even from public servants. To avoid trouble, interference, and even injury, Negroes must practice eternal vigilance in the streets and on common carriers. The possibilities of trouble are greatly increased if the colored men are accompanied by their wives, daughters, or sweethearts. For then they are more likely to resent violently any rough treatment or abuse and insulting language whether addressed directly to them or to the women. Colored women understand this so well that they frequently take up their own defense rather than expose their male friends to the danger of protecting them.

The abnormal, unwarranted activities of southern police officers are responsible for deep grievances among Negroes. In many cases the police have been the tools of powers higher up. Many colored people believe that employers of convicts urge the police to greater activities among Negroes in order to fill up convict camps; and, as if encouraging arrests, the authorities frequently do not pay the constable and other petty officers salaries for their services but reward them in accordance with the number of arrests made. Naturally, they get all out of it that the business will stand. The Negro suffers and pays the bill. These officers have become so notorious that even some influential whites have revolted at the enormity of their practices.

On this point the Daily News, of Jackson, Miss., has the following to say:

We allow petty officers of the law to harass and oppress our Negro labor, mulcting them of their wages, assessing stiff fines on trivial charges, and often they are convicted on charges which if preferred against a white man would result in prompt acquittal.

An editorial in the Macon Telegraph is also informing in this connection:

Everybody seems to be asleep about what is going on right under our noses--

that is, everybody but those farmers who waked up on mornings recently to find every Negro over 21 on their places gone--to Cleveland, to Pittsburgh, to Chicago, to Indianapolis. Better jobs, better treatment, higher pay--the bait held out is being swallowed by thousands of them about us. And while our very solvency is being sucked from underneath us we go about our affairs as usual--our police raid pool rooms for "loafing Negroes," bring in 12, keep them in the barracks all night, and next morning find that 10 of them have steady jobs and were there merely to spend an hour in the only indoor recreation they have; our county officers hear of a disturbance at a Negro resort and bring in fifty-odd men, women, boys, and girls to spend the night in jail, to make a bond at 10 per cent, to hire lawyers, to mortgage half of two months' wages to get back their jobs Monday morning, although but a half-dozen could have been guilty of the disorderly conduct. It was a week following that several Macon employers found good Negroes, men trained in their work, secure and respected in their jobs, valuable assets to their white employers, had suddenly left and gone to Cleveland, "where they didn't arrest 50 niggers for what three of 'em done."

Another source of long slumbering discontent is the matter of Negro schools. Southern white people know so little about the schools for Negroes, or regard their education so lightly, that they do not often look upon the lack of facilities for even elementary education among the colored people as an impelling cause of unrest among them; but in whatever else Negroes may seem to differ they are one in their desire for education for their children. The movement of the Negroes from the country to the cities and towns in the South has been largely an effort in this direction. Naturally, the good schools of the North, together with the opportunity to earn better wages, serve as a strong attraction to the colored people and particularly to the more intelligent classes. Among the others this motive for going was not given as often as I had expected it would be; but, as the principal of an effective colored school in Georgia thinks, their lack of expressed desire for better schools in particular is probably due to their ignorance of what good schools really are.

Another of the more effective causes of the exodus, a cause that appeals to every Negro whether high or low, industrious or idle, respected or contemned, is the Negro's insecurity from mob violence and lynching. He may or may not know of the sporadic cases of lynching in the North, but he does know it is epidemic in the South. It was the State, of Columbia, S.C., I think, that asked its white readers if they would not leave a country where they might be lynched by mistake. Recent lynchings, and particularly that of Anthony Crawford at Abbeville, S. C., have led Negroes generally to feel that character and worth secure no more protection for them than less desirable qualities, and that no Negro is safe. Regarding the Crawford lynching the Charlotte Observer comments significantly as follows:<sup>62</sup>

It must be admitted that out of that revolting incident the Negro recognized his insecurity and began to move like sheep to any land that even promised better conditions. It was the South Carolina incident which gave impetus to a movement that was then but slumbering.

The broadening intelligence of the Negroes makes them more restive under these unfavorable conditions than they have been in the past. Even the masses of them feel vaguely something of the great world movement for democracy. They bear unwillingly the treatment usually given them in the South, and they are making use of this first great opportunity to escape from it. To assume that the Negro has been blind and insensible to all his limitations, proscriptions, and persecutions, as so many whites appear to do, is to ascribe to the Negro less sense than is required to earn the money which alone the South seems to think is taking him away. Money, of course, he must have to live in the South, to say nothing of the North; but the Negro really cares very little for money as such. Cupidity is hardly a Negro vice. There is a good deal in the statement of a leading colored woman of Florida: "Negroes are not so greatly disturbed about wages. They are tired of being treated as children; they want to be men." So they are going where the conditions are more promising in that direction; and the mass of the migrants will in all probability not come back, as the whites generally think they will. Even if they do come back they will be very different people. From a good deal of evidence that is available, it seems that more of the migrants are making good in the North, where they plan to stay.

In my travels I met a number of men returning from work in the North. Only one was coming back to stay any length of time; none had any complaint to make of their opportunities in the North. The most successful common laborer I saw had been at work in a steel plant in Pennsylvania. His wages were 30 cents an hour, with an opportunity to work 12 hours per day for seven days in the week. His pay envelopes showed he had earned from \$48 to \$54 for every two weeks during the three months he had been at work in the North. He was going to his home in North Carolina to pay his family a short visit.

Two intelligent colored men--a teacher and a physician--of Americus, Ga., went north to see how the colored people who left Americus in great numbers were faring. They visited New York City, Philadelphia, Springfield, Mass., Hartford and New Haven, Conn., and they asked their friends who had gone away why they left the South. They replied that wages were not the most important considerations; that they "wanted to be free, to get good treatment, to be away from getting into the wrong seat on street cars." They declared, however, that they still loved the South. Every family from Americus was doing well. One man's pay envelope showed \$30 pay for 40 hours' work. Four other bricklayers like himself were being paid at the same rate, as were plasterers. A carpenter had had trouble with the union which he joined; he got his money back and left it. Women were paid 25 cents an hour and 10 cents car fare besides.

These Georgians were rapidly learning northern city ways. They were renting and subletting houses. In some cases too many were living in one house. All had plenty to eat and were saving their money. They were adding, the visitors thought, "life and vigor and vision" to the northern Negroes who have been overshadowed by the superior numbers and wisdom of the whites about them. New Negro enterprises were springing up. The only uncomfortable persons they saw were several colored women school-teachers from about Americus who were embarrassed to have their old friends find them at work in the tobacco fields along with their husbands. They found no one who meant to come back South to live. After looking over the field, these two thoughtful colored men advise the masses of the colored people to remain in the South and particularly those with property. Common laborers should go north for the better wages.

The head Negro farm demonstrator for Alabama, with headquarters at Tuskegee Institute, sent out a questionnaire on the exodus to persons in the North who are known to Tuskegee Institute. In order to get hold of answers from people familiar with conditions both North and South, I examined six replies sent in by Tuskegee graduates or by men who had been employed at Tuskegee. These replies happened to come from Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, and California. As to whether the Negroes who have gone North in the past 12 months are making good, all answered "yes." One made exceptions of a few persons he knew. As to whether Negroes in large numbers could adjust themselves to northern conditions, all six replied affirmatively; but two would not have them come too suddenly, owing to lack of available accommodations. As to an unusual death rate due to cold weather and poor housing, four reported not a single death; one, the death of an old man; and one, from Iowa, "no unusual death rate." In regard to any discrimination in wages paid to white and colored laborers in the North, five reported "none;" one at Akron, Ohio, thought there was some discrimination against Negroes. As to whether the whites were alarmed over the large number of Negroes coming into the North, three answered "no." One from Des Moines, Iowa, said: "Better class are not; the laboring class are." One at Cleveland, Ohio, said: "No large degree of alarm; occasional editorials." One at Akron, Ohio, said "Northerners are not; those from the border States are."<sup>63</sup>

The respondent from Iowa added the following suggestive remarks:

The whites welcome Negroes, especially to the farms, for they say they can not depend upon foreign labor. The white churches helped the Negroes to adjust themselves. At first they found it difficult to get houses, but that was remedied. Negroes receive the same pay as whites for the same work. They are employed where Negroes were never employed before in factories, shops, hotels, railroad stations, and on farms. Negroes can adjust themselves in the North on farms, in dairies, and at lumbering. Where Negroes have settled, their labor is in demand. Few of the Negroes coming into the section owned homes in the South or lived where they had schools. The first reason they give for coming North is to educate their children; the second is to get better

wages and shorter hours; and the third is to have the privilege of voting.

As far as I have been able to learn, there is yet no falling off in the demand for Negro labor in the North. I know of no case where Negro labor has been given up after it has been given a fair trial. It seems that as the Negro continues to prove his worth and ability the demand for his services increases. For instance, a big pump factory in Massachusetts offers to take all the mechanics a certain well-known school will recommend. The northern railroads are taking Negro workmen by thousands. Some of the roads are making commendable preparations, I am told, for caring for the men, and are placing trained social workers among them. A big corporation recently offered \$500 to the man who would get 500 Negro workmen for its works; and it is said that the Westinghouse people alone are asking for 1,000.

It is quite evident that an unprecedented movement of colored people from the South to the North is taking place. During the year I have been repeatedly on practically every great railroad leading out of the South. In every instance I have found groups of Negroes bound for the North. From many southern centers the movement has been large and attended with dramatic incidents. In some instances the public authorities have attempted to use force to check the movement. At Sumter, S.C., a popular Negro minister who went to the station to see some of his members off was arrested as a labor agent. At Albany, Ga., the police tore up the tickets of migrants about to leave for the North, and at Savannah the police arrested and jailed every Negro found in the station on one occasion, without regard as to where he might be going. Fortunately all these arbitrary acts were righted later. Meanwhile, the exodus went on increasing in volume until easily several hundred thousand, it may be half a million, Negroes have left the South. The movement has carried off many of the best workers; new ones had to be trained at no little cost and annoyance, and many readjustments to the new conditions had to be made. But the South has been affected seriously only locally; production has been lessened in some quarters, and business has been affected in some of the smaller towns, as, for instance, at Uniontown, Ala., where practically all of the formerly thriving Negro business and a good deal of the white business was paralyzed by the heavy exodus from that section.

Though there are many powerfully contributing influences, the better wages offered by the North have been the immediate occasion for the exodus. Wages on southern farms have not nearly kept pace with the rising cost of living, in fact they have remained practically stationary. The Progressive Farmer is quoted as follows in a letter to the Ledger-Dispatch, of Norfolk, Va.:

Farm labor has always commanded smaller wages in the South than in other parts of the country. In 1910 the average monthly wage of male farm laborers in the South Atlantic States was only \$18.76, and in the South Central States \$20.27, while in the North Atlantic and North Central States the average exceeded \$30, and in the Western States reached \$44.35. \* \* \* We ought to face the competition of other sections, not by taxing and mobbing labor agents, but by treating our own labor so fairly that it will be willing to stay with us.

But the general treatment of the Negro in the South has also had a fundamental influence in sending him away.

The white South strenuously opposes the Negro movement and loudly objects to the loss of her labor, but she is slow to adopt any constructive measures for retaining it. Indeed many feel that there is nothing to do but to let the movement run its course. The Negroes generally feel that good has already come to them from the exodus. New fields of labor with favorable conditions for larger development have opened to the Negro; his migration has awakened the South to a keener appreciation of the value of Negro labor, admittedly the best labor possible for the South; and selfish interests, at least, should lead the South to make that labor efficient and contented with its pay and treatment. So the Negro feels that there is a better day ahead for him, both north and South.

U.S. Department of Labor, *Negro Migration in 1916-1917* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 93-111.

## 3. LABOR

The migration of Negro laborers to the North is causing some uneasiness and considerable comment. The *New Republic* has had two articles on the matter. In the first it said:

"In almost every occupation the Negro is numerically weak. If the twelve thousand white barbers of New York refuse to work with the two hundred Negro barbers, the latter must submit. If the thirty thousand white carpenters and joiners choose to draw the color line, the one hundred Negro carpenters must look for odd jobs or work from their own people. The Negro gets a chance to work only when there is no one else. He is the last served; his are the industrial leavings and scraps. Being superfluous, possessing no industrial weapon against race prejudice, he is forced to work for a grotesquely low wage at menial jobs, which the white man disdains."

"We often wonder what the reflective Negro thinks as he listens to our orators, who welcome the immigrant to this land of liberty, to this free world of opportunity for all men. What does he think of our democracy, morality, religion, as he views it from his side of the color line?"

In the second it says:

"If the southern Negro, finding political and social conditions intolerable, were able to migrate to the North, he would have in his hand a weapon as effective as any he could find in the ballot box."

"This weapon of the southern Negro is all the more formidable because it can be used quietly and without open threats. Against the opposition of the preponderant white population, the southern Negro has few defenses. He has no vote; he has no wealth; and as for the protection of the law, that is a sword held by the white man, with the edge toward the Negro. He can not better his conditions by political action or armed revolt. His one defense is--to move away. If in a certain county or State conditions become very bad, the Negro, by emigration, can put so heavy a burden upon the white employer and upon the whole white population as to force them to change their policy. Today there is a steady drift of Negroes from country districts, where they are oppressed--and above all bored--to the southern cities. If to this alternative there is added a new chance in the North, with high wages and greater liberty and more fun, the South will be hard put to it to keep its full complement of workers. It will be compelled either to make concessions or face economic stagnation."

*The Crisis*, 12 (September, 1917): 237.

## 4. THE NEGRO MOVING NORTH

The War, by cutting off immigration from Europe, has started a northward movement of negro laborers, which journalistic observers find most significant. For the negro, it is said to be the entrance upon "a new stage in his progress 'up from slavery.'" For the North, it is the intensification of its negro-problem. The South may gain by the partial transfer of its race-problem, and its added attractiveness to white immigrants. But the prevailing Southern comment is represented by the *Montgomery Advertiser's* question, if the negroes go, "where shall we get labor to take their places?"

This movement of negroes is assuming large dimensions, the *Springfield Republican* notes, and--

"It is being systematically stimulated by Northern employers of labor. The Pennsylvania Railroad has taken 4,000 blacks from the South, 3,000 being brought North in one train of six sections. Persons familiar with our New England tobacco-farms have observed this season the appearance of negro laborers in much increased numbers. Exaggerated estimates of the movement are in



circulation. At the negro conference in Washington last week, representing the New England and Middle Atlantic States, it was asserted that more than 500,000 blacks from the South had come North in the past six months. But, whatever the figures may be, letters and telegrams were read at the conference from many manufacturers, mine-owners, and others, giving assurances that negroes would be encouraged to make their homes in the North and would receive a 'square deal.' It was represented that the industrial situation in Pennsylvania and New York was such that at least 2,000,000 negro laborers could be employed in the next year."

At least one important Southern daily, the *Columbia State*, thinks that South Carolina might be just as well off if a number of its 900,000 negroes should go North. This would increase the white majority and might help to attract more white immigrants. It might improve economic conditions, for the "cheap negro laborer of the South presses down the white laborer." But here, the *New York Evening Post* remarks, *The State* "will not find many in the South to agree with it, for most Southerners revel in their cheap negro labor as the basis of their prosperity, dwell upon the absence of negro labor-unions, and exult that the negro protects the South from the hordes of foreigners." The South, says the *Washington Times*, "is suffering because of its losses. It is a bad situation." As *The Times* sees it:

"The negro is better off in the South in the long run than anywhere else. He will be apt to be the first person out of work in the North, when slack times come again; in the South he is, in certain realms, the possessor of a near-monopoly of the labor franchise. It is bad for the South and will not ultimately be good for the North, which doesn't understand managing the colored brother so well as the South does."

Within the last quarter-century, says the *Montgomery Journal*, it has been satisfactorily demonstrated "that no other section of the country is quite so well fitted for the existence of the colored citizens as this part of the South, and any attempt to inveigle workmen from this section will result disastrously." The *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, in a section less troubled by the loss of negro labor, warns the people of Louisiana to "throw such safeguards and protection around both employer and laborer as are necessary to make sure that no harm or demoralization results from the excessive and unusually unscrupulous activity of labor agents from the North." The situation is so grave, in the Nashville *Southern Lumberman's* as to afford "ample warrant for the legislative steps being taken against the movement in some sections."

Now, remarks *The Southwestern Christian Advocate* (New Orleans), a representative of negro Methodism in the South, "if negro labor is as objectionable and worthless and as non-dependable as our Southern friends would often assert, why all these drastic measures to prevent this worthless labor from going elsewhere?" "Let us for a moment be frank with each other," it continues,

"The negro at heart loves the South, its activities, its sunshine, its climate, but he is very much dissatisfied with the treatment that he otherwise receives. His families do not receive proper protection at the hands of constitutional authorities as well as at the bar of public opinion. There are not proper facilities for the education of his children. There is not a congenial atmosphere for the development of self-respect and of racial contentment. We are disfranchised, we are hedged about, and we are lynched without redress. Even a worm sometimes will recoil and a half-dead hound will resent constant mistreatment. Is it any surprise, therefore, that in spite of all the negro's natural inclination to Southern climate that he so eagerly seizes an opportunity to go elsewhere?

"If our Southern friends are anxious to prevent this immigration to the North, they have the remedy in their own hands. It will not be by coercion, or threats, or arrests, it will be because the South recognizes the negro as a human being with all the rights and privileges of a human being. . . . If Georgia, Florida, and the other States of the South want to retain the negro in their borders and have him pile up their wealth and happiness, there are some things that must be guaranteed: . . . protect our families, improve educational facilities, regard the human rights of the negro, give him the franchise by whatever standards we may, but let that standard be honestly and squarely

administered; make it possible for the negro to have recreation under healthful conditions and remove the constant dread and suspicion that constantly surround him. If this is done the South will have all the labor that it wants, a labor which it has known for at least three hundred years and tried under all conditions and proved to be the best labor of the world. Shall the negro continue to move north or is he to remain at home? We wait for the answer."

A Northern negro paper, the *New York Age*, speaks of the negro as a "tremendous asset" to the South. Perhaps, it concludes, "this threatened exodus will bring a fuller realization" of his great importance.

Among thoughtful negroes, says the *New York Evening Post*, there is great rejoicing over the new situation. According to this consistent friend of the colored people,

"They feel that if various sections and large interests of the country begin to bid for the negro, the charge that he is a cheap laborer will speedily disappear. He will rise in the wage-scale precisely as have the Hungarians and other races whose representatives are now being paid \$2.50 and \$3.00 a day for unskilled labor. More than that it is believed that if the various sections begin bidding against each other for the negro, he will not only earn more money but he will receive greater consideration and something a little more nearly approaching justice."

The possibility of "a Northern movement of a million or even of a million and a half of negroes during the next ten or twelve years" is seen by a writer in *The New Republic*, who sketches some of the consequences as follows:

"In the beginning such a migration of negroes would increase the present race-friction in the North. . . . The antidote to persecution, however, is power, and if the Northern negroes are more numerous and more urgently needed in our industrial life, they could protect themselves from the worst forms of discrimination. . . .

"For the national as a whole, such a gradual dissemination of the negroes among all the States would ultimately be of real advantage. If at the end of half a century, only 50 or 60 per cent, instead of 89 per cent, of the negroes were congregated in the Southern States, it would end the fear of race domination, and take from the South many of its peculiar characteristics which today hamper development. To the negro it would be of even more obvious benefit. The race would be far better educated, considerably richer, and with greater political power. Success for the negroes of the North would mean better conditions for Southern negroes. For if the Southern negro, finding political and social conditions intolerable, were able to migrate to the North, he would have in his hand a weapon as effective as any he could find in the ballot-box. . . .

"Thus the negro, a half-century after emancipation is today entering upon a new stage in his progress 'up from slavery.'"

*Literary Digest*, 53 (October 7, 1916): 877-78.

## 5. BEFORE LEAVING THE SOUTH

Those who are encouraging the migration upon the grounds that unrestricted freedom of action, new privileges and unheard of opportunities await these laborers in the North should read the following statement from *The Pittsburgh Courier*, one of the leading colored papers of the North:

"The *Courier* believes that the Negro should be told the whole truth not after, BUT BEFORE, he leaves his Southern home. He should know exactly where he is going; for whom he is to work, the conditions of the community to which he goes, and just what advantages and disadvantages he may expect to find."

"As to his new found privileges, we assert that he who comes to *Pittsburg* looking for "new privileges" will find himself the most mistaken man living. Even when the black man reaches *Pittsburg* he will soon find that he is still in

the United States, and he will here encounter PREJUDICE, HATRED, AND SCORN NOT UNLIKE THAT HE SEEKS TO ESCAPE BY LEAVING ALABAMA."

"Before leaving the South, let the Negro know the whole truth. Let him understand that the North is no asylum. Let him know that the sun does not shine on the spot of United States soil where there is no prejudice. Let him know . . . that the laws governing the citizens of the North will not be relaxed for the benefit of any man."

"Also, let him be informed that LABOR UNIONS OF THE NORTH WILL NOT TAKE HIM INTO THEIR ORGANIZATION. LET HIM KNOW THAT LABOR UNIONS OF THE NORTH ARE OPPOSED TO THEIR COMING."

"There will always be a North and there will always be a South, but be it remembered that both sections fall within the common boundary of the United States, and the exactions of the Negro are practically the same throughout the Union."

These ringing statements from a Northern Negro paper should be a solemn warning to those who are being exploited by the sentimentalists who desire to get them out of the South to satisfy their own selfish desires.

Naturally enough the Journal and Guide believes that the Negro people as a whole, have more and better opportunities to better their condition in the South than in any other section of the country, or in the world, outside of continental and Latin-America. Those of them who have prospered and are reasonably contented with their surroundings have no disposition to leave their homes and associations of a lifetime; they prefer to remain in a section where they were born and among the people among whom they have one sort of association and another all of their lives. They have a stake in the places where they are, and they are not disposed to sacrifice it. Those who are yielding to the impulse to migrate are mostly of that great unskilled and unlettered mass of laborers. . . .

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, March 24, 1917.*

#### 6. TO NORTH:

##### BAD TREATMENT, LOW PAY

##### Negroes Possessed With Feeling That They Have No Chance for a Square Deal in South

New Orleans, La.--Dr. James H. Dillard, formerly dean of Tulane University of New Orleans, and now president of the Jeanes Fund Board and director of the Slater Fund, of Charlottesville, Va., is in Louisiana, investigating the migration of Negroes to the North, as the special agent of Commissioner Wilson, of the Department of Labor, at Washington. Dr. Dillard spent one day in New Orleans, where he conferred with Mayor Martin Behrman and other city officials on the Negro exodus and their opinion as to the remedy for it. Thereafter he went to Baton Rouge for a conference with 40 Jeanes Fund supervising teachers of rural Negro schools of Louisiana and Mississippi.

"The causes of the migration of the 250,000 Negroes who have left the South for the North, have not yet been determined exactly," said Dr. Dillard, "but there are two principles which certainly underlie the movement: First, the lack of adequate white labor in the North, due to the stoppage of immigration from Europe, and second, the growing discontent of the Negroes and the feeling possessed by all of them that they have no chance of a square deal in the South.

"The mistaken idea exists that this vast army of laborers has been enticed to the North through the devices of labor agents and of the railroad for the purpose of securing fees for the former and transportation payment for the latter. My observation is that less than one-fourth of the total has been induced to move by either of these causes. To my mind, the migration of the Negro to the North is purely an economic problem. In many instances, the Negroes have been poorly paid, as low as 70 cents a day, and we all know what

such an allowance amounts to at present prices of food."

"My investigations also indicate that the migration has been by no means confined to the poorer classes of Negroes. Negroes who earned what was considered good wages in the South, found they could nearly or quite double them in the North, and, naturally enough, they went. As I have said before, the cause of the migration is purely economic and must be settled by finding the solution in the payment and treatment of the Negro in the South. The hardest part of the situation is that the majority of the migrants have been young Negroes, who have gone northward, leaving the old to take care of themselves. In many instances, however, I find that the young Negroes have remained loyal and have sent money regularly to parents they left behind in the South."

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, July 7, 1917.*

#### 7. WHY THE NEGRO LEAVES THE SOUTH

The cause is complex and many-angled, not simple and categorical. Perhaps the greatest element in all this causation is the Jim Crow car. It is worse than lynching; lynching occasionally kills one man; the Jim Crow car perpetually tortures ten thousand.

I am writing on board a Jim Crow car from Little Rock, Ark., toward St. Louis, Mo.--a horrible night ride. The colored women have one end of a smoker, separated from smoking white men by a partition that rises only part of the way from the floor toward the ceiling of the car. All of the smoke and fumes, and some of the oaths, come over. Some of these colored people have already spent two nights in this same car-end, coming all the way from the lower side of Texas. For them the name of this train must sound very much like irony, that is "The Sunshine Special."

Just behind us is a chair car for white people, where they can stretch out and rest with sanitary napkins under their heads. They have paid exactly the same "first class" fares paid by these colored passengers. But in the Jim Crow car there are only straight-backed seats filled with the dust grime of neglect. All of these colored people are wishing, and some of them giving audible expression to the wish, to reach Poplar Bluff, the first stop in Missouri, so that they can go back into that chair car and out of the squalor and discomfort of this car-end. And some of these colored men are in the service of the United States, summoned from the far corners of Texas to Newport News, Va., to be trained to fight for democracy in Europe; and because they travel practically all of the way through Southern territory they must sit up for three nights and days, without change of clothing or a bite of warm food--certainly a good preparation for trench warfare.

They, "Why does the Negro leave the South?" indeed! You would FEEL a large part of the answer if you could be on this train, in this Jim Crow car, and share for one night the longing of these people to reach the line that divides Missouri from Arkansas, or any other part of the "the line" that separates Dixie from the rest of creation!

WM. PICKENS,<sup>64</sup>  
Morgan College  
Baltimore, Md.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, October 6, 1917.*

#### 8. "FREEDOM'S TICKET"

It is hereby understood that I am to work for the above-named company as -----, the rate of pay to be -----. The ----- Railroad agrees to furnish transportation and food to destination. I agree to work on any part of the

-----Railroad where I may be assigned. I further agree to reimburse the ----- Railroad for the cost of my railroad transportation, in addition to which I agree to pay ----- to cover the cost of meals and other expenses incidental to my employment.

I authorize the company to deduct from my wages money to pay for the above expenses.

In consideration of the ----- Railroad paying my car fare, board, and other expenses, I agree to remain in the service of the aforesaid company until such time as I reimburse them for the expenses of my transportation, food, etc.

It is agreed upon the part of the railroad company that if I shall remain in the service for one year the ----- Railroad agrees to return to me the amount of car fare from point of shipment to ----- . By continuous service for one year is meant that I shall not absent myself from duty any time during the period without the consent of my superior officer.

It is understood by me that the ----- Railroad will not grant me free transportation to the point where I was employed.

I am not less than 21 or more than 45 years of age, and have no venereal disease. If my statement in this respect is found to be incorrect this contract becomes void.

---

Laborer's name.

U.S. Department of Labor, *Negro Migration in 1916-1917* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 120-21.

#### 9. THE BLACK MIGRANT: HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

The Negro population of the Pittsburgh districts in Allegheny County was 27,753 in the year 1900 and had increased to 34,217 by the year 1910, according to the latest United States Census figures available. The increase during this period was 23.3%. Assuming the continuation of this rate of increase, the total Negro population in 1915 would be about 38,000.

From a canvass of twenty typical industries in the Pittsburgh district, it was found that there were 2,550 Negroes employed in 1915, and 8,325 in 1917, an increase of 5,775 or 225% . . . the number of Negroes now employed in the district may be placed at 14,000. This means that there are about 9,750 more Negroes working in the district today than there were in 1915, an addition due to the migration from the South.

A schedule study of over five hundred Negro migrants indicates that thirty per cent of the new-comers have their families with them, and that the average family consists of three persons, excluding the father. Adding to the total number of new workers (9,750), the product obtained by multiplying thirty per cent by three (average family), we find a probable total new Negro population of 18,550 in 1917.

This sudden and abnormal increase in the Negro population, within so short a time, of necessity involves a tremendous change, and creates a new situation, which merits the attention of the whole community. Before this great influx of Negroes from the South, the Negro population, which constituted only 3.4% of the total city population, lived in a half dozen sections of the city. Although not absolutely segregated, these districts were distinct.

Because of the high cost of materials and labor, incident to the war, because the taxation system still does not encourage improvements and because of investment attractions other than in realty, few houses have been built and practically no improvements have been made. This is most strikingly apparent in the poorer sections of the city. In the Negro sections, for instance, there have been almost no houses added and few vacated by whites within the last two years. The addition, therefore, of thousands of Negroes, just arrived from Southern states, meant not only the creation of new Negro quarters and the dispersion of Negroes throughout the city, but also the utmost utilization of every place in the Negro sections capable of being transformed into a habita-

tion. Attics and cellars, store-rooms and basements, churches, shed and warehouses had to be employed for the accommodation of these new-comers. Whenever a Negro had space which he could possibly spare, it was converted into a sleeping place; as many beds as possible were crowded into it, and the maximum number of men per bed were lodged. Either because their own rents were high, or because they were unable to withstand the temptation of the sudden, and, for all they knew, temporary harvest, or, perhaps because of the altruistic desire to assist their race fellows, a majority of the Negroes in Pittsburgh converted their homes into lodging houses.

Because rooms were hard to come by, the lodgers were not disposed to complain about the living conditions or the prices charged. They were only too glad to secure a place where they could share a half or at least a part of an unclaimed bed. It was no easy task to find room for a family, as most boarding houses would accept only single men, and refused to admit women and children. Many a man, who with his family occupied only one or two rooms, made place for a friend or former townsman and his family. In many instances this was done from unselfish motives and in a humane spirit.

The great majority of the Negro migrants come North because of the better economic and social opportunities here. But even here they are not permitted to enter industry freely. They are kept in the ranks of unskilled labor and in the field of personal service. Until the present demand for unskilled labor arose, the Negroes in the North were for the most part servants. There were very few Negroes occupied otherwise than as porters, chauffeurs, janitors and the like. The Negro at present has entered the productive industries, but he is kept still on the lowest rung of the economic ladder.

*Industrial Concerns Studied in the Pittsburgh District  
(during July and August, 1917)*

Name of Concern	No. of Negroes Employed At Present	No. Employed Prior to 1916	% Doing Unskilled Labor	Hourly Wages of Unskilled Labor (Cents)	No. of Hours Per Day
Carnegie Steel Co. (all plants)	4,000	1,500	95	30	8-12
Jones & Laughlin	1,500	400	100	30	10
Westinghouse Elec. & Mfg. Co.	900	25	90	28-30	10
Harbison & Walker	250	50	80	27-1/2	10
National Tube Co. (all plants)	250	100	100	30	10
Pressed Steel Car Co.	25	25	50	23	11
Pgh. Forge & Iron	75	0	100	30	10
Moorhead Brothers	200	200	75	30	10
Am. Steel & Wire	25	25	100	28-30	10
Clinton Iron & Steel	25	25	75		
Oliver Iron & Steel	50	0	100	25-28	10
Carbon Steel Co.	200	50	75	30	10-12
Crucible Steel Co.	400	150	90	28-33	10
A. M. Byers Co.	200	0	60		10
Lockhart Steel Co.	160	0	95	27-1/2	10
Mesta Machine Co.	50	0	100	30	10
Marshall Foundry Co.	15	0			
U.S. Glass Co.			No Negroes employed		
Thompson-Sterret Co.			No Negroes employed		
Spang-Chalfant Co.			No Negroes employed		
Total	8,325	2,550			

From a study of colored employees in twenty of the largest industrial plants, in the Pittsburgh district, arbitrarily selected, we find that most of the concerns have employed colored labor only since May or June of 1916. Very few of the Pittsburgh industries have used colored labor in capacities other than as janitors and window cleaners. A few of the plants visited had not

begun to employ colored people until the spring of 1917, while a few others had not yet come to employ Negroes, either because they believed the Negro workers to be inferior and inefficient, or because they feared that their white labor force would refuse to work with the blacks. The Superintendent of one big steel plant which has not employed colored labor during the past few years admitted that he faced a decided shortage of labor, and that he was in need of men; but he said he would employ Negroes only as a last resort, and that the situation was as yet not sufficiently acute to warrant their employment. In a big glass plant, the company attempted to use Negro labor last winter, but the white workers "ran them out" by swearing at them, calling them "Nigger" and making conditions so unpleasant for them that they were forced to quit. This company has therefore given up any further attempt at employing colored labor. . . .

About ninety-five per cent of the colored workers in the steel mills visited in our survey were doing unskilled labor. In the bigger plants, where many hundreds of Negroes are employed, almost one hundred per cent are doing common labor, while in the smaller plants, a few might be found doing labor which required some skill.

Abraham Epstein, *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1918; New York: Arno Press, 1969), pp. 7-8, 30-32.

#### 10. LETTERS OF NEGRO MIGRANTS, 1916-1918

##### LETTERS ASKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE NORTH

FAYETTE, GA., January 17, 1917

Dear Sir: I have learned of the splendid work which you are doing in placing colored men in touch with industrial opportunities. I therefore write you to ask if you have an opening anywhere for me. I am a college graduate and understand Bookkeeping. But I am not above doing hard labor in a foundry or other industrial establishment. Please let me know if you can place me.

CHARLESTON, S.C., Feb. 10, 1917

Gentlemen: Upon reading the N.Y. age, have seen where there are need of employees in some sugar concern in New York. Kindly answer this letter, and tell me the nature of the work.

As I am from the south and it is an average difficulty for a southerner to endure the cold without being climatize. If it is possible for you to get any other job for me regardless to its nature just since the work is indoor I'll appreciate the same.

As it is understood the times in the south is very hard and one can scarcely live. Kindly take the matters into consideration, and reply to my request at your earliest convenience.

WININA, MISS., March 19, 1917

My dear driend: it is With murch pleaser that i rite to You to let You no i recd Your letter & Was glad to hear from you all so i excepts all you Said that you woud do for me so i am a Painter and Carter to So i am willing to learn in neything in works kind So mr. \_\_\_\_\_ i thank You for Your kindes for all of Your aid so i am a Barber to so i am a good farmer to al all kind So i am not Set do Wn at all so if You Can healp pleas do So So i have nice famely so i will tell you i am a Curch member for 38 years i and all of my famely but 3 children so i am not a de Sever So mr. \_\_\_\_\_ i woud ask you for the monney So i Was so glad to get your letter dear Sit When I com up

thire look for me at your offes Pleas so mr \_\_\_\_\_ i all waYs hold gob When i get wone So in god name pleas healp me up there and i will pay you When i com up thire mr \_\_\_\_\_ i Cant raise my famely hear i wantor to So this all Your friend

PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS

*Kind sir:* inclose you will find Just a word to you in reading the News I found your address and was very glad to see it Kind sir I write you with my hole heart and I do not mean Just to pass off time my brothers and I are now writing you to please send 2 tickets one for \_\_\_\_\_ and one for \_\_\_\_\_ we are Very Well Experience long many lines so long as publice work I am now employed in the largest Company in the south it is the Gulf Refining Co. I have ben Working for them for a number of years Write soon I remain yours very truly.

JAZOO CITY, MISS., April 3, 1917

*dear sir:* I owe in Con sist to write you a few lines as in the regards of my ability as I am anxus to get some work to do I have a famely to work for and I habe bein workin as helper and bon do most any Kind of work. Has been in the Bixness as MoChinest helper for 7 years and Have fally good Expernce in it and would like for you to Help me out if possibl to do so I Would like to work in some Shop or Millplant and I Would lik for you to send me a transpotation and I will pay out of my salry so answer soon and let me no what you Can do for me I Will Close.

WINONA, MISS., April 13, 1917

In reading the defender I saw your advertising for more men I would like very much to come up their I wants to leave the South and go whear I can make a support for myself and Family. I have a wife and six children to take cair of and I would like to bee whair I could cair for Them my occupation is Carpenter but I can do most any kind of work will you furnish me a Transportation to com up thair on

HOUSTON, TEXAS, April 21, 1917

*Dear Sir:* As I was looking over your great news paper I would like very mutch to get Some information from you about Coming to your great City, I have a famile and Can give you good Referns about my Self. I am a Working man and will Prove up to what I say and would be very glad to Know from you, about a Job Although I am at work But, If I Could get Something to do I would be very glad to leave the South as I Read in the Chicago Defender about Some of my Race going north and making good.--well I would like to be on the List not with Standing my reputation is all O.K.

I thank you.

MOBILE, ALA., April 21, 1917

*Dear Sirs:* I am a man that would like to get work in some place where I can elevate my self & family & I think some where in the north is the place for me & I would like to get you gentlemen to advise me in getting a location my trade is cook rail Road camp cars pre fered but will do enything els that I can do. so if you all can help me out in eny way I will Sure take it as a favor.

NEW ORLEANS, April 22, 1917

under the head lines in the Chicago Defender of Saturday April 22-17 I red how some of us that goes up north are being treated. there is a few that have gone from this city north, and came back a few wees. some say they came back on account of being to cold "The others Say they ware to pay so much to get work etc" I would like to go north. and would rather be in some place. other then Chicago. or near Chicago. I am a union man" but dont expect to work at union only" there is a few of us union men that are planing to go north



and Kindly please write me" all so I mail you one of my union cards hoping to heare from you soon I am respectfully, Yours.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

I seen your advertisement in the Chicago defender where you would direct men with families where to go in order to find good work. I am a Southern cook, butler or Janitor I have two boys age 15 yrs & 13 yrs, and wife that does maid work now I would like for you to help me locate myself & family some where up there for work I can furnish reference to thirteen years of service at one place I am anxious to come right away.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 23, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Reading a article in the 21st issue of the Chicago Defender about the trouble you had to obtain men for work out of Chicago and also seeing a advertisement for men in Detroit saying to apply to you I beg to state to you that if your could secure me a position in or around Chicago or any northern section with fairly good wages & good living conditions for myself and family I will gladly take same and if ther could be any ways of sending me transportation I will gladly let you or the firm you get me position with deduct transportation fee out of my salary. as I said before I will gladly take position in northern city or county where a mans a man here are a few positions which I am capable of holding down. Laborer, expirance porter, butler or driver of Ford car. Thaking you in advance for your kindness, beg to remain.

DALLAS, TEX.,  
April 23, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Having been informed through the Chicago Defender paper that I can secure information from you. I am a constant reader of the Defender and am contemplating on leaving here for some point north. Having your city in view I thought to inquire of you about conditions for work, housing, wages and everything necessary. I am now employed as a laborer in a structural shop, have worked for the firm five years.

I stored cars for Armour packing co. 3 years, I also claims to know something about candy making, am handy at most anything for an honest living. I am 31 yrs. old have a very industrious wife, no children. If chances are available for work of any kind let me know. Any information you can give me will be highly appreciated.

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C., April 23, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Colored people of this place who know you by note of your great paper the Age and otherwise desire to get information from you of jobs of better opportunities for them and better advantages.

You will do us a great favor to answer us in advance.

SAVANNAH, GA., April 24, 1917

*Sir:* I saw an advertisement in the Chicago Ledger where you would send tickets to any one desireing to come up there. I am a married man with a wife only, and I am 38 years of age, and both of us have so far splendid health and would like very much to come out there provided we could get good employment regarding the advertisement.

PINE BLUFF, ARK., April 24, 1917

Mr. R. S. Abbott

*Kine frind:* I am riting you asting you to see if you can get me a job with some of the ship bilders I am a carpenter & can Do most iny thing so if you can get me a job pleas rite me at once.

BROOK HAVEN, MISS., April 24, 1917

CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE.

Sirs: I was reading in the defender that there are good openings for Men in small towns near Chicago would like to know if they are seeking laborers or mechanics I am going to come north in a few days and would rather try to have me a position in view would you kindly advise me along this line as I am not particular about locating in the city all I desire is a good position where I can earn a good living I am experienced in plumbing and all kinds of metal roofing and composite roofing and from you on this subject would certainly be appreciated find enclosed addressed envelope for reply I wait your early reply as I want to leave here not later than May 8th I remain respectfully yours,

P.S. will say that I am a Man of family don't think that I am picking my Job as any position in any kind of shop would be appreciated have had 12 years experience in pipe fitting.

DECATUR, ALA., April 25, 1917

THE CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE.

Gentlemen: Gentlemen desirous of settling in some small northern town with a moderate population & also where a colored man may open a business also where one may receive fairly good wages for a while until well enough acquainted with place to do a business in other words wants to locate in some coming town were goodly no, of colored people is. Wants to work at some occupation until I can arrange for other business just give me information as to the best places for a young business negro to locate & make good in. Any northern state

Thanking you in advance any information you may give in regards to labor & business location also when good schools or in operation please address

P.S. answer this at once as I plan to leave the south my May the 3rd. I can furnish best references.

ATLANTA, GA.

TO THE URBAN COMMITTEE--

Dear Sir: I am coming north and have read advice in the Chicago Defender and I would be very much obliged to you if you would direct me to some firm that is in need of brick layers for that is my professional trade and can do any class of work and if I can't get brick work now I will consider any other good job as I want to come right away I have 3 in family and I have no objection to work in other small towns I will be very glad to hear from you right away as I have never been north and advice will be excepted yours truly and friend of the race.

PENSACOLA, FLA., April 25, 1917

Dear Sir: Having read in the "Chicago Defender" are helping the negroes of the south to secure employment I am writing you this note asking you to please put me & my friend in touch with some firm that are employing men.

Please do what you can for us.

NEW ORLEANS, April 25, 1917

Kind Sir: I noticed in last week's Defender an issue relating to occupations in your territory I am a laborer of N. O. and desire to get information concerning best ways and means of securing a position I am absolutely will to do manual labor anywhere will you--Kindly inform me as to what step can be taken for further reference if necessary apply to--Hoping this will meet with your generous approval I remain

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., April 25, 1917

Dear Sir: in reading a copy of the Chicago defender note that if I get in touch with you you would assist me in getting employment. I am now employed in Florida East coast R R service road way department any thing in working line myself and friends would be very glad to get in touch with as labors. We would be more than glad to do so and would highly appreciate it the very best we can

advise where we can get work to do, fairly good wages also is it possible that we could get transportation to the destination. We are working men with families. Please answer at once. I am your of esteem. We are not particular about the electric lights and all I want is fairly good wages and steady work.

SANFORD, FLA., April 27, 1917

Dear Sir: I have seen through the Chicago Defender that you and the people of Chicago are helping newcomers. I am asking you for some information about conditions in some small town near Chicago.

There are some families here thinking of moving up, and are desirous of knowing what to expect before leaving. Please state about treatment, work, rent and schools. Please answer at some spare time.

PENSACOLA, FLA., April 28, 1917

Dear Sir: I seen in the Chicago Defender where men was wanted in small towns near Chicago at fair wages. As I want to lokate in the north I thought it very nessary to consult you in the direction of this work. Hoping to receive from you full pertikulars I a wate a reply.

FULLERTON, LA., April 28, 1917

Dear sir: I was reading about you was neading labor ninety miles of Chicago what is the name of the place and R R extends ther I wants to come north and I wants a stedy employment ther what doe you pay per day I dont no anything about molding works but have been working around machinery for 10 years. Let me no what doe you pay for such work and can you give me a job of that kind or a job at common labor and let me no your prices and how many hours for a day.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., April 29, 1917

My dear Sir: I take grate pleazer in writing you. as I found in your Chicago Defender this morning where you are secur job for men as I realey didn no if you can get a good job for me as am a woman and a widowe with two girls and would like to no if you can get one for me and the girls. We will do any kind of work and I would like to hear from you at once not any of us has any husbands.

TALLADEGA, ALA., April 29, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a subscriber for the Chicago Defender and have been reading in your paper of occupations waiting to be filled. And as I understand you want the person writing to state just what kind of work they can do. I can car petter work and have been off and on for some years. I am not a finished up carpenter, I can do ware-house work, I can work in a wholesale, I have not sufficient money to come on will you be obliging to send me my transportation. I am near thirty eight (38) years old and weighs about one hundred and ninety five (195) pounds. If you will send a transportation please write me at once at Talladega.

TEMPLE, TEXAS, April 29, 1917

Mr. T. Arnold Hill, 3719 State St., Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir: Being a reader of the Defender and young man seeking to better my conditions in the business world, I have decided to leave this State for North or West. I would like to get in touch with a person or firm that I might know where I can secure steady work. I would certainly appericate any information you might be able to give. I finished the course in Blacksmithing and horseshoeing at Prairie View College this State and took special wood working in Hampton Institute Hampton Va. Have been inpractical business for several years also I am specializing auto work. I am a married man a member of the church. Thanking you in advance for any favors Am very truly

ANNISTON, ALA., April 29, 1918

Dear sir: I read a peas in the defender about the member com north I shall be vary glad to com in touch with you, as am planing on coming north and I riting you that you mite no of som good town in that secson I am a carpenter by traid and I would like for you to locate in me as I should not like to com in that secson with out no enfremation.

ATLANTA, GA., April 30, 1917

Sir: I would thank you kindly to explain to me how you get work and what term I am comeing to Chicago this spring and would like to know jest what to do would thank and appreciate a letter from you soon telling me the thing that I wont to know.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 30, 1917

Dear Sir: Seeing you ad in the defender I am writing you to please give me some information concerning positions--unskilled labor or hotel work, waiter, porter, bell boy, clothes cleaning and pressing. I am experienced in those things, especially in the hotel line. am 27 years of age, good health--have a wife--wish you could give me information as I am not ready to come up at present. would be thankful if you could arrange with some one who would forward transportation for me and wife. would be very glad to hear from you as soon as convenient. Thanking you in advance for interest shown me.

KNOXVILLE, TENN., April 30, 1917

Dear Sir: I am anxious to come to Chicago. I have thirteen years experience as janitor in large residence apartment house, am also handy with tools.

I have a wife and four children. If you can place me where I can earn a decent living for my family will appreciate it.

MACON, GA., April 30, 1917

Mr. \_\_\_\_: i War took and Read the Chicago Defender and i read for the Wanted laborers and i am rinten to you to let you here from we all that Wold like to take a laborers part with Manufacturing and We or Willing to do ennery kind of Work and We or men Will Work and or Glad that me seet With this canne and We will gladly come if you will Send us transportation for 9 Mens and We Will Come at once and these Mens is Men With Famly and We all or hard work men and i Will Say A Gin that Me will do enny Kind of Work dut Me thave a tirde Some us

COLLINS, MISS., May 1, 1917

Dear Sir: By being a Subscriber and reader of the Chicago Defender, I read an advertisement where they are wanting and needing help. Needing Moulders and Machinist of course I do not know anything about the trade. But they Said they would pay men \$2.25 begin with and Learn the trade And transportation forwarded and they would deduct it Out of their wages.

I am Very Anxious to Come Up North. And I would put all of my energy and mind on my work. And try in every way to please the One for whom I am working for. They could get about five men from here. One that is a Pretty good Machinist I am Writting you as they Gave two branches for Colored and that you is the head of the \_\_\_\_ So Any favors extended towards Me will be highly Appreciated hoping to hear from you at an early Date I remain yours truly.

MCDONOGHVILLE, LA., May 1, 1917

dear Mr. \_\_\_\_: it afford me With pleasur to right to you on Some infermashian how to get me a transportation to Some town in the North as i Would like to Come out there to Live and better my condition as i am A young Man and desire to get With the good Clase of Laboring people i have not got a trade but

i have Work all My time around oil Mill and Cooper Shop for the Last 8 years and i cand work at Moust enj thing if i get A Little experence.

My age is--24 years good healt good behavior good record in the south this is all to tell now but if you would Like to no My record i caNd give it to you from my Lodge--are from my church--good by

ATLANTA, GA., May 1, 1917

MR. ARNOLD HILL.

Dear Sire: I am a glazer and want information on My line of work. I am a cutter and can do anything in a glazing room.

I reads the Defender and like it so much. hoping to hear from you soon

PATTERSON, LA., May 1, 1917

Kind Sir: I saw your ad in the Defender for Laborers I am anxious to get north to do something I am a Cleaner and Presser by Trade exprence Hoffman Pressing mashine oppreator of this Trade is Not in your line. I would be very glad if you could get me a Transportation Advanced from Chicago to week with the Molders I am anxious to lean That Trade I hope you with them and I would like to learn the Trade.

I hope you will attend to the above matter as I am in Eanest about this matter.

MOBILE, ALA., May 4, 1917

Dear Sir: I write you a few line to find out about the Work and if I could get you to Send me and Wife and Son a transportation I am not a loafer and can send references that I will work.

P.S. Please rite me at once I am anxious to here from you.

MIAMI, FLA., May 4, 1917

Dear Sir: Some time ago down this side it was a rumour about the great work going on in the north. But at the present time every thing is quite there, people saying that all we have been hearing was false until I caught hold of the Chicago Defender I see where its more positions are still open. Now I am very anxious to get up there. I follows up cooking. I also was a stevedor. I used to have from 150 to 200 men under my charge. They thought I was capable in doing the work and at the meantime I am willing to do anything. I have a wife and she is a very good cook. She has lots of references from the north and south. Now dear sir if you can send me a ticket so I can come up there and after I get straightened out I will send for my wife. You will obliged me by doing so at as early date as possible.

MOSS POINT, MISS., May 5, 1917

Dear Sirs: Will you please send me in formation towards a first class cookeing job or washing job I want a job as soon as you can find one for me also I want a job for three young girls ages 13 to 16 years. Please oblige.

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 5, 1917

Dear Sir: I saw your add in the Chicago Defender papa and me being a firman and a all around man I thought I would write you. perhaps You might could do me lots of good. and if you can use me any way write me and let me No. in my trade or in foundry work. all so I got a boy 19 years old he is pretty apt in Learning I would Like to get him up there and Learn him a trade and I have several others would come previding if there be an opening for them. So this is all ans. soon

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 5, 1917

Dear Sirs: I was advised by the Chicago Defender to get in touch with you if I desired to locate in or around Chicago. I write this to find out what kind of work that you have on slate. I expect to locate in or around Chicago by the first of June.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 5, 1917

Dear Sir: Am applying for a position in your city if there be any work of my trade. I am a water pipe corker and has worked foreman on subsevice drainage and sewer in this city for ten (10) years. I am now out of work and want to leave this city. I am a man of family therefore I am very anxious for an immediate reply. Please find enclosed self addressed envelop for return answer.

VICKSBURG, MISS., May 5, 1917

Sir: Just wants you to give me a few words of enfermation of labor situations in your city or south Dakota grain farms what is their offers and their adress. Will thank you for any enfermation given of same.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 7, 1917

Gentlemen: I read Defender every week and see so much good youre doing for the southern people & would like to know if you do the same for me as I am thinking of coming to Chicago about the first of June, and wants a position. I have very fine references if needed. I am a widow of 28. No children, not a relative living and I can do first class work as house maid and dining room or care for invalid ladies. I am honest and neat and refined with a fairly good education. I would like a position where I could live on places because its very trying for a good girl to be out in a large city by self among strangers is why I would like a good home with good people. Trusting to hear from you.

BEAUMONT, TEXAS, May 8, 1917

Dear Sir: I wrote you some time ago, and never received any answer. I learn you can assist me in bettering my condition. I would like very much to come North. I have no trade but Im a willing worker, and the Job I have now I have had it for eight years and there is no advancement here for me. I can give eight year refference I would like mechinist helper or some thing where I could learn a trade I have a fair education and I wish is a chance I need no transportation Im very well fix financial Im single and 29 years old if you can help me in any way it will be highly appreciate. hoping to hear from you soon.

PASCA GOULA, MISS., May 8, 1917

Dear Sir & frend: as understand that you ar the man for me to con for to & i want to Com to you & my frend & i has not got the money to Com Will you pleas Sir send me & my frend a ticket to Com and if you will I will glad La Com at onC & will worK et out will Be glad to do so I will not ask you to send the redey Casch for you dont nae me & if you Will Send me 2 tickets i will gladly take the, & i will Com Jest now hoping to hear from you be re torn male Yors Evor.

MEMPHIS TENN., May 12, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a constant reader of your paper which can be purchased here at the Panama Cafe newsstand. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ at present I am employed as agent for the Interstate Life and acc'd ins. Co. but on account of the race people leaving here so very fast my present job is no longer a profitable one. I have a number of young friends in your city who are advising me to come to Chicago and I have just about made up my mind to come, but before leaving here I wanted to ask Some advice from you along certain lines. I am buying property here and taking up notes each month on Same these notes now are aroun \$14 per month. and with my present Salary and the unusual high price on everything I can't possibly protect myself very long against a foreclosure on above mentioned property on account of my Salary being less than \$50.00 per month. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ do you think I could come to your city with myself and wife rent this place out here and better my condition financially? I am strong and able to do anything kind

of work so long as the Salary is O.K. I have a fair experience as a meat cutter and can furnish the best of reference from business houses one of them is Swift & Co of this city. I hope you can understand me clearly, it is my aim to make an honest living and would not dream of any other method. I am prepared to leave here at any time and must go Some place but Chicago is the place that impress me most. and having the confidence in you as a great race man I am writing you for your honest opinion concerning the facts in the matter. Many thanks for the information in today's paper under the Caption ("Know thyself") hoping this will meet with your hearty Cooperation.

P.S. What is about the average salaries paid there for unskilled laborers and what is board and room rent? if I come would it be advisable to come alone and Secure location and everything and then have my wife come later?

LEXINGTON, MISS., May 12, 1917

My dear Mr. H \_\_\_\_: I am writing to you for some information and assistance if you can give it.

I am a young man and am disable, in a very great degree, to do hard manual labor. I was educated at Alcorn College and have been teaching a few years; but ah: me the Superintendent under whom we poor colored teachers have to teach cares less for a colored man than he does for the vilest beast. I am compelled to teach 150 children without any assistance and receives only \$27.00 a month, the white with 30 get \$100.

I am so sick I am so tired of such conditions that I sometime think that life for me is not worth while and most eminently believe with Patrick Henry "Give me liberty or give me death." If I was a strong able bodied man I would have gone from here long ago, but this handicaps me and, I must make inquiries before I leap.

Mr. H \_\_\_\_, do you think you can assist me to a position I am good at stenography typewriting and bookkeeping or any kind of work not to rough or heavy. I am 4 feet 6 in high and weigh 105 pounds.

I will gladly give any other information you may desire and will greatly appreciate any assistance you may render me.

BESSEMER, ALA., May 14, 1917

Sirs: Noticing an ad in Chicago Defender of your assistance to those desiring employment there I thought perhaps you could help me secure work in your Windy City I'm a married man have one child. I have common school education this is my hand write. I am presently employed as a miner has been for 14 years but would like a Change I'm apt to learn would like to get where I could go on up and support myself and family. You know more about it than I but in your opinion could I make anything as pullman porter being inexperienced? I'd be so grateful to U. to place me in something I've worked myself too hard for nothing. I'm sober and can adjust my life with any kind and am a quiet christian man.

BEAUMONT, TEX., May 14, 1917

My dear Sir: Please write me particulars concerning emigration to the north. I am a skilled machinist and longshoreman.

ALGIERS, LA., May 16, 1917

Sir: I saw sometime ago in the Chicago Defender, that you needed me for different work, would like to state that I can bring you all the men that you need, to do anything for work. or send them, would like to Come my self Con recomend all the men I bring to do any kind of work, and will give satisfaction; I have bin foreman for 20 yrs over some of these men in different work from R. R. work to Boiler Shop machine shop Blacksmith shop Concreet finishing or putting down pipe or any work to be did. they are all hard working men and will work at any kind of work also plastering anything in the labor line, from Clerical work down, I will not bring a man that is looking for a easy time only hard working men, that want good wages for there work, let me here from you at once.

ROME, GA., May 16, 1917

Dear Sir: "Ive" just read your ad in the Chicago Defender on getting employment. So I will now ask you to do the best you can for me. Now, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, I am not a tramp by any means, I am a high class churchman and business man.

I am the Daddy of the Transfer Business in this city. And carried it on for ten years. Seven years ago I sold out to a white Concern.

I prefer a job in a Retail furniture store if I can be placed I'll now name a few things that I do. Viz I can repair and Finish furniture, I am an Exspert packer & Crater of furniture, I pack China, Cut Glass & Silver ware.

I can Enamel, Grain & paint furniture. I can repair Violins, Guitars, & Mandolins, I am a first-class Umbrella Man, I can do any thing that can manage a Transfer Business, I understand all about Shipping H.H. Goods & furniture, I can make out Bills of Lading & write tages for the same.

Now if you can place me on any of these Trades it will be all O.K.

SELMA, ALA., May 19, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a reader of the Chicago Defender I think it is one of the Most Wonderful Papers of our race printed. Sirs I am writeing to see if You all will please get me a job. And Sir I can wash dishes, wash iron nursing work in grociars and dry good stores. Just any of these I can do. Sir, who so ever you get the job from please tell them to send me a ticket and I will pay them. When I get their as I have not got enough money to pay my way. I am a girl of 17 years old and in the 8 grade at Knox Academy School. But on account of not having money enough I had to stop school. Sir I will thank you with all my heart. May God Bless you all. Please answer in return mail.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., May 22, 1917

Chicago Defender: I wish to go North got money enuff to come I can do any kind of housework laundress nurse good cook has cook for northen people I am 27 years of age just my self would you kindly inderseed for me a job with some rich white people who would send me a ticket and I pay them back please help me. I am brown skin just meaden size.

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 22, 1917

Sir: As you will see from the above that I am working in an office somewhat similar to the one I am addressing, but that is not the purpose with which I sat out to write.

What I would like best to know is can you secure me a position there? I will not say that I am capable of doing any kind of labor as I am not. Have had an accidental injury to my right foot; hence I am incapable of running up and down stairs, but can go up and down by taking my time. I can perform janitors duties, tend bar, or grociery store, as clerk. I am also a graduate of the Law Department, Howard University, Washington, D.C. Class of '85 but this fact has not swelled head. I am willing to do almost any thing that I can do that there is a dollar to it. I am a man of 63 years of age. Lived here all of my life, barring 5 or 6 years spent in Washington and the East. Am a christian, Baptist by affiliation.

Have been a teacher, clerk in the government department, Law and Pension offices, for 5 years, also a watchman in the War Dept. also collector and rental agent for the R.R. Church, Esq. Member of Canaan Baptist Church, Covington, Tenn. Now this is the indictment I plead to.

Sir; If you can place me I will be willing to pay anything in reason for the service. I have selected a place to stop with a friend of earlier days at \_\_\_\_\_, whenever I can get placed there. An early reply will be appreciated by yours respectfully.

CHARLESTON, S.C., May 25, 1917

Sir: Having been informed that you can secure jobs for people who desire to leave the south, I would like to get information about the conditions and



wages either in Niagra or Detroit. I would prefer work in a factory in either town. Also advise as to climate.

Dear Sirs: Having heard of you through a friend of mine, I thought that I would write asking you to please send me full information as to conditions and chances for the advancement of the negro in the north.

I am seeking for the opportunity and chance of advancement as far as my ability is capable as I am a negro self.

I would like very much to get in touch with you if you think that you can give me some assistance along the line which I have spoken.

HATTIESBURG, MISS., May 27, 1917

Gentlemen: by reading in the defender of the position you are in for securing jobs. I thought I would write, and see if you could place me. Now my job pay me well, but as my wife and Children are anxious to come north I would try and get a job now I am a yellow Pine Lumber inspector and checker can furnish recomdation from some reliable Saw Mill Firms as there is in South Miss. As Gradeing Trimming & Checking yellow pine lumber.

P.S. I know I can make good in any Lumber Yard such as checking & stowing Lumber if you Will place me write on what terms to--

GONZALES, TEXAS, May 28, 1917

New York Age, New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen: I wish to know if a man from the south come north, such as common laborer, stationery engineer, gasoline engineer, fireman or janitor able to care for heating plants ets. and able to pay his own way there, is a likelihood of finding lucrative employment?

I would be pleased to have you advise me on the same as myself and several other men of good morals and sober habits and who are able to bear our own expenses would like to better our conditions by coming North.

If you can advise us or Know of any one or place that we can get the desired information please give us the benefit of the same.

Find stamp enclosed for answer.

HAMLET, N.C., May 29, 1917

Gentlemen: I am very desirous of changing my location and am writing to know whether or not you can find a lucrative opening for me somewhere in the North.

I am 42 years old, married, wife and four children and a public school teacher and printer by profession and trade. Will accept any kind of work with living wages, on tobacco farm or factory. I am a sober, steady worker and shall endeavor to render satisfaction in any position in which I am placed.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., June 12, 1917

dear sir: I am writing to you for information concerning a Job I have a wife and 2 children and who so ever my employer may Be I would ask that they may send trancipertation for me and my family and I will pay as i work I am a come laber man my wife is a good launders all So my daughter and My Son is a laber all so I am a railroad mon By trade please aBlige mr \_\_\_\_\_

BEAUMONT, TEXAS, July 16, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a colored, am desiring work in New York or some of the adjoining states. I am not a skilled workman but I can do most any kind of common labor. I have spent several years in the plaining mills of the south. I know all about feeding planers and I can also keep them up very well. I have checked lumber and in fact, I can do a number of different things.

Will you be kind enough to put me in correspondence with some one who would like to employ a good conscientious steady laborer.

I have a family and I would be glad to come north to live. So please be so kind as to do me the favor above asked. I have a little education too if it could be used to any advantage.

Hoping an early reply.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., August 27, 1917

Dear Sir: i am wrighting you for help i haired of you by telling my troble i was told to right you. I want to come there and work i have ben looking for work here for three month and cand find any i once found a place \$1 a week for a 15 year old girl and i did not take that. now you may say how can that be but New Orleans is so haired tell some have to work for food and the only help i have is my mother and she have work 2 week now and she have four child-ren young then me and i am 15ttn and she have such a hard time tell she is willing for me to go and if you will sin me a pass you will not be sorry i am not no lazy girl i am smart i have got very much learning but i can do any work that come to my hand to do i am set here to day worry i could explane it to you i have been out three time to day and it only 12 oclock. and if you please sire sine me a pass. it more thin i am able to tell you how i will thank you i have clothes to bring wenter dress to ware. my grand mama dress me but now she is dead and all i have is my mother now please sire sin me a pass and you wont be sorry of it and if you right and speake mean please ancer i will be glad of that but if you would sin a pass i would be so much gladder i will work and pay for my pass if you sin it i am so sorry tell i cant talk like i wont to and if you and your famely dont wont to be worry with me I will stay where i work and will come and see you all and do any think i can for you all from little A\_\_\_\_\_ V\_\_\_\_\_. excuse bad righting.

PENSACOLA, FLA., May 30, 1917

Dear Sir: in answer to your advertisement for labors I am a man want to work am noes a opertunity Please notiefie me at ane as I Want to get Job with you I Will Ask a Transportation an will leve when its reaches me Please take my letter in canceration ans me at once as I very anxious to from I am stiedy drink no whiskey or eny thing that is intosicating an give fot the infomation Right soon

NATCHEZ, MISS., September 22, 1917

Mr. R. S. ABBOTT, Editor.

Dear Sir: I thought that you might help me in Some way either personally or through your influence, is why I am worrying you for which I beg pardon.

I am a married man having wife and mother to support, (I mention this in order to properly convey my plight) conditions here are not altogether good and living expenses growing while wages are small. My greatest desire is to leave for a better place but am unable to raise the money.

I can write short stories all of which potray negro characters but no burlesque can also write poem, have a gift for cartooning but have never learned the technicalities of comic drawing. these things will never profit me anything here in Natchez. Would like to know if you could use one or two of my short stories in serial form in your great paper they are very interesting and would furnish good reading matter. By this means I could probably leave here in short and thus come in possession of better employment enabling me to take up my drawing which I like best.

Kindly let me hear from you and if you cannot favor me could you refer me to any Negro publication buying fiction from their race.

MARCEL, MISS., October 4, 1917

Dear Sir: Although I am a stranger to you but I am a man of the so called colored race and can give you the very best or reference as to my character and ability by prominent citizens of my community by both white and colored people that knows me although am native of Ohio whiles I am a northern descent were reared in this state of Mississippi. Now I am a reader of your paper the Chicago Defender. After reading your writing ever wek I am compell & persuade to say that I know you are a real man of my color you have I know heard of the south land & I need not tell you any thing about it. I am going to ask you a favor and at the same time beg you for your kind and best advice. I wants to come to Chicago to live. I am a man of a family wife and 1 child I can do just any kind of work in the line of common labor & I have for the present sufficient means to support us till I can obtain a position. Now should I come to your town, would you please to assist me in getting a position I am willing to pay

whatever you charge I dont want you to loan me not 1 cent but *help* me to find an occupation there in your town now I has a present position that will keep me employed till the first of Dec. 1917. now please give me your best advice on this subject. I enclose stamp for reply.

NATCHEZ, MISS., Oct. 5, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Now I am writing you to oblige me to put my application in the papers for me please. I am a body servant or nice house maid. My hair is black and my eyes are black and smooth skin and clear and brown, good teeth and strong and good health and my weight is 136 lb.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., December 3, 1916

*Dear Sir:* in Reading The Defender I See Where you are Disirious of Communicating With a better class of working men To supply the different trades. Please advise Some place by which I could better my condition North or East.

I would be glad To come in to a better Knowing by writing you before Starting

#### 11. LETTERS ABOUT GROUPS FOR THE NORTH

SAVANNAH, GA., March 16, 1917

*Gentlemen:* Having learned that you ar short of laborers, I respectfully offer myself as an applicant for a situation, and would be glad to get a hearing from you as soon as it would be convenient for you to reply. There are also many of my friends that would be glad to get a situation. I am willing to do most eny kind of earnest work. I am 36 years of age and can read and wright the english language. and have good experance in business. Any communication whitch you may be pleased to make addressed as above will receive prompt attention.

CHARLESTON, S.C., April 2, 1917

*Dear Sir:* I saw your want in the paper and I thought i would right you and find out about it and if you have work for me and my wife I will be glad to come and if you have no work for her you can send for me and I will be glad to come and bring along manny more if you want them. You can let me know at once and i will be glad to do so. so you can write me at once and I will know just what to do.

HATTIESBURG, MISS., April 13, 1917

*Sir:* Please oblige me in getting me a pass to Chicago to some firm that are in need of labors I have three in family besides myself I have four or five other men with me now want to know if you can secure that pass we will come at once this would be about eight passes, my self and two in family and five men which will be eight passes. these are able and good work men if you can arrange this & let the list of passes bear each name so as to form a club. let hear from you soon.

MOBILE, ALA., May 15, 1917

*Dear Sir and Brother:* I am in the information of your labores league and while in this city I have been asked about the conditions of work in the north and at the same time we have about 300 men here in this city of different trades. Some are farmers, mail men iron and stell workers, mechanics and of all classes of work. They ask me in their union to find out just the conditions of the affair. They wants to know if they can go to work in one or two days after they get there? if so some of them can pay all of their fair some half and some wants to come on conditions. will the company send them a pass and let them

pay them back weekly? if so I can send 500 more or less in order that you may know who I am I will send you some of my papers that you may know what I stand for and what I have been taking along. please let me hear from you at once and what you think about it.

MOBILE, ALA., April 21, 1917

*Gentlemen:* Please have the kindness to let me know if you can handle any labor as I wish to come north but would like to know just who I am going to work for before starting so as to not be there on expences and in the main time I have other friends that would like to have a steady imployment while they are unable to raise the money for transportation. Let me know what disposition you could make in regards to the same.

MOBILE, ALA., April 21, 1917

*Dear Sirs:* We have a club of 108 good men wants work we are willing to go north or west but we are not able to pay rail road fare now if you can help us get work and get to it please answer at once. Hope to hear from you.

MOBILE, ALA., April 23, 1917

*Dear Sirs:* You will find my full name and address from which please give information about jobs and also tell me will you pay my fare up there and take it out of my work after getting to work and i can get a great many men and family if you want them. they wants to come but they cant get no work to do so they can get the money to come on. I can get men women and families so please answer and let me no what you will do if you need them.

PLAQUEMINE, LA., April 28, 1917

*Dear sir:* only a few lines in regards you advertismen this week Chicago Defender and it verry intresting to me and other that why Im wrighten you because it my benifit me in the futur I know about twenty five young men would like to go north but accorden to present conditions in the south wont allow them to save enough to go if their a possible chance of you doing anything we all good worker and think if you will give us a chance will proof to you that we can work and if you give us transportation we will work and pay it back from the start. I will close hope you will kindly except our offer and give it your persinel intrest.

DE RIDDER, LA., April 29, 1917

*Dear Sir:* there is lots of us southern mens wants transportation and we want to leave ratway as soon as you let us here from you some of us is married mens who need work we would like to bring our wife with us there is 20 head of good mens want transportation and if you need us let us no by return mail we all are redy only wants here from you there may be more all of our peoples wont to leave here and I want you to send as much as 20 tickets anyway I will get you up plenty hands to do most any kind of work all you have to do is send for them. looking to here from you. This is among us collerd.

COLUMBUS, GA., April 29, 1917

*Dear sir:* I seen your adds in the paper & after reading I saw where I could do some business for you & if you will write & let me know promptly what you will allow me for heads & let me know right away I can get you as many as thirty at once & I know that you do not want nothing but able bodied men if you will as soon as you get this mail let me know by wiring me & I can get the men ready by Thursday wire me as soon as your early convenience. will also send you my recamendation that I am a true and reliable negro if you take the notion to send the ticket send me money enough to feed them until we get there you can estimate about how much it will take to feed thirty all of them is anxious to go & will go at the word from you please return the recamendation back.

ATLANTA, GA., April 29, 1917

Dear Sir: I was reading you advertisement in the Chicago Defender and it come intresting to me and I thought I would rite you to get information about it. There are 5 or six families of us wants to know would you send us a ticket if you would we would like to heare from you at once and we will explain our statement in my next letter. I am looking for reply soon.

MOBILE, ALA., April 30, 1917

Dear Sir: In answer to your Ad. which apeared in the Chicago Defender for laborer wanted to work in Foundry warehouse and yard work I can recruit 15 good honest men whom I believe would make good and can leave as soon as transportation for same is provided. Hopeing to hear from you soon I remain Yours truly.

SAVANNAH, GA., April 30, 1917

Dear sir: in reply to the labor wanted I write you let you know I am a poor afflicted man can not do anything come to hand but am willing to work and do need something to make a support now will you please look up a job for me I could sweep or do any thing light like that could watch act as janitor if you will send me a transportation when I get there you see my willingness you would make me a job now if you will except I will get you some men and bring with me because I know numbers of men want to come and can get as many as you want. Just give me a trial.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLA., May 1, 1917

Dear sir: I am in receipt of your letter of the 16th of April in reply to a letter I written to you. I will say at this junction that there are more than 250 men desire to come north but is not able to come if your manufacture men would like to have 75 men laborees from the south why he can get them for the fair from here to New York is only 19.00 nineteen dollars and I do not think that is a high transportation cost to get good labor. Now there are men here that will work that can have 10.00 ten dollars on there fair and for a little assistance they will come at once for the condishion there is terrible the low wage and high cost of living and bad treatment is causing all to want to come north. Now I have a family of 8 only, one boy that can work in the north for he is 18 years the others is school children and I would like to get them up there with me for I was raise in the eastern state Massachusett Cambridge and pass as a master workman in Denver Colorader making brick. Now if there is any way to assist why do so now if you can only assist me why just do it as a brother & friend I have 5 to pay for but I have a little moeny but not enough to pay all way 3 full and 2 half fair so you can readilly see just where Im at but I got my fare but rather bring my family with me.

CHATTANOOGA, TENN., May 1, 1917

Dear Sur: will you send me a transportation I am a foundry man i want to come where i can get same pay for my work and you plesse send me a transportation for 4 good hard labore man please send and i can get you some good mens here i am down here working hard and gett nothing for it so i hop you will ancer soon and let me here from you i have had 7 years exprense in foundry works i noes my jobe well i will expet to here from you rat way so good by.

PATTERSON, LA., May 1, 1917

Dear Sir: I was reading one of the Chicago Defender papers and I seen a splendid opportunity to grasp a good job. Now if you could fowerd me a pass from New Orleans I would be very glad because I am a willing worker, write me a letter as soon as possible and let me know just what job you will put me to, of cours I dont know any trade but will be willing to learn a good trade. this aid I seen reads like this:

Laborers wanted for foundry, warehouse and yard work. Excellent opportunity for learning trades, paying good money start \$2.50-\$2.75 so I would like to learn a trade. I might can get you some more from here. I will close hope I will hear from you at once. Before sending the transportation write me a letter.

JACKSON, MISS., May 1, 1917

*sir:* I was looking over the Chicago Defender and seen ad for labers both woman an men it is a great lots of us would come at once if we was only abel but we is not abel to come but if you will send me a pas for 25 women and men I will send them north at once men an women

CHATTANOOGA, TENN., May 2, 1917

*Dear Sir:* I beg to call you tension of some employment in your country. I has been inform that you will give instruction an get work any wher in the northern stats. I have some of the best labor that is in south as some of the best molders if we can get employment in north we will go.

a waiting your reply.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., May 2, 1917

*Deer sir:* i reed in the Chicago Defender that you wanted some molder in your city i dont no whether you mene lumber are iron moulder but i am 4 years experience in lumber but if you mene iron molder i dont think i will be many days learning the trade if it is any chance that i can get a good job eith you i would like to hear from you at once i am maried and would like to get 2 transportation if i can and if you want some hard working mens let no and i will do all that i can for you and bring them on with me if you will make same range ment to get them there i mean that i will get you some good men hard working mens like myself so let me here from you at once Please

CHATTANOGGA, TENN., May 2, 1917

*Dear sir:* i only had the chance to see your ad today at noon i was to glad to see it and hop that i am not to lat to full it i am fuly sattisfied i can get as many as 10 or 15 reddy by the 7 or 8 and we will be reddy by that time if you will tret us rite we will stand by you to the las

PASCAGOULA, MISS., May 3, 1917

*Dear Sirs:* Whilse reading over the want adv. of the Defender I find where you wants bench molders 20 not saying I am one but I am a labering man and verry apt to lern anything in a short while and desires to come and give it a trile or something else I can do eny thing in common labor hoping you will send me a transportation and give me a trile and I can all so bring you as meny men as you want if you dont want me to bring eny men send me a transportation for my self. hopeing to hear from you by return mail.

SAVANNAH, GA., May 3, 1917

*Dare sier:* I understand that you wont some mens and if you wood sen me transportation for ten mens wood bee turly glad and please write to me at wonce and let me hir form you.

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 3, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Seeing you add in the Chicago definder that you are in need of labor I write you for full information at once hope you will please give me. I am willing to come & if you kneed any more labor I am sufficient to bring them.

Now my dear sir if you can give me a steady job please send me a pass hope you will write me at once.

PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS May 5, 1917

Dear Sir: Permitt me to inform you that I have had the pleasure of reading the Defender for the first time in my life as I never dreamed that there was such a race paper published and I must say that its *some* paper.

However I can unhesitatingly say that it is extraordinarily interesting and had I know that there was such a paper in my town or such being handled in my vicinity I would have been a subscriber years ago.

Nevertheless I read every space of the paper dated April 28th which is my first and only paper at present. Although I am greatly anticipating the pleasure of receiving my next Defender as I now consider myself a full fledged defender fan and I have also requested the representative of said paper to deliver my Defender weekly.

In reading the Defenders want ad I notice that there is lots of work to be had and if I havent miscomprehended I think I also understand that the transportation is advanced to able bodied working men who is out of work and desire work. Am I not right? with the understanding that those who have been advanced transportation same will be deducted from their salary after they have begun work. Now then if this is they proposition I have about 10 or 15 good working men who is out of work and are dying to leave the south and I assure you that they are working men and will be too glad to come north east or west, any where but the south.

Now then if this is the proposition kindly let me know by return mail. However I assure you that it shall be my pleasure to furnish you with further or all information that you may undertake to ask or all information necessary concerning this communication.

Thanking you in advance for the courtesy of a prompt reply with much interest, I am

MOBILE, ALA., May 11, 1917

Dear sir and brother: on last Sunday I addressed you a letter asking you for information and I have received no answer. but we would like to know could 300 or 500 men and women get employment? and will the company or thoes that needs help send them a ticket or a pass and let them pay it back in weekly payments? We men and women here in all lines fo work we have organized a association to help them through you.

We are anxiously awaiting your reply.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., May 21, 1917

Dear sir: i am today righting you a few lines asking you to please give me some information and that is this if you know of any one that wants help of any kind men or women and one that would send a few tickets would you please give me they address I was told to right to you for information please lead me in the light as i could get five familys and 8 or 9 good men for any firm that wanted help. so I am awaiting your prompt reply.

ORANGEBURG, S.C., June 14, 1917

Dear Sir: your adress was gave to me this after noon by a young man by the name of Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ who is now in Conn. and I write him to see if he could get me a good job so he said to me on his card that he was listening for a vacan place to apply for but hesen found any thing not as yet but he said he wood do his very best for me. This time of the year most people are now goeing north so much I thought I wood come two so he told me to write you and see if I could get you to get me a good job and have the people to write me and advance me a transportation from Orangeburg to New York. He said you are the best man in New York to assist good fellow in to good paying jobs. I will look two here from you very soon.

ASHFORD, ALA., December 8, 1916

Dear sir: I take great pleasure in writing you and replying to your advertiser that you all wanted colored laborers and I want to come up north and could get you 75 more responsible hands if you want them so if you please send

me 3 passes are as many as you like and I guarantee you that I will fill them out with responsible hands and good ones so please let me hear from you at once.

## 12. LETTERS ABOUT LABOR AGENTS

DERIDDER, LA., April 18, 1917

*Dear Sir:* in regards of health and all so in need that I am writing you these few lines to day to you. these few lines leave family and I well at the present and do trust by the help of God these will find you the same. Now what I want you to do for me is this will you please give this letter to the Chicago Defender printers and I will be obliged to you. I would of back this letter to the Chicago defenders but they never would of receive it from here.

I am today writing you just a few lines for information I will state my complaint is this. now there is 18 hundred of the colored race have paid to a man \$2.00 to be transferred to Chicago to work. he tell us that there is great demand in the north for labor and we not it is true because there is thousands of them going from Alabama and Fla. and Georgia and all so other states and this white man was to send us to Chicago on the 15 of March and every time we ask him about it he tell us that the company is not ready for us and we all wants to get out of the south. we heard that this man have fooled we people out of this money. we have a duplicate shown that we have paid him this money and if there is any company that wants these men and will furnish transportation for us will you please notify me at once because I am tired of being dog as I was a beast and we will come at once. So I will be obliged to you if you will help us out of the south.

LIVE OAK, FLA., April 25, 1917

*Dear sir:* I wish to become in touch with you. I have been thinking of leaving the south and have had several offers presented to me if only would say I would go and pay down so much money until a certain date but don't approve of such. Now would be glad to have you relate to me whether I can get a job in or near the city.

I am now working at a commission house. Listen there have been several crooks out saying they are getting men for different works in the north, all you had to do pay them \$2 or \$3 dollars and meet him on a certain day and that would be the last. Will you relate to me some of the different kinds of works & prices.

Nothing more, I remain.

ANNISTON, ALA., April 26, 1917

*Dear sir:* Seeing in the Chicago Defender that you wanted men to work and that you are not to rob them of their half loaf; interested me very much. So much that I am inquiring for a job; one for my wife, auntie and myself. My wife is a seamster, my auntie a cook I do janitor work or common labor. We all will do the work you give us. Please reply early.

MOBILE, ALA., April 26, 1917

*Dear Sir Bro:* I take great pain in dropping you a few lines hoping that this will find you enjoying the best of health as it leave me at this time present. Dear sir I seen in the Defender where you was helping us a long in securing a position as brickmason plaster cementers stone mason. I am writing to you for advice about coming north. I am a brickmason and I can do cement work and stone work. I written to a firm in Birmingham and they sent me a blank stating \$2.00 would get me a ticket and pay 10 per cent of my salary for the 1st month and \$24.92¢ would be paid after I reach Detroit and went to work where they sent me to work. I had to stay there until I pay them the sum of \$24.92¢ so I want to leave Mobile for there. if there nothing there for me to



make a support for my self and family. My wife is seamstress. We want to get away the 15 or 20 of May so please give this matter your earnest consideration an let me hear from you by return mail as my bro. in law want to get away to. He is a carpenter by trade. so please help us as we are in need of your help as we wanted to go to Detroit but if you says no we go where ever you sends us until we can get to Detroit. We expect to do whatever you says. There is nothing here for the colored man but a hard time wich these southern crackers gives us. We has not had any work to do in 4 wks. and every thing is high to the colored man so please let me hear from you by return mail. Please do this for your brother

SHREVEPORT, LA., 22, 1917

*Dear Sir:* I want to get some infirmation about getting out up there I did learn that they had a man here agent for to send people up there I have never seen him yet and I want you to tell me how to get up there. they are passing people out up there that are unable to come I would like to hear from you at once from your unknown friend.

MOBILE, ALA., December 4, 1916

*Dear Sir:* While reading Sunday's Defender I read where you was coming South looking for labor I see you want intelligent indusrious men to work in factories so I thought I would write and get a little information about it. there are a lot of idle men here that are very anxious to come north. every day they are fooled about go and see the man. plenty of men have quit thier jobs with the expectation of going but when they go the man that is to take them cant be found. last week there was a preacher giving lecturers on going. took up collection and when the men got to the depot he could not be found, so if you will allow me the priviledge I can get you as many men as you need that are hard working honest men that will be glad to come. I will send you these names and address if you will send for them to come. there is not work here every thing is so high what little money you make we have to eat it up. so if what I say to you is agreeable please answer.

### 13. LETTERS ABOUT THE GREAT NORTHERN DRIVE OF 1917

PENSACOLA, FLA., April 21, 1917

*Sir:* You will please give us the names of firms where we can secure employment. Also please explain the Great Northern Drive for May 15th. We will come by the thousands. Some of us like farm work. The colored people will leave if you will assist them.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 23, 1917

*Dear Editor:* I am a reader of the Defender and I am askeso much about the great Northern drive on the 15th of May. We want more understanding about it for there is a great many wants to get ready for that day & the depot agents never gives us any satisfaction when we ask for they dont want us to leave here, I want to ask you to please publish in your next Saturdays paper just what the fair will be on that day so we all will know & can be ready. So many women here are wanting to go that day. They are all working women and we cant get work here so much now, the white women tell us we just want to make money to go North and we do so please kindly ans. this in your next paper if you do I will read it every word in the Defender, had rather read it then to eat when Saturday comes, it is my hearts delight & hope your paper will continue on in the South until every one reads it for it is a God sent blessing to the Race. Will close with best wishes.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 25, 1917

*Dear Sir:* Would you kindly advise me of a good place where I can get a good job out in some of the small places from Chicago about 50 Or 60 miles.

I am expecting to leave the south about the 15th of May and will bring my family later on. Answer soon.

MOBILE, ALA., April 25, 1917

*Sir:* I was reading in theat paper about the Colored race and while reading it I seen in it where cars would be here for the 15 of May which is one month from to day. Will you be so kind as to let me know where they are coming to and I will be glad to know because I am a poor woman and have a husband and five children living and three dead one single and two twin girls six months old today and my husband can hardly make bread for them in Mobile. This is my native home but it is not fit to live in just as the Chicago Defender say it says the truth and my husband only get \$1.50 a day and pays \$7.50 a month for house rent and can hardly feed me and his self and children. I am the mother of 8 children 25 years old and I want to get out of this dog hold because I dont know what I am raising them up for in this place and I want to get to Chicago where I know they will be raised and my husband crazy to get there because he know he can get more to raise his children and will you please let me know where the cars is going to stop to so that he can come where he can take care of me and my children. He get there a while and then he can send for me. I heard they wasnt coming here so I sent to find out and he can go and meet them at the place they are going and go from there to Chicago. No more at present. hoping to hear from you soon from your needed and worried friend.

PASS CHRISTIAN, MISS., April 30, 1917

*Sir:* I want to come north on 15th of May, & I would like to get a job at once. & if you will please locate one for me & let me know in return mail & oblige. Will except a job on farm or in town. I have a little education & I am aquainted with work all right. Hope to here from you soon.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., May 7, 1917

*My dear Sir:* I am writing to solicit your aid and advice as to how I may best obtain employment at my trade in your city. I shall be coming that way on the 15th of May and I wish to find immediate employment if possible.

I have varied experience as a compositor and printer. Job composition is my hobby. I have no experience as linotype operator, but can fill any other place in a printing office. Please communicate with me at the above address at once. Thanking you in advance for any assistance and information in the matter.

ROME, GA., May 13, 1917

*Dear Sir:* I am writing you in regards to present conditions in Chicago in Getting employment. I am an experienced hotel man--in all departments, such as bellman, waiter, buss boy, or any other work pertaining to hotel and would like to know in return could you furnish me transportation to Chicago as you advertise in the Chicago Defender. Am good honest and sober worker, can furnish recommendations if necessary. Have worked at the Palmer House during year 1911 as bus boy in Cafe. But returned South for awhile and since the Northern Drive has begun I have decided to return to Chicago as I am well acquainted with the city. Hope to hear from you soon on this matter as it is of great importance to me.

#### 14. LETTERS EMPHASIZING RACE WELFARE

*Dear sur:* I ritting to you in order to get in touch with you about the work for the betterment of the race I shure want to better my condeshon in the Chicago Defender I seen whear that you say those wishing to locate in smaller towns with fairly good wages that what I want to suner the better for me. Answer at wonce.

SAVANNAH, GA., April 21, 1917

Dear Sir: I was very much impressed when I read the Defender where you are taking so much interest securing jobs for the race from the south. Please secure a job for man & wife in some small town and write me all information at once.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., April 22, 1917

Dear sir: in reading the defender I seen where this was an oportunity for work, for the betterment of the race. Just out of the city and I thought to get in touch with you to see if their would be a chance for me an my brother. i didnt no if you meant any one this far from Chicago or not but i rite to find out. but i hope you will except me please and let me no your wages. i hope to hear from you and if you will except me i can pick you up some responseful families mens but if you dont want them take me because i wants work. so good by.

MEMPHIS, TENN., April 23, 1917

Gentlemen: I want to get in tuch with you in regard of a good location & a job I am for race elevation every way. I want a job in a small town some where in the north where I can receive verry good wages and where I can educate my 3 little girls and demand respect of intelegence. I prefer a job as cabinet maker or any kind of furniture mfg. if possible.

Let me hear from you all at once please. State minimum wages and kind of work.

PENSACOLA, FLA., April 25, 1917

My dear Sir: I noticed an article in the Chicago Defender that officers and members of your organization officer to assist any member of the race to secure steady employment in small cities near Chicago. I am verry anxious to secure a job the year round at any kind of honest work. trusting that I may hear from you at an early date, I beg to remain.

HOUSTON, TEX., April 27, 1917

Dear Sirs: I am a reader of the Chicago Defender and I seen where you are in need of men and are also in the position for firms to seek you. I see where you are in the lines of work for the betterment of the race.

ROME, GA., April 28, 1917

My dear Northern friend: I saw in the Chicago Defender where labors are wanted I am sure a man that wants to get out of the south and would do most any kind of work I has a wife she works all the time. We has a boy age 13 years he has been working with me 5 years I has been working at the pipe shop 11 year but I can do other work you said you will sind a transportation after labores please send after me I can get 10 more mens if you want them. ans. soon so that I will no what to do but I hope you will say yes. hope you will say get the mens and let us sind for you all I am a man woks all the time I has a wife and 4 childrens.

SANFORD, FLA., April 29, 1917

Dear sir: as a member of the Race who desire to join in and with and be among the better side of our Race I ask that you surcue me a job and have me a ticket sent or please send transportation fees at once. Write soon as I will watch for answer from you.

KISSIMMEE, FLA., May 1, 1917

Dear Sir: I am a subscriber for the Chicago Defender have read of the good work you are doing in employing help for your large factories and how you are striving to help get the better class of people to the north. I am a teacher and have been teaching five years successful, and as our school here has closed my cousin and I have decided to go north for the summer who is also

a teacher of this county. I am writing you to secure for us a position that we could fit and one that would fit us, if there be any that is vacant.

We can furnish you with the best of reference. We would not like to advertise through a paper. Hoping to hear from you at an early date, I am

NEW ORLEANS, LA., May 1, 1917

*Dear sir:* i am a reader of the Chicago defender and i seen in the defender that you are interested in the well fair of the colored people those of the classe that is interested in themselves and coming to the north for a better chance so i take pleashure in riting to you that i may get some under standing about conditions of getting work as i see that you are in turch with the foundrys warehouses and the manufacturing concerns that is in need of laborers and i thought it was best to rite you and get some understanding as it is 4 of us expecting to leave here in a few days to come north but we are not coming for pleasure we are looking for wirk and better treatment and more money and i ask your aid in helping us to secure a good position fo work as we are men of familys and we canot aford to loaf and i will be very glad to hear from you and an my arival i will call at your place to see you.

DELAND, FLA., May 1, 1917

*Dear sir:* I being onknon to you in personnal but by reading the Chicago Defender I notice in its ad that there is chance for all kind of imployment that a men that will work can get and as I am one of the negro race that dont mind working study so it is understand that you will please let me no as to wheather you can place me in some of those positions for I suppose to be in this town about 5 more weeks. after leving her stopping in Savannah my home city to see my too bro. and mother I will then leve for the northern states I will thank you for some information.

*dear sirs:* I sene in Defender wher more positions open then men for them I am colord an do woork hard for my living an dont mind it is not no bad habits I work but dont get but small wedges I am up bilder of my colord race an love to help one when he dezirs to better his condishon I want to ast you for a favor of helping me to get to you an your office to get me a woork to do I want to learn a trade and I will pay you to look out for me an get me a job if you kindly will. Please send me 3 tickets as we three good woorking mens make the time you can corleck ever weeak pay for you at once be cause we meanse buisness now.

JACKSONVILLE, FLA., May 2, 1917

*Dear sir:* I am writing you a few lines seacking information about some work as i was read a Chicago Defender i saw where labarers wanted very much I am a labarer now have not no work here to do i am married man have one child and would like for you to give me work to do anything I am well expereinced in warehouse and foundry and if there any way for you to fearnish me a transportation to come at once do i can go so i can make my family a desen living you will please let me know and if you would help a poor need man i am willing to come any time if I had the money i would pay my own way but i realy ain got it so i am asking you to please do this for me i am realy in need if you can do a poor negro any good please do this for me.

COLUMBIA, S.C., May 7, 1917

*Dir sur:* i saw in one of our colord papers your ad i now seat my selft to seak work thru your ade of which i beleve is earnest devotion to our betterment i am a brick layer and plastrer i rite to no if i can get or you can get work for me please let me know detales plese.

MONTGOMERY, ALA., May 19, 1917

*Dear sir:* I notice in the Chicago defender that you are working to better the condition of the colored people of the south. I am a member of the race & want to come north for to better the condition of my famely i have

five children my self and a wife & I want you to seek for me a job please. I will send you the trade I follows while here in the south. I works in the packing houses & also wholesale grocers houses. Either one I can do but I rather the packing the best, you can get a half of dozen womens from here that want work & wants information about jobs such as cooking, nurseing & cleaning up or anything else they can do.

SHERMAN, GA., November 28, 1916

Dear sir: This letter comes to ask for all infirmations concern-employment in your conection in the warmest climate. Now I am in a family of (11) eleven more or less boys and girls (men and women) mixed sizes who want to go north as soon as arrangements can be made and employment given places for shelter an so en (etc) now this are farming people they were raised on the farm and are good farm hands I of course have some experience and qualefication as a coman school teacher and hotel waiter and along few other lines.

I wish you would write me at your first chance and tell me if you can give us employment at what time and about what wages will you pay and what kind of arrangement can be made for our shelter. Tell me when can you best use us now or later.

Will you send us tickets if so on what terms and at what price what is the cost per head and by what route should we come. We are Negroes and try to show ourselves worthy of all we may get from any friendly source we endeavor to be true to all good causes, if you can we thank you to help up to come north as soon as you can.

Adapted from Emmett J. Scott (ed.), "Letters of Negro Migrants of 1916-1918," *Journal of Negro History*, 4 (July, 1919): 290-340 *passim*.



PART IV

THE MIGRATION AND NORTHERN RACE RIOTS

## THE MIGRATION AND NORTHERN RACE RIOTS

In Afro-American folklore the North represented the fabled "Promised Land" where blacks would be free from an oppressive social system and steady work would bring economic relief from poverty. The Great Migration of Negroes from southern plantation to northern ghetto is one of the most significant developments of twentieth-century America. The dream of improvement, however, frequently dissolved into a nightmare when the influx of blacks stirred whites into action to protect themselves from this perceived threat. Before the migration, whites in cities such as East St. Louis and Chicago were accustomed to a highly-structured interaction with the few blacks with whom they might have contact. Although Illinois was "Lincoln country," whites in the lower portion of the state were more southern than northern in their racial attitudes. Blacks had to learn to adapt themselves to a rigidly segregated status in such cities as East St. Louis. There, factory employees used segregated washrooms, worked in segregated departments, and ate in segregated lunchrooms. The same conditions existed in health care, education, recreation, theaters, restaurants, and hotels. Even though segregation was informal in East St. Louis, it was a reality, and the heavy growth of 100 per cent in the black population between 1900 and 1920 seriously undermined the continued viability of these informal control mechanisms.

While the causes of riots are always complex, hostilities among white residents were almost always fanned into a flaming passion by fears of job competition. The East St. Louis Riot of 1917 and the Chicago Riot of 1919 are classic illustrations. The East St. Louis Riot (Doc. 1-11) was one of the worst of the twentieth century, taking the lives of at least forty-eight people, and hundreds more injured. The first of two riotous outbreaks within a month occurred after a meeting with the mayor in which a union delegation protested the importation of southern black workers. With tensions high already, a rumor spread that a Negro had murdered a white man, but sporadic violence was quickly controlled by the militia. A month later an auto sped through the black quarter shooting indiscriminately into Negro homes. When an unmarked police car drove through the same neighborhood, Negroes fired into it and killed two police officers. Thus unleashed the second outburst, an orgy of white brutality against blacks which resulted in the permanent exodus of ten thousand Afro-Americans from the city. The fury unleashed had its source in labor friction, however. In 1916, 2,500 white packinghouse employees struck and their places were permanently lost to Negro scabs. Many whites, therefore, had old scores to settle.<sup>65</sup>

Similar circumstances prevailed in the Chicago Riot of 1919, when thirty-eight people were killed, 537 injured, and about 1,000 rendered homeless. The precipitating incident involved the stoning death of a black youth at a city beach. Within two hours the violence was at full fury. As in the East St. Louis affair, tensions were fired to the boiling point by the heavy influx of black migrants and the long-standing racial discord stemming from job competition. The seeds of conflict were sown in several earlier labor disputes, such as the 1894 strike of slaughterhouse workers which was broken by imported Negro scabs. The blacks stayed on afterward and became part of a new union. In 1904, however, black and white packers struck and, immediately, 10,000 poverty-stricken Negroes replaced them. Several more strikes, particularly the 1904 teamsters' strike, and the 1916 strike of railroad car cleaners, resulted in even more whites being replaced by blacks. For racially-prejudiced white workers the distinction between black strikers and scabs was lost. These underlying sores festered again in July 1919 when two white strikers were killed during a strike and 600 others lost their jobs to imported Negroes. Even though blacks were discriminated against by the Chicago unions, and came from a culture which had not prepared them for unionism, whites simply did not appreciate the imperatives of poverty which operated upon black workers. Thus, the friction generated in the job market increased until it reached the point of combustion. Documents 12-21 examine the complexity of the riot and its economic roots.<sup>66</sup>



## RACE RIOT IN EAST ST. LOUIS, 1917

## 1. EAST ST. LOUIS RIOTS

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZED BY CONGRESS  
TO INVESTIGATE THE EAST ST. LOUIS RIOTS

MR. JOHNSON of Kentucky, Mr. Speaker:<sup>67</sup>

Your committee appointed under House resolution No. 128 for the purpose of making investigation of the East St. Louis riots which occurred on May 28 and July 2, 1917, reports that as a result of unlawful conditions existing at that place, interstate commerce was not only openly and violently interrupted but was virtually suspended for a week or 10 days during and following the riot of last July. For months after the July riot interstate commerce was interfered with and hindered, not, however, by open acts of violence, but by a subtle and effective intimidation of colored men who had been employed by the railroads to handle freight consigned from one State to another. So many of these men were driven out of East St. Louis as the result of the July riot that the railroads could not secure necessary help. After the worst effects of the riot had passed this class of labor remained so frightened and intimidated that it would not live in East St. Louis. Some of them took up their residences across the river in St. Louis, and would go over to East St. Louis in the morning to work and would return to that place before nightfall. In order to get out of East St. Louis and back to St. Louis before night came on the length of the day's work was reduced. The fright of these laborers went to such an extent--and it was fully justified by existing conditions--that special means of transportation had to be provided for them back and forth between St. Louis and East St. Louis in order to get them to work at all. Besides the killing of a number of these negro laborers, a very large number, indeed, fled from the work and never returned to it. In addition to this 44 freight cars were burned and serious damage done to the railroad tracks, all of which will be referred to further along in this report.

Your committee made an earnest, nonpartisan effort to determine the basic cause of the riot. We endeavored to pursue every avenue of information to its source, searched the hearts and consciences of all witnesses, and sought the opinions of men in every walk of life. The officers of the mills and factories placed the blame at the door of organized labor; but the overwhelming weight of testimony, to which is added the convictions of the committee, ascribes the mob spirit and its murderous manifestations to the bitter race feeling that had grown up between the whites and the blacks.

The natural racial aversion, which finds expression in mob violence in the North as in the South, was augmented in East St. Louis by hundreds of petty conflicts between the whites and the blacks. During the year 1917 between 10,000 and 12,000 negroes came from the Southern States to seek work at promised high wages in the industries of St. Clair County. They swarmed into the railroad stations on every train, to be met by their friends who formed reception committees and welcomed them to the financial, political and social liberty which they had been led to believe Illinois guaranteed. They seldom had more than enough money to exactly defray their transportation, and they arrived dirty and hungry. They stood around the street corners in homesick huddles, seeking shelter and hunting work.

How to deal with them soon became a municipal problem. Morning found them gathered at the gates of the manufactories, where often they were chosen in preference to the white men who also sought employment. But as rapidly as employment was found for those already there fresh swarms arrived from the South, until the great number without employment menaced the prosperity and safety of the community.

The Aluminum Ore Co. brought hundreds and hundreds of them to the city as

strike breakers, to defeat organized labor, a precedent which aroused intense hatred and antagonism and caused countless tragedies as its aftermath. The feeling of resentment grew with each succeeding day. White men walked the streets in idleness, their families suffering for food and warmth and clothes, while their places as laborers were taken by strange negroes who were compelled to live in hovels and who were used to keep down wages.

It was proven conclusively that the various industries in St. Clair County were directly responsible for the importation of these negroes from the South. Advertisements were printed in various Southern newspapers urging the negroes to come to East St. Louis and promising them big wages. In many instances agents were sent through the South to urge the negroes to abandon profitable employment there and come to East St. Louis, where work was said to be plentiful and wages high.

One of the local railroads sent an agent to the Southern States, and on some trips he brought back with him as many as 30 or 40 negro men, all of them employed at their southern homes, making from \$2 to \$2.50 a day. A number of these men testified before the committee that they were promised \$2.40 a day "and board" if they would come to East St. Louis; but when they did come they were paid only \$1.40 a day, with an allowance of 60 cents a day for board, and were fed on coffee, bread and "lasses" and made to sleep on sacks in box cars, where they suffered keenly from the cold.

Responsibility for this influx of 10,000 or more negroes into East St. Louis rests on the railroads and the manufacturing establishments, and they must bear their share of the responsibility for the ensuing arson and murder that followed this unfortunate invasion.

It is a lamentable fact that the employers of labor paid too little heed to the comfort or welfare of their men. They saw them crowded into wretched cabins, without water or any of the conveniences of life; their wives and children condemned to live in the disreputable quarters of the town, and made no effort to lift them out of the mire.

The negroes gravitated to the unsanitary sections, existed in the squalor of filthy cabins, and made no complaint; but the white workmen had a higher outlook, and the failure to provide them with better homes added to their bitter dissatisfaction with the burdens placed upon them by having to compete with black labor. This resentment spread until it included thousands who did not have to work with their hands.

Ten thousand and more strange negroes added to the already large colored population soon made East St. Louis a center of lawlessness. Within less than a year before the riot over 800 "holdups" were committed in the city. More than 80 per cent of the murders were committed by negroes. Highway robberies were nightly occurrences; rape was frequent; while a host of petty offenses kept the law-abiding citizens in a state of terror.

White women were afraid to walk the streets at night; negroes sat in their laps on street cars; black women crowded them from their seats; they were openly insulted by drunken negroes. The low saloons and gambling houses were crowded with idle vagabonds; the dance halls in the negro section were filled with prostitutes, half clad, in some instances naked, performing lewd dances.

Negroes were induced to buy homes in white districts by unscrupulous real estate agents; and, as a consequence, the white people sold their homes at a sacrifice and moved elsewhere.

Owners of cheap property preferred negroes as tenants, charging them \$15 a month rent for houses for which white workmen had paid only \$10.

Corrupt politicians found the negro vote fitted to their foul purpose, and not only bought them on election day, but in the interval protected them in their dens of vice, their low saloons and barrel houses. They had immunity in the courts; crooked lawyers kept them out of jail; and a disorganized, grafting police force saw to it that they were not molested.

East St. Louis wallowed in a mire of lawlessness and unashamed corruption. Criminals from every quarter of the country gathered there, unmolested and safe from detection.

This was the condition of affairs on the night of July 1, 1917, when an automobile--some witnesses say there were two--went through a negro section of the city and fired promiscuously into their homes. No one was injured, but the act aroused a fierce spirit in the breasts of the negroes.

The ringing of a church bell at midnight, which was a prearranged signal,

drew a crowd of negroes from that immediate section armed with guns and pistols. They marched through the streets ready to avenge the attack on their homes. They had not gone far until an automobile containing several policemen and a newspaper reporter crossed their path, having been notified by telephone that there was danger of an outbreak. The negroes cursed them and told them to drive on, although one of the detectives flashed his police badge and assured them that they had come to protect them.

For answer the negro mob fired a volley into the machine which, at the first shot, drove rapidly away. The negroes continued to empty their guns and pistols, with the result that one of the officers was instantly killed and another so badly wounded that he died later.

The police automobile, riddled with bullets, stood in front of police headquarters next morning and thousands viewed it. The early editions of the papers gave full details of the tragedy of the night before. And, on July 2, East St. Louis awoke to a realization of the awful fact that the dread which had knocked at every heart for months could no longer be denied. Years of lawlessness had at last borne bloody fruit. As the day wore on negro mobs killed other white men, and shot at men and women who were offering them no wrong.

Dr. McQuillan, a well-known physician, and his wife were dragged from their machine and shamefully abused. The doctor was shot, his ribs broken, and both he and his wife were badly beaten. One of his assailants remarked, "Boys, this is Dr. McQuillan, the Aluminum Ore Co. doctor," and pleaded for his life. The would-be murders, some of whom must have been employed by the Ore Co., helped the doctor and his wife into their machine and, cranking it for them, sent them on their way.

The news of these murders and fresh outrages spread rapidly, and the streets soon filled with excited people. Men and boys, girls and women of the town began to attack every negro in sight. All fared alike, young and old, women and children; none was spared. The crowd soon grew to riotous proportions, and for hours the man hunt continued, stabbing, clubbing and shooting, not the guilty but unoffending negroes. One was hanged from a telephone pole and another had a rope tied around his neck and was dragged through the streets, the maddened crowd kicking and beating him as he lay prostrate and helpless.

The negroes were pursued into their homes, and the torch completed the work of destruction. As they fled from the flames they were shot down, although many of them came out with uplifted hands, pleading to be spared.

It was a day and night given over to arson and murder. Scenes of horror that would have shocked a savage were viewed with placid unconcern by hundreds, whose hearts knew no pity, and who seemed to revel in the feast of blood and cruelty.

It is not possible to give accurately the number of dead. At least 39 negroes and 8 white people were killed outright, and hundreds of negroes were wounded and maimed. "The bodies of the dead negroes," testified an eyewitness, "were thrown into a morgue like so many dead hogs."

There were 312 buildings and 44 railroad freight cars and their contents destroyed by fire; a total loss of \$393,600. Your committee can not go into all the harrowing details of how the negroes--men, women and children--were killed and burned during the riot, but there were so many flagrantly cruel cases that a bare recital of the facts concerning some of them will be given.

At Collinsville and Illinois Avenues a negro and his wife and 14-year-old boy were assaulted. The man was beaten to death; his head was crushed in as if a blow from a stone, and the boy was shot and killed. The woman was very badly injured; her hair was torn out by the roots and her scalp was partly torn off by some one who took hold of the ragged edges of a wound and scalped her. After a time an ambulance drove up and the bodies of these three negroes were loaded into it. The father and the son were dead, and when the woman regained consciousness she found herself lying on the dead bodies of her husband and child. This family lived across the Mississippi River in St. Louis and were on their way home after having been on a fishing trip north of East St. Louis. They were innocent of any connection with the race feeling that brought about the riot and were victims of the savage brutality of the mob, who spared neither age or sex in their blind lust for blood.

Another negro who was trying to escape from a mob of 30 or 40 men was knocked down, kicked in the face, beaten into insensibility; and then a man stood

over him and shot him five times as he lay helpless in the street.

A white man shot at a negro and killed another white man, his bad aim infuriating the mob that pursued the unoffending negro.

Two negroes were taken from a street car at Illinois and Collinsville Avenues. They were on their way to St. Louis to escape the fury of the mob. Both were killed.

Near the stock yards a white man knocked a negro senseless from a wagon, and when two reporters offered to take the wounded man to the hospital another white man threatened their lives and forced them to drive away and leave him.

At Collinsville and Division Avenues a mob of about 100 men drove a negro into the street, knocked him down, stamped on his face, and one of the crowd drew a pistol and shot him through the head, the bullet coming out between his eyes.

An old negro, about 70 years old, stepped off a street car, having come from St. Louis on his way home. The mob immediately attacked him with such fury that he was left senseless after being stoned and beaten. A witness who described this particular case to your committee said: "This old man, his dinner bucket lying on the ground beside him, apparently was dead, although he had his arm arched up over his face as if to protect himself from blows. About that time an ambulance driver came up and started to pick him up to put him into the ambulance. A white man standing over him said, 'If you pick up this negro, you'll get what he got.' I saw that same negro in the undertaking establishment the next day, dead, with his arm still arched over his face."

Around Third and Brady Avenue the mob was firing promiscuously into houses and sheds where the negroes had taken shelter. Every time one of them ran from these houses he was shot and killed.

The rioting continued all along Broadway, between Collinsville Avenue and Eighth Street; houses were burned and the poor wretches were driven from their homes or shot as they were trying to escape the flames. Two of them, with hands above their heads, were shot and killed.

A negro child 2 years old was shot and thrown into the doorway of a burning building, and nothing ever was found of the remains.

There was a crippled negro who took care of the horses and mules for the Hill-Thomas Lime & Cement Co. He was a faithful, hard-working, loyal fellow. The day of the riot his employer's stable was in the path of the flames. He called up Mr. Thomas, his boss, on the telephone and said: "I just called you up to tell you good-bye. I'm here in the barn, and I ain't goin' to leave; I've turned all the stock out; I'm going to say here; I'm not going outside to be shot."

This faithful negro must have been consumed in the flames as no trace of him ever was found.

It is impossible to say how many people perished in the 312 houses that were burned by the mob, but many negroes who lived in those houses still are missing, and it is not possible to get an accurate report as to just how many found death in the flames.

East St. Louis for many years has been a plague spot; within its borders and throughout its environs every offense in the calendar of crime and every lapse in morals and public decency has been openly committed, each day increasing the terrors of the law-abiding. No terms of condemnation, applied to the men who were responsible for the appalling conditions revealed before your committee, can be too severe. No punishment that outraged justice may visit upon them will be adequate. In many cases they deserve the extreme penalty; in every case they merit the execration of a despoiled and disgraced community.

The purpose of the politicians of both political parties, who found East St. Louis respected and prosperous and in a few years robbed its treasury, gave away valuable franchises, sank it in the mire of pollution, and brought upon it national censure and disgrace, was deliberate. They united to elect men to high office who would further their schemes of spoliation even when they feared to share their plunder. It was a conspiracy as shameless as it was confident. They left nothing to chance. It took account of the executive; it provided for an unscrupulous legislative board; it made certain of police commissioners who would take orders and deliver the goods; it embraced the courts high and low; it went into partnership with every vile business; it protected every lawless saloon; it encouraged houses of prostitution in the very shadow of the city hall; it gave protection to gamblers, immunity to thieves and murderers.

The gang that took possession of East St. Louis harbored the offscourings of the earth. The vag, the safe blower and the "stickup man" flocked to its sheltering arms, safe from arrest or disturbance.

The good people of this sorely afflicted community were powerless. The chamber of commerce, which should have had the courage to rally the law-abiding and drive out the lawless, was ineffective. They actually "laid upon the table" a resolution of inquiry to investigate the conditions that made property unsafe and life perilous.

The owners of the great corporations whose plants were in and about East St. Louis lived in other cities. They pocketed their dividends without concern for the municipal dishonesty that wasted the taxes, and without a thought for the thousands of their own workmen, black and white, who lived in hovels, the victims of poverty and disease, of long hours and incessant labor.

The greed that made crooks of the politicians made money grabbers of the manufacturers, who pitted white labor against black, drove organized labor from their plants, brought thousands of inefficient negroes from the South, crowding the white men from their positions. All this stirred the fires of race hatred until it finally culminated in bloody, pitiless riot, arson and wanton murder.

Mayor Mollman surrounded himself with advisers who were familiar with the game of politics. They were not interested in securing an honest and economical administration. Their business first was to elect a man who would be subservient; one who possibly might not put his own hand into the public treasury, but would look the other way if a friend were so engaged. They needed a man who would stand between them and the indignant taxpayer; a fair promiser but a poor performer; personally honest, maybe, but so weak, so feeble, and so easily influenced that the conspirators were able to dictate his policies, and in the shadow of his stupidity loot the municipality. This was not the result of corruption in only one political party. It was brought about by a combination between the leaders of the worst elements in both parties. They pooled issues in the city election and declared regular dividends on their investment at the expense of honest people.

In the history of corrupt politics in this country there never has been a more shameless debauchery of the electorate nor a more vicious alliance between the agencies and beneficiaries of crime than for years existed in East St. Louis. It is a disgraceful chapter. It puts an ineffaceable brand on every man engaged in the conspiracy. Its contamination, spreading from a reservoir of corruption in the city hall, filtered through carefully laid conduits into every street and alley; into the hotels where girls, mere children of 15 years of age, were violated; into the low dance halls where schoolgirls listened to lewd songs and engaged in lascivious dances, and in the interval retired to assignation rooms with the drunken brutes who frequented these resorts; into the gambling houses where poorly paid workmen were robbed of their daily earnings; into the 350 saloons which kept open on Sunday, many of them running without license; into the barrel houses, where the vilest whisky was sold in bottles, the resort of vagrants and drunkards, rendezvous of criminals and schools of crime.

This corruption palsied the hands of prominent officials whose duty it was to enforce the law. Lawyers became protectors of criminals; the courts were shields for the highwayman, the prostitute, the gambler, the sneak thief and the murderer. The higher courts were not free from this baneful influence, which invaded all ranks and brought them to its low level.

Local judges were found who would take straw bonds that the worst criminals might escape; exacting only costs, two-thirds going into the pockets of the judge and one-third into the waiting palm of the chief of police.

A police force is never better than the police commissioners; and the police commissioners, in turn, reflect the character and wishes of the mayor. If a city has a mayor of courage and ability, who is not the weak and willing prey of political crooks and grafters, he is certain to appoint a board of police commissioners who will name policemen intelligent enough to know the law and brave and honest enough to enforce it.

East St. Louis was doubly unfortunate. In the person of Mayor Mollman it had an executive who obeyed orders from a gang of conscienceless politicians of both political parties, who were exploiting the city for their own aggrandizement, careless alike of its good name, its security or its prosperity. They were harpies who closed their eyes to the corruption that saturated every

department of the public service and fattened on its festering carcass. Without conscience and without shame they led the mayor into devious paths, tempted him with assurances of political support for his future ambitions, packed the police force with men whose incompetency was only surpassed by their venality, and so circumscribed him with flattery and encouraged his cupidity that they were able to take the reins of government from his feeble hands and guide it to suit their own foul and selfish purposes.

The great majority of the police force appointed by Mayor Mollman's board of police commissioners had served an apprenticeship as connivers at corrupt elections; as protectors of lawless saloons, and hotels run openly as assignation houses. They turned criminals loose at the dictation of politicians, and divided with grafting justices of the peace the fines that should have gone into the treasury.

This was the general character of the police force of the city of East St. Louis on July 1, 1917, when the spirit of lawlessness, long smoldering burst into flame.

When acts of violence were frequent on the night of May 28, after a largely attended public meeting in the city hall, at which Attorney Alexander Flannigan, by unmistakable implication, suggested mob violence, the police department failed to cope with the incipient mob.

When the lawlessness began to assume serious proportions on July 2, the police instantly could have quelled and dispersed the crowds, then made up of small groups; but they either fled into the safety of a cowardly seclusion, or listlessly watched the depredations of the mob, passively and in many instances actively sharing in its work.

The testimony of every witness who was free to tell the truth agreed in condemnation of the police for failure to even halfway do their duty. They fled the scene where murder and arson held full sway. They deserted the station house and could not be found when calls for help came from every quarter of the city. The organization broke down completely; and so great was the indifference of the few policemen who remained on duty that the conclusion is inevitable that they shared the lust of the mob for negro blood, and encouraged the rioters by their conduct, which was sympathetic when it was not cowardly.

Some specific instances will be given in proof of the above conclusions:

After a number of rioters had been taken to the jail by the soldiers under Col. Clayton, the police deliberately turned hundreds of them loose without bond, failing to secure their names or to make any effort to identify them.

In one instance the mob jammed policemen against a building and held them there while other members of the gang were assaulting unoffending negroes. The police made no effort to free themselves, and seemed to regard the performance as highly humorous.

The police shot into a crowd of negroes who were huddled together, making no resistance. It was a particularly cowardly exhibition of savagery.

When the newspaper reporters were taking pictures of the mob, policemen charged them with their billies, broke their machines, destroyed the negatives, and threatened them with arrest if any further attempt was made to photograph the rioters who were making the streets run red with innocent blood, applying the torch to reach their victims who were cowering in their wretched homes.

A negro was brutally clubbed by a policeman who found him guilty of the heinous offense of hiding in an ice box to save his life.

Two policemen and three soldiers were involved in the shooting of Minneola McGee under circumstances of extreme brutality. This occurred, not at the scene of the riots, but as she was going from an outhouse to the kitchen of the residence where she was employed, when the police and the soldiers who accompanied them fired at her deliberately, without even the slightest provocation, and shot off her arm near the shoulder.

Minneola McGee is a negro girl about 20 years old. She was induced to leave one of the Southern States and go to East St. Louis by the many enticing but misleading advertisements scattered among southern negroes. It is apparent that even before her injury she was a frail and rather delicate girl. When she appeared before your committee, with one arm off just below the shoulder, she was a physical wreck. She has no education whatever. It is not possible for her to earn a living in any other way than by manual labor. Now, as the result of as fiendish a piece of work as was ever perpetrated, she must, at

least to some extent, be an object of charity. Because of her youth this sort of a life is before her. She was interrogated by your committee to ascertain whether it was possible for her to have been shot by accident. Her simple story removed all doubt upon that score, as she satisfied everyone who heard her that she was purposely and deliberately shot. In answer to questions put to her by your committee she said:

I wuz in a outhouse in de garden. I hea'd de shootin' an' started fo' de house. When I got put'y nigh de house a soljer histed his gun and pinte it right at me and shot my arm off. Dar wuzn't nobody twixt me and de soljer fo' him to be shootin' at, an' dar wuzn't nobody on de udder side of me for him to be shootin' at. He just histed his gun and pinte it at me an' shot my arm off when I hadn't done nothin'. When he shot me I fell on de ground an' didn't know nothin'.

Her pitiful recital of this piece of brutality toward her had the effect of stirring the indignation of everybody in the room where the hearing was being conducted, and at the same time to arouse the utmost sympathy for her.

Many other cases of police complicity in the riots could be cited. Instead of being guardians of the peace they became a part of the mob by countenancing the assaulting and shooting down of defenseless negroes and adding to the terrifying scenes of rapine and slaughter.

Their disgraceful conduct was the logical fruit of the notorious alliance between the city hall and the criminal elements, aided by saloons, gambling houses and houses of prostitution. The city administration owed its election to their support and rewarded them for their fealty by permitting them to debauch the innocent, rob drunken victims, make assignation houses of the hotels, protect the gambler and the thief, and commit any act by which they might profit.

Mayor Mollman appointed the police commissioners. He was responsible for their failure to divorce the police from its partnership with crooked lawyers, corrupt justices of the peace and notorious criminals. He knew full well what the conditions in the police department were. Prominent citizens had warned him repeatedly and had supplied convincing proof of their charges against the department. He paid no attention to their warnings and appeals. By his failure to remove the police commissioners he acquiesced in their misfeasance, and equally is responsible with them for the heartless crimes committed by an unrestrained mob, and for the lawlessness that was encouraged and fostered by his failure to enforce the law and to hold his subordinates responsible for the proper conduct of the police department.

Much of the energy, some of the brains, and nearly all of the audacity of the gang that in recent years has held East St. Louis in its merciless grasp were centered in Locke Tarlton, president of the East Side Levee Board. It was his cunning mind that helped devise the schemes by which he and his associates were enriched. It was his practiced hand that carried them out. He made Mayor Mollman believe he was his creator; that he had elevated him to high station; and that his blind obedience to orders would mean rich political rewards in the future.

As president of the levee board, Tarlton deposited millions in a local bank and exacted no interest from it. The taxpayers suffered, while the bank lent the money and pocketed the proceeds. In further proof of the close relationship that existed between the levee board and the bank, Thomas Gillespie, brother of the bank's president, was elected attorney for the levee board.

Locke Tarlton knew how to handle the negro vote. He had an unanswerable argument to use with "floaters." He told them for whom he wanted them to vote, agreed on the price they were to get for casting their ballots, or rather having them marked for them by corrupt election officers, and always paid them promptly. Locke Tarlton was man of honor when dealing with crooked voters. He always kept his word; he was sure pay. One of the picturesque sights in East St. Louis was to see Locke Tarlton with a stack of \$5 bills in his hands publicly paying the negroes who helped him win an election.

When the levee board needed a right of way over certain land that was owned by a widow, Dr. R. X. McCracken, the health commissioner appointed by Mayor Mollman, bought the land from the widow for \$5,000 and sold it a few weeks later to his friends, the levee board, for \$20,000. The widow did not know

when she sold the land that the levee board wanted it. McCracken's wife also sold land in the same locality to the levee board for \$600 an acre, while adjoining land was purchased for \$300 an acre.

When an organized effort was made to close the houses of prostitution the mayor would not give a definite answer until he had sent for Tarlton, who rented property in which the low saloon with assignation and dance-hall attachments were featured. In the presence of Rev. George W. Allison, who was conducting this crusade, Tarlton was purposely profane and vulgar; betrayed his interest by his anxiety; showed no sympathy with the movement; said in the presence of the mayor that the "town was full of jailbirds and crooks and always would be."

Whenever profitable vice was imperiled Tarlton was always found ready to defend. The criminal element believed, as publicly expressed by them, "that he owned the mayor body and breeches;" and they looked to Tarlton to save them from interference by the police and from prosecution by the courts. He kept his compact faithfully. They never called for help in vain; and on election days the ranks of crime and its immediate beneficiaries, the saloon, the gambling den and the house of prostitution, paid him back with compound interest.

Locke Tarlton was aided in his work by Tom Canavan, superintendent of public improvements. They were partners in many enterprises. Their desires ran along the same lines; their minds met in countless devious plans for personal gain and political advantage. Canavan was not as bold an operator as Tarlton, but he was more subtle. Possibly he lacked the resistless energy that carried Tarlton over obstacles that would have deterred a more cautious man; but he was shrewd and resourceful, and found ways and means to accomplish his ends, and one of his principal agencies was Locke Tarlton. The mayor was another.

Tarlton and Canavan were "the men higher up." They knew how far to go without taking a personal risk. They knew, too, who could be depended upon to put things over; and the courts and the police force were so organized that no real friend of the "gang" ever suffered.

After the riots Canavan is reported to have said: "Something had to be done to the 'niggers,' or they would have taken the town."

Jerry Sullivan, the corporation counsel, who profited by the job which made the county drain a swamp which he and his friends very recently had bought, evidently with the knowledge that it would soon be drained at public expense, was either an understudy for Tarlton and Canavan, or he was further back of the curtain. He tried to do in a lesser way what they did wholesale. So far as he could help the combination along in his official capacity, Jerry was willing and ready to serve.

Alexander Flannigan, an attorney of some ability and no character, appears often in the record of the investigation. His speech to an excited crowd of workingmen in the auditorium of the city hall on the night of May 28 virtually advised them to kill and burn the houses of the negroes. He was not authorized to speak for those who went there to protest against the lawlessness which disgraced the city and the presence of thousands of negroes who, it is claimed, were taking the place of the white workmen, but his inflammatory speech caused many of his hearers to rush into the street and resort to acts of violence.

Flannigan has long been a menace to decency and order in East St. Louis. He has made a specialty of defending the worst criminals; and, by a corrupt partnership with certain justices of the peace, whose decisions he directed, he was able to secure the release of scores of guilty gamblers, thieves, thugs and prostitutes. If the case required a jury, by connivance with the constables, he always secured a jury that would acquit.

When efforts were made to indict him for complicity in naturalization frauds, his friend and associate, Hubert Schaumleffel, States Attorney, pleaded with the Federal authorities not to push the charge against him.

Flannigan ought to be indicted for his incendiary speech to the workingmen. He was in full sympathy with the action of the mob. They followed his advice, and the scenes of murder and arson that ensued were the logical result of his utterances.

It is the duty of the respectable members of the bar in East St. Louis to institute the necessary proceedings to deprive him of his license to practice law. Such as he make a mockery of justice and bring reproach on an honorable profession.



Hubert Schaumleffel is the States Attorney for St. Clair County, his authority extending over East St. Louis. It was his duty to prosecute the criminals that made an interstate playground of that city. No disorderly saloon, no gambling house, no house of prostitution could have existed if he had raised a threatening finger. He held in his hand the moral destiny of this city of 90,000 people. Had he been a man of average moral courage, prompted by high motives and responsive to his oath of office, East St. Louis and its border towns would have escaped the maelstrom of vice that all but engulfed them.

But Schaumleffel had no civic pride; he was devoid of character; he was the boon companion of the low and dissolute; the ready servant of scheming politicians; at heart a sympathizer with criminals whom he should have prosecuted relentlessly. A member of the Tarlton-Canavan corrupt machine, he rendered menial service to his masters. It is in evidence that before the city election, when Mollman was a candidate for mayor, with all the hopes and prospects of the gang centered on him, Schaumleffel called together the leaders among the negroes, those who controlled the vicious elements of their race, and were permitted to violate the law whenever they rendered proper service to his administration. He told them plainly that they had to vote for Mollman for mayor, and if they failed to support him he would close the gambling dens and the dance halls, the policy shops and the dice games, and the lid would be securely placed on an absolutely "tight town."

Many other instances could be given of Schaumleffel's alliance with the worst elements. Alexander Flannigan relied on and was emboldened by his friendship. The lottery sharks in St. Clair County escaped indictment by his inaction; countless criminals went unwhipped of justice, either because he neglected his duty, was blind to offenses committed by his political supporters, or was so benumbed by drink that he did not have the intelligence to realize the enormity of his official omissions.

Rev. Father Christopher Goelz testified that he went to see Schaumleffel in order to protest against the existence of a cockpit at Woodland Park, with its attendant scenes of beastly drunkenness and debauchery. He found the States Attorney as he was on his way to St. Louis to attend a prize fight, so drunk that he could not talk to him intelligently.

The day of the riot, with the mob rushing through the streets, hundreds of houses in flames, and men, women and children victims of the rifle, pistol and the bludgeon, States Attorney Hubert Schaumleffel staggered drunken along the way, heedless of the crimes that were being committed in his presence and callous to the cries of the injured and the dying.

It is his habit to drink to excess. His infirmity is known to all. His love for liquor seems to have stripped him of all moral courage and manhood, and left him naked and unashamed.

When will the authorities confront him with his official derelictions and his personal delinquencies, and take from him the high place which he has disgraced?

Dan McGlynn is a leading lawyer of East St. Louis. He should not be linked too closely with the malodorous Alexander Flannigan, but he must have learned his code of ethics in the same school from which Flannigan graduated. As a member of the so-called "Committee of One Hundred" McGlynn pretendedly was an indignant citizen, protesting vigorously against lawlessness, co-operating with the attorney general in the prosecution of the rioters and condemning every form of vice. He was so earnest (?) that he was named as a member of the executive committee of the "Committee of One Hundred," and the attorney general of the State accepted his assistance, took him into his confidence and consulted freely with him because of his conceded legal ability and his knowledge of local conditions.

But a change came over Dan McGlynn and he saw another light--not from above as Paul saw it, but from below--a red and sulphurous light that led him into devious paths. The two policemen, Cornelius Meehan and James O'Brien, who, with three of Col. Tripp's soldiers, shot off Minneola McGee's arm and murdered two innocent negroes the morning after the riot, asked Dan McGlynn to defend them. On one side was his membership on the executive committee of the "Committee of One Hundred" and his possession of important secrets of the prosecution disclosed to him by officials of the attorney general's office, and on the other was his desire to save Meehan and O'Brien from the punishment which they so justly deserved. All his talents and influence were placed at

the service of these assassins, forgetting his duty as a citizen and regard for the ethics of his profession.

He attempted to justify his conduct by the statement that the policemen were "old clients" and he felt bound to defend them. Dan McGlynn, powerful, resourceful and respected; and Alexander Flannigan, corrupt and condemned, really are brothers under the skin.

The case of a young woman, whose name for obvious reasons should not become a part of this report, brought from St. Louis to East St. Louis as a "white slave" and held a prisoner in a saloon and rooming house run by Steve Unk and his wife, illustrates to what depths of depravity human beings can descend for money. This girl was but 17 years old. She met a man in St. Louis whose name she did not know, but from her description was a "pimp" whose business it was to secure "white slaves" for the East St. Louis market. He told this girl that she was to get employment at the Star Hotel. He took her to Steve Unk's dive, where the first duty imposed upon her was to sit in the saloon and drink with low characters who frequented it. Unk next explained to her that it was her duty to go "upstairs" with them, and whatever money she received as a prostitute would be divided, half to her and half to Mrs. Unk.

In the course of time she became "enciente," and Mrs. Unk herself took her to a midwife in St. Louis, who performed an abortion on her. She was taken back to Unk's place that afternoon, was so ill and weak she could not leave her room. Racked with pain and suffering tortures from the crude operation, she was forced to submit to Unk, who broke into her room and spent half the night with her.

Day by day she sat in the back room of this low saloon, and far into the night, drinking with the mill hands and roustabouts who were drawn there by her advertised presence. She testified that she often drank as many as a dozen bottles of beer in a night, because Unk made her drink with all who asked her. Unk would not permit her to talk with anyone who spoke English, fearful that she would tell her story and appeal to them for help. Unk and his wife made it a rule that she could not have breakfast, not even a drink of water, until after she had made some money in the morning.

When she finally got away from Unk's place to go to her home in St. Louis, they kept her clothes and her money, and refused to give her even the pitiful share which she had earned by prostitution with the motley gang that crowded this low saloon and assignation house.

Mrs. Yent, who took the girl into her home at the request of the United States attorney until such time as a "white-slave" charge against Unk could be prosecuted, was hounded by the police, and finally arrested on a trumped-up charge of running a house of prostitution, because this unfortunate girl, sick almost unto death, and an attending nurse were in the house. She not only sheltered this poor girl, but nursed her tenderly, and for her act of charity was dragged into court and prosecuted; but, after a full investigation, the judge dismissed the charge against Mrs. Yent as without foundation.

Since your committee left East St. Louis Steve Unk has been convicted and sent to the penitentiary for two years for his treatment of this girl. Mrs. Unk is yet to be tried.

Joseph B. Messick is the county judge of St. Clair County. As judge he appoints two members of the board of review which has power to increase or reduce all assessments made by the city assessor and county officials. He also appoints the election board, and that board made his son its secretary. This young man is a lawyer of limited capacity, with an earning power of perhaps a hundred dollars a month, but his profound (?) knowledge of the law appealed to some of the great corporations of St. Clair County, and they at once employed him as attorney to appear before his father's board of review to secure for them a reduction in their assessments. Young Messick rapidly developed an insight into assessment values, and proved conclusively that from their standpoint his selection was wise.

The board of review was composed of William A. Swartztrauber, Frank M. Miller, with powerful political connections, and Charles F. Krebs.

It did not take the son of the county judge long to convince this board, appointed by his father, that the assessments made by the city assessor and increased by the county assessor were an unjust burden on some of these rich corporations.

Here are the assessments and reductions of the leading corporations:

St. Louis Bridge Co., assessed at \$3,500,000, which included only the east half of Eads Bridge, was reduced to \$2,500,000, although for the four years previous it had been assessed at \$3,150,000.

The Aluminum Co. of America was assessed by Assessor O'Day at \$699,990. Assessor Warning raised it to \$799,990, and the board of review, perhaps after an eloquent appeal by young Messick, cut it to \$200,000.

Ninety-four lots owned by the Wiggins Ferry Co. were assessed at \$1,518-470. This assessment was cut by the board to \$803,245. The assessment of these lots were cut virtually in half by the board; and in some other instances the board reduced the Wiggins properties, but left unchanged the assessments on adjacent lots owned by others.

The plant of the Malleable Iron Co. was assessed at \$465,000. It was raised by Warning, the county assessor, to \$519,000 and was cut by the board to \$132,000.

The American Steel Foundries' assessment was reduced about \$38,000.

The Republic Iron & Steel Co.'s assessment was reduced from \$63,990 to \$16,788.

The Elliott Frog & Switch Co. was reduced from \$24,420 to \$9,000.

Lots owned by the Water Co. assessed at \$9,660, were reduced by the board to \$2,220.

These assessments held for four years, and during that period the St. Louis Bridge Co. would save in taxes \$116,654, the Wiggins Ferry Co. \$84,140, the Aluminum Co. of America \$69,952, and the Malleable Iron Co. \$45,148.

Although the assessment of virtually every big corporation in and around East St. Louis was reduced, assessments of very many of the small householders were increased.

Your committee is not informed just what fee was paid to young Messick for appearing as attorney before the board appointed by his father.

The strike in the plant of the Aluminum Ore Co. was caused by a demand on the part of organized labor for an adjustment of wages, a reduction in hours and an improvement of conditions under which the men worked. The company refused to meet any of these demands, declined to discuss the matter with the workmen's committee and added insult to injury by importing negro strike breakers and giving them the places of the white men.

It is not the purpose of your committee to discuss the merits of this controversy, although the bringing of negroes to break a strike which was being peaceably conducted by organized labor sowed the dragon's teeth of race hatred that afterwards grew into the riot which plunged East St. Louis into blood and flame.

But there grew out of this strike a violation of the law of such a reckless and defiant nature that it calls for the severest condemnation.

One E. M. Sorrels was secretary of an alleged rifle club which never had maintained more than a desultory organization. The members virtually had ceased to use a temporary range; and there were stored in the club house a number of rifles and thousands of rounds of ammunition, the property of the United States. Sorrels, either on his own initiative or at the suggestion of an officer of the Aluminum Ore Co., entered the storeroom of the rifle club at midnight and secretly transferred to the plant of the Aluminum Co. between 30 and 40 rifles and hundreds of rounds of ammunition; the purpose being to arm the strike breakers and turn guns of the United States against the forces of organized labor and shoot down the strikers should this be necessary to break the strike.

Sorrel violated the law by burglarizing the house containing these rifles; but the Aluminum Ore Co. recognized the risk he had taken; and, grateful for the unlawful service he had rendered, promptly took him into its employ at a salary of \$175 a month.

The War Department should not be blamed when United States rifles and ammunition are stolen and turned over to a private corporation to be put to unlawful uses; but the attention of the Secretary of War is invited to Sorrell's criminal act, and he should request the United States district attorney to have him indicted and prosecuted to conviction.

The character of the police force and its utter demoralization was strikingly shown in the murder of H. B. Trafton, head of the "morality squad" of the police force, by Assistant Chief of Detectives Frank Florence. The murder grew out of the fact that Trafton, acting under orders and in the line of his duty,

raided a house of prostitution which, to the astonishment of the community, turned out to be owned by Florence. When they met Florence drew his weapon; Trafton threw both hands up above his head; but nevertheless, Florence shot and killed him in cold blood. Florence was indicted and tried, but being one of the "gang" was, of course acquitted.

One of the worst crimes ever committed in St. Clair County was the abduction and murder of Alphonso Magarian, 3-year-old son of an Armenian baker. The father of the child complained to the police that a house of prostitution was being conducted next door to his home. Soon thereafter his child disappeared, no trace of it being found until nine days later, when the little headless body was discovered 100 yards away in a dump heap. The head was found a week later in another dump heap. Several pimps and two prostitutes from the house next door were arrested, and one of the women confessed to having assisted in abducting the child. Many threats had been made against her by friends of the accused. Before the trial her mangled corpse was found on a railroad track. A coroner's verdict of suicide was rendered, but it is believed she was first murdered and then placed on the track.

Strong "gang" influence was used to save the indicted men, one of whom was a relative of Health Commissioner McCracken. State's Attorney Schaumleffel conducted the prosecution, and again, as a matter of course, there was a verdict of acquittal. The house of prostitution complained of by the father of the murdered child was in a building owned by Thomas Canavan, president of the board of local improvements, and Locke Tarlton, president of the levee board.

The offenses committed against law, order and decency in East St. Louis and St. Clair County include every known act in the catalogue of crime. We have selected some of the high lights that luridly illumine the landscape of crime.

One-third of all the stealing from freight cars engaged in interstate commerce, as reported from 27 States, was done in East St. Louis and St. Clair County. It was not only a fertile field for the car thief, but he found a ready sale for his plunder through agencies that were protected by the police and other officials.

Thousands of dollars' worth of stolen goods were found in the stable of a notorious saloon keeper, who took a prominent part in politics, and he was indicted. There was conclusive evidence of his guilt; but, as was to be expected in that community, many leading officials went to his rescue and testified to his good character. Again, there was a verdict of acquittal.

The politicians and the police force of East St. Louis and St. Clair County divided among themselves at least \$60,000 a year in graft which they exacted from the gamblers and prostitutes for protection.

Constables and deputy sheriffs picked up some easy money in the vile dance halls that were open on Sunday in the various saloons in St. Clair County. They were each paid \$5 a day by proprietors of these places under the pretense of maintaining order, but under their oaths they should have arrested and prosecuted the keepers and all those present for violating the law.

Records show that more than 300 girls between the ages of 13 and 16 years visited the dance halls run in connection with saloons and so-called hotels, which were in reality assignation houses. These children, their hair hanging down their backs, and in short dresses, publicly engaged in lascivious dances with a motley crew of drunken toughs. The police took no notice of these offenses, nor did the mayor make any effort to close these joints notoriously violating the law.

A poor widow who had three daughters appealed to Rev. George W. Allison to prosecute the men responsible for their downfall. All of them were ruined in these dance halls. The youngest, 15 years old, visited a saloon one night and was taken to a room in the building and outraged, and nine different men satisfied their lust before a well-known saloon keeper arrived on the scene, when he locked the door and spent the remainder of the night with the despoiled child. There were no indictments, no prosecutions, and no attempts on the part of the police or mayor to arrest the offenders, notwithstanding that officers of the law were eyewitnesses.

The knowledge of this horrible assault became so widespread that a former State's Attorney finally secured an affidavit from the victim; but he went out of office, and the remaining authorities paid no attention to it. Finally, however, some of those involved in the outrage sent the 15-year-old child to

California where she gave birth to a boy baby. The name of the saloon keeper who participated in the assault was given to Mayor Mollman, but he made no effort to have him indicted, and even refused to cancel his saloon license.

A well-known hotel in East St. Louis, with a saloon attachment, was offered for sale, and part of the chattels as set out in writing in the contract were two women whose earnings as prostitutes it was represented would average \$7 a day each. The owner of this hotel lived in New York, and Canavan and Talton, both public officials, acting as his agents, rented the property. The vile purpose for which it was used was held out as a reason why the place was worth the price asked.

Between the first of September, 1916, and July 2, 1917, the day of the riot, there were eight hundred crimes of various characters, ranging from larceny to rape and murder committed in East St. Louis. In hundreds of these cases straw bonds were taken, and when the criminals failed to answer a small fine was entered, of which the justice of the peace received two-thirds and the chief of police one-third. It was a profitable business for the justices, one of whom, now dead, is said to have made \$25,000 in one year.

Women of the street in kimonas, with frowzy heads and painted faces, took part in the riots and were, if possible more brutal than the men. They attacked negro women and children and beat them unmercifully.

The mayor's secretary made a practice of instructing justices of the peace when to fine criminals; how much they should pay; and also furnished a list of those who were to go free.

It is worthy of note that with the aid of the votes of the good women East St. Louis now has a commission form of government, which promises to cure some of the evils from which it has suffered for so many years.

One of the unique features of official life in East St. Louis was that permitting constables to summons juries from the barrel houses and saloons. They were known as "irrigation juries." These juries always returned a verdict in favor of the clients of Alexander Flannigan, a friend of the court, or of any other lawyer or gang leader with "pull;" and it was the invariable custom for the court to impose a sufficient additional fine to pay for a "treat" all around for the jurymen and officers. These lawyers with a "pull" proudly took them to a nearby saloon on which was the large sign, "Court Bar," where they were "irrigated."

As a matter of record many of the prominent citizens of East St. Louis and many not so prominent refused to pay taxes; and then, under the law, their property was sold. In all such cases the city bought in the property, but never perfected its title, with the result that these taxes were finally barred by the statute of limitation, the city receiving no revenue and the tax dodger retaining his property.

The saloons made a business of discounting the salaries of city employees, in many cases charging as high as 30 and even 40 per cent. The tougher the saloon the more patrons it had from the city hall.

A saloon keeper was chairman of one of the assessment boards. He publicly stated that the corporations were assessed too high and the small property owners too low.

After Mayor Mollman's election, which was brought about by an alliance between corrupt Republican and Democratic gangsters of both races, he was the guest of honor at a banquet given by negroes, and was photographed in the midst of them.

A witness stated that one of the letters written by a negro to his friend in the South ran about as follows: "There is a money tree in East St. Louis. All you have to do is to come up here and shake it and get the money." The negroes came in thousands in answer to this appeal and others like it. They found no money tree; but, instead, some of them found telephone poles from which they were hung at a rope's end.

During the riot a negro was arrested and taken to jail, that the mob might get him. He had not committed any offense; and, presumably, was in the safe custody of the jailer. One of the police officers, learning that he had some money in his pocket, constituted himself judge, jury and witness, and fined him \$11.50 and also made him contribute \$5 additional to raise the assessment of one of his fellow prisoners to the proper amount. This petty crook, in learning afterward that the negro had some change left, no doubt was surprised at his own moderation.

One of the famous institutions of Brooklyn, a negro town in St. Clair

County, was known as "Aunt Kate's Honkytonk." A sign over the door read, "Something doing every hour." Many witnesses testified that Aunt Kate was protected by the police, and that her place was vile, even in that degraded community. Indecent dances went on as a continuous performance, and abandoned white women interlined the motley crowd of men by dancing naked on the ball-room floor.

One of the original dances of "Aunt Kate's Honkytonk" was the "Chemise-she-wobble," a variation of the famous muscle dance of the East. It was a special feature of Aunt Kate's program, and hundreds came from all the countryside to witness it.

Brooklyn had a high school for negro girls, in which the town took a pardonable pride; but along came a wave of crime and engulfed this center of culture, and 24 out of the 25 girls who were in the graduating class went to the bad in the saloons and dance halls and failed to receive their diplomas.

It was a frequent occurrence to find drunken, naked white women in the streets of Brooklyn. They had spent the night in the saloons; and, in the quarrels and orgies that took place, were stripped and turned into the street.

Marie Hall is a noted prostitute in East St. Louis. She not only had a "pull" with the police, but she was a great admirer of Justice Clark, and presented him with a new office desk, to which he proudly pointed. When joked by his friends about this gift he remarked he was only sorry she had not given him an automobile instead.

Some years ago the Council of East St. Louis gave away an electric franchise to a crowd of freebooters who had neither capital nor credit. They never had any idea of establishing an electric plant nor using any of the valuable privileges so freely granted them. These promoters sold the franchise for \$50,000, and ever since East St. Louis has suffered from high prices for electricity, an eastern syndicate finally getting control, paying hundreds of thousands of dollars for the charter. The widow on of the aldermen exposed the bribery by which the franchise was secured. She filed suit against the original promoters for \$1,000, alleging that \$14,000 had been promised for the votes of 14 aldermen; that they had lived up to their part of the contract and granted the franchise, and that her husband died before he could receive his share of bootie--\$1,000.

The looting of the city and country treasury has grown into a habit in East St. Louis. More than \$250,000 has been stolen by various defaulting officials in the last five years. In one instance the school fund was robbed of \$45,000, but the prosecution of the thief has gone on listlessly for several years without any real effort to convict him. He was not arraigned for trial until after your committee had left East St. Louis. He then pleaded guilty. Everybody knows who were protecting him, but so many similar thefts have been overlooked that there is but little public sentiment against him.

After one of the defalcations the thieves took everything in the vault by the metal hinges of a loose-leaf ledger, and the fire they started to destroy the evidence of their guilt left that as the only souvenir for the taxpayers.

The names of the saloons in and about East St. Louis were typical of the wildest West in the mining-camp days; and, while picturesque in their nomenclature, they breathe a spirit of lawless defiance. Prominent among them were "The Bucket of Blood," "The Monkey Cage," "The Yellow Dog," "Uncle John's Pleasure Palace," with the seductive appeal, "Come in and be suited," and "Aunt Kate's Honkytonk," with "Something doing every hour."

In the latter part of 1912 or the first part of 1913 a hod carrier living in East St. Louis died. It was not then known that he had any near relatives, although he carried \$1,600 life insurance. The county took charge and the funeral was assigned to William Degen, an undertaker, who was a member of the city council. A relative of the deceased appeared later and claimed the insurance. It was found that all the money had been paid to Degen except about \$200. Degen supplied an itemized bill, containing such items as a casket, \$100 for a suit of clothes, \$20 for shoes, \$5 for shaving the dead man, and other and similar extravagant items.

The whole matter was exposed in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, and such a scandal resulted that the authorities exhumed the body. It was found to have been buried in a rough pine box, with scarcely enough clothing to cover it. The whole outfit cost less than \$50.

It was reported at about the same time that the bodies of women were not

safe from the degeneracy of an employee of another prominent undertaker. Another employee of this establishment reported one such instance to his employer and was discharged, while the man against whom the accusation was made was retained in the employ of the undertaker.

On the night of July 1 Mayor Mollman telephoned the acting adjutant general of Illinois that the mob spirit was rampant; that the police were unable to cope with the situation; and that it would take the strong hand of the militia to preserve order.

At 8 o'clock next morning Col. S. O. Tripp, assistant quartermaster general, arrived under orders from the office of the adjutant general of the State. After an unnecessary journey to St. Louis he came to the city hall in East St. Louis and reported for duty to the mayor, who described the situation to him and gave him entire charge to deal with the conditions as the necessities of the case might arise.

It may be well at this point to describe Col. Tripp because he fills an important rôle in this tragedy, and responsibility for much that was done and left undone must rest on him.

When the adjutant general's office summoned Col. Tripp in the early hours of the morning he answered the call to duty arrayed in a seersucker suit and a dainty straw hat, after having, as he informed your committee, hastily packed his hand bag with a lot of toilet articles. Thus ready for any emergency he took the first train for East St. Louis. He brought no uniform with him, and, although it was his duty to face and quell a riotous mob, at no time was he garbed as a soldier.

Evidently it was his intention to secure some bullet-proof coign of vantage from which he could view the turbulent scenes in perfect safety; while, with a megaphone, he could command and dispose of his troops. After hours of consultation with his companion in timidity and inefficiency, the mayor, he ventured in the direction of the mob and, according to his own testimony, saw a helpless negro with a rope around his neck being dragged to his death.

He described, with a great show of courage, how he grabbed a gun from a soldier and, facing this terrible mob, pressed back 1,500 people by his own unaided effort. Your committee was unable to find any evidence to confirm this valiant deed of the redoubtable colonel, where he practically mastered hundreds of infuriated rioters; but, as he states it to be a fact, it must be true.

It is the unanimous opinion of every witness who saw Col. Tripp on that fateful day that he was a hindrance instead of a help to the troops; that he was ignorant of his duties, blind to his responsibilities deaf to every intelligent appeal that was made to him. His presence in East St. Louis was a reproach to the assistant adjutant general who sent him there and a reflection on the judgment of the governor for burdening his staff with so hopeless an incompetent. Instead of putting himself at the head of his troops, uniformed as a soldier, and going boldly into the mob, dispersing them and, if necessary, risking his own life to rescue the poor wretches who were dragged through the streets by the neck, shot and mutilated, he remained in the city hall from 8 a.m. until 12 o'clock, when he calmly repaired to a restaurant outside the danger zone, secured a delightful lunch which it took him more than an hour to order and masticate, and at 1:30 he resumed his survey of the situation from the safe shelter of the city hall.

When Col. Tripp was asked why he spent four hours in the city hall, with East St. Louis in the hands of a murderous mob, and failed to go to the scenes of conflict and take charge of his troops who were sorely in need of a commander, he absolved himself of all responsibility by answering, "The President never goes out of his office;" and so, by comparing himself to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, he was perfectly satisfied with his conduct. "Me and the President" was, in his opinion, a complete defense.

The mayor called the governor on the long-distance telephone and urged that additional troops be sent, saying that the lives and property of the citizens were endangered. But Col. Tripp assured the governor that he "had the situation well in hand," and that there was no need for more troops. His judgment in this matter was no better than his ability and courage as a soldier; qualities which he totally lacked.

Your committee desires to speak a special word in commendation of the conduct, bravery and skill of Col. C. B. Clayton, of the Fourth Infantry, next

in command to Col. Tripp. Had it not been for his promptness and determination the mob certainly would have committed many more atrocities.

Col. Tripp, in his testimony before your committee, undertook to defend his blunders; but he failed utterly. If he had taken hold of the situation upon his arrival, inspired his soldiers with respect for him, gone to the center of the disturbance and turned loaded guns against the mob, he would have spared East St. Louis much of the ignominy from which it now suffers and saved the lives of many innocent men, women and children.

Your committee invites the attention of the Secretary of War to the record of this officer as set forth under oath by himself and many other witnesses.

The conduct of the soldiers who were sent to East St. Louis to protect life and property puts a blot on that part of the Illinois militia that served under Col. Tripp. They were scattered over the city, many of them being without officers to direct or control them. In only a few cases did they do their duty. They seemed moved by the same spirit of indifference or cowardice that marked the conduct of the police force. As a rule they fraternized with the mob, joked with them and made no serious effort to restrain them.

Following are a few of the many instances testified to by responsible witnesses:

A negro, unarmed, making no resistance, and trying to escape the fury of the mob, was knocked down and cruelly kicked and beaten. His condition was so pitiable that a soldier said to the rioters, "Boys, he has suffered enough; let him alone." In answer one of the mob drew his pistol and shot the negro five times, one bullet plowing through his brain. The soldier then put his gun on his shoulder and calmly walked away, making no arrests.

A number of soldiers openly stated that "they didn't like niggers" and would not disturb a white man for killing them.

Three soldiers and two policemen were ordered to close a negro saloon. On their approach two negro men ran, and the soldiers and policemen shot and killed both, although neither had committed any offense.

The same crowd shot off the arm of the negro servant girl, Mineola McGee, already mentioned. They had no warrant for her; she had not committed any offense; she was not even running away, she was cruelly maimed for life by these official murderers. This unoffending girl was wantonly shot by the soldiers, as testified to by the policemen who have been prosecuted. Your committee was unable to secure the names of these militiamen. They must be known to the military authorities. It is the duty of the governor and the adjutant general of Illinois to find these men and to punish them for their brutal crime. It was one of the most flagrant cases of cruelty revealed to your committee.

Paul Y. Anderson, reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, testified that he heard a soldier tell a white man who was loading a revolver "to kill all the negroes he could, that he didn't like them, either."

A member of the Sixth Illinois Infantry boasted that he had fired his gun 17 times during the riot and every time at a "black target." Your committee was unable to secure the name of this soldier.

It was a common expression among the soldiers: "Have you got your nigger yet?"

A militiaman in uniform, said to have been on furlough, led a section of the mob that was killing negroes.

A soldier stabbed a white boy with a bayonet, and the boy bled to death. The boy was carrying a pair of pantaloons across his arm. That was his sole offense. The soldier was drinking, and murderously assaulted him. After a full hearing the coroner's jury unanimously held him on a charge of murder. But, later, at a secret trial by the military authorities, he was released.

Soldiers deliberately shot into a house where seven negroes had taken shelter.

G. E. Popkess, a reporter for the St. Louis Times, testified that he saw two inoffensive negroes, while fleeing for their lives from a burning building, shot down by soldiers.

The governor of Illinois has a responsibility in this matter that he cannot evade. The militia of the State are under his control. He can arraign militiamen for misconduct; he can remove officers for inefficiency; he can institute a thorough inquiry that will expose the criminal and the incompetent.

A prominent merchant of East St. Louis testified that within 24 hours after the occurrence he notified the governor of the case of a militiaman who



deliberately shot a negro without provocation, a crime committed in cold blood. He did not know the militiaman's name, but it was possible for the governor to learn who he was and to visit proper punishment upon him.

The governor must be familiar with the wanton stabbing of the boy by a drunken soldier. The facts were reported at the time in all the newspapers as they were testified to before your committee. They are within the reach of the governor in the records of the court-martial which is said to have tried and released this murderer.

Has any official effort been made to apprehend the three militiamen who next morning after the riot, in company with two policemen, killed two innocent negroes and shot off the arm of the negro girl, Minneola McGee? These men were State militiamen, were in regulation uniform, and subject to the authorities of the great State of Illinois. At that time it would have been an easy matter to identify them and turn them over to the authorities to be tried for their crimes. It is evident that no military inquiry conducted by such courts-martial as sat in similar cases growing out of the East St. Louis riots, would have given them their desserts.

What was to hinder the proper State authorities from making an investigation of this murderous assault? They had the power to search the roster of the companies present at East St. Louis. These men were known to their companions, who could have identified them easily.

Special commendation is due Attorney General Brundage and Assistant Attorney General Middlekauf. The attorney general answered every appeal made to him by the good people of East St. Louis and St. Clair County and, virtually without assistance from the local authorities, remedied many evils. It was due entirely to his efforts that lawless resorts were closed, and wherever there had been a violation of the State law he was quick to order the arrest and prosecution of the offender.

Assistant Attorney General Middlekauf had active charge of the prosecutions growing out of the riot, and he showed neither fear nor favor. Capable, determined and courageous, he allowed neither political influence nor personal appeals to swerve him from the strict line of duty.

As a result of these prosecutions by the attorney general's office 11 negroes and 8 white men are in the State penitentiary; 2 additional white men have been sentenced to prison terms; 14 white men have been given jail sentences; 27 white men, including the former night chief of police and three policemen, have pleaded guilty to rioting and have been punished.

These convictions were obtained in the face of organized, determined effort, backed with abundant funds, to head off the prosecutions and convictions. In the case of Mayor Mollman there seems to have been an open, paid advertising campaign to slander and intimidate the attorney general.

The State of Illinois is fortunate in having men of ability and character at the head of its law department.

Your committee wishes to commend the work of Rev. George W. Allison, pastor of the First Baptist Church, of East St. Louis, and to express thanks to him for much information which was of vital assistance in bringing out the criminal life of the city and the political influence that encouraged lawlessness. The Rev. Allison is a man of courage, capacity and determination. Conspiracies against his character and threats against his life did not deter him; the constant danger of bodily harm did not prevent him from continuing his investigations and fighting with all his splendid power the organized forces of evil. If there had been others on the "committee of one hundred" with even half his moral force the example might have leavened that whole lot of selfish incompetents.

Paul Y. Anderson, reporter of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, was assigned to your committee an inexhaustible source of valuable information. In serving his newspaper fearlessly he rendered the public a more important service by laying bare the story of faithless officials who could not be lashed, even by exposure, to do their duty. He personally laid before the mayor positive evidence of the guilt and incompetency of his police force, and demanded that he close the gambling houses and the lawless and unlicensed saloons. His investigations, thwarted on every hand, were thorough and trustworthy. He saw everything; reported what he saw without fear of consequences; defied the indignant officials whom he charged with criminal neglect of duty; ran a daily risk of assassination, and rendered an invaluable public service by his exposures. His testimony before your committee was most interesting and illuminating; his harrowing

experiences before and during the riot threw a flood of light on conditions.

Your committee is indebted to Rev. Father Christopher Goelz, pastor of St. Phillips Church, at Edgemont, for much valuable information. He was a power for good in his community, and the fact that it escaped much of the contamination of the greater city was due to his vigilance and the publicity he gave the low characters that attempted to gain a foothold in Edgemont.

Your committee has not adjourned sine die for the reason that it is possible, at least, that a supplementary report may be made showing the beneficial results of the exposures brought about by the investigation and also by the vigorous prosecutions hereinbefore referred to.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

BEN JOHNSON  
JOHN E. RAKER  
M. D. FOSTER  
HENRY ALLEN COOPER<sup>68</sup>

U. S. House of Representatives. 65th Congress, 2d Session, 1918.  
House Doc. No. 1231, pp. 1-24.

## 2. THE CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF EAST ST. LOUIS

By LINDSEY COOPER,  
Special Representative of the THE CRISIS

The committee appointed by Congress to investigate the East St. Louis riots met in East St. Louis, October 18, 1917. It was composed of Representatives Ben Johnson, of Kentucky; Martin D. Foster, of Illinois; Henry A. Cooper, of Wisconsin; George A. Foss, of Illinois; and John D. Raker, of California.

Witnesses were heard from all classes. Many came voluntarily to tell what they knew of the rioting. Others were subpoenaed. Every side of the East St. Louis matter was presented for consideration. Heads of manufacturing plants, labor union representatives, East St. Louis business men, Negroes from all walks of life, professional men, policemen, and day laborers, civil and military authorities--all appeared before the inquiry committee.

The primary business of the committee was to ascertain whether or not the laws of interstate commerce were broken, or interstate travel interfered with by the rioting of May and July. Having established these facts, it was then at liberty to push the inquiry into details of labor and race conflict.

In view of this provision, the first witnesses called before the committee were those parties whose business was of a nature such as to experience interference in a case of interstate violation.

The heads of the large East St. Louis industries, the traffic manager of the St. Louis Chamber of Commerce, and the manager of the East St. Louis Relay Depot testified to the fact that commercial traffic and personal travel had been interfered with by the rioting.

Each of these witnesses told the committee what he knew of the rioting, in addition to detailing the effect the conditions had upon individual business. It was learned that in a number of instances contracts with the Federal Government had been delayed because of shortage of labor, due to the Negroes having been so thoroughly intimidated by the rioting as to be unwilling to return to the city. One manufacturer stated that he had offered his colored men higher wages than they had ever received before if they would return, but that he was unable to get them to do so. In those cases where they did come back to the city to work, they insisted on retaining St. Louis as their place of residence and demanded that they be released from work an hour sooner than customary, in order that they might be out of East St. Louis before dark.

It was one of these witnesses, Charles Roger, of the J. C. Grant Chemical Company, who first told the committee of the shooting of Negroes by the soldiers.

Upon being asked by the committee if he had seen any soldiers on the day of July 2, Mr. Roger replied that he had. Inquiry was made as to what the soldiers were doing. Mr. Roger replied: "Shooting Negroes."

He then related that he with several others was standing at a window of his plant when a soldier came out of a near-by door. A crowd was in the street below and a group of Negroes was standing not far away. The soldier was armed. Someone in the crowd taunted him, saying: "You can't shoot!" The soldier replied: "Like hell I can't!" and, raising his rifle, fired into the group of unmolested Negroes. One of the Negroes fell.

The story of the race riots as revealed through the mass of evidence procured by the investigating committee is almost the history of East St. Louis itself.

Twenty years after the establishment of the city, she had the reputation of being a center of lawlessness. Conditions seem not to have improved since that time.

Although the seat of immense money-making industries, East St. Louis has been forced to support herself by means of saloon licenses. The population of the city is 75,000. At the time of the July riots she maintained, or was maintained by, 376 saloons. Over thirty of these have been closed since the July riots. Barrel-houses, gambling resorts, and dives of all descriptions were allowed open operation in the city. While some of these places have been closed, others may continue to exist.

Situated on the Mississippi River, and the terminal of twenty-eight main lines of railroad, it is only natural that East St. Louis should attract a large floating population. Such a population requires the most efficient government. East St. Louis has had the worst.

The immense plants of Swift, Armour, and Morris are not technically located in East St. Louis and pay no tax to the city. They were originally established just outside the city limits. Upon being threatened with absorption by the neighboring town of Lansdowne, they procured a charter from the State of Illinois and became incorporated as a village. This village is called National City, and in addition to the great plants names includes the National Stockyards, owned by Morris and Company.

The territory covered by National City is not more than two miles square and includes not more than thirty-two residence houses. The heads of the great plants live in St. Louis, and the majority of the laboring men in East St. Louis.

The result is that National City bears the distinction of being the richest municipality per capita in the world. While her population is only two hundred, the property included within her limits has an aggregate value of not less than \$10,000,000.

These plants maintain open shop, and since the strikes of 1916, the majority of their employees have been Negroes.

An immense industry of East St. Louis, which is not in National City, is the Aluminum Ore Works, a subsidiary branch of the Aluminum Ore Company of America popularly known as the Aluminum Trust. The plant of the Aluminum Ore Works in East St. Louis is valued at over a million dollars. The Aluminum Ore Company of America was capitalized at \$20,000,000 and now has an investment of \$80,000,000.

It would seem that the seat of such industries would be able to maintain a properly paid police force and would be, at least, comfortably independent as to funds wherewith to meet her community responsibilities.

Yet such has not been the case. East St. Louis has had to depend on the proceeds of her saloon licenses, and her government has been so corrupt that the entire truth of its viciousness will probably never be revealed.

It is necessary to understand these conditions in order to grasp the truth of the Negro's situation in the city.

Dating from the packing house strikes of 1916, and continuing through the Aluminum Ore strikes of October 1916 and April 1917, labor conditions in East St. Louis have been desperately tense.

In order to combat such powerful employers, the laboring men were obliged to make a vigorous fight. None of the great plants is completely unionized. The men of the Aluminum Ore Company were unionized in an independent group, not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

Organized labor has been made to bear much of the blame of the riots of May and July, but it is only fair to the unions to look to the deeper causes of the trouble.

Alois Towers, a labor organizer of Belleville, Ill., told the committee that the labor unions recognized that there was no law to prevent the Negro

from coming North, and that organized labor had no desire to prevent individuals from doing so. It was with the forced condition of thousands of these colored folk being brought into a community, where the laboring population was already equal to the number of jobs to be had, that the labor unions were at war.

There is no more tragic pilgrimage in history. Working under unfair conditions, denied his rights of citizenship and education, hounded by race prejudice, the southern Negro listened eagerly to the tales of prosperity and opportunity for his race which flourished in the nearest northern city.

The relation of the Negro and the labor union has been difficult. The percentage of skilled colored labor in East St. Louis is not large and there is no organization for unskilled or common labor. The skilled Negro has felt himself discriminated against by the crafts unions, and to the unskilled or uneducated Negro the purposes of labor organization are obscure.

It is fairly certain that the employers of the large industries gave the preference to colored workers for the reason that they felt these men would be slower to organize than white unskilled laborers would be. If they did undertake to organize, more men could be brought from the South to take their places. Thus, the employer had in his grasp a solution of the problem which from his point of view was quite satisfactory. If the men of his plant went on strike, he ignored the strike, filled their places with Negro workmen, and went on with his business.

It is an interesting fact that one company of Negroes, which was brought up during the strike at the Aluminum Ore Company, refused to accept the positions which had been promised them when they learned that the reason for these jobs being vacant was that their regular occupants were out on strike.

The situation as it existed was deeply unfair to the Negro laborer. Instead of his cause being the cause of the working class at large, the two became separated and pitted against each other, the employer, of course, being on the side of that form of unskilled labor of which he felt he could for the longest period of time take advantage.

It must be remembered that as a background for all of this industrial discontent, the worst of municipal conditions existed. With three men for every one job, with saloons and gambling houses operating on all sides, with an administration which, under Mayor Fred Mollman, winked at any crime as long as it was committed by a friend of those in office, with pawnshops displaying in their windows a variety of fire-arms accompanied by the sign "Buy a Gun for Protection," it is small wonder that eventually every semblance of law and order broke down, resulting in the desperate events of July 2.

In this terrible crisis, the innocent were made to suffer for the guilty. Every instinct of brutality which had been allowed to grow up in East St. Louis sprang full-fledged into expression, and because members of his race who had had no chance for enlightenment had been used as tools in the hands of despotic employers, great numbers of Negroes were burned and shot and persecuted by a fiendish mob which cared nothing for labor principles or for industrial justice, but seized the opportunity to exercise its degraded sense of race prejudice and gratify its gluttony for bloodshed. That the rank and file of labor did take part in the riots of May and July is not to be denied.

The spring of 1917 was a crucial time in the labor activities of East St. Louis. In addition to the large strike which was called at the Aluminum Ore Works, contracts which the employees of the street railway system had made with their employers some two or three years before reached expiration. The men were dissatisfied with their wage rate and a strike was in prospect.

In view of this occurrence, the superintendent of the street railways system procured two companies of Federalized militia which were quartered within the precincts of the car company's property. Many of them were housed in the car barns and the remaining number pitched their tents near by. These troops, also, had under their protection the plants of the packing houses, the Aluminum Ore Company, and the National Stockyards.

At the time of the May riots, when the Mayor appealed to the commander of these troops for assistance he was told that the mission of the soldiers in East St. Louis was of another nature, and assistance in restoring the city to order was refused.

On the day of the opening hearing of the Congressional Committee, Mrs. Lena Cook, of St. Louis, who lost her son and her husband in the riots of July 2, told the jury at Belleville, Ill., the story of her tragic experience. She was

called as a witness in the trial of John Dow, Charles Hanna, and Harry Robinson for the murder of William Keyser, a white man who was killed by a bullet which had previously passed through the body of Mrs. Cook's son, Lurizza Beard, killing the boy. Mrs. Cook's husband was also killed by these men, but the case under consideration at that time was the murder of William Keyser.

Mrs. Cook, her husband, Ed Cook, her son, Lurizza Beard, and her thirteen-year-old daughter were on their way back to their home in St. Louis, Mo., from a fishing trip at a lake some miles above East St. Louis, near Alton.

As the car of which they were occupants passed through East St. Louis, it was stopped at Collinsville and Illinois Avenues. Mrs. Cook testified that Hanna reached through the car window and caught her by the shoulder, partly tearing her dress off. Using an abusive term, he ordered her to get out of the car, as he was going to kill her. Then Hanna and Dow came into the car and told the white people to get out, as they were going to kill the Negroes. The white people left the car. The Cook family tried to explain that they did not even live in East St. Louis. The excuse was of no avail. Hanna pulled Ed Cook to the back platform of the car, threw him off, and shot him. Dow started to drag the Beard boy from the car. His mother begged for his life. Dow jerked the boy away and the last his mother saw, the white man was beating the colored boy over the head with his revolver. Then Mrs. Cook was dragged from the car, beaten with clubs, and kicked. A group of white women fell upon her and tore her hair out by the roots.

Mrs. Cook lost consciousness. When she regained her normal senses, she found herself lying in an ambulance along with three bodies of Negroes. Wiping the blood from her eyes, she turned to find that two of those bodies were her dead husband and her son.

When this story was repeated to the Congressional Committee, Representative Henry A. Cooper, of Wisconsin, profoundly moved, made the comment: "Indians could have done no worse."

Dow and Hanna received a sentence of fifteen years each in the penitentiary. Robinson pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five years in the penitentiary.

Dr. Thomas G. Hunter, a prominent colored doctor of East St. Louis, was the first eye-witness to tell the committee of the joy-riding automobile which passed through Market Avenue, shooting into the houses, on the evening of July 1. His testimony was verified by other witnesses, one of these being a Negro policeman whose sister's house was one of the number shot into.

The killing of detective-sergeants Coppedge and Wodley had been previously described to the committee by Roy Albertson, a newspaper reporter for the East St. Louis *Daily Journal*, who was in the car with the police officers when they were shot.

Albertson described the events surrounding this killing of the detectives very vividly. A point in his testimony which did not agree with the account given by Dr. Hunter, of the weather on the same evening, was that Albertson testified that it was a very dark night.

Dr. Hunter, on the other hand, described the evening as one of bright moonlight. The committee, upon looking the matter up, found that there had been in fact a moon, almost, if not quite full.

Much interest was manifested in the courtroom on the morning of October 24, when it was learned that Colonel S. O. Tripp, who had been in command of the militia on the day of July 2, had come voluntarily to testify before the Congressional Committee.

No witness had been on the stand who had not described the cowardly conduct of the militia during the rioting. Many had told of the militia taking part in the activities of the mob. No one could tell of having seen them do any part of their duty.

When Colonel Tripp assumed the stand, he carried under his arm a substantial document. Upon being sworn in, he proceeded to open this document and began to read. The committee objected strenuously, and the Colonel was obliged to depend on his mind.

He told the committee of being called out of bed early on the morning of July 2, of leaving Springfield at four o'clock, and of reaching East St. Louis at eight. Upon reaching East St. Louis, he said he went straight to the office of Mayor Mollman.

There he was informed by the Mayor that he himself was not feeling well that day and had been advised not to go out.

Considerable amusement was expressed in the courtroom at this statement from the Mayor. The committee asked Colonel Tripp if he thought the Mayor's indisposition were physical or mental. Colonel Tripp replied that he thought it was mental, that the Mayor was "laying down on his job."

Mayor Mollman appointed City Attorney Thomas Fekete to act in his place that day, and co-operating with Mr. Fekete, Colonel Tripp took charge of the situation. When the officer told the committee that he spent the entire morning at the City Hall, mapping out a plan of campaign, Mr. Cooper, ejaculated: "You could have planned half the battle of Verdun in that time!"

Colonel Tripp strove manfully to make the committee understand that he was not in active charge of the militia that day, that he was present in an administrative capacity only, leaving Colonel E. P. Clayton, the commanding officer of the field forces. It is clear that Colonel Clayton did not understand this arrangement, for it was under his command that the militia had controlled the May rioting so effectively. When Colonel Tripp endeavored to make it clear to the committee the character of his position, he said: "It is like the President. He doesn't go out on active duty." Mr. Johnson replied caustically: "We see. You and the President don't go out."

Of the few companies of militia which straggled into East St. Louis during the morning of July 2, none was properly equipped. Ammunition was scarce among them--a fact the mob was not slow to find out. It was learned later that the majority of them had been enlisted only a few days. Many of them came from counties adjoining St. Clair County and shared the sentiment of East St. Louis toward the Negro.

The September issue of THE CRISIS, containing the East St. Louis Supplement, played an important part in the investigation by the Congressional Committee. Its sweeping data, with pictures, gave the committee the best available publication to study in connection with its inquiry.

The representative of THE CRISIS had obtained the original of the photographs published by the magazine and submitted them to the committee. After hearing Colonel Tripp's account of the competent behavior of the soldiers, a member of the committee confronted the officer with a photograph showing the militia standing by in large numbers while the mob assaulted a Negro in front of a street car. Colonel Tripp stated that he was unable to place the locality shown in the picture. Paul Y. Anderson, a reporter of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* who had given the committee valuable evidence, was called to assist the military officer. Mr. Anderson told the committee that the picture was taken at the conjunction of Broadway and Collinsville Avenues.

Colonel Tripp testified that after spending the morning at the City Hall, planning a campaign by which the city might be restored to order, he then spent an hour at lunch. By comparing evidence it was ascertained that while the commanding officer of the military forces was at lunch, three men were killed at a distance of not over three blocks away!

During the afternoon, a meeting of the Mayor and a number of business men was held, at which the Mayor called Governor Lowden by long distance telephone and begged him to have martial law declared in the city. Speaking on the same call, Colonel Tripp took the receiver and assured the Governor that he had the situation well in hand and that martial law was unnecessary. Colonel Tripp gave as his reason for this statement the fact that had martial law been declared, the military forces would have been deprived of the assistance of the police force, whereas if civil law were maintained, the military and the police forces could both operate to quell the riot.<sup>69</sup>

Considering that only fifteen out of the forty men which constituted the police force of East St. Louis had reported for duty that morning, one cannot but feel that Colonel Tripp's loss in the matter of police assistance would have been light.

It is a fact, however, that with the declaration of martial law complete authority would have devolved upon Colonel Tripp, just as under civil law it devolved upon Mayor Mollman. Consequently, each desired the form of government which relieved him of responsibility.

Colonel Tripp assured the committee that he had never before heard the stories of the militia shooting Negroes, and that he had made no investigation of the subject. He also stated that he at no time saw any occasion for firing on the mob, taking the chance of wounding and perhaps killing innocent by-standers.

Evidence as to the participation of the militia in the rioting was given

the committee by any number of witnesses, yet in no case can there be found any indication that acts committed by the militiamen have been punished by the military authorities. Most of these soldiers have been sent to the border. They have been Federalized and will from now until the close of the war devote their talents to making the world safe for democracy.

It was under the command of Colonel Clayton, at seven-thirty in the evening of July 2, that the riot was finally controlled and several hundred persons were arrested. Most of these were turned loose by the police as soon as they reached the police station. Of the number who were held until the next day, few were indicted. They were dismissed as rapidly as they could walk out.

When Colonel Tripp had completed his testimony, Representative Raker, of California, exclaimed: "What chance on earth has a poor, innocent Negro in a place like this?"

*The Crisis*, 15 (January, 1918): 116-21.

### 3. WHAT SOME AMERICANS THINK OF EAST ST. LOUIS

East St. Louis has recently occupied an unenviable but a well-merited place in the forum of public opinion.

As the home of the most destructive race riot of recent years this Northern city has brought upon itself the castigation of editors and public men both North and South. The immediate cause of this riot (which broke out on July 1, and raged for the larger part of two days) is still shrouded in doubt, but it is painfully evident that during the progress of the riot, Negro men were hunted to death and their wives and children burned within the walls of their homes. Whether or not the spirit of riot will flare up again in East St. Louis seems at present to depend more upon the strong arm of military force than upon the self-restraint of her citizens.

The opinion of Governor Lowden, of Illinois, is the opinion of the whole country. After a visit on July 3 to East St. Louis he said:

I have been weighted down since I visited those hospitals last night, since I saw those charred ruins of homes, since I saw the havoc this riot wrought. . . . A stain rests upon Illinois--a stain that will remain. We cannot erase it if we would. . . .

We in the North have been in the habit frequently of criticising our Southern friends for their treatment of the Negro. . . . I tell you that I know of no outrages that have been perpetrated in the South that surpass the conditions I found in East St. Louis, in our own beloved State.

Mr. Roosevelt, during a reception to the Russian Commission in New York, courageously faced the issue raised by the East St. Louis riots. In Carnegie Hall, from the same platform on which sat the Russian Commission, Mr. Roosevelt said:

Before I extend my greetings to these envoys I want to say a word to you, a word I should not leave unsaid. Before I speak of justice and liberty to Russia we should do justice within our own household. There has been an appalling outbreak of savagery in the race riots in East St. Louis--race riots which, as far as we can see, had no real provocation, and, whether there was provocation or not, waged with such appalling brutality as to leave a stain on the name of America.

It behooves us to express our deep condemnation of acts that give the lie to our words. It is our duty to demand that the governmental representatives whose business it is shall use with ruthless sternness every instrumentality at their command to punish murder, whether committed by whites against blacks or blacks against whites.

This statement of Mr. Roosevelt's called forth at the time the emphatic protest of Mr. Gompers, who declared that the race riots, detestable though they were, had been caused by the unfair importation of Negro labor from the South. This indirect apology for the rioters called forth a second energetic protest

from Mr. Roosevelt, and for a little while it seemed as though the reception to the Russian envoys would be forced to take second place to the discussion of what many might consider solely an American domestic problem. But it is not merely a domestic problem. That riot was an attempt to terrorize a community into submission; and "frightfulness" is a menace to all mankind, whether we call it *Schrecklichkeit* when practiced by the Prussians in Belgium or France, or call it a race riot when practiced by a mob of whites in an American city.

Naturally enough, many Southern newspapers have seized upon the East St. Louis riots as an opportunity to point the accusing finger at those Northern critics who have been most vehement in denouncing the South for its attitude toward the Negro. A typical editorial of this kind appears in the "Courier-Journal" of Louisville, Kentucky. The "Courier-Journal" says:

It would be indeed a strange *dénouement* and a kind of poetic justice if, after the ungenerous treatment bestowed upon the South by the public opinion of the North in the matter of this Negro question, the chalice of race poison should be put to the North's own lips. . . . If East St. Louis were in Kentucky, the newspapers north of us would be on their hind legs howling for dear life.

It can be said in fairness to such Northern papers as the New York "Evening Post" and the Chicago "Tribune," which have been the bitterest critics of Southern lynching, that they have been, in the present instance, equally bitter in their condemnation of this Northern atrocity. Despite this fact, there is more than enough truth in the arraignment by the Atlanta "Constitution" to make the reproach of that journal unpleasant reading for Northern eyes:

Disdainful of law or decency, disregardful of police or military authority, all day long and for half the night the blood-crazed mobs howled and fought and destroyed--employing stones, bludgeons, knives, firearms, and the torch! The number of dead Negroes as a result of the day's rioting cannot be approximately estimated until a search of the charred ruins can be made.

And this all happened in the home State of Abraham Lincoln, who guaranteed the black man freedom from bondage and equality before the law!

Here is the concluding advice of the Atlanta "Constitution:"

As to those colored folk who have escaped with their lives, they had better come back home, where they were well off. And those who have not gone North can thank their lucky stars that they have stuck by the South, where every man is safeguarded in the right to work--and to live in peace and security if he works and leads the life of a decent, self-respecting citizen!

Not all Southern papers, however, are as certain as the Atlanta "Constitution" that the exodus of Negroes to the North followed solely as a result of the blandishment of Northern labor agents. Any one who has recently traveled through the South knows that there are many Southern men and women who ascribe the exodus of Negroes from the South in part to the unsanitary conditions in which the average Negro is forced to dwell, to a lack of school facilities for the colored race, and to the uneconomic system of tenant farming which still hampers the agricultural efforts of a large part of the South.

The New York "Tribune" quotes two editorials from Southern papers which have looked upon the East St. Louis riots with their eyes open. The first is from the Houston (Texas) "Post:"

In the towns and cities the Negroes are dissatisfied with their living conditions. They are not disturbed about politics or social equality, but the unsanitary surroundings amid which circumstances compel them to exist are unsatisfactory, and the white people owe it to their own welfare to improve those conditions.

Even worse conditions obtain on many of the plantations, and added to all of the drawbacks common to the towns and cities is the other fact that the rural schools for Negro children, where they exist at all, are a joke.

Another cause of Negro discontent lies in the widely prevalent and largely justified belief among the Negroes that there is one law for the white man and another for the Negro. The instances in the court records of the State which



prove this to be true are too numerous to be recited here.

The Savannah "Morning News" does not believe that the solution of the problem caused by the emigration of Negro labor from the South is to be found in the application of coercive measure to prevent the Negro departing from the location which has so long been his home. This Georgia paper says:

Would it not be the part of reason to look about us and find out why the Negro is so fixed in his determination to go elsewhere, instead of arbitrarily seeking to stay his departure or to frighten him into staying by picturing to him the disadvantages of the life he will have to live in the North? If the Negro is discontented in the South, there is undoubtedly a reason for his discontentment. This reason may be partly fancied, but it cannot be wholly so; a race of people does not break every natural tie and go into strange lands because of an entirely fancied grievance.

Consider the matter selfishly or altruistically, as you please, there is no escape from the conclusion that the obligation to understand the Negro's view-point is resting upon the best white people of the South heavily, or that this obligation is of the most pressing immediacy.

If the North and South can get together on such a basis for action as has been outlined by the Savannah "Morning News," we shall have gone a long way towards eradicating many of the contributing causes to such a disaster as has occurred in East St. Louis.

In view of the fact that such occurrences as the East St. Louis riots and the recent ghastly lynching in the neighborhood of Memphis, Tennessee, have caused the growth of a tremendous feeling of discouragement and fear among the Negroe both North and South, it is gratifying to record the fact that in the South, at least, the number of recorded lynchings during the first six months of 1917 has been very much less than during the same periods in 1915 and in 1916. According to statistics compiled by the local head of the Division of Records and Research of Tuskegee Institute, Professor Monroe N. Work there were thirty-four lynchings during this period in 1915, twenty-five lynchings in 1916, and only fourteen lynchings in 1917. Professor Work states that in ten instances by the bravery of officers of the law mobs were thwarted and lynchings prevented. Of those lynched, thirteen were Negroes and one was a white man. Four of those put to death--one white man and three Negroes--were charged with the crime of rape. One of those lynched was a Negro woman, reported to have been of unsound mind, who in resisting arrest wounded an officer of the law.<sup>70</sup>

The decrease in the number of lynchings is a happy augury for the future; but so long as a single man, black or white, is put to death by mob violence within the confines of the United States without due process of law, America cannot hold itself free from shame.

*Outlook*, 116 (July 18, 1917): 435-36.

#### 4. THE EAST ST. LOUIS POGROM

By Oscar Leonard

Superintendent Jewish Educational and Charitable Association of St. Louis

Two days before the nation was to celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence with its recognition that "all men are created free and equal" came the news that in East St. Louis Negroes were being slaughtered and their homes pillaged and burned by white Americans. East St. Louis, as all good St. Louisans wish to make clear, has nothing to do with the southwestern metropolis. It is an industrial town across the Mississippi. It is not located in Missouri. It is part of the state which gave us Abraham Lincoln. This circumstance made the "pogrom" upon the Negroes more tragic. They were being murdered mercilessly in a state which had fought for their freedom from slavery. They were forced to seek refuge and safety across the river in

Missouri, which was a slave state at one time.

I just called the riot a "pogrom," the name by which Russian massacres of Jews has become known. Yet when I went to East St. Louis to view the sections where the riots had taken place, I was informed that the makers of Russian "pogroms" could learn a great deal from the American rioters. I went there in the company of a young Russian Jew, a sculptor, who had witnessed and bears the marks of more than one anti-Jew riot in his native land. He told me when he viewed the blocks of burned houses that the Russian "Black Hundreds" could take lessons in pogrom-making from the whites of East St. Louis. The Russians at least, he said, gave the Jews a chance to run while they were trying to murder them. The whites in East St. Louis fired the homes of black folk and either did not allow them to leave the burning houses or shot them the moment they dared attempt to escape the flames.

What is the reason for this terrible situation?

Fundamentally, the reason is purely economic. It is not that the white people in Illinois, or rather in East St. Louis, have any terrible hatred for the Negro. The two races go to the same schools. The laws of Illinois even permit inter-marriage between whites and blacks. Negroes hold state, county and municipal offices. They own a great deal of property in the state and in the city where the riots took place. But being the most disinherited of men, Negroes at times work for lower wages than do whites. Some of them will not join labor unions and most of them would not be admitted if they cared to join.

This condition is extremely objectionable to the white workers with whom they compete for jobs. But this very fact makes the Negro laborer more attractive to employers who want labor at the cheapest possible terms. They favor any labor force that will not join unions, that will not strike, that will not make periodic demands for increased wages or shorter workdays. Such an element introduced into the community acts as a whip over the heads of the white workers. Employers know that. Laboring people are painfully aware of it. This is the main reason for the race antipathy in East St. Louis, as I judge from talking to business men, laborers, professional men and labor leaders.

East St. Louis is what Graham Romeyn Taylor called a "satellite city." It is not a city of homes, in the American acceptance of that term. It is a manufacturing town where industries locate because land is cheap, transportation facilities good, coal and water near and cheap. The many factories make the place unattractive for home-building. Capital goes there simply in search of dividends. It is not interested in the welfare of the city or of the workers who help make those dividends. Only those who must, live there. Those who can live in St. Louis, while working in East St. Louis, do so.

The result is that the city is run to suit the lowest political elements. The foreign laborers who were imported by the industries in East St. Louis know nothing of American standards. There is practically no social work being done in that city which boasts a population of 100,000 souls. Saloons are numerous and gambling dens abound. They run wide open. In fact, when Governor Folk closed the St. Louis saloons on Sunday, the city across the Mississippi reaped a rich harvest. Multitudes crossed Eads Bridge for their liquor in spite of the Illinois law which prohibited Sunday selling. The saloon element has been pretty much in control of the town, from all I can learn. I have these facts both from observation as a neighbor, and from good citizens, not necessarily prohibitionists. One can not visit East St. Louis without seeing at a glance that saloons are more numerous than schools and churches. That in itself would indicate how much control the liquor interests have over the city.

This, too, has helped bring about the situation which resulted in the massacre of Negroes both May 28 and July 2. The undesirable Negro element, like the undesirable white element, was used by self-seeking politicians. In order to be able to control that element the politicians had to make concessions. Evil dives were permitted. Lawless Negroes were protected. All too frequently the St. Louis papers reported outrages committed upon white women by Negroes in East St. Louis. There were robberies and stabbings and shootings of white men at frequent intervals. Yet criminals were not punished. They were "taken care of." This helped stir ill will of the better element among the white population.

There were grumblings on the part of laboring people at the increased number of Negro workers who were coming into the city. But there was no open or pronounced hostility, although there were old scores to settle, from the days

when some 2,500 white workers went on strike in the packing plants last summer and Negroes were imported to take their jobs. According to the former president of the Central Trades and Labor Union of East St. Louis, at that time Negroes were imported in box-cars and given the jobs held by striking white workers. When the strike was over about 800 of the Negro strike-breakers were retained and the white strikers lost those places.

In speaking to a man connected with the stockyards the same facts were brought out. This man has a specialized work to do which cannot be done by Negroes. In fact, it cannot even be done by white men, excepting as they receive his special training. He could speak dispassionately, for his job was not threatened by the black workers. He said:

Of course, no one can condone this killing of innocent Negro men and women and children. It is terrible. I saw it on Monday night and I never want to see such a sight again. But here is the situation: The Negroes are not only taking the places of common laborers in the packing plants, but they are beginning to take the places of the skilled workers. The packers, no doubt, want to fill their plants ultimately with black labor. They are angry because the white workers beat them in a strike and obtained two and a half cents an hour increase. The packers are charging wholesalers five cents a pound more for meat than they did a year ago. They do not take into consideration the fact that everything is so high and the men cannot live on what they used to make. They want to give the places of the white workers to Negroes because they work for lower wages. They live in shanties which a white man could not occupy. Their wives wash clothes and their children work. A white man wants his children to get some education and would not think of sending his wife to work. He must demand higher wages. The employers who bring the Negroes here in carload are responsible for the terrible situation which has arisen.

The employers insist that they do not encourage Negro immigration and absolutely deny that they import Negroes. They insist that there are not enough white workers to take the jobs. They point to the fact that since the Negroes left East St. Louis, on July 2 and that entire week, four important industries have entirely shut down. When asked why it is that Negroes do come in such large numbers to East St. Louis they say that the lure of better wages than the South pays attracts them.

R. F. Rucker, superintendent of the aluminum ore plant, says that the employers were glad to employ Negroes when there were not enough white workers to fill the jobs. According to him, many of the white workers went east to take employment in munition factories where wages are higher. Some Negroes who had come voluntarily from the South were given their places. These men wrote home of the fine opportunities for employment at high wages and urged their friends to come to East St. Louis.

The fact remains that during a recent strike, when the government took possession of the factory, Negroes took the places of the strikers. This intensified the feeling against the race. The feeling was aggravated by the many lawless acts committed by the bad Negro element. Feeling began to run high so that on May 28 a meeting was called which was known as the "anti-race meeting."

In spite of the fact that the meeting was known in advance to be against the Negroes, permission was given for holding it in the city hall. I have these facts from a business man who was present. Mayor Mollman and the Board of Aldermen were among the 1,000 men who attended. Intemperate speeches were made and the last speaker is said to have hinted that unless the mayor and the city fathers did something to check the coming of Negroes, the people would take matters into their own hands. That night a race riot took place. The militia came and quelled the riot before it went too far.

Those who had attended the meeting, however, continued to agitate the idea that "East St. Louis must remain a white man's town." Feeling against the Negroes was stirred constantly. Here and there personal encounters between men of the two races took place. Sunday evening, July 1, a rumor was spread that the Negroes had gathered in one of their churches to plan revenge upon the white population. A number of policemen in charge of Detective Sergeant Coopedge drove over to the church. As they approached the place they were fired upon by Negroes and Coopedge was killed. The same night a policeman and two other white men were shot by Negroes.

These deeds acted as a match applied to powder. Monday morning it was apparent that there would be trouble. Mayor Mollman said he tried to prepare for it. East St. Louis has just thirty-six policemen. The mayor says that he spoke personally to them, urging them to do their duty. They were not inclined to interfere because their comrade had been shot. The deputy sheriffs felt the same way. Some militiamen were in town, but according to all accounts the militia fraternized with the white population. The mayor was urged to call up the governor and ask for reinforcements and for a declaration of martial law. He refused to do so. His opponents say that he had political reasons for his failure to act.

Be that as it may, the fact remains that through someone's negligence, black men and women and children were murdered wantonly. In the seven Negro districts of the city fires were started at the same time. Negroes were hanged and stoned and shot and kicked. White women and boys as well as men took part. A black skin was a death warrant on the streets of this Illinois city. How many black persons were killed will never be known.

It was fortunate for these harassed Negroes that their inhospitable home town was located near St. Louis, which took them in readily. The St. Louis chapter of the Red Cross, under the leadership of Mrs. Frank Hammar, took charge of the refugees, who fled half naked. They were housed in the City Lodging House, where blankets and food were provided out of Red Cross funds. The Provident Association and the Jewish Educational and Charitable Association provided social workers to handle the situation. The Red Cross Emergency Committee, with Acting Mayor Aloe, Director of Public Welfare Schmoll and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, the Provident Association and the Jewish charities met daily to devise means of helping the refugees.

A committee from the Greenville, Miss., Chamber of Commerce was ready to charter a boat and take 1,000 Negroes to that city to be placed on plantations where their labor is needed. Employers in St. Louis were ready to offer jobs. The industrial plants of East St. Louis offered to take their men back. The Emergency Committee, however, considered all these offers from the point of view of the Negroes. It secured the assurance of the city, county and state authorities that the safety of the Negroes would be guaranteed should they desire to return to work. Consultation was held with prominent Negroes of St. Louis as to what is best for their own people. At a citizens meeting held in the City Hall in East St. Louis on July 6 a reorganization of the police force was decided upon and a committee of 100 citizens will assist the mayor in keeping order. The militia will be retained as long as necessary under the direct command of Adjutant-General Dickson of Illinois. Efforts will be made by the St. Louis Red Cross Emergency Committee, with the cooperation of the Bar Association, to recover from the state of Illinois damages to life and property.

According to eye-witnesses, many Negroes must have been burned in their homes so that no remains will be found. It is believed that one hundred Negroes who took refuge in an old theater in one of their sections were burned when the building was set on fire. I saw that building, of which only part of one wall was left.

It was a distressing sight to see block after block where peaceful homes had been located burned to the ground. The innocent suffered with the guilty. Thrifty black folk, who were doing their bit by raising vegetables, were murdered. I saw the ruins of their homes, into which had gone the labor and savings of years. The little thrift gardens had escaped the flames and the orderly rows where seeds had been planted gave the plots the appearance of miniature graveyards.

*The Survey*, 38 (July 14, 1917): 331-33.

##### 5. A NEGRO ON EAST ST. LOUIS

TO THE EDITOR: It was not labor masquerading under race prejudice, or even prejudice using the labor troubles as a pretense that caused the riots in East St. Louis; it was the absolute conviction on the part of the labor leaders that no Negro has a right to any position or privilege which the white man wants.

Mr. Gompers, it may be remembered, in his reply to Colonel Roosevelt, complained that capitalists in East St. Louis had been "luring colored men" to that city. And a few days before the riots the secretary of the Central Trades and Labor Unions in East St. Louis had sent out a letter to this effect: "The southern Negro is being used to the detriment of our white citizens. The entire body of delegates to the central trades and labor unions will call upon the mayor and city council . . . and devise a way to get rid of a certain portion of those (Negroes) who are already here." The emphasis in both quotations is on color. Labor leaders are psychologists. They know that in this country the chances are more than even that any group of whites can attack a group of blacks, and not only get away with it, but probably have the protection of the laws. It was the connivance of the police and the militia which enabled the East St. Louis mob to expel from their homes, 6,000 working men, burn down the dwellings of several thousands, and butcher and burn upwards of 200 helpless men, women and children.

How do we black Americans feel about all this? I asked an unlettered southern "emigrant" the other day if he would be willing to go back South. "Miss," he told me, "if I had the money I would go South and dig up my father's and my mother's bones and bring them up to this country [Philadelphia]. I am forty-nine years old, and these six weeks I have spent here are the first weeks in my life of peace and comfort. And if I can't get along here I mean to keep on goin', but, no matter what happens, I'll never go back." Of course since then East St. Louis, Chester and Youngstown have shown him what he may expect--he is damned if he stays South and he is damned if he doesn't. But at least he has known a little respite, he has not died yearning vainly to see Carcassonne. Thus much for our untrained class.<sup>71</sup>

As for the rest of us, being true democrats, we acknowledge only two classes, the trained and the untrained. We are becoming fatalists; we no longer expect any miraculous intervention of Providence. We are perfectly well aware that the outlook for us is not encouraging, but we know this, too, it is senseless to suppose that anarchy and autocracy can be confined to only one quarter of a nation. A people whose members would snatch a baby because it was black from its mother's arms, as was done in East St. Louis, and fling it into a blazing house while white furies held the mother until the men shot her to death--such a people is definitely approaching moral disintegration. Turkey has slaughtered its Armenians, Russia has held its pogroms. Belgium has tortured and maimed in the Congo, and today Turkey, Russia, Belgium are synonyms for anathema, demoralization and pauperdom. We, the American Negroes, are the acid test for occidental civilization. If we perish, we perish. But when we fall, we shall fall like Samson, dragging inevitably with us the pillars of a nation's democracy.

JESSIE FAUSET.<sup>72</sup>

New York

*The Survey*, 38 (August 18, 1917): 448.

## 6. EAST ST. LOUIS--WHY?

TO THE EDITOR: Practically all the discussion of the race riots in East St. Louis has neglected a fundamental factor in the inability of the second city of Illinois to control such an outbreak of violence.

The impotence of the police and municipal administration has been cited, but no explanation given of the significance of their weakness. In the light of the warning that "what happened in East St. Louis might happen anywhere" in the North under the pressure of cheap Negro labor migrating from the South, that explanation is of unusual interest. It is of interest, too, in light of the fact that citizens of St. Louis, Mo., have since been busy explaining that East St. Louis is across the Mississippi in another state, and that St. Louis must not be held responsible for East St. Louis' sins.

The explanation that explains whether it "can happen anywhere" will also answer St. Louis' proud disclaimer.

It is an old story--and simple.

East St. Louis is industrially part and parcel of St. Louis. It is the big shipping and railroad center of the metropolitan district. It is the Hoboken of St. Louis. It houses all those larger industrial processes of a big city which seek cheaper land and lower business costs, railroad yards, stock markets and warehouses. These represent the great corporations engaged in transportation. The history of East St. Louis is the history of the fight of these interests to create a monopoly control of transportation across the Mississippi. Under one power they have for years controlled every bridge, ferry company and most of the river front. (Their control is now for the first time slowly being broken by the city of St. Louis).

To get this transportation monopoly these interests found it necessary to control the city government of East St. Louis. It has since been theirs without question and without a fight. (They once also owned the city government of St. Louis). And East St. Louis is probably the most finished example of corporation-owned city government in the United States. This second city of Illinois is a by-word among reformers, for municipal corruption and inefficiency Graft trials, bribery and scandals have been rife for years.

Prostitution, gambling, illegal liquor-selling, have all flourished. All the lawless elements turned out by the clean-ups in St. Louis have found their haven over the river in Illinois.

East St. Louis' failure to control the recent outbreak of race violence is only her longstanding failure to control every form of violence and lawlessness. It is due directly to the exploitation of the East St. Louis city government by selfish business interests. These are located chiefly in St. Louis, and constitute probably the most powerful single element in the organized commercial life of the city. They know no boundaries of state or city; they have no loyalties.

But among the chief interests in St. Louis which have put in a disclaimer for sharing the guilt of East St. Louis are the closest business associates of the monopoly crowd responsible for her corruption. Practically all the men in that crowd are citizens of St. Louis.

The East St. Louis outrages therefore are the joint product of corporation exploitation of city government for selfish purposes, and uncontrolled race prejudice in a labor struggle. In other cities race prejudice in labor struggles has not done such violence because the community forces of law and order controlled it. In East St. Louis those forces have not been operative for years.

The chief lesson to be drawn from East St. Louis, behind all other factors, is the need of freeing government from the control of selfish interests. If the people of East St. Louis really controlled their own government democratically, the recent outrages would have been impossible. All that the business interests need is a city government that will give them the privileges they want, and then let them alone. The politicians and the underworld can have the rest. But with the citizens really in control, law enforcement and public service would become realities.

East St. Louis is almost in a class by itself. It is among the last of the larger cities still so exclusively under the thumb of big business. No, it probably can't and won't "happen anywhere else," and St. Louis shares the guilt of her east side partner's corruption.

ROGER BALDWIN

(Recently Secretary St. Louis League.)

*The Survey*, 38 (August 18, 1917): 447-48.

## 7. EAST ST. LOUIS RACE RIOTS

On the anniversary of the signature of a famous document asserting the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, thousands of American negroes were fleeing for safety from the State of Abraham Lincoln into Missouri. They left behind them nearly two score of their own race dead, nearly a hundred in hospitals, and the blackened ruins of more than three hundred of the homes

of their people. East St. Louis, guarded by two thousand militiamen, was recovering from the effects of one of the worst race riots in American history while investigations by Federal, State, and Municipal authorities were on foot. Although the blame for the loss of life and property is laid by many observers at the door of local and State officials, the underlying cause of the riot, the press generally agree, was the influx of negro labor into East St. Louis from the South.

This migration, as our readers are aware, is no more liked at the South than at the North. Indeed, as the New York *Evening Sun* remarks, the South has tried every expedient to check it, so that "as Northern communities mob the negroes for coming in, so Southern communities mob the employment agents for inducing them to go out." Other papers observe that while the rioting at its beginning was due to economic causes, it developed racial jealousy which led to wholesale and indiscriminate attacks on negro men, women, and children.

While the press of the country more or less calmly consider the underlying causes of the East St. Louis riots, and discuss the economic effects of the war, and the development of race hatred in the United States, papers near at hand are impressed with the collapse of government in the Illinois city. Across the Mississippi River in St. Louis, *The Globe-Democrat* denounces the failure to "impress the lawless and irresponsible participants in the mob" that "attacks on property and persons would be dangerous to themselves." This paper believes that firmness early in the afternoon of the first day's rioting "would have saved East St. Louis, the State of Illinois, and American civilization itself, a record of indelible shame." But, it continues, after the coming of darkness to the aid of the mob, slaughter and burning raged unchecked. "The unleashed passions of the mob ignored questions of guilt and innocence and of age and sex. They disregarded the safety of bystanders and cared not what ruin the incendiary fires might bring. The lust of murder turned the mob into savages."

East St. Louis, tho a suburb of the great Missouri city, is itself in Illinois. In that State the *Chicago Tribune*, which, as it reminds us, "has flailed the evil of lynching and especially reproached its countrymen of the South for their failure to stamp it out, does not propose to offer any palliation of this outrage in Illinois." It continues:

"The blood of victims spatters the State. The riot will burn as an unforgettable dishonor in our memories. We do not propose to talk now about race hatred or economic rivalry or any other learned aspect of the offense. There is just one truth, one sickening, shameful truth--in an American city, in a city of Illinois, there has been a loathsome irruption of the brute, and neither civilized public sentiment nor constituted authority was capable of arresting it. . . .

"The East St. Louis riot is nothing to be covered with official whitewash. Illinois stands shamed before the world. Her authority has been proved futile. Her name will be a byword if she does not establish that authority, so it will never be defied again."

Somewhat more philosophical is the editor of the Adrian (Michigan) *Telegram*. He vigorously denounces the rioters and is thoroughly ashamed of the East St. Louis episode. But he would suggest that we try to discover the basic cause of the trouble in order to avoid similar things in the future. He says:

"Theoretically, negroes from the South have a right to go North and work for half a white man's wages, thereby turning the white man out of his job. Theoretically, the Northern employer has a right to import negroes who will work for half-wages, dwell in hovels, live on a scale that no white family would endure. But while these things may be done in theory, they cannot be done in practise. The white workers of the North will not stand it."

This writer would remind us that just now workers are sensitive over their rights and their prospects, believing that these may suffer under war-conditions. So a certain moral responsibility for the East St. Louis episode is placed upon "the men and the interests who began the wholesale importation of Southern black labor." The Adrian editor even believes that good may result from the evil of the East St. Louis riot--

"Cincinnati employers will not start any wholesale importations of negroes; Pittsburg employers will not; Chicago employers will not. They will all take due notice. They have been effectively warned that there are some things that cannot be done in practise, even tho they may be strictly according to law. . . .

"The moral is clear. Leave the negro in the South."

A leader of the negro race, Booker T. Washington's successor at Tuskegee, expresses his pain, chagrin, and discouragement at these riots on the eve of Independence day, at a time when the nation is calling upon negroes as well as whites to join in the war for "democracy" and the "square deal" for weak peoples. Major Moton adds, in a letter to the *New York World*:

"There is room in America for the various racial groups to work out their salvation. Killing and maiming men because they are seeking economic salvation is not, in my opinion, a credit to our civilization or to our boasted doctrine of fair play. With all her faults, the South, at least, cannot be criticized for killing men seeking employment and a better economic status."<sup>73</sup>

*Literary Digest*, 55 (July 14, 1917): 10-11.

#### 8. OUR TYRANNY OVER THE NEGRO

Race riots in East St. Louis afford a lurid background to our efforts to carry justice and idealism to Europe. The question, as it is put by Charles Stelzle, the writer on social subjects from a religious standpoint, is:

"How can we assume to free peoples in Europe from tyranny when we ourselves are guilty of the worst kind of tyranny toward a deprest race?" The remedy, of course, is not in abstaining from the cure of one tyranny to excuse our neglect of the other. Nevertheless, Mr. Stelzle is probably right in asserting that "the East St. Louis race riots should have made every American citizen realize that we have in the negro one of the most serious social problems by which this country is confronted." He quotes Booker T. Washington as saying, "I cannot hold any man in the gutter without staying there myself," and appeals to the principle of self-preservation as an imperative if not the highest motive for taking better care of the negro. In *The Continent* (Chicago), Mr. Stelzle declares that the simple question whether "he is to be a 'good' negro or a 'bad' negro" depends as much upon the whites as upon the blacks. He calls us to look at a few outstanding facts in regard to our treatment of the members of this race:<sup>74</sup>

"We compel him to live in the worst parts of our towns and cities, often without drainage or sewerage or garbage service, with scarcely any of the sanitary conveniences in house or yard or street which whites consider an absolute necessity."

"We drive the worst forms of immorality into the negro quarters and then curse the negro because of his moral weakness. If there is to be a 'red-light district' in town, it is dumped into the area into which we also dump the negro population."

"It would be a comparatively easy matter to produce statistics to indicate that the negro is the worst criminal in the country. But how can he help becoming such? We subject him to the severest tests of our city life--physical, moral, and political--and then cynically declare that the 'nigger' is no good anyway."

"The negroes who live in these unsanitary and immoral surroundings are our laundresses, nurses, and cooks. If there is contagious disease in their own homes--and there is much of it--they are sure to bring it to our homes, either personally or through the laundry which we send to them."

"Washington was right. If we keep the negro in the gutter, we shall be compelled to stay there with him. We can't get away from him. It is impossible



to have a nation part free and part slave, and it is still more impossible to have in one country a morally and physically decaying race, and a surviving race untouched by the dying race's fate. And let it be remembered that the 10,000,000 negroes in the United States constitute 10 per cent of the population of our country."

"Occasionally some of us try to find comfort in the statement that labor-leaders are responsible for the mistreatment of the negro race. But this may be set down as a fact--organized labor is as ready as anybody else to give the negro square deal."

"Every man who becomes a member of the American Federation of Labor obligates himself never to discriminate against a fellow worker on account of creed, color, or nationality. This is as high a standard as one could find anywhere and in a general way it expresses the attitude of organized labor toward the negro throughout the entire country."

"It is true that in some parts of the United States there is a prejudice against the negro among trade-unionists, but whenever this is the case these trade-unionists simply reflect the opinion of the so-called 'better classes' of the community. For example, it is safe to say in such communities it is easier for a colored man to join a white man's union than it is for a colored man to join a white man's church. Ordinarily, when there is prejudice against the negro on the part of the white trade-unionists it is due largely to the negro's character and not to his color."

The writer looks with apprehension upon the systematic efforts now being made to bring the negro from the South to the large industrial centers of the North. For--

"The negro is probably much better fitted for work on the farm than he is for work in the city. The latest census reports of the United States Government brought out the fact that negro farms in the South had increased 21 per cent, while negro population increased only 10 per cent throughout the country."

"The real friends of the negro will try to persuade him to move on to the farm, for here he will have more independence than he will ever secure in industrial cities or even in smaller towns."

"There are exceptional negroes who will make good almost anywhere, but it is to be remembered that we are dealing with the one-tenth of the population of the United States which for many generations to come will in some respects be inferior to the white race."

"Those who are constantly preaching equality of every sort to the negro race are not the real friend of the negro. While the negro should have equality of opportunity, it by no means follows that he is born with the same endowments or capabilities as the white man, and he is sure to suffer when he comes into competition with the white man in the city."

*Literary Digest*, 55 (September 22, 1917): 34.

## 9. UNION LABOR DENIES BLAME FOR RACE RIOTS

### Organized Toilers Feel They Have Been Refused Square Deal at East St. Louis

St. Louis, Nov. 5.--Organized labor, testifying before the Congressional Committee which is investigating the July riots in East St. Louis, denied the charge of race persecution. Harry Kerr, district organizer of the American Federation of Labor emphasized to the committee that race prejudice was not used to drive unorganized labor out of the city and cited instances of assistance to the Negro from the labor unions.

The labor unions feel that they have not gotten a square deal in the East St. Louis matter, and an appeal was made to the Congressional Committee for impartial consideration.

Mr. Kerr explained the formation of the unions which control skilled labor, attributing the failure of the Negro workman to obtain admission to these

bodies to his inability to pass the examinations required by most of the unions. As the unions are autonomous bodies, the general sentiments of the members direct the actions of each organization. The district organizer wished to make plain the fact that these sentiments were not controlled by the American Federation of Labor. . . .

There is no organization for unskilled workmen in East St. Louis owing to the large number of negroes who come into East St. Louis from the rural districts of the South, most of the colored workers are not eligible for the ranks of skilled union labor.

An attempt was made last August to organize a federal labor union, and a charter was obtained for that purpose. Such a union has for its purpose the incorporation of unskilled labor and would, therefore, include a larger number of Negro laborers than can gain admittance to the craft unions.

It was stated to the committee by other representatives of the labor unions that, owing to the loose political condition and the large migratory population which the city seemed to attract, there were habitually in East St. Louis two laboring men for every job.

#### UNIONS DIDN'T CONTROL MEETING

It would seem from the testimony of labor union men that the meeting of May 28, which culminated in rioting, although planned by the unions as a consultation with Mayor Mollman concerning complicated labor conditions, at an early hour slipped from their control.

Upon their arrival at the city hall, where the meeting was held, the unions claim they were greatly surprised to find a large crowd assembled to take part in the proceedings.

The labor representative told the committee that upon finding the meeting was acquiring a tone of levity incompatible with the seriousness of its purpose, he left the hall. Later in the evening, when the crowd had fully acquired the spirit which would result in mob activity, and had surged forth upon the streets in disorder, he made appeals that they should go home. The witness stated that he had his face slapped in reply. Immediately afterwards two soldiers whom he recognized as members of the national guard of St. Louis called to the mob to follow them, and they left the vicinity of the city hall.

The witness stated that he personally went to a point from whence the Negroes would of necessity have to come in order to enter the business section of the city, and advised the colored people to come down into the heart of East St. Louis. . . .

On the morning of July 2, finding a large threatening crowd gathered in front of the police station, about the automobile in which Detectives Coppedge and Wadley had been killed the night before, the labor leader suggested to the chief of police that exhibition of the bullet-scarred car might incite further difficulty, and upon his suggestion the car was removed to the garage.

The American Federation of Labor was connected with the strike at the Aluminum Ore works owing to the fact that the men of this plant were organized into an individual association which was not affiliated with the national body. This particular conflict lay between the managers and employees of the American Ore works.

The committee has been unable so far to learn just who is responsible for the bringing of Negroes to East St. Louis from the South. That such agencies were at work is practically certain.

*New York Call, November 6, 1917.*

#### 10. THE MASSACRE OF EAST ST. LOUIS

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York, sent Martha Gruening and W. E. Burghard Du Bois to East St. Louis, as special investigators of the recent outrages. These two collected in person the facts . . . from which this article is compiled.

On the 2nd of July, 1917, the city of East St. Louis in Illinois added

a foul and revolting page to the history of all the massacres of the world. On that day a mob of white men, women and children burned and destroyed at least \$400,000 worth of property belonging to both whites and Negroes; drove 6,000 Negroes out of their homes; and deliberately murdered, by shooting, burning and hanging between one and two hundred human beings who were black.

Such an outbreak could not have been instantaneous. There must have been something further reaching even than an immediate cause to provoke such a disaster. The immediate cause usually given is as follows: On the evening of July 1, white "joy riders" rode down a block in Market Street, which was inhabited by Negroes, and began to fire into the houses. The Negroes aroused by this armed themselves against further trouble. Presently a police automobile drove up containing detectives and stopped. The Negroes thinking that these were the "joy riders" returning opened up fire before this misunderstanding was removed, and two of the detectives were killed. Some of the policemen were in plain clothes.

One naturally wonders why should the white "joy riders" fire in the first place. What was their quarrel with the Negroes? In answering that question we get down to the real story. It is here we meet with the facts that lay directly back of the massacre, a combination of the jealousy of white labor unions and prejudice.

East St. Louis is a great industrial center, possessing huge packing and manufacturing houses, and is, therefore, one of the biggest markets in the country for common unskilled labor. The war, by the deportation of white foreign workers, caused a scarcity of labor and this brought about the beginning of a noticeable influx of Negroes from the South. Last summer 4,500 white men went on strike in the packing plants of Armour & Co., Morris & Co., and Swift & Co., and Negroes from the South were called into the plants as strikebreakers. When the strike ended the Negroes were still employed and that many white men failed to regain their positions. The leaders of various labor unions realized that the supply of Negroes was practically inexhaustible and that they were receiving the same wages as their white predecessors and so evidently doing the same grade of work. Since it was increasingly possible then to call in as many black strike-breakers as necessary, the effectiveness of any strike was accordingly decreased. It was this realization that caused the small but indicative May riots. Evidently, the leaders of the labor unions thought something must be done, some measure sufficiently drastic must be taken to drive these interlopers away and to restore to these white Americans their privileges. The fact that the Negroes were also Americans meant nothing at such a time as this.

The leader of a labor union must be an opportunist. The psychology of any unskilled laborer is comparatively simple. To the knowledge then that his job is being held by an outsider add his natural and fostered prejudice against an outsider who is black and you have something of the mental attitude of the rioters of East St. Louis. Doubtless it was with some such prophetic vision as this that Edward F. Mason, secretary of the Central Trades and Labor Union, issued a letter, the facsimile of which appears on the opposite page.

One point in particular is emphasized, that of color: "The Southern Negro," writes Mr. Mason, "has come into our community. No less than ten thousand of undesirable Negroes," he continues, "have poured in and are being used to the detriment of our white citizens." There is the appeal direct to prejudice. It is not that foreigners--Czechs, Slovaks, Lithuanians--or whatever ethnic division is least indigenous to East St. Louis--it is not that *they* are ousting Americans of any color or hue, but the "Southern Negro," the most American product there is, is being used "to the detriment of our white citizens."

Mr. Mason has no hesitancy in suggesting "that some action should be taken to retard this growing menace" and "to get rid of a certain portion of those who are already here." Was not Mr. Gompers' excuse in Carnegie Hall a faint echo of all this?

Mr. Mason wants to be fair. "This is not a protest against the Negro who has been a long resident"--so runs his superb English--"of East St. Louis, and is a law-abiding citizen of the state." In East St. Louis labor leaders are the arbiters of legal conduct and therefore 10,000 Negroes become undesirable citizens because they are strike-breakers and black.

That the July riot grew out of the meeting called by Mr. Mason (see facsimile), we are not prepared to say; but that it grew out of this attitude is only too apparent. By all accounts of eye-witnesses, both white and black,

the East St. Louis outrage was deliberately planned and executed.

Says Richard L. Stokes, writing in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* Sunday, July 8:

On the night of May 28th a delegation of about 600 union men marched to the City Hall to appeal to the authorities to prevent the importation of any more Negroes. Among them were many of the Aluminum Ore Company strikers. They took possession of an auditorium, and some of the leaders made speeches advising that in case the authorities took no action, they should resort to mob law.

When genuine mob law did finally reign on July 2, the scenes were indescribable. Germany has nothing on East St. Louis when it comes to "frightfulness." Indeed in one respect Germany does not even approximate her ill-famed sister. In all the accounts given of German atrocities, no one, we believe, has accused the Germans of taking pleasure in the sufferings of their victims. But these rioters combined business and pleasure. The Negroes were "butchered to make" an East St. Louis "holiday."

Carlos F. Hurd, an eye-witness, realizes this fact and speaks of it in the article which he published July 3 in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, of which he is a staff-reporter. Mr. Hurd writes:

A mob is passionate, a mob follows one man or a few men blindly; a mob sometimes takes chances. The East St. Louis affair, as I saw it, was a man-hunt, conducted on a sporting basis, though with anything but the fair play which is the principle of sport. The East St. Louis men took no chances, except the chance from stray shots, which every spectator of their acts took. They went in small groups, there was little leadership, and there was a horribly cool deliberateness and a spirit of fun about it.

"Get a nigger," was the slogan, and it was varied by the recurrent cry, "Get another!" It was like nothing so much as the holiday crowd, with thumbs turned down, in the Roman Coliseum, except that here the shouters were their own gladiators, and their own wild beasts.

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(A FACSIMILE OF MR. MASON'S LETTER)

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CENTRAL TRADES AND LABOR UNION

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Affiliated with the American  
Federation of Labor

Meets Second and Fourth Tuesdays  
309 Collinsville Avenue

EAST ST. LOUIS, ILL.,

May 23, 1917

To the Delegates  
to the Central Trades  
and Labor Union:

Greeting:-

The immigration of the Southern Negro into our city for the past eight months has reached the point where drastic action must be taken if we intend to work and live peaceably in this community.

Since this influx of undesirable negroes has started no less than ten thousand have come into this locality.

These men are being used to the detriment of our white citizens by some of the capitalists and a few of the real estate owners.

On next Monday evening the entire body of delegates to the Central Trades and Labor Unions will call upon the Mayor and City Council and demand that they take some action to retard this growing menace and also devise a way to get rid of a certain portion of those who are already here.

This is not a protest against the negro who has been a long resident of East St. Louis, and is a law-abiding citizen.

We earnestly request that you be in attendance on next Monday evening at 8:00 o'clock, at 137 Collinsville Avenue, where we will meet and then go to the City Hall.

This is more important than any local meeting, so be sure you are there.

Fraternally,

CENTRAL TRADES & LABOR UNION,

EDW. F. MASON, Sec'y.

He goes on with another horrible account of which he was also an eye-witness:

A Negro, his head laid open by a great stone-cut, had been dragged to the mouth of the alley on Fourth Street and a small rope was being put about his neck. There was joking comment on the weakness of the rope, and everything was prepared for what happened when it was pulled over a projecting cable box, a short distance up the pole. It broke, letting the Negro tumble back to his knees, and causing one of the men who was pulling on it to sprawl on the pavement.

An old man, with a cap like those worn by street car conductors, but showing no badge of car service, came out of his house to protest. "Don't you hang that man on this street," he shouted. "I dare you to." He was pushed angrily away, and a rope, obviously strong enough for its purpose, was brought.

Right here I saw the most sickening incident of the evening. To put the rope around the Negro's neck, one of the lynchers stuck his fingers inside the gaping scalp and lifted the Negro's head by it, literally bathing his hand in the man's blood.

"Get hold, and pull for East St. Louis!" called a man with a black coat and a new straw hat, as he seized the other end of the rope. The rope was long, but not too long for the number of hands that grasped it, and this time the Negro was lifted to a height of about seven feet from the ground. The body was left hanging there.

These accounts make gruesome reading, but they are all true. Hugh L. Wood paints in the *St. Louis Republic* another horrible picture. He says:

A Negro weighing 300 pounds came out of the burning line of dwellings just north and east of the Southern freight house. His hands were elevated and his yellow face speckled with the awful fear of death.

"Get him!" they cried. Here was a chance to see suffering, something that bullets didn't always make.

So a man in the crowd clubbed his revolver and struck the Negro in the face with it. Another dashed an iron bolt between the Negro's eyes. Still another stood near and battered him with a rock.

Then the giant Negro toppled to the ground. "This is the way," cried one. He ran back a few paces, then ran at the prostrate black at full speed and made a flying leap.

His heels struck right in the middle of the battered face. A girl stepped up and struck the bleeding man with her foot. The blood spurted onto her stockings and men laughed and grunted.

No amount of suffering awakened pity in the hearts of the rioters. Mr. Wood tells us that:

A few Negroes caught on the street were kicked and shot to death. As flies settled on their terrible wounds, the gaping-mouthed mobsmen forbade the dying blacks to brush them off. Girls with blood on their stockings helped to kick in what had been black faces of the corpses on the street.

The *St. Louis Republic* has still a further touch:

A Negro lay a block east on Broadway, with his face beaten in. He was not dead. An ambulance, driven by white men, dashed up.

"If you pick up that skunk we'll kill you, too," cried the crowd.

"I've got a wife and four children at home," said the white-faced ambulance man as he climbed back on the wagon.

When the fire had eaten its way that far the body was tossed into the flames. Two blocks further east lay a Negro who had been beaten until he was dying. "Let's string him up," shouted a man.

A rope was brought and the dying black in a moment was dangling from a pole. Several "good measure" shots were fired into the body and the crowd went further on.

Mr. Hurd who writes with much restraint tells how he saw a man covered with blood and half conscious, raise himself on his elbow and look feebly about,

when a young man, standing directly behind him, lifted a flat stone in both hands and hurled it up on his neck. This young man was much better dressed than most of the others. He walked away unmolested.

The violence was confined not only to men. Women were in many cases the aggressors and always ready to instigate and abet.

One woman, according to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, wanted to "cut the heart out" of a Negro, a man already paralyzed from a bullet wound, who was being then maltreated at the hands of a mob.

Mr. Hurd writes:

I saw a Negro women begging for mercy and pleading that they had harmed no one set upon by white women of the baser sort who laughed and answered the coarse sallies of men as they beat the Negresses' faces and breasts with fists, stones and sticks. I saw one of these furies fling herself at a militiaman who was trying to protect a Negress, and wrestle with him for his bayoneted gun, while other women attacked the refugee.

"Let the girls have her," was the shout as the women attacked one young Negress. The victim's cry, "Please, please, I ain't done nothing," was stopped by a blow in the mouth with a broomstick, which one of the women swung like a baseball bat. Another woman seized the Negress' hands, and the blow was repeated as she struggled helplessly. Finger nails clawed her hair and the sleeves were torn from her waist, when some of the men called, "Now let her see how fast she can run." The women did not readily leave off beating her, but they stopped short of murder, and the crying, hysterical girl ran down the street.

An older Negress, a few moments later, came along with two or three militiamen, and the same women made for her. When one of the soldiers held his gun as a barrier, the woman with the broomstick seized it with both hands, and struggled to wrest it from him, while the others, striking at the Negress, in spite of the other militiamen, frightened her thoroughly and hurt her somewhat.

To this the *St. Louis Republic* adds:

Seized with the mob spirit, two young white girls climbed on a car at Broadway and Main Street at about 4 p.m. and dragged a Negress from her seat. As they dragged the struggling Negress through the door to the street there was a great cheer from men on the sidewalk.

As the Negress attempted to break away from her assailants one of the girls--for they were only about 17 years old--pulled off her shoe and started to beat the victim over the head. The victim flinched under the blows of the girl and was bleeding when she was rescued by militiamen.

The girls were not arrested and started to walk away from the scene. There were bloodstains on their clothes and as they passed their friends they told about the part they had played in the riot.

But this sort of Negro-baiting did not make a strong enough appeal to the jaded senses of the mob. Surely there must be some other means of adding to such pleasurable excitement. Somebody suggested fire. The idea was immediately accepted. Says John T. Stewart:

The first houses were fired shortly after 5 o'clock. These were back of Main street, between Broadway and Railroad avenue. Negroes were "flushed" from the burning houses, and ran for their lives, screaming and begging for mercy. A Negro crawled into a shed and fired on the white men. Guardsmen started after him, but when they saw he was armed, turned to the mob and said: "He's armed, boys. You can have him. A white man's life is worth the lives of a thousand Negroes."

A few minutes later matches were applied to hastily gathered debris piled about the corner of one of three small houses 100 feet from the first fired. These were back of the International Harvester Company's plant. Eight Negroes fled into the last of the houses and hid in the basement. When roof and walls were about to fall in, an aged Negro woman came out. She was permitted to walk to safety. Three Negro women followed and were not fired upon. Then came four Negro men, and 100 shots were fired at them. They fell. No one ventured out to see if they were dead, as the place had come to resemble No Man's Land, with bullets flying back and forth and sparks from the fires falling everywhere.

A Negro who crawled on hands and knees through the weeds was a target for a volley. The mob then turned back to Main street and another Negro was spied on a Main Street car. He was dragged to the street and a rioter stood over him, shooting.

The crowd then turned to Black Valley. Here the greatest fire damage was caused. Flames soon were raging and the shrieking rioters stood about in the streets, made lurid by the flames, and shot and beat Negroes as they fled from their burning homes.

This district today was a waste of smouldering debris. Firemen fought the flames all night. In this stretch were burned the Southern Railroad freight house, the Hills-Thomas Lime and Cement Company plant and the Broadway Opera House. By desperate effort, firemen saved the Public Library Building, the Bon Bon Baking Powder Company, and the J. C. Grant Chemical Company. The warehouses of the latter contained 1,000 gallons of gasoline and coal oil.

It was rumored that many Negroes were burned to death in the Broadway Opera House, an abandoned theatre structure. Bystanders claimed to have seen men, women and children seek refuge in the basement of the building.

Rioters formed in gangs and trooped through the street, chasing Negroes when they met them, and intimidating white and Negro men alike, if they attempted to offer resistance.

Here again according to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, the women and children took a hand:

They pursued the women who were driven out of the burning homes, with the idea, not of extinguishing their burning clothing, but of inflicting added pain, if possible. They stood around in groups, laughing and jeering, while they witnessed the final writhings of the terror and pain wracked wretches who crawled to the streets to die after their flesh had been cooked in their own homes.

Where was the militia? At best they stood idly about in tacit sympathy with the rioters. It was not their business to protect Negroes against white men. Richard L. Stokes makes their attitude plain in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. He says:

I wish to point out that in these riots all the antipathy toward the Negro was not confined to East St. Louis. Among the first militia to arrive from Central and Northern Illinois, were not a few who declared feelingly their understanding they were not here to protect Negroes against whites but to guard whites against Negroes.

Subsequent testimony conflicted with this statement and showed that most of the militia, as one would suppose from the location of East St. Louis, came from Southern Illinois.

And John T. Stewart continues in the *St. Louis Star*:

The major riot ensued at 4:30, with not a Negro in sight. A crowd of fifty young men and boys dribbling aimlessly south on Collinsville came to a pawn shop. At once there were shouts of "get his guns," and the whites crowded through the shop doors and looted the shop of every weapon and all its ammunition. A boy not over fourteen years old emerged with a rifle and several rounds of cartridges. Another boy dragged a shotgun too big for him to carry.

A detachment of militia came along and made a half-hearted effort to disarm the civilians. The only persons who gave up their arms were boys. One white man walking beside me patted a large revolver in his shirt bosom. It was fully loaded. Another handed him two additional rounds of cartridges. Two guards passed.

"You've got nothing on me," the rioter said, and showed the militiaman his revolver and shells. When the militiaman laughed, the rioter threw his disengaged arm around the guardsman's shoulder and they disappeared around the corner.

Some of the militia were active in the fray. Miss Gruening tells of the two soldiers, members of Troop L, from Olney. She passed them a few days after the riot near Cahokia Creek and entered into conversation with them. They boasted that here "seven niggers" were thrown into the creek, "and every time the niggers came up people rocked them till they was all drowned." She imitated their vernacular. "And how many 'niggers' did you boys actually kill?" she

asked. They were modestly uncertain--they were not quite sure how many, but they had certainly shot to kill. That had been their orders.

"What!" asked Miss Gruening, "to shoot to kill 'niggers'?"

They grinned cheerfully. "Oh, no. Only to kill all we saw starting fires."

"And did you see any starting fires?"

"No, all we saw was niggers flying."

And they were to disarm every "nigger" of any kind of weapon--guns, razors, knives. They got everything away from them.

Miss Gruening wanted to know if they hadn't disarmed any whites at all.

They were doubtful. Yes, one remembered he had disarmed a drunken white man who was attacking a white woman.

Subsequently, Miss Gruening met with the Military Board of Inquiry, whose members were: Brigadier General Henry R. Hill, Brigadier General James E. Stewart, Colonel M. J. Foreman, Colonel Taylor E. Brown, Major Edward B. Tollman, Colonel William D. McChesney and Major Richard J. Abbott. She told her story and offered to identify the boys.

The Board was unenthusiastic and a trifle skeptical. Didn't Miss Gruening really suppose that the boys were joking? Doubtless they merely wanted to look big in the eyes of a lady. Yes, such jesting was in bad taste, but boys will be boys. At any rate identification was impossible because the Olney troops had been withdrawn.

Miss Gruening offered to go to Olney, to go anywhere to identify the two guardsmen.

Well, that was unnecessary, it was rather late now--on the third day of the inquiry--to institute such a complaint. Why hadn't the lady gone immediately to the commandant, who was present, and made her charge.

Miss Gruening had already been to the commandant on another matter and had been rebuffed.

As she was about to leave they laid on her a solemn charge.

"Young lady, as a writer, you have a heavy responsibility. If you go away and give the world the impression that the boys of the Illinois Militia or their officers failed in their duty you will be doing a serious injustice. We have gone exhaustively into the evidence. We have followed up every accusation made against Illinois guardsmen and we find not a single instance in which they misconducted themselves. On the contrary, we have found innumerable instances of the greatest heroism on the part of these young and untrained boys--instances in which Negroes were rescued from crowds of two or three hundred people. We have examined every body (Query: the burned and drowned bodies too?) and none of the wounds were made by rifles."

Miss Gruening inquired why, in the case of so much heroism, were so many Negroes killed and only eight white men. There was no answer to that.

Many white people told Miss Gruening that the militia had done remarkably well when one considered that most of them came from towns in Southern Illinois, like Olney, for instance, at whose railway stations were placards with the inscription: "Nigger, don't let the sun set on you." It was impossible, it was argued, for such to suppose that they were being called on to protect "niggers!"

And now we come to a short list of savage deeds which most of the newspapers have failed to print. Some of them though hint at them, like the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* for instance, when it says "enormities of savagery which would shame the jungle were committed in the presence of policemen and militiamen." All of the following statements were related by eyewitnesses to Miss Gruening and Dr. Du Bois.

Miss Gruening writing in the *Boston Journal* says succinctly:

"One girl was standing at a window of a white woman's house in which she worked. Her arm was shot away. A policeman and a soldier, she said, did the shooting. . . An old woman, frightfully burned, dying in the hospital, was asked if the mob had done it and replied: 'No, they jes' set fire to my house and I burned myself trying to get out'. . . One of the St. Louis reporters said that he knew exactly how people felt who had seen atrocities abroad and were trying to 'get them across' to the rest of the world, 'although,' he added, 'not even Belgium probably has anything quite as horrible to show'. . . About 10 blocks of Negro homes were burned, and the mobs stood outside and shot and stoned those who tried to escape. . . The mob seized a colored woman's baby and threw



it into the fire. The woman was then shot and thrown in."

One dares not dwell too long on these horrors. There are the stories too related by Mrs. Luella Cox (white) of the Volunteers of America, a St. Louis organization. Mrs. Cox had gone over to East St. Louis on that memorable day on business connected with her society. She passed through scenes that she can never forget. She realized the storm that was brewing and tried to persuade some of the colored families living in what afterwards became the burned district to flee. They were afraid to venture out but remained hidden in their houses with what results one can shudderingly surmise.

Mrs. Cox saw a Negro beheaded with a butcher's knife by someone in a crowd standing near the Free Bridge. The crowd had to have its jest. So its members laughingly threw the head over one side of the bridge and the body over the other.

A trolley-car came along. The crowd forced its inmates to put their hands out the window. Colored people thus recognized were hauled out of the car to be beaten, trampled on, shot. A little twelve-year-old colored girl fainted--her mother knelt beside her. The crowd surged in on her. When its ranks opened up again Mrs. Cox saw the mother prostrate with a hole as large as one's fist in her head.

Around a corner came a group of miners, fresh from work, their pick-axes over their shoulders. They plunged joyously into the crowd and made use of them resting from their labors, their pick-axes slung once more over their shoulders, and on their backs dripped blood.

While Mrs. Cox was talking to Miss Gruening and Dr. Du Bois, a colored woman came up and exclaimed: "There's the lady that saved me!" The woman had spent all that terrible night crouching in a sewer pipe.

It was Mrs. Cox, too, who saw the baby snatched from its mother's arms and thrown into the flames, to be followed afterwards by the mother. This last act was the only merciful one on the part of the crowd.

This recital deals only with facts. But stop and picture for a moment Mrs. Cox's day and the memories which must haunt her and all others who spent those awful hours in St. Louis.

First the mob, always a frightful thing--lowering in dense cowardly ranks through the streets. Then the fleeing Negroes, hunted, despairing. A hoarse, sullen cry, "Get the nigger!" A shower of bullets, of bricks and stones. The flash of meat-cleavers and pickaxes. The merciless flames. And everywhere bodies, blood, hate and terrible levity.

All our hunting-songs and descriptions deal with the glory of the chase as seen and felt by the hunters. No one has visualized the psychology of the quarry, the driven, hunted thing. The Negroes of East St. Louis have in their statements supplied the world with that lack.

The following accounts are published in the somewhat disjointed fashion in which they were necessarily collected by the investigators. No interpolation whatever is added to detract from their simplicity and sincerity.

This is the testimony of Mary Edwards. She is twenty-three years old, directress of a cafeteria at Lincoln School at fifty dollars a month, has lived in East St. Louis for sixteen years:

Knew at ten o'clock in the morning that white and colored had been fighting, but did not know seriousness of fight until five o'clock in evening when riot started at Broadway and Fourth Street. Heard shooting and yelling, saw mob pull women off street cars and beat them, but did not think rioters would come up to Eighth Street. Fires had started and were as far as Fifth Street and Broadway and swept through Fourth St., to Fifth and on to Eighth. The shooting was so violent that they were afraid to leave home. By this time rioters were on Eighth Street, shooting through homes and setting fire to them. Daughter and father were in house dodging bullets which were coming thick. Building at corner of Eighth and Walnut was occupied by whites. Some of mob yelled, "Save it. Whites live there." Some of the rioters went to Eighth and Broadway and set fire to colored grocery store and colored barber shop. Man in barber shop escaped but the man and wife in store were burned up. By that time Opera House was on fire and flats on side and back of it. East end of Library Flats caught and heat was so great that father and daughter tried to escape through alley and up street to Broadway, but encountered mob at Broadway. Soldiers were in line-up on north side of street and offered no assistance. Ran across street to Westbrook's home with bullets flying all around them and rioters shouting, "Kill him, kill him." Here daughter lost track of father.

She beat on the back door of Westbrook's home but no response, ran across alley to Division Avenue, ran on white lady's porch, but the lady would not let her in. Men were shooting at her for all they were worth, but she succeeded in dodging bullets. Ran across field and got in house and crawled under bed. Mob following right behind her, but lost sight of which house she went in and set fire to each end of flat. Rather than be burned to death she ran out and mob began shooting at her again. Just at that time a man ran out of the house, and mob let girl alone and started at him. She fell in weeds and lay very quiet. Could see them beating man. About one hour afterwards she heard someone say, "Any niggers in here?" She kept very quiet thinking them rioters. One said, "No one does answer. Come on, boys, let's go in after them." She then raised up not knowing they were soldiers and pleaded for her life. They picked her up and took her over the same ground she had run from the mob; put her in a machine and took her to City Hall. When she came to herself she was in the doctor's office surrounded by friends and her sister, Josephine, who had escaped with the Westbrooks. It was about one o'clock when she reached the City Hall. Mr. Edwards succeeded in getting away from mob, hid under a white man's porch until three o'clock in the morning, crawled from under there and went under sidewalk on Broadway and stayed there till five o'clock. (In East St. Louis, Ill., the streets are higher than the houses). He got out from under the walk and walked over where his home was still burning and stayed there till five-thirty. Started out to find girls, saw a policeman who told him he would probably find them at City Hall. On way to City Hall, he met two policemen with two colored men. One man asked him if he would send a message to his wife. Mr. Edwards said he could not do so. Police-men then arrested him charging him with being one of the rioters. He was locked up in jail and did not get out until twelve o'clock, when he was carried before Justice of Peace for trial. They found him guilty and set his trial for nine o'clock Wednesday morning and told him he would have to give bond for three hundred dollars. They would not let him have an attorney nor would they let him send for anyone. He then asked the Judge to let him make a statement to the court. That was granted.

He got up and told of his experience from five o'clock Monday evening until he was arrested at 5:45 Tuesday morning. After hearing his story the Judge dismissed him.

Nathaniel Cole is twenty-two years old and worked in a steel foundry. He says:

I was on my way from Alton on an Interurban car. When the car reached East St. Louis I saw a crowd of whites hollering, "Stop the car and get the nigger." The car was pulled off and stopped and a Negro man pulled out and beaten. In the mean time a white child called "There's another nigger." I was then pulled off the car, beaten and left in the street. After the mob left I attempted to board a car and was ejected by the conductor. Not knowing anything about East St. Louis or the mob, I ran into a white neighborhood and a woman hollered, "Stop that nigger. Stop that nigger." Two fellows ran out of gangway, one with a brick and the other with a long club. I ran and was well out of the way when a Ford car came along and about twelve of the rioters got in and overtook me after I had entered an alley. They hemmed me in a yard, where a carpenter was at work and began beating me. The carpenter then asked the rioters not to beat me up there, but to turn me over to the police if I had done anything to deserve it. The rioters replied, "The nigger takes the white man's job." I was beaten in the face with a cane and a rubber hose. I was beaten into insensibility and when I came to they were taking stitches in my head at St. Mary's Hospital.

Observe the terseness of the statement of Nine Fleet:

Husband worked at M. & O. Round House. Was a resident of East St. Louis for ten years.

I stayed with white people in the neighborhood the night of the riot and when I returned home, Tuesday, found my house had been ransacked and burned.

My husband was killed in the riot on his way home from work.

Here follows the continued story of Mary Lewis and her sister Hattie House Mary Lewis, who is thirty-three, speaks first. She says:

The mob gathered about my house shouting oaths, etc., and after watching and listening for a long time, I decided to try to escape. Just as I started to leave I saw them shoot a man dead, less than thirty feet from my window. The mob then went to the rear of the house and I, with my four children, slipped out

the front door. I had gone but a short distance when I was spied by one of the mob and they wanted to come back, but were urged by the leader to go on as he had seen some men on another street. His remark was, "Let her go and get the niggers running on the other street."

I was left in my house, my husband, Allen Lewis; sister, Hattie House, and a friend who was visiting Mr. McMurray.

Her sister, Hattie House, continues:

In less than twenty minutes from the time my sister left, the mob returned and began shooting and throwing bricks through the windows, while the three of us lay flat upon the floor, hoping to escape. The mob then set fire to both the front and back and when the roof began falling in we ran out through the rear door amidst the rain of bullets to the home of a Mr. Warren, white, begging him to save us. Mr. Lewis was shot just as he reached the door, and I ran into the house.

Some women who were always at the Warren house began beating me and I was compelled to leave there. I ran through a shed and seeing a big tin box, I jumped in, pulling on the lid and succeeded in concealing myself. The mob pursued, looking in every place as they sought for me, but overlooked the box. As they stood discussing the riot, one said, "I felt sorry for that old nigger. He begged so for his life." The answer was, "Why should you feel sorry, Irene, you helped to kill him?" Some other person in the crowd then said, "He was such a hard nigger to kill, he was shot and then had to have his head smashed with an ax."

Lulu Suggs is twenty-four years old, and has lived in East St. Louis since April. She tells of seeing children thrown into the fire. She says:

My house was burned and all the contents. My husband was at Swift's the night of the riot. I, with about one hundred women and children, stayed in a cellar all night, Monday night. The School for Negroes on Winstanly Avenue was burned to the ground. When there was a big fire the rioters would stop to amuse themselves, and at such time I would peep out and actually saw children thrown into the fire. Tuesday came and with that the protection of the soldiers. We escaped to St. Louis.

Chickens were of more value than Negro human lives. Mabel Randall, who is twenty-four years old, and has lived in East St. Louis for one and one-half years tells us:

Monday evening the mob broke out the windows and we stayed under the bed. When dark came, we begged the white lady next door to let us get under her house and she told us that she had chickens in the yard and we could not. We then went next door and got into a coal-house piling stoves upon us until four o'clock next morning when we went to the M. & O. Railroad yards. We remained there until 5:30 and then reached the ferry.

The statement of Josephine Jones is interesting. She says:

Mrs. Jones made this statement to me, that the mob formed both times at the City Hall, May, 1917, and July 2, 1917. She also said that Mayor Mollman stood in the alley leaning on the bannister of the Justice of Peace Building when a white man ran down the alley chasing two colored men, whom he afterwards shot and threw into the creek. When he returned to the street, Mayor Mollman was still standing there and he said, "Fred, I shot two niggers. How do you like that?" Mayor Mollman said nothing and made no protest.

Rena Cook returned from a day's outing to horror and death. Her statement follows:

While returning from a fishing trip on an Alton St. car, we were met by a mob at Collinsville and Broadway who stopped the car and had the white people get out. The mob came in and dragged my husband and son out, beating them at the same time, threw them off the car and shot both my husband and son, killing them instantly. Two policemen stood by, but did not interfere. The mob came back in the car and ran me out and beat me into insensibility, I knew nothing more until I found myself in St. Mary's Hospital. After staying in the hospital for two days I was taken to City Hall in East St. Louis and from there the police and militia escorted me to St. Louis.

Here is a brief but comprehensive tale of treachery as told by Edward Spence:

Born in Lafayette, Alabama--came to East St. Louis five years ago. Worked in a Rolling Mill, Madison, Ill., but lived in East St. Louis. Wages \$3.25 a day. He had taken his family, seven children and a wife to friends out from

East St. Louis for safety. He returned to East St. Louis and walked down the street with a white man, whom he thought to be a friend. When he passed this man's gate he was shot by this same man in both arms and back. He ran one and one-half blocks and was picked up and carried to the hospital by three colored men. His address is 1208 Colas Ave., East St. Louis.

Comments are needless. Here is the testimony of Elsie L. Lothridge, twenty years old, and a resident of East St. Louis for five months. She says:

Monday, about four o'clock, mob surrounded house. My husband and I were under the bed, and the mob threw stones and broke the windows and furniture up. The spread hid us from the people and after they had broke everything they left. Then we went to a white lady and asked could we hide in her house and she refused us, and we went in the next neighbor's house and hid in the coal-house until about four o'clock Tuesday morning. We hid in an engine until about 5:30 and then we went down to the Ferry and came across to St. Louis.

Testimony of Giles Bowner, sixty years old, and a resident of East St. Louis for four years:

I was at my work when the rioting began. I witnessed the rioting and being so excited I could hardly realize what the trouble was. My house was not burned but it was broken into and nearly everything was destroyed, things that I have had over twenty years. I saw many homes from a short distance of Fourth Street to Seventh Street burned to the ground.

Testimony of Mose Campbell, for seven months a resident of East St. Louis:

I was attacked by the mob of about 50 or more with stones and shots, but gave chase. They shot continuously and before we reached the Southern Freight House one bullet passed through my hand, shattering the bone. The mob threatened to burn the freight house so I crawled to the other end and found safety under the trunks of a freight car. Another victim drew the mob away by this time. This man was beaten until unconscious and when he revived the soldiers who were watching him raised a cry which brought the mob back to complete the murder.

While this excitement was at its height it gave me an opportunity to make my way to Brooklyn by back lanes. I saw the mob fire into houses the first being my own, which afterwards proved to be the bier for five men and two children. Among the men were Allen Lewis, Jas. Thomas and Aubry Jones.

Testimony of twenty-year-old Vassie Randall, an employee of the Electric Sack Plant:

The mob had benches stretched across the street facing both directions that no one might escape. A Negro came along and one fellow stepped out and struck him, and then others jumped on him, kicked out his eye and when he tried to get up, they returned and killed him. They then took him to Third and Main and swung him to a telegraph pole.

I was trying to escape with my four children and the mob threatened to throw me and the children in the river. Some white people from St. Louis, Mo., came to us and then the mob let us alone and we were allowed to escape.

The testimony of William Seawood shows the attitude of the soldiers. Seawood is thirty years old and has been a resident of East St. Louis seven years. He says:

Age, thirty years old, and have been a resident of East St. Louis seven years. I left my work at 2:30 P.M., went down Fifth Street to Walnut Avenue. I then went to a lunch stand, and as there was so much shooting I was afraid to leave. The mob came very close to the stand and I ran into an alley; there I found more of the rioters. I ran out of the alley between two buildings. I met a soldier who pointed a gun at me and told me to stop and throw up my hands. One of the men hit me on the back of my neck with his fist and another hit me across the head with a stick, and I also received a glance shot. One of the rioters also put a rope around my neck and said, "We will hang this one."

The statement of Troy Watkins is to the same effect:

Tuesday I went to my house to get what I could. While inside a man was killed in front of my house. I thought since the soldiers were there to protect me I could go out of my house. I started out of my house and the white lady told me to go back, that they (the soldiers) had killed a man in front of my house. I went into the coal shed, got behind some tubs, when four men came in and saw me, but did not harm me. Then I went to where I was working (Kehlor Mill) where Mr. Cunningham gave us a team to go to my house and get my things.

When I got there my house was burned down.

Miss Gruening told of a girl who lost her arm. Here is the girl's own account. Her name is Mineola McGee and she has been a chambermaid at \$3.50 a week. She has resided in East St. Louis since February 8, 1917. She says:

Cannot locate a relative since riot, several cousins, aunt and uncle.

Tuesday morning between seven and eight o'clock, as I was on my way to work (at Mrs. Gray's) I was shot in the arm, as I was about to enter the door. The only men whom I saw on the street were a soldier and a policeman, and I think I was shot by one of the two. I fainted after being shot, and when I came to I was being taken to the hospital in a patrol wagon. At the hospital the remainder of my arm was amputated. No insurance.

And here is the testimony of Narcis Gurley, who had lived for seventy-one years to come at last to this. She says that she has lived in East St. Louis for thirty years and had earned her living by keeping roomers and as a laundress. She says:

Between five and six o'clock we noticed a house nearby burning and heard the men outside. We were afraid to come outside and remained in the house which caught fire from the other house. When the house began falling in we ran out, terribly burned, and one white man said "Let those old women alone." We were allowed to escape. Lost everything, clothing and household goods.

The picture shows how terribly her arms were burned.

Testimony of the Kendricks, residents of West Madison, Ill., since 1909:

Monday about 1:30 P.M. I passed through East St. Louis from Belleville on my way to West Madison and the car met the mob at State and Collinsville. The mob shouted, "There's a Negro on the car, stop that car and get him off." The motorman stopped the car and all the white passengers left the car, leaving myself and sister-in-law and another lady, Mrs. Arthur. At that time three of the mob ran in the car and commenced beating me. I was shot through the left arm. They dragged me to the street. I was hit in the back of the head by one white, another hit me in the mouth. When I went to make a step another hit me on the side of the head and knocked me down. After this, one shot me in the leg. They jumped on me and beat me. After this they thought me dead and left me. There were three soldiers and a policeman in this mob, but offered me no assistance. In about twenty minutes I was carried to the hospital in an ambulance.

Testimony of Mary Bell White, age fifty-nine years. She was born in East St. Louis and did laundry-work at \$1.25 a day:

Saw two people burn an old man and a very old woman. They were thrown into a burning house. Monday at 4 P.M. I saw three women burned. By that time I was so excited that I ran to Tenth Street, where I met a white man who offered me and about one hundred others his protection. He had us go into an old building that had been used for a storage house. We stayed there all night. The next day I went to the City Hall and from there to St. Louis. I lost everything.

Testimony of Thomas Crittenden:

Age forty-six years and a resident of East St. Louis for five years. Worked as a laborer at \$3.60 a day. Monday night his boss found out about the riot and secreted him and another fellow. The next day he found that the district in which he lived had been burned. His wife was pulled from her house by the women of the mob, who beat her into insensibility and knocked out three teeth. She was sent to Cleveland, O., where she is in a very serious condition. Through the kindness of his employer he escaped to St. Louis.

Testimony of Lulu Robinson, age 33 years, has lived in East St. Louis for eight months:

Between five and six o'clock Monday evening the mob began shooting into my home at me and my child. We backed up against the wall to dodge the shots, but I was hit three times, once through the finger, shoulder and face. My boy of twelve years was shot twice and killed. I ran away and luckily escaped the shots that were rained upon me, and found shelter in another house. My husband I have not seen or heard from since the riot.

Testimony of Frank Smith, resident of East St. Louis for about twenty-five years and employed for the last fifteen years at the Acme Cement Company:

His house was set afire by the mob, and they waited outside to shoot him when he should emerge from the house. He waited till the last possible moment and was frightfully burned.

Family consists of a sister and brother who lived at 2136 Gayety, East St. Louis. Lost everything and will probably have to stay in hospital for six or seven weeks longer.

Testimony of Samuel J. Green, age 34 years:

I lived with my wife in East St. Louis; we have no children. I was born in Alabama and attended school through the fourth grade. I came to East St. Louis last October in search of better wages and better treatment from the white folks. I worked for the Loomin Owin Company; I received \$3 for eight hours' work. I rented our home; I paid \$10 a month rent. Before the riot things were fine, but on Sunday the rioting began. At night when I was going home from work I got off the car right into the thickest of the rioters. I ran and they chased me, firing at me all the time. I saw the state guards but they were helping the mob to club the Negroes. It is wonderful how I escaped unhurt. I hid in the weeds and was lost to the mob. It was about ten o'clock Monday when I saw the state guards clubbing the colored people. I shall stay here awhile, then I shall go farther north.

Testimony of Salena Hubble, age 42 years:

I am a widow. I lived in East St. Louis five years. I came to wait on my sick daughter.

Before the riot the people of both races were friendly and pleasant in manners. On the evening the rioters told me to leave because they were going to burn up the whole block, as they thought I was a white woman, so they warned me to flee. I talked with a neighbor, Mrs. Clemens (a white woman) and asked her if she thought the mob would do any more harm. She said: "I don't know, but you get ready and leave by the way of the cars over the bridge."

Just as I started over the bridge the mob broke my windows out with rocks. I escaped because the mob didn't know I belonged to the Negro race. Before I got out of East St. Louis I saw the mob with a rope and I heard them say: "There's a nigger, Let us hang the S\_\_ of a B\_\_," and they threw the rope over the telegraph pole, but I didn't know what came of that; I saw the soldiers and they offered no assistance to the colored people. I saw the fire department come before the fire was started, but when the fire was started they did nothing to stop it. I also saw the mob throw a rope around a colored man's neck and shoot him full of holes. The soldiers offered no assistance to the man who was shot, neither did the police. I saw a crowd of soldiers go into a saloon and engage in drinking heavily of beer. The mob burned the houses in the localities where colored lived mostly. The women were as vile as the men in their vile treatment to the Negroes. I saw the soldiers driving a crowd of colored men in the streets. The men were made to hold their hands above their heads as they walked.

Testimony of Beatrice Deshong, age 26 years:

I saw the mob robbing the homes of Negroes and then set fire to them. The soldiers stood with folded arms and looked on as the houses burned. I saw a Negro man killed instantly by a member of the mob, men, small boys, and women and little girls all were trying to do something to injure the Negroes. I saw a colored woman stripped of all of her clothes except her waist. I don't know what became of her. The police and the soldiers were assisting the mob to kill Negroes and to destroy their homes. I saw the mob hang a colored man to a telegraph pole and riddle him with bullets. I saw the mob chasing a colored man who had a baby in his arms. The mob was shooting at him all of the time as long as I saw him. I ran for my life. I was nearly exhausted when a white man in the block opened the door of his warehouse and told me to go in there and hide. I went in and stayed there all night. The mob bombarded the house during the night, but I was not discovered nor hurt. The mob stole the jewelry of Negroes and used axes and hatchets to chop up pianos and furniture that belonged to them. The mob was seemingly well arranged to do their desperate work. I recognized some of the wealthy people's sons and some of the bank officials in the mob. They were as vile as they could be.

Testimony of Jerry Mayhorn:

I saw the mob running the Negroes and beating them and killing them. I saw thirty white men beating one Negro. They clubbed the Negro to death. I saw the mob shooting into the homes of Negroes and throwing stones into them. The women and children were as bad as the men. The man that worked with me in the Stock Yards swam the creek to escape the mob and they stopped to beat another Negro to death. He escaped. I saw the mob set fire to the church

and to the school; then they ran. This was about seven o'clock in the evening. I ran through the Stock Yards and down the railroad to Brooklyn, carrying my three children. I saw the soldiers, who seemed to run a little pretense, and the mob just kept on killing Negroes. The soldiers searched the colored men, but I never saw them attempt to search any of the white men.

Testimony of Robert Hersey, age 20 years:

I have lived in East St. Louis since the 25th of March, 1917. I came here because of bad treatment and poor wages. I worked in a tobacco factory in St. Louis, Mo., and received two dollars a day.

Before the riot everyone seemed friendly toward me. I never got into the thickest of the men or riot, but they hit me with clubs, bricks, and stamped me on the head. They broke my arm. But for all of that I got away from them.

I shall never return to the South whatever may happen to me here, for in the South it is always killing and burning some of our people. No let up on bad treatment and no wages either. Men must work for eighty cents a day, women for fifty cents a week, and if the whites choose not to pay that, they won't do it. I shall stay in St. Louis, Mo.

The damning statements go on and on. Among the Negroes one finds a note sometimes of blank stark despair. John T. Stewart in the *St. Louis Star* drew a pathetic picture:

One aged Negro woman passed the police station carrying in her arms all that mob spirit and fire had left of her belongings. They consisted of a worn pair of shoes--she was barefooted--an extra calico dress, an old shawl and two puppies. Tears were streaming down her face and she saw neither soldiers nor her enemies as she passed beneath the lights of the City Hall, going she knew not where.

Saddest of all is Miss Gruening's account of the old woman whom she saw poking about in the desolate ruins of what had once been her home. Her family had escaped to St. Louis, but not a fraction of their possessions remained intact. The woman was old--sixty-five--not an easy age at which to begin life anew.

"What are we to do?" she asked Miss Gruening. "We can't live South and they don't want us North. Where are we to go?"

From the statements gathered by the investigators, many of these driven people seem to feel that the example of the South in dealing with Negroes is responsible for the methods of East St. Louis. Many of them express firmly their resolve, in spite of all, never to go back South. They will stay in St. Louis, they say, or push further North.

How does East St. Louis feel? According to all accounts she is unrepentant, surly, a little afraid that her shame may hurt her business, but her head is not bowed.

In this connection Miss Gruening supplies the statement of East St. Louis Postman No. 23, who said: "The only trouble with the mob was it didn't get niggers enough. You wait and see what we do to the rest when the soldiers go. We'll get every last one of them"

And here follows a sort of composite statement of the best citizens, editors, and liberty-bond buyers of East St. Louis and its surroundings:

"Well, you see too many niggers have been coming in here. When niggers come up North they get insolent. You see they vote here and one doesn't like that. And one doesn't like their riding in the cars next to white women--and, well what are you going to do when a buck nigger pushes you off the sidewalk?"

This last pathetic question was put to Miss Gruening by three different editors on as many separate occasions.

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* gives the views of District Attorney Karch on the attitude of the rioters. He says:

Those men have not left the city, and they have not repented of their excesses. They are just as bitter as they were, and the action of the Chamber of Commerce in forcing these Negroes down their throats is only inflaming the men who participated in the riot.

The District Attorney told of seeing a man on a street car exhibit a revolver openly Thursday night, and remark that "it had killed niggers, and would kill some more as soon as the damned militia leaves." Other men near by expressed similar sentiments, he added. They were laboring men, apparently going home from work.

Karch emphatically confirmed the statements made to the *Post-Dispatch* Tuesday by City Clerk Whalen, who is president of the Central Trades and Labor Union

of East St. Louis, to the effect that large employers of labor had given marked and continuous preference to Negroes.

"Their attitude for some time has been that they would give jobs to white men when they couldn't get any more Negroes," Karch declared. "This, as Mr. Whalen said, is because the Negroes will not unionize. Before the tenseness of this situation is relieved, these employers must convince the laboring whites that they will be given preference over imported blacks in applying for work. Instead of doing that, they are declaring they will put all the Negroes back to work, and protect them, if they have to keep troops here indefinitely. That kind of flamboyant talk only angers the men who should be quieted.

"As long as the heads of these big plants break up strikes by importing Negro strikebreakers, so long can they expect to have race riots. This is no defense for the rioters; there is no defense for them. It is just a fact that when a man's family is hungry his sense of justice doesn't operate very accurately."

Prejudice is a bad thing. But prejudice in the hands of Organized Labor in America! The Central Trades and Labor Union of East St. Louis has perpetrated a grim jest. Its motto as one may see by glancing back, "Labor omnia vincit." Latin is apt to be a bit obscure, so we translate: "Labor conquers everything." It does. In East St. Louis it has conquered Liberty, Justice, Mercy, Law and the Democracy which is a nation's vaunt.

And what of the Federal Government?

*The Crisis*, 14 (September, 1917): 219-38.

## 11. THE EAST ST. LOUIS RIOTS

The division of records and research of Tuskegee Institute had barely gotten before the public its announcement of a decrease in the number of lynchings the first six months of this year as compared with the same period last year, before the East St. Louis, Ill., race riots broke out afresh, resulting up to Tuesday night, in the death of seventy-five persons, the injury of seventy-five and the destruction by fire of 310 dwelling houses, and other property valued at more than \$3,000,000. Of the 14 persons lynched throughout the country during the first six months of the year, four of them, one white and three colored, were charged with the crime of rape. The score or more of colored persons mob-murdered in the East St. Louis riots were put to death because they wanted to work for their living. . . .

Organized labor appears to be directly responsible for the trouble between the races, as the following statement from Michael Whalen, president of the East St. Louis Central Trades and Labor Council will indicate:

"Last summer 4,500 white men went on strike in the packing plants of Armour and Company, Morris and Company, and Swift Company. Eight hundred from the south came into the plants as strike breakers. When the strike ended the Negroes remained at work and an equivalent number of white men failed to get their jobs back. Since then there has been a stream of Negroes arriving. At least 2,500 Negroes have come from the south in the last year. Many of them failed to get work, or to hold jobs once obtained. Burglaries, highway robberies and petty crimes began. The people became exasperated and determined to drive them out of town."

The leader of organized labor is flatly contradicted by employers of Negro labor in East St. Louis. We quote the press dispatches:

"Managers of plants mentioned by Mr. Whalen asserted that not a white man had been deprived of work by the Negroes. Even with the Negroes it was difficult to get enough labor, they said. They explained that rosy letters written back home by the first arrivals accounted for the continued influx from the south."



In spite of the alleged prevalence of crime, the real objection to the Negroes is revealed in the following:

"Mr. Whalen said that the chief objection to the Negroes was that they would not organize and would not strike."

Will the United States government take cognizance of the East St. Louis massacre? Is there any section of the United States in which the American Negro can enjoy "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" when deporting himself as a law-abiding citizen? Will the United States government permit any groups of its citizens to be deprived by anarchy of common right to work for an honest living? All of these issues have been raised by the East St. Louis race riots, and unless the United States government takes prompt and rigorous action upon them, the United States government should renounce its purposes for entering the world war and stand convicted among the nations of the earth as the greatest hypocrite of all times.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, July 7, 1917.*

#### THE CHICAGO RACE RIOT, 1919

##### 12. THE CHICAGO RIOT

July 27-August 2, 1919

Thirty-eight persons killed, 537 injured, and about 1,000 rendered homeless and destitute was the casualty list of the race riot which broke out in Chicago on July 27, 1919, and swept uncontrolled through parts of the city for four days. By August 2 it had yielded to the forces of law and order, and on August 8 the state militia withdrew.

A clash between whites and Negroes on the shore of Lake Michigan at Twenty-ninth Street, which involved much stone-throwing and resulted in the drowning of a Negro boy, was the beginning of the riot. A policeman's refusal to arrest a white man accused by Negroes of stoning the Negro boy was an important factor in starting mob action. Within two hours the riot was in full sway, had scored its second fatality, and was spreading throughout the south and southwest parts of the city. Before the end came it reached out to a section of the West Side and even invaded the "Loop," the heart of Chicago's downtown business district. Of the thirty-eight killed, fifteen were whites and twenty-three Negroes; of 537 injured, 178 were whites, 342 were Negroes, and the race of seventeen was not recorded.

In contrast with many other outbreaks of violence over racial friction the Chicago riot was not preceded by excitement over reports of attacks on women or of any other crimes alleged to have been committed by Negroes. It is interesting to note that not one of the thirty-eight deaths was of a woman or girl, and that only ten of the 537 persons injured were women or girls. In further contrast with other outbreaks of racial violence, the Chicago riot was marked by no hangings or burnings.

The rioting was characterized by much activity on the part of gangs of hoodlums, and the clashes developed from sudden and spontaneous assaults into organized raids against life and property.

In handling the emergency and restoring order, the police were effectively reinforced by the state militia. Help was also rendered by deputy sheriffs, and by ex-soldiers who volunteered.

In nine of the thirty-eight cases of death, indictments for murder were voted by the grand jury, and in the ensuing trials there were four convictions. In fifteen other cases the coroner's jury recommended that unknown members of mobs be apprehended, but none of these was ever found. . . .

The Commission's inquiry concerning the facts of the riot included a critical analysis of the 5,584 pages of the testimony taken by the coroner's jury; a study of the records of the office of the state's attorney; studies of the records of the Police Department, hospitals, and other institutions with reference to injuries, and of the records of the Fire Department with reference to incendiary fires; and interviews with many public officials and citizens having special knowledge of various phases of the riot. Much information was also gained by the Commission in a series of four conferences to which it invited the foreman of the riot grand jury, the chief and other commanding officers of the Police Department, the state's attorney and some of his assistants, and officers in command of the state militia during the riot.

*Background of the riot.*--The Chicago riot was not the only serious outbreak of interracial violence in the year following the war. The same summer witnessed the riot in Washington, about a week earlier; the riot in Omaha, about a month later; and then the week of armed conflict in a rural district of Arkansas due to exploitation of Negro cotton producers.

Nor was the Chicago riot the first violent manifestation of race antagonism in Illinois. In 1908 Springfield had been the scene of an outbreak that brought shame to the community which boasted of having been Lincoln's home. In 1917 East St. Louis was torn by a bitter and destructive riot which raged for nearly a week, and was the subject of a Congressional investigation that disclosed appalling underlying conditions.

This Commission, while making a thorough study of the Chicago riot, has reviewed briefly, for comparative purposes, the essential facts of the Springfield and East St. Louis riots, and of minor clashes in Chicago occurring both before and after the riot of 1919.

Chicago was one of the northern cities most largely affected by the migration of Negroes from the South during the war. The Negro population increased from 44,103 in 1910 to 109,594 in 1920, an increase of 148 per cent. Most of this increase came in the years 1917-19. It was principally caused by the widening of industrial opportunities due to the entrance of northern workers into the army and to the demand for war workers at much higher wages than Negroes had been able to earn in the South. An added factor was the feeling, which spread like a contagion through the South, that the great opportunity had come to escape from what they felt to be a land of discrimination and subservency to places where they could expect fair treatment and equal rights. Chicago became to the southern Negro the "top of the world." . . .

It is necessary to point out here only that friction in industry was less than might have been expected. There had been a few strikes which had given the Negro the name of "strike breaker." But the demand for labor was such that there were plenty of jobs to absorb all the white and Negro workers available. This condition continued even after the end of the war and demobilization.

In housing, however, there was a different story. Practically no new building had been done in the city during the war, and it was a physical impossibility for a doubled Negro population to live in the space occupied in 1915. Negroes spread out of what had been known as the "Black Belt" into neighborhoods near by which had been exclusively white. This movement, as described in another section of this report, developed friction, so much so that in the "invaded" neighborhoods bombs were thrown at the houses of Negroes who had moved in, and of real estate men, white and Negro, who sold or rented property to the newcomers. From July 1, 1917, to July 27, 1919, the day the riot began, twenty-four such bombs had been thrown. The police had been entirely unsuccessful in finding those guilty, and were accused of making little effort to do so.

A third phase of the situation was the increased political strength gained by Mayor Thompson's faction in the Republican party. Negro politicians affiliated with this faction had been able to sway to its support a large proportion of the voters in the ward most largely inhabited by Negroes. Negro aldermen elected from this ward were prominent in the activities of this faction. The part played by the Negro vote in the hard-fought partisan struggle is indicated by the fact that in the Republican primary election on February 25, 1919, Mayor Thompson received in this ward 12, 143 votes, while his two opponents, Olson and Merriam, received only 1,492 and 319 respectively. Mayor Thompson was re-elected on April 1, 1919, by a plurality of 21,622 in a total vote in the city of 698,920; his vote in this ward was 15,569, to his nearest opponent's 3,323, and was therefore large enough to control the election.

The bitterness of this factional struggle aroused resentment against the race that had so conspicuously allied itself with the Thompson side.

As part of the background of the Chicago riot, the activities of gangs of hoodlums should be cited. There had been friction for years, especially along the western boundary of the area in which the Negroes mainly live, and attacks upon Negroes by gangs of young toughs had been particularly frequent in the spring just preceding the riot. They reached a climax on the night of June 21, 1919, five weeks before the riot, when two Negroes were murdered. Each was alone at the time and was the victim of unprovoked and particularly brutal attack. Molestation of Negroes by hoodlums had been prevalent in the vicinity of parks and playgrounds and at bathing-beaches.

On two occasions shortly before the riot the forewarnings of serious racial trouble had been so pronounced that the chief of police sent several hundred extra policemen into the territory where trouble seemed imminent. But serious violence did not break out until Sunday afternoon, July 27, when the clash on the lake shore at Twenty-ninth Street resulted in the drowning of a Negro boy.

*The beginning of the riot.*--Events followed so fast in the train of the drowning that this tragedy may be considered as marking the beginning of the riot.

It was four o'clock Sunday afternoon, July 27, when Eugene Williams, seventeen-year-old Negro boy, was swimming offshore at the foot of Twenty-ninth Street. This beach was not one of those publicly maintained and supervised for bathing, but it was much used. Although it flanks an area thickly inhabited by Negroes, it was used by both races, access being had by crossing the railway tracks which skirt the lake shore. The part of Twenty-seventh Street had by tacit understanding come to be considered reserved for Negroes, while the whites used the part near Twenty-ninth Street. Walking is not easy along the shore, and each race had kept pretty much to its own part, observing, moreover, an imaginary boundary extending into the water.

Williams, who had entered the water at the part used by Negroes, swam and drifted south into the part used by the whites. Immediately before his appearance there, white men, women, and children had been bathing in the vicinity and were on the beach in considerable numbers. Four Negroes walked through the group and into the water. White men summarily ordered them off. The Negroes left, and the white people resumed their sport. But it was not long before the Negroes were back, coming from the north with others of their race. Then began a series of attacks and retreats, counter-attacks, and stone-throwing. Women and children who could not escape hid behind debris and rocks. The stone-throwing continued, first one side gaining the advantage, then the other.

Williams, who had remained in the water during the fracas, found a railroad tie and clung to it, stones meanwhile frequently striking the water near him. A white boy of about the same age swam toward him. As the white boy neared, Williams let go of the tie, took a few strokes, and went down. The coroner's jury rendered a verdict that he had drowned because fear of stone-throwing kept him from shore. His body showed no stone bruises, but rumor had it that he had actually been hit by one of the stones and drowned as a result.

On shore guilt was immediately placed upon a certain white man by several Negro witnesses who demanded that he be arrested by a white policeman who was on the spot. No arrest was made.

The tragedy was sensed by the battling crowd and, awed by it, they gathered on the beach. For an hour both whites and Negroes dived for the boy without results. Awe gave way to excited whispers. "They" said he was stoned to death. The report circulated through the crowd that the police officer had refused to arrest the murderer. The Negroes in the crowd began to mass dangerously. At this crucial point the accused policeman arrested a Negro on a white man's complaint. Negroes mobbed the white officer, and the riot was under way.

One version of the quarrel which resulted in the drowning of Williams was given by the state's attorney, who declared that it arose among white and Negro gamblers over a craps game on the shore, "virtually under the protection of the police officer on the beat." Eyewitnesses to the stone-throwing clash appearing before the coroner's jury saw no gambling, but said it might have been going on, but if so, was not visible from the water's edge. The crowd undoubtedly included, as the grand jury declared, "hoodlums, gamblers, and thugs," but it also included law-abiding citizens, white and Negro.

This charge, that the first riot clash started among gamblers who were under the protection of the police officer, and also the charge that the policeman refused to arrest the stone-thrower were vigorously denied by the police. The policeman's star was taken from him, but after a hearing before the Civil Service Commission it was returned, thus officially vindicating him.

The two facts, the drowning and the refusal to arrest, or widely circulated reports of such refusal, must be considered together as marking the inception of the riot. Testimony of a captain of police shows that first reports from the lake after the drowning indicated that the situation was calming down. White men had shown a not altogether hostile feeling for the Negroes by assisting in diving for the body of the boy. Furthermore a clash started on this isolated spot could not be augmented by outsiders rushing in. There was every possibility that the clash, without the further stimulus of reports of the policeman's conduct, would have quieted down.

*Chronological story of the riot.*--After the drowning of Williams, it was two hours before any further fatalities occurred. Reports of the drowning and of the alleged conduct of the policeman spread out into the neighborhood. The Negro crowd from the beach gathered at the foot of Twenty-ninth Street. As it became more and more excited, a group of officers was called by the policeman who had been at the beach. James Crawford, a Negro, fired into the group of officers and was himself shot and killed by a Negro policeman who had been sent to help restore order.

During the remainder of the afternoon of July 27, many distorted rumors circulated swiftly throughout the South Side. The Negro crowd from Twenty-ninth Street got into action, and white men who came in contact with it were beaten. In all, four white men were beaten, five were stabbed, and one was shot. As the rumors spread, new crowds gathered, mobs sprang into activity spontaneously, and gangs began to take part in the lawlessness.

Farther to the west, as darkness came on, white gangsters became active. Negroes in white districts suffered severely at their hands. From 9:00 P.M. until 3:00 A.M. twenty-seven Negroes were beaten, seven were stabbed, and four were shot.

Few clashes occurred on Monday morning. People of both races went to work as usual and even continued to work side by side, as customary, without signs of violence. But as the afternoon wore on, white men and boys living between the Stock Yards and the "Black Belt" sought malicious amusement in directing mob violence against Negro workers returning home.

Street-car routes, especially transfer points, were thronged with white people of all ages. Trolleys were pulled from wires and the cars brought under the control of mob leaders. Negro passengers were dragged to the street, beaten, and kicked. The police were apparently powerless to cope with these numerous assaults. Four Negro men and one white assailant were killed, and thirty Negro men were severely beaten in the street-car clashes.

The "Black Belt" contributed its share of violence to the record of Monday afternoon and night. Rumors of white depredations and killings were current among the Negroes and led to acts of retaliation. An aged Italian peddler, one Lazzeroni, was set upon by young Negro boys and stabbed to death. Eugene Temple, white laundryman, was stabbed to death and robbed by three Negroes.

A Negro mob made a demonstration outside Provident Hospital, an institution conducted by Negroes, because two injured whites who had been shooting right and left from a hurrying automobile on State Street were taken there. Other mobs stabbed six white men, shot five others, severely beat nine more, and killed two in addition to those named above.

Rumor had it that a white occupant of the Angelus apartment house had shot a Negro boy from a fourth-story window. Negroes besieged the building. The white tenants sought police protection, and about 100 policemen, including some mounted men, responded. The mob of about 1,500 Negroes demanded the "culprit," but the police failed to find him after a search of the building. A flying brick hit a policeman. There was a quick massing of the police, and a volley was fired into the Negro mob. Four Negroes were killed and many were injured. It is believed that had the Negroes not lost faith in the white police force it is hardly likely that the Angelus riot would have occurred.

At this point, Monday night, both whites and Negroes showed signs of panic. Each race grouped by itself. Small mobs began systematically in various neighborhoods to terrorize and kill. Gangs in the white districts grew bolder, finally taking the offensive in raids through territory "invaded" by Negro home

seekers. Boys between sixteen and twenty-two banded together to enjoy the excitement of the chase.

Automobile raids were added to the rioting Monday night. Cars from which rifle and revolver shots were fired were driven at great speed through sections inhabited by Negroes. Negroes defended themselves by "sniping" and volley-firing from ambush and barricade. So great was the fear of these raiding parties that the Negroes distrusted all motor vehicles and frequently opened fire on them without waiting to learn the intent of the occupants. This type of warfare was kept up spasmodically all Tuesday and was resumed with vigor Tuesday night.

At midnight, Monday, street-car clashes ended by reason of a general strike on the surface and elevated lines. The street-railway tie-up was complete for the remainder of the week. But on Tuesday morning this was a new source of terror for those who tried to walk to their places of employment. Men were killed enroute to their work through hostile territory. Idle men congregated on the streets, and gang-rioting increased. A white gang of soldiers and sailors in uniform augmented by civilians, raided the "Loop," or downtown section of Chicago, early Tuesday, killing two Negroes and beating and robbing several others. In the course of these activities they wantonly destroyed property of white business men.

Gangs sprang up as far south as Sixty-third Street in Englewood and in the section west of Wentworth Avenue near Forty-seventh Street. Premeditated depredations were the order of the night. Many Negro homes in mixed districts were attacked, and several of them were burned. Furniture was stolen or destroyed. When raiders were driven off they would return again and again until their designs were accomplished.

The contagion of the race war broke over the boundaries of the South Side and spread to the Italians on the West Side. This community became excited over a rumor, and an Italian crowd killed a Negro, Joseph Lovings.

Wednesday saw a material lessening of crime and violence. The "Black Belt" and the district immediately west of it were still storm centers. But the peak of the rioting had apparently passed, although the danger of fresh outbreaks of magnitude was still imminent. Although companies of the militia had been mobilized in nearby armories as early as Monday night, July 29, it was not until Wednesday evening at 10:30 that the mayor yielded to pressure and asked for their help.

Rain on Wednesday night and Thursday drove idle people of both races into their homes. The temperature fell, and with it the white heat of the riot. From this time on the violence was sporadic, scattered, and meager. The riot seemed well under control, if not actually ended.

Friday witnessed only a single reported injury. At 3:35 A.M. Saturday incendiary fires burned forty-nine houses in the immigrant neighborhood west of the Stock Yards. Nine hundred and forty-eight people mostly Lithuanians, were made homeless, and the property loss was about \$250,000. Responsibility for these fires was never fixed. The riot virtually ceased on Saturday. For the next few days injured were reported occasionally, and by August 8 the riot zone had settled down to normal and the militia was withdrawn.

*Growth of the riot.*--The riot period was thirteen days in length, from Sunday, July 27, through Thursday, August 8, the day on which the troops were withdrawn. Of this time, only the first seven days witnessed active rioting. The remaining days marked the return toward normal. In the seven active days, rioting was not continuous but intermittent, being furious for hours, then fairly quiescent for hours. The first three days saw the most acute disturbance, and in this span there were three main periods: 4:00 P.M. Sunday till 3:00 A.M. Monday; 9:00 A.M. Monday till 9:00 A.M. Tuesday; noon Tuesday till midnight. This left two long intervals of comparative quiet, six hours on Monday and three hours on Tuesday. On the fourth day, Wednesday, there were scattered periods of rioting, each of a few hours' duration. Thus Monday afternoon to Tuesday morning was the longest stretch of active rioting in the first four days.

For the most part the riot was confined to the South Side of the city. There were two notable exceptions, the district north and west of the south branch of the Chicago River and the "Loop" or downtown business district. A few isolated clashes occurred on the North Side and on the extreme West Side, but aside from these the area covered was that shown on the accompanying outline map.

For the purposes of discussion it is convenient to divide the riot area into seven districts. The boundaries in some instances are due to the designation of Wentworth Avenue by the police as a boundary west of which no Negroes should be allowed, and east of which no whites should be allowed.

- I. "Black Belt." From Twenty-second to Thirty-ninth, inclusive; Wentworth Avenue to the lake, exclusive of Wentworth; Thirty-ninth to Fifty-fifth, inclusive; Clark to Michigan, exclusive of Michigan.
- II. Area contested by both Negroes and whites. Thirty-ninth to Fifty-fifth, inclusive; Michigan to the lake.
- III. Southwest Side, including the Stock Yards district; south of the Chicago River to Fifty-fifth; west of Wentworth, including Wentworth.
- IV. Area south of Fifth-fifth and east of Wentworth.
- V. Area south of Fifty-fifth and west of Wentworth.
- VI. Area north and west of the Chicago River.
- VII. "Loop" or business district and vicinity.

In the district designated as the "Black Belt" about 90 per cent of the Negroes live. District II, the "contested area," is that in which most of the bombings have occurred. Negroes are said to be "invading" this district. Extension here instead of into District III, toward the Stock Yards neighborhood, may be explained partly by the hostility which the Irish and Polish groups to the west had often shown to Negroes. The white hoodlum element of the Stock Yards district, designated as III, was characterized by the state's attorney of Cook County, when he remarked that more bank robbers, pay-roll bandits, automobile bandits, highwaymen, and strong-arm crooks come from this particular district than from any other that has come to his notice during seven years of service as chief prosecuting official.

In District IV and V, south of Fifty-fifth Street, Negroes live in small communities surrounded by white people or are scattered through white neighborhoods. District VI has a large Italian population. District VII is Chicago's wholesale and retail center.

On only one day of the riot were all these districts involved in the race warfare. This was Tuesday. On Sunday Districts I, III, and IV suffered clashes; on Monday all but District VI were involved; on Tuesday the entire area was affected; on Wednesday District VII was not included, and District VI witnessed only one clash; on Thursday District IV was again normal, and Districts II, V, and VII were comparatively quiet; during the remainder of the week only the first three districts named were active.

The worst clashes were in Districts I and III, and of those reported injured, 34 per cent received their wounds in the "Black Belt," District I, and 41 per cent on the Southwest Side, in the district including the Stock Yards, District III.

Factors contributing to the subsidence of the riot were the natural reaction from the tension, efforts of police and citizens to curb the rioters, the entrance of the militia on Wednesday, and last, but perhaps not least, a heavy rain.

The longest period of violence without noticeable lull was 9:00 A.M. Monday to 9:00 A.M. Tuesday. On Tuesday the feeling was most intense, as shown by the nature of the clashes. Arson was prevalent on Tuesday for the first time, and the property loss was considerable. But judging by the only definite index, the number of dead and injured, Monday exceeded Tuesday in violence, showing 229 injured and eighteen dead as against 139 injured and eleven dead on the latter day. While it is apparent that no single hour or even day can be called the peak of the riot, the height of violence clearly falls within the two-day period Monday, July 28, and Tuesday, July 29.

The change in the nature of the clashes day by day showed an increase in intensity of feeling and greater boldness in action. This development reached its peak on Tuesday. Later came a decline, sporadic outbursts succeeding sustained activity.

*Factors influencing growth of the riot.*--After the attacks had stopped, about 3:00 A.M. Monday, they did not again assume serious proportions until Monday afternoon, when workers began to return to their homes, and idle men gathered in the streets in greater numbers than during working hours. The Stock Yards laborers are dismissed for the day in shifts. Negroes coming from the Yards at the 3:00 P.M., 4:00 P.M., and later shifts were met by white gangs armed with bats and clubs. On Tuesday morning men going to work, both Negro and white were attacked.

The main areas of violence were thoroughfares and natural highways between the job and the home. On the South Side 76 per cent of all the injuries occurred on such streets. The most turbulent corners were those on State Street between thirty-first and thirty-ninth. On Cottage Grove Avenue at Sixty-third Street. On Halsted Street at Thirty-fifth and Forty-seventh streets and on Archer Avenue at Thirty-fifth Street. Injuries at these spots were distributed as follows:

	Injuries	Deaths
State Street--		
at Thirty-first	7	
between Thirty-first and Thirty-fifth	2	
at Thirty-fifth	9	1
between Thirty-fifth and Thirty-ninth	19	2
at Thirty-ninth	3	
Cottage Grove Avenue--		
at Sixty-third Street	8	
Halsted Street--		
at Thirty-fifth	8	
at Forty-seventh	5	
Archer Avenue--		
at Thirty-fifth Street	7	
Streets which suffered most from rioting were--		
State	61	6
Thirty-fifth	50	5
Forty-seventh	32	2
Halsted	32	
Thirty-first	29	1

The street-car situation had an effect upon the riot both before the strike and after it. Because of a shortage of labor at the time, the surface-street-car company had put on a number of inexperienced men. This may account for the inefficiency of some crews in handling attacked cars.

An example is the case of Henry Goodman who was killed in an attack on a Thirty-ninth Street car. The car was stopped at Union Avenue by a truck suspiciously stalled across the tracks. White men boarded the car and beat and chased six or eight Negro passengers. When asked under oath to whom the truck directly in front of him belonged and what color it was, the motorman replied, "I couldn't say." When asked what time his car left the end of the line and whether or not he had seen any Negroes hit on the car, he answered, "I didn't pay any attention." The motorman said he made a report of the case, but it could not be found by anyone in the street-car company's office. The conductor of this car had been given orders to warn Negroes that there was rioting in the district through which the car ran. He did not do this. He ignored the truck. No names of witnesses were secured. The motorman was an extra man and had run on that route only during the day of the attack.

In the case of John Mills, a Negro who was killed as he fled from a Forty-seventh Street car, the motorman left the car while Negroes were being beaten inside it. Neither motorman nor conductor took names of witnesses or attempted to fix a description of the assailants in mind.

When B. F. Hardy, a Negro, was killed on a street car at Forty-sixth Street and Cottage Grove Avenue, the motorman and conductor offered no resistance and did not get names or descriptions.

The testimony of the conductor and motorman on a car attacked at Thirty-eighth Street and Ashland Avenue was clear and showed an attempt to get all information possible. They secured names of witnesses. One member of the crew had been in the service of the Chicago Surface Lines for ten years, and the other for twelve years.

The tie-up of the street railways affected the riot situation by forcing laborers to walk, making them more liable to assault in the hostile districts, by keeping many workers from jobs, turning out on the streets hundreds of idle men, and by increasing the use of automobiles.

Tuesday morning two white men were killed while walking to work through the Negro area, and two Negroes were killed while going through the white area.

Curiosity led the idle to the riot zone. One such was asked on the witness stand why he went. "What was I there for? Because I walked there--my own bad luck. I was curious to see how they did it, that is all."

Under cover of legitimate use gangs used motor vehicles for raiding. Witnesses of rioting near Ogden Park said trucks unloaded passengers on Racine Avenue, facilitating the formation of a mob. On Halsted Street crowds of young men rode in trucks shouting they were out to "get the niggers." An automobile load of young men headed off Heywood Thomas, Negro, and shot him at Taylor and Halsted streets as he was walking home from work.

Beside daily routine and the street-car situation, the weather undoubtedly had an influence in the progress of the riot. July 27 was hot, 96 degrees, or fourteen points above normal. It was the culmination of a series of days with high temperatures around 95 degrees, which meant that nerves were strained. The warm weather of Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday also kept crowds on the streets and sitting on doorsteps until late at night. Innocent people trying to keep cool were injured when automobiles raced through the streets, the occupants firing to right and left. Wednesday night and Thursday it rained. Cool weather followed for the rest of the week.

*Gangs and "athletic clubs."*--Gangs and their activities were an important factor throughout the riot. But for them it is doubtful if the riot would have gone beyond the first clash. Both organized gangs and those which sprang into existence because of the opportunity afforded seized upon the excuse of the first conflict to engage in lawless acts. . . .

*Restoration of order.*--Long before actual hostilities ceased, and even before the arrival of the militia, various agencies, in addition to the police, were at work trying to hold lawlessness in check and restore order. Efforts of citizens of both races helped greatly in bringing about peace. As long as the rioting was in progress thousands of Negroes were cut off from their employment. The Stock Yards workers especially were affected, since Negroes living east of Wentworth Avenue would have been forced to go to work on foot through the district in which the worst rioting occurred. The hostilities also cut off the food supply in the main riot areas. The dealers in the "Black Belt," principally Jewish merchants, became alarmed lest temporary lack of funds due to the separation from work and wages should lead Negroes to loot their stores.

On August 1, the various packing companies made the unpaid wages of Negro employees available for them by establishing pay stations at the Chicago Urban League at 3032 Wabash Avenue, the Wabash Avenue Young Men's Christian Association at 3763 Wabash Avenue, the South Side Community Service House at 3201 South Wabash Avenue, and the Binga State Bank, Thirty-eighth and State Streets. Approximately 6,000 employees were paid in this way. Banks within the district made small temporary loans to stranded persons, sometimes without security. The cashier of the Franklin State Bank at Thirty-fifth Street and Michigan Avenue said that he had made loans of more than \$200 to Negroes in sums of \$2 and \$3 on their simple promise to pay, and that every dollar had been repaid. . . .

Labor unions also took a hand in the efforts toward peace. Unionists of both races were exhorted to co-operate in bringing about harmonious relations, and meetings for this purpose were planned by trade-union leaders, as described in the section of this report dealing with the Negro in industry. Probably the most effective effort of union labor was the following article in the *New Majority*, the organ of the Chicago Federation of Labor, prominently displayed:

#### FOR WHITE UNION TO READ

Let any white union worker who has ever been on strike where gunmen or machine gun have been brought in and turned on him and his fellows search his memory and recall how he felt. In this critical moment let every union man remember the tactics of the boss in a strike when he tries by shooting to terrorize striking workers into violence to protect themselves.

Well, that is how the Negroes feel. They are panic-stricken over the prospect of being killed.

A heavy responsibility rests on the white portion of the community to stop assault on Negroes by white men. Violence against them is not the way to solve the vexed race problem.

This responsibility rests particularly heavy upon the white men and women of organized labor, not because they had anything to do with starting the present trouble, but because of their advantageous position to help end it. Right now it is going to be decided whether the colored workers are to continue to come into the labor movement or whether they are going to feel that they have been abandoned by it and lose confidence in it.



It is a critical time for Chicago.

It is a critical time for organized labor.

All the influence of the unions should be exerted on the community to protect colored fellow-workers from the unreasoning frenzy of race prejudice. Indications of the past have been that organized labor has gone further in eliminating race hatred than any other class. It is up against the acid test now to show whether this is so. . . .

Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago, 1922), pp. 1-11, 43-45.

### 13. THE CHICAGO RACE RIOTS

The so-called race riots in Chicago during the last week of July, 1919, started on a Sunday at a bathing beach. A colored boy swam across an imaginary segregation line. White boys threw rocks at him and knocked him off a raft. He was drowned. Colored people rushed to a policeman and asked for the arrest of the boys throwing stones. The policeman refused. As the dead body of the drowned boy was being handled, more rocks were thrown, on both sides. The policeman held on to his refusal to make arrests. Fighting then began that spread to all the borders of the Black Belt. The score at the end of three days was recorded as twenty negroes dead, fourteen white men dead, and a number of negro houses burned.

The riots furnished an excuse for every element of Gangland to go to it and test their prowess by the most ancient ordeals of the jungle. There was one section of the city that supplied more white hoodlums than any other section. It was the district around the stockyards and packing houses.

I asked Maclay Hoyne, states attorney of Cook County, "Does it seem to you that you get more tough birds from out around the stockyards than anywhere else in Chicago?" And he answered that more bank robbers, payroll bandits, automobile bandits, highwaymen and strong-arm crooks come from this particular district than any other that has come to his notice during seven years of service as chief prosecuting official.

And I recalled that a few years ago a group of people from the University of Chicago came over into the stockyards district and made a survey. They went into one neighborhood and asked at every house about how the people lived --and died. They found that seven times as many white hearses haul babies along the streets here as over in the lake shore district a mile east. Their statement of scientific fact was that the infant mortality was seven times higher here proportionately, than a mile to the east in a district where housing and wages are different.

So on the one hand we have blind lawless government failing to function through policemen ignorant of Lincoln, the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation, and a theory sanctioned and baptized in a storm of red blood. And on the other hand we have gaunt involuntary poverty from which issues the hoodlum.

At least three conditions marked the events of violence in Chicago in July, 1919, and gave the situation a character essentially different from the backgrounds of other riots. Here are factors that give the Chicago flare-up historic import:

- 1.. The Black Belt population of 50,000 in Chicago was more than doubled during the war. No new houses or tenements were built. Under pressure of war industry the district, already notoriously overcrowded and swarming with slums, was compelled to have and hold in its human dwelling apparatus more than twice as many people as it held before the war.

2. The Black Belt of Chicago is probably the strongest effective unit of political power, good or bad, in America. It connects directly with a city administration decisive in its refusal to draw the color line, and a mayor whose opponents failed to defeat him with the covert circulation of the epithet of "nigger lover." To such a community the black doughboys came back from France and the cantonment camps. Also it is known that hundreds--it may be thousands--have located in Chicago in the hope of permanent jobs and homes in

preference to returning south of Mason and Dixon's line, where neither a world war for democracy, nor the Croix de Guerre, nor three gold chevrons, nor any number of wound stripes, assures them of the right to vote or to have their votes counted or to participate responsibly in the elective determinations of the American republic.

3. Thousands of white men and thousands of colored men stood together during the riots, and through the public statements of white and colored officials of the Stockyards Labor Council asked the public to witness that they were shaking hands as "brothers" and could not be counted on for any share in the mob shouts and ravages. This was the first time in any similar crisis in an American community that a large body of mixed nationalities and races--Poles, Negroes, Lithuanians, Italians, Irishmen, German, Slovaks, Russians, Mexicans, Yankees, Englishmen, Scotchmen--proclaimed that they were organized and opposed to violence between white union men and colored union men.

In any American city where the racial situation is critical at this moment, the radical and active factors probably are (1) housing (2) politics and war psychology and (3) organization of labor.

The articles that follow are reprints from the pages of the *Chicago Daily News*, which assigned the writer to investigate the situation three weeks before the riots began. Publication of the articles had proceeded two weeks and were approaching the point where a program of constructive recommendations would have been proper when the riots broke and as usual nearly everybody was more interested in the war than how it got loose.

The arrangement of the material herewith is all rather hit or miss, with the stress often in the wrong place, as in much newspaper writing. However, because of the swift movement of events at this hour and because items of information and views of trends here have been asked for in telegrams, letters and phone calls from a number of thoughtful people, they are made conveniently available for such service as they are worth. . . .

#### TRADES FOR COLORED WOMEN

A colored woman entered the office of a north side establishment where artificial flowers are manufactured.

"I have a daughter 17 years old," she said to the proprietor.

"All places filled now," he answered.

"I don't ask a job for her," came the mother's reply. "I want her to learn how to do the work like the white girls do. She'll work for nothing. We don't ask wages, just so she can learn."

So it was arranged for the girls to go to work. Soon she was skilled and drawing wages with the highest in the shop. Other colored girls came in. And now the entire group of fifteen girls that worked in this north side shop have been transferred to a new factory on the south side, near their homes. At the same time a number of colored girls have gone into home work in making artificial flowers.

Such are the casual, hit-or-miss incidents by which the way was opened for colored working people to enter one industry on the same terms as the white wage earners.

Doll hats, lamp shades, millinery--these are three branches of manufacture where colored labor has entered factories and has also begun home work. Colored workers, with their bundles of finished goods on which the entire family has worked, going to the contractor to turn in the day's output are now a familiar sight in some neighborhoods. In one residence a colored woman employs seven girls, who come to the house every day and make lamp shades, which are later delivered to a contractor. The first week in July thirty girls were placed in one millinery shop.

A notable recent development, partly incidental to conditions of war industry, is the entrance of colored women into garment factories, particularly where women's and children's garments are made. In Chicago in the last year they have been assigned to the operation of power machines making children's clothes, women's apparel, overalls and rompers.

Out of 170 firms in Chicago that employed colored women for the first time during the war, 42, or 24 per cent, were hotels or restaurants, which hired them as kitchen help or bus girls. Twenty-one, or 12 per cent, were hotels or

apartment houses which hired them as chambermaids. Nineteen laundries, 12 garment-factories, seven stores, and eight firms, hiring laborers and janitresses, make up the rest of the 170. The packing industry, of course, leads all others in employment of both colored men and women as workers. Occupations that engaged still others during the war were picture framers, capsule makers, candy wrappers, tobacco strippers, noodle makers, nut shellers, furniture sandpaperers, corset repairers, paper box makers, ice cream cone strippers, poultry dressers and bucket makers.

In a building near the public library is a colored woman who conducts a hair-dressing parlor. She employs three white girls. All the patrons are white. The proprietress herself could easily pass for a Brazilian banana planter's widow, of Spanish Caucasian blood. But as she frankly admits that she is one-eighth African and seven-eighths Caucasian, she has been refused admission to other buildings when she wished for various reasons to change the location of her establishment.

Here and there, slowly, and by degrees, the line of color discrimination breaks. A large chain of dairy lunchrooms in Chicago employs colored bus girls, cooks and dishwashers and depends almost entirely on colored help to do the rougher work.

More notable yet is the fact that a downtown business college informs employment bureaus that it is able to place any and all colored graduates of the college in positions as stenographers and typists. In a few loop stores colored salesgirls are employed. In one shoe store beginning this policy, a white girl filed complaint. The manager investigated and found there was no objection except from this one white girl, who was thereupon dismissed.

A mattress factory opened wage earning opportunities to colored women in the last year. Two taxicab companies now hire women as cleaners. The foregoing list of occupations just about completes the recital of progress in this regard in Chicago in the last year.

Colored women were occupied during the war in various cities in making soldiers' uniforms, horses' gas masks, belts, puttees, leggings, razor blade cases, gloves, veils, embroideries, raincoats, books, cigars, cigarettes, dyed furs, millinery, candy, artificial feathers, buttons, toys, marabou and women's garments.

The comment of a trained industrial observer on the colored woman as a machine operator is as follows:

"Few as yet are skilled as machine or hand operators. Because of their newness to industrial work, the majority have been put on processes requiring no training and small manual ability. They are employed at repetitive hand operations, and occasionally run a foot press or a power sewing machine. In one millinery shop, however, the superintendent said that every colored worker in his shop preferred machine operation to hand work.

"Replacement for colored women, however, does not mean advancement in the same sense as for white women. Because the white woman has been in industry for a long time, and is more familiar with industrial practices, she is less willing to accept bad working conditions. The colored woman, on the other hand, is handicapped by industrial ignorance and drifts into conditions of work rejected by white workers. Colored women are found on processes white women refuse to perform. They replace boys and men at cleaning window shades, dyeing furs, and in one factory they were found bending constantly and lifting clumsy 160 pound bales of material.

"Inquiries as to the general attitude of white workers toward the introduction of colored women brought conflicting reports. About half the employers claimed that their white workers had no objection to the colored women; that they were either cordial or entirely indifferent toward them. Of the other half, some said their white workers objected when the colored workers were first hired, but felt no prejudice now. Other white workers preferred to have the two groups segregated. Still others were willing to let the colored workers do unskilled work, but refused to allow them on the skilled processes.

"At the time of the greatest labor shortage in the history of this country, colored women were the last to be employed. They did the most menial and by far the most underpaid work. They were the marginal workers all through the war, and yet during those perilous times, the colored woman made just as genuine a contribution to the cause of democracy as her white sister in the munitions factory or her brother in the trench. She released the white women for more

skilled work and she replaced colored men who went into service."

The report of a study jointly directed by representatives of the Consumers' League, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Russell Sage Foundation and other organizations recommends that greater emphasis be placed on the training of the colored girl by more general education and more trade training through apprenticeship and trade schools, and also that every effort be made to stimulate trade organizations among colored women by education of colored women working toward organization, education of colored workers for industrial leadership and keener understanding of colored women in industry among organized and unorganized white workers. And lastly, an appreciation and acceptance of the colored woman in industry by the American employer and the public at large is urged.

A creed of cleanliness was issued in thousands of copies by the Chicago Urban League during the big influx of colored people from the south. It recognized that the woman, always the woman is finally responsible for the looks and upkeep of a household, and made its appeal in the following language:<sup>75</sup>

"For me! I am an American citizen. I am proud of our boys 'over there,' who have contributed soldier service. I desire to render citizen service. I realize that our soldiers have learned new habits of self-respect and cleanliness. I desire to help bring about a new order of living in this community. I will attend to the neatness of my personal appearance on the street or when sitting in the front doorway. I will refrain from wearing dustcaps, bungalow aprons, house clothing and bedroom shoes when out of doors. I will arrange my toilet within doors and not on the front porch. I will insist upon the use of rear entrances for coal dealers and hucksters. I will refrain from loud talking and objectionable deportment on street cars and in public places. I will do my best to prevent defacement of property, either by children or adults."

Two photographs went with this creed. One showed an unclean, messy front porch, the other a clean, well kept front porch. Such is the propaganda of order and decency carried on earnestly and ceaselessly by clubs, churches and leagues of colored people, struggling to bring along the backward ones of a people whose heritage is 200 years of slavery and fifty years of industrial boycott.

As an aside from the factual and the humdrum of the foregoing, here is a letter, vivid with roads and bypaths of spiritual life, written by a colored woman to her sister in Mississippi. It is a frank confession of one sister soul to another of what life has brought, and as a document is worth more than stacks of statistics.

"My Dear Sister:--I was agreeably surprised to hear from you and to hear from home. I am well and thankful to say I am doing well. The weather and everything else was a surprise to me when I came. I got here in time to attend one of the greatest revivals in the history of my life. Over 500 people joined the church. We had a Holy Ghost shower. You know I like to have run wild. It was snowing some nights and if you didn't hurry you could not get standing room.

"Please remember me kindly to any who ask of me. The people are rushing here by the thousands, and I know if you come and rent a big house you can get all the roomers you want. You write me exactly when you are coming. I am not keeping house. I am living with my brother and his wife. My son is in California, but will be home soon. He spends his winter in California. I can get a nice place for you to stop until you can look around and see what you want.

"I am quite busy. I work for a packing company in the sausage department. My daughter and I work in the same department. We get \$1.50 a day and we pack so many sausages we don't have much time to play, but it is a matter of a dollar with me and I feel that God made the path and I am walking therein.

"Tell your husband work is plentiful here and he won't have to loaf if he wants to work. I know unless old man A \_\_\_\_\_ changed it was awful with his soul. Well, I guess I have said about enough. I will be delighted to look into your face once more in life. Pray for me, for I am heaven bound. I have made too many rounds to slip now. I know you will pray for me, for prayer is the life of any sensible man or woman. Good-by."

#### UNIONS AND THE COLOR LINE

At the Saddle and Sirloin Club there sat in conference one day a few months

ago representatives from two groups. On one side of the table were men speaking for the most active organizations of colored people in Chicago in matters of employment and general welfare. On the other side of the table were men speaking for the packers who employ at the stockyards upwards of 15,000 colored men and women, interests that are today and are expected to be in the future the largest employers of colored labor.

Four points to constitute a guiding policy in employment were offered by the colored representatives, with a statement that the principles embodied the general sense of the leaders of social, industrial, welfare and religious groups of the colored race in Chicago. After discussion the representatives of the packers agreed to accept the four points, and they are regarded by the colored people as in force and effective until further notice.

The four points as phrased in the conference at the Saddle and Sirloin Club, are:

1. That whenever we are attempting to introduce negro workers into trades in which white workers are unionized, we must urge the negroes to join the unions.
2. That when we are introducing negro labor into industries in which the white workers are not unionized, we advise negroes, in case the effort is made to unionize the industry, to join with their white comrades.
3. That we strongly urge the organizers of all the unions in industries which may be opened to colored labor, not only to permit, but actively to assist in incorporating negroes into the unions.
4. In cases where negroes are prevented from joining the unions, the right is reserved of complete liberty of action as to the advice that will be given to negro workingmen.

With these points in force, the men concerned felt that they had taken all steps humanly possible to avert any such disaster as came to East St. Louis, where labor conditions were a factor.

Estimates as to the number of colored workers who have joined the trade unions of the Stockyards Labor council vary from 6,000 to 10,000. The organizers say they are too busy to make even an approximate count. They say further that the organizations are mixed colored and white, and a count of membership is not as easy as it would be if all colored members were segregated in one local. Such a segregation is not being thought of.

"Men who work together in mixed gangs of white and colored workers believe their trade union ought to be organized just like the work gang," said A. K. Foote, a colored man whose craft is that of hog killer and who is secretary of local 651 of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America.

"If you ask me what I think about race prejudice, and whether it's getting better," he said, "I'll tell you the one place in this town where I feel safest is over at the yards, with my union button on. The union is for protection, that's our cry. We put that on our organization wagons and trucks traveling the stockyards district, in signs telling the white and colored men that their interests are identical.

"We had a union ball a while ago in the Coliseum annex, and 2,000 people were there. The whites danced with their partners and the colored folks with theirs. The hog butchers' local gave a picnic recently and they came around to our people with tickets to sell, and the attendance at the picnic was cosmopolitan. Whenever you hear any of that race riot stuff, you can be sure it is not going to start around here. Here they are learning that it pays for white and colored men to call each other brother."

Local 651 has a commodious, well-kept office at 43d and State streets. It is known as the "miscellaneous" local, taking in as members the common laborers and all workers not qualifying for membership in a skilled craft union. One advantage for colored workers, according to organizers, is that the seniority rights of such workers are now accorded. If the head of a work gang quits for any reason and a colored man is the oldest in point of service in the gang or department, he is automatically advanced. When an organization meeting was held recently on a Sunday afternoon in a public school yard at 33d street and Wentworth avenue, the police directed that the parade of the colored workmen from their hall at 43d and State streets must not march down State street through the district most heavily populated with negroes. The union officials are still mystified by the police explanation that it was safer and better for the colored procession to take a line of march where there were the smallest number of negro residents on the streets.

Margaret Bondfield, fraternal delegate from the British Trades Union Congress, spoke to the audience, which numbered about 3,000. Probably 2,000 stood in the hot sun three hours while the American Giants (colored) played in the next lot, and the White Sox game was on only two blocks away.

John Riley and C. Ford, organizers carrying authorizations from the American Federation of Labor, were speakers. Ford has personality, rides roughshod over English grammar, but wins his crowd with homely points such as these:

"If I had any prejudice against a white man in this crowd any more than I've got against a colored man, then I'd jump down here off this platform and break my infernal neck right now."

"You boys know about rassling. You know if you throw a rassler down you know you got to stay down with him if you're going to keep him down: If you don't stay down with him, he'll get up and you got to throw him again."

"You notice there ain't no Jim Crow cars here today. That's what organization does. The truth is there ain't no negro problem any more than there's a Irish problem or a Russian or a Polish or a Jewish or any other problem. There is only the human problem, that's all. All we demand is the open door. You give us that, and we won't ask nothin' more of you."

It was a curious equation of human races that stood listening to this talk. Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, Italians and colored men mingled in all sections of the crowd, and every speaker touching the topic of prejudice got the same kind of a response from all parts of the crowd. So they stood in the July afternoon sun, listening as best they could to what they could hear from their orators, while the noisy cheers and laughter of two ball games came on the air in great gusts. They were 2,000 men for whom the race problem is solved. Their theory is that when economic equality of the races is admitted, then the social, housing, real estate, transportation or educational phases are not difficult.

"We all know there are unions in the American Federation of Labor that have their feet in the 20th century and their heads in the 16th century," said Secretary Johnstone of the Stockyards Labor council, as applause swept the sunburned 2,000. He was referring to the unions that draw the color line.

The Rev. L. K. Williams of Olivet Baptist church, which has a membership of 8,500, and the Rev. John F. Thomas of the Ebenezer Baptist church at 35th and Dearborn streets, besides other clergymen, have voiced approval of the campaign for organization of colored labor in affiliation with the trade union movement. There was dissent to organization spoken by a few ministers at one time, but this is said now to have changed to approval.

A unique memorial was circulated among all colored clergymen in Chicago by five labor unions in which the colored people have a large representation. In order that each copy should bear proof of its authenticity, it was embossed with the seal of each of the five unions and signed by the officers. The memorial read:

"Whereas, God is the creator of all mankind and has endowed us with certain inalienable rights that should be respected one by the other, so that peace and harmony will reign and hell on earth be subdued, and

"Whereas, the unscrupulous white plutocrats, aided by corrupt politicians, have usurped even the rights of the workers guaranteed by the constitution and supplanted oppression and discord by propagating race hatred, discrimination and class distinction, and

"Whereas, the credulous common people (white and black) have been the maltreated tools of these financial master mechanics, and their fallacious teachings have kept us divided and made their throne more secure, and

"Whereas, the power of the united front and concerted action of all toilers is the only medium through which industrial and political democracy can be obtained, wage slavery and unjust legislation destroyed, and

"Whereas, the executive board of the American Federation of Labor on April 22, 1918 in Washington, D.C., was met by a committee of recognized race leaders, and adopted plans thoroughly to organize the colored workers in industry, putting them on the same economic level with other races; therefore, be it

"Resolved, that we appeal to the conscientious race leaders, intellectuals and other God-fearing men of influence, who believe in human rights, justice and fair play and are desirous of conveying light and plenty where darkness and want predominate, to assist the 60,000 colored members of the American Federation of Labor in fostering and encouraging members of our race to affiliate with the bona fide labor movement, to the end that we will have a larger

representation in this industrial army, which will exemplify to the white progressives, as well as autocrats, that we are 'straws in the new broom of reconstruction, that will sweep clean American institutions, ridding them of discrimination and corruption.'"

With the official union seals were the signatures of George A. Swan, president; Hugh Swift, vice president, and R. E. Copeland, secretary of the Musicians' Protective union; Garrett Rice, president, A. L. Johnson, vice president, and A. Welcher, secretary of the Railway Coach Cleaners' union; N. S. Wimms, president, and P. D. Campbell, vice president, of the Sleeping Car Porters of America; Annie M. Jones, president, Isabel Case, vice president, and Mabel Kinglin, secretary of local 213 of the Butcher Workmen's union; Henry Papers, president, J. W. Smith, vice president, and A. K. Foote, secretary of local 651 of the Butcher Workmen's union.

There is odd humor in the fact that Dr. George C. Hall, a colored surgeon and real estate proprietor to the extent of \$100,000, has been for years an honorary member of the Meat Cutters' and Butcher Workmen's union. Dr. Hall always has contended that organization is one route away from race discrimination.<sup>76</sup>

Carl Sandburg, *The Chicago Race Riots, July 2, 1919* (New York, 1919), pp. 1-4, 31-37, 44-50.

#### 14. A REPORT ON THE CHICAGO RIOT BY AN EYE-WITNESS

*This interview on the "Chicago Riots" is given by an able and brilliant colored attorney in Chicago. He is a Bachelor of Arts from Oberlin, a Bachelor of Laws and Master of Arts from Columbia University. The painstaking and cautious presentation of evidence will be immediately noted. It is just what we want. We desire no matter colored in the interest of Negroes or of whites. What we want is the truth. From our personal knowledge of the author of these answers, he is a man of very unusual mental endowments, of intellectual training, a thinker and speaker of extraordinary power.* The Editors.

1.--How many persons were killed of each race?

Unable to state exact number. One newspaper reported 16 white and 16 colored killed. The coroner puts the total number of casualties at 36--19 whites and 17 colored. There is a widespread belief, however, that the authorities have deliberately suppressed the truth about this matter. One white insurance adjuster, whose company insures 10,000 people, says that with his company alone 27 death claims, resulting from riot, were filed. John Dill Robertson, City Health Commissioner, however, denies that there has been any effort to conceal the facts.

2. What is the actual Negro population of Chicago?

It has been variously estimated anywhere between 100,000 and 225,000. The figure generally quoted is 125,000.

3. What was the occasion of the riot?

See "Exhibit A" enclosed. Briefly, however, the riot was caused by the growing resentment of Negroes to outward manifestations of the deep-seated prejudice of the American white man.

Mayor Thompson is credited with the statement that rioting first started at the stockyards, shortly after cessation of hostilities in Europe, when white employers of yards got the idea that they were being turned off in greater proportions than the colored. Several colored employees were beaten up by them.

4. Who participated in it? Young men, middle classes, best classes, worst classes, or all classes?

All classes. The best classes, however it seems confined their activities to protecting their homes and neighborhoods.

5. Did women take part? To what extent? Describe their activities.

Yes; they were quite active. A colored woman is said to have stood on the corner of 35th Street and Wabash Avenue and to have incited colored boys to throw stones at the white passersby. Two colored women, Emma Jackson and Katie Elder have both been indicted for the murder of a white man named Harold Dragnatello. They are being held without bonds. One white woman shot a colored man near 35th Street and Wabash Avenue.

6. *Give numbers of arrests according to races.*

It seems that colored predominate greatly, but cannot give even an approximate number of arrests. The grand jury, however, thus far has indicted 52 colored and 3 white rioters. You may be interested to hear that after the grand jury had returned their first 17 indictments, all of which were colored, they demanded that the State's attorney bring forward some white cases or else dismiss them from further duty. The following day the State's attorney and Judge Crowe instructed them as to their duties and they resumed their work.

7. *What national or racial groups among the whites took part?*

*American whites, Irish, Italians, Poles--or who?*

American whites and Irish particularly, and all of foreign groups employed at stockyards, principally Lithuanians and Poles.

8. *What weapons were used by Negroes? Where is it supposed that the Negroes got the weapons from?*

Everything from a knife to a machine gun. A white alderman stated in the City Council that he had been reliably informed that the Negroes had 1,000 army rifles and enough ammunition to last for years if used in guerilla warfare. It is known that a few Negroes broke into the Cadet School at Wendell Phillips and secured in the neighborhood of 100 rifles. They broke into the 8th Regiment Armory too, but did not find anything. Most of the discharged soldiers have guns obtained while in service. Pawnshops were looted and quite a bit of ammunition was procured from Gary, Ind.

9. *Describe the behavior of the white policemen and the white soldiers stationed in the Negro district?*

Prior to the riot there was a feeling that the white policemen were in sympathy with the lawless whites who were committing bomb outrages and other injustices against the colored. The action of the white officer in refusing to arrest Stauber was deemed characteristic of the conduct of white officers. On Monday evening, the second day of the riot, white officers wantonly injured or perhaps killed a half dozen or more colored persons by shooting promiscuously into a crowd at 35th and Wabash, merely because one mounted officer was knocked off his horse by a brick, which it was claimed, was not aimed at him but at a passing truck. One colored man, incensed by their cowardly action, walked out into the street with an automatic and shot several of the white officers. He was not hit by any of the bullets from the officer's guns and has not been captured. His name is not known, of course. On the following evening two or more mounted policemen were killed by snipers at 23rd and State Streets. After these incidents the behavior of the white officers was splendid.

The white soldiers fraternized with the colored residents of the district which they patrolled from the very beginning and not a single hostile act has been charged to them against the colored. On the other hand a white man was killed by soldiers at 63rd Street and Cottage Grove.

10. *Did any Negro leader suggest the use of the 8th Illinois? If not, why not?*

Yes. Dr. Bentley, a member of the N.A.A.C.P. and a very prominent dentist of color, was in a conference with Gov. Lowden when the suggestion was made (whether the suggestion came directly from him I can't say) and the Governor threw up both hands and said that it would never do. Some, who evidently didn't hear of this conference, thought that the reason no effort was made to use the 8th was because it was not organized. It is reported that quite a few of the former members of the 8th acted independently and did everything in their power to quell the rioters. Others participated in raiding parties in the white districts.

11. *How did the political situation affect the riot?*

Not at all, in my opinion. Quite a few of our would-be-leaders tried to make political capital out of it.

12. *Why was the Mayor so reluctant to ask for the use of the troops?*

Evidently considered it a reflection upon his administration not to be able to cope with the situation. Did not want martial law, but when the situation grew serious was compelled to effect a compromise by asking the Governor to send troops to "assist" police force. We have never had martial law and soldiers have been recalled. Perhaps you have heard of the difference between Mayor Thompson and Gov. Lowden. I am not prepared to say, however, that that had anything to do with the Mayor's failure to ask for the troops sooner. Ed Wright, Assistant Corporation Counsel, told me that he advised the Mayor



against calling for the troops, because he felt that they would line up with the lawless whites, as they did in East St. Louis. Thompson excused himself for not being able to handle the situation because he has always maintained that our police force was inadequate. As a consequence, provision has been made for a thousand more officers.

13. *Did the delayed use of the troops benefit or injure the Negro cause? Explain why, if your answer is yes or no.*

Benefited it. While the delayed use of troops caused the loss of many innocent lives, colored as well as white, it afforded an opportunity for the Negroes to impress upon the whites their readiness, willingness, and eagerness to fight the thing through.

14. *What relation has the housing problem to the riot?*

Inability to house migrants in colored districts merely furnished another point of friction between whites and blacks and thus served to accentuate an already acrimonious feeling. I am of the opinion, however, that had there been ample space for the migrants in colored districts, a great many colored people would still have moved into white districts and the same feeling would have been present.

15. *What did the Negro preachers and Negro leaders do? Especially go into activities of Roscoe Conkling Simmons and the Negro aldermen and assemblymen there.*

Preachers and persons engaged in welfare work met daily during and since the riot in an attempt to handle emergency matters. Preachers were especially active in making statements to the press stating the Negro's point of view and counselling order. Preachers, aldermen and assemblymen had conferences with the Mayor, Chief of Police and representatives at the stockyards. The Aldermen were quite active in relief work and secured from various sources rations for thousands of needy colored families. The bread line was very much in evidence. Alderman Anderson vigorously protested against the introduction of a "zoning" resolution in the City Council and succeeded. I have seen or heard nothing of Simmon's activities except from his own lips. He was away from the city most of the time and came back just in time to help a few needy families.

16. *Describe the press reporting, both white and Negro.*

The white press, with the exception of the Tribune and possibly the Post, was exceptionally fair. The Hearst papers and the Daily News distinguished themselves for fairness. The colored papers were so acrid that they were threatened with suppression. With regards to news reports of the colored papers, I think they were in the main second-hand.

17. *What do you think of the rumor that Negroes burned down those houses?*

Nothing to it. It seems almost incredible that Negroes should be able to pass soldiers who were patrolling that district without being detected. The houses burned were far removed from the colored districts. No Negroes have been arrested in connection with the crime. Of course, it was quite clever for the owners to charge the burning to riotous Negroes so that they might get damage from the city.

18. *Your opinion as to how the riot will affect future relations between the races.*

The riot will make the future relations between the races decidedly better. It will bring about "a meeting of the minds" to the effect that the colored man must not be kicked about like a dumb brute. Our white friends, seeing the danger that besets the nation, will become more active in our cause, and the other whites will at least have a decent respect for us based on fear.

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#### "EXHIBIT A"

#### CAUSE OF RIOT

The riot was precipitated Sunday afternoon while the beaches were crowded with white and colored bathers. At 29th Street and the Lake Shore a colored boy on a raft crossed, or was carried by the wind, into the territory arbitrarily established for the white bathers. The boy was stoned and was seen to fall into the water. The whites refused either to rescue him or to permit his rescue by colored persons. A white man by the name of Stauber was pointed out to a white patrolman as the person responsible for the boy's death. The policeman refused to make the arrest, and the crowd seized and pummelled him. They gave chase to Stauber, caught him and caused arrest.

The crowd became infuriated by the failure of the white patrolman to make the arrest and the brutality of Stauber in attacking the boy. Police reserves were dispatched to the scene. A colored policeman shot and killed a colored rioter after seeing him fire upon a fellow white officer. News of the incident spread and soon a free-for-all fight was on. By Sunday night the situation spread to white and colored sections and both white men and Negroes were beaten. On Monday colored people were mobbed, dragged off the cars, (particularly at transfer points in white districts) wantonly fired at from flying automobiles, and stoned and beaten into unconsciousness going to and from work. In the colored sections, policemen were seized and beaten, and an ineffective police force tried in vain to disperse the crowds of colored men numbering as high as 5,000. Mobs gathered on corners in white and colored sections, waylaying and beating members of the opposite race. Glass in the windows of business places was wantonly smashed and white and colored people were ejected from street cars. Late Monday the riot spread to the Stockyards District where colored men were not permitted to leave their work except under heavy guard. During the early morning Tuesday, two colored men were killed in the loop and scores chased and wounded. It is reported that a colored woman with a baby in her arms was attacked and that both were killed. A small Negro section on the North side has been invaded and in many of the outlying districts where Negroes are in the minority violence has resulted in one or more deaths. No information has come to us of the bombing of homes or other property owned or occupied by Negroes since the riot began. Though the immediate cause was the refusal of police to make the arrest following the stoning of the boy on Sunday, and of the white bathers to permit the colored people to rescue the boy, the general feeling of unrest which has been hovering over Chicago for two or more months is undoubtedly at the bottom of the present outbreak. The bombing of homes of colored persons who have recently moved into white districts, an attempt to enforce segregation by certain real estate agents and organizations with which they are connected, the unwarranted killing of Negroes in outlying districts, the recurrence of violence in Washington Park and the widespread belief on the part of Negroes that the police have winked at these conditions, are admittedly the responsible factors.

*The Messenger* 2(September, 1919): 11-13.

## 15. CHICAGO AND ITS EIGHT REASONS

By Walter White<sup>77</sup>

Many causes have been assigned for the three days of race rioting, from July 27 to 30 (1919) in Chicago, each touching some particular phases of the general outbreak. Labor union officials attribute it to the action of the packers, while the packers are equally sure that the unions themselves are directly responsible. The city administration feels that the riots were brought on to discredit the Thompson forces, while leaders of the anti-Thompson forces, prominent among them being State's Attorney Maclay Hoyne, are sure that the administration is directly responsible. In this manner charges and counter-charges are made, but, as is usually the case, the Negro is made to bear the brunt of it all--to be "the scapegoat." A background of strained race relations brought to a head more rapidly through political corruption, economic competition and clashes due to the overflow of the greatly increased colored population into sections outside of the so-called "Black Belt," embracing the Second and Third Wards, all of these contributed, aided by magnifying of Negro crime by newspapers, to the formation of a situation where only a spark was needed to ignite the flames of racial antagonism. That spark was contributed by a white youth when he knocked a colored lad off a raft at the 29th Street bathing beach and the colored boy was drowned.

Four weeks spent in studying the situation in Chicago, immediately following the outbreaks, seem to show at least eight general causes for the riots, and the same conditions, to a greater or less degree, can be found in almost every large city with an appreciable Negro population. These causes, taken

taken after a careful study in order of their prominence, are:

1. Race Prejudice
2. Economic Competition
3. Political Corruption and Exploitation of Negro Voters
4. Police Inefficiency
5. Newspaper Lies about Negro Crime
6. Unpunished Crimes Against Negroes
7. Housing
8. Reaction of Whites and Negroes from [sic] War.

Some of these can be grouped under the same headings, but due to the prominence of each they are listed as separate causes.

Prior to 1915, Chicago had been famous for its remarkably fair attitude toward colored citizens. Since that time, when the migratory movement from the South assumed large proportions, the situation has steadily grown more and more tense. This was due in part to the introduction of many Negroes who were unfamiliar with city ways and could not, naturally, adapt themselves immediately to their new environment. Outside of a few sporadic attempts, little was done to teach them the rudimentary principles of sanitation, of conduct, or of their new status as citizens under a system different from that in the South. During their period of absorption into the new life, their care-free, at times irresponsible and sometimes even boisterous, conduct caused complications difficult to adjust. But equally important, though seldom considered, is the fact that many Southern whites have also come into the North, many of them to Chicago, drawn by the same economic advantages that attracted the colored workman. The exact figure is unknown, but it is estimated by men who should know that fully 20,000 of them are in Chicago. These have spread the virus of race hatred and evidences of it can be seen in Chicago on every hand. This same cause underlies each of the other seven causes.

With regard to economic competition, the age-long dispute between capital and labor enters. Large numbers of Negroes were brought from the South by the packers and there is little doubt that this was done in part so that the Negro might be used as a club over the heads of the unions. John Fitzpatrick and Ed Nockels, president and secretary, respectively, of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and William Buck, editor of the *New Majority*, a labor organ, openly charge that the packers subsidized colored ministers, politicians and Y.M.C.A. secretaries to prevent the colored workmen at the stockyards from entering the unions. On the other hand, the Negro workman is not at all sure as to the sincerity of the unions themselves. The Negro in Chicago yet remembers the waiters' strike some years ago, when colored union workers walked out at the command of the unions and when the strike was settled, the unions did not insist that Negro waiters be given their jobs back along with whites, and as a result, colored men have never been able to get back into some of the hotels even to the present day. The Negro is between the "the devil and the deep blue sea." He feels that if he goes into the unions, he will lose the friendship of the employers. He knows that if he does not, he is going to be met with the bitter antagonism of the unions. With the exception of statements made by organizers, who cannot be held to accountability because of their minor official connection, no statements have been made by the local union leaders, outside of high sounding, but meaningless, protestations of friendship for the Negro worker. He feels that he has been given promises too long already. In fact, he is "fed up" on them. What he wants are binding statements and guarantees that cannot be broken at will.

With the possible exception of Philadelphia, there is probably no city in America with more of political trickery, chicanery and exploitation than Chicago. Against the united and bitter opposition of every daily newspaper in Chicago, William Hale Thompson was elected again as mayor, due as was claimed, to the Negro and German vote. While it is not possible to state that the anti-Thompson element deliberately brought on the riots, yet it is safe to say that they were not averse to its coming. The possibility of such a clash was seen many months before it actually occurred, yet no steps were taken to prevent it. The purpose of this was to secure a two-fold result. First, it would alienate the Negro set from Thompson through a belief that was expected to grow among the colored vote when it was seen that the police force under the direction of the mayor was unable or unwilling to protect the colored people from assault

by mobs. Secondly, it would discourage the Negroes from registering and voting and thus eliminate the powerful Negro vote in Chicago. Whether or not this results remains to be seen. In alking with a prominent colored citizen of Chicago, asking why the Negroes supported Thompson so unitedly, his very significant reply was:

"The Negro in Chicago, as in every other part of America, is fighting for the fundamental rights of citizenship. If a candidate for office is wrong on every other public question except this, the Negroes are going to vote for that man, for that is their only way of securing the things they want and that are denied them."

The value of the Negro vote to Thompson can be seen in a glance at the recent election figures. His plurality was 28,000 votes. In the second ward it was 14,000 and in the third 10,000. The second and third wards constitute most of what is known as the "Black Belt."

The fourth contributing cause was the woeful inefficiency and criminal negligence of the police authorities of Chicago, both prior to and during the riots. Prostitution, gambling and the illicit sale of whisky flourish openly and apparently without any fear whatever of police interference. In a most dangerous statement, State's Attorney Maclay Hoyne, on August 25, declared that the riots were due solely to vice in the second ward. He seemed either to forget or to ignore the flagrant disregard of law and order and even of the common principles of decency in city management existing in many other sections of the city.

All of this tended to contribute to open disregard for law and almost contempt for it. Due either to political "pull" or to reciprocal arrangements, many notorious dives [are] run and policemen are afraid to arrest the proprietors.

During the riots the conduct of the police force as a whole was equally open to criticism. State's Attorney Hoyne openly charged the police with arresting colored rioters and with an unwillingness to arrest white rioters. Those who were arrested were at once released. In one case a colored man who was fair enough to appear to be white was arrested for carrying concealed weapons, together with five white men and a number of colored men. All were taken to a police station; the light colored man and the five whites being put into one cell and the other colored men in another. In a few minutes the light colored man and the five whites were released and their ammunition given back to them with the remark, "You'll probably need this before the night is over."

Fifth on the list is the effect of newspaper publicity concerning Negro crime. With the exception of the *Daily News*, all of the papers of Chicago have played up in prominent style with glaring, prejudice-breeding headlines every crime or suspected crime committed by Negroes. Headlines such as "Negro Brutally Murders Prominent Citizen," "Negro Robs House" and the like have appeared with alarming frequency and the news articles beneath such headlines have been of the same sort. During the rioting such headlines as "Negro Bandits Terrorize Town," "Rioters Burn 100 Homes--Negroes Suspected of Having Plotted Blaze" appeared.

In the latter case a story was told of witnesses seeing Negroes in automobiles applying torches and fleeing. This was the story given to the press by Fire Attorney John R. McCabe after a casual and hasty survey. Latter the office of State Fire Marshal Gamber proved conclusively that the fires were not caused by Negroes, but by whites. As can easily be seen, such newspaper accounts did not tend to lessen the bitterness of feeling between the conflicting groups. Further, many wild and unfounded rumors were published in the press--incendiary and inflammatory to the highest degree. . . .

For a long period prior to the riots, organized gangs of white hoodlums had been perpetrating crimes against Negroes for which no arrests had been made. These gangs in many instances masqueraded under the name of "Athletic and Social Clubs" and later direct connection was shown between them and incendiary fires started during the riots. Colored men, women, and children had been beaten in the parks, most of them in Jackson and Lincoln Parks. In one case a young colored girl was beaten and thrown into a lagoon. In other cases Negroes were beaten so severely that they had to be taken to hospitals. All of these cases had caused many colored people to wonder if they could expect any protection whatever from the authorities. Particularly vicious in their attacks was an organization known locally as "Regan's Colts."

Much has been written and said concerning the housing situation in Chicago and its effect on the racial situation. The problem is a simple one. Since 1915 the colored population of Chicago has more than doubled, increasing in four years from a little over 50,000 to what is now estimated to be between 125,000 and 150,000. Most of them lived in the area bounded by the railroad on the west, 30th Street on the north, 40th Street on the south and Ellis Avenue on the east. Already overcrowded, this so-called "Black Belt" could not possibly hold the doubled colored population. One cannot put ten gallons of water in a five-gallon pail. Although many Negroes had been living in "white" neighborhoods, the increased exodus from the old areas created an hysterical group of persons who formed "Property Owners' Associations" for the purpose of keeping intact white neighborhoods. Prominent among these was the Kenwood-Hyde Park Property Owners' Improvement Association, as well as the Park Manor Improvement Association. Early in June the writer, while in Chicago, attended a private meeting of the first named at the Kenwood Club House, at Lake Park Avenue and 47th Street. Various plans were discussed for keeping the Negroes in "their part of the town," such as securing the discharge of colored persons from positions they held when they attempted to move into "white" neighborhoods, purchasing mortgages of Negroes buying homes and ejecting them when mortgages fell due and were unpaid, and many more of the same calibre. The language of many speakers was vicious and strongly prejudicial and had the distinct effect of creating race bitterness.

In a number of cases during the period from January, 1918, to August, 1919, there were bombings of colored homes and houses occupied by Negroes outside of the "Black Belt." During this period no less than twenty bombings took place, yet only two persons have been arrested and neither of the two has been convicted, both cases being continued.

Finally, the new spirit aroused in Negroes by their war experiences enters into the problem. From Local Board No. 4 embracing the neighborhood in the vicinity of State and 35th Streets, containing over 20,000 inhabitants of which fully ninety per cent are colored, over 9,000 men registered and 1,850 went to camp. These men, with their new outlook on life, injected the same spirit of independence into their companions, a thing that is true of many other sections of America. One of the greatest surprises to many of those who came down to "clean out the niggers" is that these same "niggers" fought back. Colored men saw their own kind being killed, heard of many more and believed that their lives and liberty were at stake. In such a spirit most of the fighting was done.

*The Crisis*, 16 (October, 1919): 293-97.

#### 16. EXPLOITATION OF NEGROES BY PACKERS CAUSED RIOTS, SAYS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

"First, the Negro is urged to come North, and is exploited as a source of cheap labor. Then he is mobbed, either because he works too cheaply or because he prospers. Exploitation summarizes the roots of the race difficulty in New York."

In a statement prepared exclusively for *The Call* the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, yesterday laid responsibility for the race riots in Chicago upon the packers and railroads of that city who had induced a great number of Negroes to go North during the war. The interests then "shirked their responsibility when real readjustment of labor and industrial conditions began."

In reply to the charge that Negroes are being infected with "Bolshevism," the association points out that the "Negro is not to be blamed for turning to those who offer him at least sympathy," and that the present form of government present him with little happiness.

"Even the excuse that was offered for the assaults upon colored people in Washington--alleged assaults on white women--was absent in Chicago," the statement says. No measures taken by authorities in Chicago to prevent clash.

"The North must recognize its responsibility to the Negroes who come from the South. In Chicago the packers and the railroads induced them to come during the war. They were promised higher wages and better living conditions. When they came they were robbed by real estate agents and landlords. The people who induced the Negroes to migrate shirked their responsibility when readjustment of labor and industrial conditions began." The "black belt" became overcrowded so when Negroes sought residence in white districts "bitter feeling was created by white property owners' associations which tried to keep the Negroes out of their districts."

"The history of the conditions which led to race trouble in Chicago is a history which could be duplicated in a number of northern industrial cities. First the Negro is urged to come North and is exploited as a source of cheap labor. Then he is mobbed, either because he works too cheaply or because he prospers. 'Exploitation' summarizes the roots of the race difficulty in the North. . . ."

"To talk about Bolshevism among Negroes as does the New York Times is to falsify and misrepresent. Having received nothing but misrepresentation from the New York Times and the class of people that newspaper represents, the Negro is not to be blamed for turning to those who offer him at least sympathy. If Negroes are turning to Bolshevism, whatever that may mean, it is because the present form of government seems to offer him little indeed of the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

*New York Call, August 5, 1919.*

#### 17. ON THE FIRING-LINE DURING THE CHICAGO RACE-RIOTS

In that sporadic warfare waged over some days and nights between the whites, blacks, and police force of Chicago, newspaper reporters became war-correspondents, with a good many opportunities to experience some of the perils of war-corresponding on the recent battle-fronts of Europe. One reporter, "his taxicab shattered with bullets," returned from a night of dashing from riot-center to riot-center, where men died much as they did "over there," "sat down at a typewriter," according to the editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, which employed him, "and calmly began to write" a first-hand account of the fighting along the "dead-line," as the boundaries of the negro district were called. To quote as it appeared in *The Tribune*:

At the "dead-line" on Wentworth Avenue, twilight brought a strange sight. To the west every street was filled with great crowds of whites, some standing silent, watching every move, others swirling and eddying in a maelstrom of pregnant mob rule. At the crossing at Thirty-seventh Street a cry was heard.

A shot came; the quick, sharp impact breaking into the riot murmur like a call to arms. There was a roar. Dust was flung into the air from thousands of trampling feet. The crowd surged forward.

The clang of a gong followed and a big blue wagon rolled up. Out of it poured a score of men in blue--the city police force. From down the street one heard the clatter of hoofs. A score of mounted men arrived. On horseback and on foot they charged. Clubs flashed in the air. Here and there a curse, a blow. The crowd retreated slowly, then ran for their lives, for these men which they faced were in earnest that peace should once more reign over a city troublous.

On the pavement lay a boy of eighteen, the life-blood staining his white shirt in an ever-widening circle. Came the ambulance--he passed from the scene.

Then, down Wentworth, squads of patrolmen appeared. "Where did those shots come from?" inquired one, and his voice was ominous of things to come.

"From that house over there"--the cry welled upward from a thousand throats.

Slowly, carefully, they circled the place, a big brick structure. They entered. Out of the door ran a woman sobbing.

In a moment the faces of the men in blue appeared from the windows of the upper story. "Nothing doing here!" they yelled to the watchers below.

Their commander, a brawny lieutenant, had been reconnoitering the district. He returned in a moment. Slowly they climbed into their wagons and rolled up the street. Another "riot" had ended.

Half an hour later a tall, sunburned sergeant picked up the phone at Deering station. "What's that?" he said. Then bang went the phone.

"Hustle to Thirty-first and Wallace," he yelled. "There's a riot on there." Bluecoats poured out of the building, jumped into the waiting machines--the police had answered the call of duty again.

The streets seemed silent, deserted. For blocks the wagon rushed on, seeing nothing but little knots of people with scared faces and a strained attitude of expectancy.

At their destination a single policeman was waiting. He pointed mutely to a great pile of broken glass on the street and sidewalk.

"They passed in an auto, shooting right and left. Look at those windows," he said. Great pieces of jagged glass stuck up in the panes which once were Pittsburgh plate.

"Up at Thirty-ninth and Wentworth there's something doing," some one yelled. "Let's go!" cried the lieutenant. And over the short distance they rushed. As they neared the block a rattle of shots was heard and one shrill cry. Around the corner. Men fled in all directions as the wagon appeared. But seven were caught even as they were disappearing from sight.

"Throw up your hands! Get 'em quick! Hear me!"

In the pockets of two were found revolvers loaded. In the others pieces of brick, stones, a railroad spike or two, and a pair of brass knucks.

"To the wagon with 'em!" And they went away.

A pair of motor-cycle police were riding slowly down Thirty-first Street at State Street. From a building a few flashes of light, a few sharp cracks. One of the riders gasped, his machine wavered. Straight to the ground, over the handle-bars, he plunged.

"My God! I'm done for!" he gasped as his partner reached him. The answer was another burst of shots from the windows above. The windshield on a taxi which had followed the cyclemen burst into a thousand fragments. The door-glass followed. Then the deep roar of the police .45 joined in the conflict.

Some one somewhere phoned a riot-call to the Stanton Police Station, and three wagons and an ambulance responded. As the first wagon came to a halt and the men started to get out, the battle was renewed from above. The second man that backed out of the "Black Maria," which is a Chicago name for a police-wagon, "pitched forward in a pathetic huddle." "They got me!" he mumbled, as the blood rose in his throat and choked his utterance to a startled gasp. After that:

The bluecoats stormed the buildings. In one two-story brick affair, which housed a tailor-shop on the first floor and apartments on the second, a wounded man was found. Six others were captured. A woman joined the procession. Revolvers were dug up from their poorly hidden places "ditched" after the cops had outnumbered the rioters.

Men rushed into the building next door. They could be heard trampling around. To the watchers on the outside came the tiny gleam of a search-light or the sudden flare of a gas-lamp. Then at the back of the house was heard a curse.

"Coom out av there! Put up yer mitts! Come down and come down quick!" The brogue in it was as thick as the mud of a peat bog.

In the dim glare of an alley incandescent a man appeared with his hands stretched to the sky.

"Ossifer, I ain't done nothing'; truly I ain't" he repeated over and over. "Take him along!" was his fate, and he was hustled to the wagon.

"Somebody get up them stairs to the roof and see if you can't find a lot of guns!"

With a tiny flash-light two policemen and a reporter journeyed up the rickety stairs in the blackness. Every corner was searched. Into the top-floor rooms they went.

The cover in front of the fireplace was pulled off. It revealed a 30-30 Winchester. A quick thrust and a shell was ejected.

"W-w-w-hy, the barrel is hot!" stuttered the man who held it. Comprehension began to dawn in the faces of his listeners. They had the man who had

shot their comrades. A woman, in a cheap cotton shimmy, came running into the room. "Befor' Gawd," she moaned, "I didn't have nuthin' to do with it; honest, I didn't!"

"Get on your clothes and come along," they told her. Another rifle and two revolvers were added to the loot of the officers.

A man lay in the gutter at Thirty-second and State streets. From the elevated tracks above a sniper was pot-shooting. Across the street a Yiddish shoemaker knelt behind a counter and prayed.

From far-off came the stroke of distant chimes. The clatter of a railroad-train somewhere in the distance, the clang of an ambulance-bell, the muffled roar of passing autos, the silently flitting forms as denizens of the night sped quickly from door to door along the street--all that was part of that story which that reporter saw but could not write--the story of Chicago's race riot in the dead-line district.

*Literary Digest*, 62(August 23, 1919): 44,46.

#### 18. WHAT THE SOUTH THINKS OF NORTHERN RACE-RIOTS

Mr. Dooley might almost have been a Southerner when he remarked to Mr. Hennessy, "I'm not so much troubled about the maygur whin he lives among his opprissors as I am whin he falls into th' hands iv his librators." Strike out "opprissors" and substitute a word implying regulation, restraint, and benevolent discipline and you have the Southern point of view to a nicety; what Northerners call "oppression," in the South the Southerners regard as measures essential to the welfare not only of the whites but also of the blacks; they believe that Northern freedom from restraint injures both races, and the Houston (Texas) *Chronicle*, commenting on race-riots in the North, observes: "The immediate cause, like the immediate result, is an old, old story, but both are rooted in a background of silly pampering which leads, and will always lead, to atrocious acts on the one hand and to illogical spasm of temper on the other." So it is natural that race-riots in Washington and Chicago should be widely discust throughout the South. To the Southerners' way of thinking, they demonstrate the fallacy of the Northern attitude toward the negro. *The Chronicle* maintains that "in Washington, more than any other place, negroes have been petted into an attitude of lazy conceit," and that "the uniform has been permitted to give them an unprecedented degree of protection and consideration," while "high wages and allotments have tended to make them shiftless and irresponsible." And when Southerners declare themselves "the negro's best friends there is no disingenuousness about it. They believe what they say. They are skeptical when Northerners lay claim to a more generous regard for the negroes, and the Memphis (Tenn.) *Commercial Appeal* speaks for the South in general in asserting: "The clash of whites and negroes in Chicago, coming hard on the heels of a similar disturbance in Washington, should be a warning to the negroes of the South that the supposed benevolent treatment of their race in the Northern States is largely a myth." As *The Commercial Appeal* informs its readers:<sup>78</sup>

"The scarcity of labor in the North during the war caused the big employers of labor there to turn their attention to the negro labor of the South. They imported a number of negroes from the Southern States, who were paid big wages. The negroes were not so informed at the time, but it has developed that their employment was merely temporary. When the white soldiers began to return, the negroes were let out. With the usual African improvidence a great many of these Southern blacks spent practically all of the money they made on city luxuries, so that when their employment was taken away from them they were penniless.

"Facing privations and want, a number of these negroes turned criminals in order to support themselves. There was an outbreak of robberies and other crimes by these imported colored men, and the result was that resentment of the white people was aroused. The supposed friends of the black man became his worst enemies and the war of races was the inevitable result. It has been pursued with a relentlessness that could not be possible in the South.



As bad for law and order as lynchings may be, they can in no way compare with the racial outbreaks that occur with a persistent frequency in Northern cities housing a considerable negro population. Mobs in the South vent their revenge only upon the negro who has been guilty of some foul crime. The innocent seldom if ever suffer. Of course, any mob law is bad, but it is infinitely worse when this develops into a clash of races where the innocent suffer with the guilty. Such racial disorders as have occurred during the last few weeks in Washington and Chicago are possible in the Southern States, but they are hardly probable."

Such is likewise the contention of the Southern press in general. As one Southern paper puts it, "too often, alas, in our own section is heard from mobs of white men the shout of 'Kill the coon!' but never 'the coons.'" The Mobile (Ala.) *Register* meanwhile remarks:

"It is characteristic of mobs north of Mason and Dixon's line to class all of the colored race as offenders, and to beat them up indiscriminately. This is the result of racial animosity. In the South where the negroes are known, and where the fact is fully recognized that there are many good negroes and but few bad ones, there is seldom any showing of actual race animosity. Mob action generally confines itself to the individual criminal. It is commonly charged by Northern writers at the South that the negro is lynched because he is a negro. If such has happened, we do not know of a case."

In the same spirit, the Nashville *Tennessean* reminds us:

"The Southern mob seldom, if ever, directs its violence against the negro race, but is satisfied when it wreaks vengeance upon the offender of virtue. The Northern mob does not stop there, but directs its lawless attacks on the race. Both mobs are lawless, and the press of the South have condemned them as such."

Somewhat less sweeping in its claims as regards the South, but not less convinced in principle, the Norfolk (Va.) *Ledger-Dispatch* says:

"There have been times when race-riots of varying sizes have taken place in a few Southern communities, but they have all been due to flashing outbreaks against an individual or several individuals, and occasionally these outbreaks have spread before they could be checked. But conditions have never been of such a character as to lead any considerable part of the population to indulge in what the calm and uncolored Associated Press describes as 'an orgy of hatred.'"

The Knoxville (Tenn.) *Journal and Tribune*, after calling the situation in Chicago "an utter disgrace to that city and a shame to the nation," marvels that "there are those with white faces and black hearts who would persecute a negro because he is a negro, and who give the law-abiding negro no consideration, lumping all together as a whole as having no rights the white criminals need give any respect," and the Charlotte (N.C.) *Observer* says that,

"In race troubles in the South always some sympathy is developed for the negroes and there is an element that is ever inclined to give them protection. In Washington not a hand appears to have been raised in their behalf and for the whole of one night they appeared on the streets at their own peril. When the negro gets into trouble in the North he is in trouble bad. The whole population turns on him and the disposition is to 'clean him up.' If it should develop that during the troubles in Washington any man came to the rescue of the negro we are going to venture that it was a white man from the South."

Very little in the way of rancorous or abusive comment appears in the Southern press concerning the outbreaks at Washington and Chicago, and if the Nashville *Banner* has something to say about Northern 'hypocrisy,' the charges are tempered by a willingness to understand and forgive. Says *The Banner*:

"The Northern people have maintained a hypocritical attitude in respect to negroes, and outbreaks like that in Chicago, now that negro populations are becoming uncomfortably large there, tear off the mask. The hypocrisy in a great many instances was unconscious. A large number of Northerners had hereditary prejudice on the subject arising out of the old crusade against slavery and the Civil War. They didn't recognize the inevitable race antagonism wherever a dark race obtrudes on the white man, and the difficulties under which the South labored in keeping that antagonism within bounds."

However, the Vicksburg (Miss.) *Herald* takes a shot at Chicago in an editorial entitled, "Chickens Coming Home to Roost," and asserts that--

"To all with understanding the bloody Chicago race-clash was forecast by the following story in the *Chicago News* two days before the riot:

"Not only is Chicago a receiving-station and port of refuge for colored people who are anxious to be free from the jurisdiction of lynch law, but there has been built here a publicity or propaganda-machine that directs its appeals or carries on an agitation that every week reaches hundreds of thousands of people of the colored race in the Southern States. The State Street blocks south of Thirty-first Street are a "newspaper row," with *The Defender*, *The Search-light*, *The Guide*, *The Advocate*, *The Whip*, as weekly publications, and there are also illustrated monthly magazines such as *The Half-Century* and *The Favorite*."

"The 'propaganda' of this 'receiving-station and port of refuge,' the inevitable precursor of race-war, cuts both ways. Its poison indeed is more deadly upon such negro centers as Chicago and Washington than with the negro masses of the South."

Far from contenting itself with merely tracing the Northern race-riots to what it believes to be their causes, the Southern press give serious attention to the measures a community should take when threatened with such outbreaks. The Savannah (Ga.) *Press* advises a prompt "show of firmness." The Tuscaloosa (Ala.) *News and Times-Gazette* deprecates anything savoring of "supine inefficiency." The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* maintains that a community "must act vigorously from the beginning," and in Richmond, Va., the *News-Leader* goes in for preparedness in an editorial reprinted by a Richmond negro paper, *The Plan-et*. Says the editorial:

"Determined that the good sense and good will of the better classes shall prevail, Richmond people have agreed upon a very definite policy. The precise details of this we shall not, of course, disclose; the main facts should be set down here and now that every man may understand Richmond is to do strict justice, but is to suppress with the utmost severity every disturbance. If white rowdies pick a quarrel with negroes, they are to be punished instantly. If negroes should start trouble, precisely the same punishment will be meted out to them. The *News-Leader* expects Colonel Myers to instruct his men to shoot without hesitation into the ranks of any mob that may start. We expect him to use all the reserve forces at his command and to continue as long as may be necessary the prudent arrangements made in recent days. We expect him, further, to keep the machine guns supplied with abundant ammunition and in perfect order as at present, so that if trouble starts in any street, the machine guns may be brought up instantly in the waiting motor-trucks and after warning has been given can be used to sweep the street from end to end. We indorse all the director has done in preparing to use fire-apparatus, but we are frank to say we do not expect him to stop with water, if any mob opens fire. Fortunately we need not call upon him to avoid the mistake made in Washington of placing a single officer or a single sentry on a street corner. We have enough forces at hand to throw a cordon around any district where disorder may start and then to scour every street and every alley.

"But, above all else, Richmond people insist that precisely the same treatment be measured out to all that may attempt trouble."

*Literary Digest*, 62 (August 16, 1919): 17-18.

## 19. CHICAGO IN THE NATION'S RACE STRIFE

By Graham Taylor

The lightning that set Chicago's race antagonisms aflame did not strike out of a clear sky. Only those who did not care or want to see could have failed to be aware that the storm clouds had been gathering a long while, and that the very air was charged with electricity. There were more who served their own supposed interests by obscuring the situation than there were those in official or private positions who were willing to serve the public by disclosing the facts which might have aroused and rallied preventive and protective measures.

So little was said of the rapid and large increase of the Negro population during the war that some of the great industries which invited and profited by the immigration from the South are suspected of concealing the figures. The Chicago Daily News, however, presented facts and a forecast in 1916 which was verified and brought down to date by another investigator just before this outbreak. Within five years the Negro population was shown to have doubled and now to have reached a total of 125,000, registering Chicago as the third or fourth city in the United States in the number of its colored people. All but about one-tenth of these are crowded into the "black belt" on the south side of the city, extending over eight square miles, within which the outbreak occurred and to which for the most part it has been confined. To the other three small colonies and to a fourth, numbering about 12,000, on the west side the disturbances spread sporadically. Some of the boldest assaults and murders were committed upon inoffensive colored men in the crowded central district of the loop.

No such reports of the gathering and bursting of the storm have appeared as the stories told me by some of the ablest and best informed Negroes, whose public and professional work has kept them in continuous contact with the rapidly developing situation. Out of their crowded district, which has become a No Man's Land to all white people kept out of it by the rioting, they brought sharp-edged facts such as could be told only by those who had witnessed or experienced them.

East St. Louis sounded the alarm two years ago. When it went wild against the influx of southern Negroes, every Negro community at northern industrial centers took warning. As with the Jews in Russia when the pogroms started, the dread of others to follow struck home to their hearts. But unlike the Russian Jews, or Negroes who have hitherto suffered such fear south and north, these Chicago Negroes prepared. Here, as probably elsewhere, they had been taking counsel together and more and more of them armed themselves to protect their lives and their homes, some of which are suspected of being "private arsenals."

Meanwhile aggressions increased. Colored children on their way to school were terrified, put to flight and roughly treated by young hoodlums. Colored people of any age, who were found in Washington Park, 371 acres lying just to the south of the black belt, were attacked and driven off with increasing violence. Late in June threats were posted on fences and trees in the Negro quarter announcing, "We will get you July 4."

Then and ever since increased preparations were made for defense. But that offense was avoided is claimed by the reminder that no clash occurred on the holiday. The picnic baskets that were carried about the streets, or by groups further afield, contained weapons which were regarded as more of a necessity of life than lunches. Thus somewhat thrown off their guard, the Negro workers continued steadily at work, and great crowds of them resorted to the bathing beaches where sections of the shore were informally set apart for their use, although without any warrant for segregation either by ordinance or statute. Across this watery line a Negro boy on a raft drifted Sunday afternoon, July 27, when the beach was thronged both by whites and blacks immediately adjacent to each other. A white man threw a stone at the lad which knocked him into the water. Some of the Negroes demanded the arrest of the assailant and, when a white patrolman refused, he was beaten, and later suspended by the chief of police. The fugitive was captured by other Negroes, placed under arrest by other officers, and held under \$50,000 bail, to be tried for murder. Meanwhile those seeking to save the boy from drowning were prevented by the whites from rescuing him. Then and there came the first clash which led to the week of rioting. The first man killed was a Negro shot by a Negro officer for firing at a white policeman. Great credit is given the police by Negro citizens, with very few exceptions, for standing up to their duty, especially when and where contending with very insufficient force against overwhelming odds in the midst of mobs of infuriated blacks and whites numbering as many as three thousand. This is the more creditable since many of them are Irishmen and had to contend with the most aggressive element from an Irish district bordering the Negro quarter.

The fury spread like wild-fire, first back in the "black belt" where safeguards disappeared as rapidly as the perils to life and property increased. Workers in the stockyards, 10,000 or more of whom are Negroes, were at first guarded as they entered and left, but few of them could get to their work when

rioting made passage through the streets unsafe and the street-cars were completely stopped by the carmen's strike. Groups and crowds gathered, grew and loitered. Gangs of white and black hoodlums appeared and ran amuck. Armed men of either color dashed through the district in automobiles and beyond, firing as they flew. Two white men, wounded while shooting up the district, were found to carry official badges, one being thus identified as in the United States civil service and the other as a Chicago policeman. White men firing a machine gun from a truck were killed. White and Negro policemen were in turn attacked and badly beaten by mobs of the opposite color. The torch followed attacks upon Negro stores and dwellings, scores of which were set on fire.

#### Fighting the Fire

At last the mayor, recognizing the inadequacy of the police force to cope with the situation, called upon the governor for the assistance of the state troops, seven regiments of which are at this writing in Chicago under arms, five of them on patrol duty in the most disturbed district. While a suspension of organized hostilities has thus been secured, sniping continues. Like a prairie fire the flames of hatred leap over all such barricades to other parts of the city, not only where Negroes live and work, but in some instances where they are passing through the thoroughfares, more thronged than ever by pedestrians and vehicles while all streetcars were strike-bound. A colored soldier wearing a wound stripe on his sleeve was beaten to death while limping along one of the main streets. He was heard to exclaim, "This is a fine reception to give a man just home from the war." One cannot but wonder what might have happened if any of these outrages had occurred a day or two before when a Negro regiment of Chicago men, 1,800 strong, carrying their rifles, marched through these same streets on their way direct from France to the demobilization camp.

The situation within the military lines has been temporarily relieved at many points. Negro stockyard employees received wage payments at their homes. Their return to work has been postponed till the responsibility for incendiary fires in the Lithuanian district has been fixed. Deliveries of food and fuel which had been suspended for several days were restored, the wholesale grocers uniting to relieve many families who could not get supplies. The district office of the United Charities kept open, but its visitors were not permitted to expose themselves to the violence on the streets in making their rounds. The playgrounds were also closed. The vacation session of the public school was forced to suspend, being at the very center of the disturbance. The Provident Hospital, served by Negro physicians and nurses, ministered to wounded blacks and whites alike, which exposed them to the threats and even raids of blacks seeking vengeance upon wounded white. The buildings of the Y.M.C.A. and the League on Urban Conditions among Negroes, managed respectively by two very courageous and capable colored men, A. F. Jackson and T. Arnold Hill, have throughout the crisis been the centers within the district for communication and cooperation for philanthropic and civic effort and have promoted understanding, interpretation and mediation among many influential groups in the city at large.

#### Causes and Remedies

Both the causes and remedies are considered by whites and blacks alike to be psychological, economic, moral and political. They agree that the psychical differences between the two races are neither understood nor considerably taken into account by either, especially at points of irritation. They must therefore be acknowledged and reckoned with until education, ethics and religion rear generations that can discriminate between the better and worse members of each race and thus learn to agree to differ concerning tastes and temperaments, as members of the same race measurably succeed in doing with each other. The family, the school, the playground and the church must be depended upon for this rearing of future generations, which in turn must be promoted by fair-minded and intelligent people of both races conferring and working together for these ends. The failure of these primary social agencies to fulfill this higher function should stimulate parents and teachers, social and church workers to much more direct effort to counteract indiscriminate race prejudice.

Insufficient and unsuitable housing provision for the industrial classes

is considered to be the economic factor of the race problem which gave occasion for the outbreaks of resentment and violence, because it bears hardest upon the Negroes and most irritates the whites. The district in which the great majority of Chicago Negroes can find dwellings available for them is unfortunately located at the older center of a growing section of the city which affords no space for the spread of the increasingly congested colored population. With the doubling of that population the congestion became intolerable, and its families were forced to seek residence elsewhere. Despite an overcharge to Negroes of from 15 to 25 per cent on rentals and sales of real estate, adjoining property occupied by whites depreciated in value. Resentment against those thought guilty of this intrusion and loss not only prevented neighborship, but incited persecution. Bombs were the deterrents used before the riot and the torch when the mob got control. Capitalists interested in the solution of this housing problem insist that the rentals which colored laborers can pay will not return 5 per cent on the investment, which therefore cannot be considered as a business proposition in real estate. Self-respecting colored people resent its consideration upon any other basis and insist that a single demonstration that such an investment might meet with a warrantable return would be followed by others to the speedy solution of the deadlock that now exists. The building and rental of dwellings by municipalities at a return less than is satisfactory to private capital might be undertaken in this country as in some European cities. In any event, this crisis forces the conviction that some way must be found other than this worst *laissez faire* policy, which proves to be no way at all.

Community morals are recognized as responsible for much personal immorality of the most dangerous type. For years the segregated vice district was forced upon this residential section where Negroes practically had to live. Since the break-up of segregated vice, the vicious resorts and practices which were permitted to survive have been tolerated and protected by the city administration where the population was weakest and most helpless in protecting itself.

Gambling, which is suppressed almost everywhere else, is allowed to run wide-open there. A recent survey of this situation and its disastrous effects upon family life disclosed two blocks with 83 families, 96 per cent of whose boys were truants, 72 per cent of whom were retarded in their development. The fathers had deserted 31 of these families and were heavy drinkers in 28 of them. Forty mothers worked all day away from home and 20 were heavy drinkers. Fifty-one per cent of these "homes" were broken by death, desertion, divorce, drink, promiscuous living and degeneracy. Appalled as the city may well be at the savage brutality of young hoodlums from sixteen to twenty-one years of age, both black and white, who with equal aggression have wreaked the worst vengeance upon life and the most destruction upon property, are they anything but the outgrowth of the seeds we have allowed to be planted in these hotbeds of vice and crime?

The political depravity which is responsible not only for the failure to prevent, but for the actual promotion of such conditions, is directly chargeable to a situation which has existed not only in Chicago but in East St. Louis and everywhere else where racial necessity is exploited as a partisan asset. The most eminent Negro physician and surgeon in Chicago publicly charged that the present situation is possible "by reason of the fact that the two colored aldermen are responsible to white politicians rather than to the voters who elected them; that the colored people have simply been sold out by colored leaders who are in the hands of white politicians." He might have added that some of the colored ministers have played the part of the very worst of these politicians, even going so far as publicly to urge the men of their congregations to arm themselves against the whites. An army officer at a public conference hinted at the political source of a concerted propaganda that led directly to lawlessness and violence.

Many powerful organizations are lining up to help meet the present emergency and also to take far-reaching measures for the prevention of its recurrence. The trade unions have not always welcomed Negroes to membership and not all of them do yet, but they have been unionizing colored workers for the past year or two on a larger scale than ever. The official organ of the Chicago Federation of Labor in an editorial For White Union Men To Read, urges the unions "to protect colored fellow workers from the unreasoning frenzy of race prejudice, so as to decide whether the colored workers are to continue to come into the labor movement or are to feel that they have been abandoned by it and lose confidence in it. Since in the past organized labor has gone further in

eliminating race hatred than any other class, it is up against the acid test now to show whether this is so."

The Association of Commerce and groups of merchants and manufacturers are acknowledging their share of the community's neglect of a situation which might have been prevented by earlier attention, and are seeking measures both for temporary relief and the permanent improvement of conditions.

A conference of eighty representatives connected with forty-eight civic, social, commercial and religious bodies was held at the Union League Club to enlist Red Cross emergency aid, to discuss the housing crisis and to petition Governor Lowden to appoint a state committee to investigate the causes and occasion of the race riots in the state and recommend measures for racial adjustment.<sup>79</sup>

The Chicago Church Federation has issued a statement to be read in the churches prefaced by the warning that "if the Church has no message of assurance, confession and goodwill in a time of peril like this, it has lost an opportunity which will not soon recur."

In justice to Chicago, its citizens and those of other cities should recognize this humiliating experience to be a local symptom of a national disturbance which can be effectively remedied only by the broadest interchange of views and the most active cooperation in effort and by eliciting and applying locally all the social and economic, legislative and administrative, educational and religious resources of the whole nation.

*The Survey*, 42(August 9, 1919): 695-97.

## 20. WHY THE NEGRO APPEALS TO VIOLENCE

Maclay Hoyne, Illinois State Attorney, reports that "large quantities of firearms, deadly weapons, and ammunition" were stored by negroes in Chicago's Black Belt, that negroes had been "arming themselves for months" before the recent "race war" began, that an outbreak of negro violence in Chicago had been "planned for July 4," and that "a secret organization" is counseling the negroes "to obtain what they regard as social equality, by force if necessary." Unless Mr. Hoyne is mistaken something altogether new has developed in the negroes' psychology. For years they pinned their faith to the spelling-book, then for years they pinned it to the bank-book; now, as if convinced that neither education nor material prosperity could advance their cause, they appear to be putting their trust in brute strength. They will fight. In Washington's "race war" negroes were frequently the aggressors. So also in Chicago. This "changed attitude," as a Chicago negro puts it, would seem to have been the underlying cause of the Chicago riots, tho Mr. Hoyne informs the *New York American* that they came about thus:

"*First Cause.*--City Hall organization leaders, black and white, have catered to the vicious elements of the negro race for the last six years, teaching them that law is a joke and the police can be ignored if they have political backing. The decent colored element is as much incensed as whites at catering to colored gamblers and panderers.

"Negro politicians have even threatened the discharge of white police officers who made arrests of favored and protected black grafters."

"*Second Cause.*--The continued enormous importation from the South of ignorant negroes, who, on arriving here, listened to these teachings and have thrown off all restraint."

"*Third Cause.*--Insufficient housing for increased negro population. The negroes have invaded many residence districts hitherto confined to whites."

"*Remedy.*--Immediate increase of police force, declaring of martial law, and searching of buildings in Black Belt and removing firearms, deadly weapons, and ammunition now stored there in large quantities.

"There should be some scheme of segregation, to which a majority of negroes will themselves consent."

"Race feeling, when once engendered into a district, does not die out."

"In Chicago both races are now tremendously inflamed and the situation is serious."

Likewise tracing the more immediate causes of the race war, Dr. Willis N. Huggins, a teacher in the Chicago public schools and editor of a colored weekly, writes in the *New York Tribune*:

"The basis of the trouble is this: The large employers of labor who lured my people to the North with high wages and the city of Chicago itself have been derelict in providing housing accommodations for them."

"It is impossible to put 80,000 people where 50,000 lived before in utter congestion."

"Politicians who wanted to be sure of their political futures have not looked with displeasure upon the crowding of my people into a given district so that 85 per cent of their vote might invariably be safely held under control."

"Unscrupulous landlords and real-estate dealers have taken advantage of the shortage of houses to gouge my people, both when they rent and when they buy. My people in Chicago always have to pay \$5 and up in excess of what white tenants have paid, and that, too, minus the care of the building and grounds that was given to white tenants. Negro real-estate agents have been as instrumental in bringing this situation about as white agents have."

"Few of my people have moved into white blocks for the sheer braggadocio of being in such a community. They have moved in because white people were willing to sell or rent, because they wanted to avoid the congestion in the Second Ward, and, lastly, because they are American citizens."

But, while much light is shed upon the Chicago riots by such testimony as this of Mr. Hoynes and Dr. Huggins--that is, in so far as their more immediate causes are concerned--it remains to determine whether the idea of advancing negro interests by recourse to violence was not an underlying cause from the first. The *Chicago Defender*, edited by and for negroes, frankly admits that it was:

"The younger generation of black men are not content to move along the line of least resistance, as did their sires. . . . We have little sympathy with lawlessness, whether those guilty of it be black or white, but it cannot be denied that we have much in justification of our changed attitude. . . . Industrially, our position has been benefited by the war. Socially it has grown decidedly worse. On all sides we have been made to feel the humiliating pressure of the white man's prejudice. In Washington it was a case of 'teaching us our place.' In Chicago, it was a case of limiting our sphere to metes and bounds that had neither the sanction of law nor of sound common sense. In both cases we resented the assumption. Hence the race riots."

Dr. J. G. Robinson, a presiding elder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, refers to the negro's resolve to win equality, by force if necessary, in a letter written from Chattanooga, Tenn., to President Wilson and containing the following significant paragraphs:

"Mr. President, I recall the 14th day of March, 1918, when as spokesman of a committee representing the bishops and membership of the African Methodist Episcopal Church I presented to your Excellency the pledge of loyalty and outlined the grievances of the twelve million negroes in the United States. I recall with vivid recollections your great and masterly reply to my address. Among other things you said:

"I have always known that the negro has been unjustly and unfairly dealt with; your people have exhibited a degree of loyalty and patriotism that should command the admiration of the whole nation. In the present conflict your race has rallied to the nation's call, and if there has been any evidence of slackness manifested by negroes the same has not reached Washington."

"Great principles of righteousness are won by hard fighting, and they are attained by slow degrees. With thousands of your sons in the camps and in France, out of this conflict you must expect nothing less than the enjoyment of full citizenship rights--the same as are enjoyed by every other citizen."

"Under the plea for democracy emphasized by you as by no other man in the world 400,000 negroes went undismayed and helped to win the war."

"I went into six States and during great religious revivals and in great Liberty Bond and War-Savings Stamp drives I told my people that Mr. Wilson gave us the assurance that full democracy will be enjoyed by all Americans; we rolled up our share of money, etc., to prosecute the war."

"I fear, Mr. President, before the negroes of this country again will submit to many of the injustices which we have suffered in this country, the white man will have to kill more of them than the combined number of soldiers that were slain in the great world-war."

The publication of this letter while the race war in Chicago was at its height might be taken as indicative that the writer put a somewhat broad interpretation upon the President's phrase, "full citizenship rights." Where does citizenship begin? Where does it leave off? Does it imply social equality as well as political equality? The *Chicago Tribune* believes not, and reads the negroes a lecture. At the time of the riots precipitated by black soldiers early in the war, *The Tribune* told negroes to see that that sort of thing stopt immediately. Moreover, it told them that brilliant behavior during the war would tend to advance the negro cause. Now, when brilliant behavior is succeeded by what it looks upon as a hopeless struggle to win social equality by violence, *The Tribune* denounces the "changed attitude" among negroes and declares:

"We are swiftly getting to the point where our thoughtful colored fellow citizens must look the facts in the face. There will be no political injustice. There will be social differences. They need not be unjust. They do exist, and they will. The thinking negroes must use their influence with their race. They must realize the facts and conditions. The race problem will not be settled by these outbursts, nor by expedient adjustments brought about by military forces. The enduring settlement will come only out of agreement."

*Literary Digest*, 62(August 9, 1919): 11.

## 21. THE LULL AFTER THE STORM

In reviewing the race riots, Dr. George C. Hall, Chicago's eminent Negro physician, who is a director of the League on Urban Conditions among Negroes and a leader of his race, had unstinted praise for one element in the city's white population. He said:

Organized labor, by its conduct in Chicago during the race riots and since, has clearly demonstrated the fairness of its attitude toward the Negro. Union leaders labored to prevent friction between whites and blacks; union men refrained from joining in the rioting. After the riots the unions went back as a body to work with non-union Negroes in the stockyards. Negroes have participated in the benefits which organization has obtained for the workers, and now that we have this conclusive proof of the good-will of the unions every thoughtful Negro ought to be convinced of the necessity of joining the unions.

Dr. Hall added: "The packers also acted fairly in reemploying all Negro workers after the riots." Ten to fifteen thousand Negroes work in the Chicago stockyards, and the importance of the stockyards labor situation as a factor in race relations has been emphasized since the riots. The Chicago Federation of Labor issued on August 9 a proclamation which charged that the packers had deliberately attempted to fan race prejudice for the purpose of keeping the Negroes unorganized and declared that it was the efforts of union people, working day and night, that had prevented the spread of race hatred among stockyards workers and had kept the rioting from becoming far more serious than it was. The week's strike of union stockyards workers subsequent to the riots was a protest against the use of the militia to "protect" non-union Negroes when they returned to work. Union leaders declared that the presence of the soldiers, in the tense situation, would have brought on clashes, and they called off the strike when the militia were removed.

A prominent social worker who is in close touch with the stockyards workers said:

The race situation is simply hushed up now. All the underlying causes of serious outbreaks are still present. If the packers were willing to welcome the organization of the Negroes into the unions which are eager to take them in, the situation would be hopeful. Our Lithuanians and Poles feel no race antipathy for the Negro, but they say, "He must not take our jobs or lower our wages."

Investigations into the riots are getting into full swing. The grand jury, after holding up proceedings for a day because no charges against whites had been presented to it, resumed work and is still sitting. The following



indictments have been returned: murder, 11 Negroes; assault to kill, 25 Negroes, 15 whites; manslaughter, 1 white; carrying concealed weapons, 14 Negroes, 9 whites; arson, 4 whites. Twenty-one Negroes, as against sixteen whites, were killed in the riots, but no white person has yet been indicted for murder. At the state's attorney's office it is said that the investigation is only beginning and that cases against whites will undoubtedly come up later. State's Attorney Maclay Hoyne has issued a statement placing responsibility for the riots on "black belt" politics. He charges that city hall organization leaders encourage lawless Negro elements in an effort to hold the black vote solid, and his activities threaten to develop into a city-wide political and police graft expose. Governor Lowden has appointed a commission of six Negroes and six white men to investigate race relationships in Chicago.

*The Survey*, 42(August 30, 1919): 782.



PART V

GEORGE E. HAYNES AND THE  
DIVISION OF NEGRO ECONOMICS

## GEORGE E. HAYNES AND THE DIVISION OF NEGRO ECONOMICS

The magnitude of the problems confronted by black workers as a result of World War I and the Great Migration prompted United States Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson (see note 80) to create an office specifically charged with studying racial labor relations. On May 1, 1918, Secretary Wilson called George E. Haynes to that position.

Haynes (b. 1880) was the first Negro to graduate from what became the Columbia School of Social Work, and also the first black to receive a Ph.D. from Columbia University. A man of many firsts, he was a charter member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an organizer of Dillard University in New Orleans, one of the founders of the National Urban League, and organized and chaired the Social Science Department at Fisk University. A talented researcher and writer, Haynes published numerous studies, including Negroes at Work During World War I and During Reconstruction (1921), Negro Newcomers in Detroit (1918), and The Trend of the Races (1932).

The new Director of Negro Economics implemented three types of activities for dealing with race relations among black and white workers. First, he established an organization of cooperative committees composed of both races in states with significant racial labor problems. Secondly, publicity and educational campaigns were undertaken to create racial harmony and understanding among all citizens in those states. Thirdly, Negro staff workers were retained to organize and maintain the cooperative committee structure. The office also held numerous preliminary conferences with the chief public officials and leading local citizens in order to promote cooperation. Within six months, eleven states had established cooperative committees, and three others initiated steps to establish them as well. Judgment of the relative success or failure of the Office of Negro Economics must await proper scholarly assessment. Still, the effort was significant because it recognized the complexity of the social problems created by the migration, and the need for some concerted effort by the government to settle them.

Haynes served as Director of the Office until 1921, although the field staff was abolished in 1919 when Congress refused to appropriate additional funds. The summary report of the Director of Negro Economics is partially reproduced as Document 1.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES RAISE NEW QUESTIONS

## 1. THE NEGRO AT WORK DURING THE WORLD WAR AND DURING RECONSTRUCTION

By George E. Haynes

## INTRODUCTION

The entrance of Negroes into industries, particularly in the North during the great war led to many questions: What particular industries did they enter? In what kinds of occupations were they most generally employed? Were they unskilled, semiskilled, or skilled? How did they measure up to the average number of working hours and average earnings as compared with the white workmen? What was the estimate and opinion of employers who tried them? How did they compare with white workmen in the same establishments and on the same jobs as to absenteeism, turn-over, quality of work produced, and speed in turning out quantity?

Some of the chapters of this bulletin bring together the best available data in an attempt to answer some of these questions with the facts. Obviously, the data is very limited in scope and necessarily fragmentary. It would, therefore, be unwise and unscientific to make any large generalizations based upon so limited an amount of data. What is presented, however, has been carefully gathered and collated, and, therefore, gives some definite indications and information where information has been heretofore very limited. Whatever analysis and comment have been made upon the tables and figures may be readily weighed in the light of the accompanying data themselves.

Facts and figures, however, are only bases of information upon which to build programs and plans of action. Negro workers are employed for the most part by white employers and work in the same industries and often on the same jobs with white workers. Their relations with these employers and other workers frequently assume racial as well as labor aspects. In such adjustments as were required during the war, when industries were calling as never before for all kinds of workers, activities which proved successful and valuable in promoting the welfare of these wage-earners and in improving their relations to employers and other workers were exceedingly important parts of the machinery of organized production.

The plans and activities of the Department of Labor for dealing with these matters are experiences of permanent and instructive value, especially because of the hearty and successful response received from white and Negro citizens in many States and localities. A part of this bulletin, therefore, gives a summary of these plans and activities of the Division of Negro Economics in the office of the Secretary of Labor. The account shows the general program, the facts and principles upon which it was based, and how it was carried out in the several States with the hearty indorsement and cooperation of governors and other State and local officials and of white and colored citizens, both in organizations and as individuals. . . .

## MIGRATION

Shortage of labor in northern industries was the direct cause of the increased Negro migration during the war period. This direct cause was, of course, augmented by other causes, among which were the increased dissatisfaction with conditions in the South--the ravages of the boll weevil, floods, change of crop system, low wages, and poor houses and schools.

A previous bulletin of the department summed up the causes as follows:

Other causes assigned at the southern end are numerous: General dissatisfaction with conditions, ravages of boll weevil, floods, change of crop system, low wages, poor houses on plantations, poor school facilities, unsatisfactory crop settlements, rough treatment, lynching, desire for travel, labor agents,

the Negro press, letters from friends in the North, and finally advice of white friends in the South where crops had failed.

The Department of Labor estimates the Negro migration in figures of from 400,000 to 500,000. Other estimates, ranging from 300,000 to 800,000, have been made by individual experts and by private bureaus. Such a variation of figures goes to show the wide scope of the migration. Prior to the war period the Negro worker had been sparsely located in the North, but the laws of self-preservation of the industrial and agricultural assets of our country and the law of demand and supply turned almost overnight both into war and private industries hundreds of thousands of Negro workers, among whom there were laborers, molders, carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, janitors, chauffeurs, machinist laborers, and a mass of other workers, comprising, probably, nearly every type of skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor.

The most marked effects of the migration were easily determinable. First, the agricultural regions of the Southern States, particularly Mississippi and Louisiana, began to suffer for want of the Negro worker who had so long tilled the soil of those regions. On the other hand, the Negro workers who had been turned into the plants of the North faced the necessity of performing efficient work in the minimum amount of time, of adjusting themselves to northern conditions and of becoming fixtures in their particular line of employment, or becoming "floaters."

It is interesting to review for a moment some of the wage scales in Southern States. In 1917 about \$12 a month was being paid for farm labor in many sections. In other sections 75 cents and \$1 a day were considered equitable wages. During the harvesting of rice in the "grinding season" the amount was usually increased to \$1.25 and \$1.75 per day, with a possible average of \$1.50. . . .

#### CREATION OF THE OFFICE OF DIRECTOR OF NEGRO ECONOMICS

In view of the perplexing questions with regard to Negroes in industry and agriculture and the migration of Negroes from the South to the North during 1916, 1917, and 1918, upon representations of white and Negro citizens and several influential organizations dealing particularly with Negro life and race relations, the Secretary of Labor, Hon. William B. Wilson, after consideration and favorable recommendation by his Advisory Council on the war organization of the Department of Labor, decided to create the position of adviser on Negro labor in his immediate office, with the title of Director of Negro Economics. The function of this official was to advise the Secretary and the directors and chiefs of the several bureaus and divisions of the department on matters relating to Negro wage earners, and to outline and promote plans for greater cooperation between Negro wage earners, white employers, and white workers in agriculture and industry.<sup>80</sup>

In starting this work the Secretary stated that as Negroes constitute about one-tenth of the total population of the country and about one-seventh of the working population, it was reasonable and right that they should have representation at the council table when matters affecting them were being considered and decided. In defining the function of the office of the Director of Negro Economics the Secretary decided that the advice of the director should be secured before any work dealing with Negro wage earners was undertaken and that he be kept advised of the progress of such work so that the Department might have, at all times, the benefit of his judgment in all matters affecting Negroes.

Accordingly, on May 1, 1918, the Secretary of Labor called to that position Dr. George E. Haynes, professor of sociology and economics at Fisk University and one of the secretaries of the National League on Urban Conditions among Negroes. Dr. Haynes was strongly recommended by many individuals and organizations, among them being the Commercial Club of Nashville, Tenn., his home city.

The Secretary of Labor, with the advice of the Director of Negro Economics, early in May, 1918, considered and approved plans outlining three types of activities for dealing with problems of Negro workers in their relations to white workers and white employers, as follows:

1. The organization of cooperative committees of white and colored

citizens in the States and localities where problems of Negro labor arise, due to large numbers of Negro workers.

2. The development of a publicity or educational campaign to create good feeling between the races and to have both white and Negro citizens understand and cooperate with the purpose and plans of the department.

3. The appointment of Negro staff workers in the States and localities to develop this organization of committees, to conduct this work of better racial labor relations, and to assist the several divisions and services of the department in mobilizing and stabilizing Negro labor for winning the war.

In undertaking to carry out the three parts of this plan, the office of the Secretary recognized two main difficulties:

1. The difficulty of forestalling a strong feeling of suspicion on the part of the colored people, growing out of their past experiences in racial and labor matters.

2. The difficulty of forestalling a wrong impression among white people, especially those in the South, about the efforts of the department, and of having them understand that the department wishes to help them in local labor problems by means of its plans.

These cardinal facts were also given due consideration:

1. The two races are thrown together in their daily work, the majority of the employers and a large number of the employees having relations with Negro employees being white persons. These conditions give rise to misunderstandings, prejudices, antagonism, fears, and suspicions. These facts must be recognized and dealt with in a statesmanlike matter.

2. The problems are local in character, arising as they do, between local employers and local employees. The people, however, in local communities, need the vision of national policies, plans, and standards to apply to their local situations.

3. Any plan or program should be based upon the desire and need of cooperation between white employers and representatives of Negro wage earners, and, wherever possible, white wage earners.

#### FIELD ORGANIZATION--CONFERENCES AND COMMITTEES

The first step in setting up the field organization was a preliminary trip of the Director of Negro Economics to strategic centers in a number of States where Negro workers' problems were of pressing importance. Through preliminary correspondence, informal conferences and interviews were held with representative white and Negro citizens from different parts of each State visited. These interviews and conferences established the first points of sympathetic contact for cooperation in subsequent efforts to improve labor conditions and race relations.

These preliminary visits laid the foundation for subsequent work. For instance, the North Carolina conference, called by Hon. T. W. Bickett, Governor of the State and described below, which set the model for other Southern States, grew out of such a preliminary visit. The creation of the Negro workers' committees of Virginia and the cooperation of the Negro Organization Society of that State grew out of a similar visit on the trip. Similar results followed the connections made in other States.<sup>81</sup>

Upon the visit to a State, officials of State and private schools for Negroes, of the State councils of defense, representatives of the chambers of commerce, of the United States Employment Service, and of white and Negro colleges promised cooperation and assistance in the efforts of the department to stimulate Negro wage earners by improving their condition in such a way as to increase their efficiency for maximum production to win the war.

The first of a series of State conferences of representative white and Negro citizens was called on June 19, 1918, by Hon. T. W. Bickett, Governor of North Carolina, at his office in the State capitol at Raleigh. There were present at this conference 17 of the most substantial Negroes from all parts of the State and five white citizens, including the governor, who presided throughout the conference and took an active part in the proceedings.

The plans of the Department of Labor for increasing the morale and efficiency of Negro workers were outlined by the Director of Negro Economics and

freely discussed. At the close of the meeting the governor appointed a temporary committee which drafted a constitution providing for a State Negro Workers' Advisory Committee and for the organization of local county and city committees. This plan of organization, with slight modifications and readjustments, later served as a model for other States in the development of a voluntary field organization which was set up in the course of the next six months in four other southern States, and six northern States. Gov. Bickett was so highly pleased with the result of the conference that he issued a statement to the public press saying that this meeting was one of the most patriotic and helpful conferences he had ever attended.

A State meeting of white and colored citizens was held by the Southern Sociological Congress at Gulfport, Miss., July 12, 1918. The congress extended an invitation to the Director of Negro Economics to address the meeting. About 200 white citizens, business men and planters, and about 75 Negro citizens of the State were in attendance. The department took advantage of this State gathering to call together those who were especially interested in the adjustment of Negro labor problems. The address of the Director of Negro Economics before the congress received a hearty response from both whites and Negroes present, and as a result several of the white citizens took an active part in the conference, which worked out a plan of State-wide organization similar to the one adopted by North Carolina.

On the basis of the precedent set by Gov. Bickett and the success at the Gulfport meeting of the Southern Sociological Congress, Hon. Sidney Catts, Governor of Florida, called a conference of white and Negro citizens at Jacksonville, on July 16, 1918. After full discussion of plans and procedure this conference adopted a program and formed a State Negro Workers' Advisory Committee composed of representative white and colored citizens under the auspices of the State Council of National Defense and the United States Employment Service. A program of activities was worked out, having as its object the promotion of better conditions and a better understanding of employment matters relating to the Negroes of Florida in order that greater production of food and war supplies might be the result. So great was the enthusiasm on the day of the conference that the citizens of Jacksonville, white and colored, held a monster mass meeting, at which the governor, the Director of Negro Economics, and other officials spoke.<sup>82</sup>

In the meantime, through the help of the Negro Organization Society of Virginia, the Negro Workers' Advisory Committee of that State was organized and the first supervisor of Negro economics, a Negro citizen of training and experience, T. C. Erwin, appointed and undertook the direction of advisory work in the State.

The next step was to get the work and organization launched in northern territory. Ohio was selected for the initial effort, and on August 5, 1918, a conference was called by the department with the hearty help of the Federal Director of the United States Employment Service and Hon. James M. Cox, governor of Ohio. This conference met at the State Capitol at Columbus and was notable for the number in attendance, and the enthusiasm and readiness with which they worked out a plan of State-wide organization. There were present about 125 persons--white employers, Negro wage earners, and representatives of white wage earners. The afternoon session was closed with a splendid address by the governor. The conference adopted the usual plan of State organization and Charles E. Hall, the second supervisor of Negro economics, was assigned to the State to develop the organization and to supervise the work, under the auspices of the United States Employment Service office.<sup>83</sup>

One other conference, that held in Louisville, Ky., August 6, 1918, needs to be described as showing one other slight variation in the far-reaching significance of the cooperative plan of organization. This conference was unique in that the plan of organization adopted was that of a united war-work committee made up jointly by those representing the State Council of Defense, United States Food Administration, United States Department of Agriculture, and the United States Department of Labor, white and colored citizens being the persons representing these various interests. The conference was noted for its enthusiasm. Hon. A. O. Stanley, governor of Kentucky, made an enthusiastic address to the conference and a large mass meeting followed in the evening.<sup>84</sup>

By the time of the Kentucky conference, three months after the first plans were outlined, the influence of the State conferences and their feasibility were so well proved as a means of starting a State movement and



creating good will and favorable sentiment that other conferences followed as a matter of course in setting up the State work. Additional conferences in 1918 were held in Georgia, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, and New Jersey.

A national informal conference was called by the Secretary of Labor and met in Washington, D.C., February 17-18, 1919. This conference included men and women representing welfare and social service organizations, both North and South, of both Negroes and white people, in order that the views and interests of all sections and of both races might be ascertained. The keynote of the conference was sounded by the Secretary of Labor in welcoming the representatives. He said:

Congress in defining the duties of the Department of Labor made no distinction either as to sex or race, and, I may add, as to previous condition of servitude. We were authorized to promote the welfare of wage earners, whether men or women or children, whether they were native born or alien residents; and in the undertaking to promote the welfare of the wage workers we have not assumed that it was our duty to promote the welfare of the wage-worker at the expense of the plans of the community but to promote the welfare of the wageworker, having due respect to the rights of all other portions of our population.

The Assistant Secretary of Labor, Louis F. Post, in addressing the conference said:

It is the function of the Department of Labor to look after the interests of all wage earners of any race, any age, or either sex.

Special subjects were discussed, as follows:

Lines of work which should be undertaken for improving race relations and conditions of Negro workers.

Conduct and toleration as necessary for cooperation and good will between Negro and white workers.

Special problems of women in industry.

The Negro land tenants and farm laborers and what agencies may do to help them.

Education and Negro workers.

On the second day the informal conference gave most of its time to the general topic: "Unity of action in local communities to secure efficiency and cooperation of welfare agencies and methods, by which the Department of Labor and other governmental agencies can best cooperate with private agencies and organizations."

In a set of resolutions adopted and recommended to the Secretary of Labor the following important points are set forth:

RESOLUTION ON PLAN OF COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION ADOPTED AT INFORMAL CONFERENCE ON NEGRO LABOR PROBLEMS, FEBRUARY 17 AND 18, 1919, AS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF LABOR.

Whereas the improvement of conditions of Negro wage earners and the improvement of relations of white employers, of white wage earners and of Negro wage earners are questions of great importance for the advancement of the welfare of all wage earners in America; and

Whereas the several organizations and agencies specifically interested in promoting the better adjustment of Negro wage earners to American life need to work in closer cooperation:

Therefore, It behooves representatives of such boards, agencies and organizations interested in such questions to adopt measures of cooperative organization, of action, and of policy that will foster constructive work along these lines.

We, therefore, the representatives of such organizations, invited to an informal conference in Washington by the Secretary of Labor, do hereby recommend and ask the Secretary to use his good offices in laying before the organizations represented, and any other organizations that may be interested, a plan of cooperative organization and effort on the following general lines:

1. That local efforts to influence employers of Negro workers to provide welfare facilities be undertaken, jointly, by all the agencies attempting to do such work in a community; and that the local representatives of the Department of Labor be used as far as practicable as a channel through which the experiences and methods of the several agencies shall seek exchange in these local efforts.

Where there is no such local government organization or representative of the Department of Labor, and several agencies desire to act, that they request the Department of Labor to assist them in getting such a neutral channel of cooperation.

2. That our several agencies, boards and organizations, which undertake the organization of any work or the expenditure of any funds for improving the living and neighborhood conditions of Negro workers in local communities seek to become informed of similar plans of other agencies, boards and organizations before deciding on plans or taking action.

3. That the Department of Labor be asked to furnish such information and to provide such facilities as are necessary for keeping the agencies, boards and organizations informed of such plans, efforts, or proposed undertakings or steps that have been undertaken by the several agencies, boards and organizations interested.

4. That each agency, board or organization here represented, or any other agency, board or organization that may hereafter be concerned shall, as soon as practicable, make available to the Department of Labor such parts of its records, facilities and opportunities as are necessary in order that the Department may have available the information needed for using its good offices in furthering the cooperation of such agencies, boards, or organizations. That such agencies, boards, or organizations detail for service in this connection such personnel services of its staff as may be needed for carrying out the part of any effort in which said agency, board, or organization may be involved.

5. The Department of Labor is also asked to call a second conference, at the time that seems best, of representatives of the organizations that have been invited to this conference; also representatives of such other organizations that may be interested or concerned for further discussion of the questions involved in connection with Negro economics, in order that further exchange of experiences and plans of unity and cooperation may be discussed.

The following resolution was adopted by the conference as an addition to the report of the committee:

6. That it is the consensus of this body that the representatives of national organizations attending this conference request their local representatives in various States to cooperate immediately with the representatives of the Director of Negro Economics of the United States Department of Labor in all matters affecting the interests of the Negro workers.

A program of national work was also adopted and recommended to the Secretary covering the following matters:

1. Survey of Negro labor conditions.
2. The getting of Negro workers into industry.
3. Holding Negro workers in industry, including the improving of living and working conditions in both agriculture and industry.
4. Training the next generation of workers.
5. The general advancement of Negro wage earners in the United States.

The following are some of the organizations signing, and the names of their representatives:

Name	Organization or agency represented
Dr. Jesse E. Moorland (chair) <sup>85</sup>	International Committee, Y.M.C.A.
(Miss) Nannie Burroughs <sup>86</sup>	The National Training School
(Miss) Mary C. Jackson	War Work Council, Y.W.C.A. (National Board)
John R. Shillady	Nat'l. Assn. for the Advancement of
(Vice) Walter F. White }	Colored People
T. S. Settle	War Camp Community Service
Eugene Kinckle Jones <sup>87</sup>	Nat'l. League on Urban Conditions among Negroes
Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones	Phelp-Stokes Fund
C. H. Tobias <sup>88</sup>	National War Work Council, Y.M.C.A.
John T. Emlen	Armstrong Association of Philadelphia
Dr. Rodney W. Roundy	American Missionary Association
Dr. R. R. Moton	Tuskegee Institute
Rev. Harold M. Kingsley	Joint Committee, War Production Committees
Rev. E. W. Moore	Baptist Home Mission Society
(Mrs.) Etnah R. Bouttee	Circle for Negro War Relief (Inc.)
(Miss) Estelle Haskin	Women's Home Mission Council--Methodist Publishing Board
John J. Eagan	Commission on Training Camp Activities
Dr. James H. Dillard <sup>89</sup>	Jeanes-Slater Funds

In carrying out the plans for a publicity and educational campaign to create a better feeling between the races and to have both white and colored citizens understand and cooperate with the purposes and plans of the department, the office of the Director of Negro Economics received the hearty help and cooperation of the Information and Education Service of the department during the war and until that service was discontinued July 1, 1919.

A regular newspaper release was given to both the white press and Negro press which cannot be too highly commended for their cooperation. Special mention should be made of the support given by the Negro newspapers of the country, more than 250 in number, who gave without compensation large sections of news columns and advertising space. As an illustration, a news release on that part of the Secretary's annual report relating to Negro workers was sent out from the office of the Director of Negro Economics through the Information and Education Service. Clippings from white newspapers showed that the release was used by them as far north as Maine, as far west as California, and as far south as Louisiana. Nearly all the Negro newspapers, north and south, carried the release--some of them in full.

Special addresses for use at patriotic and holiday celebrations were prepared and sent out to the Negro workers through the advisory committees in the territories where they were organized. On the Fourth of July, 1918, more than 2,000 copies of an address entitled "Labor and Victory" were used in county and city patriotic celebrations in more than 150 counties and about 12 States. (For copy, see Appendix I.)

Statements were prepared for writers of special articles in newspapers and magazines and for the Four Minute Bulletin of the Committee on Public Information. Similar material was sent to hundreds of speakers in different parts of the country. Magazine articles dealing with the problems of Negro labor during the war and reconstruction and the work of the Division of Negro Economics were prepared and appeared in such magazines as The American Review of Reviews, The Crisis, The Public, and The Survey.

The United States Public Health Service in its effort to combat venereal diseases inaugurated a special effort to reach all Negroes. This office co-operated with the Public Health Service by helping that service to get in touch with Negro workers through our field organization in order that they might become acquainted with the facts relative to disease as it affected health and efficiency.

The Negro workers' advisory committees organized and held many public meetings, attended by both white and colored citizens, to discuss the problems of labor and the war. Speakers were sent to hundreds of other meetings. We estimate that each month no less than a million Negro workers and hundreds of employers were reached and influenced in this way.

## EARLY RESULTS OF NEGRO ECONOMICS SERVICE

At the end of the first six months of the work, Negro workers' advisory committees, by States, counties, and cities, had been wholly or partly formed in 11 States, and by the time the armistice was signed steps had been taken to establish committees in three other States.

Nearly all of these committees, both State and local, had white and Negro members or had cooperating white members representing organizations of white employers and white workers. In all, 11 State committees and about 225 local county and city committees, with a membership numbering more than 1,000, were appointed. One of the most remarkable facts is that out of the invitations and acceptances for service of all of these white and colored persons on these committees, so far as we have any record, there was only one case of a member of one committee whose relationship on the committee caused friction and made necessary a request for his resignation. There was the heartiest response from citizens of both races everywhere. Many of them used large amounts of time, gave their services, and often spent their own money to further the departmental program. It was the expressed opinion of many citizens of well-known competence that the holding of these conferences and the voluntary cooperation of hundreds of white and Negro citizens on these committees, both north and south, were in themselves sufficient to justify all the effort put forth by the department. Even more significant were the many written statements of commendation from citizens in all parts of the country and from organizations that cooperated and helped in the movement.

## SELECTION AND TRAINING OF A STAFF

The selection and training of a staff for such work ordinarily would hardly be considered as one of the results of a departmental or organization effort. However, it should be borne in mind that there is usually serious doubt about the expert efficiency of Negroes in official positions which call for high standards of character and ability. Often criticism has been specially lodged against Negroes in public office. Therefore, the successful and effective selection and organization of a staff of Negro officials and employees, with the necessary general training, expert knowledge, and experience to carry out the program of work and to achieve the results as shown in the succeeding pages, was in itself an achievement.

This work of mediation between white workers, white employers, and Negro workers called for exceptional qualities of mind and character in addition to technical knowledge and efficiency. The spirit of conciliation and cooperation, the ability to see both sides of any issue, and the combination of initiative and self-control necessary to act effectively when action is called for and to wait with patience when action is not strategic required persons far above the average in both character and ability. The office of the Director of Negro Economics may modestly claim this success as a part of the achievement of the work, as it demonstrates that such a staff can be built up in the public service.

The department had previously used the services of three Negro experts from the Department of Commerce. These men were retained and their duties readjusted so that throughout the period of the war and for nearly eight months of reconstruction they gave effective service--Charles E. Hall as supervisor of Negro economics for Ohio, William Jennifer as supervisor of Negro economics for Michigan, and Harry E. Arnold as an examiner and special agent in the United States Employment Service in Pennsylvania. As the organization grew, the following men were added: T. C. Erwin, supervisor of Negro economics for Virginia; Dr. A. M. Moore, supervisor of Negro economics for North Carolina, who served as a dollar-a-year man, with R. McCants Andrews as assistant; William M. Ashby, supervisor of Negro economics for New Jersey; W. O. Armwood, supervisor of Negro economics for Florida; Lemuel L. Foster, supervisor of Negro economics for Mississippi, who succeeded J. C. Olden, resigned for other work after doing valuable service; H. A. Hunt, supervisor of Negro economics for Georgia; and Forrester B. Washington, supervisor of Negro economics for Illinois. In addition, the qualifications and recommendations of a number of Negro examiners in the United States Employment Service, as well as stenographers and clerical assistants, were investigated and passed upon by the office of the Director of Negro Economics.

In the office of the Director of Negro Economics at Washington headquarters, Karl F. Phillips, as assistant to the director, ably managed the office and closely associated with the director in the full supervision of the work. A competent staff of clerical employees was added as the growth of the work made it necessary.

These Federal officials performed their duties with enthusiasm, efficiency, and success under the many trying circumstances which arose during the strenuous months of the war labor program and the first months of reconstruction. Their services as a part of this experiment in the Federal Government's relation to Negro wage earners has been a contribution to the experience with Negroes in important administrative positions. . . .

#### PROBLEMS OF NEGRO LABOR

Before entering the detailed discussion. . . , a summarized statement of the problems of Negro labor during the war and reconstruction period, extracted from reports of the Director of Negro Economics to the Secretary of Labor, follows:

##### I. During the war period.

1. The movement of large numbers of Negro workers from the South to the North.
2. The inevitable maladjustment in living conditions confronting the newcomers in the North.
3. The delicate questions of relations of Negro workers and white workers in northern industries into which Negroes were for the first time entering in large numbers.
4. The difficulties and readjustments in southern agricultural regions, due to the sudden departure of thousands of tenants and farm laborers, as well as the readjustments in industrial operations in the South, due to the same causes.
5. The attraction to centers of war industries and construction camps and cantonments, both north and south, due to the wages offered, which were higher than those prevailing in post-war industry and agriculture.
6. The serious labor shortage, both north and south, white and colored, due to the drafting of millions of men into the Army.

##### II. During the reconstruction period.

1. The thousands of Negro workers in war industries who had to be shifted back to post war industries along with the other workers called for special attention similar to the period when they were being shifted into war industries.
2. Probably between 400,000 and 500,000 workers migrated from the South to northern industries. The difficulties of cooperative adjustment of white wage earners and Negro wage earners in the industrial communities where they must find community life in contact with each other were increased.
3. Special problems connected with the entrance of colored women into industry and special problems in domestic and personal service.
4. The problems of improving the conditions, increasing the efficiency, and encouraging the thrift of Negro workers were probably greater during the war and still remain as reconstruction problems.
5. In the South the common interests of white employers who want to engage the services which the Negro wage earner has to offer and the desire of the worker for wages in return make the adjustment of the Negro labor situation one of the most far-reaching factors in bringing about just and amicable race relations. The migration and war restlessness of the two races creates problems which the labor nexus may be very effective in settling.
6. The adjustment of farm tenantry and of the labor situation in the South is very largely a problem of Negro labor.
7. For the first 12 months following the armistice the problem of demobilization of thousands of Negro soldiers called for cooperative action, and more tact and judgment than were probably needed during the period when they were being drafted out of production into the

Army. The return of the Negro soldier to civil life, with the obligations of the Nation to him, has been one of the most delicate and difficult labor questions confronting the Nation, north and south.

8. The improvement of living and working conditions, including such questions as housing, sanitation, and recreation of Negro wage earners, should receive more attention during this period of reconstruction and peace time than they did before or during the Great War period. . . .

#### REPORT OF WORK IN NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina was selected as the State in which the initial effort of the Department of Labor should be made, and its program established for promoting and fostering the welfare of Negro wage earners through the special service of Negro economics. Consequently, following an official trip of the Director of Negro Economics into important points in the State a conference of representative white and colored citizens was called by Hon. T. W. Bickett, governor of North Carolina, on June 19, 1918. There were present at this conference, which was held in the office of the governor, 17 of the most substantial Negro citizens from all parts of the State and five white citizens, as described in Chapter II. At the close of the meeting the governor appointed a temporary committee which drafted a constitution provided for the Negro Workers Advisory Committee, and for an organization of local county and city committees. The working plan of organization, with slight modifications and adjustments, which served as a model for the development of voluntary field organizations in other States, has been previously explained in the description of activities in other States.

Before discussing the subsequent steps of organization and activity in North Carolina, brief attention is here given to a few general and specific industrial and agricultural situations which obtained in North Carolina.

These situations are cited for the purpose of showing the wide scope of the field of Negro work into which the policies and plans of the Division of Negro Economics were to be carried.

The chief occupations of Negro women were in the field of agriculture, laundry work, domestic service, some work in spinning mills (and some in hosiery and underwear), and work in tobacco factories. There was a scarcity of female labor and on that account a number of silk mills had been closed. The cotton-mill season extends from May to September, and the tobacco season from September to April. In many instances the homes of workers were of a poor type; the streets and sidewalks fronting such homes were unpaved and poorly lighted. Surface drainage existed and general sanitation was inadequate in some cases. On the other hand, there were large numbers of well-cared-for homes in communities of intelligent and progressive Negroes.

In one North Carolina city it was reported that a Negro union had been organized to which the white workers objected. At New Bern, lumber industries employing large numbers of Negroes were reported as having "working conditions which were unpleasant." At Wilmington Negroes were employed in the shipyards, but only in the unskilled occupations. At various other points in North Carolina, Negroes found employment in tanneries, hosiery mills, guano plants, box factories, and the like. Throughout the State there were found a number of physicians, dentists, druggists, and a more than usual ownership of store and office buildings. At Kingston 5,000 Negro women and children were reported working in tobacco factories. At Waynesville there were found mill girls, garment workers, and a few clerks, organized and unorganized. As a general situation throughout the State, Negro labor was much in demand and was affected by the usual factors--(a) the union, (b) low wages, (c) housing conditions, (d) health, (e) opportunity for advancement, (f) the general competition between white and colored workers.

Following the conference the plan for cooperation and for the subsequent formation and activity of a State committee and subsidiary county and city committees was perfected. Among the early agencies of cooperation may be mentioned the United States Public Reserve, the State department of education, the rank and file of Negro colleges and universities in North Carolina, chambers of commerce and the Negro private organizations, including the church. An initial State committee of 29 substantial Negro citizens from various

sections of the State was formed. The membership of the State committee and its executive board represent the following cities: Winston-Salem, Wadesboro, Winton, Oxford, Charlotte, Henderson, Raleigh, Greensboro, Rocky Mount, Tarboro, Salisbury, Chadbourne, New Bern, Lumberton, Bricks, Lexington, Durham, Method, Goldsboro, Wilmington, Wilson, and Asheville, thus bringing into play the influence and forces of the best citizens throughout the State. This committee was supplemented by interested white citizens, who became cooperating members.

This State committee and the subsidiary county committee, after adopting the constitution, started out in their activities under the supervision of Dr. A. M. Moore, who was appointed Supervisor of Negro Economics and special agent of the United States Employment Service. It should be stated that Dr. Moore served the department throughout the entire period of the war and the following seven months as a dollar-a-year man.<sup>90</sup>

The early formation of county and city committees included the following counties: Guilford, Craven, Vance, Rockingham, Buncombe, Granville, Forsyth, Beaufort, Durham, Hertford, Alamance, and Edgecombe, Halifax, and Nash combined. When the work was closed on June 30, 1919, names had been submitted covering practically every county in the State.

Inasmuch as the Division of Negro Economics was in the immediate office of the Secretary of Labor, who was also chief administrative officer for the United States Employment Service as well as all the other departmental bureaus and divisions, it was practicable that the North Carolina Negro work, as did the work in other States, should have a close relationship to the United States Employment Service in that State. Consequently under the plan of organization for the State, the Federal Director of the United States Employment Service became an advisory member of the State Negro Workers' Advisory Committee. Also a close relationship with the governor, the chairman of the State Council of Defense, and other white men acting as advisers to other committees, was perfected and the following initial recommendation for North Carolina was gradually worked out and approved:

1. Workers appointed for special activities among Negro wage earners will work under the authority of the United States Employment Service to give them official standing, with cooperation and supervision of the Federal State director.
2. The work shall be undertaken with the advice of the Director of Negro Economics.
3. Matters calling for the expenditure of funds shall be submitted with the approval of the Federal director and with the advice of the Director of Negro Economics.
4. All work carried on which relates to the Employment Service shall be undertaken with the approval of the Federal State director.

These plans of course were "overhead" plans, but they covered the many details which became properly applicable to local committees in the State as they were found. In order to bring the plans to the attention of the public the special agent succeeded in getting in close touch with the white and Negro members throughout the State, and in making arrangements for a publicity service which would not conflict with the Information and Education Service of the department.

Among some of the earlier problems were found (1) that many North Carolina laborers had been recruited through employment agencies and in an indiscriminating way many of the "shiftless" and "unstable" had been imported into North Carolina cities; (2) no particular opportunity had been offered to thrifty, dependable workmen to buy homes and to become permanent residents of the State. In subsequent plans of publicity and contact these two problems were dealt with by the North Carolina special agent and the close of the work found at each particular point but a few scattered persons who might be designated "shiftless."

The Supervisor of Negro Economics, having business interests of his own, soon found it necessary to have an assistant who could actively canvass cities throughout the State. Mr. R. McCants Andrews was subsequently detailed for such assistance work. Of the early problems which he faced there came report of race friction in a city of eastern North Carolina at a point in which there were members of the Negro workers' advisory committees. An investigation was

made as to the nature of such race friction and valuable advice was given both to the employing class and to the working class, which resulted in removal of racial friction. In this connection valuable assistance in the matter of sentiment was given by a leading North Carolina paper, to the attention of which was called the value of mediation between white workers, white employers and Negro workers followed by a spirit of conciliation and cooperation and the ability to see both sides of an issue. It was pointed out also that the common interest of the white employer who wants to engage the service which the Negro wage earner has to offer will make the adjustment of the labor situation a most important one. This paper gave publicity not only to the comment above quoted but also to subsequent comment and advice tending to create a better feeling among the employing and working classes of North Carolina.

In carrying out the plan of work of the North Carolina committee, one of the first steps was for the supervisor to inaugurate an educational campaign wherever practical among Negro workers at the various points in the State. Short itineraries were arranged and the supervisor was given permission to address groups of workers at many large plants, with specific health questions, ideals of efficiency and recreational activities, in order to preserve the morale and competency of Negro workers. Although in many instances employers had been slow to put on foot similar programs and thereby to bring about a contented group of workers, there were many leading plants in the State which had, from the beginning, recognized the need of such an institution as would make their workers contented. A superintendent of one of the large North Carolina plants had under his supervision about 800 Negro employees, who, in fact, practically made up one of the small villages of the State. In the early formation of one of the county committees this superintendent saw a splendid opportunity presented in being able to link up his plans with the program of work of the committee. It is of particular interest, in this connection, to point out some of the early steps which his plant had taken in an endeavor to preserve contentment among the workers. It was estimated that the average worker at this plant in the eight-hour day was earning \$100 a month. The work was not exhausting, physically, and overtime pay was allowed to good workers. The plant in question was equipped with steel lockers, porcelain washbowls, shower baths, and other facilities necessary to the comfort and cleanliness of its workers, white and colored. Within the village row after row of new houses had been erected. These houses were modern and sanitary, with running water, sewerage, and electric lights. They were rented to workers at an extremely low price and many had been purchased on a ten-year plan which the company had arranged in order to increase the desire for permanent residence. The company also paid for a nine-months school for the children of workers. In the village itself Negroes were engaged in business enterprises which were largely patronized by workers of this plant. A modern hospital was in the course of erection and two churches had been planned.

The local Negro workers' advisory committee, under the direction of the supervisor, assisted this plant in a further educational campaign to promote efficiency and thrift among the Negro workers. Intelligent and self-respecting workers were solicited and the eventual outcome of assistance given by the local committee resulted in the company's retaining a permanent social worker who has charge of a program in behalf of the welfare of these workers.

As the work of the supervisor of Negro economics and the Negro workers' advisory committee increased in scope and understanding, various firms called upon the supervisor and his assistant for advice in the formation of plans for the higher economic status of their workers. One exceptionally large plant invited the supervisor and the director of Negro economics to outline a complete program of welfare for its Negro employees. Such a plan was made up and submitted, and it received the commendation and adoption of the officials of the firm.

In his itineraries the assistant supervisor of Negro economics carried the program of the department into the following cities: Durham, Badin, Oxford, Henderson, Bricks, Tarboro, Dover, New Bern, Burlington, Lexington, Spencer, Charlotte, Statesville, Hickory, Morganton, Marion, Asheville, Winston-Salem, Salisbury, Raleigh, and High Point. At various other points the supervisor and his assistant visited Negro schools, making addresses and increasing the desire of workers for greater efficiency and of employers for greater consideration of their workers.

So pleased were the governor and other State officials with the work of



the Division of Negro Economics that the governor called, for June 14, 1919, the annual meeting of the Negro workers' advisory committee, at which time the State supervisor submitted his recommendations concerning the work. Inasmuch as that report received the universal commendation of persons throughout the State, it is given in full:

[U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Supervisor of Negro Economics for North Carolina, Durham, N.C.]

#### HOW TO KEEP NEGRO LABOR

*New methods.*--How to keep the Negro workers and make them satisfied with their lot is the problem now presented to the South. It ought not be difficult of solution. It is not natural for the Negroes to leave their old homes in this wholesale fashion, and they really do not want to go. Some planters and industrial establishments are already demonstrating by means of better pay and greater care for their employees what such considerations will do in keeping the Negroes loyally at work in the South; and the more efficient Negro schools have for years been pointing the way.

*Constructive possibilities.*--The improvement of race relations is a matter of time, and rests largely on the satisfactory solution of the economic problems of farm life. Several noteworthy tendencies were, however, noticeably strengthened by the loss of Negro labor. The first of these was the tendency of the leaders of the two races to draw closer together. Several State-wide and county meetings were held to discuss the migration and the grievances of the Negro. Until more interest is taken in these meetings by the white leaders, and until they are followed by constructive programs for better law enforcement and education they cannot measurably influence the tendency of the Negro to move.

*Holding Negro labor on the farm.*--There is a general agreement that friendly personal interest, absolutely fair dealing in all business transactions, clear understanding of the terms of the contract at the outset, itemized statements of indebtedness, good housing, and encouragement of the Negroes to raise their foodstuffs as far as possible, taken together will attract and hold labor on farms.

*Majority of Negroes are workers.*--Since the great majority of Negroes are in the working class, their permanent interests are as laborers, and those interests are in the maintenance of living wages and of good working conditions.

*The Negro's value to North Carolina.*--There is no question as to the value of the Negro to the South; but circumstances are bringing other sections to an appreciation of his value also and the Negro, too, is coming to understand something of his worth to the community. If North Carolina would keep the Negro and have him satisfied she must give more constructive thought than has been her custom to the Negro and his welfare.

The outline of facts stated above should help us to approach our local problems with greater understanding, greater sympathy, and a great willingness to cooperate in their satisfactory adjustment. With this understanding and sympathy we are better able to appreciate the statesmanlike policy of the Department of Labor in creating and maintaining the work of Negro economics.

On May 1, 1918, the Secretary of Labor, Hon. William B. Wilson, realizing that the Negro constitutes about one-seventh of the total working population of the country, appointed a Negro, Dr. George E. Haynes, as advisory to the Secretary with the title Director of Negro Economics. This was done in order that the Negro might have a representative in council whenever matters affecting his welfare were being considered; and that more extensive plans might be developed for improving his efficiency and production in agriculture and industry.

There were appointed in four Southern States and five Northern States supervisors of Negro economics who have established cooperative committees of representative white and colored citizens to work out together the local labor problems. These Negro workers' advisory committees, as they are called, have a program of work which is carried on by the colored members, the whites serving as cooperating members. So successful has the work of the committees proved that the Division of Negro Economics have been continued for the important work of reconstruction. This work is not separate from the other work of the department, but is carried on as an integral part. The supervisors are

under the authority of the Federal directors of the United States Employment service.

*North Carolina led the way.*--On June 19, 1918, Gov. T. W. Bickett, called a conference in his office which was attended by 17 of the most substantial Negro citizens from all parts of the State and 5 white citizens. Out of this meeting came the plan of Negro workers' advisory committees, which is now operating in nine States. A State Negro workers' committee of leading Negro men and women of North Carolina was appointed and plans were formed for the creation of county and city committees. There were on April 1 of the present year 25 of these committees actively at work in our State.

*The supervisor's report.*--The supervisor of Negro Economics for North Carolina and the assistant supervisor have visited 23 counties since their organization, holding conferences with leading white and colored citizens which have been most helpful. On the basis of this personal investigation throughout the State, the supervisor wishes to present under separate headings a summary of conditions as found:

*White employers and liberal white citizens.* There is the greatest cordiality and willingness to cooperate upon the part of these persons. In many instances, they rivaled the colored citizens in spirit and enthusiasm. They spoke freely as well as the Negroes, and are asking on every hand to be called upon for cooperation. Some of them came from the rural districts and from near-by towns to attend the conferences.

Many employers are already offering special inducements to their Negro workers. For example, a cotton oil company is giving free life insurance for \$500 to all who remain in its employ for six months; many older employees have been given free insurance for \$1,000. Knitting mill companies are carefully selecting colored girls for their plants and are giving employment at good wages throughout the year. Lumber companies are giving bonuses to men who go to the lumber camps.

*The labor situation in North Carolina.*--Broadly speaking there is a scarcity of Negro labor in the State. All the industries are feeling this at present. But a greater suffering will be felt in the fall when it is time for crop gathering. The farmers are suffering most. Cotton is standing in the fields in all parts of the State from last year.

It is highly desirable that leaders of white workmen cooperate with our committees.

#### SPECIAL PROBLEMS INVOLVING NEGRO LABOR

1. Tobacco, guano, and cotton-oil industries. Tobacco work is seasonal; the wages are high and no great intelligence is required for much of the work. When the great warehouses open, crowds of workers leave year-round industries, often demoralizing the latter. The work of the industries here mentioned is dirty and does not invite workers of any particular skill. It is hard to promote cleanliness, efficiency, and thrift among workers whose lives are haphazard, who come and go through the streets in their working clothes and who are not generally considered as advanced workers.

2. Many of the seasonal plants run 12-hour shifts, often doubling the work day of the most faithful employees. This leads to the workers "laying off" on Saturdays and Mondays. In one 12-hour plant visited the colored workers had "struck" for Saturdays off.

3. Lumber camps: In some instances the quarters provided for logging and mill camps have not attracted respectable workers and their families. "floaters" and crap-shooters were mainly the classes who were willing to go to such camps. Their work has, of course, not been satisfactory. On the other hand, one concern visited had made its location a real community and stimulated local pride in it. The manager of this concern spoke of his success in getting and holding labor of a splendid class in his little town.

4. Hosiery mills: The plants visited are clean and sanitary, well-lighted, and safe. They pay good wages and run all the year. The owners are trying to select their workers carefully and to encourage the development of character. But very few of them have been highly successful in getting an adequate force; and most of the girls leave as soon as the tobacco work opens. Some of these plants have never been able to increase their output; and one of them is still compelled to close on Saturdays because of a general shortage of girls.

## HOW OUR NEGRO WORKERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEES CAN MEET THESE PROBLEMS

In line with our official program of work our committees should--

- (1) Promote the efficiency of colored workers in order to overcome the loss from shortage of labor.
- (2) Encourage the use of farm machinery to increase farm production and to create a surplus of farm labor for use in the harvest time.
- (3) Prevail upon white leaders as well as white employers to cooperate with our committees.
- (4) Encourage white employers in the tobacco, guano, and cotton oil industries to make the work as clean and as pleasing as possible. The installation of clothes lockers and washrooms will impress the workers with the advantage of coming and going from work in clean clothes.
- (5) Advise with employers whose plants are running long hours as to whether shorter hours will not mean greater efficiency and greater regularity. Many workers are now averaging only four days a week; the proportion of "laying off" on Saturdays and Mondays is distressingly large.
- (6) Pay close attention to seasonal plants, following especially shortage and surplus, and endeavoring to assist in transfer of workers to new jobs as these plants close. The United States Employment Service should be aided in recruiting Negro workers so as not to draw away workers from "year-round" industries. Reports as to shortage and surplus should be made regularly by the committeemen to the office of the supervisor so that colored workers may secure jobs without going great distances.
- (7) Suggest to employers of lumber concerns the development of community life in their camps, with better housing and family settlements.
- (8) Call to the attention of steady and capable young women in the community who are not employed the excellent sanitary condition of the knitting mills and opportunity for steady employment in them.

It is urgently hoped that all public spirited citizens of both races who have at heart the agricultural and industrial expansion of our State, and who realize that such expansion and development can only come through the improvement of Negro labor will sustain this far-sighted effort of the Department of Labor and will give active support to the program of work of the Division of Negro Economics, and to the undersigned,

A. M. MOORE, M.D.,  
Special Agent and Supervisor  
of Negro Economics for North Carolina,  
Durham, N.C.

JUNE, 1919.

It is deemed to be in place to quote commendations from Hon. T. W. Bickett, governor of North Carolina, regarding the Negro economics work in his State:

There is the greatest cordiality and willingness on the part of the white employers and liberal white citizens to cooperate with the Negroes. In many instances they rival the colored citizens in spirit and enthusiasm. They speak freely and are asking on every hand to be called into cooperation.

This report sets out that in many industries and on the farms intelligent efforts are being made to improve living conditions of the Negro and to afford him every incentive to put forth his very best efforts. In one plant the committee devised a plan to publish an honor roll containing the names of all Negroes who worked steadily six days in the week. Under this system the loafing list was decreased 57 per cent and there was a corresponding increase in the number of steady workers.

If every man, black and white, in the United States, could read and digest this report, it would go a great way toward solving all our questions. I shall keep and use this report as a basis for my future work.

The Chief Justice of the State, the Federal Director of the United States Employment Service and a number of employers all expressed themselves as profoundly impressed with the scope and character of the work done by the committee. . . .

## REPORT OF WORK IN ILLINOIS

In the early development of the plans of the department for the Division of Negro Economics it seemed feasible that one man should advise on policies and plans for one district comprising Michigan and Illinois. As the work developed this district was divided into the two States, Michigan and Illinois.

At the beginning of June, 1918, Mr. Forrester B. Washington of Detroit, Mich., was appointed as supervisor of Negro economics in the district comprising Michigan and Illinois. It had been estimated by the department that about 30,000 Negro migrants had moved into Detroit and that probably 50,000 had come into the Chicago district within the period during 1917 and 1918. Mr. Washington, trained at Tufts College and the New York School of Philanthropy, had had three years' experience and unusual success as executive secretary of the Detroit Urban League in cooperation with the Employers' Association of Detroit in handling the industrial problems growing out of the influx of the thousands of Negro newcomers.

During July and August, he very successfully dealt with these problems of his district, which centered mainly at Detroit and Chicago. About September 1, Michigan and Illinois were made separate districts and Mr. Washington was transferred to Chicago and began the intensive development of the work in Illinois. He began with a study of the communities of the State where large numbers of Negroes resided and arranged for a State conference, which was held Monday, September 30, 1918, at Springfield, in the old historic Sangamon County courthouse, so well known in relation to the revered memory of Abraham Lincoln. Delegates representing Negro workers, white employers, and white workers were present from 14 points in the State. They spent a day in discussing general conditions and adopted the form of organization of a State advisory committee with local committees. In the weeks that followed the conference, Negro workers' advisory committees were formed in 17 counties and 9 cities throughout the State to deal with the many delicate and difficult labor problems. Some of the results of the activity under the supervision of Mr. Washington are outlined in the following pages.

During sessions of the conference several committees were appointed and made reports, among them the committee on general conditions, which gave such a concrete review of the relationships between Negro workers and white workers and white employers that a greater part of the report is included as follows:

We, your committee on general conditions as to labor and general war work relating to Negroes in the State of Illinois, beg leave to submit the following report:

First, we find that the city of Chicago is the greatest center of Negro influx on account of the conditions produced by the war of any community in the State of Illinois; and that the cities of East St. Louis, Cairo, Springfield, and Peoria follow in their order. The city of Decatur does not have the same condition as does the cities above named, neither does the city of Danville, nor Quincy, as they are governed in some degree by local conditions which have to do with only their own particular vicinities.

We find that in the mining districts in southern Illinois, composing the counties of St. Clair, Perry, Jackson, Franklin, and Williamson and adjacent counties, the conditions of the colored miners as to housing and economic conditions are on par with those of the white miners. In fact, all mining districts of the State are guided by the miners' union, and the purpose of the leaders of the miners, and of the mine owners as well in those districts, seems to have been directed to the task of winning the war by doing and giving effective service and every effort has been lent to neutralizing the opposing forces that both white and colored workers may understand and help each other and in this way work for a common purpose.

## OTHER LABOR

In Chicago, at the stockyards, we find that conditions are much improved and better relations created by organization. The colored men and workers and the white brother in toil have been brought together.

In the other parts of Illinois we find that the Negro as a laborer is not understood. The white men have been led to believe that the Negro was his common industrial enemy and as a result some very grave disturbances have

taken place, such as the recent one at East St. Louis.

In many instances ill feelings have resulted in the employers suffering from shortages of effective workers and the propagandists of German connection have, no doubt, seized upon this spirit of unrest to further their wicked ends and many instances of this spirit have fallen within the knowledge of some of the members of your committee. Some employers have misunderstood, in that they had been led to believe that Negroes were not faithful nor yet effective workers, but that notion has been pushed into the discard and now, thanks to the work of the Department of Labor and the leaders of the various organizations having these matters at heart, Negroes are entering all the avenues of endeavor.

Some of the cities above mentioned are not cursed with the bad conditions above complained of. We are pleased to refer to the city of Decatur as a city where the best of relations exist between white and colored people and in the large factories of that city. They work side by side in harmony, and general helpfulness results from that condition.

In the capital city of Illinois (Springfield) for many years colored workers have not been given employment in many of the factories; but, owing to conditions brought about by the war, a sign of betterment is seen. Now some of the steam laundries are finding colored workers a decided success. A watch factory has increased its quota of colored workers, but we find that in many of the factories the closed door stands between the colored worker and employment. Your committee is driven to the conclusion that in many instances the lack of efficiency on the part of the workers who apply, the lack of attention to duty, the lack of thrift and energetic effort is proving the undoing of the colored workers.

#### RÉSUMÉ

We recommend that steps be taken to educate both the colored and white toiler to the fact that the interest of both the white and colored toiler and of their employers as well is finally centralized only in the finished products of their toil when it is ready for the markets of the world. We further recommend that an effort be made to bring the Negro workers of the country into a closer relationship with the employers of labor of the State of Illinois and at the same time with the various labor organizations of this State in order that the interests of all parties, namely, white workers, colored workers, and employers of labor, and the trade-union as a medium of conciliation and arbitration, may all be conserved, remembering at all times that the supreme and centralizing efforts of every American citizen should be, and is, winning the war.

Respectfully submitted by your committee.

GEO. W. FORD, *Chairman.*  
HUGH SINGLETON  
J. B. OSBY  
GEO. W. BUCKNER  
A. K. FOOTE  
CHAS. S. GIBBS

The situation in southwestern Illinois, particularly the East St. Louis situation, was so vital with the whole question of Negro labor and war production in this territory that the department soon found it necessary to have the supervisor of Negro economics give attention to St. Louis and to territory in the State of Missouri in further work to adjust relations of Negro workers and white workers. Accordingly, at the request of the Federal director for Missouri of the United States Employment Service, the department called a conference of Negro workers, white employers, and white workers, which was held at St. Louis, Mo., December 18, 1918. An interesting incident in connection with this conference was that it was held in the Poro Building, a new structure just completed by a Negro corporation of unusual success. The conference was attended by select delegates from about 12 centers throughout the State and its significance is shown by the program of work attached.

PROGRAM OF WORK ADOPTED BY THE MISSOURI CONFERENCE ON PROBLEMS OF NEGRO LABOR,  
DECEMBER 18, 1918

1. Race relations.
  - a. This committee should take steps to get white and colored labor together in order to better understand the ideals and ambitions of each.
    1. Negro labor leaders shall be urged to teach their people that their interests are common with those of white labor.
    2. White labor leaders shall be urged to teach their people that their interests are common with those of colored labor and also instruct them regarding the high standard of living of Negroes.
2. Release of Negro labor.
  - a. Steps should be taken to prevent wholesale discharge of Negroes in order not to cause race friction.
    1. Visits should be made by representatives of the local committee to factories where they seem to be discharging Negroes wholesale.
    2. Visits should be made by representatives of the committee to factories where large numbers of Negroes are employed, urging that the latter be discharged only in the same proportion and for the same reason that employees of other races are discharged.
3. Housing.
  - a. This committee should make plans to house returning colored soldiers.
    1. By establishing a room registry for colored soldiers in the various communities.
    2. The Government shall be urged to grant land to those returning colored soldiers who desire to settle in the agricultural districts.
  - b. The local committee will urge employers that they provide their colored employees with housing that is sanitary.
4. Make plans to create openings for Negroes.
  - a. By investigating every public construction program and ascertaining whether or not Negroes are to be used.
  - b. By encouraging Negroes to go into business for themselves.
5. Distribution of labor.
  - a. Prevent unequal distribution of Negroes through exchange of information re shortage or surplus of colored labor by committeemen from various localities.
  - b. Cooperate with the nearest United States Employment Service office.
6. Act as agency representing the Negro in soldiers' bureaus--about to be established by the United States Government.
7. Cooperation of agencies.
 

This committee shall seek to develop cooperation in the carrying out of its program from--

  - a. Labor union.
  - b. Philanthropic agencies.
  - c. Churches.
  - d. Lodges.
  - e. Employers' organizations.
8. Education.
  - a. Negro.
    1. Shop talks on efficiency.
    2. Lectures in colored churches and fraternal organizations on efficiency.
    3. Neighborhood visits on better living.
    4. Special attention shall be paid to the encouragement of thrift.
  - b. White employer.
    1. Employers should be furnished with information re Negro's efficiency.

It may be added that local committees were set up in this State in only four places, as the restriction of activities developed in this direction commenced a few weeks after this conference. It should be added, however, that Missouri offers in many places one of the most important fields where Negro labor may be more efficient and where there is a necessity for developing better understanding between white workers, white employers, and Negro workers.

A large part of the unskilled labor in the industrial districts in St. Louis and some mining and coal districts make this matter of interest to all, both employees and employers in this city.

The supervisor of Negro economics for Illinois, following the State conference at Springfield, quickly lined up his work with the private agencies and organizations in various parts of the State. Consequently each city and county Negro workers' advisory committee was able to bring to its assistance the cooperation of many white and colored citizens; so that despite subsequent racial disturbances in Chicago it may justly be said that much friction, both in Chicago and elsewhere, was removed by this cordial effort of advisory committees and local organizations. In fact, in three places--one of them East St. Louis--acute racial situations were met and adjusted through this means. One of the first pieces of work was to ascertain the firms employing colored workers, so as to give some substantial idea of the extent to which they were employed. The list included some of the largest firms in Illinois, the number of firms in each locality being as follows:

Abingdon	1	Hoopston	1
Alton	2	Indiana Harbor	1
Aurora	2	Madison	1
Batavia	1	Moline	4
Bloomington	1	Morris	1
Cairo	6	Murphysboro	1
Canton	1	Onarga	1
Herrin	1	Paris	1
Chicago	89	Peoria	6
Chicago Heights	5	Quincy	4
Danville	2	Rochelle	1
Decatur	1	Rock Island	3
Dixon	1	Rockford	8
East Moline	2	Rockdale	1
East St. Louis	12	Granite City	1
Freeport	4	East St. Louis	1
Granite City	3	Springfield	1
St. Louis	2	Sycamore	1
Hammond	1	Waukegan	2
Harvey	6	North Chicago	1
West Harvey	1		

Of particular significance was the work in Illinois of assisting in the placement in civilian occupations the returning Negro soldiers and sailors. General cooperation in Illinois in the matter of caring for these returning men was well organized. Such organizations as the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., the Knights of Columbus, the Jewish Welfare Board, the Chicago Urban League, and many other agencies cooperated effectively and closely with the United States Employment Service, the supervisor of Negro economics, and the State employment office. The State employment service and the United States Employment Service, immediately following the signing of the armistice, adopted the plans of the Federal service for meeting needs of the returning soldiers by the establishment of placement bureaus with the cooperation of private organizations, some of which are named above. In addition to the returning soldiers, many workers had been released from war industries. This complicated the labor situation in Chicago and other points in Illinois in the months following the signing of the armistice, and required the most delicate handling in the most sympathetic manner. With the hearty cooperation of the Washington office the plans went forward rapidly, and the work was undertaken in the placement of the 10,000 Negro soldiers who returned to Chicago. In addition to the central office, a special bureau was opened on the South Side of Chicago, in the main district containing large numbers of Negro residents in professions and profitable enterprises.

In conducting this special office, however, no restriction was made limiting it to the use of colored soldiers. Its sole purpose was to put the placement facilities within the easiest reach of those whom it was designed to serve. An appeal letter signed by a central committee representing a number of welfare agencies and the Federal Government was sent to over 5,000 employers in Chicago urging especially that they give attention to employment

of members of the Eighth Illinois Regiment just returned from service overseas. This letter was approved by the State Advisory Board of the Employment Service, the executive committee of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Bureau, and the Federal director, United States Employment Service. In addition, a sort of flying squadron of returning soldiers in uniform was sent throughout the city to solicit opportunities for these men. The success of this effort as a part of the general response may be judged from the fact that, although there was rather an acute unemployment situation in Chicago at the time, it was not many weeks before the situation had been cleared up and the supervisor reported that it was possible to say that a job could be found for every man that really wanted work. As an example of the activities in the placement of returning Negro soldiers, the following figures for one week are given: Attendance, 468; registrations, 198; help wanted, 152; referred, 156; reported placed, 114; transferred, 26.

Although the following figures were included in the report of the United States Employment Service the following report of the South Side office during the month of May, 1918, is given, as it had more placements than any other office in Chicago for that month:

*Men.*--Attendance, 1,430; registration, 795; help wanted, 824; referred, 637; reported placed, 570; transferred, 3.

In all this work special mention should be made of the assistance given by private organizations, especially the Chicago Urban League, which maintained an employment office in cooperation with the United States Employment Service and the State Employment Service throughout the period of the United States Employment Service work in the city of Chicago.

One of the special forms of the work in Illinois was to assist in the improvement of depressing housing conditions in the State. When the plans of the United States Homes Registration Service had developed to the point that a field worker was needed in this territory, the supervisor of Negro economics canvassed urban localities in Illinois. Chicago, East St. Louis, Springfield, Quincy, Alton, Cairo, Peoria, Bloomington, Centralia, Decatur, Danville, Jacksonville, and Monmouth were covered by the Negro workers' advisory committees at each point. Through the assistance of these committees, the field agent of the Homes Registration Service and the Illinois supervisor of Negro economics formulated plans for a campaign on housing. These plans suffered curtailment due to a change in plans of the housing bureau.

As a means of developing stability of labor and thrift among Negro workers, a study was made of cooperative store enterprises, and the laws governing same. Thereafter plans of organization were outlined giving details as to incorporation, stock values, share and loan of capital, stock holders meetings, duties of boards of directors, management, buying of goods, bookkeeping auditing of accounts, dividends and surplus earnings, and similar details. The results of this study were issued in mimeographed form and put into the hands of Negro workers' advisory committeemen for State-wide distribution. So valuable does this outline seem that it is given in full as follows:

116 NORTH DEARBORN STREET,  
Chicago, Ill., June 17, 1919

[From the supervisor of Negro economics in Illinois to the Negro Workers Committee on the subject of cooperative stores.]

One of the lines along which the Director of Negro Economics is laying great emphasis is that of the development of business enterprises among our people. Because of the small number of Negroes who handle any large amount of capital the most successful business enterprises among colored people must necessarily be cooperative.

I am sending you today a brief outline of the method of starting and carrying on a cooperative store.

Cooperative stores have been very successful in a great many places in this country and enormously successful in Europe.

Already a cooperative store conducted by Negroes is on foot in Illinois. It is being promoted by the members of Butcher Workmen's Local 651 of Chicago.

It seems to me that there are enough colored people in your community to support such a store.

Too much of the money that is being earned by the colored group at present remains in their hands only for a short time, then goes to the hands of



others, usually foreign born of short residence in this country.

A cooperative store planned and carried on by Negroes will mean that a large portion of the money earned by Negroes will be kept within the group.

Further information can be obtained by writing to the Supervisor of Negro Economics in Illinois or to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. for Bulletin 394 on cooperative stores, price 10 cents, or to Mr. Duncan McDonald, secretary-treasurer, Central States Cooperative Society, Springfield, Ill., who has issued some very interesting pamphlets on this subject at a small cost of not over 5 cents.

Very truly yours,

FORRESTER B. WASHINGTON,  
*Supervisor of Negro Economics in Illinois*

9. *Special conferences.*--(a) President Chicago Federation of Labor; (b) men of public works in Chicago; (c) State Advisory Board, United States Department of Labor, executive committee Soldiers' Bureau, Assistant Federal Director United States Employment Service, superintendent Soldiers and Sailors' Bureau, chairman of board of management, representatives of churches, lodges, women's organizations.

10. *Cooperation*--Cooperation was had through the supervisor of Negro economics and through local Negro workers' advisory committees with the following organizations: Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Chicago Urban League, Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, American Federation of Labor, Chambers of Commerce, mayor of Cairo, aldermen of Chicago, superintendent of public schools, Springfield; city attorney of Cairo, State auditor of Jacksonville, and many other organizations and public officials.

11. *Miscellaneous.*--(a) Addresses to colored workers in industrial plants, emphasizing regularity, punctuality, and efficiency, etc.; (b) opportunities for colored college women; (c) opportunities for colored women in domestic work; (d) establishment of homes registration service. . . .

#### REPORT OF WORK IN OHIO

The number of Negro migrants who settled in the principal industrial centers of Ohio were large. Estimates secured upon visits to those centers by investigators of the Department of Labor in 1917 give some definite notion of these numbers. The following figures, of course, are largely general estimates and probably should be double, and, in some cases, increased to a large extent as of September 1, 1919.

Cleveland.....	10,000
Cincinnati.....	6,000
Columbus.....	3,000
Dayton.....	3,000
Toledo.....	3,000
Canton.....	3,000
Akron.....	3,000
Middletown.....	1,000
Camp Sherman,Chillicothe.....	2,000
Portsmouth.....	300
Baltimore & Ohio camps.....	400
Pennsylvania Railroad camps.....	800
Contractors.....	1,000
Traction companies.....	1,000
Total.....	37,500

It will be noticed that Alliance, Bellaire, Hamilton, Ironton, Lima, Springfield, Steubenville, Youngstown, and Zanesville were not included in this survey. These points, as well as other cities, contained a large number of iron, steel, coal, coke, and other industries which called for the kind of labor which Negroes were readily able to supply. As the figures indicate, large numbers of Negroes migrated into Ohio and were distributed over it generally. Therefore, this State received early consideration in the program of the Department of Labor.

*Organization--Supervisor of Negro economics.*--The departmental State supervisor of Negro economics, Charles E. Hall, was appointed with the view of general efficiency to the department and to the State of Ohio. For more than 18 years Mr. Hall had been an employee of the Bureau of the Census in the United States Department of Commerce, and had had considerable experience in field work. He had supervised the gathering and preparation of statistical material relating to the manufacturing interests and to the Negro population in the United States. He had received special commendation from the Department of Commerce for this work. During 1916, the early period of Negro migration to the North, Mr. Hall had been detailed to the Department of Labor for field investigations. His valuable work in a report of more than ordinary worth, served as a basis for first steps by the Department of Labor.

Being a native of the Middle West, Mr. Hall enjoyed a wide contact with public officials and representative citizen, through whom it was believed the fullest cooperation could be obtained. He took the field in Ohio on June 17, 1918, just preceding the State conference. The later success of his work gave substantial indorsement to the judgment of the department in assigning him to Ohio.

*Conference on Negro labor.*--Following the assignment of Supervisor Hall to the State, under the auspices of the United States Employment Service, plans for the Ohio conference on Negro labor were started with the hearty cooperation of both State and Federal officials, the State Council of National Defense and a number of private citizens and agencies. Special mention should be made of the personal interest and attention of Gov. James M. Cox and Mr. Fred D. Croxton, chairman of the State Council of National Defense.

The conference was called by the Department of Labor to get action upon those things that needed to be done in Ohio to promote the welfare of wage earners, and to stimulate the production for winning the war. Dr. F. L. Hagerty, professor of sociology, Ohio State University, presided. After considerable discussion and a number of addresses the body of the work of the conference was done, through committees, reports from which were adopted for the further guidance of the department's work in the State.

Some of the committees' recommendations were as follows:

1. Investigation into the difficulties arising from discrimination against Negroes by local labor unions.
2. Efforts to stabilize labor by giving new opportunities for promotion, by standardizing wages, by reclassifying work, by the employment of colored foremen, and by educational work among the working classes with the view of making them satisfied with their occupations.
3. An endeavor to employ the Negro worker in full accordance with his fitness.
4. The opening of new places of employment in keeping with the fitness of Negro wage-earners.
5. The conducting of welfare work in plants and factories.
6. The setting up of facilities for community recreation.
7. Increased attention to rooms, lockers, ventilation, and adequate space for employees.
8. Special attention to health problems.

The committee on industrial conditions reported to the conference that there was sufficient work to be secured in the State for Negro laborers in industry doing government and other work and that the Negro laborers were generally reliable. It also reported that in some industries there was discrimination as to the kinds of work and conditions under which the work was done with reference to Negro laborers. The committee stated that the demand for labor was more than the supply and in order that the Government might get the greatest return out of the amount of the actual and potential energy of the Negro workmen it was recommended that where skilled Negro laborers were doing unskilled work because of their inability to secure work at the skilled trades on account of color that the Government adopt rules for governmental contracts and make a special effort to see that every such man be given the opportunity to do that for which he was best fitted. The final recommendation of this committee closed with the averment that "race or color should be no bar to advancement."

The committee on organization adopted with modifications to meet local conditions for use in Ohio the form of constitution for the Negro workers' advisory committee which the department had developed.

The committee on Negro women in industry submitted a report on this subject of such special importance for future procedure that it is reproduced here in full:

1. We, as a committee, recommend that a Negro woman be placed on the State committee of women in industry, recently named by the Ohio Branch, Council of National Defense.
  2. We, as a committee, recommend that the United States Employment Service place Negro placement secretaries in any employment office where numbers of colored women seek employment, to be determined by the State director.
  3. We, as a committee, recommend that we indorse the standard which the women's committee, Ohio Branch, Council of National Defense, have drawn up through the committee on women in industry.
  4. We recommend that this committee bring to the attention of the national committee on housing any housing conditions as they affect Negro women.
  5. We recommend that a pamphlet be drawn up stating the necessity of loyalty to duty and efficiency on the part of the worker, and the financial loss entailed through the neglect of such, upon the part of the employer and community, be given each worker through the employment office.
  6. We, as a committee, recommend that a woman be placed on the committee of hygiene and sanitation, if the committee appointed this morning is a standing committee.
  7. We recommend that no worker shall be permitted to leave her present employment without giving a week or more notice before being accepted by another employer.
  8. We recommend and urge that a Negro welfare worker be placed in industries over Negro women as a solution to the employers' problem of adjustment.
  9. We recommend the encouragement of an adequate system of training within plants which recognizes the difference between showing and teaching for all new employees.
- Respectfully submitted.

MISS JENNIE D. PORTER,  
*Chairman, Cincinnati, Ohio*  
 Miss Elsie Mountain,  
*Secretary, Columbus, Ohio*

Hon. James M. Cox, governor of Ohio, was present at the conference and made the closing address, which included the following remarks:

I have no disposition to interfere with your deliberations, but upon the statement of Dr. Haynes, with whom I have had a brief but delightful conference with reference to the earnestness of this meeting and the fact that it seems to be the most serious, if not the most successful, meeting that has been held in any of the States, I felt that we would be derelict in our responsibility to the duties that come and go each day, as governor of this State, if I did not come here and express my appreciation of your coming.

First, we need your people and need them badly in the war. We, likewise, need your people and need them badly in the industrial life of this country.

Last winter I had the privilege of visiting Tuskegee Institute. I had a long visit with that splendid type of your race, Dr. Moton. The opportunity was mine of making a survey of what was being done at this institute. I took pains to make considerable inquiry with reference to national and industrial conditions in the State of Alabama, and I am prepared to say, in the candor of my own judgment, at least, that you, as representatives of the race, are just now coming into your own. Even in the Southern States, when the great flow started northward, the southern people found they could not get along without the colored people.

The war gives you a great opportunity. I can say with pride, now, and reiterate it all through the corridor of time, that not a single member of your race is following the standard of the Kaiser. I have had the opportunity of reviewing colored troops, and I hope you will not feel that I am speaking

flippantly when I recall the circumstances of reviewing the troops at Camp Sherman. Capt. Talbott, with Gen. Glenn's staff, came over to the reviewing stand and said: "I have just left the colored regiment, and they are so full of pep that if they do not dance the cakewalk when they come by, I will be surprised." They presented the best line of the day--it was generally conceded to be the best line of the day by the general, the persons in the reviewing stand, and the thousands of white people who were assembled there. I hope that when the war is over we can then join together members of our race and yours in helping to work out in Ohio what they have in Alabama.

The colored man is here, and here to stay, and since that is true we not only want to improve the educational opportunities that come to him but we also want to give attention to vocational training. I want you to carry home to those you represent the assurance that whatever help this State can render, either to the people in your State or to the soldiers at the front, needs but an evidence of your desire.

The Department of Labor takes this special opportunity to thank every agency and every individual who helped to make successful the Ohio conference August 5, 1919.

*Negroes workers' advisory committees.*--Immediately after the conference, Supervisor Hall, with the assistance of public-spirited citizens of Ohio, recommended to the department a number of the strongest persons for appointment to service on the State Negro workers' advisory committee, and to local, county, and city committees of 25 important centers of the State where Negro workers in considerable numbers resided. The complete personnel of the State committee follows:

Edward Berry, Athens; Leroy W. Bobbins and Chas. C. Cowgill, Middletown; Chas. L. Johnson and Chas. P. Dunn, Springfield; Robert K. Hodges, D. R. Williams, Alexander H. Martin, and (Miss) Hazel Mountain, Cleveland; Chas. W. Bryant, Harry B. Alexander, J. H. Hendrick, and (Mrs.) E. W. Moore, Columbus; J. E. Ormes, Wilberforce; R. E. Holmes, Zenia; F. D. Patterson, Greenfield; Joseph L. Jones, H. S. Dunbar, Fred A. Geier, and (Miss) Anna Laws, Cincinnati; B. M. Ward, B. H. Fisher, and (Mrs.) Minnie Scott, Toledo; Rev. W. O. Harper, and T. E. Milliken, Youngstown; H. T. Elliott, Dayton; Rev. A. M. Thomas, Zanesville; (Mrs. Stephen Bates, Chillicothe; James French, Sandusky; T. E. Greene, Akron.

Persons serving on these committees did so at the special request of the Secretary of Labor, and, in but one or two instances where the appointees were confronted with extreme pressure of business, were the invitations declined. Throughout the work the patriotism and spirit of service of the citizenship of Ohio made possible the successful carrying out of virtually every plan which the department launched, and the Ohio committee, like similar committees in 10 other States, assisted in the handling of industrial problems with a maximum degree of satisfaction.

*Surveys of labor conditions.*--The general industrial conditions in Ohio were investigated either by the supervisor directly or by the committee members, who reported to the supervisor on a blank form, of which the following is a copy:

#### NEGRO WAGE EARNERS IN OHIO

##### *Information for supervisor of Negro economics*

*To members of county and city committees of Negro workers' advisory committee.*

Please fill out blank and return.

1. Are there many out of work in your city or county? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have many been released during the past 30 days? \_\_\_\_\_
3. If so, were they absorbed by other occupations? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Have any new avenues of employment been opened? \_\_\_\_\_
5. If so, state the kind of work. \_\_\_\_\_

Remarks.

(Under "Remarks" please furnish the supervisor with any other information which you think should be brought to his attention.)

Information furnished by .....

Address:.....

Date: .....

The first general survey developed the following facts:

The Negro workers had not been greatly disturbed because of the many industrial readjustments and temporary suspensions of the manufacturing enterprises not essential to winning the war, during the war and preceding the signing of the armistice.

The counties of Hamilton, Lucas, and Montgomery, whose principal cities are Cincinnati, Toledo, and Dayton, respectively, were largely engaged in war contracts. In Toledo the opportunities for employment were steadily improving. Local industries in Cleveland, Columbus, Youngstown, Akron, Canton, Lima, Delaware, Greenville, Steubenville, Zanesville, Chillicothe, Sandusky, Portsmouth, Marietta, and other centers were employing large numbers of Negro workers. In Butler County, the American Rolling Mills were giving employment to hundreds of workers. In Lima, the Swift Packing Co. was giving employment to Negro men and women, who were making good. In Youngstown, Mahoning County, an increasing number of elevator girls and male truck drivers were given employment.

In Dayton a large firm was making calls for considerable numbers of Negro laborers. This company was able to guarantee prospective workers housing facilities of the better type. Columbus reported a garment manufacturer who was unable to get a sufficient number of Negro women who could operate power machines. Youngstown reported insufficient wages (\$9 and \$10 a week) for girls. Dayton reported an industry using from 15 to 30 colored women, sorting rags on a piece-work basis, at \$15 per week.

*Job selling.*--Among the special conditions found in Ohio was one which related to job selling in industrial establishments; and there is incorporated herein a full report of the Ohio supervisor respecting this condition, evidences of which were very apparent. This report was approved by the Director of Negro Economics and sent to advisory committeemen in all parts of the State.

#### JOB SELLING IN INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS TO NEGROES

To prevent job selling by foremen, assistant foremen, "straw bosses" and "go-betweens" a very comprehensive bill was enacted by the last General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Industrial Commission of Ohio, the penalty being as follows:

"SECTION 2. Whoever violates any provision of this act shall be fined for the first offense not less than one hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars and the costs of prosecution; and for the second or any subsequent offense not less than two hundred dollars nor more than one thousand dollars and the costs of prosecution."

"SECTION 6. The Industrial Commission of Ohio shall have full power, jurisdiction, and authority to administer the provisions of this act."

Before the migration of Negroes from the South had reached a considerable volume, the foreign-born wage earners were the ones who were the victims of this pernicious system and the Department of Investigation and Statistics secured definite information that the collection of fees for jobs, or assessments of various kinds by foremen was a well-established custom in many of the industrial establishments through the State. It was found at the time the investigation was made that the price paid to foremen was generally \$15, \$20, or \$25 for a job paying approximately 25 cents per hour, and that the custom appeared to have become so well established that no demand for payment needed to be made as the applicant understood that he must make a payment of money before he got the work.

Definite information was secured by the department to the effect that the shrewd foreman seldom received the money directly from the applicant, but usually had a number of men who acted as "go-betweens" and who were generally "straw bosses" or workmen.

This system of petty graft became so pronounced and the demands of the grafters became so insistent that the investigators experienced no great difficulty in securing the evidence upon which a number of indictments were made under the old law relating to private employment agencies which was not broad enough in scope, however, to fit the entire situation.

The new law includes the acceptance of fees, gifts, or gratuities, or promises to pay a fee or to make a gift under the agreement or with the understanding that the grafter will undertake to secure or assist in securing work for the applicant, or with the understanding that he will advance or undertake

to secure or assist in securing an advance in pay or prevent or undertake to prevent or assist in preventing the discharge or reduction in pay or position of the worker in the employ of the company. The law which was enacted by the eighty-second general assembly covers all of these points and carries with it the penalty indicated above.

There are indication that there has been a revival of the practice of job selling, but that instead of working on the foreigners, the grafters have turned their attention to the helpless, ignorant, and destitute Negroes who are coming from the South to seek opportunities to better their condition and it is not unlikely that the system of job selling in industrial establishments in Ohio will again be investigated as the practice is not only unlawful and highly dishonorable but has a tendency to destroy the morale of the workers and thereby seriously affect production. All such cases should be reported.

CHARLES E. HALL,  
*Supervisor of Negro Economics*

Approved.

(Signed)

GEORGE E. HAYNES  
*Director of Negro Economics*

*Living conditions of Negro workers.*--It was the experience of the department that unfavorable living conditions, more than anything else, made difficult the advancement of the Negro worker in efficiency and increased contentment. At times the housing conditions were due to lack of employment; at times the conditions were due to lack of pride on the part of the worker; and at times the boardinghouse keeper of the low type set up conditions which necessity forced the working men to accept.

As to the latter class, in one instance Supervisor Hall reported as follows:

OCTOBER 11, 1918

DR. GEORGE E. HAYNES,

*Director of Negro Economics, Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR SIR: On the evening of October 9, 1918, I visited the boarding and lodging house conducted by \_\_\_\_\_, a colored man, for the \_\_\_\_\_ Co., \_\_\_\_\_, Ohio.

This very dilapidated two-story frame building is located at \_\_\_\_\_ Street, and is known as \_\_\_\_\_. It is the most filthy boarding and lodging house that has come under my observation. A foul-smelling closet adjoins the unclean dining room. I noticed broken windows upstairs in the sleeping quarters, and in the south wing even the skylights were without glass or other protection from the elements.

There is no shower or bathroom for the 42 men who occupy this house, and it has been found necessary to borrow a washtub from the neighbors to accommodate the men who wish to take a bath. The place is heated by small stoves and natural gas heaters and the building is lighted by electricity. The kitchen was fairly clean but the range had no hot-water boiler, which greatly inconveniences the cooks and other kitchen help as well as the boarders.

A number of the dirty sunken floors need jacking up and the rooms would not be less attractive if they were painted or whitewashed. Although there are a few new bed mattresses, I found most of them alarmingly filthy with bed coverings in the same condition. Although there are plenty of rooms in the house, many of them are unfurnished. Upon inquiry I was informed that the men coming off the night shift are obliged to occupy the rooms just vacated by the men going on the day shift. In some instances four or five men sleep in a room about 10 by 12 at the same time. Some of the bed springs are worn out, necessitating the sleeper to lie in most uncomfortable positions, regardless of the fact that he has been working hard and that the efficiency of his work depends largely upon comfortable repose. There is no assembly room, music (except a nickel-in-the-slot piano), pool, billiards, or books.

For these most inferior accommodations the men are charged \$7.25 per week for room and board as compared with \$4.55 per week charged by the \_\_\_\_\_ Co., located in the same city and within a few blocks. The \_\_\_\_\_ Co., maintains a large boarding and lodging house, known as "The \_\_\_\_\_," which is now being papered, painted, and generally overhauled.

In my opinion, the \_\_\_\_\_ is extremely insanitary and a disease breeder, a condition which could not have escaped the attention of the local officials

of the company, one of whom visits the house daily for the purpose of checking up.

These conditions are doubtless the causes of the large turnover and inefficiency of the colored workers of this company.

Respectfully,

CHARLES E. HALL,  
Supervisor of Negro Economics, Ohio

This report was approved by the Director of Negro Economics for submission to the general manager of the \_\_\_\_\_ Company. Subsequent action by the company in the renovation of this place and change of these conditions followed the receipt of this report by him.

Critical housing conditions in Cleveland, together with other economic problems, gave to that city a special need which the department planned to give attention to through a local representative member of the Negro workers' advisory committee. This plan, however, was delayed and finally given up because of necessary changes in the policy of the department.

Acute housing conditions were found also at Akron, Cleveland, Dayton, Lima, Portsmouth, Toledo, and Youngstown; and, subsequently, the Department of Labor, through the United States Housing Corporation, had surveys made in several of these cities, but the sudden termination of the war, accompanied by a readjustment of the industries to a peace-time basis, threw a great many persons out of work and the housing condition was somewhat relieved through the general exodus of Negro and white wage earners to other localities within and without the State where there was a shortage of labor and where adequate housing facilities obtained. One permanent result in stimulating building and loan associations is fully described below.

The failure of congressional appropriations for the furtherance of the Negro economics work unfavorably affected the industrial progress of this class of wage earners who had watched with increasing interest the development of this new agency which was established to better their industrial welfare and to act as a clearing house for industrial opportunities. Men were no longer obliged to live in idleness, because they were able at all times to learn through the supervisor where work could be obtained, the rate of wages, the hours of labor, and the attitude of the residents of any community toward Negro labor. Negro professional men, skilled and unskilled workers, and others, freely communicated with the Director of Negro Economics and with the State supervisor for the purpose of securing a location or an opportunity in a community where conditions were favorable to their prosperity, and the failure of appropriations to provide for the continuance of this field work was keenly felt.

Discrimination in occupations on account of color was one of the conditions which, in some instances, confronted the Negro worker. The Ohio Conference on Negro Labor made recommendations on this point. Whether such discriminations were approved by private or public employers made a difference in the action which the department could take. The private employer might hire whomsoever he chose. Aside from an appeal for justice and fair play on his part, the department was unable to take any specific action in such cases. Where such discriminations, however, were alleged to exist within the ranks of employers who because of war contracts or other relations came under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, investigations were made and definite steps taken to remove such discriminations.

*Complaints.*--Complaints, other than those noted above, were generally of three types:

1. Discrimination in the matter of opportunities for the Negro worker.
2. Unfair treatment of the Negro worker by employers.
3. Inefficiency of the Negro workers.

On the whole, there was a minimum amount of complaint in Ohio either by employer or employee. The stamp of efficiency was often placed upon the Negro worker, and the Negro worker often recognized the effort on the part of employers assuring to him equal pay, equal hours, recreation facilities, pleasant relations with white workers, and decent living conditions.

*Results.*--Under the supervision of the United States Employment Service, the State supervisor of Negro economics made direct reports of placement of Negro workers to the Federal director. He assisted the employment offices throughout the State with their problems of placing Negro workers. Reports

of the United States Employment Service give him the recognition for this help. Placements were many and varied. Services were frequently rendered to firms which had not formerly employed Negro workers. Following the signing of the armistice and the resulting nonemployment situation the efforts for the returning Negro soldiers and sailors were carried along side by side with the efforts of the Federal and State machinery for the employment of all persons.

An outstanding feature of the Ohio work was the project of furthering the organization of building and loan associations among Negroes of the State as one concrete means of remedying the housing situation. In a letter dated May 8, 1919, which was given Statewide publicity, Supervisor Hall made the following points:

1. Industrial opportunities in Ohio are ever opening.
2. The housing facilities offered to Negro workers are inadequate.
3. Negro people themselves should make some of the financial arrangements for meeting the housing situation.
4. Overcrowded and insanitary housing conditions destroy the efficiency of the worker.
5. The home owner is ever a permanent working factor, contributing to the growth of the State and to its civic and commercial progress.

Thereafter Supervisor Hall compiled, from the Laws of Ohio, a skeleton outline of the statutes regulating the organizing and conducting of building and loan associations. He also formed a plan and model constitution for such associations among colored people of the several localities. This outline of laws and plans was placed in the hands of members of the Negro workers' advisory committees and of special groups in the cities and counties throughout the State having a considerable Negro population. This was supplemented by talks made by the supervisor to interested groups in various places. Wilberforce University gave special courses of lectures on building and loan matters in three centers of the State. So numerous became the requests for additional information that the supervisor found it necessary to prepare a model form of constitution and by-laws for distribution. In rapid succession building and loan associations were organized in several Ohio cities where they are greatly needed. Requests for the "Ohio Plan" were also made by persons living in Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan, and New York, and several associations in these States have since been organized. All are reported to be doing good business financially and are helping to alleviate the housing conditions. Companies in other places are proposed and will doubtless be launched.

In carrying out the purpose with which it was charged by Congress, the Department of Labor has steadfastly been a neutral administrator regarding union and nonunion workers, and has endeavored to promote alike the interests of all workers, white and colored, male and female, union and nonunion. With this in view, the department has sought to keep fully informed of the attitude of labor organizations toward Negroes in territories where the question is a vital one for amicable relations of the two races in industry.

Consequently, statement of the change in the attitude of organized labor in Ohio during this period is of special note. The copy of a letter of Mr. Thomas J. Donnelly, secretary-treasurer, Ohio Federation of Labor, outlining the attitude of that organization in the matter of unionizing Negro wage earners covers this important point:

COLUMBUS, OHIO, January 22, 1919

MR. CHAS. E. HALL,  
*Supervisor of Negro Economics,  
 Department of Labor, Columbus, Ohio*

DEAR MR. HALL: Supplementing our conversation recently upon the subject of Negro labor and the unionizing of colored men in this section of the country, I am writing you at this time. Best results would be obtained, in my opinion, if efforts should be made to bring into the union those colored men who were born and educated in the North, where through contact and association with the whites they have formed the same viewpoint on industrial affairs, see the same necessity for a sustained effort, have the same "pep," and the same determination to protect their rights as wage earners and as citizens. These men can be taken in by the organizations representing both the skilled and unskilled branches of the labor unions, and I believe that no great objection would be found, especially if in communities where there are large numbers of



both white and colored, distinct locals were organized; but where there are only a few whites or a few colored men following the same trade it would be advisable for them to belong to the same local. A possible objection to a mixed local in communities where there are large numbers of both races employed in the same line of work is that both elements might vote along the color line upon questions of organization and policies. This of course would have a tendency to destroy the solidarity of the organization and to discount its work. I believe that once these colored workers were fairly well organized they would be a valued aid in organizing the illiterate ones who have migrated from the South and give them a clearer view of northern ideals and the responsibilities accompanying citizenship.

While it has been my experience that colored men as a rule make good union men, I do not think that the colored agricultural illiterates from the South are adaptable to skilled industry and membership in unions of the skilled white workers.

Negroes reared in Ohio, having the advantage of the public schools in the State, should be adaptable to skilled industry and no doubt could secure membership in the unions of the skilled white workers or have separate organizations chartered by the international trades-unions. Places could possibly be found for a number of southern colored agricultural illiterates at common labor and in semiskilled trades. They would then be eligible to membership in the unions of the workers in these lines of industry.

Improved machinery has greatly lessened the demand for muscle, but at the same time has increased the demand for men who are trained to use their heads as well as their hands.

A great number of accidents in the Ohio factories and mills during the past few years has largely been due to the employment of illiterate foreigners from southern Europe, who formerly followed agricultural pursuits and the employment of large numbers of Negroes of the same class from the South would result, no doubt, in a like number of accidents. Until they become factory-broken, more punctual and dependable in attendance, more intelligent, and more accustomed to the northern method of living they will not really constitute an asset of large value to skilled industry.

Yours, very truly,

THOS. J. DONNELLY,  
*Secretary-Treasurer, Ohio State Federation of Labor*

In closing the work in Ohio, after the failure of appropriations, Supervisor Hall gave the following statement of concrete results of his efforts:

1. The growth and stimulation of the opinion among colored workers that the Government has recognized them industrially, that they now have a medium through which to voice their complaints, and that because of the moral effect of such recognition they will be less subject to exploitation.

2. A more helpful attitude on the part of employers and a less hostile one on the part of white wage earners brought about through contact with colored members of committees.

3. The gradual elimination of racial objection at "the gate" or point of hiring, through the cultivation of superintendents, managers, and directors of employment.

4. The announcement of the official attitude of the Ohio State Federation of Labor concerning skilled and unskilled Negro labor.

5. The increase in efficiency and decrease in labor turnover brought about through the knowledge or belief that they would be given a "square deal" industrially.

6. The awakening of Negroes, through the circulation of frequent State-wide reports, to the industrial opportunities open to them.

7. The location, through questionnaires sent to county committees, of points where a surplus or shortage of Negro labor obtained, and the adjustment of these conditions, when possible, through the Clearance Division of the United States Employment Service.

8. The placing of movable wooden racks on cold cement floors of shower baths in several industrial plants in order to encourage a more frequent use of the bath.

9. The closing of several dilapidated, filthy, disease-breeding Negro boarding and lodging houses maintained by large manufacturing companies. The

personal inspection of other lodging houses, camps, etc.

10. The creation of a better understanding of the functions of the Department of Labor, and a greater appreciation of governmental agencies brought about through the efforts of the State and county Negro worker's advisory committees.

11. The development of cooperative groups through the encouragement and information given to committees in communities where the organization of a building and loan association would be both practicable and advisable.

12. The appointment of several colored "labor scouts" whose efficient work in congested industrial centers was of great value to the service and to the Negro wage earners.

The opinions and attitude of white and colored citizens of Ohio on the work of Negro economics in that State show something of its effort. A few excerpts from the communications to the department are given below:

Your circular with reference to Negro economics in Ohio under date of December 14th was received by us and read with lively interest. Any further communication or publication you may have on this subject I am sure will be appreciated. We are interested in this problem as you are, and desire to help in its solution so far as it is possible for us to do so.

I am glad to know that your work is progressing satisfactorily. I sincerely hope that we will continue to hold our own industrially, and that the Government will continue to cooperate with us and allow us representation in the Department of Labor.

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I shall be glad to cooperate with you to the extent of my ability in trying to bring about the conditions we both desire during readjustment.

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I received your circular, and most heartily welcome its coming. Words are inadequate to express my appreciation. Please let the good thing continue to come this way.

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The work you are in calls for a first-class race man's efforts, and I believe that you should be retained with the Government in the same capacity. I am pleased to have met you, to have learned of your work, and to have been brought in touch with it, and I believe you will be successful.

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I am glad you have completed your organization, and I assure you you have my full support.

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In returning your information blank, I would state that the United States Employment Service is filling a long-felt need among our people and that your methods meet my approval and will receive my earnest support. Let me hear from you at any time.

---

Congratulations on your report. Keep it up. Just simply the information is a tremendous factor in cementing the race, and that means ultimate solidarity and success.

---

Your very concise and yet informative letter relative to labor and labor conditions among the Negroes came to hand. It is a splendid document. You are to be congratulated upon its production, for in it you have at your fingertips the best and most information it has been my good fortune to receive to

the Negro in this important field of endeavor in Ohio. I wish you continued success in all your efforts.

---

I thank you for the circular letter concerning the readjustment of Negro labor. Keep me posted, and if I can serve you, call on me.

---

We have also got good service from the United States Employment Service, and Mr. Hall, State supervisor, is doing a great work.

---

I wish to congratulate you upon the excellent work you are doing in Ohio for the industrial advancement of our people. We all appreciate the opportunity to cooperate with you and the Department of Labor.

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Your letter with the inclosed statement marked "Personal, not for publication" has been received. We are grateful to you for your kindness in sending this information.

---

I wish to advise you that as a result of your efforts here in Cincinnati to organize a building and loan association managed by colored men, we have the Industrial Savings & Loan Co., incorporated for \$300,000, which commenced doing business January 31. We will be prepared to make our first loan within the next week or 10 days and our prospects are very bright for a large and growing company. . . .

#### NEGRO LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES SHIPYARDS

The widespread demand for ships to "beat" the unlawful submarine warfare of the Germans led the Nation to see that ships were needed to win the war. The building of ships called for labor of all kinds, skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled, and those who responded to build ships were serving the cause no less than those who responded for service in the Army. During the war the Negroes showed their patriotism in this particular fully as they did in others. In the shipyards under the jurisdiction of the United States Shipping Board--Emergency Fleet Corporation--covering four shipbuilding districts on the Atlantic coast, one on the Gulf coast, two on the Pacific coast, and one in the Great Lakes district, there were 24,648 Negroes employed during the war and 14,075 employed up to September, 1919, following the signing of the armistice. In the southern district during the war there were 11,991 and for the period after the war 5,504; in the middle Atlantic district there were 4,506 and 5,223, respectively; in the Delaware River district, 5,165 and 2,230, respectively; in the northern Atlantic district, 371 and 297, respectively; in the Gulf district, 1,830 and 309, respectively; in the southern Pacific district, 582 and 399, respectively; in the northern Pacific district, 176 and 96, respectively; and in the Great Lakes district, 27 and 17, respectively. Both the numbers involved and the distribution of the numbers, both during the war and the months following the signing of the armistice, give ample evidence that Negroes played a large part in the building of the ships. Unfortunately, it has not been feasible to secure the figures of the white workmen under the United States Shipping Board for these districts.

We do have, however, a full record of the occupations in which Negro workmen were engaged. During the war 4,963, or about 20.7 per cent, were engaged in occupations which may be classed as skilled occupations, leaving 19,685, or about 80 per cent, in unskilled occupations, some of which could probably be classed as semiskilled occupations. After the war 3,872, or 27.47 per cent, were in skilled occupations and 10,203, or 72.53 percent, in unskilled occupations, some of which may be classed as semiskilled. It is significant that the largest number of Negroes in skilled occupations both in steel and wooden ship construction was in the southern district, both during

and after the war. The second largest during the war was in the Delaware River district and after the war in the middle Atlantic district.

Negroes participated in 46 of the 55 separate shipbuilding occupations listed during the war period, and in 49 such occupations after the war. In addition, during the war 21 occupations had less than 10 Negroes employed and after the war 17 occupations had less than 10 Negroes employed in them. This leaves 25 occupations with 10 or more Negroes during the war and 22 occupations with 10 or more Negroes employed after the war.

The details are given in full in the accompanying table, but some illuminating comparisons may be made here. During the war there were 1,464 Negro carpenters, 225 calkers, 21 chippers and calkers, 631 fasteners, 11 blacksmiths, 102 blacksmiths' helpers, 36 riggers, 38 riveters, 22 foremen, 240 drillers and reamers and 399 bolters. These all are important skilled or semi-skilled occupations in the building of ships. After the war there were only 74 carpenters, 59 calkers, 36 chippers and calkers, 143 fasteners, 7 blacksmiths, 45 blacksmiths' helpers, and 191 reamers and drillers. There were, however, 49 riveters and 1,116 bolters, these occupations showing increases.

The analysis of these figures indicates that in the more highly skilled and therefore the more highly paid occupations there has been a greater decrease in the number of Negroes in the shipyards than in the less skilled or semiskilled occupations, but taking the skilled and semiskilled occupations together, Negro workers held their numbers and showed less decrease after the war than they did in the unskilled occupations, altogether, after the war. The total decrease after the war of Negroes in all skilled or semiskilled occupations was only 20.7 per cent, while the total decrease after the war of Negro workers in the unskilled occupations was about 48 per cent, or nearly one-half. While these figures show a very decided decrease in the more highly skilled occupations, on the whole they make a favorable showing for Negro workmen in the shipbuilding industry, both during and after the war.

Not only did Negroes enter the skilled and semiskilled occupations during the war in large numbers but they remained in these occupations in larger proportions than in the unskilled occupations. . . .

#### RECORD-BREAKING NEGRO WORKERS

How a Negro pile-driver gained the world's pile-driving record is told, partially in his own language, as follows:

#### WORLD'S PILE-DRIVING RECORD SMASHED

Edward Burwell, the Negro pile-driving captain whose Negro crew of 11 men broke the world's record in driving piles on shipway No. 46 (Philadelphia, Pa.), was asked how he came to break the standing record. Burwell smiled and pointed to a placard nailed on the pile-driving machine. The placard read: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again."

The record prior to Burwell's wonderful drive was 165 piles in 9 hours. Burwell and his crew drove 220 65-foot piles in 9 hours and 5 minutes, and a good part of the time the crew worked in a terrific downpour of rain. Since coming on the job in January, 1918, Burwell's crew has driven 4,141 piles with a total of 241,573 linear feet. The crew under Burwell is employed by the Arthur McMullen Co. This company had the contract to drive 21,434 piles. Burwell and his crew drove about 20 per cent of this number.

"I went into the pile-driving business 15 years ago," Burwell said in speaking of his new record. "I was never on a job as large as this one before. It was due to rivalry between another Negro foreman and myself that I made up my mind to go after the record of 165 piles held by another company.

"This sign filled our crew with enthusiasm. We decided, one night, that a new world's record would be made on the morrow, and it was. Of course, we had our little mechanical troubles, and instead of fretting and fuming, the men just glanced at the sign and started in with renewed vigor and the record was smashed."

Capt. Burwell then produced the log of the crew on the day the world's record was made. It is rather interesting reading and is printed below:

	Piles driven
7 a.m. to 8 a.m. ....	27
8 a.m. to 9 a.m. ....	23
(Delay 4-1/2 minutes due to broken steam line; raining very hard from 8.15 to 10 a.m.)	
9 a.m. to 10 a.m. ....	28
10 a.m. to 11 a.m. ....	22
(Delay 8 minutes due to pile fall breaking)	
11 a.m. to 12 a.m. ....	27
12 noon to 12.30 p.m. (lunch)	
12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. ....	25
(Heavy rain with electric showers from 1.25 to 2.50 p.m., and from 1.25 to 1.40 p.m. air pressure dropped considerably, which held up hammer.)	
1.30 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. ....	23
2.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. ....	23
3.30 p.m. to 4.35 p.m. ....	<u>22</u>
Total, 9 hours and 5 minutes .....	220

NOTE. Total linear feet of piles, 14,260. Previous world's record, 165 piles in 9 hours and 15 minutes.

Of no less interest is the performance of a gang of Negro riveters working at Sparrows Point, Md., in the plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, in breaking the world's record for driving rivets. One of the gang, Charles Knight, drove 4,875 three-quarter-inch rivets in a 9-hour day. The highest record was 4,442, made by a workman in a Scottish shipyard. Mr. Knight is a highly respectable and industrious citizen of Baltimore, Md., and a native of Virginia. . . .

#### NEGRO WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

##### SUMMARY OF REPORTS MADE BY MRS. HELEN B. IRVIN, SPECIAL AGENT OF THE WOMEN'S BUREAU IN 1918-19

Desiring to give recognition to all major questions affecting women in industry and keeping in mind the declared purpose of the United States Department of Labor "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of wage earners of the United States," the Women's Bureau, early in its career as the Woman in Industry Service, made provision to include in its program a study of the problems of Negro women in industry. The summary of data here given was secured from several industrial centers where typical conditions were known to prevail during visits made within the seven months beginning December 1, 1918, and ending June 30, 1919.

This summary is by no means extensive. One hundred and fifty-two plants, employing more than 21,000 Negro workers, were visited, and the figures and statements here presented cover recent phases and developments in this industrial situation.

The plants and industries visited were located in Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, and in portions of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. In a number of cases recommendations were made for the improvement of conditions. Wherever subsequent information could be obtained showing that action had followed these recommendations and some instructive experience resulted a statement has been included in this summary.

#### INDUSTRIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEGRO WOMEN

The total number of Negroes 10 years of age and over who were gainfully employed in 1910 as reported by the Thirteenth Census was 5,192,535; of these 3,178,554 were male workers and 2,013,981 were female workers. Of the female workers, 1,051,137 were included in agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry. Only 8,313 were listed in trade and transportation occupations, and 67,967 in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits.

While these figures include women in all sections of the country, of wide range of training, and of all ages above 10 years, it is reported that, on an average, Negro women in industry are between 16 and 30 years of age. With the great labor shortage during the war, especially in northern industries, colored women had the opportunity to enter industrial pursuits never opened to them before. For the country as a whole there are at present no available figures to show the full extent to which they embraced the opportunities. The figures included below, however, are so typical as to give a good indication for the territory covered. As a result of recent migration in the North, these women were frequently new to urban life and to the factory type of community. They were, therefore, largely in process of adjustment to unaccustomed conditions, climatic, social, occupational, and economic.

The great need for workers to replace men drafted for Army service brought women into occupations not heretofore considered within the range of their possible activities. Negro women shared to some extent these new fields. In response to the industrial demand, large numbers dropped their accustomed tasks in the home and in domestic service to take up the newer, more attractive work of supplying the need of the fighting world for the products of industry.

In visits to 152 typical plants employing Negro women it was found that they were working at many different processes and under very different working conditions. Table VII gives an outline of the kind of work done by the women and the industries in which they were employed.

It will be seen from a study of this table that the two industries employing the greatest number of Negro women were the meatpacking industry, where 3,282 were employed in the stockyards and abattoirs, and the tobacco industry, where 5,965 were employed at stemming tobacco, and 2,373 in the preparation of chewing tobacco and of snuff.

Another very large group were doing office work, 5,538 being employed in 16 offices. The other occupations ranged from the simple work of sorting and packing to the operation of various machines requiring skill and dexterity. Some of these occupations, such as loading shells, operating lathes, cleaning and repairing automobiles, flagging trains, and salvaging from railroad wreckage, were new to all women. On the greater number of processes, however, white women had been employed many years before Negro women were taken on.

During the war the employment of large numbers of women at new tasks in munitions plants and other war industries led to a shortage of labor in the textile and garment factories, which had long been great employers of women. As a result many textile and garment manufacturers, being quite unable to secure the requisite number of white workers for their plants, accepted and even appealed to Negro girls and women to relieve the situation. The work of 1,670 girls and women in textile and garment trades was carefully observed. Several thousand others were known to be similarly employed.

In several arsenals and munition plants groups of Negro women were found mixing chemicals, loading shells, making gas masks, stitching wings for aeroplanes, and engaging in similar processes requiring great care, skillful fingers, patriotism, and courage. Most of these industries were housed in modern fireproof buildings, well ventilated to carry off the poisonous fumes, asbestos partitioned to prevent the spread of flames, and well equipped with hose, fire escapes, and first-aid apparatus for use in the occasional accidents that appear to be unavoidable in such places.

The 499 munition makers were found to be giving satisfaction as a whole, and in some instances were reported to respond more readily than others for doing the heavy and dangerous portions of the work. They were proud of their unusual tasks and of their uniforms, and seem to have appreciated the working day shorter than household hours in domestic and personal service.

In abattoirs, stockyards, and tanneries Negro women were engaged at different times in all processes except the actual butchering and inspecting of meats. They trimmed, sorted, and graded different portions of the carcasses; separated and cleaned the viscera; prepared, cured, and canned the meats; and graded, cleaned, cured, and tanned the hides for making articles of leather.

In Government clothing factories and in private establishments on Government contracts they made overalls, army shirts, and dungarees in large numbers. In other factories they made bolts, nuts, rivets, screws, motor accessories, and metal buckets. In rubber plants they made automobile tires, tubes, parts of rubber boots, shoe heels, toys and hospital necessities,

TABLE VII.--*Industrial occupations of 21,547 Negro women in (approximately) 75 specific processes, at 152 plants, during the period December 1, 1918, to June 30, 1919.*

No. of plants inspected	Product	Processes at which women were employed	Number of women employed, each specified process
1	Bed springs	Assembling, misc.	4
		Machine operating	16
2	Brooms, brushes	Grading broom corn, bind, bristles	190
5	Canned foods	Pit., pack., crystal, & can'g vegetables & fruits	311
26	Clothing (men's & women's)	Cutting	2
		Draping	5
		Hand finishing	11
		Machine sewing	632
4	Cotton mills (cordage, waste, mops)	Feeding and tending machines	190
		Sorting cotton	100
31	Department & other stores	Elevator operators	110
		Saleswomen	3
		Stock girls, maids	228
		Wrappers	37
4	Furniture	Operating lathes	7
		Polishing desks, pianos	25
1	Glassware	Making blown glass	102
		Matron, timekeeper	2
7	Hardware	Misc. machine operating punch & drill press., soldering, welding	360
4	Hosiery and knit goods	Finishing knitted garments	38
		Operating knitting machines	692
6	Laundries	Steam and dry cleaning	11
		Wash. & iron., by power machinery	146
3	Leather goods	Grad., clng., & curing, tanning hides	130
5	Meats and meat products (stockyards, abattoirs)	Cleaning and curing offal	2,990
		Prepar., cur., & canning meats	117
		Testing hides	37
		Time keeping	2
		Trimming and cleaning viscera	136
2	Munitions	Loading shells	499
16	Office work (Govern. work, mailorder houses)	Billing mach. & addressograph ops.	331
		Card filing, clerking	2,705
		Expert investigating	7
		Packing and shipping goods	182
		Skilled field work (lectures, etc.)	8
		Switchboard operating	2
		Typists, stenos., bookkeepers	2,303
4	Rubber goods	Making-vulcan. motor tires, tubes, rubber toys, etc.	114
10	Tobacco	Making cigars	48
		Preparing snuff & chewing tobacco	2,373
		Stemming	5,965
		Weighing and inspecting	2
12	Transportation	Clean. & repairing automobiles	215
		Flagging trains	18
		Salvaging from railroad wreckage	84
3	War apparatus (gas masks, aeroplane sails, balloons)	Power-machine stitching	57
Total			21,547

such as rubber gloves, pads and hot-water bottles. In transportation service they cleaned cars, acted as switchmen and flagmen, mended roadbeds, salvaged small parts of engines and coaches from wreckage, painted and made simple repairs on automobiles, and occasionally acted as chauffeurs.

Power-laundry work has furnished the opportunity for many Negro girls and women to earn a livelihood. In considerable numbers they have followed into the factory their former occupations of laundering clothing. Under good factory conditions this permits escape from the more undesirable conditions of the household laundry service. Because of the difficulties and dangers of the work, and because of the traditional linking of Negro women to such tasks, there has been in most places little objection to them or color discrimination against them in laundries. They have learned, consequently, to operate all kinds of power-laundry machinery; to wash, iron, steam or dry clean garments of all sorts, as well as to do the hand finishing that is still in considerable demand.

Many of these industries being essential in peace times, it is probable that large numbers of the Negro women who were drawn into them during the war emergency, and have made good, will find permanent occupations at more desirable work than heretofore.

In these industries Negro women usually fell heir to the less desirable occupations or processes. As a whole, however, they stuck to these jobs and many won advancement to higher places in that way. Many are still to be found spinning coarse yarn; knitting gloves, stockings, and underwear of cheap grades; making lingerie fine waists, silk and woolen dresses, coats, caps, overalls, and men's shirts.

The 8,388 tobacco workers observed in the factories visited were found chiefly in southern or border-line States, and, with the exception of two groups, are working under most objectionable, unsanitary conditions. Nearly 6,000 of these young, unskilled girls, work in stemmeries, where they prepare the stemmed tobacco for chewing, cigar making, snuff and cigarettes. Very few Negro girls are found at the more skilled processes, such as making cigars. For this work one employment manager insisted upon hiring only pretty types, of rather foreign appearance, "in order that they may be regarded by patrons as Cuban, South American, or Spanish." Two women who were employed as weighers or inspectors were found to be both quick and accurate in their judgment, and are paving the way for others.

In hotels many Negro women performed the services of cooks, dishwashers, waitresses, maids, elevator operators, and even bell girls. These latter were afterward quite generally replaced by boys and men, the girls being unable to handle most of the luggage of patrons. The wages of maids and waitresses were usually low, the workers being largely dependent upon "tips."

Elevator girls were operating both in hotels and in department stores as well as in many office buildings. They worked on alternate long and short "shifts," with brief rest periods, and carried passengers or freight as required. However, they were not usually compelled to lift packages into or out of their cars. Not only have these girls succeeded as elevator operators, but also as maids, stock girls, bundle wrappers, and even, where given the opportunity, as saleswomen. Several employers expressed a marked preference for Negro stock girls, for reason that a greater variety of service might be demanded of them. For instance, in some stores they came to work 15 minutes before schedule time in order to polish mirrors and display cases.

Careful observation showed that bundle wrappers working in sight of customers of stores were often of types whose racial identity was doubtful, while those behind the screens, as in packing and shipping department, were more distinctly negroid in complexion. Three saleswomen of discernible Negro blood were of good appearance and showed keen intelligence about their work. Three or four quick and clever stock girls were found acting as sales assistants.

Excepting Government appointees, of whom varying numbers have held positions under civil-service regulations since the period of reconstruction following the Civil War, comparatively few Negro women were employed at office work until 1917. The general spur to industry consequent upon America's participation in the war, the shifting of workers from home and farm to office, factory, and battlefield made opportunities for greater numbers at clerical tasks than ever before. In this emergency several thousand Negro women found opportunities to play their part. The total of 5,538 found doing office work qualified in the offices of shops, of mail-order and other business houses,



as typists, stenographers, and bookkeepers, 2,303 were observed at this work. There were 2,705 filing clerks, 331 billing and addressograph operators, and 182 packing and shipping clerks. These included, of course, forewomen and supervisors of the various groups of workers. Clerical work was being done for the Government under civil-service and special classification. Also, there were 15 special investigators and lecturers and 2 telephone switchboard operators.

A majority of these clerical workers, both in general commercial and industrial plants and in Government service, were given temporary appointments under the war emergency. Many of them were being released after the armistice to make way for discharged soldiers or because need for their services no longer existed. Others were frankly told that such positions as remained available were intended for white workers, and that they had been used merely because no others could at that time be obtained. In known instances, however, Negro girls and women acquitted themselves in so satisfactory a manner that they have been retained, these having made permanent places for themselves. Also, a number of instances of individual success and achievement are known to have been rewarded by promotion and by assurance of continuance during satisfactory service.

The signing of the armistice, bringing about a gradual cessation of war industries, or a change in factory processes and products, probably meant the permanent dismissal of many of these Negro women industrial workers. Some have been provided for in the new plans of their employers and others have returned to their prewar occupations. Subsequent study is in progress to ascertain to what extent these Negro women have found a permanent foothold in these industrial occupations.

#### CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

In individual plants conditions were found to vary from the least desirable to the most satisfactory, as judged by modern industrial standards. Outstanding examples of these differences are to be found particularly in types of factory work usually denoted as "women's trades," such as textile, clothing, and tobacco industries. On the whole, the working conditions where Negro women were employed along with white women the conditions appeared to be similar. A few typical cases will illustrate the situation.

In a hosiery mill employing Negro women no provision was made for first aid, although slight accidents are frequent. Other facilities for the comfort of the workers were at a minimum. The plant had no lunchroom or lockers. There were but two toilets and two sinks, and one separate faucet with a tin cup attached supplied the drinking water for the entire group. There was neither soap nor warm water for washing the hands, although the workers were expected to keep the white hosiery quite free of any soiling. They were taxed a few cents for each soiled spot found by the inspector.

On the other hand, another establishment, manufacturing men's shirts, offered thoroughly desirable working conditions with adequate facilities for the comfort of its employees. Each unit, consisting of 140 to 200 girls, was furnished with an instructor for processes that were new, whether carried on by hand or by power machine. The shops were well lighted and heated and were fitted with modern machinery that runs with little noise and gives to the operators protection from accident. A small dispensary and first-aid room, with a nurse, were available. There was an excellent lunch room, with food furnished at cost. There were lockers, clean and adequate toilets, and sinks with soap and sanitary towels. All workers started with the same basic wage, with increases to more highly paid piecework as rapidly as their skill permitted.

Good and bad conditions were found also among industries heretofore carried on entirely by men. For instance, a plant manufacturing buckets and other sheet-metal products was very poorly heated, lighted, and ventilated. Its uneven cement floor held pools of water that had overflowed from the cooling tanks. Generously spilled paint and solder caused an uncertain footing the dim aisles.

One room, about 9 by 12 feet, with a single toilet in the corner and with hooks above two benches along the walls, furnished the only arrangements for women to change street clothing and working apparel and for the storage of coats and skirts of changed garments. There being no lockers, garments

of workers were frequently reported as lost from the hooks. Two sinks just outside the door of this room were supplied merely with cold water, and only roller towels were furnished.

Under these conditions two groups of 35 Negro women each worked on alternate day and night shifts. One group worked from 7 p.m. until 5 a.m., with a half hour at midnight for lunch. Because of the extreme suburban location of this plant and the inconvenience to cars these employees were obliged to walk about half mile across an unpaved, poorly lighted, wind-swept area which was unpleasant even on a clear winter midday, not to mention inclement weather.

A group of young Negro women, selected and sent by the local United States Employment office in response to an urgent appeal from the woman proprietor, left this factory in a body on their first day because of the abusive language of a foreman in response to their protest against the conditions under which they were expected to work.

In marked contrast to these conditions were those found in an immense plant which was making bolts, nuts, small parts of motors, and other machine-shop products. The several hundred women employees were native-born white, Negro, and foreign-born of several nationalities. The workrooms of this factory were light and clean, neither unduly noisy nor overcrowded. The punch and drill presses were provided with guards to reduce the number of accidents. The Negro women wore caps and overalls and were directed by a Negro forewoman. The plant was adequately equipped with toilets, washrooms, and lockers. There was a plain but clean lunchroom, a dispensary with first-aid and visiting-nurse service without charge. There was also a company store where employees could purchase uniforms, other plain clothing, and a few necessary foodstuffs at wholesale rates. A training school offered certain instruction during a limited number of hours each working week. There was apparently no special arrangements made because of race, except that the colored women worked in a group to themselves and were superintended by a Negro forewoman.

Realizing that the opinion of their employers would seriously affect the future of Negro women in industry, an attempt was made to secure the opinions of superintendents or other officials dealing with Negro women in these plants. Of 34 employers who expressed a definite opinion on this subject, 14 said that they found the work of Negro women as satisfactory as other women workers, and 3 found their work better than that of the white women they were working with or had displaced. Of the 17 employers who felt that the work of Negro women did not compare satisfactorily with that of the white women, 7 reported that irregularity of attendance was the main cause for dissatisfaction, and 7 others felt that the output of Negro women was less because they were slower workers.

#### INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

The chief of the problems of industrial training is presented by the very obvious need for a more carefully thought-out plan of education for Negro women, who are comparatively new to industry and who have no adequate standards upon which to base their estimate of their own worth or the requirements of their occupations.

If private and public facilities were to be generally opened to Negro women for their education there would not fail to be a very general increase in the efficiency of Negro women in industry. This is not education in the usually accepted sense, though an impartial enforcement of the school attendance law will improve economic conditions for future groups of workers. It is training for efficiency, with its contributing factors of personal hygiene, industrial sense, increasing skill, and realization of contractual obligation. It is the development of industrial consciousness through the fostering of pride in achievement, through increasing personal and family thrift and through encouraging an attitude of constancy toward a given task or locality. This type of education is essential in "training the work on the job."

As is the case with any group new to a situation, Negro women on entering industry have need of patient, careful training in all processes required of them and in the use of all machinery employed in the specific work assigned to them. Such training plus the opportunity to advance individually or in groups, as their increasing skill may warrant, has been found profitable by most of the employers who are awake to the possibilities of Negro women as workers. Eighty per cent of the employers interviewed who had given a trial to the training-plus-opportunity method reported little or no difficulty

with these workers, while 30 per cent expressed a preference for Negro women because of their cheerfulness, willingness, and loyalty in response to fair treatment.

One employer who had instituted these courses said: "We are getting all we hoped for and more." In this plant the girls were doing clerical work. Each girl was given three days special training before being put to work. Up to the time of the visit (1919) their work was so satisfactory that a large number were employed. The management said that it had found that Negro girls did just as good clerical work as white girls as soon as the "breaking-in" training had been given.

In another plant, where a "superintendent of service" was detailed to superintend group and individual training for work on small machine products, it was reported that there was no difference between the work or attendance of the native-born white, Negro, and foreign-born women workers. This plant showed in the kind of women employed and the atmosphere of the workroom the excellent results of the absolutely equal chance given to all workers. In other plants training was more haphazard, being given by the forewoman and sometimes by fellow workers. It was from such establishments that the greater number of complaints of inefficiency and slowness came.

In addition to courses of training supplied by the employer within his plant and which are limited to the actual processes in use in his plant, there were found some opportunities for Negro women in the public schools, through continuation classes or night schools.

In one locality a plan of cooperation for such extension work between the vocational bureau of the public schools and a privately controlled industrial school was feasible. The school in question had already launched several courses designed to interest the young working girls of that community. The principal was quite willing to extend the opportunity to Negro women workers, making such course as practically attractive as the school facilities would permit. At the time this school was offering courses of interest to housemaids, cafeteria workers, butchers, core makers, motor mechanics, and various sorts of garment workers, including makers of overalls, shirts, and women's clothing.

Possibilities for decent, sane, healthful recreation for the average Negro working girl and woman being in many communities distressingly inadequate, this phase of educational activity is very essential to efficiency. It appeared wise to attempt to arouse interest in this matter wherever the situation seemed urgently to warrant it. As an instance of what can be done, a community center organization which had previously taken no heed of the 300 to 400 colored girls at work in a local factory was persuaded to provide for them a weekly meeting place and a leader of games and athletics. The principal of a Negro school was induced to appeal to the school authorities to include in their plan for a new building some provision for a joint assembly room and gymnasium. Much to the principal's surprise the appeal met a favorable reception, and the people of the little community are now watching the erection of their building with this addition.

Several recreational clubs of different sorts have been organized in churches, and a certain war service has given excellent and valuable assistance in this respect, following most willingly any lead or suggestion that might be given.

A very important part of the work which was done by the Women's Bureau in connection with Negro women was the educational talks explaining to various groups interested in this subject the standards and policies that should attain in establishments employing women and girls.

In addition to the courses of training which could be made available for Negro workers in the private or public schools, there could be a most valuable educational stimulus and training given in the various leagues and clubs of industrial women workers which are organized in different communities.

#### METHODS OF SUPERVISION

If the Negro woman is to keep and increase her hold in industrial activities of the country, in addition to special training to fit her for the work, she will need the cooperation of employers who understand the special problems attending her employment, and who will make adjustments and establish policies accordingly. Various methods of shop management in plants employing Negro and

white workers together were noted during this survey, and on the basis of successful experiments that were observed recommendations were made for the improvement of conditions in other localities.

In one northern community which had recently been subjected to a large influx of Negroes one well-known firm had already put into operation a plan of work for them on equal pay and conditions as other workers. The results were not only satisfactory but were promising of most desirable further development. The workers were making good in every department. The largest numbers naturally were found in sections where mainly manual operations were required. Besides the many operators on punch and drill presses there were several forewomen, five typists, two or three clerks, two messengers, two elevator operators, a first-aid assistant, a postwoman, and a woman chauffeur. With this particular firm as a successful example three others were persuaded to give their Negro workers similar opportunity.

Negro women supervisors of units of workers of their own kind were giving results. One very successful instance of such supervision can be used as an example of what might be accomplished through the more general adoption of the plan. This unit of approximately 200 girls in a large mail-order house had worked for about a year under the supervision of an intelligent Negro woman. The work of these girls consisted of all office processes, such as bookkeeping, stenographic work, typewriting, and operating office appliances as well as packing and preparing goods for shipment.

These workers were not only supervised but were also trained and instructed by Negro forewomen. The unit had a slogan, "Make good 100 per cent." So successful had been the work of this group that shortly after their dismissal by a new, unsympathetic superintendent, they were reinstated and their number augmented because their work was so satisfactory in relation to the larger work of the entire plant.

Although there was a number of examples found of a carefully thought out policy in the employment of Negro women, there were complaints of discrimination made by these women too serious and frequent to be ignored. If a group of women persistently believes that they are given the lowest wages, the most disagreeable work, the poorest material, and that they will be the first to be laid off, whether or not the facts fully warrant their beliefs, they will hardly put their best efforts into the improvement of their work.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the foregoing account it would seem that the Negro women have taken an increasingly important place in industrial activities, largely as a result of labor shortage during the war. They increased in numbers in meat packing, in the tobacco industry and power laundries, and entered largely into textile and garment factories, munitions plants, and into clerical positions.

The conditions of the places of work varied from excellent to very poor, appearing to be similar to those surrounding white women where the two were working together. The Negro women workers need special attention to their industrial training and opportunities for community adjustment. Where employers have tried to do this they found it profitable. Special supervision, especially by persons of their own race, has proven effective.

So far as the situation may be regarded as peculiar to the Negro woman it may be said that she has been accepted, in the main, as an experiment; her admittance to a given occupation or plant has been conditioned upon no other workers being available, and her continuance frequently hinged upon the same. She was usually given the less desirable jobs. The Negro woman worker being new to industry has to learn its lessons of routine and regularity; the attitude both of the employer and of other workers toward Negro women workers was one of uncertainty. . . .

#### APPENDIX I

##### LABOR AND VICTORY

[An address prepared and sent out for use in Fourth of July celebrations, 1918. About 2,000 copies were distributed and it is estimated that it was heard by

more than 1,000,000 Negroes.]

This a world struggle for democracy, and win it we must.

How can we win it? There is but one way. Everyone--man, woman, and child, be he a millionaire or a day laborer--must do his level best at his work, wherever he may be, whether on the farm, at the docks, in the machine shop, in the mill, at the White House in Washington, in the kitchen, in the home, or in the trenches. Even wealthy society women in our own country are giving up their luxuries, children are giving up their candy, that the children of Europe may have bread.

To win this war our soldiers must go to France and fight; but they cannot fight unless they have guns and ammunition. They cannot fight unless they have clothing and shoes, and tents, and plenty of food. They cannot have these things unless there are ships to carry them to France. We must have ships and more ships. We must build steel ships; we must build wooden ships; we must build concrete ships, to hurry our men and war supplies to the front. Thoughtful men and women, how can our soldiers have clothing and shoes and food? How can we have ships to carry our boys to France? There is but one way. Every man, and every child and woman, must work and save, to furnish food, to make clothing and shoes, to make guns and ammunition, and to build ships. And do not forget that any person, black or white, who does not work hard, who lags in any way, who fails to buy a Liberty bond, or a War Savings stamp if he can, is against his country and is, therefore, our bitter enemy.

I am happy to say that the majority of our men and women are working like all other good Americans to make their labor win the war. Only a few weeks ago the world's record for driving rivets in building steel ships was broken by Charles Knight, a Negro workman at Sparrows Point, Md. In one nine-hour day he drove 4,875 three-quarter inch rivets in the hull of a steel ship. The newspapers of the country have lauded him for his work. The British Government sent him a prize of \$125. Again, many of our men and women are making records as workers in the steel mills, in the coal mines, on the railroads, and on the farms. Our thoughtful, interested cooks and other helpers in the kitchen are really doing service at the front, by saving all the food they can. The newspapers and journals of the country, managed and edited by thoughtful men and women, are creating sentiment that will do much toward winning the war. For instance, the Albany (Ga.) Herald, a newspaper edited by Southern white men, advised and suggested to ladies of the city who offered to make and present to the city a service flag, that a service flag for Albany would not be complete unless there were placed in its field a star not only for every white soldier or sailor who has enlisted from Albany but a star for every Albanian, white or black. The first employee of this newspaper to join the National Army was a Negro, and the first star on the Herald's service flag is his star.

Negroes are being asked in every city, town, and rural district to join in this work of winning this war. We, like other folk, are having an unusual chance to work and save our country. Let every one of us be wide awake and make the most of this opportunity. Let him bear in mind that every time he makes good on his job, he helps his country and the race. Let him also remember that every time a Negro falls down on his job, he pulls down his country and the entire race, and thus makes winning the war less possible.

A few months ago a friend printed a card to help the Negro workmen in factories and shops. The card read something like this:

#### WHY HE FAILED

He did not report on time;  
He watched the clock;  
He loafed when the boss was not looking;  
He stayed out with the boys all night;  
He said, "I forgot;"  
He did not show up on Monday, and  
He wanted a holiday every Saturday;  
He lied when asked for the truth.

There is still another thing we ought to think about, if we are to make the most of these opportunities for saving our country. These are times of great demands and great prosperity. Wages are high. Everybody who will work

can get work. Many who are working now are making more money than they ever made. Many of our families who have men in the Army are now getting from Uncle Sam more cash money than they ever had at any one time before. What then is the wise thing for us to do now? In the words of the proverbs of Solomon: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise. She layeth up her store in summer." Now is the time to work every day we can. Now is the time to work every hour we can. Now is the time to make and save every dollar we can. Now is the time to buy every Liberty bond we can, and every War Savings stamp that we can, in order that our country may have that liberty for which she is fighting. The Negro has fought like a man in the battles from Bunker Hill to San Juan Hill. He has died to keep the American colors flying. Those left behind did their duty like soldiers, and today there are hundreds of black boys at the front in France laying down their very lives for their country, for you and for me. Will you, because of your refusal to work six days in every week, or because of your failure to save as much food as you can, or because of any lack of interest whatever on your part, have to answer to our boys on their return, maimed in battle or even to men who never return? We are our brothers' keepers; we, too, are soldiers on duty, and in our hands rests the destiny of our country and our fellow men America needs, expects, and asks every man to do his duty.<sup>91</sup>

George E. Haynes, *The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1921), pp. 7-138 passim and rearranged.

## 2. AN APPEAL TO BLACK FOLK

The Secretary of Labor

My dear Dr. Haynes:

So important do I consider the information, advice, and departmental aid furnished through your work as Director of Negro Economics, a war service of the Department of Labor, which I created in order to harmonize the labor relations of white workers, Negro workers and white employers, and thereby to promote the welfare of all wage-earners in the United States, that I hereby request you to continue the service.

Owing to our failure to get the appropriations asked for from Congress, it will be necessary for you to continue without the field staff that would enable you to gather information and give assistance more promptly and fully. But I need your assistance in this work of conciliation and will make such provision for retaining it as is possible.

I hope that the white and colored citizens, both North and South, who have so heartily and beneficially co-operated with you, will continue their co-operation under the difficult circumstances in which the Department is involved due to curtailed funds. By correspondence with such citizens, you may enable the Department of Labor to continue in some degree the valuable service you have rendered in dealing with the delicate and difficult problems touching Negro labor, and thus to serve employers and workers of both races and all sections.

Let me supplement this request with the most emphatic assurances of my appreciation of your personal qualities as well as the value of your work.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) W. B. Wilson,  
Secretary.

## 3. THE OPPORTUNITY OF NEGRO LABOR

Dr. George E. Haynes

America is probably facing the greatest agricultural, industrial and commercial expansion in her history. For this purpose, there must be labor, unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled. The cessation of immigration during the war and the emigration of aliens now give no promise of an adequate supply of laborers from abroad. The Negro people furnish the largest potential supply available. This situation offers the long-sought economic opportunity for the Negro worker. It emphasizes, however, questions of relations of white workers, white employers and Negro workers on terms of full justice and opportunity. In the light of recent riots and the question of Negroes in the Chicago stockyards, these statements may seem too optimistic. But a brief sketch of the facts given here will indicate some of the grounds for faith.

Let us look more in detail at the facts: America faces a great economic expansion. She has already been called upon to furnish supplies for rebuilding and feeding Europe. The markets of Africa, Asia and South America are open to her as never before. The home market, after the self-denials of war, is calling for the products of the factory and the farm. To build and command ships, to produce raw materials from the fields, the forests and the mines, and to manufacture for the markets, call for laborers.

An adequate labor supply is not available through foreign immigration. At the close of the war America was more than three millions short of immigrant laborers. Today, aliens in this country are going back to Europe by the thousands, as fast as they can get passports and ocean passage. Investigations of the Department of Labor have shown that in many cities fully 50 per cent of aliens plan to return to their native lands. Many of them are going because they have not heard from their relatives during the war. Others desire to settle the estates of relatives killed in the war, or to gain land and other opportunities under their new governments. Furthermore, there is a strong pressure for additional laws restricting immigration. Mexican, Chinese and Japanese laborers are already excluded from the United States.

The Negro workers of the Nation, who form about one-seventh of the total working population, constitute an important available source of labor from which to meet the increasing demands of agriculture, industry and commerce. Already in at least six states, where Negroes are an important labor factor, there is a labor shortage.

An important change in the occupational condition of Negro workers took place during the war and seems likely to continue. Preceding the war the large majority of Negro workers were engaged in domestic and personal service and in agricultural pursuits. They found then a much more restricted opportunity in trade and transportation and manufacturing and mechanical pursuits than during and since the war. During the war the doors to industrial occupations swung open, particularly in the iron and steel industries, in foundries, in slaughtering and meat packing plants, in automobile and automobile accessory plants, in brick and clay product industries, in coke-making and in coal mines.

The shifting of large numbers of workers, white and colored, from agriculture to industry has created a shortage of labor on the farm. Planters and farmers are, therefore, having to offer increased inducements in wages and other terms for tenants and laborers. Some land owners are offering to Negroes land ownership on adjoining tracts, as a means of securing part-time workers for their own land.

With the coming of these economic opportunities for which the Negro has waited and worked, there arises, naturally, the question of practical plans for successfully grasping these opportunities. The entrance of the Negro into these new fields of work involves far-reaching questions of his relationship with white employers and white workers. These questions must be met and successfully solved in the local community on the basis of standards and needs of the wage-earners of the nation, white and black.

The Department of Labor took steps during the war to secure the co-operation and help of the three group interests involved in adjusting such questions. The Secretary of Labor stated as the basic principle of the plans

that since Negroes constitute about one-seventh of the wage-earners of the United States, it seems only reasonable and right that they should have representation in council when matters affecting their welfare are being considered and decided.

The plans pursued recognized also that the majority of Negro workers are employed by white employers on jobs or in occupations with white workers, and that the racial difference is the occasion for fears, misunderstandings, prejudices and suspicions, thus producing problems calling for action on a co-operative basis and in the light of national standards and ideals. These local questions have a national bearing on the welfare of wage-earners, white and colored; on the interests of employers and on the interests of all the people.

Following out these principles, the Department of Labor formed co-operative Negro Workers' Advisory Committees by states, counties and cities. Serving upon these committees were representatives of Negro wage-earners and, either upon them or co-operating with them, white employers and, wherever possible, white wage-earners. In this way, connecting links were established between white workers, white employers and the existing organizations of Negro workers, such as churches, lodges, labor unions, women clubs, betterment agencies, etc., through the feelings, desires and activities of Negro workers are expressed.

To make these committees effective in each state, the Secretary appointed Supervisors of Negro Economics. The Woman in Industry Service of the Department appointed two national agents to look after the interests of colored women in industry. Through these co-operative advisory committees the welfare of Negro wage-earners was advanced and amicable and helpful relations were established with white employers and white workers in ten states and about 250 localities.

As indications of the results achieved, mention may be made here of some of the varied and helpful activities carried on by these committees and supervisors. Bi-weekly reports were made on the demand and supply of Negro labor in different localities. For example, such reports were made regularly from thirty-one cities and counties in Ohio, from fourteen in Michigan, and from sixty in Virginia. Through co-operation with the U.S. Employment Service, the Committees and Supervisors helped in recruiting and placing thousands of workers and in opening new lines of industries and new plants to Negro workers, both male and female, in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Virginia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Florida, and Mississippi. Numbers of employers in these states, as in others, were advised about improvements and methods of dealing with Negro workers. The supervisors in Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, New Jersey, North Carolina and Mississippi gave a large amount of such advisory service. Complaints about the conditions and treatment of Negro workers were brought to the attention of employers. Following the armistice, special assistance was given in forming and making effective for Negro soldiers the Placement Bureaus for Returning Soldiers and Sailors. For example, in Illinois volunteer workers solicited by telephone or personal calls more than a thousand employers in the interest of returning Illinois Negro troops and about 5,000 letters in their behalf were sent out.

Conferences with employers and leaders of Negro workers were held in many localities, often in co-operation with local organizations and authorities. For instance, in Mississippi during December and January, more than thirty conferences of from 75 to 300 Negro school teachers and ministers were visited in co-operation with the Board of Education of that state. Preceding the establishment of the state and local committees in the ten states, state conferences were held. Four of these were called and presided over by the governors of the states. Sixteen sectional conferences were held. One informal national conference, with representatives from forty-five welfare agencies, boards and organizations, North and South, dealing with the welfare of Negro workers, was held in Washington last February. At these conferences programs of work and plans of co-operation were adopted and put into operation. At the informal national conference such a program and plans national in scope were adopted and recommended to the Department and are now being put into operation.

One of the most significant pieces of work begun, but not yet completed on account of failure of appropriations, was the study of the experience of employers in industries that employed Negro workers during 1918-19. This



study was begun before the close of the war and continued into the present year. Up to the time it was stopped, records from 244 typical plants employing Negroes in seven states with a total of about 35,000 workers, white and colored, had been secured. A full report on Negro Migration in 1916-17 was edited and published.

The figures are not yet available, but two general indications have already been announced by the Department: First, that in all these plants Negro workers and white workers were employed with apparently good feeling on both sides. Second, with here and there an exception, the Negro workers in the matter of turnover, absenteeism, wage scales, quantity and quality of the work on which they were employed, compared favorably with the white workers in the same plant on the same work. Here is substantial answer to the old charge of shiftlessness and laziness.

With the new expansion of American agriculture, industry and commerce and with the prospect of a labor shortage during the next decade, adjustments must be made which will assure full opportunity and justice to Negro workers, which will safeguard the struggles of white workers for higher standards of wages, hours and working conditions, and which will give due consideration to the productive interests of employers and the economic interests of the entire nation. To those who have considered the question carefully, the experiment already made by the Department of Labor demonstrates that practical results to this end can be achieved through the co-operative Negro Workers' Advisory Committees, described above, linked with and working through existing organizations, or through similar plans. Each community has felt the freedom of local autonomy, has had the experience of other communities as examples and inspiration and has had help of national standards, needs and policies through the Federal Government. The Secretary of Labor has continued the Department of Negro Economics even after the failure of appropriations asked for it from Congress. Many individuals and organizations have endorsed his action.

The problems of the future are many and will call for racial good will and co-operation on a basis of fair play and justice to all. The Negro needs help in building up a leadership that will guard his interest, and guide his steps toward thrift and efficiency. Living conditions, such as housing and sanitation, recreation, schools and community life, must receive attention. Better relations between white workers, white employers, and Negro workers on a basis that will insure a man's chance, equal wages, hours and conditions of labor for Negro workers require some means by which they may meet in council.

As the Negro faces the responsibilities of these new opportunities the plans of labor adjustment carried out by the Department of Labor furnish a meeting ground to all under impartial auspices where employers and employees of the two races may meet and not only adjust their differences, but form constructive plans for mutual help.

*The Crisis*, 18 (September, 19): 236-38.



PART VI

ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE BLACK WORKER DURING  
WORLD WAR I AND READJUSTMENT

ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE BLACK WORKER DURING  
WORLD WAR I AND READJUSTMENT

The immediacy of the "Negro Problem" forced its way onto the floor at various American Federation of Labor conventions, but the delegates either ignored or gave short shrift to most of the resolutions pertaining to the issue. At the 1917 convention, for example, one resolution called for the organization of black workers, but went on to enumerate the injustices heaped against blacks in the South. The resolution was rejected, however, and even its sponsor apologized for offending the southern delegates. Similarly, even as the AFL unions refused to organize Negroes, at the 1918 and 1919 meetings, the same unions rejected on technical jurisdictional grounds a series of resolutions calling for the organization of blacks into their own unions (Doc. 1-3).

The problem of exclusion was aggravated in the North, however, by the Great Migration. The black worker confronted a new dilemma: he could live in the South "where most of his manhood and civil rights were denied him, but when economically his condition was secure," or he could live in the North where his rights were at least theoretically guaranteed by the law, "but where his economic condition was always precarious" (Doc. 18).

Ambivalence toward unions does not demonstrate that blacks were anti-union. Although they resented the discrimination practices by the white unions, Afro-Americans did not necessarily disapprove of the concept itself. In fact, the workers' need for collective power was even more poignant for that large majority of blacks at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Thus, as their consciousness was raised, black locals began to spring up throughout the North. Negro publications, such as *The Messenger*, *The Crisis*, and the *New York Call*, regularly announced the desirability of working-class unity, and denounced any backward step away from this ideal by either black or white workers. As *The Messenger* put it, "if the employers can keep the white and black dogs, on account of race prejudice, fighting over a bone," then the capitalists will be able to steal the bone (profits) for themselves (Doc. 22, 24, 29).

Not all white labor organizations restricted blacks. Even in the South white members of the Molders' union became avid supporters of an open policy after the organization had educated them to their economic interests (Doc. 8). The Chicago Labor News admitted that there were unions which "discriminated shamefully" against the Negro, but noted that many did not, and contended that the movement should "open all the labor unions to colored" workers (Doc. 15). Commendable acts of racial unity were exhibited as well. In Norfolk, Virginia "thousands of white and colored laboring men all lined up in one great parade, and afterward played a baseball game in the park (Doc. 11).

One of the most remarkable symbolic examples of cross-racial labor unity occurred in Bogalusa, Louisiana, when four white local unionists were murdered in 1919 as they protected a Negro organizer from a mob of vigilantes. The International Timber Workers' Union had launched an organizational drive at the Great Southern Lumber Company, where Sol Dacus, a black vice president of the local, had his life threatened. Dacus sought refuge in the swamps, and when he emerged protected by four white union men, the whites were murdered by the mob. The black press hailed the display of racial brotherhood, but generally recognized that it was an isolated case of compassion (Doc. 35-40).

Still, most blacks rejected membership in labor unions which practiced discrimination. Many followed the council of such leaders as the black minister in Birmingham, Alabama, who advised his flock that "the white labor union is inimical to the Negro laborer." The fact that union leaders in Birmingham were "moving heaven and earth to organize the Negro workers in the steel and iron and coal mines in this district while they were counseling the white laborers to murder Negro laborers in other sections of the country," was sufficient evidence to prove the point. If the Negro must organize, "let the organization be purely a Negro" union (Doc. 9). Some black leaders accepted this premise and organized all-Negro unions. In July 1917, for example, the Associated Colored Employees of America was founded, three days before the East St. Louis riots. Founded in New York, its aim was to foster working-class unity along racial lines, and to organize both skilled and unskilled Negroes into "one big union" (Doc. 10). Similarly, in 1918 the Washington Bee called for an Afro-American confederation of labor patterned after the AFL. The call was answered the following year when the National Brotherhood Workers of America was founded in Washington, D.C. (Doc. 20, 27).

## AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTIONS AND THE BLACK WORKER

## 1. AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTION, 1917

Resolution No. 36--By Delegate Daniel C. Murphy of the San Francisco Labor Council, San Francisco, Cal.:

WHEREAS, Representatives of the International Negro League have presented to the San Francisco Labor Council for its endorsement, and for endorsement by the American Federation of Labor, certain resolutions, hereinafter fully set forth, dealing with the racial problem occasioned by the presence of thirteen million negroes in the United States; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent and purpose of the sponsors of said resolutions to secure the cooperation of the American people and the national government in an endeavor to have the nations participating in the coming world's peace conference agree upon a plan to turn over the African continent or parts thereof to the African race and those descendants of said race who live in America and desire to return to Africa, and thus enable the black race to work out its own destiny on an equality with other peoples of the earth; and

WHEREAS, This proposal seems to be one of great importance and worthy of consideration, though one not to be adopted and encouraged or carried into execution except after fullest investigation as to its practicability and desirability as a means to solve the negro problem of the United States; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Thirty-seventh Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor hereby recommends and directs the Executive Council to promptly and diligently investigate and take such steps as may seem advisable and proper to influence the President and Congress to carry into effect, should they so decide, the intents and purposes of the following resolutions submitted for the consideration of organized labor by the International Negro League, to-wit:

"WHEREAS, President Woodrow Wilson, in his historic war speech, has declared that 'the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things we have always carried nearest our hearts; for democracy; for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government; for the rights and liberties of small nations; for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free; and <sup>92</sup>

"WHEREAS, There are upward of 12,000,000 American citizens of negro blood who are compelled to submit to taxation without their having a representative or a voice in the law-making bodies of the nation, millions of whom, in the Southern States, are openly disfranchised and have no voice in their state or local affairs, and are deprived of their civil and property rights by humiliating and jim-crow and segregation laws: and

"WHEREAS, Men, women, and children are put to death, oftentimes by torture and fire, for slight offenses and for no offense at all, while white men can openly commit crimes, against colored women with impunity, which if committed by colored men against white women would mean death by torture. Various other grievances too numerous to mention here could be recorded; and

"WHEREAS, This nation is now at war and as a result great and unusual powers have been given the President which, if he will, can be exercised to abolish many of the wrongs to which American negroes are subjected; and

"WHEREAS, The nation has entered the war for the purpose of protecting the rights of small peoples; therefore, be it

"RESOLVED, That we American citizens and others respectfully appeal to President Woodrow Wilson to use, now and immediately and to their fullest extent, all the power and influence at his command, to the end that all the political, civil and economic disabilities, so offensive and destructive to the rights of negroes as human beings and American citizens be removed; and, be it further

"RESOLVED, That we call upon the members of the United States Congress and

all executive and judicial officers of the land to use their power and influence to the same end."

Your committee can assume no responsibility for statements contained in the resolution, but inasmuch as portions of it refer to the organization of negro workers we recommend that that portion be referred to the Executive Council.

It was moved and seconded that the report of the committee be adopted.

Delegate Gorman, of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers, spoke at some length on the subject and took exception to that part of the resolution referring to the treatment of the negroes in the South. He expressed a desire to amend the resolution and was informed by the chair that the subject matter before the house was the report of the committee.

Delegate Murphy, of the San Francisco Labor Council, the introducer of the resolution, explained his position and expressed regret that certain parts of the resolution were framed in language offensive to any delegate.

The question was further discussed by Delegates Connors, Switchmen's Union; Bowen of the Bricklayers, Berry of the Printing Pressmen, and others. The principal point of contention was the language in the resolution that was objectionable particularly to the delegates from the South.

Delegates James Duncan and Frey, on behalf of the committee, explained that they appreciated the danger resting in the language contained in the resolution, but that since it was a part of the official proceedings they had no alternative than to submit a report and that they felt all that was necessary was to disclaim all responsibility for the statements contained in the resolution.

Delegate Frey suggested the following as an amendment to the report of the committee; That the committee cannot be responsible for and rejects the statements contained in the resolution, and inasmuch as portions of it refer to organization we refer that portion to the Executive Council.

A motion by Delegate Lennon that the resolution, together with the report of the committee, be laid on the table, was lost.

Delegate Bowen, of the Birmingham, Alabama, Trades Council, asked Delegate Murphy who was responsible for the introduction of the resolution?

Delegate Murphy responded and said that neither he nor the San Francisco Labor Council had any particular interest in the negro workers, but that out of a certain measure of appreciation of support given by the negro workers in a recent strike in San Francisco, the resolution had been introduced at the request of the representatives of the International Negro League.

When Delegate DeNedrey asked a question of Delegate Bowen concerning the organizing of the negro workers Delegate Woll raised the point of order that cross-questioning of delegates in the convention was not permissible. President Compers declared the point of order well taken.

The matter was further discussed by Delegates Ogletree, John H. Walker, Secretary Frey, Bowen (Wm. J.) and others.

President Compers then read Section 6 of Article XI, of the Constitution of the American Federation of Labor, which is as follows:

"Separate charters may be issued to Central Labor Unions, Local Unions, or Federal Labor Unions, composed exclusively of colored members, where, in the judgment of the Executive Council, it appears advisable and to the best interests of the trade union movement to do so."

Secretary Frey then read the amended report of the committee, which was as follows: "Your committee cannot be responsible for and rejects the statements contained in the resolution, but inasmuch as portions of it refer to the organization of negro workers the committee recommends that that portion be referred to the Executive Council."

The convention adopted the amended report of the committee. . . .

Resolution No. 58--By Delegates Walter Green, T. B. Henry, James E. Cousins, John L. Price and William N. Chavis:

WHEREAS, The colored delegates representing the local unions affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor in the State of Virginia, having thoroughly examined the situation of organized labor and the elements that must go into the workings, so as to place its benefits within the reach of all its members without regard to race or color, and feeling that the interest of the cause would be greatly improved if colored organizers were given a place in the workings of the American Federation of Labor, of organizing additional local unions; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the colored delegates of directly affiliated local unions of the State of Virginia do hereby request this convention to grant and recommend that colored organizers be appointed or elected, according to the convention's rulings, and placed especially in Virginia at the following cities where organizing is greatly needed: Roanoke, Richmond, Rocky Mount, Portsmouth, Norfolk and Suffolk, Va., Raleigh, N.C., and Jacksonville, Fla., or any city where organizers may be needed. These cities named are working at a low rate of wages per diem and need the services and advantages of American Federation of Labor organizers.

Your committee refers this resolution to the Executive Council for action if the funds of the Federation will permit.

The report of the committee was adopted.

Resolution No. 63--By Delegates Dennis Lane, John F. Hart and John Kennedy of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America:

WHEREAS, At the last convention of the American Federation of Labor held in Baltimore, Md., one year ago, the Executive Council was requested to render such assistance in organizing the butcher workmen as its finances would permit; and

WHEREAS, In compliance with that request the work has been earnestly carried on since, with the result that our membership has been greatly increased, and at the present time we are meeting with success in organizing the large packing centers; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, In order that this work be continued to a successful termination that we may make secure our gain, resulting from the assistance already given by the American Federation of Labor, that the Executive Council be requested to continue its assistance to the Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen as far as its finances will permit.

Your committee reports concurrence in this resolution.

The report of the committee was adopted.

Vice-President Duncan, on behalf of the delegates representing Helpers and Laborers' Union No. 15566, and with the unanimous consent of the convention, introduced the following resolution, identified as Resolution No. 166;

Resolution No. 166--By Delegate Sidney Burt, of Helpers' and Laborers' Union No. 15566 (Committee: C. M. Battle, Hubert Fitts, Sidney Burt, E. D. Thomas):

WHEREAS, The American Federation of Labor stands for strength and protection by concentrating its power through organized forces into unionized labor, and since more effectual work might be accomplished through certain agencies by reason of intimate and social relations; and

WHEREAS, The colored laborers and helpers throughout the southeastern district are not familiar with the labor movement as they should be, especially upon the different railroads of the southeastern territory; and

WHEREAS, There are fifteen (15) different railroads in the district; and

WHEREAS, There are only four colored locals on these fifteen roads, two on the Seaboard, one on the Atlantic Coast Line, and one on the Norfolk & Western; and

WHEREAS, We feel and believe that a colored organizer, because of his racial and social relations among his people, could accomplish much in organizing the forces into unions; and

WHEREAS, There is a union in our city known as the Transportation Working Men's Association of Virginia, with a membership of eighteen hundred (1,800), meeting in the same hall as we, and since so many of our men are falling in line with them; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That it be the sense of the National Convention to recommend the appointment of a railroad man (colored) as organizer for the territory as above mentioned.

Referred to Committee on Organization.

The subject matter is referred to the Executive Council with the recommendation that an organizer be appointed as soon as possible, if the funds of the Federation will permit.

Delegates Battle and Burt spoke in support of the resolution and told briefly of the work that had already been done by the colored men in the South and of the opportunities for further organizing the class of workmen mentioned in the resolution.

Delegate King, of the Alabama State Federation of Labor, also spoke in support of the resolution, as did also Delegate MacGowan, of the Boilermakers

and Iron Shipbuilders.

The motion to adopt the report of the committee was carried.

*Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington, D.C., 1917), pp. 176-77, 349-50, 182, 278-79.

## 2. AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTION, 1918

### Colored Workers--Organization Of

Several resolutions were brought before the Buffalo Convention having for their object the better organization of the colored workers. One of the earliest declarations of the American Federation of Labor was, "That it is the duty of the working people of the United States to organize and cooperate for the protection and the promotion of the rights and interests of all the workers and without regard to nationality, sex, politics, color or religion."

The constitution provides for the organization of separate unions of colored workers when that course is deemed desirable and most advantageous and for the formation of central labor unions representing local unions of these workers. At every convention of the A. F. of L. for the past thirty years there have been colored delegates and they have received the same treatment of cordiality, courtesy and fraternity as any white man could expect.

At our meeting in February, the first meeting at headquarters after the Buffalo Convention, we notified the following of our meeting and invited them to confer with us regarding plans for the organization of colored wage-earners:

R. R. Moton, Principal, Tuskegee Institute  
 John R. Shillady, Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People  
 Fred R. Moore, Editor, *New York Age*<sup>93</sup>  
 Archibald Grimke, Washington Association for the Advancement of Colored People<sup>94</sup>  
 Emmet J. Scott, Special Assistant to the Secretary of War  
 Eugene Kinckle Jones, Executive Secretary, National League  
 Thomas Jesse Jones, Educational Director, Phelps Stokes Fund

These representatives of the colored workers asked that when organizing their race, there should be included skilled as well as unskilled workmen, those from the North as well as from the South, employees of the government together with civilian employees, women as well as men.

We referred the subject to President Gompers with authority to appoint a committee representing the A. F. of L. to meet with a like committee representing the colored workers for further consideration of plans and policies.

The committees thus appointed met in joint conferences at headquarters April 22 and the subject was comprehensively discussed.

The whole plan, work and desires of the A. F. of L. in regard to the organization of colored workers were laid before the representatives of the colored people at the conference. They were greatly impressed, so that they finally declared that they would issue a statement addressed jointly to the A. F. of L. and to the colored workers, calling upon the latter to organize into bona fide unions of labor and to become part of the existing trade unions, or to organize into purely colored workers' unions in full affiliation in spirit and fact with the A. F. of L.

Up to this time the declaration has not been received. . . .

Secretary Morrison read the following communication from a committee representing various organizations of colored people:

New York, June 6th, 1918

Hon. Samuel Gompers, President American Federation of Labor, Washington, D.C.  
 My Dear Mr. Gompers:

We write to present suggestions for further cooperation between our committee and the American Federation of Labor as growing out of our recent conference in Washington:



First, we wish to place before you our understanding of your statement to us at the conclusion of the meeting. We quote you as follows, and will be glad for you to make any changes in the text as will make the statement more nearly conform to the ideas which you have in mind relative to the connections that should be established between white and Negro workingmen:

"We, the American Federation of Labor, welcome Negro workingmen to the ranks of organized labor. We should like to see more of them join us. The interests of workingmen, white and black, are common. Together we must fight unfair wages, unfair hours and bad conditions of labor. At times it is difficult for the national organization to control the actions of local unions in difficulties arising within the trades in any particular community, inasmuch as the National body is made possible by the delegates appointed by the locals; but we can and will use our influence to break down prejudice, on account of race, color or previous condition of servitude, and hope that you will use your influence to show Negro workingmen the advantages of collective bargaining and the value of affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. But few people who are not thoroughly acquainted with the rapid growth of the Federation of Labor know of the large numbers of colored people who are already members of our organization. The unpleasant incidents in connection with efforts of colored men to get recognition in trades controlled by the American Federation of Labor have been aired and the good effects of wholesome and healthy relationship have not been given publicity; and for that reason, a general attitude of suspicion has been developed towards union labor on the part of colored working people; but I hope that out of this conference will spring a more cordial feeling of confidence in each other on the part of men who must work for a living."

We are willing to cooperate with the American Federation of Labor in bringing about the results of the recent conference, and would make the following suggestions and recommendations which, with your approval, we shall proceed to carry out to the best of our ability.

First, we suggest that you prepare a statement, along the lines of the quotation from you given above, and send it to us for approval and then to be given to the Negro press throughout the country as expressing your position on matters connected with the relationship between Negro and white workingmen.

This statement in our judgment, should contain a clear exposition of the reasons why certain internationals may exclude colored men as they do by constitutional provision and still be affiliated with the A. F. of L. whose declared principles are opposed to such discrimination. This we think necessary because the stated facts above alluded to will be familiar to the leaders among the colored people, particularly to editors and ministers whose cooperation it is essential to secure if the best results are to be obtained.

We would suggest further that you consider the expediency of recommending to such Internationals as still exclude colored men that their constitutions be revised in this respect.

Second, that a qualified colored man to handle men and organize them be selected for employment as an organizer of the American Federation of Labor, his salary and expenses, of course, to be paid by the American Federation of Labor.

Third, that for the present we meet at least once a quarter to check up on the results of our cooperative activities and to plan for further extension of the work, if satisfactorily conducted.

Fourth, that you carry out your agreement to have your Executive Council voice an advanced position in its attitude towards the organization of Negro workingmen and have these sentiments endorsed by your St. Paul convention in June, and this action be given the widest possible publicity throughout the country.

We should be glad to hear from you at your earliest convenience as to the action taken by your Council on these recommendations with such other suggestions or recommendations as may occur to you.

Sincerely yours,  
EUGENE KINCKLE JONES  
FRED R. MOORE

For the following committee:

Dr. R. R. Moton, principal of Tuskegee Institute

Mr. John R. Shillady, secretary of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Mr. Fred R. Moore, editor of New York Age.

Mr. Archibald Grimke, Washington Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Mr. Emmett J. Scott, special assistant to the Secretary of War.

Mr. Eugene Kinckle Jones, executive director Phelps Stokes Fund.

Mr. Thomas Jesse Jones, educational director Phelps Stokes Fund.

Dr. James H. Dillard, president of Jeanes Fund.

Dr. George C. Hall, vice president of the executive board, Chicago Urban League.

(P. S. Please address all communications care of E. K. Jones, 200 Fifth Avenue, Room 1120, New York City, N.Y.).

Referred to Committee on Organization. . . .

#### Report of Committee on Organization

Delegate Conboy, Secretary of the Committee, submitted the following report:

Colored Workers--Organization of.

Upon that portion of the report of the Executive Council under the above caption the committee reported as follows:

This part of the Executive Council's report deals with conferences of leading men of the colored race with President Gompers and the Executive Council relative to the organizing of the colored workers, both skilled and unskilled, under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor, and their promise to assist and cooperate in that work.

It is with pleasure we learn that leaders of the colored race realize the necessity of organizing the workers of that race into unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and your committee recommends that the President of the American Federation of Labor and its Executive Council give special attention to organizing the colored wage workers in the future. We wish it understood, however, that in doing so no fault is or can be found with the work done in the past, but we believe that with the cooperation of the leaders of that race much better results can be accomplished.

The report of the committee was adopted unanimously.

The committee recommends that the communication signed by a number of representatives of associations of colored people, read in the convention and printed in the third day's proceedings (page 198), be referred to the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor for such action as they deem necessary.

The report of the committee was concurred in. . . .

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION

Delegate Conboy, Secretary of the Committee, reported as follows:

Resolution No. 18--By Delegate Thomas F. Burns, of the Central Labor Council of Tacoma, Wash.:

A resolution to be presented for endorsement by the Central Labor Council of Tacoma, Washington, whereby the American Federation of Labor will be petitioned to give a square deal to colored labor and favorably consider an application for an international charter to organize colored railway men by colored men.

WHEREAS, The influence of world affairs on the present and future condition of the masses of laborers is such as to make necessary a closer and more kindred feeling of sympathy and purpose on the part of all who labor; and

WHEREAS, This spirit of oneness of purpose can and will only be most completely achieved when the benefits derived by the efforts of organized labor are not predicated on race, or creed, or sex, or color, but rather shall be the common lot and heritage of all; and

WHEREAS, In the past, because of a lack of realization on the part of the organized white laborer, that to keep the unorganized colored laborer out of the fold of organization, has only made it easily possible for the unscrupulous employer to exploit the one against the other, to the mutual disadvantage of each, resulting always in creating that undemocratic and un-Christian thing--race prejudice--and its foul by-products, riot and mob rule, as during the mine troubles in the Pacific Northwest in the early 90's; as more recently on the Puget Sound during the Longshoremen's strike; in Pennsylvania and at East St. Louis, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, It is the duty and should be the privilege of every man or woman to labor under such conditions and at such terms, free from restraint because of sex or color or race or creed, as will be conducive to his or her contributing such strength as to effectively aid our common country to successfully wage the battles of war, and to meet the problems of peace; be it

RESOLVED, That we, the undersigned colored railway employes being typical colored laborers, do hereby petition the Central Labor Council of Tacoma, Wash., to give its endorsement to the plea for a plain, square deal for the colored American laborer; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Central Labor Council of Tacoma, Washington, be and is hereby petitioned to instruct its delegate to the forthcoming convention of the American Federation of Labor to give his support to such, and any application for an international charter to organize colored railway employes as might be made by said employes, if presented either during the session of the convention, or if presented to the properly constituted committee or body after adjournment of the convention.

A lengthy hearing was held on the subject matter of this resolution at which the introducer of the resolution appeared in support of the demands for an international charter for colored men working on railways. Mr. Robert L. Mays, representing the Railroad Men's International Benevolent Association, also appeared before the committee in support of the same demand, claiming that the following list of workers should compose the proposed international union: Pullman Porters, Dining Car Cooks and Waiters, Colored Brakemen, Colored Train Porters, Colored Firemen, Colored Switchmen, Colored Yard Engine Men, Colored Shop Workers, Colored Boilermakers and Assistants, Colored Machinists and Helpers, Colored Headlight Tinkers, Colored Coach Cleaners, Colored Laundry Workers, Colored Shop and Track Laborers and Colored Section Men.

The representatives of the Hodcarriers Building and Common Laborers and the representative of the Boilermakers also appeared in opposition to this resolution.

This claim of jurisdiction is a trespass upon the jurisdictional claims of several organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and until such time as an adjustment is reached with these organizations your committee cannot do otherwise than recommend that the charter asked for be denied.

It is not the policy of the American Federation of Labor to grant charters along racial lines. We know that many international organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor admit colored workers to membership, and in these organizations their interests can best be protected and taken care of. There are other organizations that have not as yet opened their doors to colored workers, but we hope to see the day in the near future when these organizations will take a broader view of this matter. Until that time we urge the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor to organize the colored workers under charters of the American Federation of Labor.

Delegate Burns discussed at some length conditions on the Pacific coast where colored men are employed in various occupations, the prejudice that is displayed toward them by some organizations and urged that action be taken as suggested by the resolution rather than by the report of the committee.

Delegate D'Alessandro, Hodcarriers and Building Laborers, stated that colored laborers were admitted to that organization, that two colored men were members of the executive board and that no discrimination against them is allowed in the organization he represents.

Delegate McGowan, Boilermakers, spoke in favor of the report of the committee. He stated that while the Boilermakers' organization does not accept colored men to membership there is a strong sentiment growing in favor of admitting them, and that the Boilermakers had not at any time objected to the organization of colored men into federal labor unions.

Chairman Duffy, in discussing the question said in part: "There are a number of international organizations represented here today that admit colored men to membership. The Plasterers, the Hodcarriers and Building Laborers, the Cigar Makers, Cooks and Waiters, Textile Workers, Miners and other organizations have them, the miners by the thousands. There are international organizations that have not admitted them up to the present time. I hope that state of affairs will soon pass away. In the meantime we want the colored men organized, and if international organizations will not admit them we recommend that the American Federation of Labor organize them under charters

of the American Federation of Labor."

Delegate Friedman, Ladies Garment Workers, stated that Negroes were admitted to the organization she represented, and that they were admitted and treated exactly as were the white workers. She stated further that two colored girls were serving on the executive board of Local 15, Philadelphia.

The motion to adopt the report of the committee was adopted.

Resolution No. 69--By Delegates B. S. Lancaster, of the Shipyard Labor Union; F. T. Chinn, Jr., Central Labor Union, New Orleans; Geo. W. Millner, Coal Trimmers No. 15277; Thos. P. Woodland, Central Labor Union, New Orleans; J. B. Clinedinst, Virginia Federation of Labor:

WHEREAS, We, the colored delegates representing Local Unions in Mobile, Alabama, and New Orleans, La., affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor, and being familiar with the strong sentiment in favor of organized labor now prevailing among the colored people in and around Mobile, Ala., due mainly to the establishment of new shipbuilding industries by the Government at this and other points along the East, together with a deal of encouragement from our white brethren; and

WHEREAS, There is quite a large number of our people in this district unorganized, and the time and conditions make it very necessary that they be organized and educated in the labor movement; and

WHEREAS, We believe that if a colored brother, familiar with above named facts be appointed as organizer to work among our people in the Mobile District, will bring satisfactory results to all concerned; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the delegates of the Shipyard Laborers' Union, Mobile, Ala., and New Orleans, La., do hereby request this convention to grant and so recommend that a colored organizer be appointed for Mobile District, or territory prescribed by the Executive Council, including Mobile; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the same conditions apply to all southern States and that colored organizers be placed in each State. . . .

*Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor* (Washington, D.C., 1918), pp. 130-31, 160, 198-99, 205, 208, 263-64.

### 3. AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR CONVENTION, 1919

Delegate Duffy, Chairman of the Committee: Your Committee had before it Resolutions Nos. 76, 101, 118, 120 and 122. One resolution deals with requests of colored men for an international charter for colored workers. One resolution asks for the services of organizers from the American Federation of Labor, another that a colored organizer be appointed in every state in the Union where necessary; another makes complaint against the international unions of the metal trades for refusing to admit to membership colored workers, and one asks that a man be stationed at Washington, preferably a colored man, to look after the interests of colored workers.

The resolutions are as follows:

Resolution No. 76--By Delegate Harry A. Badgett, of Federal Labor Union No. 16321.

RESOLVED, That, as the man working in the day has the best part of the working day allotted him, a good night's sleep and the best part of the afternoon and evening for recreation, and as the night man has to fight sleep in summer time, inhale the fumes of a torch, stand the noise of the daily routine of business, we therefore request the Executive Council to present this resolution to Congress and have Congress enact a law to equalize these conditions by giving the night man more pay.

We, the undersigned, brothers of American Federation of Labor, do hereby resolve that as white organizers in the South have trouble in getting among the colored workmen that the American Federation of Labor appoint a colored organizer in every state where one is needed, and be it further resolved that the American Federation of Labor appoint a laboring man from the craft to represent us at Washington in any business to the benefit of the craft.

W. M. WATSON, Federal Union, No. 15681  
 WM. E. McKINNON, Ship Yard Labor, No. 15980  
 ROBERT J. LANE, Ship Yard Labor, No. 15922  
 MILLER L. CAMPBELL, Railroad Employees, No. 164486  
 WILLIE E. VAUGHN, No. 15392  
 HARRY BADGETT, La Junita, Colo., No. 16821  
 O. L. LEONARD, Local No. 16417  
 EDMUND TURNE, Local No. 16199  
 JAMES W. FITTS, Oyster Shuckers, Local No. 16117  
 MATT LEWIS, H. H. U. No. 16406  
 JOHN A. LACEY, Rec. Sec. Colored C. L. U., Norfolk, Va.  
 J. W. RICHARDSON, Suffolk, Va., Local No. 15859, Peanut Workers

Resolution No. 101--By Delegate William Boncer, of the Virginia State Federation of Labor:

WHEREAS, It is impossible for colored men to obtain a charter from the Metal Trades Headquarters of any craft; and

WHEREAS, Similar trades locals refuse them entrance; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor go on record as endorsing the colored brother as being entitled to any charter according to his trade.

Resolution No. 118--By Delegate Robt. E. Burford, of the Freight Handlers' Union, No. 16220, of Richmond, Va.:

RESOLVED, Owing to the peculiar position of the Colored Freight Handlers and Station Employees on the C. & O., S. A. L., and R. F. & P. Ry. systems and on the American Ry. Express Co., being under the jurisdiction of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks and chartered direct from the American Federation of Labor and having no representative or grievance man in the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, we are receiving little or no assistance from them.

RESOLVED, That this body appoint a system organizer for the above mentioned railroads and express companies to organize the Freight Handlers and Station Employees into a system organization. Our purpose for a system organization is to affiliate ourselves together for our mutual protection and benefit. We appeal to the Executive Council for their support and immediate action also for instructions about appointing a grievance committee to help us get an agreement and a contract with our various railroads and the American Ry. Express Company. We understand that the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks on the C. & O. system have an agreement with their officials, that covers the Freight Handlers on the C. & O. system, but the Freight Agent at Richmond, Va., told our committee that it does not cover the Colored Freight Handlers, as to Saturday afternoons, Sundays and Holidays, and they being unable to get any information from their clerks we desire to bring this matter to your attention, asking your help and instructions.

Resolution No. 120--By Delegate Jordan W. Chambers, of the Railway Coach Cleaners, No. 16088, of St. Louis, Mo.

WHEREAS, The American Federation of Labor will petition to give a square deal to colored skilled and unskilled laborers, favorably consider an application for an International Charter of organized colored labor, or use its influence to have them chartered from the International Organization having jurisdiction over them.

WHEREAS, The influence of the world of affairs on the present and future conditions of the masses of laborers is such as to make necessary a closer and more kindred feeling or sympathy and purpose on the part of all who labor; and

WHEREAS, This spirit of oneness of purpose can and will only be most completely achieved when the benefits derived by the efforts of Organized Labor are not predicated on creed, or sex or color, but rather shall be the common lot and heritage of all; and

WHEREAS, In the past because of a lack of realization on the part of Organized White Laborers that to keep the organized Colored Laborers out of the fold of organization, has only made it easily possible for the unscrupulous employer to exploit the one against the other to mutual disadvantage of each; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this the thirty-ninth annual convention go on record as endorsing such petition from colored organized labor.

Respectfully submitted by delegates approved: W. E. Vaughan, Jr., Shipyard Helpers and Laborers, Berkley, Va.; Robert J. Lane, Shipyard Labor Union, No. 15980; W. M. Watson, Federal Labor Union, No. 15681; J. W. Richardson, Suffolk, Va., Local No. 15856, Peanut Workers; James W. Fitts, Oyster Shuckers, Local No. 16117; John A. Lacy, Rec. Sec. C. L. U., Norfolk, Va.; O. L. Leonard, Memphis, Tenn., Union No. 16407, F. H. H.; Edmund Turner, Local No. 16199, A.F.L.; Robt. E. Buford, Freight Handlers', No. 16220, Richmond, Va.; Garrett Rice, R. Coach Station Cleaners, Local No. 16351; Matt Lewis, Freight Handlers', No. 16406, Little Rock, Ark.; William Carter, Station Employees, Freight Handlers', Local No. 16381, Baltimore, Md.; J. W. Worthey, Freight H. U., Local No. 16395, Salisbury, N. C.; Oscar Williams, Freight Handlers' Local No. 16413, St. Lou's Mo., and East St. Louis, Ill.

Resolution No. 122--By Delegate Edmund Turner of the Boilermakers, Blacksmiths and Machinists' Union, No. 16199, of Mobile, Alabama:

WHEREAS, There is a vast field to organize colored men, skilled and unskilled, among the colored men to get in touch with the unorganized class; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the annual convention of the A.F. of L. give the Executive Board authority to appoint a colored organizer for the Southern District of Alabama. This colored organizer shall work in the interest of labor at all times. His salary shall be paid monthly.

Chairman Duffy: A lengthy hearing was had on these resolutions, at which everybody interested appeared and discussed the subject matter contained therein from all viewpoints, especially the granting of an international charter to colored workers. The term "colored labor, skilled and unskilled" is so broad that it is a trespass upon the jurisdictional rights and claims of several organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Under these conditions your Committee cannot do otherwise than non-concur in the request for an international charter for colored workers.

Many international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor admit colored workers to membership, and in so doing protect their rights and interests. Other organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor refuse admittance to colored workers, which brings about the present complaints. In such cases your Committee recommends that the American Federation of Labor organize these colored workers under charters from the American Federation of Labor.

We further recommend that the Executive Council give particular attention to the organizing of colored workers everywhere, and to assign organizers for that purpose wherever possible.

The following organizations admit colored members: United Mine Workers of America, Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, Longshoremen, Carpenters, Textile Workers, Seamen, Cigarmakers, Teamsters, Plasterers, Bricklayers, Maintenance of Way Employees, Laundry Workers, Cooks and Waiters, Tailors, Brewery Workers, Upholsterers.

Chairman Duffy asked if there were other organizations represented in the convention which accepted colored workers to membership. Delegates announced that the following organizations admit colored workers to membership:

International Ladies' Garment Workers, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, Tunnel and Subway Workers, Amalgamated Associations of Street and Electric Railway Employees, International Typographical Union, Brick and Clay Workers, Hod Carriers and Building Laborers, Leather Workers, Blacksmiths, Motion Picture Players' Union, American Federation of Musicians, Bakers, Postal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, Steam and Operating Engineers, Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, Hotel and Restaurant Employees, Glass Bottle Blowers, National Association of Federal Employees, Barbers' International Union, Metal Polishers, Stereotypers and Electrotypers, Boot and Shoe Workers, Molders, Quarry Workers, Letter Carriers, International Fur Workers, Civil Engineers' Association of Boston, Firemen and Oilers.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the recommendation of the Committee. The question was discussed by Delegate Lacey, Colored C. L. U., Norfolk, Va.; Delegate Burford, Freight Handlers' Union, Richmond, Va.; Delegate Chambers, Railway Coach Cleaners, St. Louis, Mo.; Delegate Chlopek, Longshoremen; Delegate Forrester, Brotherhood of Railway Clerks; Delegate Mason, Freight Handlers' Union No. 16410, Louisville.

The motion to adopt the recommendation of the Committee was carried.

President Gompers: The Chair was instructed by the convention to appoint a special committee to proceed to Washington in connection with the Electrical Workers' matter and in connection with the Employment Service of the Department of Labor, referred to by the delegate from the Detroit Central Body.

The following special committee was announced:

Delegate C. L. Baine, Boot and Shoe Workers; Delegate P. H. McCarthy, Brotherhood of Carpenters; Delegate M. F. Ryan, Brotherhood of Railway Carmen.

The appointment was confirmed by the convention. . . .

On Resolution No. 131, the Committee reported as follows:

While heartily endorsing the substance of the resolution, the Committee realizes that no section of the country has a clean record with regard to mob violence, and deprecates the introduction of sectionalism into this convention. Therefore, without condoning lawlessness in any section, it amends--with the approval of the introducer of the resolution--by striking out the concluding portion of the second preamble, commencing "and this very much predominates in southern states, etc.", the amended resolution then reading:

Resolution No. 131--By Delegate William F. Kavanaugh, of the State Federation of Labor of New Jersey.

WHEREAS, President Woodrow Wilson issued from the capital city of our nation on July 26th, 1918, a personal statement addressed to his fellow countrymen, defining mob-spirit action, called upon the nation to show the world that while it fights for Democracy on foreign fields, it is not destroying democracy at home; and

WHEREAS, While the President referred not alone to mob action against those suspected of being enemy aliens or enemy sympathizers, he denounced most emphatically mob action of all sorts, especially lynchings, and

WHEREAS, In all wars, where our country and its interests were at stake the colored race with their white brothers, fought, shed their blood and died in defense of Old Glory and over there gave their all that others may live in peace and happiness ever after; and

WHEREAS, Lynchings, cowardly and unjust, is also a blow at the heart of ordered law and human justice; and

WHEREAS, The colored people, their workers, their breadwinners, throughout the nation look with hope and anxiety in their hearts to those in the struggle for better conditions, for better homes and for the good things of life, as well as protection from mob rule and for a surging popular opinion behind them that will not tolerate a laxity in upholding the laws of our land; and

WHEREAS, The hope of civilization is in democracy; the hope of democracy is in justice; the only hope of justice is in the tribunals through which justice can be secured, and the only hope of the functioning of these tribunals is in the sentiment which demands that they, within their departments, shall be supreme and that any effort to incite mob violence shall be regarded as an attack upon the very foundations of society itself; and

WHEREAS, The American labor movement, A.F. of L., knows no race, color or creed in its stand for the toiling masses to get justice; and

WHEREAS, Through its representatives in convention assembled, at Perth Amboy, N.J., week of August 19th, 1919, the New Jersey State Federation of Labor, with a membership of over 90,000, endorsed this resolution; and

WHEREAS, The great American Labor movement through its conventions, city, state and national, is the very medium through which popular and public sentiment can best be expressed against mob rule and for proper enforcement of the laws of our land; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we, the representatives of the 39th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, go on record as endorsing the above as our sentiments in opposition to mob rule and lynchings; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of the same be sent to our Representatives of Congress and United States Senate and Speakers of both Houses, to the press and to the President of our nation, Honorable Woodrow Wilson.

The Committee concurs in the resolution as amended, and recommends its adoption.

The report of the Committee was adopted. . . .

*Report of Proceedings of the Thirty-ninth Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor (Washington, D.C., 1919), pp. 227-28, 304-06, 321.*

## RACE RELATIONS AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

## 4. THE NEGRO MIGRATION AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT

As was pointed out in the discussion of the nature of the work of the migrants, a very small percentage are engaged in skilled labor, and unionization is scarcely an issue with the Negro labor force at present. In fact, a pitifully small number of unionized Negroes were found, although there is undoubtedly a steady movement toward organization.

In Chicago there were more labor organizations among the Negroes--strong locals of hodcarriers, plasterers, and molders, and a general mixed union of janitors were already in existence--than is the case in eastern cities. In that city able Negro leadership may help the white union heads to organize the blacks in the abnormal labor situation of the war crisis. In the W. & H. Cane Construction Works in Newark, N. J., 80 out of every 200 Negro employees were in the union and worked an eight-hour day for \$3.60. Here also there was reported to be a plasterers' local. In Cincinnati locals represented plasterers, teamsters, and tar roofers, and a common-laborers' union with 600 colored members was reported. No information could be obtained about this unskilled workers' union.

Since the fearful East St. Louis race riots of July, 1917, the press of the country has been filled with controversy concerning the problems of the colored race in the North. Editors, employers, and even "prominent statesmen" have laid the blame of the wholesale slaughter of women and children at the door of the labor unions. On the other hand, labor leaders have placed the responsibility for the riots upon the industrial leaders, who, they charge, brought the Negroes as a tool to break up the labor movement. The recriminations on both sides are in error. The more or less definite charges made by certain sections of the Negro press that the riots were traceable to the action of organized labor and its leaders is the result of misunderstanding of the Negro labor situation. That individual labor leaders may be guilty of bigotry and race prejudice is true, and it may be that some feared for the future of their unions, but for the most part their interests as leaders of organized labor did not bring them into direct opposition to the new Negro labor group. As the district organizer of the American Federation of Labor pointed out before the congressional committee investigating the July riots, unionism in East St. Louis was confined to the control of the skilled laborers, into whose ranks the Negroes cannot or do not gain admittance, are ineligible, or excluded. In the North, the two groups, organized craftsmen and unskilled workers, white or Negro do not overlap, or only in such rare cases that the correlation is negligible.

For instance, the conflict which, uncontrolled, resulted in the fearful tragedy of East St. Louis was not a struggle between organized and unorganized labor, but between the white and black unorganized workers crowding for a place on the lowest rung of the industrial ladder. There seems to have been a temporary oversupply of unskilled labor, due to the large migratory population passing through East St. Louis. The American Federation of Labor was not connected with the strike at the Aluminum Ore Works--which was more or less directly concerned with the July riots--where the men were trying to organize a separate association not connected with a national body. Not until August was an attempt made to form a federal labor union of unskilled workers, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

Again, in the Chester riots later in the month, a careful search failed entirely to reveal any labor cause of the trouble whatever. The riot here seemed to have had its basis entirely in saloon politics and to have taken its rise from the friction between the vicious elements in both groups.

Until recently, as we have seen, very few colored people in the North were working in trades where the whites were organized. The great mass of Negroes were largely doing work of a personal-service character, such as porters, janitors, elevator men, etc. This class of workers it has been



impossible to organize, even among the whites. Of course it must be admitted that any hostile attitude of the local unions is probably based upon the fear that Negro labor may ultimately be used to batter down the standards of the labor movement, and may be grounded in the deduction that if unskilled Negroes can be used to fight the organization of unskilled whites, skilled Negroes may be used to break down the craft unions. As we have shown, the number of skilled Negroes employed in the North seems as yet to be so small that this is a groundless fear.

In only one instance in our survey of the Pittsburgh trade-unions was a complaint lodged against colored people taking the places of striking white workers. This was in a waiters' strike, which was own just the same, because the patrons of these eating places protested against the substitution of Negro waiters; in all the others there were no such occurrences. Indeed, the number of Negroes taking the places of striking whites and of skilled white workers is so small that it can hardly be noticed. They are, as we have seen, largely taking the places that were left vacant by the unskilled foreign laborers since the beginning of the war, and the new places created by the present industrial boom. These unskilled people, whose places are now being taken by the Negro, worked under no American standard of labor. The fear of these unskilled laborers breaking down labor standards which did not exist is obviously largely unfounded.

In two cases in Philadelphia Negroes were brought in to break strikes in which unorganized unskilled laborers were attempting to establish the right to organize and gain a higher wage. At a large oil-refining company the policy of the company regarding employment of Negro labor had changed when a spontaneous strike for an eight-hour day and a higher wage involved almost 70 per cent of the 4,000 foreign workers at the plant August 23 to September 14. With the importation of Negroes the strike had been broken and the men returned to work; a fourth of the force subsequently became colored. The agent employed, a professional strikebreaker, transported the Negroes at the expense of the company, bringing a first batch of 90 on September 13. This group, called the "North Carolina gang," had been housed and fed by the company in an old building until the trouble was past and the men could find places in the community. Five or six of this first group were still with the company. Afterwards further transportation of the workers from the South was engaged in on the usual basis. The assistant superintendent said the company had decided to continue the use of Negro labor as it was the only sort available. The employment manager complained that the Negroes had been unsatisfactory, because they "soldiered" and were unable to stand the strain of extremes of heat and cold which the workers in the plant had to endure. They were compared unfavorably with the foreign workers, as they did not make good still cleaners at piece rates.

An even more violently contested strike occurred at a Philadelphia sugar refinery. The general superintendent of this company made the following statement:

At the time of the strike of the white workers at the plant February 1, 1917, Negroes had been employed to replace and "equalize" the foreign laborers. The strike had been organized by the I.W.W. among the foreign workers of the plant and the stevedores already in that organization had been called out in sympathy. After a six weeks' strike in which there had been considerable violence, the strike had been broken and the demands of the workers for 30 cents an hour and organization had been lost. In the plant a 25-cent-per-hour rate had been raised after the strike to a 27-cent rate, which is increased by a 10 per cent bonus for steady work for two months to 29.7 cents an hour. The stevedore rate of wages is 40 cents. The plant works continuously, two 12-hour shifts, stevedores working a 10-hour day. The turnover in May and June was from 30 to 50 per cent.

At present this manager had from 250 to 300 Negroes in the plant and from 400 to 500 working as stevedores. On the whole, his experience with Negroes had been satisfactory. They had worked well, even on the docks in winter, though many had been eliminated by illness. A steady group of good workers had been selected. There had been no race trouble on the docks where whites and blacks had worked side by side. In the plant there has been developing a strong undercurrent of prejudice among the foreign workers, particularly the Slavs. There are no skilled Negro workers at the refinery, though some in the warehouse make a high-tonnage wage.

The Negro dock foreman who had been responsible for gathering the Negro workers and was proud of the record of his stevedores, complained bitterly, however, that although the company had promised to keep all the colored workers, the assistant superintendents, who were southern men, were now replacing them with foreign laborers. "This week they fired 30 Negroes and hired 15 Polacks," he said. "These men dislike to work beside the colored men, and are going to make trouble for us."

The attitude of the superintendent of this plant, who believed in "welfare work" but was unalterably opposed to unionism, may be indicative of a generally favorable disposition of some groups of northern employers toward the southern migrants. They may see in these colored workers the effective means of staving off or preventing the movement toward organization and the attainment of the eight-hour day, which is now spreading among the foreign workers. For instance, the employment manager of a Pittsburgh plant, which had a big strike about two years ago, pointed out also that one of the chief advantages of the Negro migration lay in the fact that it gives him a chance to "mix up" his labor force and so secure "a balance of power." "The Negro," he claimed, "is more individualistic--does not form a group and follow a leader as readily as many foreigners do."

Perhaps the generalization should not be made that the colored people are difficult to organize, for from our Pittsburgh survey we have found only one union, the waiters' local, that has made any attempt to organize the colored people, and this was unsuccessful. An official of this union explains it because the colored waiters "are more timid, listen to their bosses, and also have a kind of distrust of the white unions." The same official also admitted that while he himself would have no objection to working with colored people, the rank and file of his union would not work on the same floor with a colored waiter. None of the other unions made any effort to organize the colored workers in their respective trades, and they cannot therefore claim there is difficulty of organizing the Negroes.

In the two trade organizations which admit Negroes to membership the colored man has proved to be as good a unionist as his white fellows. In Pittsburgh a single local of the hod carriers' union, a strong labor organization, has over 400 Negroes among its 600 members, and has proved how easy it is to organize even the new migrants by enlisting over 150 southern hod carriers within the past year.

The other union which admits Negroes--the hoisting engineers' union--has a number of colored people in its ranks. Several of these are charter members, and a number have been connected with the organization for a considerable time. Judging from the strength of these unions--the only ones in the city which have a considerable number of blacks amongst them--the Negroes have proved good union men.

U.S. Department of Labor, *Negro Migration in 1916-1917* (Washington, D.C., : Government Printing Office, 1919), pp. 134-38.

## 5. OUR WOMAN WAGE-EARNERS

The daily newspapers of Washington have given more than usual attention to the formation, January 4, last, and growth of the Woman Wage-Earners' Association, of which Miss Jeannette Carter is president; Dr. Julia P. H. Coleman, secretary; Mrs. Mary Church Terrell, treasurer. This attention has been given by the daily newspapers of Washington because there is a live demand for an organization that will be helpful to the colored women wage-earners of the country, by showing them how to help themselves. This is, perhaps, one of the vital principles in uplift work, that those who know what should be done should organize to show those who do not know.<sup>96</sup>

The Woman Wage-Earners' Association of Washington has just issued a leaflet, a copy of which we have before us, stating the objects of the association, as follows:

1. While it is the main object of the Association to better the working

hours and the housing and wage-earning conditions of our women in all lines of work, and to secure as many of them as possible as members of the organization, we very well understand that the main work of the Association must be promoted and done by public spirited women of the race who have homes of their own and resources independent of service for others for wages. It is that way in most of the charitable and benevolent work here and elsewhere. We earnestly desire the membership and active help of our women. It behooves us all who are in a position and able to do so to do what we can to help those who need help and are unable to help themselves.

2. To create better and more sympathetic and helpful relations between employers and employees.

3. To promote in every way more efficient and faithful service.

4. To provide a home where domestic science may be taught, and where employers can find workers on request, and where such workers can always find a home when out of employment, and a place where they can spend an hour reading or writing, with gymnasium privileges and the like, when they are not working.

5. To maintain a lecture course, when persons of large information and experience will appear at stated intervals, and give of their abundance of wisdom and experience to those who need it and will profit by it.

We invite our women generally to join our association and to help us improve the condition of our women in all lines of useful work they may be engaged. In a multitude of counsel there is much wisdom in the concert of many women for any given purpose there is great strength.

The headquarters of the Washington association is 609 F street, Northwest. No woman reader of *The Journal and Guide* who has at heart the welfare of the women of the race will hesitate a moment to approve the objects of the Woman Wage-Earners' Association, and especially those of them in such large cities of the South as Norfolk. A half dozen of our women in Norfolk could begin such an organization and extend its influence, in connection with the parent association at Washington, so that they could soon have a State organization. The work is one needed to be done, and our women who have the education, the time and means and the inclination to help their less fortunate sisters must take hold and do it or it will not be done.

The Woman Wage-Earners' Association is nothing new under the sun. White women in all of our large cities are engaged in like uplift work. Here and there our own women are doing such work. What is needed is that the doing of the work shall be more general, and that there shall be a central, moving purpose in the work. This can only be possible by the cooperation of the thinking, public-spirited women of the race, who are willing to take hold of the work, white women take hold of it for their own, and make it possible. God helps those who help themselves. Those who do not help themselves, who do not try to do so, they have troubles of their own and often with the police.

Our women wage-earners are a large factor in the life of the race. They are becoming more so every day as the business interests of the race expand and the demand for intelligent workers grows with the expansion. And besides these there are millions in unskilled work who need the assistance of those more fortunately circumstanced than they are.

Women of women of Norfolk, think it over.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide*, March 3, 1917.

#### 6. FACTORY GIRLS RESENT ABUSE

DECLARE STRIKE WHEN "BOSS" ASSAULTED ONE OF THEIR  
NUMBER IN KNITTING MILL

Superintendent Discharged Offending Foreman And Girls Returned To Work With  
No Loss Of Time--Mill Owned By White People Of Rocky Mount

Rocky Mount, N.C.--Declaring that they would not work under the manager,

every one of the female colored operatives at the knitting mill here left their work at eleven o'clock last Thursday morning. The trouble arose when the white floor manager cursed one of the girls and attempted to otherwise abuse her. When the superintendent learned of the trouble later in the day he immediately began to visit the homes of the operatives asking them to return to work. The offending white manager was discharged and the girls returned to their work with no loss of time.

This mill is owned and managed entirely by white people. They employ colored girls from some of the best families in the city. They have made good and the management has expressed its determination to see that they are treated with respect.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, March 3, 1917.*

## 7. THE TRAINMEN'S STRIKE

The determination of the Railroad Brotherhoods to go on general strike, and thus tie up the freight and passenger service of the country, was the sensation, at home, the past week, as the Russian Revolution was abroad. The sensation was all the more impressive not only because of the imminence of war with Germany, but as well on account of the scarcity of foodstuffs that would result, with consequent scarcity and increased cost of such. Prices are high enough now; a railroad tie-up would not only make them higher but foodstuffs scarcer.

President Wilson voiced the national protest against the Railroad Brotherhood strike when he said:

"A general interruption of the railway traffic of the country at this time would entail a danger to the nation against which I have the right to enter my most solemn protest. It is now the duty of every patriotic man to bring matters of this sort to immediate accommodation. The safety of the country against manifest perils affecting its own peace and the peace of the whole world makes accommodation absolutely imperative and seems to me to render any other choice or action inconceivable."

There is something radically wrong in our system of government when the differences of employers and wage-earners cannot be settled without upsetting the orderly course of everyday affairs, and with utter disregard of the rights and needs of the general public, the patrons of the interests concerned, without whom they could not exist at all, and from whom they derive their franchises to do business. It constitutes the most dangerous and menacing problem in the life of the Nation today--the defiant attitude of capital and labor towards the laws and public opinion of the Nation. It spells bloody revolution unless there shall be a change of attitude, and revolution always threatens the life of the Nation.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, March 24, 1917.*

## 8. ORGANIZE THE NEGRO

During the past few years there has been a shifting of Negro labor from the South to the North and an increased competition between the white and colored worker. Recently there has been strife in the labor ranks because the white workers refused to work with the Negroes. The following editorial comment from the *International Molders' Journal* throws light on the Molders' efforts to organize the Negro and make him a fellow unionist rather than an economic enemy.

Perhaps the International Molders' Union has had more experience in endeavoring to organize the Negroes than has any other metal working trade union organization.

Originally because of the strong sentiment which existed in the South where the Negro was principally employed, it was impossible to bring about that view of the problem in its industrial and economic aspect which was necessary before the white man in the South could see the necessity of organizing the Negro.

The first efforts made by officers of the Molders' Union to organize the Negro in the Southern territory met with the strongest opposition on the part of our members, and this was not surprising in view of the sentiment which existed in the South. But time and the hard unyielding logic of circumstances finally led to a change in opinion, some of the most prominent members of our organization in the South becoming open advocates of the policy of taking the Negroes into the organization whenever he became qualified to work as a mechanic.

*New York Call, July 1, 1917.*

#### 9. ORGANIZED LABOR NOT FRIENDLY?

##### Race Workers Advised To Form Their Own Organizations For Better Conditions

Birmingham, Ala.--The fact that union leaders in Birmingham were moving heaven and earth to organize the Negro workers in the steel and iron and coal mines in this district while they were counseling the white laborers to murder Negro laborers in other sections of the country led Dr. A. C. Williams during his sermon Sunday at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church to advise strongly against affiliation with the labor unions. "There is nothing for the Negro in white labor unions," said Dr. Williams. Continuing, he said:

"In its province the white labor union is inimical to the Negro laborer. We have our problems which we must work out for ourselves and by ourselves. If the Negro laborer must organize, let him organize himself, and then not to antagonize capital, but to work out his own peculiar problems, to promote efficiency, and to secure more benefits for himself and his family through co-operation and sympathy of the employer.

"The Negro will never gain anything through the white labor union. He will soon find that in them he can go so far and no further. If the Negro must organize, let the organization be purely a Negro one, officered by Negroes and working only to promote the Negro's efficiency and welfare. Every Negro endeavor should be centralized and the time will come when it will be, but it must be through a leadership that in one community stands the Negro and not through a court and in another counsels his murder. The Negro will never accomplish much trying to follow a leadership that he neither loves nor respects, and in which he has no confidence. Under the nature of things there is nothing in common between the Negro laborer and the white union leaders [document garbled]."

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, July 28, 1917.*

#### 10. NEGRO WORKERS ARE ORGANIZING

##### First American Union of Colored Toilers Establishes Special Employment Bureau

The first step has been taken to organize the large number of Negro working men and women of New York and vicinity into an effective labor organization. The Associated Colored Employees of America, which began its work on July 1, three days before the East St. Louis riots, is the first Negro labor union in this country, and, although its aim primarily is to bring about a sense of solidarity among its own people, it seeks also to spread the feeling

of class consciousness.<sup>97</sup>

A bulletin already has been issued by the Associated Colored Employees, the purpose of which is to give "facts concerning conditions in the North compiled for the benefit of those who some day expect or desire to be actually free." The booklet is called "A Message From the North for Negroes."

The association is conducting a survey and census of all Negro workers in the city and vicinity. It already has collected a mass of information regarding the trades in which Negroes are to be found, and in what numbers. These facts it will use as a first-hand source of information for colored workers eager to come here from the South. In this work it is functioning as an employment bureau, making no charge to union members, who pay \$1 to enter the union, and advising the members where their particular work is to be found.

Although the survey is yet far from completed, the union has found an amazing number of instances of misfit workers. It has found graduate engineers and electricians and experienced carpenters, painters and shipbuilders doing the work of porters, elevator men and janitors. To find the work which these men should really be doing, is one of the aims of the employment bureau of the union.

Branches of the union are to be established in all cities with a Negro population of 5,000. In all of the Northern cities the Negro workers are being taught that they have within their hands the power of the ballot and they are being instructed in that use of the ballot which will bid best for the interests of the working masses. To do this educational work in an efficient manner, the union has decided to issue the Industrial Bulletin, a journal of information and comment. F. Harrison Hough is the editor of the new magazine.

*New York Call, August 9, 1917.*

## 11. BIG LABOR DAY CELEBRATION

Thousands of White and Colored Laborers Paraded Streets of City.

### HARMONY BETWEEN RACES

Day Ended With Big Celebration at League Park And Baseball Game.

If carrying the stars and stripes is a demonstrative evidence of patriotism and loyalty to the United States, the Norfolk colored labor organizations can be styled as true friends to their country. The organizations were out very strong on Labor day. Several thousands together with the white Labor unions marched the streets of Norfolk in celebration of the day designated as their day throughout the country.

Many of the large industries in and around the city closed down to give their employers a day to celebrate and this was done in great style. Citizens of this city expressed themselves surprisingly at the great number of labor unions among the colored people. That the Negro is awakening to the necessity of organization for protection was clearly shown as well as the fact that white unions and industries in this section are beginning to recognize the Negro as an important factor in the industrial world. It was indeed the first time in the history of Norfolk that colored and white unionists combined in one parade.

Perhaps no other city in the south witnessed a similar demonstration, which was in evidence in Norfolk. Monday, thousands of white and colored laboring men all lined in one great parade all with the same object in view, minds centered upon one great central fact: That organization alone can produce the effectuality of standardizing labor in this country. The whites led the parade. Following close behind them were the various Negro unions. Among them were the Carpenters and Joiners, Coal Trimmers, Stokers, Working Women's union and many others. The colored aggregation, numbering more than a thousand, were escorted by three bands.

The great parade Monday clearly showed the prevailing harmony which

exists among the white and colored working classes of this community and is an indication of a better understanding and more harmonious racial relationship in the future.

All day long the principal streets were crowded with surging masses. Many cheers went up when the various unions would pass, each man bearing proudly "Old Glory." In many places the sidewalks were impassable on both sides. The streets were filled with curious people eager to see the greatest labor parade of the city.

After marching down the various business streets the whites disbanded on Main street and the colored marched back to Chapel street and some disbanded but the Coal Trimmers Local and the company of soldiers with the two bands marched down Church street to the League Baseball park where Field Day sports were indulged in until four o'clock when the baseball game was called.

#### Fine Ball Game

About 5,000 persons were within the enclosure of the park. Long before the game the grand stand was packed. It was a beautiful game and some very pretty plays were made by both the A.F. and L. Giants and Titus Town Red Stockings. It was anybody's game from the start to finish. The Titus Town boys made the first score in the second inning and again another in the fourth, but the Giants made two also in the fourth. The Red Stockings made one in the sixth but failed to cross the rubber again, while the A.F. and L. boys made two in their half of the eighth thereby winning the game 4 to 3.

The Coal Trimmers ended up the day's pleasure by having a Grand Ball at Midway Park which was crowded to capacity.

The Longshoremen's Union took the afternoon for their parade. This is one of the strongest local Negro organizations and they made a formidable appearance.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 8, 1917.*

## 12. MILLS OPEN TO COLORED LABOR

Women Employed In Hosiery Mills of Elizabeth City

DUE TO SCARCITY OF LABOR

Opening of Labor Opportunity Heretofore Closed  
to Members of the Race

The Hosiery Mills of the city that have heretofore employed white help on the account of the scarcity of labor have opened their doors to Negro women, boys and girls, as a result about 12 young women went to work at the Parsonage Hosiery and about 14 at the Lawrence St. Mill Monday. We also received an application for several boys to go to work at Road St. Mill.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 15, 1917.*

## 13. COLORED MEN DENIED INCREASE

Railroad Did Not Include Them In Raise Ordered By Government

WOMEN ASK FOR MORE PAY

Tobacco Stemmers Declare They Are Not receiving A Living Wage

Rocky Mount, N.C.--The colored laborers of the American Federation of Labor who have been working at the Atlantic Coast Line shops, but recently

walked out, five hundred in a body, because the company gave 6-1/2 per cent increase of wages to everybody except the Negroes, are still insisting that the railroad company must consider them as entitled to the increase of wages ordered by the government to all railroad employees.

They cannot understand why it is that the Swede, Pole, Jew, Italian and all save the Negro get the increase and the Negro must meet the advanced cost of living just like the others, give a harder day's work and yet must not be benefited by the increase of wages.

It is only through such papers like the "Journal and Guide" that we can circulate the true facts in the case of these men. Had they stolen chickens every white paper would have stamped it on the minds of the nation. But since they are demanding justice and showing that they have rights that must be respected the news is suppressed. However, their bold stand for better conditions for Negro laborers is a song that must be sung by the Negro race.

Rev. Talley said in his special sermon to the men, "God wants men with their heads perpendicular to heaven with a divine will and rights that must be respected and any creature ceases to be a man when he crawls around horizontally indifferent to wrongs committed against him."

We pray that these men will get their rights.

#### Tobacco Stemmers Quit

About three hundred women employed as stemmers by the American Cigar Co., at their Norfolk factory went on a strike several days ago when the management refused to accede to their demands for an increased wage scale and shorter hours. The women have organized under the Transportation Workers Association of Virginia and declare that they will not return to work until their demands are met. Mr. J. J. Long, manager of the Norfolk factory was willing to deal with the women but declined to negotiate with the union and on that account no agreement has been reached. The factory is closed down there, being no labor to operate it.

Efforts on the part of citizens to mediate the troubles between the women and their employer failed.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 22, 1917.*

#### 14. THE NEGRO AND THE WAR

There has been much speculation as to how the American Negro will be affected by the outcome of the war. Many indulge the hope that America's entry in the conflict to "make the world safe for democracy," will result in giving a new meaning to democracy in America. All of which remains a matter of speculation as the war progresses. There are however, some practical and tangible benefits that are already accruing to the Negro as a result of the war. Benefits that the race is reaping as a result of circumstances the making of which seem to be providential. There is the labor situation. Nothing has occurred in fifty years to so modify the attitude of union labor toward the race as have the conditions brought on as a result of the war. The agents of the American Federation of Labor were never so active among Negroes of the South as they now are, and never before, in this section at least, have Negro labor organizations been invited to participate in a Labor Day parade with the white organizations as they were on September 3rd. On the surface interest upon the part of white labor in the affairs of colored labor does not seem important, but to the far-seeing it portends the eradication of the double-standard of wages and working conditions in the South. For years it has been customary in the South to pay white and colored unequal wages for performing equal tasks, upon the assumption that a Negro was not worth as much as a white man, even if he performed the same amount of work. This policy not only made the Negro's economic standards lower than the whiteman's but kept them so. The present tendency among leaders of organized labor is toward standardized wages. And at the rate that labor is being unionized there will be a very little non-union labor available in the South in a short while.



Another significant change in conditions that will greatly improve the economic status of the race is the willingness of factory and mill owners to use colored labor in places where it has never been used before. Our Elizabeth City correspondent noted last week the action of several knitting mills in that city, that on account of the scarcity of white labor opened their doors to Negro young women and boys. Such an opening would hardly have occurred if it had not been for the war.

Not the least of the benefits that the race will derive from the war will come as a result of having white officers in Negro regiments, most of whom will come from the South. This will occur to some as a blessing in disguise. It is practically certain that no Southern white man can go to the front with a Negro regiment and come back without a changed viewpoint on all questions affecting the race. Every such officer that returns and takes up his residence in the South may be counted upon as being a safe friend of the Negro after the war.

"Making the world safe for democracy" has reference to doing away with kaisers, czars and princes; to the disillusion of Kaiser Wilhelm of his world-empire dream. But in attaining this fundamental desire the by-products of the conflict will go a long way toward lifting the burden of social and economic oppression under which the negro labors.<sup>98</sup>

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 24, 1917.*

#### 15. OPEN ALL THE LABOR UNIONS TO COLORED

National Labor Organ Sees Solution of Labor Troubles In Such Action

WILL AVOID RACE FRICTION

Admits That Many of the Unions Have Discriminated Against Negro Workers

Chicago, Ill.,--"Let us open all unions to the Negro," says the Chicago Labor News, in commenting on a report of the East St. Louis race riots in which discrimination of unions against the Negro was criticized. The labor paper admits that "many of the unions have discriminated shamefully against the Negro." It adds, "And we condemn them heartily for so doing."

The News continues, "It is ridiculous to say that the I.W.W. is the only labor organization that welcomes the Negro. In the United Mine Workers alone, at the present time, there are more Negroes than the I.W.W. has had all told in its ranks since it was founded. And this takes no account of the thousands of Negroes in scores of other trade unions. The Asphalt Pavers Union of Chicago, one Union of Chicago, one of the best in the city, is composed entirely of Negroes. So is local No. 208 of the musicians. And of the Chicago Flat Janitors Union, which ranks high among the most powerful and militant organizations in this country, fully 25 per cent of the 7,000 members are colored. Various other similar examples could be cited."

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 29, 1917.*

#### 16. THE CASE OF THE WOMEN STRIKERS

For three weeks three hundred colored women have conducted a strike which has been so effective that it closed entirely the operations of one of Norfolk's largest industries, the American Cigar Company's local stemmery. The women quit work because, as they affirm, they were not earning a living wage, and that certain overhead conditions in the plant were not satisfactory. At the time of our going to press, officials of the company had agreed to meet practically all of the demands of the women with two exceptions; the granting of a

wage of \$1.25 a day to women floor laborers and the recognition of the union to which the women belong.

The factory management questions the justice of the wage demand. They say that \$1.25 per day is an excessive wage for an unskilled working woman. They have been paid heretofore an average of 70 cents per day, for a ten-hour day, 55 hours a week for house rent, food, fuel, clothing, insurance, church dues, lodge dues and incidentals. The items will run about as follows:

In view of the present living conditions The Journal and Guide is of the opinion that there are justice and reason in the demand of the women. We do not believe that under present conditions any adult laborer, man or woman, can subsist upon much less than the factory women are asking. The average woman who works in the factory of the American Cigar Company has to provide every week for house rent, food, fuel, clothing, insurance, Church dues, lodge dues and incidentals. The items will run about as follows:

House rent.....	\$1.00
Fuel.....	.75
Food.....	3.00
Clothing.....	1.00
Insurance.....	.25
Church dues.....	.25
Incidentals.....	.25
	<u>\$7.25</u>

At \$1.25 a day the women would earn \$6.87 a week, as the working time at the factory is 5-1/2 days.

Every item mentioned above is absolutely essential to the existence of a working woman. Insurance, church dues and lodge dues are just as essential as bread and meat. Were it not for these three things every working woman of the tobacco factory element that got sick would most likely die from lack of attention and be buried as a pauper.

Even if a woman is married or has other working members in her family her prorata of house rent cannot fall below \$1.00 per week, nor fuel allowance less than 75¢ with slab wood selling at \$8 per cord and coal at \$9.50 per ton. It sounds almost ridiculous to estimate the cost of clothing a woman at the present time at \$1.00 per week. It would take a five weeks' allowance to buy one pair of shoes that would be at all serviceable. And with white pork selling at 30¢ a pound, flour at 10¢, meal at 7¢, peas 30¢ a quart, beans 40¢ a quart and pork steak 45¢ a pound a woman that undertook to live on less than \$3 worth of provisions a week would not be able to work at all. So in view of these conditions it appears to us that there are both justice and reason in the demands that the striking tobacco stemmers are making for a living wage.

If this labor is so non-productive that it will not warrant a living wage the factory should so reorganize its operations as to eliminate such non-productive time.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, September 29, 1917.*

#### 17. SKEPTICAL OF LABOR UNIONS

Commenting upon a recent editorial in the Journal and Guide in which reference was made to the recent activities of the American Federation of Labor among colored people the New York Age says:

"Any movement that promises to bring about a square deal for Negro labor in the South, or at the North for that matter, is to be welcomed. It would be well for those concerned, however, to be cautious in their dealings with the leaders of organized labor, and test well the good faith of any overtures made before surrendering any advantage already gained." The Age mentions several instances, including the Rocky Mount affair, in which Negro unionists were unfairly dealt with by white unionists. There is really nothing in the situation at Rocky Mount to encourage Negro workmen to have anything to do with the American Federation of Labor. We understand that when Negro union

machinists' helpers walked out for higher wages white union men were put in their places because there was a growing sentiment on the part of the union against Negroes holding these places. We do not comprehend the ethics of a labor union that would permit one member to take such an unfair advantage of another, and agree with the Age that Negroes should exercise care and discretion in identifying themselves with any branch of the American Federation of Labor. In Virginia the transportation workers have formed an organization under a state charter which in our judgment in the thing that all classes of colored laborers should do.

*Norfolk Journal and Guide, October 13, 1917.*

## 18. THE CHANGING STATUS OF NEGRO LABOR

*James Weldon Johnson, Field Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, New York*

The present war set in motion a great many blind forces; that is, forces whose course was not foreseen when they were first unloosed and whose effect cannot now be controlled. These forces are at work all over the world, and many of them are operating directly upon the American Negro.

The most striking example of how some of these forces are operating upon the Negro is shown in the "exodus" from the South. As we know, when the war came it took thousands of men out of the industrial and labor fields in the North back to the colors of their native lands in Europe, and cut off the supply normally furnished by immigration, thus creating what might be called a vacuum in the industrial world. This resulted in a steadily increasing stream of Negroes from the South rushing into the North to fill the vacuum that had been produced. They have gone up by the thousands and tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands, until today the number is roughly estimated to be anywhere between half a million and seven hundred and fifty thousand.

At first there were many complaints about the shiftlessness of Negro labor; and it is true that a number of Northern employers, accustomed to steady workmen, had good cause for complaint. And there was a reason: the rush of Negroes northward was started by the railroads sending labor recruiting agents South and having them spread the news that they had free transportation for as many men as wanted to go north to work at so much per day; these notices gave only a day or two to those who wished to take advantage of the offer. As a result, many of the most shiftless and unreliable of the race, attracted by the prospect of a trip North, were gathered in. The steady, reliable class would demand more time and more definite information before they would be willing to pull up and leave. However, by a natural process, this condition is being rectified. Since the first great rush, the people coming North are more and more largely of the steady, reliable class. This is due to the fact that agents are no longer recruiting wholesale in the South. The people who have come North and secured jobs are writing back to their relatives and friends to come on. This is by far the better method, for in most cases, those who write have their eyes on a job for those who come. This process is selective, and is already producing a steady flow northward of the best element of colored working people, who become adjusted economically and socially as soon as they arrive.

They are being engaged in many lines of industry, especially in the steel and allied industries, where large numbers from the southern iron districts are finding work in which they are already skilled. The demand is so great that notices of jobs for wages ranging from \$3.00 to \$6.00 a day are frequently read in the colored churches of northern cities. The opinion regarding Negro labor is constantly rising, and many employers are testifying that it is as good as any they ever had. And so the Negro has this chance, the first in his history, to get his hand upon the thing by which men live, to become for the first time a real factor in the world of labor. He has at last come into what is rightfully his own, the opportunity that has heretofore been denied him and given to the stranger.

But the Negro comes up against a problem he has never had to face before, and that is union labor. In the North, in almost every field the unions shut him out, and he finds himself in the position of an independent or a scab. Many colored men skilled in their trades have had to turn to common labor because they were not allowed to join the unions. So after all, this thing we call the Negro problem and which we have thought of as a problem of the South is today coming before the North; and it is going to be curious to see just how the North will meet it.

Heretofore the Negro has had two choices--that of living in the South where most of his manhood and civil rights were denied him, but where economically his condition was secure; or that of living in the North where his rights were guaranteed him, but where his economic condition was always precarious. In this attitude toward the Negro, the North has been almost as cruel as the South; for although the South, to use a figure of speech, denied him life, it offered him bread; while the North offered him life, but refused him that whereby he might live. Many problems connected with the shifting of Negro labor from the South to the North are to be met, and if they are met in a spirit of fairness and helpfulness the movement will exert a strong influence on the status of the race than anything that has happened in its history since the adoption of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments; it will mark the beginning of a great advancement not only in the economic status of the race, but also in its intellectual and political status.<sup>100</sup>

*Proceedings, National Conference of Social Work, 1918, pp. 383-85.*

#### 19. THE BLACK MAN AND THE UNIONS

I am among the few colored men who have tried conscientiously to bring about understanding and co-operation between American Negroes and the Labor Unions. I have sought to look upon the Sons of Freedom as simply a part of the great mass of the earth's Disinherited, and to realize that world movements which have lifted the lowly in the past and are opening the gates of opportunity to them today are of equal value for all men, white and black, then and now.

I carry on the title page, for instance, of this magazine the Union label, and yet I know, and everyone of my Negro readers knows, that the very fact that this label is there is an advertisement that no Negro's hand is engaged in the printing of this magazine, since the International Typographical Union systematically and deliberately excludes every Negro that it dares from membership, no matter what his qualifications.

Even here, however, and beyond the hurt of mine own, I have always striven to recognize the real cogency of the Union argument. Collective bargaining has, undoubtedly, raised modern labor from something like chattel slavery to the threshold of industrial freedom, and in this advance of labor white and black have shared.

I have tried, therefore, to see a vision of vast union between the laboring forces, particularly in the South, and hoped for no distant day when the black laborer and the white laborer, instead of being used against each other as helpless pawns, should unite to bring real democracy in the South.

On the other hand, the whole scheme of settling the Negro problem, inaugurated by philanthropists and carried out during the last twenty years, has been based upon the idea of playing off black workers against white. That it is essentially a mischievous and dangerous program no sane thinker can deny, but it is peculiarly disheartening to realize that it is the Labor unions themselves that have given this movement its greatest impulse and that today, at last, in East St. Louis have brought the most unwilling of us to acknowledge that in the present Union movement, as represented by the American Federation of Labor, there is absolutely no hope of justice for an American of Negro descent.

Personally, I have come to this decision reluctantly and in the past have written and spoken little of the closed door of opportunity, shut im-

prudently in the faces of black men by organized white workingmen. I realize that by heredity and century-long lack of opportunity one cannot expect in the laborer that larger sense of justice and duty which we ought to demand of the privileged classes. I have, therefore, inveighed against color discrimination by employers and by the rich and well-to-do, knowing at the same time in silence that it is practically impossible for any colored man or woman to become a boilermaker or bookbinder, an electrical worker or glass maker, a worker in jewelry or leather, a machinist or metal polisher, a papermaker or piano builder, a plumber or a potter, a printer or a pressman, a telegrapher or a railway trackman, an electrotypist or stove moulder, a textile worker or tile layer, a trunk maker, upholsterer, carpenter, locomotive engineer, switchman, stone cutter, baker, blacksmith, boot and shoemaker, tailor, or any of a dozen other important well-paid employments, without encountering the open determination and unscrupulous opposition of the whole united labor movement of America. That further than this, if he should want to become a painter, mason, carpenter, plasterer, brickmaker or fireman he would be subject to humiliating discriminations by his fellow Union workers and be deprived of work at every possible opportunity, even in defiance of their own Union laws. If, braving this outrageous attitude of the Unions, he succeeds in some small establishment or at some exceptional time at gaining employment, he must be labeled as a "scab" throughout the length and breadth of the land and written down as one who, for his selfish advantage, seeks to overthrow the labor uplift of a century.

*The Crisis*, 16 (March, 1918): 216-17.

## 20. THE LABOR UNION

The question whether at this time colored labor in the United States should join the American Federation of Labor, i.e., affiliated with the white labor unions, is a question of far-reaching importance. The Bee has already advised caution in reaching a conclusion. The decision by colored labor should be preceded by more reflection, more conference, and perhaps more experience.

Here are a few fundamental facts bearing on the problem:

- (1) The principle of organized labor may be safely accepted as sound.
- (2) The white labor unions do not embody the majority of laborers in the United States.
- (3) There is no compulsion, or seldom any, for any laborer to join a now-existing union.
- (4) Colored labor now enjoys its most remunerative employment from those capitalists who have dared to defy labor unionism; hence, colored labor is under some moral obligation to those capitalists.
- (5) The non-union colored laborer is a competitor of the white union laborer; and he now enjoys not only the opportunity to compete in certain lines (an opportunity not before enjoyed), but also enjoys the countenance (practically the friendship) of those capitalists who now employ him.
- (6) White organized labor has heretofore been unfriendly to colored labor--whether organized or not--and we have noted no evidence that that unfriendliness has ceased.

If colored labor has taken the initiative and knocked at the door of the white labor union, what is the motive? If, on the other hand, the first suggestion came from the white labor union, what is the motive?

At this stage of the problem we are inclined to advise:

First. Let colored labor endeavor to maintain amicable relations with those capitalists who in the last few years have given him remunerative employment.

Second. Let colored labor organize itself into a separate confederation of labor, but holding its doors open to all races.

Third. Let the colored and white confederations next endeavor to establish a harmonious working basis, and carefully note the result of this effort.

Fourth. Eventually, if experience seem to warrant, let the colored and white confederations unite on terms mutually advantageous and mutually self-respecting.

The chief resource of the American colored man today is his labor. He must not sell it for a mess of pottage, nor let his hands be tied in a blind and hasty bargain. He must reserve at all times the prerogative of self-determination.

*Washington Bee, March 9, 1918.*

## 21. IS ORGANIZED LABOR PATRIOTIC?

The Detroit Free Press asks the question: "How can we demand equality for other peoples, while denying the right to live to certain of our own people because of their complexion?" In the South the Negro is still in slavery, and in the North while there exists a greater amount of social freedom, in industry, only a few jobs are open to colored people. They can be laborers, porters or waiters, sometimes barbers, but they may not be factory workers, store clerks, merchants or railway conductors.

Organized labor is as much to blame for its prejudice against the colored people as organized capital. The unions refuse to take in colored people unless there are enough of them to form a separate unit by themselves. Capital takes advantage of this and holds over the heads of dissatisfied or striking workers always this one thing as a threat: "If you do not admit to our terms, we will employ colored men." The local government is using this argument effectively against the laborers who clean Baltimore's streets. These laborers say: "With prices so high, and everybody expected to buy War Savings Stamps and Liberty Bonds, our services are worth \$3 per day rather than \$2.76. The city says: 'We can't afford the increase. Either go to work, or get out and let colored men have your place.'"

A similar incident took place at the Belvedere Hotel when President Wilson and a large crowd of guests were expected in the city. The waiters' union regarded this an opportune time to demand higher wages. The hotel managers threatened them in the usual way. The threat did not work because the waiters thought the manager would not dare to hold out and embarrass the President. The manager did hold out and in addition made good his threat. The report has been given out that colored waiters will be permanently employed. Thus thru a quarrel of capital and labor, colored waiters get jobs.

But the question that is becoming insistent since our government went across the sea to establish equality of nations and races, why should capable colored workers have to wait until capital and union labor fall out before they can get jobs? Why have efficient colored men always got to be strike-breakers and "scabs" in order to get decent employment?

In Massachusetts the other day a Tuskegee graduate and capable mechanic was discharged from a factory because of his color. He returned with a gun and wounded the man who was accountable for his discharge. Arrested, he claimed to have been discriminated against several times and forced out of jobs merely because he was not white, and commented bitterly on the injustice of sending men to Europe to fight for liberty while sustaining at home a democracy that denies men a right to do any but menial tasks.

There is only one reason why colored men cannot become conductors and motormen on our street cars. They are honest and efficient enough--but they are colored. In Washington, any man who can handle a saw and drive a nail can get a job at \$6 per day of eight hours, putting up temporary office buildings for the United States Government. Colored carpenters have applied in large numbers, but they were not taken on. Only union men can be employed and of course colored men may not join the union.

Belgians have the right to live in their own country on their own labor. Serbians ought to be free from Austrian domination. Poles ought to have every human right. These are the things for which the United States has entered the war. But it is necessary to point out with the Free Press that with "80,000 black troops cooperating in the endeavor to win this war and colored women as busy in Red Cross activities as the white, it is unpatriotic

for employers to discriminate against or for men to refuse association in labor with colored folk."

*Baltimore Afro-American, April 19, 1918.*

## 22. NEGRO WORKERS GET IMPETUS TO ORGANIZE IN LABOR UNIONS

Stimulated by the rally the Negroes are making for political and industrial security and the strong appeals made last week at the convention in St. Paul of the American Federation of Labor, local unions of Negro workers are springing up in all sections of the country.

The need of strong types of unskilled labor in the shipyards has brought to the vicinity of New York within the last twelve months at least 15,000 colored men, who need only a helping hand to organize into a union. They recommend to join the International Building, Hodcarriers and Common Laborers union, but since this organization is almost exclusively composed of Italian workers, who heretofore have been predominant in the rough work, the lack of understanding between the different races is a drawback.

A number of organizers who have special ability to reach the black man are expected to go on the road for the American Federation of Labor very soon to do this vital work. Hubert Harrison, a powerful Socialist speaker and organizer, is on the road now for the hotel workers, and is active in Philadelphia, Washington and Atlantic City, where practically all the cooking is done by Negro labor.<sup>101</sup>

It is reported that the Pullman porters have started a local in New York. Recently they held a meeting which was addressed by William Collins, general organizer of the American Federation of Labor; Hubert Harrison and the Rev. George Frazier Miller, a radical preacher, and the enthusiasm to form a union was intense. . . .<sup>102</sup>

The agitation among these men is being carried from New York to all parts of the country. They are being assured of the protection of the government in their desire to organize.

Appeals for a general organizer for Negroes has been very insistent from the Southern ports of Mobile, New Orleans, Hampton Roads, Atlanta. In many cases the black workers have been forced into strong independent unions because they were made to feel that they were not wanted in the A.F. of L. This is a mistaken impression, and the remedies are being applied now.

*New York Call, June 24, 1918.*

## 23. REASONS WHY WHITE AND BLACK WORKERS SHOULD COMBINE IN LABOR UNIONS

First, as workers, black and white, we all have one common interest, viz., the getting of more wages, shorter hours and better working conditions.

Black and white workers should combine for no other reason than that for which individual workers should combine, viz., to increase their bargaining power, which will enable them to get their demands.

Second, the history of the labor movement in America proves that the employing class recognize no race lines. They will exploit a white man as readily as a black man. They will exploit women as readily as men. They will even go to the extent of coining the labor, blood and suffering of children into dollars. The introduction of women and children into the factories proves that capitalists are only concerned with profits and that they will exploit any race or class in order to make profits, whether they be black or white men, black or white women, or black or white children.

Third, it is apparent that every Negro worker or non-union man is potential scab upon white union men and black union men.

Fourth, self-interest is the only principle upon which individuals or groups will act if they are sane. Thus, it is idle and vain to hope or expect Negro workers out of work and who receive less wages when at work than white workers, to refuse to scab upon white workers when an opportunity presents itself.

Men will always seek to improve their conditions. When colored workers, as scabs, accept the wages against which white workers strike, they (the Negro workers) have definitely improved their conditions.

That is the only reason why colored workers scab upon white workers or why non-union men scab upon white union men.

A scab who is ignorant of his class interests does not realize that it is necessary to sacrifice a temporary gain in order to secure a greater future gain which can only be secured through collective action.

Every member which is a part of the industrial machinery, must be organized, if labor would win its demands. Organized labor cannot afford to ignore any labor factor of production which organized capital does not ignore.

Fifth, if the employers can keep the white and black dogs, on account of race prejudice, fighting over a bone; the yellow capitalist dog will get away with the bone--the bone, to which we refer, is profits. No union man's standard of living is safe as long as there is one man or woman who may be used as a scab.

*The Messenger*, 1 (July, 1918): 14.

#### 24. WOULD UNIONIZE NEGRO

##### E. J. Scott Proposes Organization of Workers as Remedy

Organization of colored labor in the United States will do much to remove the causes of industrial unrest and afford greater efficiency for the Government.

Emmett J. Scott, special assistant to the Secretary of War, presented this opinion before a conference of colored labor and educational leaders and officials of the American Federation of Labor, at Federation Headquarters, 9th Street and Massachusetts Avenue, Tuesday.

The conference was called to consider the admission of colored labor unions to the national labor organization. A resolution looking to this end was passed at the recent convention of the American Federation of Labor at Buffalo.

Among those taking part in the conferences were Dr. Robert R. Moten, principal of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute; Emmett J. Scott, special assistant to the Secretary of War, and George W. Harris, editor of the New York News.<sup>103</sup>

*Washington Bee*, December 9, 1918.

#### 25. NEGRO STRIKER IS VICTIM UNDER ESPIONAGE CHARGE

New Orleans, La.--May 28.--Joe Dennis, a Negro, has been found guilty in the United States District Court of violating the Espionage law by urging a strike on the Texas and Pacific Railroad, near here, September 14, 1918. It is stated that this is the first conviction of its kind in the United States.

Dennis, while employed as foreman of a section gang, was charged with interference with the movement of troops because he urged workers to strike for better conditions. Attorneys for the defendant will appeal the case.

The New Orleans Labor Advocate says that the responsibility for the conviction rests with Judge Foster, who charged the jury to bring in a verdict



of "guilty if it found the facts bore out the contention of the government attorney, that the defendant had hampered the government in the operation of railroads."

Invoking the Espionage law to convict the Negro appears far-fetched, says this paper, which declares that "the intent of that measure, as we understand it, was for a means of handling German spies during the war with Germany.

"To invoke it to convict an ignorant Negro worker because he asked his fellow workers to join him in a demand for living wages not only appears to be wholly inconsistent, but inhuman as well.

"We believe the judge, whether intentional or not, has taken a step that will stir up considerably more turmoil than he anticipated. To attempt to deny workers the right to strike is a decidedly serious matter."

*New York Call, May 29, 1919.*

## 26. NEGRO WORKERS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Negro Workers' Advisory Committee, representing practically every Negro fraternal, welfare, religious and labor body in Chicago, and affiliated with like bodies in other districts, has wired the A.F. of L. convention to urge that all restrictions against Negro workers should be removed by labor unions. Just how widespread this discrimination is we do not know, but quite a number of unions of the North have removed them during the past 20 years.

The same papers that carried this news also reported that, because of the seating of W. C. Page, a Negro, as a member of the Virginia Federation of Labor at its recent convention, 2,000 union men of Richmond have withdrawn from that body. This action is not unusual in the South, where the exploiters cultivate race prejudice between whites and blacks, exploit both, and use each race against the other. But the fact that the Virginia organization seated a Negro indicates considerable progress. Those who voted in favor of seating him certainly knew that in doing so it would offend large numbers of white union members who know nothing of solidarity. The latter are union members, but not union men. They labor under a psychology that belongs to the old slave regime that was the peculiar product of slave owners.

The Negro worker is a part of the American working class, and imposing union restrictions on him by the white members is to foster a race aristocracy in the unions. In the end it must work against the white members who favor this, for if the Negro is not admitted to the unions on equal terms he certainly owes no obligations to labor aristocrats when the latter are engaged in a struggle with the capitalist class. The latter, too, will be only too eager to take advantage of the racial prejudices for their own purposes.

The slave owners were cunning enough to follow this same policy. By the side of Negro slaves there vegetated masses of poor whites whose standard of living was in many cases as low, and even lower, than the enslaved blacks. To reconcile these poor whites to their lot the exploiting whites inculcated pride in the workers' white skins and made the latter feel that they were a part of the ruling whites because their skins were not black. Thus masses of poor whites dragged out a miserable existence in poverty, rags and ignorance. This still obtains in many parts of the South, for the racial antagonism is still fostered in that section by politicians and the capitalist press, and for the same reason.

Workingmen who indulge in any form of racial or national prejudices because of the color of other workers' skins, or the language they speak, or the place where they were born, are playing a stupid game and one which makes them the playthings of the exploiters of all types.

*New York Call, June 12, 1919.*

## 27. THE NEGRO ENTERS THE LABOR UNION

Not since the abolition of chattel slavery, says the *New York Age*, Afro-American weekly, has any step been taken toward the industrial freedom of the race so important as that of the American Federation of Labor when it voted to open its doors unconditionally to the negro. This means, as the *New York Times* points out, that "all over the country the negro worker will have, as he has not had hitherto, a chance to enter all of the skilled, and therefore better-paid trades, and in them to be judged on his merits." It wipes out "the part of the color-line which most impeded the progress of the black race," says the *New York World*, which reminds us that colored wage-earners now constitute about one-seventh of our industrial population. The *New York Tribune* interprets this victory for the negro as "a by-product of the war."

One of the colored delegates to the Federation of Labor Convention in Atlantic City, pleading for the resolution which was afterward adopted with only one opposing vote, exclaimed:

"If you can take in immigrants who cannot speak the English language, why can't you take in the negro, who has been loyal to you from Washington to the battle-fields of France?" And he went on to say:

"We ask for the same chance to earn bread for our families at the same salary our white brothers are getting. The negro is ready to live for you and to die for you, with all his dirty treatment in this country, if you give us equal rights the same as you have to earn bread for our families."

The connection between the Federation's action and war and reconstruction conditions is emphasized by Mr. Fred R. Moore, editor and publisher of the *New York Age*, who is quoted by the *New York Tribune* as saying:

"The exodus of Italians and other southern Europeans from the United States during the reconstruction period have combined to bring about this action."

"With the large influx of colored labor into the Northern States during the last three years there was danger of the Federation of Labor from colored strikebreakers. This danger was recognized by the Federation, and was one of the impelling causes leading to the Federation's action. With equal opportunity and equal wages and membership in the Federation, the colored man will not lend himself to strike-breaking."

In the editorial columns of his own paper Mr. Moore says that the action of the convention "was largely due to the progressive policy of Sam Gompers." And he adds:

"The real extent of this forward movement on the part of organized labor can only be gauged by the spirit in which it is carried out. With good faith and fair dealing on both sides, the industrial progress of the race should now be assured."

And in *The Amsterdam News*, another New York negro weekly, we read of the Federation's action--

"It is one of the most far-reaching advantages that has come to Afro-Americans in recognition of their labors in essential industries during the world war. No one studied with closer interest the employment of Afro-Americans in war and essential industries than Mr. Samuel Gompers and the able men who surround him in the councils of the American Federation of Labor; and no one looked with more concern than they upon the considerable migration of large masses of Afro-American workers from the Southern to the Northern and Western labor vintage ground. This interest and study convinced Mr. Gompers and his associates that the only safe way to deal effectually with this labor force was to open wide for it the door of membership in the American Federation of Labor, qualified membership in which it has enjoyed for some time with more or less dissatisfaction to all concerned. This dissatisfaction has led to a concerted movement among Afro-Americans to affect labor organizations of their own, the most pretentious being the National Brotherhood Workers of America, with headquarters at Washington, of which Louis J. Brown is president and Miss Jeannette Carter is secretary. Mr. Gompers and his associates have taken, therefore, the wiser and more politic course in seeking the cooperation rather than the organized opposition of Afro-American labor."<sup>104</sup>

"It is of the greatest importance not to lose sight of the significant part the industrial educational policy of the late Booker T. Washington played

in the preparedness of Afro-Americans to do the work during the war, and which has convinced the American Federation of Labor that it is the part of wisdom and policy to give it equal membership opportunity with white wage-workers rather than bar it out and make a 'scab' working force of it."

Mr. John Mitchell, editor of *The Planet*, a negro paper published in Richmond, Va., also comments on the "far-sightedness" manifested by the American Federation of Labor. For--<sup>105</sup>

"The greatest menace to organized labor as opposed to organized capital is the black multitude that entered the industrial plants of the country and demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that they could execute and master the tasks assigned to respective members thereof. It was organized capital and not organized labor that gave to black labor the position that it now occupies. Will the colored men accept the invitation and join the white labor-unions or will they stand out as independent units under their own leaders and from their respective platforms deal directly with the moneyed interests of the country? On this decision will depend the fate of the white laboring interests of America as represented by the American Federation of Labor.

"It is also an interesting question as to whether the American Federation of Labor can hold in leash its own membership should the invitation be generally accepted by the colored men of this country. We see, or think we see, a changed condition of affairs, which must necessarily benefit the colored laboring elements of America."

The Federation's action "opens the gateway to real American life for the first time within the last half century," says the *Boston Guardian* (negro), which continues:

"The decision may establish so great a hope within our youth that it may save even a greater exodus from this country, the land of colored people's birth to any other country that might bid for them than any other favor."

In still another negro paper, the *Nashville Globe*, we read:

"In a number of the Southern States the negro constitutes the greater factor in the agricultural, manufacturing, and mining industries, so to admit him into the trade-unions will not only vouchsafe to the negro a better opportunity for promotion and advancement along these industrial lines, but it will give to the manufacturer a higher degree of efficiency in labor. We hope that his admission into the union will mean his promotion as he fits himself for the work. Too long America has delayed justice to the negro along industrial lines, and the step now taken is welcomed by thirteen millions of real Americans."

A "striking contrast" between the attitude of the American Federation of Labor and that of "the alleged Christian Churches of the United States" is dwelt upon by *The Appeal*, a negro paper published in St. Paul, Minn., which goes on to say:

"Some of these orthodox Christian churches asked the colored members to get out and form segregated bodies, and in some cases legislation was enacted to compel segregation. The action of America's great labor body is a strong confirmation of the attitude *The Appeal* has always maintained, that the real advancement of the colored people will come through economic forces and never through hypocritical religious bodies.

"The American Federation of Labor has sensed the absolute necessity for organizing negro workingmen along with white workingmen in order to face capital with a solid front in working out the serious problems of the new era," remarks Mr. Eugene Knickle Jones, executive secretary of the National Urban League, an organization for social service among negroes.

Labor-leaders, we are told in an Atlantic City dispatch to the *New York Tribune*, regard the Federation's action in this matter as only surpassed in importance by its declaration of 1917 supporting the Administration in its conduct of the war. Mr. Gompers himself is quoted as saying:

"It is one of the most important steps taken by the Federation in many years. In the past it has been difficult to organize the colored man. Now he shows a desire to be organized and we meet him more than half-way."

## 28. THE NEGRO AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

At its Convention in Atlantic City in June, the American Federation of Labor went on record as endorsing and planning to organize Negroes in the unions throughout the United States. Negro leaders all around are claiming to have had some influence in creating this decision. Such old fossils as Fred R. Moore, Robert Russa Moton, George W. Harris, Emmett J. Scott and George E. Haynes have the temerity to claim that they were able to bring force to bear to get this decision in the American Federation of Labor's Convention. Of course, we hardly need to say to our readers that these old political fossils, mental manikins, intellectual lilliputians, who are bankrupt in ideas and poverty-stricken in information, could have had nothing to do with any movement which tends toward progress, except to hold it back. What, then were the real causes of this quasi change of heart on the part of the Federation of Labor?

There are several reasons.

First: There are thousands and tens of thousands of Negroes in the unions who have been moved by the social unrest which is shaking the world. Instead of assuming the complacent, compromising, shifty, surrendering position advocated by the old political and social fossils enumerated above, these Negroes in the labor unions decided to assume the position of a threat and to hold the Sword of Damoclese dangling over the head of the Federation of Labor. In the convention, they threatened to withdraw, to secede entirely. Now, these Negroes pay in dues hundreds of thousands of dollars yearly to the Federation of Labor. They hold an economic power which cannot be ignored by that strong and powerful organization. But the withdrawal of immense sums of money looked menacing, and a blow in the pocketbook is always a blow which will be felt, noted and responded to if it is pressed with persistency.

Secondly: A large group of these Negroes in unions have formed the National Brotherhood Association which is itself a sort of Negro Federation of Labor. It has headquarters in Washington, D.C., and has called a convention for August the 25th, in the City of Washington. This organization threatens to pull the Negroes into a body which will fight both employers and the labor unions who discriminate against Negroes, very much in the way that the United Hebrew Trades operates among the Jews. The editors of the MESSENGER are members of the Board of Directors of this organization, and that means that the organization is built upon and is following sound, union principles and militant, revolutionary methods.<sup>106</sup>

Third: The MESSENGER magazine, the only magazine of scientific Radicalism in the world, published by Negroes, has been carrying on relentless and widespread propaganda among Negro workers in this country for nearly two years. It is being read this month by over thirty-three thousand Negro workers and a few thousand Radical whites. It has struck such alarm in the breasts of the reactionaries who dominate the American Federation of Labor's machine, that the Union League Club asked the New York State Legislature to probe its agitation among Negroes in the United States. The Legislature of the State acted upon said resolution and the National Security League has been examining its issues and propaganda. This resolution of the Union League Club was passed March 13, 1919, and carried by the Associated Press. On March 25th, 1919, the National Civic Federation Review, an organ of the Wall Street plutocrats, and the millionaires and billionaires of the United States, carried a three-page article entitled, "New York State Probe of Bolshevism Asked." "Union League Club Committee Declares Facts Warrant Full Inquiry--Especially as to Those Who Seek to Stir Negroes--Ultra Radicals Back New Union." The article stated, "The propaganda of the Radicals in the U.S., is increasing. Every cause of complaint in any part of American society is used to increase the numbers of the Radical forces."<sup>107</sup>

"An attempt is being made to arouse a latent discontent among the Negro population in this country by circulating among them Bolshevik doctrines. An excellent illustration of the character of this propaganda is the MESSENGER, a Negro paper which has been widely distributed among Negroes of New York City and elsewhere.

The comment of the Review continues: "In order to stimulate an interest in Socialist activities, an association has been formed which is known as The National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism Among Negroes<sup>108</sup>

with headquarters at 2305 Seventh Avenue, New York City. The significance of this movement may be gathered from an examination of the names upon its Advisory Board. Among these appear, Charles W. Ervin, editor of The New York Call, a Socialist organ; Julius Gerber, Sec'y of the N.Y. Socialists Local and a member of the Metal Workers Union; Morris Hilquit, the well-known Socialist; Jacob Panken, Socialist Judge of the Municipal Court, N.Y. City; James H. Maurer, Pres. of the Penn. State Federation of Labor; Max Pine, Organizer of the United Hebrew Trades; Joseph Schlossberg, Sec'y of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; Abraham Shiplacoff, of the Jewish Forward and Rose Schneiderman, President of the Workers' Trade Union League.<sup>109</sup>

"The President of the Association is Chandler Owen, a Negro and one of the editors of the Radical paper from which we have been quoting. The article of the Civic Federation Review quotes further THE MESSENGER of February, 1919, and calls the preamble of The National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism Among Negroes, insidious propaganda. It reproduces the following seal and carries by the side of it the following article:<sup>110</sup>

#### OUR REASON FOR BEING

First, as workers, black and white, we all have one common interest, viz., the getting of more wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions.

Black and white workers should combine for no other reason than that for which individual workers should combine, viz., to increase their bargaining power, which will enable them to get their demands.

Second, the history of the labor movement in America proves that the employing class recognize no race lines. They will exploit a white man as readily as a black man. They will exploit women as readily as men. They will even go to the extent of coining the labor, blood and suffering of children into dollars. The introduction of women and children into the factories proves that capitalists are only concerned with profits and that they will exploit any race or class in order to make profits, whether they be black or white men, black or white women or black or white children.

Third, it is apparent that every Negro worker or non-union man is a potential scab upon white union men and black union men.

Fourth, self-interest is the only principle upon which individuals or groups will act if they are sane. Thus, it is idle, and vain to hope or expect Negro workers, out of work, and who receive less wages when at work than white workers, to refuse to scab upon white workers when an opportunity presents itself.

Men will always seek to improve their conditions. When colored workers, as scabs, accept the wages against which white workers strike, they (the Negro workers) have definitely improved their conditions.

That is the only reason why colored workers scab upon white workers or why non-union white men scab upon white union men.

Every member, which is a part of the industrial machinery, must be organized, if labor would win its demands. Organized labor cannot afford to ignore any labor factor of production which organized capital does not ignore.

Fifth, if the employers can keep the white and black dogs, on account of race prejudice, fighting over a bone, the yellow capitalist dog will get away with the bone--the bone of profits. No union man's standard of living is safe so long as there is a group of men or women who may be used as scabs and whose standard of living is lower.

The combination of black and white workers will be a powerful lesson to the capitalists of the solidarity of labor. It will show that labor, black and white, is conscious of its interests and power. This will prove that unions are not based upon race lines, but upon class lines. This will serve to convert a class of workers, which has been used by the capitalist class to defeat organized labor, into an ardent, class-conscious, intelligent, militant group."

This statement of the Negro's labor problem, together with the presentation of the radical whites, who recognize no race or color line, brought to the attention of the Union League Club's billionaires, and the Washington Chamber of Commerce, what the new Negro is thinking and Mr. Samuel Gompers, who is a member of the Chamber of Commerce himself, was no doubt promptly informed that the Negroes were getting unruly and from under control of the

reactionaries and that some sop would have to be handed out or else the more radical unions would get control of them.

Sixth: The Industrial Workers of the World commonly termed, the I.W.W., draw no race, creed, color or sex line in their organization. They are making a desperate effort to get the colored men into the One Big Union. The Negroes are at least giving them an ear, and the prospects point to their soon giving them a hand. With the Industrial Workers Organization already numbering 800,000, to augment it with a million and a half or two million Negroes, would make it fairly rival the American Federation of Labor. This may still be done anyhow and the reactionaries of this country, together with Samuel Gompers, the reactionary President of the American Federation of Labor, desire to hold back this trend of Negro labor radicalism.

Seventh: The Providence Sunday Journal of June 1st, 1919, one of the chief plutocratic mouth pieces of the country, carries a whole half page on THE MESSENGER and its labor agitation, entitled, "Enrolling American Negroes Under Banners of Bolshevism." In speaking of THE MESSENGER it says: "What is advocated by THE MESSENGER, is a policy of evolution--one that will bring the Negro workers of this country into closer relationship with the white unionists--one that will make a great combination of the white and black laboring vote of this country, and, therefore, one which if brought to a successful culmination would dominate the politics and policies of the entire country.

The Providence Journal continues, "The publication in the U.S., spreading this insidious propaganda among Negroes, is THE MESSENGER. It is published at 2305 Seventh Avenue, New York City, by two as well read, well educated and competent Negroes as there are in the United States. They are A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, and as a contributing editor, they have Dr. George Frazier Miller, one of the best known Negro divines in New York City. The publication is well gotten up, well printed and in every way put together in a manner which would appeal to the people that it is intended to reach."<sup>111</sup>

After writing a whole half page on the propaganda being carried on by THE MESSENGER magazine and the National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism Among Negroes the Providence Journal also quotes the preamble of the National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism Among Negroes.

Eighth: The New York World, the mouthpiece of the present administration, and also a plutocratic mouthpiece, says in its issue of June 4, 1919, "The radical forces in New York City have recently embarked on a great new field of revolutionary endeavor, the education through agitation of the southern Negro into the mysteries and desirability of revolutionary Bolshevism. There are several different powerful forces in N. Y. City behind this move. The chief established propaganda is being distributed through THE MESSENGER, which styles itself--"The magazine of scientific radicalism in the world, published by Negroes." Its editors are A. Philip Randolph and Chandler Owen, with George Frazier Miller, contributing editor. This radical journal is published at 2305 Seventh Ave., New York City. With the exception of The Liberator, it is the most radical journal printed in the U.S.

In the issue of the New York World, June 8th, Sunday edition, a special article, almost a page long on "Methods Used by Radicals to Destroy the Influence of The American Federation of Labor," the following quotation was taken from the MESSENGER:

"The dissolution of the American Federation of Labor would inure to the benefit of the Labor Movement in this country in particular, and to the International Labor Movement in general. Why? In the first place it is organized upon unsound principles. It holds that there can be a partnership between capital and labor. Think of it! A partnership between the exploiter and the exploited! Between the spider and the fly! Between the lion and the lamb! Between the cat and the mouse!"

The foregoing comments from such powerful organs as The Providence Sunday Journal, The New York Sunday World, The National Civic Federation Review and the Union League Club of New York, followed by action of the Legislature of the State of New York--demonstrates how powerful is the influence of a well-written, logical publication, fighting for the interests of twelve million Negroes in particular and the working masses in general. These are the real reasons why the American Federation of Labor decided to lay aside its infamous color line. There is no change of heart on the part of the Federation, but it is acting under the influence of fear. There is a

new leadership for Negro workers. It is a leadership of uncompromising manhood. It is not asking for a half loaf but for the whole loaf. It is insistent upon the Negro workers exacting justice, both from the white labor unions and from the capitalists or employers.

The Negroes who will benefit from this decision are indebted first to themselves and their organized power, which made them dangerous. Second, to the radical agitation carried on by the MESSENGER; and third, to the fine spirit of welcome shown by the Industrial Workers of the World, whose rapid growth and increasing power the American Federation of Labor fears. These old line Negro political fossils know nothing of the Labor Movement, do not believe in labor unions at all, and have never taken any active steps to encourage such organizations. We make this statement calmly, coolly and with a reasonable reserve. The very thing which they are fighting is one of the chief factors in securing for Negroes their rights. That is Bolshevism. The capitalists of this country are so afraid that Negroes will become Bolsheviks that they are willing to offer them almost anything to hold them away from the radical movement. Nobody buys pebbles which may be picked up on the beach, but diamonds sell high. The old line Negro leaders have no power to bargain, because it is known that they are Republican politically and job-hunting, me-to-boss-hat-in-hand-Negroes, industrially. Booker Washington and all of them have simply advocated that Negroes get more work. The editors of the MESSENGER are not interested in Negroes getting more work. Negroes have too much work already. What we want Negroes to get is less work and more wages, with more leisure for study and recreation.

Our type of agitation has really won for Negroes such concessions as were granted by the American Federation of Labor and we are by no means too sanguine over the possibilities of the sop which was granted. It may be like the Constitution of the United States--good in parts, but badly executed. We shall have to await the logic of events. In the meantime, we urge the Negro labor unions to increase their radicalism, to speed up their organization, to steer clear of the Negro leaders and to thank nobody but themselves for what they have gained. In organization there is strength, and whenever Negroes or anybody else make organized demands, their call will be heeded.

*The Messenger*, 2 (August, 1919): 10-12.

## 29. THE NEGRO AND THE LABOR UNION

### An N.A.A.C.P. Report

In his study of the "Negro Artisan," Atlanta University, 1902, Dr. DuBois sums up the matter of the relation of the Negro to the labor union in the following statement:

"The rule of admission of Negroes to unions throughout the country is the sheer necessity of guarding work and wages. In those trades where large numbers of Negroes are skilled they find easy admittance in the parts of the country where their competition is felt. In all other trades they are barred from the unions save in exceptional cases, either by open or silent color discrimination. There are exceptions to this rule. There are cases where the whites have shown a real feeling of brotherhood; there are cases where the blacks, through incompetence and carelessness, have forfeited their right to the advantages of organization. But on the whole, a careful, unprejudiced survey of the facts leads one to believe that the above statement is true approximately all over the land."

This view is as correct in 1919 as it was in 1902, but the position of the Negro artisan has, in the meantime, greatly changed. With the European War and its shortage of immigrant labor, the colored man has entered into the industry of the United States. North and South he no longer stands at the foot of the ladder, doing only the heaviest unskilled work; he still performs many of these tasks, but thousands have moved up the rungs and are competing with the white man in well-paid skilled labor. This makes his organization

necessary to the labor movement of the United States, and it explains the extraordinary interest and even enthusiasm manifested for him at the recent annual conference of the American Federation of Labor.

The conference met in Atlantic City in June and on the thirteenth of that month the Negro members made themselves heard. They spoke in no uncertain terms. There were twenty-three of them, where the preceding year there had been only six. Among the group were the representatives from the Freight Handlers and Helpers, Memphis; the Shipbuilders' Helpers, Tampa; the Janitors, Charleston; the Stationary men and Oilers, Denver. Men came from the Texas oil fields, from the railroads of Mississippi, and from the shipyards of Norfolk.

John A. Lacey, Secretary of the Labor Council of Norfolk, declared a serious condition existed in many cities where the labor organizations refused to take Negro laborers--that the Negro in the United States had received dirty treatment. "We don't ask any favors," he said, "we ask for a chance to live like men, with equal rights and democratic rule. The Negro can read now, and the man who can read can think."

Complaints came from the Negro Freight Handlers and the International Longshoremen of discrimination on the part of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks throughout the South. The Chief Executive of the Brotherhood, aroused by this, admitted that his organization did not give full rights to the Negroes, but hoped that at their executive board meeting full rights would be allowed them.

*The Committee on Resolutions then introduced a resolution that "the Executive Council give particular attention to the organization of colored workers everywhere and assign colored organizers wherever possible; and that in cases where International Unions affiliated with the A.F. of L. refuse admittance to colored workers, the A.F. of L. organize the workers under charters from the Federation."*

This resolution was followed by a demonstration such as made the onlooker believe that the Negro had at length come into his own in the labor world. Forty heads of International Unions arose and welcomed black men into their ranks.

Mollie Freedman, of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, was the first to speak, declaring that her union had six thousand colored girls in its membership and was proud of them; Seymour Hastings, of the Motion Picture Players' Union of Los Angeles, declared, "We draw no distinction as to race or color;" and the Meat Cutters and Butchers Workmen's Union announced large membership of Negroes employed in the packing plants and five Negro organizers on the road. Among others who arose to testify to their hearty welcome to the Negro were also the Carpenters, Plasterers, Bricklayers, Brick and Clay Workers; Hod-Carriers, Steel and Iron Workers of the Building Trades; the United Mine Workers; Mill, Mine and Smelter Workers; Textile Workers; Laundry Workers; Upholsters, Leather Workers; Boot and Shoe Workers; Fur Workers; Tailors, Garment Workers; Brewery Workers and Cigarmakers; Teamsters, Firemen and Pilers, Street Railway Employees, Seamen and Maintenance-of-Way Men; Federal Employees, Postal Employees, Letter Carriers; Stage Employees; Motion Picture Operators; Car Builders; Molders, Quarry Workers; Printers, Stereotypers, Barbers; and the Professions of Music and Civil Engineering.

This was the demonstration. And since the American Federation of Labor always desires more power, more money and more men, it is likely to use pressure when necessary upon its local units to bring in the thousands of colored workers, whose dues will help swell its treasury and theirs. It knows, too, that the colored men have learned to organize and constitute a danger outside the Federation. It is not difficult to forget racial prejudice when a high wage is at stake.

What has the N.A.A.C.P. done on this matter?

In January, 1918, at the call of the Urban League, representatives from that body, the N.A.A.C.P., the Slater Fund, the Jeanes Fund, and Tuskegee presented the following memorandum to the A.F. of L.:

"We wish especially to address ourselves to the American Federation of Labor which at its recent convention in Buffalo, N.Y., voiced sound democratic principles in its attitude toward Negro labor.

"We would ask the American Federation of Labor, in organizing Negroes in the various trades, to include: (1) skilled as well as unskilled workmen; (2) northern as well as southern workmen; (3) government as well as civilian employees; (4) women as well as men workers.



"We would have Negro labor handled by the American Federation of Labor in the same manner as white labor; (1) when workmen are returning to work after a successful strike; (2) when shops are declared 'open' or 'closed'; (3) when Union workers apply for jobs.

"We would have these assurances pledged not with words only, but by deeds pledged by an increasing number of examples of groups of Negro workmen given a 'square deal.'

"With these things accomplished, we pledge ourselves to urge Negro workmen to seek the advantages of sympathetic co-operation and understanding between men who work."

This has been the stand of the N.A.A.C.P. for a year and a half. Mr. Shillady has appeared in committee before Mr. Gompers and his executives and now at last, through pressure from without and within, the A.F. of L. has made a good beginning at the "square deal."

From the correspondence with our branches we realize that the choice between organization and non-organization is not always so simple as it seems. At Birmingham we learn that the employers treat their colored workmen fairly, but through agents urge them not to join the union. The President of the Branch adds: "Thus far the Negroes have found it profitable to stay out of the unions, for they have given him a cold deal." A letter from Austin, Texas, says: "There seems to be general unrest between the races and it is thought that labor agitation, the admission of Negroes into the American Federation of Labor, is the cause."

Especially interesting has been a long correspondence with a member at Balboa in the Canal Zone who is strongly in favor of union organization, but who has been telling us of the efforts of white union men in the Zone to prevent the organization of colored men. The A.F. of L. sent two men to Panama especially to organize colored labor. These men, shortly after their arrival, were informed that the white workers were against them, that they did not wish Negro laborers to have the permanent status organization would give them, and white union officials even went so far later as to ask the Governor to have the organizers deported. This was not done, and next an unsuccessful attempt was made to have them recalled from United States Headquarters. The organization of black men continued, however, and will continue, though at Atlantic City a white representative sent up from the Zone offered a resolution against the unionizing of Negro labor at Panama. The resolution was received and referred to the Executive Committee for investigation, where, it is believed, it will remain indefinitely. The A.F. of L. seems earnest in its desire to bring to American colored labor in the tropics a decent wage.

A press report from Chicago says that a committee of prominent Negroes, speaking on the riots, urges the colored men whenever possible to join the labor unions. We believe this is wise advice. When colored labor enters into competition with white labor, as it is doing increasingly today, it must demand the hours and wages of the white workers, or be counted a scab. To underbid for any length of time is to pull down the standard of living of the working class. The opposition of the white worker on racial lines becomes insignificant when the real issue, the issue "to give like men," as John A. Lacy put it, is before him. For his selfish purposes he must admit America's hundreds of thousands of black workers into his International Brotherhood.

The Labor Union is no panacea, but it has proved and is proving a force that in the end diminishes race prejudice. A democracy prospers when laborers of all races work together. Where a despotism is at its height, as in the old days of southern slavery, cracker and black are kept apart, hating one another, ignorant and ragged workers going about their unskilled, wasteful tasks.

It was an immense advance toward harmony between the races when for a half-hour at Atlantic City the Negro was invited into the full and equal privileges of organized labor. It is now his business to accept this invitation, to see that given in the heat of enthusiasm it is not withdrawn, to follow it up and to go hundreds strong to the next meeting of the Federation.

## 30. STRIKES

To strike is to stop work with a view to winning certain demands, such as, more wages, shorter hours or better conditions under which to work. It is not alone effective for the achievement of economic object, however, but it may be used also for securing favorable political action. For instance, the threat of the Brotherhood of Railway trainmen to strike in 1916, forced the adoption of the Adamson 8-hour Day Law by Congress.<sup>112</sup>

The strike is the chief weapon in the hands of labor in the class war, since by the use of it, labor is able to enforce a loss upon capital by arresting production. When production ceases, profits stop also. And since business is only run for profits, when it is no longer possible to get profits out of the enterprise, the reason for business is destroyed. This is why capitalists are terror-stricken at the use of the strike. "Big Business" knows how helpless it is when confronted with the strike.

Labor is gradually awakening to the necessity of striking at the source of production. Throughout the country in the ranks of all types of labor, strikes are being called to offset the rising cost of living. In Brooklyn, New York, The Brooklyn Rapid Transit Employees have virtually won their demands after having paralyzed transportation for several days. Transportation in Chicago is just assuming normal conditions in the wake of a bitter strike. The railway shopmen, cigar makers, workers in the building trades, longshoremen, etc., are striking, have struck, or are about to strike for a better wage. Even 12 theatres in New York City have been closed by a strike of actors. And it is rumored that the police in New York City and Boston are organizing themselves into a union. So it has finally dawned upon those who are charged with the enforcement of the law that they too are workmen who receive wages with which they must purchase life--food, clothing and shelter. This is the beginning of the end. For when one part of the working class which is used to hold down the large masses of the workers, strikes--then truly the end of capitalism is at hand. Since without the police, the militia and the regular army, the ruling class is powerless and impotent.

The present order of strikes ought to impress the millions of Negro workers in the South. Cotton is used in every conceivable form of manufacture. It is the basis of the great clothing industry. The progress of science has been materially accelerated by King Cotton. Millions of bales are produced by Negro labor yearly out of which millions of dollars of profits are realized and yet, the large majority of Negro cotton plantation workers are in dire poverty on account of the starvation wages they receive. What is the remedy is the question coming from the mouths of millions of black workers.

The answer is contained in one word--"Strike!" Piteous appeals are of no avail. Positive demands enforced by the strike are the only things that count. If the Negro cotton workers were to strike, the great cotton mills of England that rely upon the cotton exported from the South would be forced to close down. Now since these cotton mills are owned by the capitalists of England, who, in turn, control Parliament, representations would be made immediately to America with a view to influencing the action of the Government with respect to the cotton strike. When the Negro understands his power to cripple the main industry of the South by arresting production, and thereby stopping the creation of profits, he shall have reached the point where he will be able to secure a respectful hearing in the high court of American public opinion in general, as well as an attentive audience from Southern cotton plantation owners in particular.

The exploiting class in all parts of the world can appreciate a blow in the pocketbook. Negroes must form cotton workers' unions and present their demands to the masters of the cotton industry in the South. There is no need for fear. Not a sign of cotton can be raised without Negro labor. Southern white capitalists know that Negroes can bring the white bourbon South to its knees by one strike at the source of production. So, go to it!

## 31. MEMORIAL ON BEHALF OF NEGRO WOMEN LABORERS

Washington, D.C., November 4, 1919

Memorial:

To: The National Women's Trade Union League of America  
 From: Representative Negro Women of the United States  
 In behalf of Negro women laborers of the United States.

Greetings:

The importance of Negro women labor in Agriculture and Industry in the United States makes it reasonable, you will agree, that in any adjustment of interests between employers and wage-earners the interests of Negro women wage-earners should be considered and that they should have representation in the Council.

In 1910, there were in the United States 2,013,981 Negro women, ten years of age and over, in all occupations; in the manufacturing and mechanical industries there were 67,978. In the trades, there were 7,027. In Agriculture, Forestry and Animal Husbandry there were 1,051,137. In Domestic and Personal Service there were 853,357. In the clerical occupations there were 3,132. In transportation there were 1,286.

Negro women, as you well know, are very little organized in unions or other organizations. They have, therefore, very limited means of making their wishes known and of having their interests advanced through their own representatives.

It is frequently assumed or stated that Negro women are working for lower wages than other women, because they can live on less. They do often live on less because they are forced to do so. We wish to call your attention to the fact that, as shown in cases of other labor, such cheaply paid labor is, after all, dearer labor because lower wages produce lower standards of living and lower efficiency, and, thus, lower output.

The present generation of Negro women laborers like other women laborers, had little or no opportunity for training and education at childhood or since. The present prospect of the world demand for the products of American agriculture and industry makes it of fundamental importance to American production that the potential capacity of Negro women workers should be developed to its limit. As you will agree, it is up to the labor, commercial, industrial and agricultural leaders of America to see that this opportunity is given them.

THEREFORE, We, a group of Negro women, representing those two millions of Negro women wage-earners, respectfully ask for your active cooperation in organizing the Negro women workers of the United States into unions, that they may have a share in bringing about industrial democracy and social order in the world.

Any communication may be mailed to Mrs. Elizabeth Ross Haynes, c/o Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.

Elizabeth C. Carter, Executive Worker  
 War Work Council, Y.W.C.A.  
 Honorary President National Assn.  
 Colored Womens Club

Leilia Pendleton, Folder and Composer,  
 Washington, D.C.

Eva A. Wright, Milliner, Ohio and  
 Washington, D.C.

Nannie H. Burroughs, Pres. Nat. Tr.  
 School for Women and Girls,  
 Washington, D. C.

Mamie R. Ross, Pres. Conf. Branch M.  
 Missionary Society, Liberia, West Coast  
 of Africa

Dr. A. G. Green, Community Sec'y,  
 Public School of D.C.

Mary Church Terrell, Hon. President,  
 National Assn. Colored Womens Clubs,  
 Washington, D.C.

Carrie Roscoe C. Bruce, Public Schools,  
 Washington, D.C.

Caroline Clifford, Ch., Com. on  
Childrens Work, N.A.A.C.P.,  
Washington, D.C.

Elizabeth Ross Haynes, Working Woman,  
Fisk University and Washington, D.C.

*Proceedings of the First International Congress of Working Women, October 28 to November 5, 1919; November 4 Session, pp. 32-34. National Women's Trade Union League Papers, Library of Congress.*

### 32. EUGENE KINKLE JONES

Speaking before the Readjustment Congress held last week at Howard University, Eugene Kinkle Jones executive secretary of the Urban League, had the following to say:

"As a rule, Negroes are suspicious of unions, with but little sympathy towards other Negroes who advocate affiliation on the part of Negro workingmen with white unions. However, the unions will never be able to muster their full strength in their fight with capital, without the recruiting of Negro workmen now constituting one-seventh of the labor supply of America. And Negroes will be unable to attain their position in the labor world without it in a large measure affiliating with organized labor groups."

There is no sociologist who thinks more clearly, and speaks straighter on labor conditions among colored people than Mr. Jones. What he says above, he has preached in public addresses all over the country to employers and employees, white and colored. He makes just two points:

First, that the colored worker cannot get better working conditions, better hours and higher wages without organization;

Second, unions in the United States will never be able to control all of the workers until they include the Negro workers.

The first point is the more important. Without organization, without labor unions, the colored laborer is a scab and a makeshift, the average worker in the United States is the best paid workingman in the world. The worst paid laborers are the Chinese coolies, the Jamaica farm labor, and the South African miners.

In the United States, the average white laborer can earn \$3.50 a day, in Jamaica, he earns 25 cents per day. The difference between them is in money --\$3.25. The real difference lies in the fact that the average white laborer in the United States is organized and the average Jamaican is unorganized.

The difference is more than this--the Jamaican laborer is poorly housed, badly nourished and largely ignorant; the average white American lives well and sends his children to the public school. The only reason that colored workers in America are not getting the same wages paid in China and Jamaica is that they are competing with organized white laborers who are highly paid. But even so, unorganized Negro workers are receiving lower wages than white organized workers in every case. The only time both races are paid alike is when both belong to labor unions.

Colored workingmen can accept the word of Mr. Jones when he says:

"NEGROES WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTAIN THEIR POSITION IN THE LABOR WORLD WITHOUT IN LARGE MEASURE AFFILIATING WITH ORGANIZED LABOR GROUPS."

*Baltimore Afro-American, November 21, 1919.*

### 33. REPORT OF THE CHICAGO COMMISSION ON RACE RELATIONS : ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE NEGRO WORKER

#### I. Introduction

Industry involves the continuous contact of more whites and Negroes than any other field. It therefore affords wide opportunity for the operation of

racial misunderstanding and friction. It is also a field in which the lines of economic interest are so tightly drawn and so closely watched that any misunderstanding or friction is thereby greatly accentuated.

Irritation and clashes of interest have been conspicuous in the relations between labor unions and Negro workers. This friction has extended to the relations between white and Negroes generally. The efforts of union labor to promote its cause and gain adherents have built up a body of sentiment that cannot easily be opposed by non-union workers. The strike breaker is intolerable to the union man. Circumstances have frequently made Negroes strike breakers, thus centering upon them as a racial group all the bitterness which the unionist feels toward strike breakers as a class. This tends to increase any existing racial antipathy or to serve as concrete justification for it.

On the other hand, Negroes have often expressed themselves as distrustful of the unions because prejudice in the unions has denied them equal benefits of membership. They often find that their first opportunity in a new industry comes through the eagerness of a strike-bound employer to utilize their labor at wages more than they have previously earned, even if less than the union scale. This often tends to make them feel that they have more to gain through affiliation with such employers than by taking chances on what the unions offer them.

There is a gradually increasing sympathetic understanding by unionists of the struggle of Negroes to overcome their handicaps, and an increasing realization of the importance to the unions of organizing them. Negroes are themselves showing more interest in efforts toward organizations, but there is still much mutual suspicion and resentment in their relations.

To understand these relations it is necessary to know (1) the policy and attitude of organized labor toward the Negro and how its expressed policy is carried out in practice; and (2) what the Negro believes the facts to be and what his attitude is toward organized labor. In its investigation the Commission used the following methods of inquiry: Questionnaires were sent to all labor organizations; interviews were held with union officials and members, both white and Negro, with officers and members of Negro "protest" unions, with non-unions Negroes, and with persons who were not connected with unions but had certain special information. Ninety-one persons, of whom twenty-five were Negroes, were interviewed. Trade-union meetings were attended by the Commission's investigator. Union constitutions, magazines, convention reports, etc., were collected and studied. Conferences were held by the Commission at which the following labor leaders and organizers presented their information and views:

George W. Perkins, president of the International Cigarmakers' Union, and prominent in the affairs of the American Federation of Labor since its organization.<sup>113</sup>

Victor Olander, secretary-treasurer, Illinois State Federation of Labor, and vice-president of International Seaman's Union.

John Fitzpatrick, president, Chicago Federation of Labor.

W. Z. Foster, organizer of the American Federation of Labor in the steel and packing industries.<sup>114</sup>

A. K. Foote, Negro, vice-president of Stock Yards Labor Council and secretary-treasurer, Local 651, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of America.

I. H. Bratton, Negro organizer for Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of America.

John Riley, Negro organizer for the American Federation of Labor in the Stock Yards district.

Max Brodsky, secretary-treasurer, Local 100, International Ladies Garment Workers' Union.

Agnes Nestor, president, Women's Trade Union League.<sup>115</sup>

Elizabeth Maloney, treasurer and organizer, Chicago Waitresses' Union.

Robert L. Mays, Negro, president of an independent Negro union, the Railway Men's International Benevolent and Industrial Association.

## II. POLICY OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND OTHER FEDERATIONS

From its beginning the American Federation of Labor has declared a uniform policy of no racial discrimination, although this policy has not been carried out in practice by all the constituent autonomous bodies. At its

fortieth annual convention, held at Montreal, Canada, in June, 1920, a plan was presented to "use every means in its power to have the words 'only white' members stricken out of the constitution" of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, an organization which exercises jurisdiction over 100,000 colored employees, although barring them from membership, and "admit the colored workers to full membership in their Brotherhood or have them relinquish jurisdiction" over these Negro employees and allow them to establish a brotherhood of their own.

This failed to receive favorable action, but a resolution was passed reaffirming the position taken at the Atlantic City convention in 1919 that "where international unions refuse to admit colored workers to membership, the American Federation of Labor will be authorized to organize them under charters from the American Federation of Labor." This means that in such cases the American Federation of Labor itself becomes the national or international union of such locals. According to the information given to the Commission by George W. Perkins, "the Federation of Labor has organized hundreds of local unions and thereby directly attached to the American Federation of Labor colored workers." President Compers states: "Of the 900 unions affiliated directly with the American Federation of Labor there are 169 composed exclusively of Negroes."

A brief reference to the history of the national federations which preceded the American Federation of Labor shows that the foregoing policy has been followed since shortly after the Civil War.

The National Labor Union (1866-72), at its first convention in 1866, was the first national federation of labor unions to deal with the problem of meeting Negro competition after the Civil War. The formation of trades unions among colored people was favored. In 1869 Negro delegates were admitted to the annual convention. A separate national Negro Labor Union, formed in 1869, was short-lived. The unfriendly attitude of the unions toward the Negroes was the subject of bitter comment at the various sessions of the latter organization. The Knights of Labor, which rose to prominence after the decline of the National Labor Union, admitted all workers without regard to color. Many Negroes in the South joined the organization. When the leadership of organized labor shifted from the Knights of Labor to the American Federation of Labor in the late eighties, the Federation continued to express the policy of no racial discrimination and has stood for that policy to the present time. At the convention of the American Federation of Labor in Atlantic City, 1919, there were present about fifty Negro delegates, men and women. A large number of Negro delegates also attended the last convention of the Federation at Montreal.

The policy of the Illinois State Federation of Labor was outlined to the Commission by Victor Olander, secretary-treasurer, as follows:

The State Federation of Labor is under the jurisdiction of the American Federation of Labor, and the laws governing the national would necessarily govern the state federation, so that in respect to law they are the same. I might add that they are carrying out the law in much the same manner with respect to the Negro. There hasn't been a convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor held in many years that hasn't had in attendance Negro delegates. That is the usual thing at every convention. There is no discrimination.

The Chicago Federation of Labor is the city central body of the various local unions in Chicago which are connected with the American Federation of Labor. Each of these local unions elects delegates to represent it at the semi-monthly meetings of the Chicago Federation. Negro delegates take an active part in these meetings, and are cordially received. The Federation and its president have been very active in all efforts to organize Negroes, especially in the Stock Yards, the steel industry, and the culinary trades.

### III. POLICY OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL UNIONS

In considering the policy of national and international unions, that of the unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor will be discussed first, and following this the policy of six of the most important of the independent internationals.

## I. UNIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

The American Federation of Labor has consistently followed a policy of no racial discrimination. It has, however, no power to compel its constituent national and international unions to follow this policy. The question of race discrimination by an autonomous national or international union has been frequently the subject of spirited discussion at American Federation of Labor conventions, but the outcome has been merely a recommendation to the offending union that the discrimination be discontinued. Since strict autonomy of national and international unions is recognized in the constitution of the American Federation of Labor, no more effective action can be taken.

In order to learn the racial policy of the 11- nationals and international-affiliated with the American Federation of Labor inquiries were sent to each, and direct responses were received from sixty-nine. The policy of twenty-five additional unions was learned through their district councils or locals in Chicago. Thus all but sixteen of the 110 national and international unions in the American Federation of Labor were covered. Of these, two were covered. Of these, two were suspended from the American Federation of Labor in 1919-20. Only three have locals in Chicago, and all have little significance for Chicago. Information concerning the racial policy of the sixteen unions not heard from was supplied by labor leaders in touch with the whole union situation and able to speak with authority on this subject.

Of the 110 national and international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, eight expressly bar the Negro by their constitutions or rituals. These unions are: Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America, International Association of Machinists, American Association of Masters, Mates, and Pilots, Railway Mail Association, Order of Railroad Telegraphers, the Commercial Telegraphers' Union of America, American Wire Weavers' Protective Association, and Brotherhood of Railway Mail Clerks.

Thus 102 of the 110 national and international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor admit Negroes. Not all of these unions, however, have Negro members, notwithstanding the fact that Negroes are eligible to membership. In accounting for the absence of Negro members, twenty-eight national and international unions reported "no Negroes in the trade," or "no applications ever received." Certain of the 102 nationals and internationals reported a small Negro membership with the following explanations:

Eleven stated that employers discriminated against Negro members of the union--wanted white men if they had to pay the union scale of wages.

Seven internationals and five delegate bodies reported that special efforts were now being made to organize Negro workers.

Twelve internationals called attention to long periods of apprenticeship--four had a three-year period, six a four-year period, and two a five-year period--as a factor which accounted for the failure of Negroes to join.

In their comments, some of these union officials unconsciously express their prejudice, sometimes attributing traits to the Negro which they seem to take for granted as being characteristic. The following are some examples:

No Negroes have applied for membership in our union or did not have nerve enough to as it requires lots of climbing.

We do not have any Negroes in our organization, but there is nothing in the constitution which prevents them from becoming members after they have learned the trade. No one has ever made application for a Negro. I judge this is because they have to blow in the same pipe [in glass blowing].

I find nothing in our laws which bars Negroes from becoming member of this union, but in my thirteen years in this office I have never known one to make application for membership. This may be due to the hazardous nature of our work.

Ours is usually very hard work. Negroes as a whole do not like hard work. They instead very often prefer employment where they can get along at their own gait or in their own way, especially working in gangs.

National and international unions which had Negro members in appreciable numbers reported the following facts:

Sixteen had Negro officers or organizers.

Twenty-three reported that relations between the races in the unions were undisturbed by race prejudice.

Thirty-three stated that Negroes had belonged to the union for the following periods:

	Number of Unions		Number of Unions
2 years or less.....	12	8 to 15 years.....	4
2 to 4 years.....	8	20 years.....	4
4 to 6 years.....	1	25 years.....	1
6 to 8 years.....	2	35 years.....	1

## 2. UNIONS NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

There are a number of unions not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, of which the most important are: the four railway brotherhoods-- Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Order of Railway Conductors of America-- Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Industrial Workers of the World, (I.W.W.). The four railway brotherhoods exclude the Negro by constitutional provision. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and the Industrial Workers of the World admit the Negro and make special efforts to organize Negro workers. The I.W.W. has its main foothold in the lumber, mine, and textile industries and does not have any strong unions in Chicago.

Disregarding the classification of nationals and internationals based upon affiliation with the American Federation of Labor, a review of the figures presented above shows that 104 national and international unions admit the Negro and that twelve exclude the Negro by written provision.

The outstanding fact with reference to these twelve organizations is that, with the exception of the Wire Weavers, they are all connected with the transportation industry; seven are members of the American Federation of Labor Railway Department and the other four constitute the big "railway brotherhoods." The latter are sometimes referred to by members of the unions as the "aristocrats in the labor movement." All of these unions, except the Masters, Mates, and Pilots, have been organized more than twenty years. None of the unions formed within the last twenty years, except the Masters, Mates, and Pilots, excludes the Negro.

In these crafts, excepting such trades as carmen, machinists, clerks, and firemen, it may be that in general the Negro would not be much of a factor at present, because these trades demand an amount of education and skill not yet possessed by a large percentage of Negroes. But this by no means proves that the Negro would not acquire the necessary skill and education if opportunities in these trades were actually open to him.

The Railway Department of the American Federation of Labor is composed of fourteen craft unions, all but two of which exclude the Negro worker. The Stationary Firemen and Oil Men of the American Federation of Labor Railway Department are openly soliciting Negro members. The only other craft organization which admits Negroes is the Maintenance of Way Craft, which really means the common labor group. Negroes can get into this craft through an auxiliary charter to a Negro local. Regardless of how skilled or how intelligent the applicant may be, or how logically he falls into some other craft, he can only come in through one or the other of these two craft unions.

The attitude of the railway brotherhoods is typified in remarks made to an investigator for the Commission by a member of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks who is now serving on an important public commission. He was emphatic in upholding the brotherhood's policy of excluding Negroes. "As long as the engineers have anything to say about it, they certainly will not get in." He said that the modern locomotive was a highly complicated and scientific mechanism, and that the Negroes "did not have brains enough to run one."

As showing the contrasting view of another trade-union man, an employee of the public commission mentioned said that he had been a member of the United Mine Workers since 1901, and in that organization no color line is drawn; that he had worked beside Negro miners and feels no prejudice. He pointed out that the national conventions of the miners always have a large representation of Negro delegates, and some of the ablest and best speakers come from the Negro race. He expressed the feeling that the policy of the railway brotherhoods is a mistake, and is a case of "swell-headedness."

The general exclusion policy of the railway brotherhoods and certain of the unions in the Railway Department of the American Federation of Labor has



created a feeling of bitterness among Negroes which spreads beyond these crafts and is directed against unions in general, notwithstanding the constructive and progressive policy of the many unions which admit Negroes: In the transportation crafts it has led to the formation of a "protest" Negro railway union.

*The Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association.*--This organization is a labor union open to Negro railway employees. It is a protest organization which has grown up because of the exclusion of Negroes by the railway brotherhoods and certain unions in the Railway Department of the American Federation of Labor.

The Association was organized May 12, 1915, and has seventeen locals in Chicago and a membership of about 1,200, all railway employees. The leaders of this group disclaimed any intention of building up "a rival American Federation of Labor among Negroes," but stated that, as far as they were personally concerned, they would be willing to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor in its proper department, *providing* all forms of discrimination in national and international unions, both in constitution and practice, were done away with, and the Negro worker was assured of equal treatment and opportunity with the white worker. They realize that the highest welfare of both groups depends upon co-operation. But, as to what the membership would want to do when that time comes, they of course do not know.

Mr. Mays, the president of the organization, was asked by the Commission's investigator what he would do in a situation where both Negroes and whites were organized separately, and the whites were going out on a strike and had requested the Negroes to come out also. He stated that several such local strike situations had arisen in the South, and that he had advised the Negro union in each of these cases to use its own judgment, but that if it decided to support the white unions, it should, before doing so, have a joint committee of both groups meet and make it understood absolutely that any agreement finally reached with the employers must include both groups on equal terms. In one case, after such an agreement had been reached and the men had gone back to work, the employer tried to keep out certain Negroes, but the white unionists insisted that the agreement must be lived up to.

The officials of this organization are exceptionally capable Negroes; its advisers are professional men, well educated and thoroughly familiar with the history and tactics of white labor unions.

A more definite statement of the purpose and policies of this protest organization was made before the Commission by R. L. Mays:

The Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association really protests as an organization against unfair and bad working conditions of the employer and against unfair practices on the part of the American Federation of Labor and the railway brotherhoods.

This is the crux of the problem as we see it. We agree with the policies and principles of the American Federation of Labor so long as they are American and in the interests of the workmen, but if their practices are against Negroes, then we are against the American Federation of Labor unflinchingly.

*Question:* To what extent have you found their practices unfair to the colored people?

*Mr. Mays:* There are fourteen unions in railway employment in the American Federation of Labor. The United Brotherhood of Railway Employees has been accepting Negroes in full membership, but the other thirteen organizations do not accept Negroes in membership. As a matter of fact, they are secured on contract, which is the greatest holdback for the Negroes and breeds more distrust on the part of the Negro in these places, so far as the American Federation of Labor is concerned.

Before the roads were under government control certain discriminatory practices were found in the South, but now you will find colored men in certain skilled positions. In the Brotherhood of Carmen, if a colored man is not organized into the local union, he cannot advance automatically from repair to car building. He might be a member of one of these local unions chartered by and affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. But under contract they say their members must be white, and they use only white men. In the South our men have enjoyed these jobs; under war conditions they were brought here, but under this contract no Negro can be employed as a carman, although he has all the experience in the world. They refuse to take the colored man but take the white man. No colored boy can go in as an apprentice and work

up to a skilled mechanic's position. Consequently they are reducing the Negro railway worker to a position of common laborer and automatically are keeping him down. If this is the condition in the railways in the North, I say it will prevail everywhere. I have said that it is a northern prejudice coming South.

#### IV. ATTITUDE AND POLICY OF LOCAL UNIONS IN CHICAGO

##### 1. WHITE AND NEGRO MEMBERSHIP IN CHICAGO LOCAL UNIONS

Much effort was made to obtain statistics of white and Negro membership in local trade unions in Chicago. Information was sought through requests addressed to the national headquarters of all national and international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor for data as to any local unions they might have in Chicago. Requests were also addressed directly to these local unions as listed in a directory published by the Chicago Trade Union Label League. Further requests were addressed to local unions in Chicago directly affiliated with the American Federation of Labor as listed in a directory of all such unions published by that organization.

It was difficult to ascertain the exact number of local unions in Chicago. Those covered embraced, however, as full a list as could be supplied by trade-union offices in Chicago. But the president of the Chicago Federation of Labor said that the number of local unions was changing so continually by reason of the organization of new ones and the consolidation of two or more into one, that no accurate list was available.

Data for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and for the Railway Men's International Industrial Benevolent Association were obtained directly from those organizations.

Reports were received from the railway brotherhoods saying that they exclude Negroes, but giving no data as to the number of white members.

The information which was obtained may be summarized as follows:

	Members
371 local unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, comprising locals of national and international unions so affiliated, and also federal and local unions directly affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.....	253,237
11 local unions of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.....	40,000
17 local unions of the Railway Men's International Industrial Benevolent Association.....	1,200
	<hr/> 294,437

The total Negro membership reported for Chicago by the foregoing organization was 12,106. The number of locals through which this Negro membership was distributed cannot be stated with any approach to accuracy, due to the fact that in a number of cases the district council or the national body reported the membership for its Chicago locals jointly. In such cases it could not safely be assumed that each of the locals in question had Negro members. Disregarding all such cases, however, there still remains a total of at least eighty-five Chicago locals for which, individually, Negro members were reported.

It is interesting to note that, judging by the figures here shown as to white and Negro membership in local unions in Chicago, the proportion of Negro union members to the Negro population in Chicago is almost exactly the same as the proportion of white members to the white population in Chicago.

##### 2. METHODS OF DEALING WITH NEGRO APPLICANTS

If the unions which bar the Negro are chosen as examples, organized labor might appear to be very unfair to Negro workers. On the other hand, if unions which admit them into the same locals and have Negro organizers and officers are chosen as examples, it might appear that there was no prejudice whatever against Negroes on the part of trade unions. Neither extreme would represent the facts. On the basis of policy toward the Negro, unions in Chicago may be divided into four classes or types. These classes are:

- A. Unions admitting Negroes to white locals.
- B. Unions admitting Negroes to separate co-ordinate locals.
- C. Unions admitting Negroes to subordinate or auxiliary locals.
- D. Unions excluding Negroes from membership.

The existence of these classes indicates the fact that the union attitude and policy toward the Negro cannot be summed up by any simple generalization. Each class or type has its own policy, and even within the class there are minor variations of attitude and policy.

#### A. UNIONS ADMITTING NEGROES TO WHITE LOCALS

Wherever and whenever Negroes are admitted on an equal basis and given a square deal, the feeling inside the union is nearly always harmonious. This is true in such unions as the Butcher Workmen's, Hodcarriers', Flat Janitors', and Ladies' Garment Workers', which include important fields of Negro labor in Chicago.

*Stock Yards' unions.*--The Stock Yards' strike of 1904 was broken by the use of Negroes. This was the opening wedge for the admittance to the union of the large number of Negroes which followed. No organization thereafter could hope to amount to anything in the Yards unless it took in Negroes. From 1917 until the riot of 1919 Negroes in large numbers were joining the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen's Union of North America. Forty locals were formed. The Negro was welcome to join any local he desired, whether it was predominantly Polish or Irish or Negro. However, the majority gravitated to Local 651, which was composed mainly of Negroes and had Negro officers and organizers and headquarters near the "Black Belt."

This was not unnatural, since the headquarters of the various local unions are distributed over the city with a view to their convenience for the members. Most of the Negro members live within the "Black Belt." The most active Negro organizer in the city is connected with this local. Negroes living outside this area belong to the locals nearest their homes.

Efforts to organize Negro workers in the Yards are commented upon in the *Negro Year Book* of 1918-19 in the following paragraph:

That the unions are doing much to organize Negro labor is indicated by the fact that of the more than ten thousand Negro workers in the Chicago packing houses, over 60 per cent are reported in the unions. The International Union of Butchers' Workmen, which has jurisdiction over 90 per cent of the employees in the packing houses of the country, has three paid Negro organizers. In other lines of work there is equal activity in organizing Negro labor.

The unions succeeded in securing an agreement under which Judge Samuel Alschuler was mutually accepted by the packing companies and the unions as an arbitrator on matters affecting working conditions in the Yards, especially hours and wages. This agreement applies to all who work in the Yards, whether in or out of the union, but, according to labor leaders, union action and union money "put it across." Consequently there was the feeling of all who benefited should join and help share in the expense, and a feeling of hostility toward such Negroes, and whites as well for that matter, who did not join because they found that they could get all the benefits of the arrangement without paying dues.

While the Commission's investigator was interviewing the officials of one of the unions of the packing industry at their headquarters, a number of the white members dropped in to pay their dues. In conversation they showed, quite unsolicited, that considerable feeling existed because the Negro workers were not coming into the union. They felt that the Negroes were receiving all the benefits secured for the workers by the unions without paying their proportion of the expense of the organization. In fact, several used rather strong terms with the words "fink" and "scabs."

The sentiment of the men present seemed to be that, while mistakes had been made on both sides in the 1904 strike and since, the antagonistic feeling had been pretty largely eliminated, as was shown by the large Negro membership prior to the riot, and they said that every effort was being made at that time and since to bring the Negro into the union. Conferences had been held with Negro ministers and other organizations explaining the position of the unions, literature had been distributed, and a great deal of money had been spent through Negro organizers, and yet the results were disappointingly small. These white union men contended that they were opposed by an

effective combination of "packers;" influence hard to beat and intensively interested in keeping the races apart for its own purposes in opposing union organization.

*The Hod Carriers* have sixteen locals in Chicago with a large total membership. No racial record is kept, but Negroes are admitted without discrimination into all of the unions. A few years ago the Negro membership was between 1,200 and 1,400; at present with an increase of 300 to 500 from the South, the secretary of the executive council estimates the total Negro membership to be at least 1,700, most of whom have joined two locals. The president of the Evanston union and the vice-president of the Chicago Heights union are colored. No feeling of discrimination exists, all being treated alike as long as they pay their dues and live up to the rules. The Hod Carriers have joint arbitration agreements with the employing contractors' associations in this industry, and no strikes have been called since 1900.

*The International Ladies Garment Workers' Union* is another illustration of a union which accords Negroes the same treatment as white members, and where the relationship is entirely harmonious. This union has never drawn the race, creed, or color line and is trying to leave out the word "white" and "colored" from its minutes and reports. The Negro girls came into this industry as strike breakers within the last three years.

The officials of this union, in interviews and in testimony before the Commission, claimed that whenever any friction did arise it was due to the fact that the employers in this industry discriminated against Negro girls and paid them less than white girls. The agreement between the ladies' garment manufacturers and the union provided a weekly wage of \$37.40 for skirt and dress operators--85 cents per hour for a forty-four-hour week. Negro operators in non-union factories for the same work were being paid from \$18.00 to \$25.00 per week. Union skirt and dress finishers were being paid \$26.40 per week--60 cents per hour for forty-four hours. Negro operators in non-union factories averaged \$15.00 per week for the same work and frequently worked longer than forty-four hours.

The relations of whites and Negroes in the union were discussed before the Commission by Max Brodsky, a representative of the union, who said:

"As a result of the 1917 strike we have now about 450 colored women workers in our industry. We lost the strike, and this is how the colored women got into our industry. Now the union knew the object of the colored women coming into our industry, and we decided to have them organized just like the white women and girls, so we established this particular union. They are at present conscientious union girls and women. It was the policy of the union not to discriminate against the colored women who broke the strike in 1917. This helped us."

At the same conference, Agnes Nestor, president of the Women's Trade Union League, testified as follows:

*Miss Nestor:* In the ladies' garments work, the unions have taken in colored girls on the same basis as the white girls. They made a colored girl a chairman of their shop meeting. There is no feeling there with them as far as I know.

*Miss McDowell:* Didn't they elect a colored girl as shop steward where they had both white and colored girls?

*Miss Nestor:* Yes.

As an illustration of employers' discrimination against Negro workers, and of the efforts of the union to protect Negroes when they become members of the union, the case of a manufacturer was cited whose shop had only Negro workers. Shortly after the union had organized them they were locked out. Later the employer was willing to settle "providing you sent us a set of white workers." The union refused to do this and called a strike.

The union claimed that in many recent cases where Negro girls were sent out on jobs the employers would refuse them when they found out that they had to pay them the same scale as white workers. During 1917-18, owing to the war, the manufacturers worked in harmony with the unions because they had to; since the war, and largely within the first few months of 1920, the manufacturers have opened many shops on the South Side employing only non-union colored girls. In the various strikes in which this union has been engaged for this same period, the strike breakers have been Negro girls secured

for the employers through a Negro minister acting as a labor agent or solicitor.

*The Flat Janitors' Union* has a membership of approximately 5,000, of whom 1,000 are Negroes. It includes many nationalities with strong racial feelings, yet, as stated by Mr. Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, rarely is any complaint made against this union by Negroes.

Interviews with the president and other officials, attendance at a session of the Executive Board, and attendance at a crowded meeting of the union, where transaction of general business, nomination of candidates for the coming election, and initiation of new members occurred, gave the Commission's investigator ample opportunity for observation of the attitude toward Negroes.

This union, organized in 1904, started out with a Negro as recording secretary and business agent. At the time of the interviews, the vice-president and three members of the Executive Board were Negroes. These had been elected for a three-year term. At the general meeting attended, the Negro officers were renominated unanimously to hold office for a period of five years. In addition, several more Negroes were nominated as stewards and as delegates to the Chicago Federation of Labor.

According to the members, discrimination in this craft is practiced by the flat and apartment owners. The experience of the union is that as soon as a Negro is taken into the union and demands the union scale the owner calls up the union and says, "If I have to pay these wages I'm going to get a good white man."

The position taken by the union is that if a Negro has had the job he must be allowed to stay there and get the scale, and the union will back him up in the fight for it. The threat of a strike against a building is usually effective.

Inquiry among Negro janitors in the residence districts brought up a case in which one Negro claimed that Negroes were forced into the union and then usually found themselves discriminated against by the white members, especially by Belgians, and sooner or later, were squeezed out of the good jobs. However, this Negro admitted that he had not attended a union meeting since his initiation, except to stop in to pay his dues, and that he had never made a complaint to the Negro officer of the union. The officers of the union admitted that there was, in the many racial groups in this craft, strong racial feeling, especially among Austrians and Belgians, who seemed to feel that whenever a janitor died or left a job, or an assistant or helper was needed, such job should always be filled with members of their own nationality. However, the Negro officials claimed that with three Negroes on the Executive Board and a Negro vice-president, any complaint coming from a Negro would surely be fairly dealt with; but that unless their attention was called to unsatisfactory conditions the union could not be expected to know of them, and in such cases it was not the union that was to blame, but the member himself.

Frequently, in those unions in which the Negroes are not admitted into the same locals with the whites, the reasons given for putting them into separate locals or auxiliaries is that the white members object to the close physical contact or association in meetings, especially where there is some element of ritual in connection with the meetings. At the meeting of the Janitors' Union attended by the investigator, new pass words were given out, and all members, white and Negro, had to come before the Negro vice-president, who whispered the words to each and they in turn repeated them to him. Not the slightest hesitancy was noted on the part of the white members, but rather a hearty handshake or a slap on the back seemed to be the rule. Again, in taking in nineteen new members, four of whom were Negroes, the major part of the ceremony was performed by the Negro vice-president. At this meeting, packed to standing-room and attended by well over a thousand members, Negroes were a large percentage of those present. These were not confined to a group by themselves, but were scattered in all parts of the hall and seemed to be in cordial conversation with the white members.

A number of interesting comments by members and officers of unions admitting Negroes on equal terms with whites were volunteered, either in interviews or in correspondence. In one union of 700 highly skilled workers receiving \$1.50 an hour, or \$12.00 a day, no Negroes were found to be members, although they are not barred by the constitution. It was suggested that the five-year apprenticeship period discouraged Negroes. It was further noted that admission was by a two-thirds vote, a provision which could easily result in the exclusion of any race which two-thirds of the members did not like. The

investigator's report of his interview says:

The business representative of this union was strongly of the personal opinion that unions had made a mistake in ever admitting the Negro into any of the unions. He claimed that the employers' only interest in them was as a lever to keep wages down for the workers.

Two other members of the League took a contrary position and held that Negro labor was in the field, and that while the employer's interest in the Negro was simply to play one group against another to keep expense down as low as possible, it was really up to labor itself to solve the question and that the Negroes must be taken into unions. They admitted that undoubtedly prejudice existed, but that it was gradually being overcome.

Other comments are as follows:

From an officer of the Teamsters and Chauffeurs: "We have had one Negro holding office as trustee for several years. So feeling is brotherly."

From an officer of a specialized mechanics' union: "There has been no sign of race feeling or hatred since we have been organized. We have six officers (one colored). I myself, being colored, have no complaints whatever against my white brothers."

From a Negro officer of the Mattress Makers: "Discrimination and race prejudice does not exist in this union. We are one happy family. It seems impossible to organize the other Negro mattress makers. Would appreciate some assistance."

#### B. UNIONS ADMITTING NEGROES TO SEPARATE CO-ORDINATE LOCALS

Certain unions organize Negroes into separate locals which are in all respects co-ordinate with the white locals belonging to the same unions. The reason for maintaining separate Negro locals is either (1) preference of the Negro workers for locals of their own, or (2) unwillingness of white workers to admit Negroes to white locals. It often seemed that the second indicated the real situation, the first reason being given as an excuse for it.

The important factor is the reason for the existence of separate Negro locals rather than the fact of separation. This is illustrated by the experience of the Painters' and Musicians' unions on the one hand, and that of the Waiters' Union on the other.

During July, 1920, twenty Negro painters applied to the Painters' District Council for membership in the Painters' Union. They passed the required examination but, instead of being placed in the existing Painters' Union, were given temporary working permits which identified them as members of "South Side Colored Local." They immediately suspected that some effort was being made to place them in a separate Negro local in which they could not get the full benefits of union membership. They then went to discuss the matter with the editor of a Negro paper which had expressed the point of view of many Negroes concerning labor unions in its editorial columns. This editor told them his belief that the Painters' District Council was merely duplicating the practices of several other unions in the city, and was attempting to limit these men to a "Jim Crow" union. They returned to the president of the District Council, who explained that he had to keep track of all temporary permits issued, and inasmuch as the charter for their local was not yet issued he could not know the number until issued. He had to put the description on the cards to identify the men temporarily.

A charter for the local was given from national headquarters, and the new cards were issued, designating them simply as members of Local No. \_\_\_\_\_. The membership of this local, exclusively Negro, grew from twenty to seventy-five in two months. One of the Negro officials of the local stated that its members had been working in all parts of the Chicago District, including the North Side and Evanston, and that they had a representative on the District Council. The attitude of the white workers, he stated, was a little cool on the first day, but there is now no evidence of friction. He thought that the members of this local were well pleased and happy.

The Negro Musicians are organized into a strong separate local, chartered in 1902. It has a membership of approximately 325. It has held the Municipal Pier dance-hall contract for three years, and besides many other contracts in the city. It furnished players for various occasions for a considerable territory outside of Chicago. This group much prefers its own union, but works jointly with the large white union, the Chicago Federation of Musicians,

whenever matters come up affecting both organizations. Both unions have the same wage scale.

Where Negro workers are permitted to join white locals but prefer to have their own colored local there is no feeling that they are discriminated against, occasional joint meetings with white locals being characterized by friendly interest and good fellowship. Where, however, a union closes the door of its white locals to Negroes and organizes them into separate locals because the white members object to contact with Negroes, a very difficult situation exists. This condition is illustrated by the methods of the Waiters' Union in Chicago.

Negro waiters are not admitted into the white Waiters' Union, but are placed in the Pullman Porters and Dining-Car Waiters' Union, which is a local affiliated with the same international as the white Waiters' Union. The make-shift of putting Negro waiters, although employed in city hotels, restaurants, and cafes, into this local is pointed to by Negroes as unmistakable evidence of discrimination.

The culinary strike in Chicago, which started May 1, 1920, resulted in failure for the unions concerned largely because Negroes acted as strike breakers. This is easily accounted for by the fact that seventeen years ago Negro waiters lost their positions in many of the first-class hotels and restaurants in the business district through circumstances in which they felt that they had been "double-crossed" by the unions, of which they then were members.

The Negro strike breakers in 1920, however, found themselves again displaced, this time through the action of employers. A typical instance was found in the restaurant of a hotel patronized largely by people of German descent, the managers as well as many of the former waiters being of German extraction. These waiters, some of whom had been employed for many years in this restaurant, were members of the union and went out when the strike was called. The managers replaced them with Negroes. The latter filled the positions with apparent satisfaction for nearly a year, when suddenly they were all discharged and the old waiters taken back.

A regular patron of the restaurant, a man of German descent, expressed vigorous views upon the "injustice" with which the Negroes had been treated by the management, which should have appreciated their service through the period when the former waiters caused trouble. He said he had always found the Negroes efficient and willing, and many of them "very intelligent fellows." Although of the same nationality as the managers and the former waiters, many of whom he had known for years, he did not let this national feeling blind him to what he considered most unfair treatment of the Negroes. He said that he had discussed the matter with one of the managers and had been told that the reason why the Negroes had been discharged and the old waiters taken back was because of complaints against the Negroes by patrons of the restaurant. He added, "I think that's bunk."

A change in the officers of the Waiters' Union at the recent election has placed in power a group which recognizes that the entire policy of the culinary unions must be co-ordinated and proper provision made for the large Negro element in the field. If this is not done, it is felt that a rival Negro union may be organized, similar to that organized by the Negro railway workers. In fact, even now a beginning has been made toward such an organization by a few high-grade Negro waiters who have been in active charge of the waiters of several of the large hotel dining-rooms during the recent strike.

#### C. UNIONS ADMITTING NEGROES TO SUBORDINATE OR AUXILIARY LOCALS

The practice of admitting Negroes to subordinate locals appears to be very unusual in Chicago. The investigation disclosed only one instance where the policy of the union was to admit Negroes only to subordinate locals. The Commission is not at liberty to publish the name of this union, which makes the following provision for Negro locals in its constitution:

Where there are a sufficient number of colored helpers they may be organized as an auxiliary local and shall be under the jurisdiction of the white local union having jurisdiction over that locality, and must be submitted to duly authorized officers of said white local for their approval.

In shops where there is a grievance committee of the white local, grievances of members of said auxiliary local will be handled by that committee.

Members of auxiliary locals composed of colored helpers shall not transfer except to another auxiliary local composed of colored members, and colored

helpers will not be promoted to . . . or helper apprentice; and will not be admitted to shops where white helpers are now employed.

Auxiliary locals will be represented in all conventions by the delegates elected from the white local in that locality.

The officials of this union stoutly maintain that the provisions above quoted are not discriminatory, and they are at a loss to explain why attempts to organize Negro workers in Chicago into auxiliary locals have not met with success.

#### D. UNIONS EXCLUDING NEGROES FROM MEMBERSHIP

Chicago locals which exclude the Negro do so either in conformity with the laws of their national unions or in the exercise of "local option." Locals belonging to the national and international unions which bar the Negro by written provision in their constitutions or rituals are obliged to follow the same racial policy as their parent bodies. This number includes the Chicago locals belonging to the eight American Federation of Labor national unions which exclude the Negro, and the locals of the four railway brotherhoods which likewise exclude the Negro by constitutional provision.

In addition to the locals which are bound to follow the policy of their nationals, there are certain other locals which are known to reject Negro applicants. By allowing their locals to practice "local option" or to require a majority or two-thirds vote for election to membership, the progressive policy of certain American Federation of Labor national and international unions which admit the Negro is nullified.

The Machinists' Union has frequently been referred to as a union which, although complying in its constitution with the American Federation of Labor policy of no racial discrimination, still effectually bars the Negro by a provision in its secret ritual. In effect, however, there is no real difference between such a policy on the part of the Machinists' Union and that of the unions which apparently practice exclusion as an unwritten law. With the Machinists' Union must then be grouped such unions as the Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers' International Alliance, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers of America, and United Association of Plumbers and Steam Fitters of United States and Canada. The Electricians' Union has only one Negro member out of a total membership of 11,000 in Chicago.

#### V. ATTITUDE OF NEGROES TOWARD UNION ORGANIZATION

From its attitude toward labor unions the Negro population of Chicago may be considered in four groups: (1) racial leaders outside the labor movement--ministers, editors, politicians, etc.; (2) Negroes with a special interest in opposing unions; (3) Negro workers outside of the unions; (4) Negro workers within the ranks of the unions.

##### 1. RACIAL LEADERS OUTSIDE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Within this group are found many sincere workers for the welfare of the race. Their attitude is determined by the apparent practicability of courses of action for Negroes in relation to the unions. These attitudes again depend upon their familiarity with the principles and purposes of unionism. They recognize that the entrance of large numbers of Negroes in industry has been recent. The belief is that the employers rather than the labor unions provided this first opportunity, and since, under most frequent circumstances, the holding of these positions has been due to the kindly attitude of employers, they felt that first loyalty was due to them.

They have also been affected by experiences with labor unions which in the past have not been disposed to accept Negroes freely into membership with them.

Although the interest of employers in securing Negroes has not always been merely the granting of an opportunity for work, where Negroes have entered as strike breakers they have usually remained. This recent entrance into industry has made them, for the first time, a considerable factor, and they feel that the unions, recognizing their importance to the accomplishment of union aims, are making appeals to them for membership, not out of a spirit of brotherhood, but merely to advance their purposes.



These considerations have largely determined the attitude of many Negro leaders, especially the ministers, some of whom have been requested by employers to recommend members of their congregations for jobs in various fields of industry. At a recent industrial convention of Negro organizations controlling the employment of thousands of Negro workers, it was decided that Negroes would not be sent as strike breakers to plants where the strikers' unions accepted Negroes, and that they would advise Negroes to join the unions wherever possible, but that where Negroes are offered positions by employers in trades where Negroes are excluded from the unions, they would not be advised to forego the opportunity.

An intelligent Negro woman, who has been active in trying to acquaint ministers with union aims and methods, commented upon the fact that until recently Negro ministers knew very little about unionism, except that employers were opposed to it. This was enough to influence many ministers to urge Negro workers to stay out of labor unions and thus demonstrate their loyalty to employers who had given them a chance in industry.

A prominent Negro leader, a member of the Illinois legislature, stated his position respecting unions, at one of the industrial conferences held by the Commission, as follows:

I want to confess that I have never felt that I could intelligently advise the colored people who ask me whether laboring people should join the unions. It has been the opinion of the leaders of our race for years that employers of labor felt more kindly toward colored labor and were less concerned about the color of the workmen--were only concerned about the character of the service. We felt as leaders of the race that the labor employer was given a square deal much more than the employee himself. . . . We had a strike here of waiters several years ago when the Kohlsaat lunchroom waiters were involved. I was the president of a men's Sunday club, and some labor agitators got the colored boys to join the white Waiters' Union, and I remember when the matter came before the club I told them, "They raised your wages to the white man's scale, and the white men are raising you out in the street," and that is what they did to . . . I have been somewhat influenced by that experience.

## 2. NEGROES WITH A SPECIAL INTEREST IN OPPOSING UNIONS

The rift between employers and labor unions has provided a field of exploitation for certain less responsible Negroes. Their operations have occasioned bitter feeling between Negroes and labor unions and have accomplished little or nothing for the Negro workers. A Negro editor of a small and irresponsible paper advises Negro workers not to join the white man's union, but instead to join a union which he has formed and of which he is president. He is looked upon with suspicion by representative Negroes of Chicago, who believe that he is willing to sacrifice the best interests of the race to serve his own purposes. A well-informed Negro outlined the method employed by the editor in question to represent himself to employers of labor, as one who controls large numbers of Negro laborers. In furtherance of this plan, which appears to have prospered, he organized a group which he called the "American Unity Labor Union." The appeal on the one hand to Negroes was that white unions would not admit them on an equal basis and that white employers preferred Negro non-unionists to white unionists and would pay them the same wages while according them better treatment. To white employers he represented the Negroes as being opposed to unions because they were white men's unions, and as such discriminated against Negroes, and that they belonged in large numbers to his organization, which was designed to improve the quality of Negro labor by increasing Negro pride in special and unmixed endeavors.

That certain employers did give money for this kind of service is apparent in several instances. A Negro ex-clergyman secured for a long period something like \$2.00 per capita for every Negro supplied by him to any one of ten iron foundries in the Calumet district.

The following are typical of advertisements which appear regularly in the paper of the Negro editor referred to above:

### WANTED

100 Building Laborers to work in the city of Chicago at Building Scale Wages. Union Job. If you are not a Union man you can get a permit to work

as a Union Man at \_\_\_\_\_ Indiana Avenue.

Do not pay \$33.50 to join a white man's union, when you can join the black man's union for \$5.00 and work on any building in Chicago.

#### WAGE EARNERS CLUB

American Unity Labor Union was organized March 10th, 1917, Chicago Illinois.

#### GET A SQUARE DEAL WITH YOUR OWN RACE

Time has come for Negroes to do now or never. Get together and stick together is the call of the Negro. Like all other races, make your own way; other races have made their unions for themselves. They are not going to give it to you just because you join his union. Make a union of your own race; union is strength. Join the American Unity Packers Union of the Stock Yards, this will give you a card to work at any trade or a common laborer, as a steam fitter, electrician, fireman, merchants, engineers, carpenters, butchers, helpers, and chauffeurs to drive trucks down town, delivering meat as white chauffeurs do for Armour's and Swift's or other Packers. A card from this Union will let you work in Kansas City, Omaha and St. Louis, or any other city where the five Packers have packing houses.

This Union does not believe in strikes. We believe all differences between laborers and capitalists can be arbitrated. Strike is our last motive if any at all.

Get in line for a good job. You are next. Office, \_\_\_\_\_ Indiana Ave.

#### THE WORKING MEN'S CLUB

Join the American Unity Steel and Metal Union, a Union of your own race with officers of your own race with a President. A card from this Union will entitle you to work any place in the United States as a steel and iron workers, craneman, engineer, molders, rail straighteners, and any job that it takes brains and skill to do and common laborer. *Join one big union and demand a square deal with your own strength.* 8 hour day's work.

Get in line for a good job. You are next. Office, \_\_\_\_\_ Indiana Ave.

All classes and kinds of work waiting for good people in our Association.

During the latter part of December, 1920, the editor in question visited the large daily newspapers in Chicago and presented an article which purported to tell of a large mass meeting of his union at which this group decided that they would work at the Stock Yards, steel mills, and all other plants in Chicago and the Calumet region and at all foundries and factories at a 15 per cent discount on wages previously paid for skilled labor, and 10 per cent on common labor wages. Although only one paper gave any attention to this statement, the opinion of some of the more responsible Negroes was expressed in a Negro newspaper in Chicago, which characterized the man as "a public nuisance" and his story as "bunk."

### 3. NEGRO WORKERS OUTSIDE OF UNIONS

Negro workers outside of the union ranks often do not see any necessity for unionism or do not understand its aims and methods; many are frankly suspicious of the good intentions of white unionists toward Negroes; others condemn unions generally because of some bitter experience with a particular union, while still others are enthusiastic believers in unionism and expect to join a union at some time. Several shades of opinion are illustrated by the following quotations taken at random from interviews with a large number of Negro workers.

H G, thirty-four years old, left a farm in Georgia to come to Chicago in October, 1919. Employed as a laborer in a paper-box manufacturing plant. He said he didn't know much about unions but couldn't see what good they were doing. They made prices go up, but wages didn't go up with prices. If unions did any good he would join, but he can't see that they do.

W W had spent nearly all of his life hauling logs to be made into

ties for railroads. When he came here from the South he worked as a trucker in the Quartermaster's Department of the army until the department closed. After loafing half a month, he got his present trucking at a box factory. Unions would be all right, in his opinion, if they let all of the men in who would do right, but when they don't, they do more harm than good. He used to belong to the Butchers' Union at the Stock Yards and "got along fine," but he quit butchering. He intends to get back in a union if possible. Strikes are too hard on the man that "ain't in the union; strike out here recently and now we can't make overtime and we hardly make enough in regular time to live on. Unions are secret--I can't remember all the bunk about them now, but you pay dues and go to meetings, something like a lodge I guess. If anything goes wrong on your job you tell it in meeting, and your branch of the union takes it up with the people. You don't have any of that worry on yourself. They are allright if you are on the inside, but mighty hard if you ain't."

J. McN., forty-two years old, had been a farmer in the South all of his life until he came to Chicago in January, 1920, and went to work in the Yards as a meat trimmer. He has been asked to join the unions but hasn't done it as yet--he isn't quite sure they mean a square deal by the colored man, although he can't see why they would ask him to join if they didn't. Don't know much about the "workings of 'em" but they pull together, sort of "lodge like." He thinks everybody who belongs is mighty "close mouthed" about what they do at the meetings. He knows that they pay dues and have assessments, that they look after sick members and have some sort of initiation.

J. L., fifty-two years old, is foreman over the truckers in a box factory. He said: "Unions ain't no good for a colored man, I've seen too much of what they don't do for him. I wouldn't join for nothing--wanted me to join one at the Yards but I wouldn't; no protection; if they had been, the colored men who belonged might have worked while the riot was going on; only thing allowed out there then was foreigners. If a thing can't help you when you need help, why have it? That's the way I feel about unions. I tell you they don't mean nothing for me."

H. S., twenty-four years old, had lived in Chicago only two months. He said: "Well I don't know, you see these other folks been here longer than me; they ain't joined, and I reckon they know more about it than me. No, they didn't have no unions where I comed from--ain't nothing there anyway but farmers. I reckon, though, if I had a chance I might join. They can't do much harm here to a fellow."

J. H., thirty-eight years old, came up from Alabama in 1917 with about thirty other men during the big rush from the South. They went to work almost immediately at the Stock Yards, where he worked as a laborer, stripping bacon. After he quit this he was out of work for nearly a month. He heard about the wool mills. They put him on the very first day and he has been there ever since.

He does not belong to a union. He "would join one if I had a chance and it meant anything to me materially." He does not understand them, "can't understand why they strike and keep men out of work."

M. L., forty-two years old, came to Chicago from Tennessee in 1894. He said: "I tried every job under the sun since I came. My first job was porter in the Palmer House; made good tips here but not very much salary. Changed to bellboy; was finally made head bellboy; stayed there four years; boss made me mad and I quit. Along about this time I met my wife. I wanted to make her think I was a regular man, so got a job as a laborer in a foundry. Since then I've gone from one foundry to the other. Work got so hard I quit one time; went on the road; stayed there for about four years, then went back to the foundry work; worked for Illinois Malleable for three years first time; had trouble with straw boss; he fired me; went to McCormick's but they didn't pay so well, so I got back on my old job. Yes, unions are the best thing in the world for a working man. If I'd been in a union my boss couldn't have fired me that time. I wish it was so you could join a union regardless of your color. We need protection on our jobs as well as the white man. I guess though that time is coming. I don't know much about the workings of a union, but I do know it's a protection to the man who belongs."

F. D., twenty-eight years old, does not belong to a union because there are no unions in the car shops where he works. He says unions are the best things in the world if the right kind of people are at the head, and if all the fellows will join, but when half of them won't join, unionism won't do

because it just means loss of your job.

R\_\_ R\_\_, thirty-four years old, has been working in Chicago three months at his regular trade as a stove joiner. He learned to join stoves at a mill in Helena. He has never had a chance to join a union, but all the white men in the mill at Helena belonged, and they fared lots better than the Negro men. He wants to join one here the very first chance he gets. He is a skilled laborer, knows he can put out as much work as any man doing his line of work, feels he should be paid as much as anyone else, and knows the only way this can happen to him is to get in a union where he has some protection and backers. There is a union where he is, but he hasn't been asked to join it yet. He says he has found out that the colored man, if he wants the same thing as a white man gets, has to get in things with them.

Mrs. N\_\_ M\_\_ found work as a maid in a Chicago hospital after she was deserted by her husband. She wants to save money enough to run her while she takes "nurse training." She did not know anything about unions until she went to the hospital. The nurses there had a union, and she saw just how much they can mean to people. "They usually make the employers do the right thing by the people; unless the nurses asked too much they got what they wanted." That was what made her decide she wanted to be a nurse; she saw how square they were with each other, and how the union made them pull together regardless of whether or not they liked each other. That is what she liked about the unions: "They make you treat the other fellow right regardless how you fell toward him."

Nellie W\_\_, age thirty, doing clerical work in a large mail-order establishment, said that "unions don't mean anything to colored people. The only reason they let them in when they do is so they can't become strike breakers." She didn't know how her husband felt about unions, as they had never talked about the matter, but she knew that she wouldn't join one.

O\_\_ L\_\_, thirty-eight years old, had migrated from Georgia in the summer of 1917. To him unions are "the best thing that ever came the colored man's way. Out here [in a box factory] it doesn't make quite so much difference whether I'm in one or not, but if I ever go back to my trade as a plasterer, that's the first thing I intend to try and do. You get protection, you get more money, and then too the white man gets a chance to see that you are not all for yourself, for when you are in a union you work for everybody's good."

H\_\_ has been a head waiter in a hotel. He believes the big reason why Negroes are not strongly enthusiastic for unions is because they feel they will not get square treatment. This he based upon continual references to the 1903 waiters' strike.

The attitude of indifference or suspicion so frequently encountered among Negro workers outside of the unions is attributed by white and Negro labor leaders and union men to the following reasons: (a) traditional treatment of Negroes by white men; (b) influence of racial leaders who oppose unionism; and (c) influence of employers' propaganda against unionism.

The traditional treatment of Negroes in the South, increasingly reflected in the North, has made the Negro suspicious of the white man's sincerity. Negroes, therefore, naturally feel that they will not get a "square deal" in white unions. In support of this attitude the waiters' strike of 1903 is still cited as an instance of "double-crossing" by white unions.

This strike was so often referred to by Negroes as a justification for their attitude toward labor-union policies that it seemed worth while to attempt to learn the facts, even though seventeen years had elapsed since the strike occurred.

Two organizers for the American Federation of Labor, a newspaper editor, an officer of the Negro local during the strike, the head waiter of one of the large hotels (all Negroes), and John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, were asked to tell the facts.

Reports are conflicting in many instances. However, the explanations of circumstances as presented to the Commission are as follows:

The union of cooks and waiters involved in the strike of 1903, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, had a membership of 20,000 of whom over 2,000 were Negroes. The Negroes had only recently been taken into the union as a separate local under their own officers. The strike first centered on Kohlsaats' chain of restaurants. This lasted seven weeks, during which time all of the union members were out. The strike terminated in circumstances on which there is general disagreement. Negroes state that the white unionists

"double-crossed" them, and when Kohlsaas refused to take back the Negro waiters who had walked out with the whites the latter went back to work and left the Negroes without jobs. It is known that during the general excitement the charter of the Negro local was revoked, although no one appears to know how or by whom this was done. The white union leaders have frequently attempted to absolve the union of responsibility for this situation and place the blame on the Kohlsaas restaurants and the *Chicago Herald*, controlled by Kohlsaas. John Fitzpatrick, before the Commission, referred to the incident thus:

*Commissioner:* Concerning the waiters' strike several years ago, the Kohlsaas strike, were they unionized under your direction in order to raise the scale of dinner men [they were known as dinner men] to the union scale? What was the success of it as far as the colored waiters were concerned?

*Mr. Fitzpatrick:* They weren't organized for financial purposes. They were organized as workers. We felt they ought to have our co-operation, so we went out to organize them. The Kohlsaas newspaper was one of the instruments by which they perpetrated the conspiracy, and some other papers went into a scheme and tried to bring about an atmosphere of fear and suspicion between the colored and white workers.

It was Sunday, and the charter of the colored workers was in my possession. That night they met, and I was installing officers at Twenty-third Street and Washington Avenue. That morning the *Herald* ran a front-page story, first column, teeming with a set-up against organized labor and warning the colored workers to beware.

When I got up on the platform I read the story to them and said. "That sets up one side of the story, and there is a conspiracy to destroy your rights. What do you want to do about it?"

They said, "We will go ahead. We know what the employers want and you go ahead and install us." They went ahead and got into that strike. The employers said: "We are going to supplant colored men with white union girls." We told them we wouldn't permit union girls to go on the job. The Kohlsaas begged of us to give them white union women, and we refused to do so.

Now then, while this was going on, the newspapers had different reports out, and they went out and had the charter of this local revoked. How they did it, I don't know. But I have my own notions how a newspaper operates. I think that a newspaper has influence and money and other things, and that is the only way I can account for that thing happening. They went to the international organization to revoke the charter of this organization.

This whole situation was obscured by a mass of charges and countercharges, but the fact that the strike failed was evidence enough. Whatever the facts actually were, there is a widespread belief among Negro workers that the colored waiters were "double-crossed" by white unions in this strike. Since it is men's belief about facts which determines behavior, it is not surprising to find that Negro strike breakers could be found in large numbers to take the place of waiters who went on strike in May, 1920.

The influence of some employers is also a factor in the attitude of Negroes toward labor unions. In many open shops the employers and unions are engaged in a continuous struggle. In such cases, if persuasion and argument fail, there is an effective instrument in strike breakers. For this purpose Negroes have frequently been used. Instances in Chicago are found in the strikes in the steel industry, the Stock Yards, and the culinary industry. Many labor leaders and union members believe that welfare clubs, company Y.M.C.A.'s glee clubs, and athletic clubs are encouraged and supported by employers as a substitute for a form of organization which they cannot control. The subsidizing of social movements and churches is regarded as one of the means employed by large employers to insure this reserve of strike breakers. The union organizer in the steel strike, W. Z. Foster, stated at one of the conferences at a church in Pittsburgh, the Negro preacher had said to him: "It nearly broke up the congregation, but we decided you were going to speak here in this church." The organizer continued:

Then I got the underneath of all this thing and found that this church had lost a donation of \$2,500.00 from the Steel Corporation for allowing me to speak. They had tried to block my speech to these colored workers in Pittsburgh. Whenever it's a question of a donation to a poor, struggling church like that, we know what usually happens.

The statement made by George W. Perkins, president of the Cigarmakers'

International Union, was typical of the view of labor leaders:

If you go to the root, you will find that economic reason; the employers, not all of them but many of them, in our industry as well as others, will divide the workers if they can. That is the history all along. They will divide them, not because they are black and white, but to keep them divided so they won't unite in the organization.

Another labor leader, acting as an organizer in large industries in various cities, stated at another conference:

I want to tell you that a strike breaker is a very precious animal for the employer, and if he thinks he has a great body of colored workers in this country who are apt to learn trades with very little practice, as an inexhaustible well of strike breakers, he is not going to stop at a little thing like propaganda. He will find plenty of excuses to keep men out of the union. In the Stock Yards, in the steel industry, he will find arguments and he will carry on propaganda.

The difficulties inherent in the whole question of organizing Negroes were probably best brought out before the Commission by W. Z. Foster, who took a leading part in organizing Negroes in the Stock Yards, the most important industry in Chicago so far as Negroes are concerned:

We found in the steel industry that the colored worker was very unresponsive to organization. The same was true in the packing industry. Let me give you first what steps we took in the packing industry in Chicago in 1917, the big campaign which resulted in the organization of men. The first meeting we had we sat around a table and talked it over, and we realized that there were two big problems, the organization of the foreign worker and the organization of the colored worker. We shortly dismissed the problem of organizing the foreign worker, but we realized that to accomplish the organization of the colored worker was the real problem. When we went into the packing-house situation we were determined to organize the colored worker if it was humanly possible to do so, and I think I can safely say that the men who carried on that campaign realized fully the necessity for the organization of the colored worker, not wholly, or at least not only, from the white man's point of view, but from his own point of view to a certain extent. In other words, we were not altogether materialistic. We like to think that we were a little bit altruistic in the situation. There was a total employment of twelve or fourteen thousand. We found that we had tremendous opposition to encounter.

First of all it took this attitude, that the colored man would not be allowed to join the unions at all. We met that broadcast with such circulars as those already shown. I wrote some of them up myself as secretary of the council, inviting these men in such a way that these colored men could not help but realize that there was nothing to this argument that they would not be allowed to join the union. . . . The next argument that developed was, "Sure, the white man will take you into his union because you are in the minority." But we fought all of these arguments, and we organized a local union on State Street.

Then the argument was raised that it was a "Jim Crow" proposition. It was quite general along State Street that it was a "Jim Crow" proposition. It seemed to make no difference what move we made, there was always an argument against it, so we overcame the "Jim Crow" argument by combining the white locals and the black. We said to the boys: "This is not a colored local. This is a neighborhood local of miscellaneous locals. Any colored man can belong to this local." We told the white men: "You are free to come in here and join this union."

Well, we punctured that argument that there was discrimination in the Stock Yards, and I would challenge anyone to show where the unions in the Stock Yards campaign have discriminated against the colored man. There may have been isolated cases of an individual here and there, but I will say this, and I was on the organizing committee and probably in closer touch with the situation than anyone else here in the city with those four or five thousand colored workers that we organized, I dare say that 40 per cent of the total amount of grievances that were presented by all the workers in the Stock Yards came from these colored workers, and the standing instructions were to look after them very carefully . . . .

But the more we tried to help the colored worker the more intense the opposition was, because there was a force working against us, and we could not help but feel it. We got it from the colored people themselves, and it

is a fact that some of the organizers were actually afraid to go around to some of these saloons and poolrooms where they congregated because of the agents of the packers, or whoever was responsible for that propaganda, and they felt that their lives were in danger. . . . Out in the Stock Yards we could not win their support. It could not be done. They were constitutionally opposed to unions, and all our forces could not break down that opposition. . . . We tried to make our appeal quite general in scope. We got the best organizers. A good colored organizer is very rare--a man who is thoroughly qualified to represent the trade-union point of view. We tried to find one and picked out a colored member of the Engineers' Union, a man highly honored in all the trade unions of Chicago. . . . The reason the colored man gave for not joining you will find in the circular "Beware of the White Man's Union," and that the only way that they can ever make any headway in the industry is to stick in with the boss and then when there is a strike to step in and take the jobs that are left there. . . .

Race prejudice has everything to do with it. It lies at the bottom. The colored man as a blood race has been oppressed for hundreds of years. The white man has enslaved him, and they don't feel confidence in the trade unions. But there is more real fraternal feeling among the black and white workers than in any other grade of society. . . . As soon as the colored man becomes a factor in industry, he is going to be organized, providing he does not become a victim to the line of tactics that are laid out by the employer. In the steel strike he lined up with the bosses.

#### 4. NEGRO WORKERS WITHIN THE UNIONS

Negro workers inside the ranks of such unions as the Stock Yards', Janitors', and Hodcarriers', types of the unions which accept Negroes with complete equality, feel, with very few exceptions, that they are being given a "square deal" by the unions. By coming into the unions they say they have been able to secure better working conditions and higher wages. They express satisfaction with the treatment accorded them by white unionists on the job and at meetings, where the grievances of Negro members are given the same attention as the complaints of white members. The situation in the unions mentioned has been so fully described already in this report that there is no need for further details on the friendly relationship which exists between white and colored members of these unions. Many Negro unionists look to labor organization as one of the most promising solutions of race problems.

#### VI. THE NEGRO AND STRIKES

The attitude of Negro workers during strikes is closely connected with the attitude of Negroes toward union organization. As stated before, there are many cross-currents at work, some tending to keep Negroes out of unions and others impelling them toward the unions. All the forces at work to prejudice the Negro against union organization are factors which help to explain his willingness to take the place of striking white workers. The loyalty of the Negro during strikes by white employees was referred to by a number of the representatives of large employers attending the industrial conferences held by the Commission.

Some of the most conspicuous cases coming to the attention of the Commission in which Negroes have taken the place of white strikers or have remained at work during strikes are the following:

The Stock Yards strike of 1904 lasted from July 4 to the middle of September. The general superintendent of one of the plants in the Yards, appearing before the Commission, said: "The strike was called at 12:00 o'clock. Every employee practically that we had went out. Within two or three days we had any number of colored employees return to work. . . . I'd say Negroes helped us to break the strike by coming to work. A number of Negroes that we understand belonged to the union did not remain out more than two or three days. Practically all the Negroes came back before the strike was called off."

The strike in the Corn Products Refining Company plant at Argo, where, in the summer of 1919, before the strike, 300 Negroes were employed, during the strike 900, and when it was over about 500.

The steel strike of 1919. Representatives of several of the iron and

steel plants stated that Negroes had helped to break this strike. The *Inter-church World Movement Report on the Steel Strike of 1919* (p. 177) lists the "successful use of strike breakers, principally Negroes, by the steel companies" as the second cause of the failure of the steel strike. "Niggers did it, was a not uncommon remark among company officials."

The waiters' strike of 1920.

Less important cases were the following:

A clothing shop where Negro women broke a strike in 1916 and continued in the employ thereafter. A wool warehouse and storage company which used Negroes at slightly higher wages to replace striking Polish laborers in 1916, and have since continued to employ Negroes.

The strike of Pullman-car cleaners about 1916. Negroes were used as strike breakers and have since been employed in large numbers, men cleaning the windows and outside of cars and Negro women doing most of the inside cleaning.

Many other instances where Negroes have been used as strike breakers could be cited.

During a strike, feeling runs high and the word "strike breaker" or "scab" carries with it a decided stigma among the strikers. White workers ordinarily do not try to understand why the Negro acts as he does. They do not reason that the Negro is often loyal to the employer because he feels that the employer, sometimes at considerable risk, has opened to him industrial opportunities which, translated into wages, mean better living conditions for himself and his family. If the white worker took into account the struggle of the Negro to gain entrance into the fields outside of personal service, the latter's eagerness to take advantage of any opening, however created, might be better understood and regarded with more tolerant spirit.

What bearing this use of Negro labor has on the attitude of white workers toward Negroes depends upon whether the subject is approached from the point of view of the employer or of the trade unionist. Representatives of the packing companies emphasized the employers' appreciation of the Negro's loyalty and discounted the antagonism caused by Negroes serving as strike breakers, while trade-union leaders and others having the workers' point of view emphasized the seeds of dissension that were sown by such action and contended that the good will of the employer gained at such a cost was in reality a handicap to the Negro. White workers feel that Negroes who serve as strike breakers are helping to earn for their race the stigma of being a "scab" race. This is especially serious in the case of Negroes, because color identification makes it easy to focus hatred for the "scab."

Union leaders and social workers who participated in the conferences held by the Commission condemned the practice of some private employment agencies in sending Negroes to plants as strike breakers without informing them that a strike was in progress. Investigations in several states have disclosed such practices of some private employment agencies, "misrepresentation of terms and conditions of employment" being the most frequent abuse, according to the report of the Federal Commission on Industrial Relations: "Men are not informed about strikes that may be on at places to which they are sent, nor about other important facts which they ought to know."

Private employment agencies following such practices try to do so against colored as well as white workers, although with probably less success because of the ability of the Negro to speak English. However, the part played by private employment agencies in supplying Negro strike breakers in Chicago appears to be of relatively little importance. Ordinarily agents of employers find Negro strike breakers directly by going into the Negro residence section with autos or trucks and recruiting the number of men desired. The industrial secretary of the Urban League made the following statement regarding Negro strike breakers:

According to all information available to the Chicago Urban League, it does not appear that any of the private employment agencies except the one conducted by R. G. Parker, editor of the *Chicago Advocate*, who advertised for cooks and waiters to break the strike of the Cooks and Waiters' Alliance during the National Republican Convention in June, 1920, have been instrumental in strike breaking.

The method used in the organization of strike breakers among colored people is not well defined. Generally labor scouts work directly for companies



affected by strikes. These scouts have frequently applied to our office for workers, but we have refused assistance. The men are usually gathered from the streets, poolrooms, or wherever they can be found. It is the policy of the Chicago Urban League not to interfere in strikes unless the striking unions have refused to admit colored workers to their membership. The League is not opposed to unionism, but is interested primarily in the welfare of colored workers.

## VII. ATTITUDE AND OPINIONS OF LABOR LEADERS

From the eleven representative labor leaders attending the trade-union conferences held by the Commission, from the various interviews by the investigators with these and other union officials and members, and from letters received from labor officials from various parts of the United States, it was apparent that there were certain definite views held by most of these leaders as to the relationship of organized labor to the Negro. These views are summarized and set forth in the following pages:

### 1. GENERAL PUBLIC HAS RACE PREJUDICE

Race prejudice exists generally in all groups of the white race and only changes slowly. The worker is just as much subject to it in the beginning as are the members of all other groups.

### 2. UNIONS FAIRER TO NEGRO THAN ARE OTHER GROUPS

The unions have given the Negro a fairer deal than other social institutions or groups, such as department stores, clubs, churches, theaters, fraternal organizations, hotels, and railways.

### 3. UNIONS BLAMED FOR CONDITIONS THEY CANNOT CONTROL

Unions are many times blamed for situations in which Negroes are not admitted to an occupation or industry over which the unions have no control, the exclusion existing because the attitude of either the public or the employer prevents the entrance of Negroes into the industry. For example, Negroes are not employed in Chicago as motormen or conductors on surface or elevated transportation lines, as telephone operators by the telephone company, as sales clerks in department stores, as chauffeurs by taxicab companies, nor as upholsterers and drapers by firms sending such employees to work in private homes.

The position taken by the unions is that they cannot organize a miscellaneous public, but that they can only organize those that have the jobs, that as long as street and elevated lines do not employ Negroes as motormen and conductors the unions cannot take them in. True, there might be objection on the part of the members in these unions, but the question has never come up. Also the traction companies are not in business to reform public opinion and so, because the public might object, do not engage Negroes in these jobs. In this their position is similar to that of the large taxicab companies, which, however, employ non-union workers. They have Negroes in the garages but not as chauffeurs, probably because they believe that the general public would object if Negroes were employed as chauffeurs. In such cases the unions feel that they are not responsible, any more than they are accountable for the policy of the telephone company which engages no Negro operators. Among other large businesses must be listed the department stores, which have no Negroes as sales clerks.

Exclusion of Negroes from a trade or industry results in inability to join the unions in such trades. This fact is well illustrated by the Upholsterers' Union, which has three branches--furniture upholsterers, drapers, and mattress makers. Upholsterers and drapers are frequently sent out by the large stores to residences of customers, and the stores will not risk offending customers by sending a Negro into their homes. Consequently there are no Negroes in these branches of the Union. The mattress makers' local, on the other hand, has more Negro than white members, and the secretary of the union is a Negro. This situation would not be possible if Negroes were excluded from employment in mattress factories. In view of the fact that the

Upholsterers' Union freely admits Negroes into the mattress makers' local, Negroes would also, no doubt, be admitted into the locals of the upholsterers and the drapers if employers hired Negroes for such work.

#### 4. EXCLUSION POLICY CONDEMNED

The policy, wherever it exists, of excluding Negroes from unions, whether by direct or indirect means, is considered wrong and shortsighted by the great majority of labor leaders. They believe that the small group of "aristocratic and conservative" unions cannot long withstand the American Federation of Labor policy of organizing Negroes in local and federal unions, nor the policy of the more progressive national and international unions. As the number of Negroes increases in the unions now admitting them, as the number of Negro delegates to city centrals, like the Chicago Federation of Labor, increases, and as the number of delegates to conventions of the State Federation of Labor and to the American Federation of Labor increases each year, more and more pressure is being brought to bear on these unions from without and also by the progressive leaders from within, so that gradually all barriers will be swept aside. That a gradual change is taking place in the policy of many unions is evidenced by the following instances:

*International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers.*--"In 1902 a local union of Negro stationary firemen in Chicago could not be chartered because the white local union would not give its consent." In 1920 the president of Local 7, Chicago, reported as follows:

The symbol of our organization is, "We shall not discriminate against creed, color or nationality." The membership of our organization is open to the Negro as much as to any other man who earns his living by the sweat of his brow. I should say, offhand, that we have approximately about 100 Negroes who are members of our Chicago local and who take an active part in all of our deliberations. So far as has come under my observation the feeling towards these men has always been of the most cordial nature.

I am, however, free to say that we have found that a great many of the employers, who do not desire to play fair, use the Negro to offset any high standard of wages which the organization may deem proper and just, and I have found, in my experience, an endeavor on the part of some of the employers to only use the Negro when he would want to maintain a lower standard of wages, but when compelled by force of circumstances to pay a living rate of wages, immediately a request would be made on the organization that the Negro be removed and a white man furnished. This we emphatically refuse to do. If the Negro was efficient and competent to perform his duties prior to the establishment of a living wage he certainly should be competent enough to perform the same duties afterwards.

*Metal Polishers' International Union.*--The general secretary informed the Commission:

At the last international convention held, the question of Negroes entering our trade was taken up, and the delegates anticipated that, at some future time, Negroes would be employed, and we felt that, if the manufacturerers were left under the impression that we would refuse to accept them into the organization, it would be an incentive to the Manufacturers' Association to import Negroes or hire them, so a resolution was passed that any skilled polisher, buffer, or plater, even though a Negro, should be admitted to our organization.

*International Association of Machinists.*--Although at its convention at Rochester, New York, in 1920, this union again voted down the proposition to strike out the word "white" from its ritual, there was significance in the fact that seven resolutions were introduced at the convention to remove the excluding provision. These resolutions came from unions in the following cities: two from different locals in Chicago; one from Columbia, South Carolina; one from Akron, Ohio; one from New Haven, Connecticut; one from Tucson, Arizona. Resolutions opposing came from Bakersfield, California; Pine Bluff, Arkansas; Whistler, Alabama; and Savannah, Georgia. As an instance of enthusiastic appreciation of the mutual advantage to whites and Negroes of joint effort in union organization with no discrimination the following comment from an office of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' National Alliance was received by the Commission:

We have one local union composed of white and colored workers--that union

is located in the city of Boston, Massachusetts; roughly speaking, there are approximately 400 in a total membership of about 2,000; at our convention held at Providence, Rhode Island, last August, one of the delegates from that union was a colored man. Six years ago Boston colored waiters woke up, and so did the whites, to the fact that for decades they had been used one against the other by their employers; they got together, and they affirm with considerable emphasis that amalgamation has proved beneficial.

#### 5. UNIONS INSTRUMENTAL IN REMOVING RACE PREJUDICE

Labor leaders emphasize the influence of contact in union meetings in promoting a friendly understanding between white and colored members. They point out the fact that the Negro ceases to be a stranger or an object of prejudice when once he has identified himself with the union. A common interest in common problems binds the members together, and a spirit of loyalty to the union develops in the effort to realize the aims of the group. White members come to have a more kindly feeling for a Negro within the Union group than they have toward a white man who remains outside the union ranks. Said one union leader:

Some day the white worker is going to coax the black man to line up with him; all that he needs is a crusader's heart and a genuine desire to make the black man and himself free, and when he succeeds there won't be, in the economic field at least, the differences which now exist, due to this pitting of one race against the other and both being walloped by the action.

The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1922), pp. 403-35.

#### 34. THE NEGRO IN INDUSTRY

Herbert J. Seligmann

The world war helped to dispel the myth that the American Negro was at best an agricultural laborer only and that complicated industrial processes overtaxed his abilities. That myth was dispelled in the factories where colored workmen did white men's work and did as well, and often better, than immigrants from Europe. In the course of the practical demonstration of their capacity as machinists and factory operatives, colored men not only established themselves in the North; their prosperity exerted a pull on their friends in the South, so that the immigration, even after the signing of the armistice, alarmed Southern communities whose labor supply was being depleted.

The immigration intensified many of the maladjustments of industrial society. Congestion and overcrowding occurred in the cities to which the colored workers came. Bitter antagonisms were brought about between white labor unions and unorganized colored workers. Many white people who had known color prejudice only in the off-hand way of contempt found their emotions feverishly active when their men and colored men competed for jobs or when, during a strike, places were filled with Negroes imported by hundreds from Alabama, Mississippi, or Georgia.

The increased tension between the races to which the northward movement contributed had two main determinants: First, recognition by northern industrialists that they must find some source of cheap labor to compensate the stoppage of immigration during the war and that Southern Negroes were available for their purposes. Second, a realization by white labor unionists that their unions were endangered by an influx of aliens, unorganized, distrustful of labor unions and therefore difficult and in many cases impossible, for the time, to unionize. What has been called "group protection" became a strong motive among white unionists. Independent as it was of racial antipathy--for hostility would have been directed against any laborers who threatened union standards--it speedily fastened on the color line. Thus from the industrial movements and readjustments incident to the war grew a new race conflict.

For the Negro wartime opportunity was especially significant in that it enabled him as never before to play with capital and with labor. In a short space of time Negroes found themselves preferred in many plants from which they had previously been excluded or where they had been employed in small numbers only. Their leaders urged them not to serve as strike breakers; just as the more intelligent of the white union leaders had warned against dividing labor by the color line. In practice, white unionists had discriminated against the Negro, had given him no jobs when the allotments were made or had given the most arduous and disagreeable work; had either discouraged his joining their unions or had made it virtually impossible for him to do so. In practice, the Negro, indoctrinated with the brotherhood of man and the common interests of all labor, irrespective of color, took advantage of the situation which presented itself. Colored workers in many instances saw no reason why, having always been made victims of white discrimination, they should fight the white unionists' battles.

#### *Trade Unions and the Negro*

The Negro's distrust of unionism, justified as it has been discrimination in the North, is based on the treatment of colored labor in the South. It has been the rule to exclude Negroes from white unions. In June of 1919, it was reported that two thousand white unionists of Richmond, Virginia, had withdrawn from the Virginia Federation of Labor because W. C. Page, a Negro of Newport News, had been seated as a delegate. Under the circumstances, the American Federation of Labor, at its spring meeting of 1919, indulged in a more or less empty gesture in voting with but one dissenting voice to admit Negroes to full membership. As is well known, the Federation exercises no power over its constituent international unions. At the same convention at which the vote was taken, a representative of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks justified the exclusion of Negroes from his union and announced that the color line would be drawn in the future as it had in the past. One of the colored delegates to the convention reported that in Virginia, from March to April, 1919, 43,000 Negro workmen had been obliged to join an independent labor union because they could not be received into those affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

The influence of Southern delegates to the Federation had always prevented effective measures to organize Negroes. Even where the constitution of the union contained no express prohibition, it was not uncommon for white membership to double while no Negroes were added, in an industry giving employment to both white and colored men. It is recounted in Epstein's *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh* that one labor leader reported a growth in membership of one hundred per cent in six months, in the Pittsburgh district. He said that there were no colored men in the union, although numbers had applied for membership and complaints had been made of discrimination.<sup>116</sup>

"His statement concerning efforts to organize Negro laborers," the investigator comments, "would seem to have little meaning in view of his assertion that the growth of white membership during the past year was one hundred per cent, while that of Negro membership was zero." This man's attitude is found typical of the "complacent trade unionist."

At the very time when it was claimed that the union was endeavoring to organize Negro workers, a white man who joined was reported to have been pledged as follows by the president of the union: "I pledge that I will not introduce for membership into this union anyone but a sober, industrious white person." Among labor leaders, too, are men born in the South, convinced that the Negro is inferior and strongly adherent to the advantages of segregation and "Jim-crowding." Through the influence of individual labor leaders and of delegates to the Federation, the Southern practice was made fairly general in the North, while Negroes were not in a position to constitute a menace to unionism.

With the demand for Negro labor to supply war-time and after-war needs, the scene changed. The Federation made its gesture of generosity. Unions whose strikers were being replaced suddenly discovered the brotherhood of man. The Negro found himself in a position of strategic importance.

#### *Obstacles to Progress*

Every sort of opposition was offered the Negro during his progress to

industrial bargaining power. Mr. Roger Baldwin, who worked as a manual laborer in the Middle West during October and November of 1919, writes:

"Everywhere, of course, the Negroes had the hardest and most disagreeable jobs. Only the exceptional Negro had risen above the lowest paid day laborer rate. That's the rate I was getting too! And it was these men I found really thinking, keenly conscious of the relation of their own problem to the race and to labor. Every one of the men was in favor of the unions, but every one of them complained of union discrimination against the Negro. They are ready for organization which they felt would be fair to them.

"On the other hand, there was a feeling of desperation because of the almost universal ignoring or contempt of the Negro. Every man I spoke to talked of warfare between the races. All of them were preparing to resist further invasion of what they regarded as their rights. They didn't seem to have faith that white men, even in the unions, were going to make common cause with them. Even the scabs in the steel mill at Homestead, Pennsylvania, where Negroes have been imported by the thousand, were all for the union and all for a strike at the right time, but they felt that they owed nothing to white men who had so long ignored and oppressed them. Not a single organizer had been sent into the Pittsburgh steel district. . . . I couldn't help but feel as I looked around at the forces lined up about me that the immediate future of American labor depends on what the unions will do with the Negro. It is the white man's job if he is to make the solidarity of labor a living fact."

Mr. Baldwin found no "theoretical radicalism" among the Negroes. "I found," he says, "no trace of 'red' propaganda, but I found observations and conclusions expressed in as 'red' terms as I have ever heard them from a soap-box agitator. It is obvious that the conditions themselves produce radical thinking."

#### *The Negro and the Steel Strike*

Discrimination against Negro labor bore fruit in the steel strike of 1919. The conditions which materially helped to produce the East St. Louis riots and the Chicago disorders were reproduced. Despite opposition in the South, where labor recruiters and agents risked death at the hands of a mob if their errand were made known, Negroes were brought North. Negro welfare workers were employed at the Homestead and Duquesne plants of the Carnegie Steel Company, at the Monessen plant of the Pittsburgh Steel Company; and by the Lockhart Iron and Steel Company. Three of the four basic mills of the United States Steel Corporation and the largest of the independent mills pursued the policy of encouraging employment of Negroes. During the first six weeks of the steel strike 6,000 Negroes, it was estimated, were brought to Allegheny County.

At Lackawanna, before the strike there were said to be 7,000 employees of whom 72 were Negroes. During the strike the mill was operated chiefly with Negro labor. Some of the steel mills employed Negro preachers. Early in November a representative of the Urban League said that Negroes in the steel works had remained at work during the strike almost to a man. There were, of course, exceptions, but in general, however favorably they were disposed to white labor unions, Negroes became effective instruments to be used against white unions.

#### *A New Southern Alignment*

If the vote of the American Federation of Labor to unionize Negroes was an anticipation and a recognition of the menace of division of labor along color lines, that state of mind found recognition in the South. For the first time to any marked extent white labor realized the necessity of making allies of colored workers. Any such general change of front by white workmen would menace the very foundations of the color line as it is drawn in the South. It is, therefore, significant to note what extraordinary measures were adopted to prevent a coalition of white and colored labor. As always, the advocates of the color line brought about violence to sustain the division. It is, therefore, a melodramatic episode which reveals the forces which were at work in the South.

In Bogalusa, Louisiana, on November 22, 1919, three white men were shot dead, and a number severely wounded. One of the men killed was district

president of the American Federation of Labor; another was a union carpenter. The white men were killed because they had walked armed down the main street of Bogalusa protecting with their lives and guns the life of a colored labor organizer.<sup>117</sup>

"The black man," says Miss Mary White Ovington, "had dared to organize in a district where organization meant at the least exile, at the most death by lurching." In the town where his white protectors were shot dead for refusing to give him up, the controlling lumber company had in the fall of 1919 ordered 2,500 union men to destroy their union cards. "The company," said Miss Ovington, "has at its command the Loyalty League, a state organization formed during the war, not of soldiers, but of men at home, part of whose business it was to see that every able-bodied man (Negro understood) should work at any task, at any wage, and for any hours that the employer might desire. They had back of them the state 'work or fight' law and might put to work men temporarily unemployed, save that the provision of the Act did not apply to 'persons temporarily unemployed by reason of differences with their employers such as strikes or lockouts.' Under this legislation it was small wonder that unionism was forbidden by the Lumber Company; or that, unionism continuing, despite the master's mandate, the Loyalty League, though the war was ended, continued its work." It was in the continuance of this "work" that the Negro organizer was hunted and the three white union men who protected him were shot down.

As early as June, 1919, the president of the New Orleans branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had reported the expulsion from Bogalusa of respectable colored men "among them a doctor owning about \$50,000 worth of property," because they had refused to advise colored people against joining the unions. The Committee which visited the colored citizens gave them twenty minutes, or an hour, or six hours to leave town, according to their circumstances.

Whatever the outcome of the investigation or neglect of this situation, one fact of major significance for race relations was uncovered there. As Miss Ovington said in comment:

"Not since the days of Populism has the South seen so dramatic an espousal by the white man of the black man's cause."

It indicated the beginning of the end of the exploitation of both white and colored workers by pitting their groups against one another and by fanning the animosities that left them hostile. White men, too poor to pay a poll tax, ignorant and disfranchised, have found a key to such industrial conditions as those in Bogalusa. When they join forces with colored labor, a political as well as an industrial system that is founded in misinformation, oppression, artificially-fostered hatreds and brutalities begins to totter.

As the color line is stretched and becomes a matter of national concern, it becomes more and more evident that colored labor cannot be treated as though it were a monstrosity or a rare specimen. Too much evidence is at hand which demonstrates that not only have colored men done their work as well as white, often increasing output in factories manned previously by white men; but also have worked in amity, without friction, among white workers. The elaborate plans made by the steel companies to obtain and to keep Negro labor tell their own story. The urban League of Pittsburgh found that the Negro laborer "can do anything the white worker can do." If some Negroes are unsteady, on the other hand, there are "hundreds and hundreds and even thousands of Negroes who have not lost a single day and are counted upon by concerns as their most dependable men."

#### *Conclusions*

It is not necessary to draw from the evidence presented any conclusions other than those written upon the fact of the facts; namely, that the Negro has enormously enlarged his sphere of opportunity in industry by doing satisfactorily the work allotted to him; that he has worked with white men amicably; and that the future of the American labor movement will be involved to some extent in the position which the Negro workman is given or takes. In the existing state of industrial organization, the Negro's capabilities as they may be limited or determined by racial inheritance, play a small part. With few exceptions industries are not so thoroughly organized that slight individual and psychological differences make themselves felt in large-scale production. Meanwhile the test of practice has been applied. The results have shown

industrial corporations eager to employ and to retain Negro labor. That is a fact which, regardless of racial prejudice, actual or alleged racial "inferiority," it is necessary for any student of labor currents to take into account.

Not only the Negro's position in industry but the orderliness with which new forms of society are devised, depends upon the Negro's sense of his real share in the building of American civilization. He may be made a valuable source of power and inventiveness, or he may be driven to the self-defense which means destruction of the society which provokes it.

*The Socialist Review*, 8 (February, 1920): 169-72.

## BLACK AND WHITE UNITE IN BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA

### 35. LOYALTY LEAGUES KILL 3 UNION MEN

Bogalusa, La., Is Scene of a Pitched Battle Over A Negro Agitator

#### UNIONISTS SHIELDED NEGRO

Are Besieged and Shot Down by a Crowd Representing  
Local Business Interests

BOGALUSA, La., Nov. 22.--Three persons were killed and several wounded, one fatally, in a pitched battle here today between members of the local Loyalty League, and men said to be union labor agitators.

The dead are:

L. E. Williams, District President of the American Federation of Labor and editor of *The Press*, a union labor newspaper.

A. Bouchillon

Thomas Gaines

All three are union carpenters.

The wounded include J. O'Rourke, a leader in union labor circles, who is fatally hurt, and Jules Le Blanc, former army Captain and member of the Loyalty League.

Trouble between the Loyalty League, which includes ex-service men and representatives of the Great Southern Lumber Company, and other business interests on the one hand, and union labor, whose members assert that the Great Southern locked out about 2,500 employees because they would not "tear up their union cards," on the other, began last night after about 500 armed members of the league held up a train half a mile from the railroad station and searched it for undesirables. After the search had failed to reveal anyone whose presence was unwelcome, the crowd started to find a negro who was said to have been active recently in trying to stir up bad feelings among his race against the whites. The search, continued until a late hour, was unsuccessful.

This morning, to the surprise of the Loyalty League men, the negro they sought emerged from his hiding place and walked boldly down the principal street of the town. On either side of him was an armed white man, one was O'Rourke, a leader in labor union circles, and the other a union sympathizer, whose identity has not been ascertained. The sight of the negro, protected by the white men, incensed the Loyalty Leaguers. They said the black man had been trying to cause race rioting and that they did not intend to permit him to stay here.

Rallying their forces quickly, the Loyalty Leaguers forced the three to retreat to an automobile garage. When called upon to surrender the negro the men in the garage refused, and firing began. The besieged drew first blood. Le Blanc was shot through the arm. That only increased the zeal of the besiegers, whose numbers constantly increased.

When the attackers finally silenced the fire, from the garage three dead men and one fatally injured were found within. The negro had escaped.

Williams, Bouchillon, and Gaines sacrificed their lives in protecting the negro, whose name was not learned, and O'Rourke received fatal wounds.

Edward O'Brien, a former head lawyer of the Great Southern Lumber Company, was forced a few days ago to leave Bogalusa by a Vigilance Committee, of which Le Blanc was a member. He was accused of sympathy with the I.W.W., who killed ex-soldiers in Washington. In New Orleans on Friday O'Brien and another union labor man filed charges before the United States Commissioner against members of the committee, accusing them of wearing the uniform of the army contrary to the law.

*New York Times, November 23, 1919.*

### 36. UNION PROTESTS TO PALMER

NEW ORLEANS, Nov. 22.--William L. Donnels, General Organizer of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, telegraphed Attorney General Palmer tonight asking for an investigation into the killing of three union men in Bogalusa today in a battle with special policemen. Copies were sent to Samuel Compers, President of the American Federation of Labor, and Secretary Wilson.<sup>118</sup>

The telegram follows:

"President of Central Trades Council of Bogalusa, La., and two other men murdered by thugs in employ of Great Southern Lumber Company. We have asked repeatedly that an investigation be made of conditions in Bogalusa without avail. If something is not done at once, we are going to take the law into our own hands."

A late dispatch from Bogalusa says that the Chief of Police had sworn in forty-five special officers, who attempted to make the arrest of Saul Dechus, President of a negro union. W. C. Magee and Jules Le Blanc, with warrants for J. O'Rourke and A. Bouchillon, white labor union leaders and Dechus, started toward the garage, where they had taken refuge. As they entered a gate leading to the building the firing began, and Le Blanc was hit in the arm.

L. E. Williams, the President of the Trades Council, stepped into the doorway. The officers said he refused to give up the men and made an attempt to carry his shotgun to his shoulder. He was shot dead. The garage was rushed by the officers, and only the bodies of Bouchillon and Williams were found.

*New York Times, November 23, 1919.*

### 37. VIEWS AND REVIEWS

By James Weldon Johnson, Contributing Editor

#### THE OBVIOUS THING TO DO

The press a day or two ago carried a story which came up out of Louisiana. A story which sounded passing strange, but which was based on such obviously common sense action that the real strangeness comes in thinking of it as strange at all.

In Bogalusa, a town in Louisiana, they had trouble, serious trouble. As a result of this trouble, four men were killed and several others are wounded. The dead men are L. E. Williams, president of the local branch of the American Federation of Labor and editor of "The Press," a union labor newspaper; A. Bouchillon and Thomas Gaines, union carpenter; and A. J. O'Rourke, a leader in union labor circles. Among the wounded are Jules Le Blanc, former army



captain and member of the Loyalty League.

The trouble came about through a clash between the Loyalty League comprising representatives of the Great Southern Lumber Company and other important business interests of Bogalusa on the one hand and members of the labor unions on the other. The Great Southern Lumber Company, so the labor men assert, had locked out about 2,500 employees because they would not tear up their union cards.

The protests from the union labor men caused the Loyal Legion to get together some 500 armed members, who held up a train a half mile from the railroad station and searched it for "undesirables." After the search of the train failed to reveal anyone they could "run out" of town, the crowd started out to find Saul Dechus, a Negro, alleged to have been active in "disturbing the relations" between the races. They did not find him, that night, but were dumbfounded the next day to see Dechus walking down the main street of the town, on either side of him an armed white man, one of them O'Rourke and the other a strong labor union man.

The Loyalty Leaguers made an attempt to take Dechus, charging that he had been trying to start race rioting. The white labor men stood by him. When the Leaguers were reinforced, the labor men retreated into a garage. The Leaguers stormed the garage in increasing strength with the result as stated above.

Here was an instance of white working men and black working men standing together. It gives promise that the day will come when the white working men of the South will see and understand that their interests and the interests of the black working men of the South are identical.

The white working man of the South ought to be able to see that it is impossible for him to get what he is fighting for unless he joins hands with the colored man. And he ought to be able to see that it is the plan of those who keep him out of what he is fighting for to do it by keeping him and Negro apart. When white and black working men get together in the South for their common economic advantage, there are going to be some might changes.

A comment worth making on this affair is that the New York "Tribune" headed the whole story as follows: "NEGRO CAUSES FATAL CLASH IN LOUISIANA." Anyone reading only the Tribune's heading would gain the impression that here was another clash instigated and initiated by Negroes. There was as much reason in the "Tribune's" heading as there would be in the statement that the murderer's victim caused the electrocution of the murderer.

*New York Age, November 29, 1919.*

### 38. ARREST LABOR RIOT POLICE

#### Thirteen of Bogalusa Posse Held as Slayers of Unionists

FRANKLINTON, La., Dec. 7.--Thirteen policemen who were members of the posse which killed four labor leaders in Bogalusa on Nov. 22 in a battle over the attempted arrest of a negro labor leader, were arrested today on the charge of murder, brought here on a special train, kept in jail an hour and a half and released on bail of \$40,000 each.

Affidavits charging them with murder were sworn out by James Williams, brother of Lum Williams, one of the labor leaders killed. Among those accused is Jules LeBlanc, a former United States army Captain, who while serving with the others as a special deputy was wounded in the arm.

More than a hundred citizens of Bogalusa accompanied the prisoners on the special train. Several rode through the country in automobiles, and many farmers came here to offer their names on the necessary bond. One hundred and thirty-three men signed the bail, which totaled \$520,000.

Since the Grand Jury which investigated the riot last week adjourned without returning any bills, court officials say that the charges can hardly be taken up before the session of the next Grand Jury, at the May term of court. Regular Army troops are still in Bogalusa.

*New York Times, December 8, 1919.* \*

39. REPORT ON SITUATION AT BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA, BY PRESIDENT  
OF LOUISIANA STATE FEDERATION OF LABOR

(Transmitted to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People by Frank Morrison, Secretary American Federation of Labor, in letter dated February 4, 1920.)

The Great Southern Lumber Company who own the lumber mills and the pulp and paper mills at Bogalusa, Louisiana, are perhaps the largest lumber producers in the United States. They claim that the sawmill located at Bogalusa is the largest mill in the world. They are also connected with several large enterprises; they are interested in the large mill located at Virginia, Minnesota, which they claim to be the next largest mill in the world.

About three years ago they put in a very large pulp and paper mill at the Bogalusa plant, and about that time the workmen at Bogalusa began to try to organize. They asked for organizers, and several attempts were made to help the people there. About this time a young man named Rodgers, an organizer for the carpenters and joiners, went to Bogalusa and while there was arrested as a suspicious character. He was released after getting the news to some of his friends in New Orleans; however, they claimed that he was a dangerous character and filed charges against him in the federal court, and while he was in jail at Bogalusa, the Bogalusa officers had put dynamite caps and fuse in his grip. This grip was produced in the federal court as evidence, but their case was so flimsy and so crude that the federal authorities dismissed it without trial. Later James Leonard, at that time vice president of the State Federation of Labor and an organizer of the A.F. of L., went to Bogalusa and was told by the authorities there that they would not permit any organizer to come there and organize the men. Mr. Leonard left Bogalusa and returned to New Orleans; however, this did not stop the desire of the workers at Bogalusa, who were in touch with the state federation; and later on W. M. Donnell's was sent there as an organizer for the carpenters, and organized the carpenters of the place. Then, in rapid succession, the organization of all lines followed until we had seventeen local unions at the place with a splendid central union.

Seeing that the men had organized in spite of their efforts to thwart it, the company became furious and tried to intimidate the members of the locals; finding that this would not work they then started systematic system of discharging all white union men and putting non-union Negroes to work in their places and at the same time making a great deal of noise and trying to work up a spirit of antagonism to the organization of Negroes, even telling the farmers and planters that we were trying to organize the Negro farm laborers. This forced the hand of labor and a campaign of organization was then begun to organize the Negroes in the employ of the Great Southern Lumber Company. This brought on quite a little feeling. The company called a mass-meeting of the citizens, where several public men, among them a Congressman, made speeches opposing the organization of Negroes. Donnell's spoke at that meeting and defended the right of labor to organize. Seeing that the men were determined the company then entered into an agreement to effect that they would stop discharging the union men if they would cease organizing Negroes. This arrangement was made with the understanding that no union man should be discriminated against or prejudiced in any way because of his membership in a union. This arrangement had not been made thirty days when the company immediately started discharging both white and colored union men, and issued an ultimatum from Mr. W. S. Sullivan, the vice president and general manager of the plant, that he would not recognize any union man and that he would not meet nor confer with anyone representing union labor and instructed his office to so inform Donnell's and others.

This agreement was made in April of 1919, and from that time on things happened fast at Bogalusa. Mr. Sullivan, who is vice president of the Great Southern Lumber Company, is also mayor of the town of Bogalusa. He then placed about thirteen of his henchmen that had not joined labor on the police force of the town. They were augmented by a number of deputies appointed by the sheriff of the parish, and then began a reign of terror in the town.

They tried to get rid of all the leaders by terrorizing them and by offering them bribes to leave the place. Finding this would not work, they sent their employment man to Chicago and other cities to secure three

thousand Negroes, with the intent of placing non-union Negroes in the industries there and forcing the union men to leave. They failed to get any men in Chicago; I was informed by reliable parties in Chicago that they did not offer sufficient wages and that the men were informed that no labor trouble existed. However, the men knew that they were wanted as strike breakers and would not go. On failing to get men, they immediately began arresting men, both black and white, on all kinds of trumped-up charges and taking them to the county seat about twelve miles away. The automobiles furnished the police and deputy sheriffs were used for the purpose of taking the men to the county seat, but the men when discharged for lack of evidence had to get back to Bogalusa any way they could. In addition to this, several men were beaten by these same gunmen; others were ordered to leave, while some of them were offered bribes to leave.

Previous to this, a committee had been appointed, two by the company and two by the men, to investigate wages and working conditions in the lumber industry throughout the state and east Texas and western Alabama and Mississippi. This committee reported that the Great Southern Lumber Company was paying less wages than any mill west of the Mississippi River. One of the men representing the company was a sawyer, who had at that time never joined the union. However, when he was selected by the company to represent, he accepted and when the report was made he was accused by the company of not making a fair report. He joined the Sawyers' Union and was soon made president of the union. They then tried to induce him to leave. He owned his own home in the town, and also a small farm just outside of the city. He was told by the henchmen of the company that he had better sell his property and leave the place. He refused to do this, and while attending a meeting he was called from the hall, when seven of the gunmen attacked him, placed him in an automobile, and ran him five miles out of town, where they took him out of the car and there proceeded to beat him into an almost unconscious condition. They then dictated a letter which they compelled him to write to his wife, telling her to sell all their property and leave at once, as he was not coming back. This man, whose name is Ed. O'Bryan, was then taken to a station on the Northeastern Railroad and placed on the car bound for New Orleans, and was told by the gunmen that they were the Department of Justice agents, and that he was under arrest by the federal authorities as an I.W.W. agitator. They had, in the meantime, painted a sign on the man's back which read "I am an I.W.W.," and when placed on the train they found Brother Donnell on the same train. They also told him that both he and O'Bryan were under arrest by the federal authorities as I.W.W. agitators. They held guns on both of them, and would not allow them to speak to each other. At the first station out of New Orleans, two of the gunmen got off the car while one stayed on. On reaching the yards in the city, this man also got off and left O'Bryan and Donnell alone.

After having O'Bryan's wounds treated, they went to the office of the Superintendent of the Department of Justice and filed complaints from which nothing has yet been heard.

The president of the Colored Timber Workers' Union was another one they offered a small sum of money to leave and sell his property. He owned a home and some live stock in the place, all told valued at about thirty-five hundred. They offered him two thousand to sell this property and leave. He refused to do so. They went that night to his house and shot it to pieces, and searched for him. However, he had told the white labor people of the offer to leave and they had gotten him away. When they could not find him, they then blamed the white labor people for getting him away and then gave out a statement to the press that Lum Williams and another labor sympathizer had paraded the Negro Dacus up and down the street while they were heavily armed, and had defied the authorities to arrest him. I am informed by a number of people, who are not members of labor, that this is a false statement, as nothing of the kind was done, and the gunmen who claimed to have a warrant for the arrest of Dacus had nothing but a trumped-up charge. That was their excuse for going to Lum Williams's place on the following day where they murdered Williams, who was president of the Central Trades Council, together with three others. The claim of the gunmen that the union men had arms in the building was untrue, as there was not a gun in the building. They drove up in their automobiles and without warning began to shoot. Williams was the first to appear at the door where he was shot dead, without a word being spoken by either side.

Two other men, who were in his office at the time, were shot down, and the bodies of the three men fell one on top of the other in the doorway. The other men attempted to leave the building by the back door where two of them were shot down while coming out with their hands above their heads; the only shot fired by any man connected with the labor people in any way was fired by a young brother of Lum Williams who shot Captain LeBlanc in the shoulder with a .22-caliber rifle, after he had shot his brother to death. This Captain LeBlanc was a returned soldier and was placed in command of the gunmen in Bogalusa. One of the men wounded at the back door of the building where the killing occurred was taken to the sanitarium where he died three days later, but no one was allowed to see him while he was alive.

Young Williams was arrested immediately and charged with shooting with intent to kill, while the thirteen gunmen, who did the murder, were not arrested until three weeks later, when the grand jury took action and bound them over to await the final action of the regular session of the grand jury in May. They were immediately released on a bond of forty thousands dollars each and have returned to Bogalusa where they are still armed and defying the law of the state.

They have been continually arresting Negroes for vagrancy and placing them in the city jail. It seems that a raid is made each night in the section of the town where the Negroes live and all that can be found are rounded up and placed in jail charged with vagrancy. In the morning the employment manager of the Great Southern Lumber Company goes to the jail and takes them before the city court where they are fined as vagrants and turned over to the lumber company under the guard of the gunmen where they are made to work out this fine. There is now an old Negro in the hospital at New Orleans whom they went to see one night, and ordered to be at the mill at work next day. The old man was not able to work, and was also sick at the time. They went back the next night and beat the old man almost to death and broke both of his arms between the wrist and elbow. This old man was taken from the hospital and went to the county seat and appeared before the grand jury and the papers made a big thing of it and said we were trying to stir up race trouble. The State Federation has taken the matter up with labor throughout the state and we intend to fight the thing to a finish.

However, we are badly handicapped for funds to fight the combined forces of the entire lumber industry, as they have organized an organization to fight us and now have a man named Boyd, who was editor of *The Lumbermen's Journal*, traveling through the Southern lumber states forming local organizations with the sole purpose of defending the Great Southern Lumber Company and fighting any attempt on the part of labor to organize the lumber industry in the South. I have it from reliable sources that they have succeeded in lining up the hardwood lumber people also in this anti-union organization. They are holding meetings in all the towns in the Southern lumber states.

We have employed the Hon. Amos L. Ponder as an attorney to defend young Williams for the shooting and to prosecute the thirteen gunmen. We are having some investigating done and hope to be able to bring them to justice along with those who are responsible for the many outrages against humanity and justice. However, they are still terrorizing the people that live in Bogalusa, and just last week Brother Donnelly was on his way, in company with Brother Donnelly, to Bogalusa to hold a meeting. Brother Donnelly is now president of the central body at that place. On arriving at the depot in New Orleans one of the gunmen met them there and told Donnelly that if he went to Bogalusa he would be murdered, and made several threats. They had him arrested on two charges--one for threatening to kill and one for carrying concealed weapons. He was released on bond in each case and, no doubt, no effort will ever be made to have him appear for trial in New Orleans.

The union men asked the Governor of the state to have federal troops sent to Bogalusa, which he did, and which no doubt prevented bloodshed, as it seemed that the Southern Lumber Company had determined to get rid of all members of labor. . . . Some of the citizens had become aroused over the matter, on one side or the other, till it looked as though a serious situation had been reached, and should the troops be taken away and the gunmen begin again their reign of terror, it is almost certain that the citizens will take a hand in the affair. Some of them are friendly to labor while some of them are aiding the gunmen in every way they can. The citizens of the parish have requested that marshall law [martial law] be declared, but at present under that

authority of the constitution governing such matters, the Government cannot declare the parish under marshall law [martial law] as the authorities there are now keeping order. It seems this is being done to assist the lumber company in its effort to have the soldiers removed, as Sullivan is trying to get the soldiers away from there until such time as we are assured that the local civil authorities will see that the laws are enforced and justice can be had.

This report does not cover all details of the case, but will give you some idea of the conditions that prevail in Bogalusa, and in the entire Southern lumber belt. This will happen anywhere in the Southern belt if they get away with it at Bogalusa, for they are the one industry in this country that have always resisted organization to the finish.

[Signed] T. J. Greer,  
President Louisiana State Federation of Labor

Herbert J. Seligman, *The New Negro* (New York, 1920), pp. 311-19.

#### 40. LABOR AND LYNCHING

A Negro labor organizer in Bogalusa, Louisiana, was rescued from a mob of white hoodlums of a so-called "loyalty league" bent upon lynching him by his white labor comrades. The Negro in question was active organizing Negro workers in the lumber industry, to enable them to get more wages, shorter hours and better working conditions. The lumber operators branded him as an agitator stirring up race riots. Three white workers were killed fighting for the life of the Negro.

This is, indeed, a hopeful sign. White workers in the South are beginning to recognize that their interests are identical with the interests of the black workers. It is interesting to note, also, how Bolshevism in the North, East and West, and race riots in the South are employed by the Northern and Southern white capitalists as an excuse for opposing all forms of labor organizations by white and black workers. This, too, is an evidence of the power of labor to stop lynching. It is a splendid lesson for Negro organizations. They have circularized Southern governors to no avail. Why? The reason is plain. Southern governors are elected by a political machine which is dominated by the lumber, railroad, and turpentine still operators, who profit from the division of the black and white workers. The Southern governor's political life depends upon the perpetuation of lynching, race riots, jim-crowism, disfranchisement, anything that will serve to keep the black and white workers fighting. While they fight, the Southern white capitalists can rob both. The Vardamans, Bleases, Byrnes, and John Sharp Williamses, the political parasites and henchmen of the Southern Bourbon capitalists, can hold their seats in Congress, based upon notorious, political corruption and a flagrant disregard of the Federal Constitution. They can promulgate their sinister doctrines in the interest of a government by mob-law and lynch-law. They know that if the white workers of the South, who are in poverty and ignorance, wake up and join hands with their black brothers, the Southern white capitalists and their political prostitutes will no longer be able to exploit labor, by the old game of playing up the race question.

All hail to the white workers of Bogalusa! You are learning! You are on the right road. Your enemy is the Southern white employing class, not the Negroes. Your only weapon is the solidarity of the working class, black and white. Only class-conscious, militant labor can change the South. And when it is sufficiently educated, labor will change the South from a place of auto-cracy and lynching to a place of democracy and freedom. So, let us educate labor. Circularize white labor unions, not Southern white capitalist, anti-Negro governors.

*The Messenger* 3 (February, 1920): 2.



PART VII

SOCIALISM, THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE  
WORLD, AND THE BLACK WORKER

## VII

### RADICALS AND THE BLACK WORKER

The Industrial Workers of the World, popularly known as the "Wobblies," was founded in the summer of 1905 by progressives in the American labor and socialist movements who were convinced that the working class should be organized without regard to skill, color, sex, or national origin. Although the IWW did little to organize black workers during the first four years of its existence, in 1910 it launched a determined recruiting campaign. Widely distributed leaflets and pamphlets emphasized that Negroes were discriminated against not only because of their race, but also because, disproportionately, they were unskilled workers. Only a union such as the IWW, organized along industrial lines, could solve these twin problems. IWW literature constantly reminded readers that, since employers would force wages down to the level at which the poorest blacks would toil, whites had no choice but to unionize them. The IWW denounced black strikebreakers as "niggers," but heralded black unionmen as "Negro fellow workers."<sup>119</sup>

The Wobblies denounced all manifestations of Jim Crowism, and condemned lynching as utter "savagery." Unlike most other unions, the IWW practiced what it preached, even in the deepest South. Since it opposed political action at the ballot box as a waste of energy, Negro disfranchisement was not a serious obstacle to IWW plans for building racial unity. It has been estimated that 10 per cent of the one million membership cards issued by the IWW between 1909 and 1924 went to Afro-Americans, but the actual number was probably much lower because the organization was most active in areas of the country where few blacks lived. The IWW did recruit large numbers of black dockmen along the Atlantic coast waterfronts. In fact, the Marine Transport Workers was the most powerful docker union in Philadelphia from 1913 until the early 1920s. The union itself was organized by Benjamin Fletcher, a black IWW organizer. Fletcher subsequently was imprisoned on a federal charge of conspiracy and violation of the Espionage Act (see note 138).

One of the most inspiring chapters in IWW history is the organization of the yellow pine lumber industry in Louisiana and Texas. Blacks comprised more than half of the workers in that industry. As with other fields of labor, black lumbermen received less pay for doing more work than their white counterparts, but both lived as economic vassals of the lumber barons. In 1910 the lumbermen secretly organized into the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, and by 1912 had a membership of more than 20,000, half of whom were blacks organized into segregated "colored lodges."

In 1912 the BTW became affiliated with the IWW. William "Big Bill" Haywood (see note 127), the driving force behind the IWW, and Covington Hall, who, as editor of *The Lumberjack* was the BTW's chief publicist,<sup>120</sup> attended the BTW convention in Louisiana to present the case for affiliation. When Haywood learned that the black members could not meet in the same hall without breaking the state law, he called the black brothers to join with the whites. "If it is against the law, this is one time when the law should be broken," he said. The men discovered for the first time that "they could mingle in meetings as they mingled at work." The lumber barons immediately launched an intensive effort to destroy the interracial union. They resorted to every weapon in the anti-union arsenal, but none of these measures succeeded. When the union struck the American Lumber Company in Merryville, Louisiana, the company imported blacks, European immigrants, and Mexicans, but the scabs refused to break the strike. A committee of Merryville businessmen, who sided with the company, organized the "Good Citizens League," which then hired strong-arm men and deputized them. The coalition unleashed a violent offensive which crushed the strike and destroyed the union. The assault was part of a broader effort by the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, led by John Henry Kirby, the owner of the largest lumber company in East Texas, to break the union throughout the pine region. Violence characterized the assault, but nowhere more dramatically than at the small mill town of Grabow, Louisiana. In a ten-minute gun battle precipitated by company gunmen, four men were killed and forty wounded (see note 133).<sup>121</sup>

The documents presented in Part VII reveal the attitudes and relationships between black workers and the radical wing of the American labor movement.



## BEFORE THE WAR

## 1. NEGROES, CAPITALISTS, SOCIALISTS

The Socialists Invite Afro-Americans to their rank  
and hold out Flattering Inducements

Editor Colored American:--In your issue of August 18th, you give an editorial on the Steel Strike, in which you indicate that the Negro must side with the capitalists. It should therefore be interesting to you and your readers to hear what the Socialists propose for the Negro.

The Appeal to Reason, of Girard, Kans., is the largest Socialist paper in the country and in its issue of Aug. 17th, it gives the Socialist platform. Among the planks is this:

## NEGRO RESOLUTION

"Whereas, The Negroes of the United States, because of their long training in slavery and but recent emancipation therefrom, occupy a peculiar position in the working class and in society at large,

"Whereas, The capitalist class seeks to preserve this peculiar condition and to foster and increase color prejudice and race hatred between the white worker and the black, so as to make their social and economic interest to appear to be separate and antagonistic in order that the workers of both races may be more easily and completely exploited.

"Whereas, Both the old political parties and educational and religious institutions alike betray the Negro in his present helpless struggle against disenfranchisement and violence, in order to receive the economic favors of the capitalistic class; be it therefore

"Resolved, That we, the Socialists of America, in National Convention assembled, do hereby assure our negro fellow worker of our sympathy with him in his subjection to lawlessness and oppression, and also assure him of the fellowship of the workers who suffer from the lawlessness and exploitation of capital in every nation or tribe of the world; be it further

"Resolved, That we declare to the negro worker the identity of his interests and struggles with the interests and struggles of the workers of all lands, without regard to race or color or national lines: that the causes which have made him the victims of social and political inequality are the effects of the long exploitation of his labor-power that all social and race prejudices spring from the ancient economic causes which still endure to the misery of the whole human family, that the only line of division which exists in fact is that between the producers and the owners of the world--between capitalism and labor; and be it further

"Resolved, That we, the American Socialist Party invite the negro in membership and fellowship with us in the world movement for economic emancipation by which equal liberty and opportunity shall be secured to every man, and fraternity become the order of the world."

FRANCIS B. LIVESEY,  
Sykesville, Md.

*The Colored American, August 31, 1901.*

## 2. DEBS SCORES SLANDERERS

## Evansville Politicians Are Blaming Socialists for Race Riot

Do Not Dare to Support Their Accusation by Naming any Socialist as Implicated  
 --Slander Gives Opportunity for Debs to Declare Socialists' Opposition  
 to Race Prejudice.

EVANSVILLE, Ind. July 17.--Some capitalist spokesmen, journalistic and otherwise, of this place and elsewhere in this part of the country, have made a strenuous but ineffectual effort to put upon the Socialists of Evansville the responsibility for the recent disgraceful lynching and rioting episode.

Captain A. W. Dudley, commanding Company B, of the National Guard, if not the author of this outrageous slander, was at least the principal mouth-piece for those who devised it. He declared, and some of the papers gave prominent place to his statement, that the mob was led by Socialists. Called on to name the men or even one of them, he could not do so, but took refuge in the statement that the sister of one of the men shot by the militia admitted that her brother was a Socialist. Afterwards, pressed still further to substantiate his charge, he and his friends shifted their ground and said that the Socialists were not so much to blame, after all, but, there were "Anarchists of the worst type in Evansville, who were responsible for the trouble. This is, of course, as baseless a fabrication as the other.

Eugene V. Debs has made a forcible reply to these falsifiers through the columns of a local paper, bringing out the real facts of the case. He said, in part:

"If Captain Dudley is correctly quoted, he is an ass. As a matter of fact, not a single Socialist was connected, directly or indirectly with the Evansville outrages. The Socialists are the only ones who recognize not merely the political and economic equality of the negro, but his social equality as well. Among Socialists there is not the slightest trace of race prejudice and to charge that they instigated the riotous crusade against the negroes in Evansville is an infamous calumny.

## Dudley's Party to Blame

"Instead of the Socialists the fact is that the rotten and vote buying political party to which Dudley belongs is responsible for these crimes. In the late municipal election at Evansville hundreds of negroes were imported from Kentucky to help elect the present Republican Mayor of that city. The negro whose murder of the policeman precipitated the conflict, was one of these. He was a Republican, the policeman he murdered was a Republican and the city officers for whom he acted as political plugger were also Republicans. After the election this negro felt that as one of the main props of the administration he could strut and swagger at will. This was the starting point of the present trouble which since then has been brewing and required only some spark to set it off. The whole trouble is the culmination of the negro as a factor in politics and, as is notoriously true, a corrupting factor, since he finds ready sale for his votes in the political market of Evansville. The Socialists never purchased a negro vote nor imported a negro voter to debauch politics and incite race war in Evansville. Will Dudley says the same for the party to which he belongs? In the light of these facts who is responsible, the Socialists or they who seek by the cry of stop thief to criminate them in order to divert attention from the consequences of their own crimes?"

Comrade Debs also warmly denounced the riotous attack upon the colored waiters at Linton, feeling that if it was true that union miners were involved in the affair, as alleged, they had proven false to the principals of their union as formulated by its conventions and by President Mitchell:

## Miners Should Repudiate

"It is generally understood that the mob at Linton was composed of union miners. I am not ready to believe this but whoever it consisted of they merit unqualified condemnation. I am opposed to all forms of violence, but do not hesitate to give it as my opinion that if, in the absence of any effort on

the part of the state to protect them, the negroes massed their forces and marched into Linton to resent the outrages perpetrated upon their people, they would be eminently justified in doing so. This, however, is not the way to proceed in such an extremity and the negroes do well to bear with patience and bide their time.

"The miner's union cannot afford to bear the odium of such an outrage and they owe it to themselves to disavow all connection with or responsibility for it. They can scarcely do less in view of the fact that their organization is appealing to the negroes of Kentucky and West Virginia to help them fight their battles. At this very hour, President Mitchell is in Kansas assuring the negroes that the miners' union is their friend and proposes to recognize them on terms of equality."

*The Worker*, July 26, 1903.

### 3. A SOCIALIST CARPENTER ON THE NEGRO

There are too many workers who feel that color, race or nationality and not status as a worker should determine what their attitude should be towards other workers. They argue that blood alone can tell. I would not train a child of mine like that for any sum of money. I rejoice greatly in being absolutely free from such feeling. I could associate with a negro or a Chinaman, or any other nationality or color, provided the person behaves as a man ought to behave and does not live on the produce of other people's labor. If "The Negro was created solely for surveying land with a jackass," I see no reason why that work is not as honorable as surveying a board with a jackplane.

Some of our Southern brothers have evidently not studied the labor problem very deeply when they can write "that there is no need to ever fear the competition of the disorganized colored carpenter;" for the unorganized colored carpenters of the South are not only a danger to those who live in the South, but the unorganized carpenters in New Orleans are a danger to the organized carpenters of San Francisco, and the unorganized, unskilled workers in China are a danger to the most skilled workers in America. The workers are a class, and when one worker is degraded the whole class suffers without regard to color or nationality; and if we can lift up one branch of the working class the whole class is benefited.

It may be best for our colored brothers to have their own unions where the race prejudice exists; but sitting with a colored brother in a lodge-room does not require us to invite him to our home, any more than it would compel me to invite to my home J. P. Morgan, Mark Hanna, J. D. Rockefeller, or anyone else of the capitalistic rich white trash of the "Four Hundred," who might belong with me to some lodge or order like the Masons, Knights of Pythias or Odd Fellows. I might have to sit with some of that rich white trash in a lodge, but that would not force me to invite them to my home to torture my family with their fashionable snobbery. <sup>122</sup>

There are capitalists and rich people who do useful work, and earn their own living, who are just as good as any ordinary workingman; but an industrious negro who works to earn his own living is surely a more desirable companion in a lodge or at home than a capitalist who lives in luxury on what he obtains by speculation, interest, rent or profit from the products of the labor of other people. Let us have the colored carpenters organized. Let us have all the colored people organized in unions, and let us have organized all the "poor white trash" all over the land that does useful work. Let us unite and so reorganize the government of the United States that we shall have an industrial government instead of the present military government with its soldiers to kill working people who ask for more pay for their work. Let us study the industrial problems and learn the tricks by which the larger part of the wealth we produce is diverted from us into the pockets of those who do not do any useful work; and when the working people, as a class, realize that it through the machinery of government that their products are turned over to the non-producers, we will soon find a remedy by assuming control of the government;

and our labor unions are needed to teach us to stand together, white or colored.

Oakland, Cal.

TARAL T. FRICKSTAD  
Local Union 36

*The Carpenter* (September, 1903): 6, 10.

#### 4. THE RACE QUESTION A CLASS QUESTION

"There is no clash between the white man of the South and the negro of MY CLASS!" said John Mitchell, Jr., President of the Mechanics' Savings Bank of Richmond, Va., at the convention of the Bankers' Association in New York City. Mr. Mitchell declared that no color line was drawn between the "better class" of whites and the "better class" of blacks, and that the negro was learning that as a business man the negro would be respected and not discriminated against. "He was received with enthusiasm and his brief remarks proved to be one of the memorable features of the convention. Among the Southern delegates a feeling of genuine satisfaction was expressed and they united in praising Mr. Mitchell's speech," says the New York "Evening Post." And when the colored banker had finished and was being cheered and congratulated on all sides, the bankers were roused to new enthusiasm by a response from one of the South's best-known financiers, Col. Robert J. Lowry of Atlanta, who said: "I am delighted to hear from my Southern brother. There is no fight, no hostility, between his class and my race in Georgia--or anywhere else. I am glad to hear this gentleman from Virginia. The gentleman is right in what he says."

This touching scene in which the Southern white capitalist greeted the black capitalist as a gentleman and a brother in a striking proof of the fact that the race question is at bottom, like all other questions, a class question.

It is undoubtedly true that the negro has suffered much discrimination and outrage merely because of race feeling, and on the surface it may seem that the hatred of blacks is wholly caused, by repugnance to those of another race. But the real source of this race feeling is to be found in the fact that the negroes AS A RACE were once, as slaves, almost the sole working class in the North together with the fact that most of them are now working people--wage slaves instead of chattel slaves.

The non-productive ruling class, whether it be a slave holding class or capitalist class, always looks down upon and despises the other class which toils and sweats for it and feeds it and produces all the wealth upon which it lives in luxury. The capitalist's contempt of the white workingman is restrained only by the consideration that it is necessary to get his vote, by the fact that it is necessary to maintain the illusion of social and political equality in order to keep the white workingman contented with his lot. The white workingman is used to believing himself "as good as any man" and it is therefore necessary for the capitalists to keep up this flattering illusion in order to persuade him to continue to submit to the present industrial system of legalized robbery. But because the negro working class is not long used to political freedom, and because the master class of the South once owned him bodily as a chattel slave, the contempt of the Southern ruling class for the negro workingman is entirely unrestrained, and the negro's age-long habit of submission is taken advantage of to throw out his vote or disfranchise him.

That the Southerner's contempt for the negro is not really based on any physical repugnance to him as a person is proven by the fact that the rich whites of the South think nothing of tolerating the presence of the black man as a personal servant waiting upon them, shaving them, attending them in baths and performing all sorts of services which bring the colored man into the closest personal contact with his master. And the thousands of mulattoes in the South are living proofs that many of the white men who express their horror at the thought of "social equality" freely enter into the most intimate

of all personal relations with the women of the black race, as did many of the old slaveholders who considered their female slaves as sexual property as well as sources of material profit.

As a matter of fact there is no "social equality" between the workingmen and the rich men of any race. The white capitalist moves in the "cultured and respectable society" of his own class and would regard as preposterous and abhorrent the idea of receiving the "coarse and vulgar workingman" on a basis of equality; the workingman is admitted to his circles only in a despised menial capacity in some places special street cars for workingmen have been proposed (just as the South has its "Jim Crow" cars for negroes) in order that the fine ladies and gentlemen of the capitalist class may not have to soil themselves by riding in the same cars with "the dirty, ignorant workingmen."

That the Southern capitalist has no more regard for the workingman of his own race than he has for the negro is shown by the fact that wherever white workingmen go on strike, the capitalists never hesitate to replace them with negro scabs, and the black man who will do any equal amount of work for less wages can always get the job of the white. When a question of capitalist profit is involved race lines disappear and class division, regardless of race, stands out clearly for all to see. And that the negro is despised by the Southern upper class really for the reason that he is a workingman, and consequently poor, is proven by the fact that both the negroes and the prosperous whites consider the "poor white trash" of the South still lower than the black race itself.

The speech of the colored capitalist at the convention of the Bankers' Association, and the way to which it was received by the Southern gentry present, prove that the Southern capitalist does not say: "All 'coons' look alike to me." To the Southern capitalist the black banker is evidently a "gentleman" and a brother in the fraternity of capitalist parasites, but the black workingman is despised as a "loafer" and an inferior being, as is the white workingman. And the black banker has a delightfully simple solution of the race problem: Just let all negroes become bankers or business men and then they will be respected and race hatred will disappear. White workingmen are familiar with the same advice: Just let them save enough capital out of their wages, by the practise of industry, thrift, frugality and other capitalist virtues, to compete with multi-million-dollar trusts and then they will be eminently respectable citizens.

It is part of the instinctive policy of the capitalist class to perpetuate itself by creating and playing upon race hatred in order to keep workingmen of all races and nationalities from uniting to overthrow the infamous industrial system by which the capitalists profit. And it is also part of capitalist policy to use a weaker race to undermine the efforts of the more intelligent workingmen to better their conditions and emancipate their class. So it happens that Booker T. Washington and other prominent colored men are coddled by the ruling capitalist class and need to teach the colored men to be hard-working, submissive and contented under the tyranny of capitalism. . . .

Booker T. Washington, the best type of the negro leader who is entirely satisfactory to the capitalist, has recently been put to a crucial test on the question of working class vs. capitalist class. During the recent great meat strike, in which so many of his race were used as strike breakers, he was asked by the union of the workers in the stockyards to address a meeting, which both union and non-union workingmen were invited to attend, on the question: "Should negroes act as strike breakers?" In this position, so awkward for a man who has dined with the capitalist President who stands for the "open shop," Booker escaped by pleading the convenient excuse of "a previous engagement: which would prevent his being present."

Some negro papers openly advise the colored man to show his "faithfulness" and his industrial power by taking a job wherever he can get it, even if he is thus helping to break a strike, and promise that this will result in capitalist favor and respect; notwithstanding the fact that the strike breaker is always despised even by the capitalist himself and kicked out when he can no longer be used.

The Socialist movement, on the other hand, appeals to all workingmen, without regard to race, color, or previous condition of servitude (but with very lively regard to present condition of servitude), to realize that their interests are in common and against the interests of all capitalists and to unite to overthrow capitalist rule.

Many of the Southern trade unions are realizing this, in some measure, by admitting the negroes to membership equally with the white, just as the bankers recognize their common class interest by welcoming the negro banker.

To the negro Socialism says: As a workingman you are oppressed by your capitalist boss as you were as a slave by your master, you are enslaved and robbed of the product of your labor under wage-slavery as you were under chattel slavery; you must unite with all other workingmen in the Socialist movement to free yourselves.

To the white workingman Socialism says: "If you do not realize your common interests with your black fellow-workman he will be used against you by the capitalist, who is the enemy of both of you. You must recognize that his interests as a workingman are the same as yours and must enroll him as a comrade in the fight against capitalism.

And to the white Southerner who fears the bugaboo of "social equality" with the negro, and objects to Socialism on that ground, it may be said. No one who objects to "social equality" with the negro, or with anyone else, can be forced to associate with those who are uncongenial to them under Socialism, or under any other system. No one need invite to his home or seek the company of those who are displeasing to him. Socialism stands for political and economic equality, and in all public relations men of all races must have the same rights as human beings; but private association is a matter for each individual to decide for himself. And finally it should be remembered that as repugnance to the colored man has its chief source in his subservient position as a worker, together with all the lack of advantages which that position implies, therefore under Socialism, when opportunity for education and culture will be open to all, the negro and all others who are now crushed and degraded by capitalism will develop to a point where they will no longer be "inferior," and consequently no longer repellant or uncongenial.

*The Worker, October 2, 1904.*

## 5. THE COLORED STRIKE BREAKER

By

Rev. Geo. W. Slater, Jr., Pastor Zion Tabernacle<sup>123</sup>  
3000 LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill.

In the struggle between labor and capital the former is the under factor, and therefore suffers. Labor revolts against capital because it cannot, and also because it is not well for it, to be satisfied with less than the full product of the toil. This position of labor is a just one.

Compulsory education has increased intelligence among the laborers. Because of this increase in education, higher has become the general taste and greater his demands. To satisfy this higher taste and to supply this greater demand, he needs comparatively greater returns from his toil. Hence, he asks for higher wages. The capitalist's greed for gain causes him to raise higher the price of food.

When the laborers' demand for higher wages is acceded to by the capitalist, the capitalist in turn raises still higher the prices of goods for the purpose of preserving his profits. This raising of prices continues until it has reached the limit of the ability and willingness of the consumer to purchase. When the capitalist reaches the consumer's limit he finds that the laborer is still demanding more, which more wages encroaches perceptibly upon his profits. At this the capitalist balks. Then the laborers in one way or another protests, which protest usually takes the form of a strike.

In order to break the strike the capitalist is forced to find two agencies, as

1. He must find either laborers who are willing to work for less wage than that demanded, by the contending laborers.

2. He must find other poor laborers, who as detectives, police or soldiers, are willing to protect the strike breakers until the strikers are

starved into submission.

The colored laborer, more and more, is becoming a factor, one way or another, in labor disputes. Frequently he is used as a strike breaker. For this purpose it appears from certain indications that the capitalist will attempt to use the colored man more and more. It is certain that the business, industrial and agricultural schools are fast qualifying the colored man so that he can do the capitalist's work satisfactorily. (By the way, you know that he is being educated in capitalist schools). Because of this increasing preparation, the doubt as to his ability for such an agent in the hands of the capitalist, supported by a capitalist owned and controlled police and army, is fast disappearing.

Under the existing economic conditions there can be found white men who will readily serve as strike breakers, for the temptation for a hungry, freezing, clothesless and houseless man to work for half loaf when he hasn't any under these conditions the temptation is too strong, especially at this time of his little information and class consciousness. Also the colored man has the same strong temptation confronting him. Also it is true that the colored man has as much right to take the place of a striker as a white man.

While it must be admitted that the colored laborer has as much right as a white man to be a strike breaker, yet the question is patent whether it is wise for the colored man to be recognized by the poor white laborers as a menace to his laudable aims.

To my mind it is very unwise, for the following reasons:

1. The good that the strike breaker resolves is but temporary, because soon he is reduced to the same necessity to protest against low wages or to starve. The new position which he holds is not because the capitalist thinks any more of him or desires to give him good wages. He has the new position he is willing to work for a lower wage than the other, thus the capitalist can make out of him more profits. From press, pulpit, platform and school rostrum, practically, the people have been taught that the great desideratum is the "almighty dollar" the "rule of Gold" instead of the "Golden Rule." Therefore it is wrought in his very make-up that the more dollars he has, the more respected he is on earth (which is no lie), and also in heaven (which is a lie).

Profits are the outcome of exploiting the weak. The selfishness, great and cunning which is necessary to produce profits is still with the capitalist, and he continues to systematically, exploit the strike breaker just as he had done the striker.

2. It is unwise, because by becoming recognized as a strike breaker he is intensifying the already dislike of a strong foe organized labor--the foe which is strong because it is intelligent, large numerically, well organized and its members enjoy the elective franchise, throughout the country, which unique qualifications this body used against whatever and whoever it considers a menace to its aims. The poor white laborers of this country are largely in the majority in every walk of life, and through the influence of organized labor they are becoming more and more conscious of their position and power, and therefore are becoming more assertive. Even if it was desirable, it is not probable that the colored man could succeed ultimately against such odds. In a dual struggle, which is inevitable, the poor white policemen, detectives and soldiers will take the part of their fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters, as they usually do even now, thereby having the colored man unprotected against the vengeance of his poor white neighbor.

3. God, of one blood, made all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth in peace--not in strife. Strife between men of a common destiny is subversive of their best interests. The capitalist knows that strife among them is against the financial interests, hence the trust. The laboring people must and are learning the same thought slowly, but surely, hence, the inevitableness of economic Socialism.

*Chicago Daily Socialist, January 14, 1909.*

## 6. DELEGATE BARNES OF LOUISIANA

I am speaking not alone for the I.W.W., but I am speaking for ten millions of black people. The solution of the great race problem lies in the organization of the colored race industrially which is the only organization they can comprehend. . . . I don't believe the I.W.W. wants this congress to endorse it. It simply wants you to recognize the principle of industrial organization. The cause of Socialism demands that we shall adopt the industrial form of organization because that is the form that reaches down and gets the lowest down; and we have got to get the man that is lowest down or the capitalist will use him to defeat us and defeat his own interests. Now whether it is right or wrong the white people of the south won't mix with the negroes. Men go down there for a few months and try to understand the condition of things. I have lived among these people for forty-five years and new things come up every day. But after living in both sections, and standing impartial on this question, I believe that the industrial organization is the only solution of this tremendous problem. You cannot organize the negroes politically in the south; it would do you no good if you did. They disfranchise him. But this industrial movement will educate him; and when the white Socialists get into power, he will come in as an educated man to do his part, and will become a valuable citizen. That is why I am in favor of the industrial form of organization.

Delegate McAllister (Mo.): You say the colored man is disfranchised. Some of the comrades deny that. Will you explain that?

The Chairman: No, no. We won't go into that. . . .

*Proceedings, 1910 Socialist Party Convention, pp. 280-81.*

## 7. GOMPERS AND THE "RACE QUESTION"

Solidarity has received the following note from a reader in Chicago:

"You have undoubtedly read the brutally frank remarks 'Lord' Gompers made regarding our unfortunate fellow citizens of black color. I am an old man, have lived in this so-called republic for 58 years, have seen it as low as a corrupt and unprincipled people could make it go; but I have noted at all times a number of higher and finer souls who have striven to lift it out of the mire. Today I look despairingly for the beacon lights upon whom the nation might look in its hour of distress. I remember many a harsh, inhuman, eye, brutal expression regarding those of our fellow beings whom the superior race exploited in a manner that called forth the condemnation of the best men and women in this and other countries. But I remember nothing more brutal, more heartless, more arrogant, more foolish than the proposal of this autocrat, this 'philosopher of right,' this firm believer in the 'brotherhood of man,' whose every word belies his fine phrases that ill cover up the real object, purpose and tendency of this impudent program. I hope the members of the labor unions are not as unjust, inhuman, impudent, cruel, what you please to call it, as their star leader. If they are, the condemnation of conscientious, just, decent mankind will apply to them also. I beg of you to take note of his utterances and give them the setting they deserve. I have no faith in the socialists doing it, as they ought to. Berger is getting to be a diplomat already."

JACOB ECBERTH

The above allusion is to an alleged statement by Gompers at a reception on November 18, in St. Louis, given by the local A.F. of L. to the delegates to the national convention of that body. In a speech on the occasion Gompers is reported to have touched upon the race question, in which he is declared to have said that "the negro is not far enough removed from slavery to understand human rights," and may, therefore, be legitimate subjects for discrimination by the trades union movement.

Gompers denies the statement thus imputed to him, and declares that he



made a special appeal for the organization of negroes into the trades unions, and only incidentally remarked in his speech that "in our efforts to win negroes for the unions' cause, the fact should not be lost sight of that American negroes are only half a century removed from slavery and consequently are deprived of advantages that white men have enjoyed for centuries."

This denial will not save Gompers or the A.F. of L. from the charge of race discrimination. On the contrary, the very form of the denial but shows a desire to justify such discrimination on the part of the craft union movement. The whole history of the American Federation of Labor adds emphasis to the point, not only as regards the negro, but also with reference to every foreign white worker as well. Race and nationality discrimination is a patent fact all along the line. The A.F. of L. is an "American" organization in the narrow "Yankee" sense of that term. And it is so because the A.F. of L. is primarily based upon the "aristocracy of skill." The skilled workers, being originally native white Americans, found thereby a lasting and perfectly justifiable (to them) reason for their "patriotism" and their aversion to foreigners and native blacks who were just emerging from chattel slavery.

As a consequence of this situation and environment, each nationality and foreign workmen in turn had to fight for a place in the craft union ranks in America. And these "favored" ones from foreign lands, who finally fought their way into the "organized aristocracy of skill" also became "patriots" and in many cases have outdone the natives in their opposition to the "pauper labor of Europe," the "yellow peril" and the "backward negro."

Meanwhile industrial and social development have gone far beyond this narrow viewpoint of the trades union. The development of machinery, the expansion of industry, the removal of skilled processes, have enabled and compelled the employing class to scour the earth in search of all nations of unskilled labor, in every factory, store, and farm in America. Race prejudice has been fanned into flame and kept alive by capitalist agents, in order to keep the workers divided and at each others' throats.

The A.F. of L., far from trying to remove the race prejudice, has accentuated it by its form of organization, and by its attitude towards the unskilled workers, who make up the overwhelming mass of wage slaves, and who remain almost totally unorganized. The A.F. of L. only makes a bluff at organizing the unskilled when some other organization seriously undertakes that work, and thereby invades the field of the American labor movement. But it is ONLY A BLUFF on the part of the A.F. of L., because the organization of the unskilled would destroy the craft union and the official machine that now holds it together. The negro for the most part still belongs to the category of "unskilled," and therefore, apart from his color, is an object of discrimination by the craft union.

This state of affairs cannot be wiped out by appeals to sentiment, however justifiable they may be. It can only be removed by education and organization along the lines of revolutionary industrial unionism as proposed by the I.W.W. The latter calls upon all wage workers, regardless of color, nationality, religion, politics, or any other consideration except that they are WAGE WORKERS--skilled and unskilled--to unite in one CLASS union on the industrial field. This appeal is not based on "sentiment" or "philanthropy," but on economic (bread and butter) interests. Leaving the negro or the Jap or the "Hunky" outside of your union, makes him a potential if not an actual scab, dangerous to the organized workers, to say nothing of his own as a worker. In spite of any supposedly inborn prejudice any of us may have for any race or nationality, we cannot escape from this point of view. Present industrial and social conditions in America force it upon us irresistibly. Hidebound craft union "aristocrats" and their blind leaders like Gompers may not see it; so much the worse for them. "Diplomatic" socialists like Berger may not see it; so much the worse for them. The WORKING CLASS, thanks to industrial and social development and I.W.W. propaganda, will ere long see the necessity of uniting AS A CLASS and sweeping all the reactionary rubbish of craft unionism into the Sea of Oblivion.

So we say to our correspondent. Be of good cheer. The strong men of the working class will save the republic, and build a new and better society--Industrial Democracy--in its place.

*Solidarity, November 26, 1910.*

## 8. A WARNING TO "NIGGER" HATERS

There is no place in the Socialist movement for men  
with race lines, boundary lines, or color lines

(Note.--Inasmuch as many communications have been addressed to the national office inquiring about the negro resolution adopted by the Socialist party, we print below the resolutions in question at the request of the national secretary.)

Whereas, The negroes of the United States, because of their long training in slavery and but recent emancipation therefrom, occupy a peculiar position in the working class and in society at large;

Whereas, The capitalist class seeks to preserve this peculiar condition, and to foster and increase color prejudice and race hatred between the white worker and the black, so as to make their social and economic interests to appear to be separate and antagonistic, in order that the workers of both races may thereby be more easily and completely exploited;

Whereas, Both old political parties and educational and religious institutions alike betray the negro in his present helpless struggle against disfranchisement and violence in order to receive the economic favors of the capitalist class. Be it therefore

Resolved, That we, the Socialists of America, in national convention assembled, do hereby assure our negro fellow worker of our sympathy with him in his subjection to lawlessness and oppression and also assure him of the fellowship of the workers who suffer from the lawlessness and exploitation of capital in every nation or tribe of the world. Be it further

Resolved, That we declare to the negro worker the identity of his interests and struggles with the interests and struggles of the workers of all lands, without regard to race or color or sectional lines; that the causes which have made him the victim of social and political inequality are the effects of the long exploitation of his labor power; that all social and race prejudices spring from the ancient economic causes which still endure, to the misery of the whole human family; that the only line of division which exists in fact is that between the producers and the owners of the world--between capitalism and labor. And be it further

Resolved, That we, the American Socialist party, invite the negro to membership and fellowship with us in the world movement for economic emancipation by which equal liberty and opportunity shall be secured to every man and fraternity become the order of the world. (Chicago Daily Socialist.)

*The Prolocutor (Garden City, La.), April 13, 1911.*

## 9. RACE PREJUDICE

## Solidarity:

In one of the later issues of Solidarity, which, through the kindness of a friend, I can enjoy to read, I find a contribution from a Californian referring to our colored fellow beings as "niggers," thus using the opprobrious term on a par with "sheeny," "mick," "guinea," "dago" and other insulting terms used by arrogant and ignorant people--usually they are both.

The writer seems to be a German. I remember the time when we were called "dutchmen" in this country, and hooted with "Nix come 'raus ous Dutchman's house." The quotation your California writer perverts is to be found in Schiller's "Fiesko," where it reads: "Der Mohr hat seine Schuldigkeit gethan, --der Mohr kann gehen." The irony is fine, and merited the satire; but "nigger" is not the word to use for negro, if one wishes (unity?) with the down-trodden class. . . . <sup>124</sup>

JACOB EGBERTH

(It may be that our California correspondent made a "bum" translation of Schiller's apt satire. But the use of the quotation itself would tend to show

that he had no race prejudice in mind. As Solidarity has all along insisted, the race problem can never be solved on the basis of sentiment, or of tact of polite language, though such are desirable; but on the recognition of the common economic interests of all wage-workers, regardless of color, sex or nationality. A striking instance came to the editor's attention at the Sixth I.W.W. convention. The fraternal delegates from the Brotherhood of Timber Workers were all typical white southerners, imbued with all the race prejudice which is bred in that environment. They all insisted that they did not "love the negro" per se; but that they had discovered from their experience in organizing the lumber workers that the negro was an important factor, and they could not hope to successfully fight the lumber barons without taking the colored workers into the union on equal terms with white workers. They had to organize the negro in order to protect the common interests of all workers against all employers. The I.W.W. applies that principle generally; hence its program offers the only possible solution of the "race problem" For the rest, it depends largely upon the temperament of the individual whether or not he gives or takes offense at "opprobrious terms." Even us poor native "white trash" get plenty of epithets hurled at us.--Editor Solidarity).

*Solidarity, December 9, 1911.*

#### 10. APPEAL TO NEGROES

If you allow yourselves to be made tools of by these men who are sent to hunt you up, and hold out flattering promises of good wages and good treatment, you are doing the very thing that our organization proposes to prevent and forever put a stop to. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers is the only one that has ever been organized in the South that takes the Negro and protects him and his family along with the white wage worker and his family on an industrial basis. Thousands of your race have taken advantage of the opportunities afforded by our order and have nobly and loyally performed their part in the great struggle of the wage worker for the right to organize and correct the abuses now fastened upon us by the companies. They seem to fully realize that we must all pull together and that each must perform his duty honorably if we expect to win the fight and take our proper place among the organized powers of the world. Are you one of this number of good, loyal Negroes who are willing to stand by their own class, or are you one of those fellows who have no thought of the future welfare of your race as well as yourself and family? If you go in and take the jobs that have been wrongfully taken away from honest, hard-working white and colored men, you will not only assist these mill men to keep up their system of low wages and abuses unmentionable, but you will also assist them in whipping the many thousands of white men and men of your own color and race. . . . Let us plead with you to get in and help us in this great fight for you and yours. If you cannot do this, in the name of all that is high and holy do not be misled and made tools of against the best interests of your own class and your own color.

*Solidarity, December 23, 1911.*

#### 11. WANTS TO KNOW

A correspondent wants to know the "I.W.W. attitude on the negro question, and on lynching." As to lynching, all the I.W.W. men we have met are opposed to lynching, as they are opposed to savagery in whatever form, and most of all in the form of "civilized" human beings. As to the "negro question," the I.W.W. does not distinguish that from the "labor question." For the negro labor skinner we have no more or less use than for his white, brown, red or yellow brother labor skinner. For the negro worker, the I.W.W. invites him to join the union of his class, and shoulder to shoulder with all other workers

of whatever color, help to put the labor skinnners of all colors to work.

*Solidarity, June 8, 1912.*

## 12. NEGRO WORKERS!

Don't Allow Yourselves to be Divided from Your Fellow Workers by the Vicious Lumber Trust.

To all Negro Workers, and especially to the Negro Forest and Lumber Workers of the South, we send this message and appeal:

Fellow Worker:

When the forest slaves of Louisiana and Texas revolted against peonage and began, about two years ago, the organization of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, an industrial union taking in all the workers in the sawmills and camps, the lumber kings at once recognized the power inherent in such a movement and immediately began a campaign of lying and violence against the Union and all persons connected with it or suspected of sympathizing with us.

First among the cries they raised against us was, of course, the bunco cries of "white supremacy" and "social equality" coupled with that other cry: "They are organizing negroes against whites!" which the capitalists and landlords of the South and their political buzzard and social carrion crows always raise in order to justify the slugging and assassination of white and colored working men who seek to organize and better the condition of their class. From the day you, the negro workers were "freed," down to the present hour these cries have been used to cloak the vilest crimes against workers, white and colored, and to hide the wholesale rape of the commonwealth of the South by as soulless and cold blooded a set of industrial scalawags and carpetbaggers as ever drew the breath of life.<sup>125</sup>

For a generation, under the influence of these specious cries, they have kept us fighting each other--we to secure the "white supremacy" of a tramp and YOU the "social equality" of a vagrant. Our fathers "feel for it," but we, their children, have come to the conclusion that porterhouse steaks and champagne will look as well on your tables as on those of the industrial scalawags and carpetbaggers; that the "white supremacy" that means starvation wages and child slavery for us and the "social equality" that means the same for you, though they may mean the "high life" and "Christian civilization" to the lumber kings and landlords, will have to go. As far as we, the workers of the South, are concerned, the only "supremacy" and "equality" they have ever granted us is the supremacy of misery and the equality of rags. This supremacy and this equality we, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers, mean to stand no longer than we have an organization big and strong enough to enforce our demands, chief among which is "A man's life for all the workers in the mills and forests of the South." Because the negro workers comprise one-half or more of the labor employed in the Southern lumber industry, this battle cry of ours, "A man's life for all the workers," has been considered a menace and therefore a crime in the eyes of the Southern oligarchy, for they, as well as we, are fully alive to the fact that we can never raise our standard of living and better our conditions so long as they can keep us split, whether on race, craft, religions or national lines, and they have tried and are trying all these methods of division in addition to their campaign of terror, wherein deeds have been and are being committed that would make Diaz blush with shame, they are so atrocious in their white-livered cruelty. For this reason, that they sought to organize all the workers, A. L. Emerson, president of the Brotherhood, and 63 other Union men, are now in prison at Lake Charles, La. under indictment, as a result of the Massacre of Grabow where three Union men and one Association gunman were killed, charged with murder in the first degree, indicted for killing their own brothers, and they will be sent to the gallows, or, worse, to the frightful penal farms and levees of Louisiana, unless a united working class comes to their rescue with the funds necessary to defend them and the action that will bring them all free of the grave and levees.<sup>126</sup>

Further words are idle. It is a useless waste of paper to tell you,

the negro workers, of the merciless injustice of the Southern Lumber Operators' Association, for YOUR RACE has learned through tears and blood the hyenaism we are fighting. Enough. Emerson and his associates are in prison because they fought for the unity of all the workers.

Will you remain silent, turn no hand to help them in this, their hour of great danger?

Our fight is your fight, and we appeal to you to do your duty by these men, the bravest of the brave! Help us free them all. Join the Brotherhood and help us blaze freedom's pathway through the jungles of the South.

"Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing but your chains to lose! You have a world to gain!"

COMMITTEE OF DEFENSE,  
BROTHERHOOD OF TIMBER WORKERS,  
Box 78, Alexandria, La.

*Solidarity, September 28, 1912.*

### 13. "BIG BILL" HAYWOOD

In Chicago I made arrangements to go down South into Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas to confer with the Lumber Workers. The Timber Workers Union was having a convention at Alexandria, Louisiana.

I knew that the lumberjacks and mill workers of that part of the country were both black and white, and when I went to the convention hall in Alexandria, I was very much surprised to find no Negroes in the session. When I inquired as to the reason, I was told that it was against the law in Louisiana for white and black men to meet together. The black men were meeting in some other hall.

I said, "You work in the same saw mills together. Sometimes a black man and a white man chop down the same tree together. You are meeting in convention now to discuss the conditions under which you labor. This can't be done intelligently by passing resolutions here and then sending them out to another room for the black man to act upon; why not be sensible about this and call the Negroes into this convention? If it is against the law, this is one time when the law should be broken"

The Negroes were called into session without a murmur of opposition from anyone. The mixed convention carried on its work in an orderly way, and when it came to the election of delegates to the next I.W.W. convention, black men as well as white men were elected.

There was to be a mass meeting at the Opera House in Alexandria, at which I was to speak. I said that in this meeting as in the convention, we would have to make it known that the Negroes would come on the same terms as the white men, take part and sit where they pleased. There was to be no segregation of the Negroes in the top gallery, as the law provided. This was the first time that such a meeting had ever been suggested in Alexandria. The members did not know what might happen, but the House was crowded from pit to roof. While many Negroes went up to the gallery, probably from habit, many sat downstairs among the white workers. There was no interference by the management or the police, and the meeting had a tremendous effect on the workers, who discovered that they could mingle in meetings as they mingled at work.

*Bill Haywood's Book: The Autobiography of William D. Haywood (New York, 1929), pp. 241-42.*

## 14. COLORED WORKERS OF AMERICA WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN THE I.W.W.

Fellow Workers:

There is one question which, more than any other, presses upon the mind of the worker today, regardless of whether he be of one race or another, of one color or another--the question of how he can improve his conditions, raise his wages, shorten his hours of labor and gain something more of freedom from his master--the owners of the industry wherein he labors.

To the black race who, but recently with the assistance of the white man of the northern states, broke their chains of bondage and ended chattel slavery, a prospect of further freedom, of REAL FREEDOM, should be most appealing.

For it is a fact that the Negro worker is no better off under the freedom he has gained than the slavery from which he has escaped. As chattel slaves we were the property of our masters and, as a piece of valuable property, our masters were considerate of us and careful of our health and welfare. Today, as wage workers, the boss may work us to death at the hardest and most hazardous labor, at the longest hours, at the lowest pay; we may quietly starve when out of work and the boss loses nothing by it and has no interest in us. To him the worker is but a machine for producing profits, and when you, as a slave who sells himself to the master on the installment plan, become old or broken in health or strength, or should you be killed while at work, the master merely gets another wage slave on the same terms.

We who have worked in the south know that conditions in lumber and turpentine camps, in the fields of cane, cotton and tobacco, in the mills and mines of Dixie, are such that the workers suffer a more miserable existence than ever prevailed among the chattel slaves before the great Civil War. Thousands of us have come and are coming northward, crossing the Mason and Dixon line, seeking better conditions. As wage slaves we have run away from the masters in the south only to become the wage slaves of the masters of the north. In the north we find that the hardest work and the poorest pay is our portion. We are driven while on the job and the high cost of living offsets any higher pay we might receive.

The white wage worker is little, if any, better off. He is a slave the same as we are, and, like us, he is regarded by the boss only as a means of making profits. The working class as a whole grows poorer and more miserable year by year, while the employing class, who do not work at all, enjoy wealth and luxury beyond the dreams of titled lords and kings.

As we are both wage workers, we have a common interest in improving conditions of the wage working class. Understanding this, the employing class seeks to engender race hatred between the two. He sets the black worker against the white worker and the white worker against the black, and keeps them divided and enslaved. Our change from chattel slaves to wage slaves has benefited no one but the masters of industry. They have used as wage slaves to beat down the wages of the white wage slaves, and by a continual talk of "race problems," "Negro questions," "segregation," etc., make an artificial race hatred and division by poisoning the minds of both whites and blacks in an effort to stop any movement of labor that threatens the dividends of the industrial kings. Race prejudice has no place in a labor organization. As Abraham Lincoln has said, "The strongest bond that should bind man to man in human society is that between the working people of all races and of all nations."

The only problem then which the Colored worker should consider as a worker is the problem of organizing with other working men in the labor organization that best expresses the interest of the whole working class against slavery and oppression of the whole capitalist class. Such an organization is the I.W.W., the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD, the only labor union that has never, IN THEORY OR PRACTICE since its beginning twelve years ago, barred the workers of any race or nation from membership. The following has stood as a principle of the I.W.W., embodied in its official constitution, since its formation in 1905:

"By-Laws--Article 1. Section 1. No working man or woman shall be excluded from membership in Unions because of creed or color."

If you are a wage worker you are welcome in the I.W.W. halls, no matter what your color. By this you may see the I.W.W. is not a white man's union, not a black man's union, not a red or yellow man's union, but A WORKING MAN'S UNION, ALL OF THE WORKING CLASS IN ONE BIG UNION.

In the I.W.W. all wage workers meet on common ground. No matter what language you may speak, whether you were born in Europe, in Asia or in any part of the world, you will find a welcome as a fellow worker. In the harvest fields where the I.W.W. controls, last summer saw white men, black men and Japanese working together as union men and raising the pay of all who gathered the grain. In the great strikes the I.W.W. has conducted at Lawrence, Mass., in the woolen mills, in the iron mines of Minnesota and elsewhere, the I.W.W. has brought the workers of many races, colors and tongues together in victorious battles for a better life.

Not only does the I.W.W. differ from all organizations in regard to admission of all races, but there is a fundamental difference in form of organization from all other labor unions. You have seen other labor unions organized on craft, or trade lines. Craft unionism means that any small section of an industry has a labor union separate from all other actions that cannot act in any concerted movement of labor because of this craft separation. For example, in the railroad industry there are the engineers' union, the firemen's union, the conductors' union, the brakemen's union, the switchmen's union and many others on the road and in the shops and yards.

Each union acts for itself and usually has time agreements with the companies for a term of years, each agreement ending at a different time than the others. When one craft union goes on strike at the end of the time agreement the other craft unions keep at work and by remaining on the job act as scabs and strike breakers in defeating their fellow workers of the craft on strike.

Thus in 1911 the men in the shops of the Harriman lines went on strike and the trainmen, who belonged to different craft unions, remained at work; the train crews took cars and delivered cars to the strike breakers in the shops because they were organized separately and had separate time agreements with the companies. That strike was lost because the railroad workers were organized wrong. The I.W.W. has INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM, which means that all crafts in any industry are organized together and act together. Had the I.W.W. been in the place of the craft unions on the Harriman lines in 1911, all workers could have gone out together, not a wheel would have turned, not a train would have moved till the companies would come to terms with the shopmen. For the I.W.W. makes NO TIME AGREEMENTS with any employer and makes AN INJURY TO ONE AN INJURY TO ALL. The I.W.W. always leaves its members free to strike when they see an opportunity to better themselves and support their fellow workers.

The foundation of the I.W.W. is INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM. All workers in any division or of any industry are organized into an INDUSTRIAL UNION OF ALL the workers in the ENTIRE INDUSTRY; these INDUSTRIAL UNIONS in turn are organized into INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENTS of connecting, or kindred industries, while all are brought together in THE GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD—ONE BIG UNION OF ALL THE WORKING CLASS OF THE WORLD. No one but actual wage workers may join. The working class cannot depend upon anyone but itself to free it from wage slavery. "He who would be free, himself must strike the blow."

When the I.W.W. through this form of INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM has become powerful enough, it will institute an INDUSTRIAL COMMONWEALTH; it will end slavery and oppression forever and in its place will be a world of the thinkers, by the workers and for the workers; a world where there will be no poverty and want among those who feed and clothe and house the world; a world where the words "master" and "slave" shall be forgotten; a world where peace and happiness shall reign and where the children of men shall live as brothers in a world-wide INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY.

The following is the preamble of the I.W.W. constitution, showing the reason and form of its organization, the aims and purposes of its membership:

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

"Between these two classes a struggle must go on, until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and machinery of production and abolish the wage system.

"We find that the centering of management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions, unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the

same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the workers have interests in common with their employers.

"These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any industry, or in all industries, of necessity, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

"Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage system.'

"It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the every day struggle with capitalists, but to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

The I.W.W. welcomes you as a member, no matter in what industry you may work. The initiation fee is \$2, the dues are 50 cents a month. After you once join you have the right of free transfer into any industry. All that is necessary to continue membership is the payment of dues, regardless of where you go or what your work may be.

For further information write to

William D. Haywood, Gen. Sec.--Treas.<sup>127</sup>  
I.W.W. Publication Bureau  
1001 W. Madison St.  
Chicago, Illinois

Pamphlet, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

## 15. RACE EQUALITY

I am under the impression that some of the workers will not join the I.W.W., or any other organization simply because, if the whites and Negroes meet in the same hall it is "Race Equality." The white man goes to the same mill or planes and works all day side by side, day by day, year by year, pushing truck after truck of lumber, rolling and tussling with Negroes all day, drinking water out of the same bucket and the same dipper. As long as it happens at the capitalists' mill it is all right.

But is it Race Equality and a bad offense for white and Negroes to meet in the Union Hall, tho' the Negroes take one side of the hall and sit there with just as much respect as can be shown to the whites to try to better our conditions.

Some say, "We have the Negroes in the dark and let us keep them there and use them as a tool." See where are we, then--in the dark with the Negroes. What are we, white and black? We are like a good many other tools--the capitalist uses us as a tool to make money with and, when they have worn us out, they throw us away and let the rust (the devil) take us.

When you speak about keeping the Negroes in the dark, then we are just as deep in the dark as the Negro is. This has been our greatest mistake; trying to keep one another in the dark; then the capitalist shuts the door on all working classes and they are going to keep us in there till we ourselves find light and get out of the dark and teach others to come to the light; teach others to join the one big union, the I.W.W.! Be a man, a Union Man.

J. H. EZERNACK

*The Lumberjack, April 3, 1913.*



## 16. THE SOUTHERN NEGRO AND ONE BIG UNION

By Phineas Eastman<sup>128</sup>

With the advent of sawmills and other big industries, and the construction of numerous lines of railroads in the South, day hands have been hard to get on plantations. So the owners rent to the negro tenant as many acres as he can cultivate. They make one stipulation; nothing but cotton is to be planted on this land and no part of it is to be devoted to the raising of garden truck. This, of course, compels the poor tenant to buy of the master, at exorbitant prices, food and clothing for himself and family, and feed for his work stock. Now if the negro is energetic and economizes with the hope of "coming out" at the end of the year with something above rent and store account he is eyed with suspicion. He is also slated for a great beating about the time his crop is to be "laid by" for the purpose of running him off the place and confiscating his season's product. Should he, in desperation, refuse to run, the yarn, "He made a move as if to draw a weapon," is worked again, and one more poor black peon will have gone to join the innumerable host of his fellows "in the silent halls of death."

The negro is treated with more consideration in the southern lumber industry, but "there's a reason." The boss in this industry has been pitting the negro against the poor white and vice versa, and making suckers out of both. On account of the scarcity of labor he has been compelled to treat the negro with a semblance of fairness, in order to use him as club to hold over the rebellious white workers.

The negro still has a bloodthirsty enemy in the shape of the deputy sheriff stationed at each saw mill town and paid by the mill company. This contemptible tool of the master class in the South never lets a chance slip to graft on the negro in every way made possible by his ignorance and fear of the law. As these deputy scoundrels are recruited from the "bad native scissor-bills," they are just as quick to murder a negro as their plantation prototypes, the overseers.

Since the formation of the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers of the I.W.W. in this section, the negro and white workers are fast getting together, and beginning to see a great light. They see that they have been played for fools by the bosses, and are banding together under the banner of the I.W.W. They mean to help each other in the fight for better conditions on the job, regardless of their difference in color, which they see cuts no ice with the boss, who would just as soon hire a cheap white as a cheap negro, or vice versa. There are many negroes in the Forest & Lumber Workers' Union. There is room for all of them. The only drawback is the lack of confidence some of them have in their white fellow-workers, caused by the poison injected in their minds by the wily boss. Employers have used every dirty method to keep the two, whose interests are the same, divided. In this way scabs are always available.

Each, though, is becoming educated to the fact that they need the help of the other. In the lumber industry they are about equally divided. To control their jobs they must fight shoulder to shoulder on the industrial battlefield, or else become peons. The negroes naturally feel solidarity among themselves. This spirit has developed through their age-long abuse and exploitation by the whites. It is not a hard matter to make the negro class-conscious. He is bound to be rebellious.

In the recent fight at Merryville, La., where the American Lumber Company blacklisted fifteen of its employees for testifying for the defense in the famous Grabow trial, when the lumber trust tried to convict fifty-nine union men in an effort to stop the agitation for better conditions in the lumber industry, 1,300 members of the Forest and Lumber Workers struck. They meant to force the American Lumber Co. to put these fifteen men back to work. Although not a one of these fifteen was a negro, our colored fellow-workers showed their solidarity by walking out with their white comrades, and no amount of persuasion or injection of the old race prejudice could induce them to turn traitor and scab.

They were arrested and jailed on different absurd charges, such as "unlawfully meeting in the same hall with white men," but they laughingly lined up and marched to the town bastille, singing the rebel songs they had learned

at the daily mass meetings in the Union Hall, and despite threats, after their release, they appeared in greater number the next day to hear the speakers, and sing more songs to fan the flames of discontent.

The writer spent four weeks at Merryville during this strike, and he and Fellow Workers Kelly, Cline and Feligno spoke to the strikers every day in the hall and on the streets, and the conduct of the negro strikers was a revelation to us all, and an eye-opener to the whites. After Fellow Workers Cline, Deeny, Baker and I were forcibly deported by thugs of the company, aided by the Good Citizens' League, the negroes still remained firm and refused to return to work when threatened by the company's deputies. This shows what can be done with the negro workers along organization lines with a little effort. Most of the scabs now working in the plants of the American Lumber Company are negroes gathered from the cotton and sugar plantations. All these fellows need is a little industrial union propaganda. It will then be impossible for a boss to induce them to scab on their fellow-workers who are on a strike. They will be glad to join the union and they will stick when they have become members.

A better understanding exists now between the white and black wage slaves than I thought could be possible in such a comparatively short time. Thanks to the I.W.W. and its organizers, the time is not very far off when the boss will be unable to pit these workers one against the other. They will all be in the One Big Union, which recognizes the fact that there are only two classes in the world today, the Employing Class and the Working Class, and that there can be no peace as long as one is robbed by the other.

*International Socialist Review, 13 (June, 1913): 890-91.*

#### 17. THE NIGGER SCAB

A grave situation is rapidly developing in the South which all Negroes who care at all for their race's advancement would do well to take note of and use all their power against, and that is the using of the lowest types of their race, the Niggers, as scabs in every struggle of the workers to better their condition. With every means at its command the I.W.W. has and is struggling to allay the antagonism of the races to bring all the workers into One Big Union for the mutual protection and final freedom of all, but, if the Negroes of the South lay down on the job and allow the Niggers to continue to disgrace their race, no earthly power can prevent a disaster to their people.

Against the Lumber Trust, we, the I.W.W., appeal to the Negro workers of the city of New Orleans to waken to their duty to their class and ostracize the Nigger scabs of the United Fruit Company, until they will be glad to quit their dirty work.

Colored Fellow-Workers! We appeal to you to awaken and to do your duty by your class.

*The Lumberjack, July 10, 1913.*

#### 18. WHO CARES?

By Mary White Ovington

Who cares whether a colored woman in Washington can sit in a vacant seat in the forward part of a street car, or must stand in the rear while a white rowdy, lolling comfortably, blows his smoke in her face? Who is troubled when the black man is ordered out of the railroad restaurant and goes hungry on his travels? Who is concerned whether the state of South Carolina gives the colored children their equal share of the school funds or allow them one-fourth

of what it allows the white child? Who bothers when the police in Atlanta or Birmingham or New Orleans arrest each Negro who is out of work as a vagrant; or who troubles himself when the court sends the vagrant to the chain gang where he is vilely housed and debauched and beaten? Who, among the many that have been filled with sympathy for the fifty thousand yellow people in California, is stirred at hearing of the segregation of eight million black-and brown-and white-skinned Americans, all conveniently classed as Negroes? Who cares?

There are two organizations in this country that have shown that they do care.

The first is the Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This organization is made up of white and colored men and women and is pledged to oppose the segregation of the Negro and to strive for the enforcement of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. . . .

The second organization that attacks Negro segregation is the Industrial Workers of the World.

When it looked as though William D. Haywood and the organization that he represents would be recognized at the National Socialist Convention at Indianapolis, Haywood turned to the delegates and said: "Now I may go back to tell the millions of women and children and the eight million Negroes that you stand with them." The I.W.W. has stood with the Negro. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers in Louisiana have battled against their exploiters. Only one familiar with the South can appreciate the courage of this position, and the bravery demanded of both races. Mixed locals have been organized despite the fact that there is a law in Louisiana prohibiting public gatherings of black and white. The common enemy has obliterated the color line.

I wish I might cite the Socialist party, the party I so love, as the third force to stand aggressively for the Negroes' full rights. In some Southern states, notably Oklahoma, the white Socialists have supported the blacks in their manhood struggles. In Louisiana and Texas, on the other hand, they have, at times, shown a race prejudice unexcelled by the most virulent Democrats. But it would not be just to judge the party by the action of a small group in the South. We need to note the position of the national body. This body in 1901, passed a noble resolution expressing its sympathy with the Negro in his subjection to lawlessness and oppression, and inviting him to membership and fellowship in the world movement for economic emancipation. This was in 1901, but there has been no word since. At the last National Socialist Convention, while the delegates spent hour after hour in frenzied talk over amendments to amendments of motions which no one remembered, no word, save that of Haywood's was uttered in appreciation of the existence of this most exploited race. One Negro delegate was present, but he was not given the opportunity to speak. To this convention, the United States Negro, composing one-fifth of all the workmen in the Union, did not exist.

And yet the color problem is not one that we can dispose of by saying, as did many at the Socialist convention, that is economic and will be solved by the coming of Socialism. Our goal is still far off; we are on the road, and we must beware of the forces that will be used to retard us. Among these forces is race discrimination. The creation of a segregated class in our democracy, a class without a ballot, without civil rights, poorly educated, with a low standard of living, will seriously retard the coming of the Co-operative Commonwealth. So we must watch every effort that is made to prevent black men and white men from meeting on equal terms.

Mary White Ovington, "The Status of the Negro in the United States," *The New Review*, 1 (September, 1913): 747-49.

## 19. I.W.W. AND THE NEGRO

By Joseph Ettore<sup>129</sup>

Mary White Ovington is a Brooklyn woman who is devoted to the cause of the Negro. Her book, *Half a Man*, a study of the Negro in New York, has met with favorable criticism and been praised for its knowledge of the subject.

Her first-hand studies of Southern conditions have been read by many. In *The New Review* for September, Miss Ovington has an article on "The Status of the Negro in the United States." It is a gloomy picture showing how the Negro, despite his emancipation and constitutional rights, is steadily being degraded into a position of social and racial inferiority by means of disfranchisement and segregation. There are some who howl against race discrimination when applied to the Japanese, as in California recently, but there are none who seem to care for the Negro. As Miss Ovington well puts it, "Who among the many that have been filled with sympathy for the fifty thousand yellow people in California, is stirred at hearing of segregation of eight million black and brown and white skinned Americans all conveniently classed as Negroes? Who cares?"

Miss Ovington answers her own question by showing that "there are two organizations in this country that have shown that they do care." The first is the Association for the Advancement of Colored People, composed of white and colored men and women opposed to segregation on constitutional grounds. Miss Ovington is a prominent member of this association.

"The other organization that attacks Negro segregation," continues Miss Ovington, "is the Industrial Workers of the World. . . ."

That Miss Ovington sums up correctly the I.W.W. position on segregation may be seen in the current issues of *The Voice of the People*, the Southern I.W.W. organ, published at New Orleans, La. *The Voice of the People* never tires of battering down race barriers. It is particularly active in fighting the battles of Fellow Worker Gaines, a Negro I.W.W. man who persists in preferring jail rather than commit perjury against his white fellow workers in a case involving a charge of using dynamite in the Merryville strike. The bravery demanded of both races, more particularly, the Negroes, is well shown in the Gaines episode.

But what makes Miss Ovington's article of special interest is the contrast it affords to that of Booker T. Washington on the Negro and labor organizations in a recent issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*. Mr. Washington who is a protégé of Seth Low, the boss of the Civic Federation, and friend of Sam Gompers, gives the essence of replies to a series of questions put to the leaders of the American Federation of Labor. According to these replies with only one or two exceptions, the A.F. of L. is just dying with love for the Negro; and is his especial friend, when he will permit it. Perhaps the poor fellow doesn't get the chance too often. At least, so we are lead to believe by Miss Ovington's figures, showing the status of the Negro in the New York A.F. of L. This is almost nil.<sup>130</sup>

Now comes Miss Ovington again, and refuses to recognize the A.F. of L. as one "who cares" for the Negro, while admitting the I.W.W. to the honor. Surely, with such an author we are not inclined to dispute; we leave that to the A.F. of L. leaders who "stuffed" Booker T. Washington; a gentleman who is not at all adverse to the pastime. judging from his many honorable capitalist connections, and the many donations that they yield to him.

*Solidarity, September 20, 1913.*

## 20. RADICAL MOVEMENT AMONG NEW YORK NEGROES

The Independent Political Council, a New York organization consisting mainly of Negroes who have broken away from the Republican party, has headquarters at 436 Lennox Avenue. It has about 600 members and is working along radical lines. Statement by the president, A. Philip Randolph, and Secretary Chandler Owen appeared in an interview in the *New York Call*, in part as follows:

Rents and the high prices of food are the chief clouds on our domestic horizon. The rents are high because there are more people than there are houses. At least, this is true of the colored people, because they are limited to certain locations by the operation of a crystallized segregation rule. The high prices of food are not due, as the Republican orators tell you, to the absence of a protective tariff. The high prices are due to the scarcity of goods. We have 611 million bushels of wheat this year. It takes 650 million

bushels to feed this country. Yet we have contracts to send away 400 million, which, of course, compels the advance in the price of flour, bread, etc. . . .

For high rents we would propose the Single Tax and Socialism. We would have the land taxed heavily, while the buildings are taxed lightly or exempt from taxation. This would force the land into use, which would give us more buildings and a competition which would automatically lower the rents. Each landlord with vacant houses would be offering attractive rates to get tenants into his houses.<sup>131</sup>

But suppose the land held out for speculation were finally built up and the property occupied?

There is where Socialism must eventually come in to control the rent question. But one thing is sure: It is unnecessary to pray for lower rents, since the rents ascend as the prayers ascend, and the rents retain their ascent after the prayers have fallen. . . .

This "preparedness" is a Trojan horse. The issues we are told, are Americanism and "preparedness", whatever they may mean. But we do know that the \$662,000,000 to be spent on "preparedness" this year will be paid by those of us least prepared to pay. Rockefeller, Morgan and Hearst will be the tax collectors who will get the money, but that is all. The tax producers are the real tax payers, and the tax gatherers can only gather what is produced after it is produced. . . .

We are not Socialists. We are not anything. We are enrolled Republicans, but we have no special sympathy with the Republican party. Our only object for so registering is that most colored men enroll as Republicans and we want to have colored candidates win the primaries next year. You see, the Republican party is a religion with the colored man. He is deceived, duped and folled by it. But he still licks the hand just raised to shed his blood. But even if we were Socialists, we would have to blacklist those Socialists in Iowa, Kansas, Pennsylvania, etc., who have replied to the crisis that they favored segregation among races. There must still be independent choice among men in all parties.

*The Public, (November 10, 1916): 1067-68.*

#### COVINGTON HALL

#### 21. REVOLT OF THE SOUTHERN TIMBER WORKERS

BY

Covington Hall

The second annual convention of the Brotherhood of Timber Workers was convened in Alexandria, Louisiana, May 6th, and adjourned at midnight on May 9, 1912.

About 100 delegates, white and colored, were in the assembly, which was undoubtedly one of the most important labor bodies that ever met in the south, for, not only was it decided by unanimous vote to refer to the membership the proposal to unite with the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers of the Industrial Workers of the World, but, so certain were the delegates that the proposal of the convention would be adopted, that the general officers were instructed to immediately advise the rank and file as to the number of delegates the B. of T.W. should elect to the joint convention of Forest and Lumber Workers and to the general convention of the I.W.W., which conventions are to be held in Chicago this coming September.

On all other propositions also, the convention was progressive to the core. The white and colored delegates met in joint session on the second day despite the fact that the local "Democratic" authorities threatened to get out an injunction prohibiting the convention meeting at all, should this occur.

This great revolt of the Southern Timber and Lumber Workers began about

one year ago when all the mills throughout southwest Louisiana were shut down in an effort to crush the young, but rapidly growing Brotherhood of Timber Workers. Not satisfied with the lockout, the Operators' Association also began a campaign of villification against every man connected with the union blacklisted and forced out of the industry more than one thousand men and capped this act of folly by forcing every worker who applied for a job to take one of the most infamous anti-union oaths ever conceived in the rotten brain of a corporation lawyer. Failing, after all this, to beat the workers back into meek submission, the operators' association then began to fill the lumber belt with gunmen of the very worst and lowest type, to fence in, with boards or barbed wire, the quarters where the workers lived, this despite the fact that all the lumber companies have the gall to charge rent for their so-called houses and the payment of rent, under the laws of Louisiana, is supposed to give a man the full right to control the dwelling as his own.

In one instance a whole town, Fields, La., has been so fenced in, so that people on the outside are forced to get their mail from the United States postoffice through a back window! which is certainly "some" law and order when we consider the fact that Louisiana is a "Democratic" state and has just been swept by the "progressive" wing of that party. But still the spirit of the awakened workers is unbroken and still the union grows, and ever farther and wider spreads its call to action: *"One Big Union, life and freedom for ALL the workers! Don't be a Peon--Be a MAN!"*

The revolt is economic to the last degree, a thing the brutal bosses of the Lumber Trust seem absolutely unable to comprehend, for, like the Manchu mandarins, they have literally driven the workers into rebellion.

In reality, the fight began in 1907, when, taking advantage of the panic, the Lumber Trust cut wages and increased the hours of labor throughout the South so outrageously that a spontaneous strike broke out over a wide area, which strike forced some concessions, but brought no real relief because for the concessions, the workers practically agreed not to organize a union. Fatal error! Since then the Trust has added burden unto burden, until today "common" labor in Arkansas is paid for at the rate of \$1.25 per day while in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi wages, counting in both "skilled" and "common" labor, will not average over \$1.45 per day, for a working day of ten to eleven hours.

On top of this, the cost of living has steadily climbed in all directions, especially in the "commissaries," or company stores, where shoddy and canned cat are sold at a profit that would startle even the soul of Shylock.

On top of all this, the workers were forced to pay fees to support the companies' doctors; fees to support imaginary hospitals and for imaginary treatment therein; premiums for imaginary insurance; outrageous rents for alleged houses, shacks a Lumber King wouldn't herd his hogs in; graft on top of graft, and then more graft was piled upon the workers until human endurance could bear no more, and then came the revolt, and then the lockout, and then the blacklist, and then the oath, and then the gunmen, and now--a supreme struggle is on between the Lumber Trust and its peons in the South.

*International Socialist Review, 13 (July, 1912): 51-52.*

## 22. NEGROES AGAINST WHITES

By

Covington Hall

"They are trying to organize the negroes against the whites!" This has been one of the chief howls raised against the I.W.W. and the Brotherhood of Timber Workers by the Southern Lumber Operators' Association and its hired thugs and assassins to justify the hyena-like deeds they are now committing against the white workmen who must, perforce, take the lead in the struggle now raging for the overthrow of peonage in the South. "Organizing the negroes against the whites!"

This cry is raised for several purposes; first, to distract the attention of all the workers from the vital questions at issue, to turn their attention from such gross, material things as higher wages, shorter hours and better living conditions in the camps and mill towns to loftier ideas and ideals, such as the effect of the "spiritual significance of white supremacy" on the whisky-soaked, fossilized brain of a gun-toting Democratic troglodyte, a human brute with whom no self-respecting negro would acknowledge his "social equality;" second, having failed to split it on craft, political, religious or other lines, to split the Brotherhood into warring factions on race lines, and thereby beat all the workers back into the old meek submission to peonage; third, an attempt on the part of the cave-men of capitalism to justify in the eyes of a world, that is already in revolution against their demoniac rule, the infamous and inhuman deeds that have been and are still being committed against the timber workers and their allies by the Southern Lumber Operators' Association and its thugs and gunmen.

And, first, second, third, fourth, to "Divide and Conquer."

That this is true is shown by the fact that right in the midst of the war, when the tom-toms of race prejudice were sounding their loudest and wildest alarms, John Henry Kirby and his gang have not hesitated to use black scabs against *white men* and white scabs against *black men* when they dared go on strike for human conditions in the peon pens of the association. They have also used black thugs against black union men and more than one rebellious white worker, it is whispered, has met his death in the darkness of the night at the hands of a black gunman and vice versa.

More than once the association has thrown an army of gunmen around the "quarters" where lived its black slaves and dared the white peons, on the penalty of their lives, to so much as try to speak one word with them, for it was hard pressed and hard set against the "organization of the negroes against the whites," the only "whites," in this instance, seeming to be the Lumber Kings, their troglodyte managers, superintendents, foremen, suckers, gunmen and thugs. There were according to these "high born" gentry, evidently no "white" men in the union, though hundreds of them had white skins and were southern born for generations on generations.

And they were not *white* because they had grown tired of the "white supremacy" and "social equality" flim-flam, and set out to organize One Big Union of *all* the workers and overthrow peonage forever in the mills and forests of the South.

They had lost, thanks to the Socialist propaganda, the hallucination that the Lumber Kings cared anything about a lumberjack's color, race or nationality, and proceeded to organize as they were *worked--all together against the boss*, instead of all apart and for him as heretofore. This naturally sent the boss up in the air, and you can't blame the boss, for, for the first time in a generation the southern oligarchs saw their sacred stealings menaced by a uniting working class, which could not be tolerated; so all the methods of "chivalry" were called into play and the furies of hell turned loose on the "insolent," "upstart" workingmen and working farmers who dared to preach and were attempting to organize industrial democracy. Strange how those simple words, industrial democracy, sends the master and pimping classes into such hydrophobic anger!

But despite all the madness of the masters, all their murdering and slugging, the Union still pressed on its way, preaching and teaching the solidarity of labor, ever crying: "A man's life for all the workers in the mills, and forests! Don't be a Peon! Be a *Man*."

Far and wide that cry is sounding on through Dixie--the shriek of the association's rifles at Grabow is echoing and re-echoing that message through the swamps, over the plains and up the hills, back into corners where otherwise it would have taken years for it to go, and the workers, startled from their slumbers, are asking each other in whispers: "Can it be?" "Is the New South, the South of labor, off its knees and on the march to union and victory, at hand?" "Is the dawn really breaking through the blackness of the long, long night?" It is, and there is no power that can stop it if our brothers of the North, the East and West will only stand by us as we are trying to stand together, in the brotherhood of labor, regardless of color, nationality or race, in a stone wall of the toilers against the spoilers of the world.

Now is the time, not after the next election, for the negroes of the

North to act. The boys in jail are there because they fought for *all* the peons, black as well as white. *Now*, and not tomorrow, is the time to save the lives and liberties of Emerson, Lehman, Helton, Burge and their associates. *Now* is the hour of vengeance and retribution in your hands; *now* is the chance and time for *all* the workers to rise against the southern oligarchy and through the might of the One Big Union, organize its cruel peon system off the earth forever. Clan of Toil, awaken; Rebels of the South, arise! Workers of the World, unite! You have nothing but your chains to lose! You have a world to gain!<sup>132</sup>

*International Socialist Review*, 13 (October, 1912): 349-50.

### 23. LABOR STRUGGLES IN THE DEEP SOUTH

By

Covington Hall

#### THE FARM AND FOREST WORKERS' UNION

The Farm and Forest Workers Union was the last attempt we made to re-organize in the Southern District. But for the United States entering the first World War the attempt might have succeeded. The war with its "silk-shirt" wages practically finished organization work in Louisiana, even as about everywhere else. All over the country I.W.W. members were hunted down, and twice Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer complimented President Gompers of the A.F. of L. for aid he and his organizers rendered in running down I.W.W. and "Red" agitators.

I was convinced that part of the deal between the Wilson and Gompers administrations was based on their common interest in destroying the feared and hated I.W.W. I know that the Lumber Trust used the Selective Service machinery in order to draft active union men into the army.

I helped save at least one man from them. Strange as it may seem when the officials of the court martial read my poem, "The Way of Kings, Crowned and Uncrowned;" they reduced the charge against the accused from "Desertion in time of war," carrying the death penalty, to going "A.W.O.L.," the true charge, and gave him 90 days in the guard house.

All this persecution, plus high wages, plus the "patriotic heebiejeebies" then epidemic, made free and open organization impossible; at the end of the war the forests of Louisiana had been practically swept off the earth.

Then came the Ku Klux Klan, backed in Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma by the lumber barons and oil emperors, they (like the industrial tycoons of Germany) having conceived the brilliant idea that moronocracy could be used to crush, not only the I.W.W., but the entire union labor movement of the country. But when the best labor in (the timber country, white as well as colored, began its hegira to Detroit and other Northern cities and industrial areas--that didn't look so good!

So the barons about-faced, ordering the local managers, superintendents, etc., to get out of the Klan; worse, they cut off their contributions to the night-shirted nobility. This last had more to do with the extinction of the Klan in the states named than all the protests of all the "friends of labor" in the North and East ever did.

"What is your authority for that?" I probably will be asked. Well, I got it (as usual) from men the barons thought, because they were Catholics, naturally with them in their efforts to do away with unions everywhere.

It was in just the same conditions that the Farm and Forest Workers Union was born. Laboring men of the south were desperate, as the "Manifesto and By-Laws of the Farm and Forest Workers' Union, District of Louisiana," shows [see below]. . . .

This duty [that "no member shall recognize another on the job or elsewhere"] was embodied in the by-laws of the Klan, but not the recommendation to purchase a high-power rifle. These ideas probably came from fellow worker



J. J. Eager, a Confederate veteran and leader of the old Ku Klux Klan. He was a "prince of a man," but one who held the combine of corruptionists, blacklegs and neurotics then masquerading as the Klan in supreme contempt.

Reading the manifestos and by-laws of the Clan of Toil, and of the Farm and Forest Workers' Union, some may ask: "Can any good come out of Dixie?" and comment further, "They are all crazy!" But one thing they will have to give us "Ignorant Southerners" credit for, is that when we move, we often go the limit.

I doubt if the I.W.W. would have allowed the Farm and Forest Workers Union to affiliate with it after reading its manifestos and by-laws; for, while I.W.W. men have resisted mobs and fought back with what arms they possessed, it does not believe in military action. It agreed with the capitalist tenet that "Might makes Right." In contradistinction to its enemies, its idea of social might was based entirely on building an economic power, called the "One Big Union," so great that it would be irresistible in the final showdown between the profiteering and the producing classes. . . .

"Not A Nigger!"

One of the heroes of the strike was fellow worker I. Gains, a Negro member. I think his first name was Isaac. The same day that 45 of its 50 guards had been discharged by the company, that night a charge of dynamite exploded in the compound where its scabs were herded. In the morning not one of the 500 could be found anywhere, and the mill again closed down.

The Union was accused of the nefarious act; bloodhounds were brought to Merryville. When put on the trail, they headed, not for some unionman's shack, but straight for Manager Estes' bungalow! This would never do, of course, so the dogs were called back, again put on the scent--and again they made for Estes' home! Disgusted, the sheriff took them back to De Ridder; everybody on our side laughed and chortled until tired.

The next move was to arrest Isaac Gains. Taken to Lake Charles and jailed. There Burns detectives grilled him for 90 days. "You are nothing but a nigger, and are going to the penitentiary; but if you will confess and testify that three certain white men (whom they wished to get) are guilty, we will let you off." Steadily, throughout the three long months, Gains refused to turn State's witness, insisting that he had nothing to do with the explosion, and as steadily refused to implicate his white fellow workers, penitentiary or no penitentiary.

We were financially flat broke, and all we could do to aid him was to try to arouse the workers to go to his defense. This we did, week on week in the *Lumberjack*, until so loud and angry were the protests of all decent folks the authorities were compelled to release him.

One day, afterwards, Ed Lehman was talking to a group of lumber workers in De Ridder, trying to get them to "line up." A fellow in the crowd volunteered the information that he would "not join the Forest and Lumber Workers Union, because it took in niggers." "There is not a nigger in the Union," Ed quietly answered. "The hell there ain't," said the guy. "Not a one," said Ed.

"Well, what in h--- is Gains if he ain't a nigger? He is as black as the ace of spade!" "Yes," replied Ed, "he is as black as the ace of spades, but he isn't a nigger." What the devil is he then?" queried the truculent one.

"He is a *man*, a *unionman*, an *I.W.W.*,--A *MAN*!" shot back Ed, "and he has proven it by his actions, and that is more than you have ever done in all your boss-sucking life. There are white *men*, Negro *men* and Mexican *men* in this Union, but no niggers, greasers or white trash! All are *men* on the side of the Union, and all the greasers, niggers and white trash are on the side of the Lumber Trust; and you are one of the white trash. Now, get out! Go tell your boss what I said to you, and don't you ever again come around trying to discourage men I'm trying to line up, damn you! Beat it! And he did.

Ed's assertion that all real men were for the Union, and all "Niggers, greasers and white trash" on the side of the bosses, spread all over the lumber country, the rank and file taking it up and insisting "There are no niggers, greasers and white trash in the Union, only *men*!" It may sound childish, but it had a tremendous effect in countering the bosses' efforts to stir up race prejudice, something Southerners have always to fight, especially in industrial war.

"Cats' Paws? All Right!"

The lumber companies kept 15 or 20 colored preachers traveling up and down the Kansas City Southern Railway warning the Negro workers against joining the Forest and Lumber Workers Union. One of their chief arguments was: "All the white workingmen are trying to do is to use you as cats' paws to pull their chestnuts out of the fire." But this time it didn't work.

"Maybe so," our colored fellow workers replied, "but this is one time we will get some of the chestnuts our paws help pull out of the fire." And they did get their full and fair share of the chestnuts, for the Forest and Lumber Workers Union never violated the principle of "Equal pay for equal work," making no distinction there between race, sex or creed.

This is not to say that we overcame race prejudice. We did smother it, and prevent our opponents from using race against race, and creed against creed, as they had often done in the past.

So strong, so impressive, was the solidarity arising from the struggle, that we were often given valuable information and tips as to what the enemy was planning, by men and women in the offices of the companies and the Trust. This came to us unsolicited, as it will when workers know a class fight is on. . . .

Covington Hall, "Labor Struggles in the Deep South," unpublished manuscript, Howard-Tilton Library, Tulane University, 5-6, 9, 43-46.

#### 24. ANOTHER CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Another Constitutional Convention, that is to say, another legalized flimflam of the people of Louisiana is soon to be assembled.

When it gets to its work, the tax rate of the small suckers will have been doubled or tripled and no political organization other than the Black Democratic party will be able to put a ticket in the field. The disfranchisement of the Working Class will be perfected and, under the guise of "anti-trust" laws, the dying State will attempt to hamstring the unions and balk the rising tide of Industrial Democracy. Vain as is the hope, this will be attempted, for nothing else can be expected either with Hall, Sundberry, and the gang back of them.

Graciously, the Gang has agreed to allow "the sovereign people" to pass on the work of THEIR convention, thus placing the few remaining voters, should they approve the new Constitution, in the position of having legalized the rape of 1898, whereby, without their consent, over EIGHTY THOUSAND WHITE VOTERS and nearly all the negro and colored voters were disfranchised. Under an illegal Constitution, a Constitution the Gang did not dare to submit to even the WHITE VOTE, but traitorously imposed on the people of the State, they now call a new convention to legalize the rape of 1898 and to realize a still further destruction of Democracy.

The convention will assemble in September, 1913. The convention will be of Property, by Property and for Property, thru and thru, and against Man from start to finish; for, on top of the thousands of workers disfranchised by the frame-up of 1898, other thousands have been disfranchised by the war panic. That's why they are calling it at this time. When the Four Rings (City, Reform, Sheriffs and Sawdust), now united in an offensive and defensive Plunderbund, finish their frame-up there will be less freedom left in Louisiana than there is in Liberia and liberty and loot will be synonymous in "Our Fair State."

*Rebellion (June, 1915): 9-10.*

## 25. VIEWS OF VOC ON DIXIELAND

I am now, great Negus, in that part of the alleged Republic of Usa which lies to the Southeastward of the North American continent and which is called by the denizens dwelling therein "Dixieland."

A large part of these people are white in color and another large portion black, but a considerable sprinkling of them are neither white nor black but of a red, yellow and olive color, due, it is said, to too much "White Supremacy" and "Social Equality," the first of which is a supernal virtue and the last an unpardonable sin, according to the ruling tribe of this section, the Donkocrats, or that's the way it sounds to me.

This tribe is very, very virtuous and has passed many laws and statutes to "protect" the Whites from the Blacks, or so it says, and to see to it that no other Tribe or Clan get a lookin at the emoluments of public office or a rakeoff out of the funds sent down here by Northern and British Plutocrats to finance "concessions," which is the euphonious word used by all Usaians to designate what we style loot.

There is no great blasphemy that can be committed by a Dixiean than to sneer at the Donkocrats and the "religion of their fathers," which they say is "White Supremacy," or the doctrine that in Mazuma's Holy Name the Donkocracy has a divine right to all the loot, license and liquor in sight and to come.

Indeed these are a peculiar people, great Negus. They actually and really believe--what won't some folks believe!--that they are the cream of the human race, even out-doing the Chinese in this respect, and it is lafable to hear a Dixiean, suffering from pellagra, asking a blessing over a cowpea-dinner, thanking Mazuma that he is a Donkocrat, and that there are no other people on earth like and his, which is truer than he thinks methinks.

They say their God, Mazuma, made the "Niggers," by which name they designate the tribe of Blacks, "to be hewers of wood and drawers of water forever," and that if it wasn't for the Plutocrats tempting the Donkocrats "everything would be all right in Dixie," and that, if the evil Daughters of Ham had not broken the extremely just laws passed to protect the he-virgins of the Donkocracy, there would not now be a "Race Question in our midst," by which they mean the reds, yellows and olives in their land; these "Mixed Bloods," as they call them, being to their mind the most dangerous of all "Niggers," since they are everlastingly getting out of the "place to which God condemned their mothers" and trying to get up to where their fathers are so easily enjoying the good things of life.

All Blacks and Mixed Bloods, if they have to work for a living, and also a part of the Donks who are called "Poor White Trash," on account of having to work for a living, are not expected to take part in "Politics," by which is meant the grabs of Government, so the "Niggers" are disfranchised, i.e., not allowed to vote in elections for those who shall legalize the robbing in Dixie, because they "corrupt politics;" yet, on the other hand, all females, of the Donkocracy even, are denied the "right of ballot" because "politics are so rotten that it would destroy their Supreme White Supremacy virtue."

When I heard the two reasons why the "Niggers" and Sufferingets were kept out of office I almost fainted, but, as you know, great Negus, I am only a Barbarian and not yet quite used to the wonderful processes by which the thought of Christian Civilization is exprest. It is indeed a remarkable process.

But of all the lands thru which I have rambled since departing from home this people gets my goat, for, being red in color, I would sure be "damned a Nigger" and not allowed any "privileges" whatsoever were my pockets not full of "rocks," as they style gold here. But by Mazuma I am spared much indignity. More anon, great Negus, from your fazed friend and humble servant.

Voc, The Barbarian.

## 26. MANIFESTO AND BY-LAWS

Of The Farm and Forest Workers Union, District of Louisiana

## MANIFESTO

To the Southern Workers, Greeting:

Less than five years ago there was an organization of the common workers of the South. Industrial conditions had become so unbearable that we, the Workers of the South, were on the verge of starvation.

As a protest against these conditions, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers was organized, and quickly grew to a membership of several thousand. But, like all mass organizations, it soon collapsed.

Then came the organization of the National Industrial Union of Forest and Lumber Workers, I.W.W.

Because of a few serious mistakes and the poverty of the membership, this union could not survive the stringent financial crisis that so heavily hit the Workers of the South during the next few years following its launching.

The menacing increase in land monopoly has, today, become the foremost economic question confronting the Southern Workers. So, as man is a land animal, we mean to take back the land and make use and occupancy the only title to land.

Therefore, we recommend that every worker who wishes a piece of land go get on it and hold it for his own.

Knowing, as we do, that the hired assassin is ever ready to obey the command of the exploiter, as exemplified by Couer D'Alene, Cabin Creek, Grabow, and the brutal murder of women and children at Ludlow and in countless other murders of Workers wherever there are labor difficulties, we recommend that every Worker purchase a high-power rifle in order that we may avoid a repetition of the same or, if not able to do this, to defend ourselves against these assassins.<sup>133</sup>

Believing that organization is necessary to our emancipation, that action coupled with power is the only way to improve our wage rate and living conditions, we, the Rebels of the South, have organized the FARM and FOREST WORKERS UNION of the I.W.W.

In this Union we have all that is necessary to "bring in the bacon" NOW and to, finally, aid in ushering in the glorious INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY.

Therefore, We ask YOU to join us in the fight for LAND and LIBERTY.

Signed: L. WILLIFORD, General Sec.Treas., Simms, La.

Signed: W. H. Lewis, Gen. Organizer, Simms, La.

Note--Southern Socialist and Labor papers, please copy.

## BY-LAWS

NAME--The name of this organization shall be the Farm and Forest Workers Union.

PURPOSE--To immediately better the economic condition of the Southern Workers and to aid in the establishment of the Industrial Commonwealth.

OFFICERS--The Officers shall be: A General Secretary-Treasurer and a General Organizer. Their duties shall be strictly clerical and they shall have no governmental power whatsoever.

STRIKES--The power to call or declare a strike shall rest entirely with the membership so concerned.

DUES--The Dues shall be 25 cents a month. The Initiation Fee shall be \$1.50.

DUTIES--No member shall recognize another on the job or elsewhere as an F. and F.W.U member, except in case of extreme necessity, and then the one so appealed to must respond to the best of his or her ability. Any member who violates his or her obligation will be held strictly responsible to the entire membership.

LOCALS--The local organizations shall be known as Local Unions.

DISTRICTS--There shall be one District Council in that State, and the Locals in a given State shall be connected with their respective District Councils, and the Councils to the General Office.

## COMMENT

When I passed thru middle Louisiana in the latter part of October, 1915, I found everything shot to pieces and all except the "Old Guard" so badly loosed they were afraid to even move on the ballot box, lest the Bosses take their cowpeas away from them. It was reported to me that many were saying, "We will never join a dues-paying organization again, on account of the graft in it," which simply meant that the Workers had swallowed, hook, bait and all, the bunc of the Lumber Trust, for, if there was any graft in the Forest and Lumber Workers Union, we who were insinuated to have received it, Emerson, Smith, Hall, Lehman, Filigno, and the rest, grafted about the cheapest and hardest living we ever bit off.

Yet supposing, just for the sake of argument, that we did graft; say we took the whole Fifty Cents a month the members paid in, and you know that is a damn lie, still YOU were WINNERS on the deal, for counting the advance in wages alone that was secured by the Brotherhood, which was most certainly not less than 25 cents a day, which would be \$5.00 for a working month of only 20 days, YOU were \$4.50 a month ahead on the graft, so you never made a better investment in all your life, even if we had grafted the whole Fifty Cents of dues and the initiation fees besides.

Again, as soon as you let the Union die, what happened? Well, YOU KNOW-- the Lumber Trust started out to immediately cut your wages and bring back all the old abuses and more and worse. That's what happened and what will keep on happening unless YOU join the FARM and FOREST WORKERS UNION and do your share toward bettering conditions.

For "God helps those who help themselves," and he helps no one else. Further, in this Moneyized Civilization, those who are unwilling to organize and then to finance their own organizations are the ones who are going to forever get NOTHING FOR THEIR LABOR.

The Officers of and the Men behind the F. and F.W.U. are known to all of you, all are MEN who have stood by their principles regardless of persecution and hunger, who have gone thru the fire and never been found wanting anywhere or at any time. Their fidelity and courage none can successfully question.

Now, once again they have put it up to YOU to quit crawling and be a MAN. What is your answer? There will be little advertising of the F. and F.U. and no hurrahing. It will work on and on until it is ready to strike, so if you don't hear of it, don't assume that it is not here, for it will be Already it has good Locals going and will soon have more. Therefore, I charge you that if you claim to be a Rebel to immediately write Secretary L. Williford, Simms, La., for information as to organizing a Local in your section, but you will get no information until you first PROVE who and what you are. Remember this. Also remember that Secretary Williford and General Organizer W. H. Lewis alone have power to credential Organizers.

Get in NOW and help better the terrible conditions existing for us in Louisiana. Let's at least make a try to keep SOME of the wondrous natural wealth of our native land for OURSELVES.

Yours to win.

COVINGTON HALL

*Rebellion (March), 1916): 3-6.*

## 27. THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Behold the Democratic Party, my son.  
But for it the Nigs would rule and o'er us run.  
It's busted Trusts and at the Bankers raved,  
The cotton crop of Nineteen Fourteen, saved,  
By lad and deed it works, by pen and mouth,  
Forever holding up the Sunny South.  
It saves us from ourselves, the Supreme Whites,  
And for our fathers' constitution fights.  
Thru fifty years of grief and graft and toil

It's kept a fence around old Dixie's soil.  
 It won't let any one else rob us, no--  
 That's why it's now preparednessing so.--  
 Year in and out, it strives for common gains.  
 The blood of chivalry pumps thru its veins.  
 Its tender heart turns no one from its door--  
 It is all things to all men, and some more.  
 Pellagrins, Tenants, Peons, all  
 In worship at its ancient altars fall.  
 The Donkey is its emblem, strength and cinch.  
 Its court of first resort is just Judge Lynch.  
 The child slaves and their mothers, too, it guards  
 As true knight errants watch o'er helpless wards.  
 It's very virtuous, benignant, wise,  
 No issue dodges, and it never lies.  
 It's pure and patriotic to the core.--  
 (It says so itself--the g----d---- old Scalawag.)

Covington

*Rebellion (April, 1916): 2.*

## 28. AS TO "THE RACE QUESTION"

I would rather work side by side with the blackest Union man on earth for Eight Hours and Eight Dollars a day than side by side with the chalkiest-faced white scab or sucker that ever crawled on two legs for twelve hours and a dollar day.

I would rather be a free man in a free Commonwealth equal in freedom with my Mammy's son than be a peon or tenant slave in the most "Supreme White" Empire even the Black Democrats can conceive.

*Rebellion (June, 1915): 25.*

## 29. "WHITE SUPREMACY"

The Judge was white, the Jury was white, the District Attorney was white, the Sheriff and his Deputies were white. All the "Machinery of Justice" (?) was white and elected by a "White Supremacy Party." Before such a court the "Nigger" had about as much show of acquittal as a snowbird has of flying across the Lake of Liquid Fire. But the "Supreme Whites" took the "Nigger" out and lynched him, and did it in the name of "White Supremacy." Can you beat it? It's no wonder, with such Donk brains as that running Dixie, that the Southmen are fast becoming a race of Pellagrins and that the Christian State of Mississippi votes so strong for "Preparedness," which simply means world-wide lynch-law, the reign of the Mob over Justice, of Superstition over Reason.

*Rebellion (February, 1916): 32.*

## POST-WAR AND READJUSTMENT

## 30. NEGRO WORKERS: THE A.F. OF L. OR I.W.W. ?

The giant, Labor, in all the world is awakening. Labor is slowly but surely beginning to realize that the fabric of civilization rests upon its shoulders. Only ignorance stands between labor and economic freedom. Ignorance is the mother of race prejudice, and prejudice still haunts the trail of labor. White and black workingmen, in the South, still fight over race prejudice, while the rich white plutocrats pick the pockets of both. The official American labor organization--the American Federation of Labor is criminally negligent and recreant to its duty, in either ignoring or opposing Negro workers.

Not only does it ignore Negro workers, however, as a rule it also ignores the unskilled worker and the women.

The American Federation of Labor, is essentially a craft or trades' union organization. The Negro is mostly an unskilled laborer. His interests lie with that group which neither discriminates against workers on account of color, or on account of being unskilled.

There is but one question, which, more than any other, presses upon the mind of the worker today, regardless of whether he be of one race or another, of one color another--the question of how he can improve his conditions, raise his wages, shorten his hours of labor and gain something more of freedom from his master--the owners of the industry wherein he labors.

To the black race, who, but recently, with the assistance of the white men of the northern states, broke their chains of bondage and ended chattel slavery, a prospect of further freedom, of REAL FREEDOM, should be most appealing.

For it is a fact that the Negro worker is no better off under the freedom he has gained than the slavery from which he has escaped. As chattel slaves we were the property of our masters, and, as a piece of valuable property, our masters were considerate of us and careful of our health and welfare. Today, as wage-earners, the boss may work us to death, at the hardest and most hazardous labor, at the longest hours, at the lowest pay; we may quietly starve when out of work and the boss loses nothing by it and has no interest in us. To him the worker is but a machine for producing profits, and when you, as a slave who sells himself to the master on the installment plan, become old, or broken in health or strength, or should you be killed while at work, the master merely gets another wage slave on the same terms.

We who have worked in the South know that conditions in lumber and turpentine camps, in the fields of cane, cotton and tobacco, in the mills and mines of Dixie, are such that workers suffer a more miserable existence than ever prevailed among the chattel slaves before the great Civil War. Thousands of us have come and are coming northward, crossing the Mason and Dixon line seeking better conditions. As wage slaves we have run away from the masters in the South, but to become the wage slaves of the masters of the North. In the north we find that the hardest work and the poorest pay is our portion. We are driven while on the job and the high cost of living offsets any higher pay we might receive.

The white wage-worker is little, if any, better off. He is a slave the same as we are, and like us he is regarded by the boss only as a means of making profits. The working class as a whole, grows poorer and more miserable year by year, while the employing class, who do not work at all, enjoy wealth and luxury beyond the dreams of titled lords and kings.

As you are both wage-workers, you have a common interest in improving conditions of the wage-working class. Understanding this, the employing class seeks to engender race hatred between the two. He sets the black worker against the white worker and the white worker against the black, and keeps both divided and enslaved. Our change from chattel slaves to wage slaves has benefited no one but the masters of industry. They have used us as wage slaves to beat down the wages of the white wage slaves, and by a continual talk of "race problems," "negro questions," "segregation," etc.,

make an artificial race hatred and division by poisoning the minds of both whites and blacks in an effort to stop any movement of labor that threatens the dividends of the industrial kings. Race prejudice has no place in a labor organization. As Abraham Lincoln has said, "The strongest bond that should bind man to man in human society is that between the working people of all races and of all nations."

The only problem then, which the colored worker should consider as a worker, is the problem of organizing with other working men in the labor organization that best expresses the interests of the whole working class against the slavery and oppression of the whole capitalist class. Such an organization is the I.W.W., the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD, the only labor union that has never, IN THEORY OR PRACTICE, since its beginning twelve years ago, barred the workers of any race or nation from membership. The following has stood as a principle of the I.W.W., embodied in its official constitution since its formation in 1905:

"By-Laws--Article 1. Section 1. No working man or woman shall be excluded from membership in Unions because of creed or color."

If you are a wage-worker you are welcome in the I.W.W. halls, no matter what your color. By this you may see that the I.W.W. is not a white man's union, not a black man's union, not a red or yellow man's union, but a WORKING MAN'S UNION. ALL OF THE WORKING CLASS IN ONE BIG UNION.

In the I.W.W. all wage-workers meet on common ground. No matter what language you may speak, whether you were born in Europe, in Asia or in any other part of the world, you will find a welcome as a fellow worker. In the harvest fields, where the I.W.W. controls, last summer saw white men, black men and Japanese working together as union men and raising the pay of all who gathered the grains. In the great strikes which the I.W.W. has conducted at Lawrence, Mass. in the woolen mills, in the iron mine of Minnesota and elsewhere, the I.W.W. has brought the workers of many races, colors and tongues together invictorious battles for a better life.

Not only does the I.W.W. differ from all organizations is a fundamental difference in form of organization from all other labor unions. You have seen other labor unions organized on crafts or trade lines. Craft unionism means that any small section of any industry has a labor union separate from all other sections that cannot act in any concerted movement of labor because of this craft separation. For example, in the railroad industry there are the engineers' union, the conductors' union, the brakemen's union and many others on the road in the shops and yards.

Each union acts for itself and usually has time agreements with the companies for a term of years, each agreement ending at a different time than the others. When one craft union goes on strike at the end of the time agreement, the other craft unions keep at work and by remaining on the job act as scabs and strikebreakers in defeating their fellow workers of the craft on strike.

Thus in 1911 the men in the shops of the Harriman lines went on strike and the trainmen, who belonged to different craft unions, remained at work; the train crews took cars from and delivered cars to the strikebreakers in the shops because they were organized separately and had separate time agreements with the companies. The strike was lost because the railroad workers were organized wrong. The I.W.W. has INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM, which means that all crafts in any industry are organized together and act together. Had the I.W.W. been in the place of the craft unions on the Harriman lines in 1911, all workers could have gone out together, not a wheel would have turned, not a train would have moved until the companies would have come to terms with the shopmen. For the I.W.W. makes no TIME AGREEMENTS with any employer and makes AN INJURY TO ONE AN INJURY TO ALL. The I.W.W. always leaves its members free to strike when they see an opportunity to better themselves or support their fellow workers.

The foundation of the I.W.W. is INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM. ALL workers in any division of any industry are organized into an INDUSTRIAL UNION OF ALL the workers in the ENTIRE INDUSTRY: these INDUSTRIAL UNIONS in turn are organized into INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENTS of connecting, or kindred industries, while all are brought together in THE GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD--ONE BIG UNION OF ALL THE WORKING CLASS OF THE WORLD. No one but actual wage workers may join. The working class cannot depend upon anyone but itself to free it from wage slavery. "He who would be free, himself must



strike the blow."

When the I.W.W., through this form of INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM, has become powerful enough, it will institute an INDUSTRIAL COMMONWEALTH; it will end slavery and oppression forever and in its place will be a world of workers, by the workers and for the workers; a world where there will be no poverty and want among those who feed and clothe and house the world; a world where the words "master" and "slave" shall be forgotten; a world where peace and happiness shall reign and where the children of men shall live as brothers in a world-wide INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY.

The following is the preamble of the I.W.W. constitution, showing the reason and form of its organization, the aims and purposes of its membership:

"The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

"Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production and abolish the wage system.

"We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the evergrowing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the workers have interests in common with their employers.

"These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, this making an injury to one an injury to all.

"Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage system.'

"It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized not only for the every day struggle with capitalists, but to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old."

*The Messenger*, 2 (July, 1919): 14-15.

### 31. WHY NEGROES SHOULD JOIN THE I.W.W.

The I.W.W. is the only labor organization in the United States which draws no race or color line. It deals chiefly, too, with unskilled labor and most Negroes are unskilled laborers. They stand on the principle of industrial unionism, which would necessarily include, in its organization, any Negroes in an industry. For instance, the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, has in its organization, the conductors, firemen, engineers and switchmen. Negroes are not permitted to join, notwithstanding the fact that there are 149,000 Negroes engaged in the transportation work. The I.W.W. would include those 149,000 Negroes, who have the power, by stopping their work, to tie up the railroads as completely as the Big Four Brotherhood could. If the Negroes stopped loading the cars, repairing the tracks and producing the materials which are necessary for the transportation, the engineers would have nothing to carry, but the Big Four Brotherhoods are so highly American that they are shot through with race prejudice which blinds them to their enlightened self-interest.

There is another reason why Negroes should join the I.W.W. The Negro must engage in direct action. He is forced to do this by the government. When the whites speak of direct action, they are told to use their political

power. But with the Negro it is different. He has no political power. Three-fourths of the Negroes in the United States are disfranchised. Over two million Negro men pay taxes but cannot vote. Therefore, the only recourse the Negro has is industrial action, and since he must combine with those forces which draw no line against him, it is simply logical for him to throw his lot with the Industrial Workers of the World. Nor do the Negroes need to bother about the abuse heaped on the I.W.W. Most of it is lies, told by their opponents, just as the opponents of the Negroes lie about them. Again it needs to be noted that most of the forces opposed to the I.W.W. are also opposed to Negroes. John Sharp Williams, Vardaman, Hoke Smith, Thomas Dixon, D. W. Griffith, who produced the *Birth of a Nation*--and practically all the anti-Negro group, are opposed to the I.W.W. Now, as a general proposition and principle, if we found John Sharp Williams, Vardaman, Hoke Smith, Thomas Dixon and D. W. Griffith opposed to anything, we should be inclined to accept it on its face without an examination. And Negroes cannot afford to allow those Southern bourgeois and race prejudiced crackers, together with their hand picked Negro leaders, to choose for them the organizations in which they shall go. The editors of the *MESSENGER* have made a thorough study of the economic and social problems in the United States. We know the history of labor organizations. We know their record on the race question. We have compared them carefully. We know that the American Federation of Labor is a machine for the propagation of race prejudice. We, therefore, urge the Negroes to join their international brothers. The Industrial Workers of the World, the I.W.W.<sup>134</sup>

*The Messenger*, 2 (July, 1919): 8.

### 32. THE MARCH OF INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Because of the slowness and inadequacy of political action class conscious labor is more and more relying on industrial solidarity as the omnipotent weapon for the achievement of its immediate aims as well as its ultimate liberation. All over the world--in Australia, Canada, England, France, Spain and the Virgin Islands, the working class with minds that interpret the inevitable trend of social and industrial evolution, is being inspired with the grand idea of the One Big Union. This new form of unionism, logical and revolutionary, is the workers reply to capitalism's gigantic combinations of trusts, cartels and financial syndicates. It is the antidote for capitalist poisons.

Split up into separate craft unions, convulsed by jurisdictional jealousies, deluded by notions of craft aristocracy, organized labor in the past refused to avail itself of its entire strength, but instead, permitted itself to be flattered with patriotic slush, cajoled by ecclesiastical soothsayers, pampered by designing philanthropists and deceived by artful and professional worshippers at the shrine of racial and national prejudices. Instead of depending upon their industrial power to achieve results, the workers were induced by their venal and corrupt leaders to over-emphasize and use political means, such as dignified arbitrations and eminently proper "working agreements," for the enforcement of their demands. This policy proved barren of real results. Instinctively labor began to change its tactics. It saw that "orderly" methods, methods that depended upon politicians to legislate justice for the working class were clumsy of execution and productive of delay and internal discord. With their disillusionment as to tactics, the working class began to apply a radical remedy--one that could bring maximum results by the exertion of a maximum of pressure.

Strikes ceased to be localized as they extended their scope and embraced entire industries. This tendency became infectious, and when the workers of an industry struck to enforce their demands, other groups, superficially unrelated, struck sympathetically. With many a reverse, but with definite gains in discipline, experience and class solidarity, it was but a question of time that the goal of a Big Strike became labor's objective. The dream of the Socialist theoretician was gradually transferred from the inanimate pages of

books to the sentient and pulsating battlefields of the class-struggle. Thus the theory of the General Strike became more and more coordinated with the actualities of industrial and political life.

This development corresponded in character with the growth of capitalist combinations. It was the ruthless competition among small businesses that forced the birth of trusts. Also it was the sdabbing of one craft upon another in cases of strike that called the industrial union into being. To have unity of action without unity of purpose and organization was an anachronism that could not long exist. Hence, in order for the General strike to function effectively, it had to have an organization of suitable structure.

Realizing the futility of attempting general strikes while maintaining craft unions, the workers, ignoring the advice of conservative leaders, began to scrap their obsolete and unwieldy organizations for the more wieldy and, to the capitalists, terror-inspiring industrial union. To conform with the goal of a strike that included every worker, the form of One Big Union that included all workers was evolved. The accomplishment of this revolutionary aim was opposed at every step by the forces of reaction in and outside of the ranks of labor. Imperial business interests recognized in the new union a formidable and deadly foe and mobilized every ounce of strength to destroy it. Governments whose chicane had deceived the workers into believing in their impartiality, threw off their masks and revealed their class affiliation and class character. The class struggle was more luridly revealed. Persecution of various kinds was meted out to the leaders. Laws to suppress industrial unions were enacted and, to live up to the best traditions of patriotism, so that Americanism should not perish from the earth, members of the Industrial Workers of the World were tarred and feathered, deported into arid wildernesses, while their leaders were treated even as Negroes, are now being treated--LYNCHED! However, despite misrepresentation, persecution and violence visited upon its disciples, the principles of the One Big Union are swiftly encircling the globe and making new converts. From the Pacific Coast it sweeps eastward to the Atlantic, across the ocean to Europe, and then to Asia. Where it will stop only its proponents dare assert with any degree of positiveness. Already all races are affected. Its magnetic phrase--One Big Union--has magnetic potency in bringing members of the working class under its sway. Wherever it is heard, be it in Winnipeg, Glasgow, Sydney or the little known islands of the Virgin group, the workers become victims of its seductive spell. ON WITH THE ONE BIG UNION! ON WITH INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM! ON WITH THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD!

*The Messenger*, 2 (September, 1919): 6-7.

### 33. JUSTICE FOR THE NEGRO

#### How He Can Get It

Two lynchings in a week--one every three or four days--that is the rate at which the people in this "land of the free and home of the brave" have been killing colored men and women for the past thirty years--3,224 Negroes known to have been put to death by mobs in this country since 1889, and put to death with every kind of torture that human fiends could invent.

Even during the war, while colored soldiers were being obliged to "fight for democracy" abroad, ninety-one of their race were lynched at home.

The wrongs of the Negro in the United States are not confined to lynchings, however. When allowed to live and work for the community, he is subjected to constant humiliation, injustice and discrimination. In the cities he is forced to live in the meanest districts, where his rent is doubled and tripled, while conditions of health and safety are neglected in favor of the white sections. In many states he is obliged to ride in special "Jim Crow" cars, hardly fit for cattle. Almost everywhere all semblance of political rights is denied him.

## COLORED WORKERS TREATED UNFAIRLY

When the Negro goes to ask for work he meets with the same systematic discrimination. Thousands of jobs are closed to him solely on account of his color. He is considered only fit for the most menial occupations. In many cases to accept a lower wage than is paid to white men for the same work. *Everywhere the odds are against him in the struggle for existence.*

Throughout this land of liberty, so-called, the Negro worker is treated as an inferior; he is cursed and spat upon; he is treated, not as a human being, but as an animal, a beast of burden for the ruling class. When he tries to improve his condition, he is shoved back into the mire of degradation and poverty and told to "keep his place."

How can the Negro combat this widespread injustice? How can he, not only put a stop to lynchings, but force the white race to grant him equal treatment? *How can he get his rights as a human being?*

Protests, petitions and resolutions will never accomplish anything. It is useless to waste time and money on them. The government is in the hands of the ruling class of white men and will do as they wish. No appeal to the political powers will ever secure justice for the Negro.

## THE MASTER CLASS FEARS THE ORGANIZED WORKER

He has, however, one weapon that the master class fears--the power to fold his arms and refuse to work for the community until he is guaranteed fair treatment. Remember how alarmed the South became over the emigration of colored workers two years ago, and what desperate means were used to try to keep them from leaving the mills and cotton fields? *The only power of the Negro is his power as a worker; his one weapon is the strike.* Only by organizing and refusing to work for those who abuse him can he put an end to the injustice and oppression he now endures.

The colored working men and women of the United States must organize in defense of their rights. They must join together in labor unions so as to be able to enforce their demand for an equal share of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." When they are in a position to say to any community, "If you do not stop discrimination against the colored race, we will stop working for you," the hidden forces behind the government will see to it that lynchings cease and discrimination comes to an end. Only by threatening to withdraw their labor power and thereby cripple industry and agriculture can the Negroes secure equal treatment with other workers.

## THE WORKERS OF EVERY RACE MUST JOIN TOGETHER

But the Negroes cannot accomplish this alone; they must unite with the other workers in order to make their industrial power count to the utmost. If they form separate racial organizations they will encourage race prejudice and help the master class in their effort to divide the workers along false lines of color and set one race against the other, in order to use both for their own selfish ends.

The workers of every race and nationality must join in one common group against their one common enemy--the employers--so as to be able to defend themselves and one another. Protecting for the working class lies in complete solidarity of the workers, without regard to race, creed, sex or color. "One Enemy--One Union!" must be their watchword.

## TRADE UNIONS DO NOT WANT THE NEGRO

Most American labor organizations, however, shut their doors to the colored workers. The American Federation of Labor excludes him from many of its unions. In those to which he is admitted, he is treated as an inferior. *The Negro has no chance in the old-line trade unions.* They do not want him. They admit him only under compulsion and treat him with contempt. Their officials, who discourage strikes for higher wages or shorter hours, are always ready, as in the case of the Switchmen's Union, to permit a strike aimed to prevent the employment of colored men.

The narrow-minded policy of excluding the Negro from the trade unions

often forces him to become a strike-breaker against his will by closing legitimate occupations to him. The consequence is racial conflicts such as the frightful tragedy in East St. Louis in 1917.

#### THE I.W.W. ADMITS NEGRO TO FULL MEMBERSHIP

There is one international labor organization in this country that admits the colored worker on a footing of absolute equality with the white--the Industrial Workers of the World. The first section of its By-Laws provides "no working man or woman shall be excluded from membership because of creed or color." This principle has been scrupulously lived up to since the organization was founded.

In the I.W.W. the colored worker, man or woman, is on an equal footing with every other worker. He has the same voice in determining the policies of the organization, and his interests as zealously as those of any other member.

Not only does the I.W.W. offer the Negro worker union membership free from any taint or suggestion of racial inferiority, but in its form of organization it is far superior to the old-fashioned trade unions.

#### INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM THE STRONGEST FORM OF ORGANIZATION

The I.W.W. organizes the workers by industries, not trades, instead of the American Federation of Labor plan of dividing the workers in any plant into ten or twenty separate craft unions, with separate meetings and separate sets of officials, the I.W.W. unites *all the workers in each industry, whatever their particular line of work* may be, into One Big Industrial Union. In this way, the industrial power of the workers is combined and, when any of them have a disagreement with their employer, they are backed by the united support of ALL the workers in that industry.

But the I.W.W. does not limit its aim, as do the trade unions, to "less work and more pay." Its greatest object is *the complete emancipation of the working class*. As long as the workers hold their jobs only by permission of some employer, they are not free. As long as there is one class that lives in ease and idleness of their labor, they are industrial slaves. Freedom for the workers will come only when everybody does his share of the work of the world and when the workers take control of the industries and operate them, not as at present, for the benefit of the leisure class, but for the welfare of society as a whole.

#### SERVANTS OF CAPITALISM LIE ABOUT THE I.W.W.

Do not believe the lies being told about the I.W.W. by the hired agents of the capitalists--the press, preachers and politicians. They are paid to deceive the workers and lead them astray. They are hired to throw dust in their eyes because the master class *does not dare to let them know the truth*.

Investigate the I.W.W. for yourself and get the facts. We are confident that, when you learn the truth about it, you will realize that it is to your interests to join and help build up the organization.

Fellow workers of the colored race, do not expect justice or fair treatment as a gift from the ruling class. *You will get from them nothing but what you are strong enough to take.* "In union there is strength." The only power that the workers of any race or nationality have is their power to act together as workers. We, therefore, urge you to join with your fellow workers of every race in the

#### ONE BIG UNION of the INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD

1001 West Madison Street, Chicago Illinois

Workers' Halls, with Reading Rooms, at 119 S. Throop St. and 951 W. Madison St.

NOTE--The I.W.W. admits to membership every wage worker, man or woman, young or old, skilled or unskilled. Its plan of organization includes all workers. No matter what your occupation, if you work for wages, you can get a union card in the I.W.W.

Pamphlet, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn Papers, State Historiciety of Wisconsin.

## 34. THERE IS NO RACE PROBLEM

One group of workers in the United States that all too little organization work has been done among is that of the colored men and women of the country. One reason for this is that workers' organizations have mostly followed the large industries where the work was constant, and these have largely been located in the Northern states. Another reason is that in the Southern states the task of obtaining food, clothing and shelter has been comparatively more easy than in the North. This has made the organization of strong unions for the purpose of self-protection less needed in the South than in the North.

But the old-time conditions are gone. Giant industries have been introduced in the South. More than this, hundreds of thousands of colored workers have been induced to come North to work in the giant industries of this section because of beautiful promises, that were made to them. More than 100,000 colored men were brought from the South to work in the packing houses of Chicago alone during 1917-18.

The employers do not want any organizations among the workers, either colored or white. They want every worker, no matter what his race, to go to the factory gates with his hat in his hand and ask humbly for a job at just what the boss is willing to pay and to work just as long hours as the boss wants him to work. For the purpose of keeping the workers divided, the employers want all workers to believe that there is a race problem that must be solved. For the purpose of keeping the workers of all races apart, the employers are willing to have race riots that go to unlimited proportions and result in the death of hundreds of victims. It matters not to the employers how many are killed and wounded, or how much property is destroyed, just so it is only the workers who suffer.

But the problem of the workers is not a race problem. There is no white or brown races. All have but one problem to solve, and that is the problem of how to overthrow the system of slavery under which all are bound to the employing class. When this one problem is solved there will be no race problem.

No employer cares what the color of his worker is. The only consideration with him is whether the worker he hires will produce the most profit for him. The owners of the Chicago packing plants are all white and they hire those who can do the work, regardless of their color. It is profits they want, but they know their profits will vanish the moment the workers join in one organization without any regard to what race they belong to. For that reason they are doing their best to keep the workers apart, and it is just for that very reason the workers of all races should form themselves into one strong organization that is formed on correct lines, and do this for the purpose of overthrowing the system of slavery.

*New Solidarity, September 27, 1919.*

## 35. I.W.W. WORKERS BUSY IN CHICAGO

Radical Propaganda on the Increase, But Has Not  
Reached Proportion of Movement

OPPOSED TO WILSON

Southern Folk Hostile to the President on Account of Mob Violence

Chicago, Ill., Nov. 20.--Radical propaganda among Negroes is on the increase in Chicago. But it has not resulted in any definite drift, and in no respect has assumed the proportions of a "movement." This is the view of T. Arnold Hill, secretary of the Urban League, the foremost employment and social center of the colored race. Other prominent workers emphasized this view.<sup>135</sup>

"I am sure that socialist and syndicalist propaganda has not increased among the Negroes in the proportions that it has among the whites," said Hill. "There are papers and magazines published every month of course. It can easily be shown that they have been in existence for years, and slowly built up a self-sustaining subscription list. One of these (the Messenger) is extremely radical. Its editor is an instructor in the Rand School for Socialism in New York.<sup>136</sup>

"The I.W.W. has a special organizer, J. W. Sims, formerly an organizer for the American Federation of Labor, active in Chicago. Negro leaders from four southern cities have passed thru Chicago in the last two weeks. In all cases they escaped from mobs seeking to lynch them or they were warned by white officials and friends that if they did not leave, mobs would get them. Also in each instance the refugee was promoting the work of an organization which urges the colored race to stand for the complete constitutional rights of the Negro.<sup>137</sup>

"I have talked with these men who escaped the mobs or were warned of mobs, said Dr. George Cleveland Hall, one of the leaders in Chicago and a member of the State Race Relationships commission. There is a propaganda and a movement active in the south which aims to destroy Negro leadership. If the department of justice is looking for propaganda of violence and lawlessness, utter disregard of the constitution and law and order, we suggest that the department pay some attention to this phase of sedition, anarchy and contempt for American institutions.

"Is the Negro getting more hostile to our government?" Not at all. He is turning more and more bitterly against the administration of our government, however, which permits discrimination in law and action against people who are asking only constitutional rights. Our enemies always emphasize social equality. But you will notice we put the strong pedal on economic and political equality. Let us have these and social equality will take care of itself."

*Baltimore Afro-American, November 21, 1919.*

### 36. STRIKE MIGHTIER THAN BULLETS

James Weldon Johnson says Strikes will bring Whites to Reason

I.W.W. PRAISED

Referred to as Only Organization Freely Admitting Colored People

New York, Dec. 4.--Asserting that it was useless for colored people to take up shotguns and shoot down white people who oppressed them, altho it "helped matters" when colored people fired back and killed whites who attacked them. James W. Johnson, Field Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People declared Monday night that the mightiest weapon in the hands of the colored people is the "strike." He was the main speaker at the church of the Ascension.

"If the colored people in a city like Jacksonville, Florida, for example, would organize," Mr. Johnson said, "they could help wonderfully to better their condition. They could send a committee representing ten thousand of their number to the city government, and declare that if they did not receive protection, equal schools, abolition of the jim crow conditions, or iron or do a stitch of work. . . . Such a course would be more effective than the use of the shotgun.

Mr. Johnson stated that the I.W.W., which is being condemned by thoughtless newspapers as radical, is nevertheless the only organization that takes the Negro freely. He said the A.F. of L. accepted colored members only when it was absolutely necessary.

Castigating pussyfooters in general and spineless men who are relying on "good white friends" to give them citizenships rights, Mr. Johnson admonished his hearers that fifteen millions of people in this country cannot be weak,

they will get only as much as they will take, go out and lay hands on, to seize and to hold.

President Wilson was said to be to blame for the increase of lynchings and mob violence in the South.

*Baltimore Afro-American, December 5, 1919.*

### 37. BEN FLETCHER<sup>138</sup>

Negro newspapers seldom publish anything about men who are useful to the race. Some parasite, ecclesiastical poltroon, sacerdotal tax gatherer, political faker or business exploiter will have his name in the papers, weekly or daily. But when it comes to one of those who fights for the great masses to lessen their hours of work, to increase their wages, to decrease their high cost of living, to make life more livable for the toiling black workers--that man is not respectable for the average Negro sheet.

Such a man is Ben Fletcher. He is one of the leading organizers of the Industrial Workers of the World, commonly known as I.W.W. He is in the Leavenworth Penitentiary, Kansas, where he was sent for trying to secure better working conditions for colored men and women in the United States. He has a vision far beyond that of almost any Negro leader whom we know. He threw in his lot with his fellow white workers, who work side by side with black men and black women to raise their standard of living. It is not uncommon to see Negro papers have headlines concerning a Negro who had committed murder, cut some woman's throat, stolen a chicken or a loaf of bread, but those same papers never record happenings concerning the few Negro manly men who go to prison for principle. Ben Fletcher is in Leavenworth for principle--a principle which when adopted, will put all the Negro leaders out of their parasitical jobs. That principle is that to the workers belongs the world, but useful work is not done by Negro leaders.

We want to advocate and urge that Negro societies, lodges, churches, N.A.A.C.P. branches and, of course, their labor organizations begin to protest against the imprisonment of Ben Fletcher and to demand his release. He has been of more service to the masses of the plain Negro people than all the windjamming Negro leaders in the United States.

*The Messenger* 2 (August, 1919): 28-29.

### 38. THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

To the Marshal of the Northern District of Illinois,

Greeting:

You are hereby commanded that you take Ben Fletcher if he shall be found in your district and him safely keep, so that you have his body forthwith before the Judge of the District Court of the said United States for the Northern District of Illinois, at Chicago, in the Eastern Division of the said District, to answer unto THE SAID UNITED STATES in an indictment pending in the said Court against him charging that he together with William D. Haywood and others, during the period from April 6, 1917, to September 28, 1917, at Chicago, in the Eastern Division of the Northern District of Illinois, unlawfully and feloniously did conspire by force to prevent, hinder and delay the execution of the laws of the United States pertaining to the carrying on of the war with the Imperial German Government; to injure, oppress, threaten, and intimidate citizens in the free exercise and enjoyment of the right and privilege of supplying the United States with war munitions, supplies and transportation; to commit divers offenses consisting of procuring persons to fail to comply with the registration and draft laws of the United States, and



of causing disloyalty in the military and naval service; to obstruct the recruiting and enlistment service; and to commit divers offenses consisting of placing in the post office at Chicago of mail matter for the purpose of executing a scheme to defraud employers of labor; contrary to the form of the statutes of the United States in such case made and provided; viz: Sections 6, 19 and 37 of the Criminal Code of the United States, and Section 4 of the "Espionage Act" of June 15, 1917.

And have you then and there this writ, with your return hereon.

Witness, the Hon. Kenesaw M. Landis, Judge of the District Court of the United States of America, for the Northern District of Illinois, at Chicago, aforesaid, this 28th day of September in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventeen, and in the 142nd year of the Independence of the said United States.

T. C. Mac Millan, Clerk

United States of America  
Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division

The President of the United States of America to the Marshal of the Northern District of Illinois, and to the Warden of the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas

Greeting:

Whereas Ben Fletcher appeared before the District Court of the United States of America for the Eastern Division of the Northern District of Illinois, on the First day of April A.D. 1918 to answer an indictment filed therein against him for violation of Sections 6, 19 and 37 of the Criminal Code of the United States and Section 4 of the "Espionage Act" of June 15, 1917, and the said Ben Fletcher upon a trial in due form of law, having been found guilty as charged in the said indictment, and having on August 30, 1918 been sentenced to imprisonment in the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth Kansas for and during a period of six years on count 1, ten years on counts 2 and 4 and two years on count 3, said sentences to run concurrently and to pay a fine of five thousand dollars on each counts 1 and 2 and a fine of ten thousand dollars on each of counts of 3 and 4 besides the costs in this behalf expended.

Now therefore you said Marshal are hereby commanded that you convey the said Ben Fletcher to the said Penitentiary and you the said Warden of the said Penitentiary are hereby commanded that you receive the said Ben Fletcher into the said Penitentiary and him there safely keep until the expiration of said sentence, or until he be discharged therefrom by the due course of law.

Witness the Hon. Kenesaw M. Landis, Judge of the District Court of the United States of America for the said District of Chicago aforesaid, this 30th day of August, in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred eighteen and of the independence of the United States the 143rd year.

T. C. Mac Millan, Clerk

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
EASTERN DIVISION

United States of America  
Plaintiff vs. William D. Haywood, et all Defendants

Affidavit in Forma Pauperis  
No. 6125

State of Kansas, County of Leavenworth SS

Benjamin H. Fletcher, being first duly sworn, on his oath says that he is a native born citizen of the United States; that on the 30th day of August, 1918, after a trial before a jury duly empannelled in the above entitled court, he was adjudged guilty of the crime of conspiracy committed as charged in the first four counts of the indictment in the above entitled cause and sentenced to imprisonment in the United States penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, for the term of ten years and to pay a fine of \$30,000; that he desires to sue out a writ of error to the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and to review said conviction and reverse said judgment for error; and has been advised by Mr. George F. Vanderveer and Mr.

Otto Christensen, his attorneys, and verily believes that he is entitled to the redress he seeks; but that because of his poverty he is wholly unable to pay the costs of said writ of error, or to give any security for the same and therefore makes this application for leave to sue out and prosecute the same to a conclusion without being required to prepay any fees or costs or for the printing of the record in said Appellate Court and without being required to give any security therefor.

Benjamin H. Fletcher

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this 21st day of February, A.D. 1919.  
Thos. C. Taylor, Notary Public  
My commission expires Jan. 13th, 1923.

Miscellaneous Political Records, Political Prisoners, U.S. Department of Justice Files, National Archives.

## NOTES AND INDEX



## NOTES

- 1 Jerome Dowd was a professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin at the time. Earlier he taught at Trinity College in North Carolina.
- 2 The reference to a "second Daniel" suggests the Biblical Daniel who was protected by God when cast into a lions den as a test of his faith.
- 3 The Spanish-American War heroes were Admiral George Dewey (Manila), Rear-Admiral W. S. Schley (Manila), Rear-Admiral W. T. Sampson (Santiago), Lieutenant R. P. Hobson (Santiago).
- 4 Kelly Miller (1863-1939), educator and author, was a professor of mathematics at Howard University for forty-four years. Miller assisted W. E. B. Du Bois in editing *The Crisis*, and lectured throughout the nation on social issues. In addition to numerous articles, he authored *Race Adjustment* (1908), *Out of the House of Bondage* (1917), and *The Everlasting Stain* (1924).
- 5 "Geophagy" refers to eating clay. Recent studies have demonstrated that the practice was common among both blacks (slaves called it "cachexia Africana") and whites, and is still found in the rural South. In moderation it apparently has little effect on one's personal health. The source and cause of this uncommon practice is a matter of conjecture, and a phenomenon which remains inadequately understood.
- 6 For background on Booker T. Washington, see Vol. IV, note 8.
- 7 For Fisk University, see note 19.
- 8 For background on President Benjamin Harrison, see Vol. 3, note 63. *De jure* means "in law," and *de facto* means "in practice."
- 9 Dr. Washington refers to Booker T. Washington (see Vol. IV, note 8). For background on Timothy Thomas Fortune, see Vol. III, note 10, and Vol. IV, note 119.
- 10 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (Philadelphia, 1899). For background on Du Bois, see Vol. IV, note 136.  
Black Codes (1865-66) were laws passed in the ex-Confederate states following the Civil War. These laws were passed to define the legal status of blacks after the abolition of slavery. They dealt with all facets of institutional life, such as vagrancy, apprenticeship, penalties for crimes, property rights, and marriage. The spirit of these laws was to reestablish a system of racial control which had been lost with the abolition of slavery.  
For background on the Emancipation Proclamation, see Vol. I, note 14.
- 11 William L. Bulkley was one of the founders of the Committee on Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York (1906). This organization, along with the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes (1910), and the National League for the Protection Colored Women (1905), were merged in 1911 to form the National Urban League.

- 12 For background on President Grover Cleveland, see Vol. III, note 61. Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), 26th President of the United States (1901-09), was born into a prosperous New York family. Almost immediately upon graduation from Harvard University, he became active politically, serving in the New York Assembly, as a member of the Civil Service Commission, as police commissioner of New York, and as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Roosevelt became a household word after the national publicity given the "Rough Riders" which he lead during the Spanish-American War. Following the war he was elected governor of New York, and then assumed the Vice Presidency under President William McKinley (see Vol. III, note 37). When McKinley was assassinated, Roosevelt became President of the United States. A vigorous man both physically and intellectually, Roosevelt's activities included explorations in the Amazon jungles as well as a four-volume history, *The Winning of the West* (1889-96). See also note 28.

The Mason-Dixon Line is the boundry between Pennsylvania and Maryland, latitude 39-43-26.3 North. It was surveyed by Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon in 1767 in order to settle a continuing dispute between the two colonies over the exact location of the boundry. The line was a convenient demarcation between free northern states and southern slave states.
- 13 For background on Eugene V. Debs, see Vol. IV, note 3.
- 14 Thomas Dixon, Jr., *The Clansman: an Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan*, was published in 1905 as the southern states were completing the process of installing segregation. To justify the subordination of the Negro an avalanche of writing poured forth which treated blacks as either too savage or too ignorant to enjoy equal citizenship. *The Clansman* was an immensely popular novel portraying the redemption of the South from these "black barbarians" by the Ku Klux Klan. *The Clansman* might have been forgotten as another third-rate novel had it not been adapted to the motion picture screen in 1915. *The Birth of a Nation*, produced by D. W. Griffith, was not only the first film spectacular, it also was the first to deal with a serious social issue. Thus it was a major social event in itself, but one which slandered the Negro race viciously.
- 15 Ida B. Wells-Barnett (see note 16) founded the Negro Fellowship League in 1908, and became its first president.
- 16 Author, social worker, and journalist, Ida B. Wells-Barnett (1864-1931) was the pre-eminent anti-lynching crusader in America. She published numerous exposés on that phenomenon, the most important of which was *A Red Record* (1895). A civil rights activist, she held many responsible civic positions and helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
- 17 Samuel Chapman Armstrong (1839-93), educator, was commissioned colonel of the 9th Regiment, U.S. Negro Troops in 1864. At the end of the war he received brevet rank of brigadier-general, and because of his success in dealing with Negro troops, he was placed in charge of a Freedman's Bureau camp near Hampton, Virginia. There he facilitated the establishment of Hampton Normal and Industrial Institute in 1868.
- 18 Richard Robert Wright, Jr. (b. 1878) was educated at Georgia State Industrial College, and received a B.D. (1901) and a Ph.D. (1911) from the University of Chicago. He also spent two years studying in Germany and two years as a research fellow in sociology at the University of Pennsylvania. For many years he worked as a banker and financial consultant in Pennsylvania, and served in numerous racial uplift associations. Wright was a scholar of the first order, and he authored many studies including *The Negro in Pennsylvania* (1911), and *The Negro in*

*Industry in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh* (1913). The African Methodist Episcopal Church's organ, *The Christian Recorder*, was also edited by Wright for many years. He eventually became an A.M.E. bishop.

- 19 For background on these and other Negro Colleges see *The Moton Guide to American Colleges with Black Heritage 1974-1975*, Moton Consortium Office of Admission and Financial aid (Atlanta, 1974). See also, James M. McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to the NAACP* (Princeton, 1975).
- 20 For an excellent study of this strike, see Richard A. Straw, "The Collapse of Biracial Unionism: The Alabama Coal Strike of 1908," *Alabama Historical Quarterly*, 37 (Summer, 1975): 92-114.
- 21 John Pierpont Morgan (1837-1913) built the family fortune into a colossal financial and industrial empire of J. P. Morgan and Company. During the depression of the 1890s he came into control of the largest group of railroads in the nation. In 1901 he purchased the steel interests of Andrew Carnegie (see note 60), and formed the U.S. Steel Corporation, the first billion-dollar corporation in the world. In 1912 a congressional investigative committee, the Pujo Committee, found that Morgan controlled seventy-two directorates and forty-seven large corporations.  
John Davison Rockefeller, Sr., (1839-1937) established the Standard Oil Company while still a young man in his twenties. An astute and aggressive businessman, by 1890 he had created a global petroleum empire. This was broken up as a result of anti-trust suits which led to its dissolution in 1911 by the Supreme Court. Thereafter, Rockefeller preoccupied himself with planning the distribution of his fortunes through charitable organizations.
- 22 For background on John Mitchell, see Vol. IV, note 96.
- 23 For background on the National Afro-American Council, see Vol. IV, note 119.  
The National Negro Business League was founded by Booker T. Washington in 1900 to foster business and industrial development among the race. It was founded on a faith in the classical economics of free competition and economic individualism. In this regime Negroes who offered a better product would be rewarded by the rational judgment of consumers.
- 24 John Rogers Commons (1862-1944), professor of economics at the University of Wisconsin from 1904 to 1932, is most noted for his studies of the American labor movement. Among his most significant publications is the multi-volume *History of Labor in the United States* (1918-35) which is regarded as a classic in the field. *Legal Foundations of Capitalism* (1924), and *Institutional Economics* (1934) expanded the discipline of economics into the realm of social science.
- 25 For background on John Brown, see Vol. I, note 41.  
William Howard Taft (1857-1930) practiced law in Cincinnati, Ohio following graduation from Yale, and reached national prominence upon appointment as U.S. Solicitor General in 1890. He served as Secretary of War under Theodore Roosevelt (see note 12), and became the 27th President of the United States (1909-13). Taft was unable to continue the progressive programs of Roosevelt, and the party conservatives soon controlled his administration. Taft was retired at the end of one term, and thereafter taught law at Yale until he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1921.

- 26 Charles W. Anderson was born in Ohio, but pursued a political career in New York. His efforts to involve more Negroes in politics resulted in the New York Civil Rights Law of 1895. He rose steadily in Republican circles, from state committeeman in 1900, state racing commissioner from 1898 to 1905, and with the aid of Booker T. Washington he served as collector of internal revenue in New York from 1905 to 1915. He remained a close protege of Washington throughout his career.
- 27 In 1905, W. E. B. Du Bois (see Vol. IV, note 136), who was then teaching at Atlanta University, issued a call for an organization which would vigorously oppose segregation. Twenty-nine Negro intellectuals and professionals responded, and in July 1905 they met at Niagara Falls, New York to found the Niagara Movement. In 1909, the Niagara Movement became the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.
- 28 President Theodore Roosevelt held the rank of colonel during the Spanish-American War. Although born to a wealthy family, he was a sincere progressive who advocated "trust-busting," denounced the "malefactors of wealth," and called for a "square deal" for American workers. He captured the popular imagination by vigorously championing the rights of the "little man." See also note 112.
- 29 For background on Samuel Gompers, see Vol. IV, note 1.
- 30 For background on James Duncan, see Vol. IV, note 21.
- 31 John P. Frey (1871-1957), an iron molder, was elected president of the Worcester, Massachusetts local of the International Molders and Foundry Workers Union of North America in 1893. Thereafter, his ascent in labor circles was rapid, becoming a vice-president of the IMFWU in 1900. He served on numerous boards and commissions for both the American Federation of Labor as well as the federal government. A conservative trade unionist, he edited the *Iron Molders' Journal* from 1903 to 1927, and authored several books.
- 32 Frank Duffy (1861-1955) immigrated to the United States from Ireland at age twenty, and settled in New York City. A carpenter, he joined the Greater New York United Order of American Carpenters and Joiners, and was elected president. The Order merged with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America in 1888. In 1901 Duffy became secretary-general of the UBC, and was elected to an American Federation of Labor vice presidency in 1918, an office he held until 1940.
- 33 Benjamin J. Davis, Sr., of Atlanta, Georgia attended Atlanta University in 1887-88, and founded the *Atlanta Independent* in 1903. Publically he supported Booker T. Washington, although he was a highly independent man whose opinions could not be controlled by others. He criticized Negroes for their failures, while at the same time he advocated racial solidarity and self-help. For one who usually minimized politics in favor of economic uplift, Davis was exceedingly active in the Republican Party, serving as chairman of the Republican committee in Georgia's second district.
- 34 For background on Frank Morrison, see Vol. IV, note 33.
- 35 Oscar Ameringer, a German from Wisconsin, was one of the outstanding white champions of racial equality in the Socialist Party. He was a union and socialist organizer in New Orleans where he became involved in the



biracial brewery and dock workers' unions, and after Oklahoma became a state in 1907, he went there to continue his efforts. In Oklahoma, Ameringer assumed the editorship of the leading party organ, the *Oklahoma Pioneer*, and consistently fought against racial inequality. He argued that blacks were not inherently inferior; the Negro's degradation was the result of the capitalist system. He opposed segregation within the Socialist Party because it would encourage state legislators to enact additional Jim Crow measures. Ameringer wrote a plank in the 1910 Socialist platform which outlined the party's opposition to the disenfranchisement of Negroes through the infamous "grandfather clause" technique.

- 36 Charles William Eliot (1834-1926) was a professor of analytical chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology until Harvard University called him to be president. At thirty-five he began a distinguished tenure which lasted from 1869 to 1909, and made Harvard the model to be emulated. His *Harvard Classics* (1910), a fifty-volume selection of world literature, was designed to bring formal education to adults through self-study. When he retired, Eliot was considered the nation's leading educator.
- 37 Mayor "Baerman" of New Orleans is properly spelled Behrman.
- 38 *The Communist Manifesto*, published in February 1848 by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, was commissioned as a statement of principles of the League of Communists. It was the first significant popular statement of Marxism socialism. It declared that all history was explained as class struggle; that under capitalism that struggle was between the workers and owners of production; that the struggle would culminate with the workers' victory; that the abolition of classes would then ensue; and that there would follow a society in which all people would be free.
- 39 A dispute between black and white screwmen's unions on the New Orleans docks over a work-sharing agreement was marked by sporadic violence. Shortly after midnight on March 10, 1895, an armed mob of white men forced their way into a company storeroom for cotton packing tools (called "screws"), seized the tools being used by Negro screwmen, and threw them into the river. Actually, this dispute began in 1894 and continued into 1895. In October 1894, a similar incident occurred when about 200 armed white dock workers boarded six ships being loaded by black screwmen, and heaved ninety-six screws over the side. See *Daily Picayune*, March 10, 11, 1895; *The Daily Picayune*, October 27, 1894; *Times-Democrat*, October 27, 1894.
- 40 W. R. "Farley" is properly spelled Fairley. For background on Fairley, see Vol. IV, note 88.
- 41 Braxton Bragg Comer (1848-1927), was a merchant, planter, textile manufacturer, and governor of Alabama from 1907 to 1911. A wealthy Birmingham businessman, he served as president of the Alabama Railroad Commission. Known as a reform governor, he expanded social services, especially education, and although an opponent of child labor legislation, he signed a law prohibiting the employment of children under twelve. It was because of his public reputation as a reformer that the miners accepted him as a fair arbitrator in their dispute with the operators, but they misjudged his social views.
- 42 For background on the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor, see Vol. IV, which is devoted to the era dominated by the Knights.

- 43 John P. White (1870-1934) served United Mine Workers of America, District 13, which included Iowa, as secretary-treasurer and then president from 1899 to 1912. From 1912 to 1917 he served as international president of the UMWA, but resigned to accept a position in the National Fuel Administration during World War I.
- 44 It was not true that Negroes were barred from the United Mine Workers of America in the fields north of the Ohio River. In fact, the first black member of the national board was Richard Davis of Ohio. See Vol. IV, pp. 118-247.
- 45 The United Mine Workers of America "Womans' Auxiliary" was much more than a social sewing circle. When the miners went on strike their women were actively involved, often showing up on the picket line to denounce scabs and provide a solid front for the strikers. Although the wives of other workers also involved themselves in strikes, the small isolated mining communities enabled the auxiliary women to be much more influential.
- 46 Coal miners often were farmers themselves, or had numerous friends and relatives who were. Therefore, it was not uncommon to find farmers assisting miners when the latter went out on strike.
- 47 Miners who lived in company houses often were evicted by the company when the men went out on strike. Frequently they erected "tent cities" and under such stressful conditions black and white families did not concern themselves with the color of neighbors in the next tent. This was the "social equality" referred to. In this particular case, there was exceptional unity among the miners.
- 48 Thomas L. Lewis (1866-1939) began work in Ohio mines as a breaker boy, and was one of the founders of the United Mine Workers of America in 1890. He served as international vice president under John Mitchell, but was a competitor with the popular UMWA president. In 1908 he defeated William B. Wilson for the international presidency. An ambitious man, Lewis created a machine to further his own advancement. After a revolt of district officers against his rule, Lewis was defeated in 1911, and became a labor advisor to an anti-union operators' association in West Virginia. He also published a trade journal, the *Coal Mining Review*.
- 49 On the night of August 14, 1908, a race riot occurred in Springfield Illinois, which resulted in widespread destruction of Negro property, numerous beatings, and the death of seven people. Racial tensions among white residents were heightened by the growing influx of blacks from the South, and when two black men were arrested, in separate incidents on charges involving the rape of white women, a white mob spent the night of the 14th venting their hatred. The state militia finally restored order, but thousands of black residents moved from Springfield never to return. Six months later, a conference of civil rights advocates met in Springfield to discuss the "Negro Problem" and established the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The conference was held on the site of the riot, Abraham Lincoln's hometown, and on the date of the Great Emancipator's centennial.
- 50 Hoke Smith (1855-1931), a successful attorney of Atlanta, Georgia, became popular among the farmers as an anti-trust reformer. He was elected governor of Georgia in 1906, and his administration abolished the convict lease system, established prohibition, and reformed the penal, educational, and the judicial systems. He also presided over reforms which disfranchized Negroes.

- 51 The peonage system emerged in the southern states after the Civil War. Farmers would sign annual contracts, then took advances on their expected share of the crop. All too frequently, they ended the year with less earnings than debt and planters demanded that they stay until their debts were paid. Eventually, the planters had legislation passed to ensure their control over the mobility of their indebted workers. When planters used indebtedness as an instrument for compulsory labor, this system became peonage. While blacks were effected disproportionately, poor whites and immigrants also fell victim to this labor system. When such cases surfaced in the press, they stirred an outrage seldom displayed over black peonage.
- 52 Charles Nagel (1849-1940) graduated from Washington University Law School (St. Louis) in 1872 and began to practice law in St. Louis. Nagel entered politics and was elected to the state legislature, and president of city council. A member of the Republican National Committee, President Taft (see note 25) appointed him Secretary of Commerce and Labor (1909-1913).  
Frank Harris Hitchcock (1867-1935), a prominent Ohio attorney, managed the presidential campaign of William H. Taft in 1908. Once elected Taft appointed him Postmaster-General, (1909-12).  
George Woodward Wickersham (1858-1936), was a leading expert in corporate law. One of the closest advisers to President Taft, he served as U.S. Attorney General from 1909 to 1912, and led the administration's drive against the trusts. In 1929 he was appointed Chairman of the Wickersham Committee, which conducted a path-breaking inquiry into the entire system of American jurisprudence.
- 53 The Erdman Act was passed by Congress in 1898. It provided for the voluntary submission of railroad disputes to mediators, and if that failed, to a board of arbitration. The board's findings were binding upon both parties for one year. Actually, the law was unacceptable to both the companies as well as the unions. The former did not want novices interfering, and the latter did not want to be forced to labor on terms they found oppressive.
- 54 Lillian D. Wald (1867-1940) was a pioneer of public health nursing. In 1893 she organized a visiting nursing service which evolved into the famous Henry Street Settlement in New York City. She also founded the first public school nursing service in the world (1902), and at her urging the U.S. Children's Bureau was founded (1912). Wald also involved herself with founding the Women's Trade Union League, and the woman's suffrage movement.
- 55 For background on Bishop Henry M. Turner, see Vol. II, note 2.
- 56 John Dewey (1859-1952) taught philosophy at the University of Chicago (1894-1904) and Columbia (1904-30). He formulated instrumental pragmatism, a philosophic system based on the notion that since human problems constantly change, the instruments for dealing with human problems must be constructed individually. Dewey revolutionized educational theory with *The School and Society* (1899), and *Democracy and Education* (1916), which postulated intelligence should be trained to alter environment. Dewey attacked metaphysics as the product of an outmoded aristocracy which was unsuitable in a democratic society. Through these and other books, Dewey delineated a break with tradition so sharp that it still stirs controversy.  
For background on Bishop Alexander Walters, see Vol. IV, note 118.  
John Spencer Bassett (1867-1928) was born in North Carolina and took his Ph.D. in history from Johns Hopkins University. He taught at both

Trinity and Smith Colleges (1906-1928). A prolific scholar, he authored fifteen books on American history. He was liberal on questions of race and he wrote at length about Afro-Americans.

- 57 Hilary Herbert (1834-1919) studied law in Alabama and was admitted to the bar in 1857. During the Civil War he became an officer in the Confederate Army. After the war he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served from 1877 to 1893. President Grover Cleveland (see Vol. III, note 61) appointed Herbert Secretary of the Navy during Cleveland's second term (1893-1897). A staunch segregationist, he contributed to *Why the Solid South?* (1890) and published *The Abolition Crusade and Its Consequences* (1912).

Thomas William Hardwick (1872-1944) was a Georgia lawyer who served in the Georgia state house from 1890 to 1899, and from 1903 to 1914. He was elected to the U.S. Senate to fill a vacant seat in 1914 and served until 1919, but lost a campaign to be renominated. Hardwick then won the governorship of Georgia, and served in that post from 1921 to 1923. He was probably defeated because of his stern opposition to the revived Ku Klux Klan. He served as special assistant to the U.S. Attorney General from 1923 to 1924, and then retired from public office.

David Crenshaw Barrow (1852-1929) was born in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, and received his education at the University of Georgia. After serving as professor of mathematics and engineering at that university for many years, he became its chancellor from 1906 to 1925.

- 58 In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the ghost of Banquo appears as Macbeth hosts a great feast, driving him to distraction by reminding Macbeth that he has murdered his friend Banquo. In the context of the document, "Banquo's ghost" refers to a deed which comes back to haunt one's conscience.

- 59 "Crackers" was a term referring to the poor whites of Georgia or Florida. Presumably the term was derived from the practice of cracking their whips loudly when urging on their mules, or their heavy reliance on cracked corn in the diet.

"Sandhillers" were poor whites who lived in the infertile sandy regions of the South, sometimes called pine barrens. The term usually connoted extreme ignorance and poverty.

"Woolhatters" were members of the working class who often wore coarse wool hats stiffened with glue because they were cheap. It had a political connotation, however. In the 1820s Andrew Jackson was popular among these people, and later Whigs continued to call these common people who supported democratic reforms as the "wool hat boys." Over time hat styles changed, but the term was revived during the Populist era of the 1890s when *Wool Hat*, a Populist newspaper, was begun in Georgia.

- 60 Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) began his business career with the Pennsylvania Railroad in the 1850s, and went into the iron industry following the Civil War, purchasing iron mills in Pittsburgh. In 1873 he built the largest steel mill in the country, and further endeavors built his holdings into an immense empire. He sold his assets in 1901 to the U.S. Steel Corporation for the unprecedented sum of \$447,000,000. Thereafter, Carnegie devoted himself to philanthropy as he carried out his belief that the rich should act as trustees for the public benefit.

- 61 An excellent study of the migration is Florette Henri, *Black Migration: Movement North, 1900-1920* (Garden City, 1976).

- 62 Anthony Crawford was only one of the seventy-eight black people lynched by white mobs in 1919. This represented an increase of fifteen over 1918

and thirty over 1917. For lynching and the attempt to pass legislation making it a federal crime, see Robert L. Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade Against Lynching, 1909-1950* (Philadelphia, 1980).

- 63 The reference to Akron residents from the border state being racially prejudiced is accounted for by the large immigration of people from the southern mountains into the north-central cities which began during this period. In mountainous states such as Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee, blacks were traditionally segregated, and the "hillbillies" retained their southern customs.
- 64 William Pickens (b. 1881), educator and author, graduated from Talledega College and then Yale University, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. After teaching language at Talledega for ten years, Pickens taught at Wiley University in Texas prior to his appointment as dean at Morgan State College in Baltimore. Pickens succeeded James Weldon Johnson (see note 99) as field-secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a position he held until 1941 when he accepted a position with the federal government. Among the books authored by Pickens are *The New Negro*, *His Political, Civil and Mental Status*, and *The Ultimate Effects of Segregation and Discrimination*.
- 65 The classic study of the East St. Louis riot is Elliott M. Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Carbondale, 1964).
- 66 The standard study of the Chicago riot is William M. Tuttle, Jr., *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (New York, 1970).
- 67 Ben Johnson (1858-1950) was a Kentucky lawyer. A Democrat, he was elected to the state house in 1885 and became speaker of the house in 1887. He was elected to the state senate in 1905, and then to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving there from 1907 to 1927. Johnson was Democratic national convention president from 1912 to 1920.
- "Mr. Speaker" refers to Champ Clark who was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in March 1911, and still held that post in 1917. A U.S. Representative from Missouri, Clark was a "peace Democrat" of the William Jennings Bryan stamp who had been in the house since the 1890s. He was a leading contender for the Democratic nomination for President in 1912, but lost to Woodrow Wilson.
- 68 John Edward Raker (1863-1926), a lawyer from California, served in various state offices as a Democrat. In 1911 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served until his death.
- Martin David Foster (1861-1919) was a physician from Illinois. A Democrat, he was elected mayor of Olney in 1895, and 1902. In 1907 he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he served until 1919.
- Henry Allen Cooper (1850-1931, a Wisconsin Republican, served in various state offices until 1893, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and served for thirty-six years.
- 69 Frank O. Lowden (1861-1943) was a graduate of the University of Iowa (1885) and the Union College of Law (1887). He practiced law in Chicago, and became a professor of law at Northwestern University (1899). He served on the Republican national committee from 1904 to 1912, and was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from 1906 to 1911. In 1916 Lowden was elected Governor of Illinois. Following the race riots in 1917, Lowden supported anti-race and anti-religious discrimination legislation.

- 70 Monroe Nathan Work (1866-1945), graduated from the Chicago Theological Seminary in 1898, and received a masters' degree in sociology in 1903. He became famous by proving in his thesis that the city of Chicago was founded by a Negro, Jean Baptiste Pointe Du Sable, who settled there in 1790. Work taught at the Georgia State Industrial College and later at Tuskegee. As editor-author of the *Negro Year Book*, the first of which appeared in 1912, he became a leading authority on matters pertaining to black Americans. As the compiler of statistics on lynching, he was the recognized authority on the subject.
- 71 In 1917 numerous race riots occurred in northern cities including those in Chester, Pennsylvania, Youngstown, Ohio, New York City, East St. Louis, and elsewhere.  
Carcassonne is an ancient city in southern France, and considered one of the best surviving walled cities. It was settled by the Gauls, conquered and fortified by the Romans, and re fortified by Medieval lords. In 1978 it celebrated its 2050th anniversary. Until modern times Carcassonne was considered impregnable. Thus, the reference here is meant to imply protection and security.
- 72 Jessie Redmond Fauset (1882-1961), poet, graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Cornell University in 1905. She received a graduate degree from the Alliance Francaise in Paris. Literary editor for *The Crisis* for several years, she taught and wrote poetry and novels as a primary occupation.
- 73 Robert Russa Moton (1867-1940), educator, graduated from Hampton Institute in 1890. When Booker T. Washington died in 1915, Moton was called to the presidency of Tuskegee. President Woodrow Wilson (see note 92) selected Moton to investigate the complaints of Negro troops overseas during World War I. Moton published an autobiography *Finding a Way Out* (1920), and another book *What the Negro Thinks* (1929).
- 74 The Rev. Charles Stelzle was born in the tenement-house district in New York, and at eight years old went to work in a sweatshop, as a news-boy, and later became a machinist. With his background it comes as no surprise that years later, when he became a Presbyterian minister, Stelzle took up the workers' cause. The "Apostle of Labor," as he was called, was a very popular author and lecturer, and his columns appeared regularly in the labor press. Rev. Stelzle also served as the director of Christian sociology at Bible Teachers' Training School, and chairman of the Committee on Church and Labor of the New York Federation of Churches and Christian Organizations, and as superintendent of the Presbyterian Department of Church and Labor.
- 75 Organized in 1911, the National Urban League's purpose was to assist Negro migrants from the South in making the adjustment to city life and in finding employment. A nine-point program including housing, health, sanitation, recreation, self-improvement, and job assistance suggests the scope of its operations. From its inception the Urban League has been interracial, "a voluntary community service agency of civic, professional, business, labor and religious leaders . . . dedicated to the removal of all forms of segregation based on creed or color."
- 76 George Cleveland Hall (1864-1930), a Michigan-born surgeon, was one of the founders of Provident Hospital in Chicago. Because Negro doctors had difficulty practicing medicine in the city's hospitals, Hall and his colleague, the noted heart specialist Daniel Hale Williams, founded Provident Hospital so black doctors could improve their skills. Dr. Hall was the hospital's chief surgeon. He also was active in civic affairs, serving as vice president of the National Urban League and helped found

the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in Chicago. Dr. Hall was a nationally recognized consultant on racial problems.

- 77 Walter Francis White (1893-1955) graduated from Atlanta University. He worked in the Atlanta branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and after distinguished field work was called to New York as an assistant to the executive secretary, James Weldon Johnson (see note 99). White's field research for the NAACP was truly distinguished, and frequently dangerous. When Johnson retired, White assumed leadership of the organization, a position he maintained for many years. He published several books including his autobiography, *A Man Called White*.
- 78 Mr. Dooley and Mr. Hennessy were popular cartoon characters.
- 79 For background on the Union League, see Vol. II, note 5.
- 80 William Bauchop Wilson (1862-1934), a Scottish born miner of Pennsylvania, was elected secretary of a local miners' union in 1877 and from 1888 to 1894 served as district master workman, Knights of Labor. One of the founding members of the United Mine Workers of America, he served as international secretary-treasurer of the UMWA from 1900 to 1908. In 1906 he was elected to Congress on the Democratic ticket, and became the first Secretary of Labor when Woodrow Wilson created that department in 1913, serving until 1921. He lost a bid for the Senate in 1926.
- 81 Thomas Walter Bickett (1869-1921) graduated from Wake Forest College (1890) and was admitted to the bar in 1893. He served in the North Carolina state house of representatives from 1907 to 1908. Twice elected states attorney general, he served in that office from 1909 until 1917, when he assumed the governorship.
- 82 Sidney Johnston Catts (1863-1936) received a law degree from Cumberland University (1882) and practiced law briefly before entering the Baptist ministry. He moved to Florida in 1911 where he entered politics. Catts won a race for the governorship in 1916 on the Prohibition Party ticket and served until 1920. Subsequently, he lost a bid for the U.S. Senate and two more races for governor.
- 83 James Middleton Cox (1870-1957) worked as a teacher, newspaper reporter, and then as secretary to Congressman Paul Sorg (1894-97). He owned and published the Dayton *Daily News* (1898), and the Springfield *Daily News* (1903). From 1909 to 1913 he served as a Democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives, when he resigned to assume the governorship of Ohio. Cox was elected at the height of the Progressive movement in Ohio, and affected widespread reforms in the government of the state. Cox was an unsuccessful candidate for president in 1920.
- 84 Augustus Owsley Stanley (1867-1958) graduated from Centre College in Kentucky (1889). He was admitted to the bar in 1894, and quickly entered politics. A democrat, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from 1903 to 1915. After an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate in 1914, he won the race for governor in 1915. In 1919 Stanley resigned to take a seat in the U.S. Senate, but his bid for reelection in 1924 was unsuccessful.
- 85 Jesse Edward Moorland (b. 1863) was born in Ohio and received a D.D.

from Howard University in 1905. He began his service to the Young Men's Christian Association in 1892, and held positions in that organization for most of his active career. The Rev. Moorland became secretary of the International Y.M.C.A. in 1898. When the philanthropist Julius Rosenthal donated a large sum of money for the construction of Y.M.C.A. buildings for blacks in eleven cities, Rev. Moorland assumed responsibility for the fund. Making his home in Washington, D.C., he was a trustee of Howard University and a member of the American Negro Academy.

- 86 Nannie Helen Burrough (1883-1961) was the founder of the National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls in Washington, D.C. Following her work as associate editor of the *Christian Banner* in Philadelphia, she served as president of the Women's Convention of the National Baptist Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. Ms. Burroughs also organized the Woman's Industrial Club which specialized in offering short-term lodging to Negro girls and teaching them basic domestic skills. Through the National Baptist Convention, she started the National Trade and Professional School, which emphasized skills in housework, gardening, interior decoration, and allied vocational skills.
- 87 Eugene Kinckle Jones (1885-1951) received a B.A. from Virginia Union University in 1906, an M.A. from Cornell University in 1908 and an honorary LL.D. from Virginia Union in 1924. Jones served as the first executive secretary of the National Urban League and worked with that organization from 1911 to 1941. He served on numerous national boards and committees as advisor on Negro Affairs for the U.S. Department of Commerce, and as a member of the Fair Employment Board of the U.S. Civil Service Commission.
- 88 Channing Heggie Tobias (1882-1961) graduated from Paine College, and then attended Drew Theological Seminary and the University of Pennsylvania. Tobias returned to Paine College in 1911 to teach Biblical literature. He also became active in the Young Men's Christian Association, became chairman of the board of directors of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and in 1946 was named director of the Phelps-Stokes Foundation.
- 89 For Dr. James H. Dillard, see pp. 255-56.
- 90 Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore (1863-1923) graduated from medical school at Shaw University and in 1888 became Durham, North Carolina's first Negro physician. A man of deep religious convictions and a unique philanthropic inclination, his selfless career is still remembered in the names of a variety of public works in Durham. In 1895 he helped to launch a pharmacy for Negroes, and thereafter was involved in virtually every business venture launched by blacks in that city. He also founded Lincoln Hospital in 1901, the Colored Library in 1913, and absorbed himself in the rural school movement for Negroes. In addition, he spent a large portion of his life working for charities of the Baptist Church. Believing that the Negro business movement was part of an overall program of racial uplift, Dr. Moore was one of the seven founders of the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1898, and served as its president from 1919 until his death.
- 91 "From Bunker Hill to San Juan Hill" refers to black participation in American wars. The hero of Bunker Hill was a Negro, Peter Salem. Negro troops of the 10th Cavalry made it possible for the "Rough Riders" to secure the top of San Juan Hill. Sgt. Horace W. Bivins, a black member of the 10th, received the Congressional Medal of Honor.



- 92 [Thomas] Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), 28th President of the United States (1913-21), graduated from Princeton University, and received a Ph.D. in government from Johns Hopkins in 1886. Wilson taught, and then became president of Princeton in 1902. In 1910 he won the governorship of New Jersey, and the Presidency of the United States in 1912. A reform Democrat, Wilson was successful in gaining the Federal Reserve System (1913), the Federal Trade Commission (1914), the Clayton Anti-Trust Act (1914), the Adamson Act establishing the eight-hour day, along with other reform measures. Wilson was unfortunate enough to be in office during World War I, but he tried to bring a new world order of peace out of the ashes of war by the creation of the League of Nations, forerunner to the United Nations. His record on civil rights for blacks, however, is generally conceded to be unsympathetic at best.
- 93 Fred R. Moore (b. 1857), publisher and editor of the *New York Age*, was a self-made newspaperman of the highest quality. While working at the National Bank of Commerce, he purchased the *Colored American Magazine*, and in 1905, left the bank to become deputy collector of internal revenue in New York. A few months later he left to become an organizer for the National Negro Business League. Moore acquired the *New York Age* from T. Thomas Fortune and Jerome B. Peterson in 1907. A staunch friend of Booker T. Washington, he was appointed Minister to Liberia under President Taft (see note 25), but resigned before actually going to Africa. Moore was heavily involved in national political issues and served on numerous boards and committees.
- 94 Archibald H. Grimké (1849-1930) attended Lincoln University and received a law degree from Harvard University in 1874. He practiced law in Boston, wrote for several newspapers, and edited a weekly called *The Hub*. From 1894 to 1898, he served as consul to Santo Domingo. Grimké was president of the Washington, D.C. branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for ten years, and also of the American Negro Academy.
- 95 Robert L. Mays, a Chicago Negro, was president of the Railway Men's International Benevolent Industrial Association, and executive officer of the Interstate Order of Locomotive Firemen, Yard and Train Service Employees and Railway Mechanics. He organized a convention of Negro railroad workers to combat the elimination of Negroes from railroad service by the white unions. Mays asked those in control of American industry to judge Negroes on their individual character rather than by race. See also pp. 461-62.
- 96 Mary Church Terrell (1863-1964) was a founder of the National Association of Colored Women in 1896, and a charter member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. She also served in many civic organizations and led a long and active life campaigning for the uplift of the race. A graduate of Oberlin College, Mrs. Terrell served on the Race Relations Committee and on the Interracial Committee in Washington, D.C. She was active in the women's suffrage campaign, and in 1940 wrote an autobiography, *Confessions of a Colored Woman in a White World*. As the wife of Robert H. Terrell, one of the few black federal judges, Mrs. Terrell used her social position as a platform to articulate the needs of less fortunate Afro-Americans.
- 97 The Associated Colored Employees of America was not "the first Negro labor union in this country." There were "labor combinations" of black workers even in the colonial period, but the first organization which can be called a union was the American League of Colored Laborers, founded in New York City in 1850 with Frederick Douglass as a vice president. Its main object was to promote unity among mechanics, and to foster training in the industrial arts.

- 98 William II (Kaiser Wilhelm), German emperor, king of Prussia (b. 1859-d. 1941), showed sympathy for the workers and was called the "Labor Emperor." He also favored a mild approach toward the socialists, a position which was opposed by Chancellor Bismark. The Emperor hoped to win the workers away from socialism through social legislation. Under his orders, industrial courts were established to adjust wage disputes. Rest days became obligatory, factories inspected, workers organized committees to negotiate conditions of employment, and a labor department was founded. The emperor was disappointed with the results, however, for socialism spread rapidly after the repeal of anti-socialist legislation.
- 99 James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was admitted to the Florida bar in 1897 while living in Jacksonville and working as a school principal. He and his brother J. Rosamond Johnson wrote songs during these years, including "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing," now widely known as the black national anthem. From 1906 to 1912 Johnson served as U.S. Consul in Venezuela, and then Nicaragua. He returned to the United States in 1912 and became field secretary, and then general secretary, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In 1930 he took a position at Fisk University as professor of creative literature. Johnson wrote numerous books, including *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), *Black Manhattan* (1930), and *Along This Way* (1933).
- 100 For the Fourteenth Amendment, see Vol. IV, note 84; for the Fifteenth Amendment, see Vol. II, note 8.
- 101 Hubert Henry Harrison (1883-1927 came to New York in 1917 from St. Croix, Virgin Islands. A socialist, he wrote pamphlets and espoused his ideas on the street corners of New York, founded the "Liberty League," and edited a newspaper, *The Voice*. Marcus Garvey was influenced by Harrison's ideas, as were the editors of *The Messenger*. In 1926, Harrison became a staff lecturer of the Board of Education of the city of New York, and for several years he edited Garvey's *Negro World*.
- 102 Rev. George Frazier Miller (1864-1943), a black Christian socialist, was born in South Carolina and educated at Howard University and New York University. From 1896 until his death, he served as rector of St. Augustine's Church in Brooklyn. Early in the twentieth century, he was elected president of the National Equal Rights League, an organization dedicated to combating disfranchisement, segregation, and every other aspect of second-class citizenship for black Americans.
- 103 George W. Harris was editor of the *New York News*, and a member of the New York City Board of Aldermen. He was closely associated with the Friends of Negro Freedom, a socialist oriented organization founded by the black socialists Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph, editors of *The Messenger*. The distinguishing characteristic of the FNF was its commitment to the restructuring American society along socialistic lines.
- 104 In 1919, two blacks, T. J. Pree and R. T. Sims (see also note 137), attempted to organize a separate black labor movement known as the National Brotherhood Workers of America. Initial support came from the shipyard and dockmen of Newport News, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, Virginia. A. Philip Randolph was a member of the board of directors. The AFL opposed the Brotherhood, and it was finally dissolved in 1921.
- 105 John Mitchell, Jr. (b. 1863) was born a slave in Henrico County, Virginia. He graduated from high school in 1881. In 1883 and 1884 he

worked as the Richmond correspondent of the *New York Freeman*, and on December 5, 1884, he became editor of the *Richmond Planet*, the most influential black newspaper in the state. Friends considered him courageous to a fault because of his strong editorial stands against racial injustice.

- 106 The United Hebrew Trades was founded in 1888 by Jewish socialists in the New York garment industry. Its purpose was to centralize and stabilize the trade union movement in order to challenge the deplorable working conditions in the industry. It was a central trades organization for garment-workers unions.
- 107 National Civic Federation Review was the organ of the National Civic Federation. It was established in 1901 by a number of industrialists and union leaders, including John Mitchell of the United Mine Workers and Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, who served as vice president of the group. Most of the energies of the group were aimed at promoting peace between capital and labor through mediation, conciliation, and collective bargaining. The leaders believed that industry needed organized labor in order to avoid social tensions and the interruption of production. The attempt to moderate industrial conflict was attacked from the left and right. Radical unionists believed the Federation threatened to undermine union militancy, while anti-union employers opposed the recognition accorded labor unions as collective bargaining agents. Both the left and the right believed that the interests of labor and capital were inimical, while the Federation sought common grounds for cooperation (see also note 130).
- 108 The National Association for the Promotion of Labor Unionism Among Negroes was founded by the socialist editors of *The Messenger*, Chandler Owen (see note 110) and A. Philip Randolph (see note 111). It was an interracial organization whose purpose was to encourage Negroes to join unions. Owen served as president of the organization, and its board included numerous white New York socialists.
- 109 Morris Hilquit (1869-1933), a New York lawyer and socialist leader, became a prominent defender of labor in the courts. He also was the leading theoretician of the Socialist Party, and his *History of Socialism in the U.S.* (revised, 1910) is a standard on the topic.
- Rose Schneiderman was born in Russian Poland in 1891 and came to America at age nine. She went to work in a cap factory and boarded with a socialist family. Rose became a socialist herself, organized her sister workers into a union, served as secretary of the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers Union (chartered in 1903) and as its representative to the Central Labor Union of New York. Then only twenty-two, she was elected to the union's executive board, the first woman to hold such a position in the capmakers' union. In 1905, while leading a thirteen-week strike against the open shop, she came into contact with the Dreier sisters, Margaret and Mary, who convinced her to join the Women's Trade Union League. In 1912 Ms. Schneiderman became involved in the woman's suffrage movement in Ohio. She agreed because she was "a socialist and a trade unionist who looked upon the ballot as a tool in the hands of working women with which . . . they could correct the terrible conditions existing in industry." For a study of women workers during this era see Philip S. Foner, *Women and the American Labor Movement: From Colonial Times to the Eve of World War I* (New York, 1979).
- 110 Chandler Owen was a student of political science and sociology at Columbia University when he became an associate of A. Philip Randolph. Between 1914 and 1917 he gradually became a socialist, and joined the Socialist party. In 1917 he and Randolph edited the *Hotel Messenger*,

but the magazine went out of business in several months, and the Headwaiters Union fired the editors. A few months later Owen and Randolph began to publish a new journal, *The Messenger*, an independent journal of radical economic and political thought among Negroes. Owen was deeply committed to organized labor, but felt that the leading union organization, the American Federation of Labor, practiced discrimination against Negroes. Therefore, he opted for an independent black labor movement, the National Brotherhood Workers of America, founded in 1919 (see also note 104).

- 111 A. Philip Randolph (1889-1979) organized the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925 and made it into the strongest of the black unions. Randolph himself rose to become the elder statesman of Negro labor leaders, and the only black vice-president of the AFL-CIO. During World War II he organized the March on Washington Movement to press for open hiring in industries with government contracts, and lobbied for a Fair Employment Practices Commission. A socialist who opposed World War I, he was imprisoned briefly, but continued to voice his views in *The Messenger* which he published during the 1920s with Chandler Owen. In 1960 he founded the American Negro Labor Council, and in 1963 was one of the leaders in the famous March on Washington. Those few porters who remain are now organized into the Airline Clerks Union and the BSCP has ceased to exist.
- 112 The Adamson eight-hour day law was passed in 1916 in order to prevent a threatened nationwide shutdown of the railroads. Gradually, it was adopted throughout American industry as the standard work day.
- 113 George W. Perkins (d. 1934), a conservative craft unionist, rose in the cigarmakers' union to become its president in 1891. He was closely associated with his predecessor in that post, Samuel Gompers, and was known as a member of "Sam's gang." As president of the Cigarmakers' International Union of America from 1891 to 1926 he ignored the unskilled and women who labored in the industry. He was roundly criticized for encouraging mechanization, and presided over a twenty-year decline in membership to nearly one-fifth its peak size.
- 114 William Zebulon Foster (1881-1961) worked at a variety of industrial jobs as a youth. He joined the Socialist Party in 1900 but was expelled, and joined the Industrial Workers of the World. He was an IWW representative in Europe and used the time to study European labor movements. He served as a secretary for the Syndicalist League of America, business agent for a Chicago railroad union, and founded the International Trade Union Educational League during the years immediately preceding World War I. Foster acted as an organizer on many occasions, most significantly perhaps during the historic 1919 steel strike. He joined the Communist Party of America after the war, and stood as the Party's candidate for public office with regularity thereafter, and also served as CPA national chairman from 1932 to 1957. Foster was the author of numerous books.
- 115 Agnes Nestor first went on strike in 1898 at age fourteen, when the women at the Eisendrath glove factory in Chicago walked out over a new piecework system. Later, Nestor led the glove workers to victory and headed the local which was established, served as a representative to the 1902 and 1903 Glove Makers' conventions, and won fame as a keen union negotiator. She was heavily involved as a representative to the Chicago Federation of Labor, in the Women's Trade Union League, and maintained a hectic speaking schedule in support of women's rights and legislation to improve working conditions. Her autobiography, *Woman's Labor Leader*, was published in 1954.

- 116 Abraham Epstein, *The Negro Migrant in Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh, 1918).
- 117 See pp. 483-89.
- 118 A. Mitchell Palmer (1872-1936) was President Woodrow Wilson's Attorney General. He organized a widespread series of raids against alleged alien radicals. In reaction to unsolved bombings he attacked radicals between 1919 and 1920 by using private spies to raid private homes and labor union offices in search of incriminating evidence of communism. He arrested nearly 3,000 people, held them incommunicado, and tried them often without due process. A few hundred supposed radicals were deported, but the vast majority were found to be harmless.
- 119 Two of the best accounts of the IWW are Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the IWW* (Chicago, 1969), and Philip S. Foner, *A History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, Vol. 4, *The Industrial Workers of the World, 1905-1917* (New York, 1965).
- 120 For Covington Hall see Joyce Kornbluh (ed.), *Rebel Voices: An I.W.W. Anthology* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1964), pp. 259-60; Oscar Ameringer, *If You Don't Weaken* (New York, 1940), p. 209; and David J. Saposs, *Left Wing Unionism* (New York, 1926), p. 169.
- 121 The most thorough treatment of these events are found in James R. Green, "The Brother of Timber Workers, 1910-1913: A Radical Response to Industrial Capitalism, in the Southern U.S.A.," *Past and Present*, No. 60 (August, 1973): 161-200, and his *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge, 1978).
- 122 Marcus Alonzo Hanna (1837-1904), a prominent Ohio industrialist, became interested in politics, and by 1890 he was the most powerful Republican in the state. He selected William McKinley and guided him to the Ohio governorship twice, and then to the Presidency in 1896. Hanna served in the U.S. Senate from 1897 to 1904, where he assisted organized labor when feasible, a position which earned the respect of many unionists. His own employee policies were enlightened for the times (he considered anti-unionism to be irrational), and he was able to persuade the coal operators to make substantial concessions during the historic anthracite strike of 1902.
- For John Pierpont Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, Sr., see note 21.
- The "Four Hundred" refers to an informal social ranking of genteel wealth. The extravagant wealth of the post-Civil War period called for a means for determining who was among the elect. Ward McAllister, a prominent sociolite associated with Mrs. Jacob Astor, once said that there existed a solid core of older, wealthy families surrounded by looser circles of newer wealthy families. This older core, presumably more legitimately rich because of their tenure, McAllister claimed, numbered Four Hundred. The term continues to imply the most socially prominent of the rich.
- The Masons, Knights of Pythias, and Odd Fellows were popular secret and semi-secret fraternal orders.
- 123 Rev. George W. Slater, Jr. remains an unknown figure, except for the articles he wrote for the *Chicago Daily Socialist* between September 1908 and March 1909. Slater's articles marked the first time in American history that a socialist organ carried writings by a black American on a regular basis. He claimed that socialists were the "New Abolitionists" and that only through socialism could the problems of all workers, black

and white, be solved. Slater was highly critical of Booker T. Washington and of black strikebreakers.

- 124 Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805), German poet, dramatist, and aesthetic philosopher, was trained to be a surgeon. Surprisingly he read revolutionary authors of the so-called Sturm und Drang (Storm and Stress) literary movement and shared their scorn for rigid autocratic discipline. Schiller wrote many plays, most of them dealing with historical themes, such as *Wallenstein*, *Maria Stuart*, and *Wilhelm Tell*. One of his earliest plays was *Fiesco* (1783) which dramatized the career of a sixteenth-century Genoese conspirator. Its significance lies chiefly in the play's foreshadowing of Schiller's later triumphs at historical drama.
- 125 "Industrial scalawags and carpetbaggers" referred to southerners and northerners (respectively) who sold out the plantation cotton-South to the "outside" industrial interests.
- 126 José De La Cruz Diaz (1830-1915) was born in Oaxaca, Mexico. After studying law he fought in the Mexican-American War (1847-48). In a successful coup of 1876 he became President of Mexico, and for the next thirty-five years Diaz remained in firm control. He became increasingly unpopular, however, ruling with an iron hand and inviting U.S. capital to invest in Mexico. In 1911 Diaz was overthrown by Francisco Madero, and went into exile. He died in Paris hated by Mexicans for his cruelty. For the Grabow Massacre, see note 133.
- 127 William Dudley Haywood (1869-1928), was a miner employed in various Rocky Mountain states. In 1894 he moved to Idaho and became an officer in the Silver City local of the Western Federation of Miners. He was elected to the WFM executive board in 1899, and became secretary-treasurer in 1900. A major figure in the bitter Colorado strikes at Telluride and Cripple Creek, he became a revolutionary industrial unionist. Haywood helped found the International Workers of the World in 1905, and was tried, but acquitted for murder in 1907. Purged from the WFM by moderates in 1908, he became a full-time IWW organizer. Following several successful campaigns, Haywood was elected general secretary of the IWW in 1915. He and other Wobblies were convicted in 1917 for violating the Espionage Act and imprisoned. Released two years later, he jumped bail in 1921 and immigrated to the Soviet Union where he remained until his death.
- 128 Phineas Eastman was a socialist editor of the revolutionary magazine, *The Masses*.
- 129 Joseph J. ("Smiling Joe") Ettor was a leading organizer for the Industrial Workers of the World most noted for directing the more than 20,000 workers involved in the famous textile strike at Lawrence, Massachusetts. Although only twenty-seven in 1912, when he was called to coordinate the Lawrence strike, Ettor had gained experience organizing miners and migrant farmers in the West, and foreign-born steel workers in the East. Fragmented by nationalistic jealousies, sex, and craft biases, Ettor needed all of the experience at his disposal to unify the Lawrence mill workers. Ettor succeeded, but when a woman was accidentally killed during a demonstration, he was charged with murder. After a protest strike, the jury vindicated Ettor and he was released. He went on to organize the New York City hotel workers strike in 1913, and the Mesabi Range strike in 1916.

- 130 See Booker T. Washington, "The Negro and the Labor Unions," *Atlantic Monthly*, 101 (June, 1913): 756-67.
- Seth Low (1850-1916), graduated from Columbia University in 1870, entered his fathers import business, and later city politics. As mayor of Brooklyn (1882-1885), Low instituted the merit system, the first city successfully to do so. Later he served as president of Columbia, mayor of New York City (1902-1903), and as head of the National Civic Federation (see note 107) from 1907 to 1916.
- 131 For background on the Single Tax Plan, see Vol. III, note 16.
- 132 The "boys in jail" is a reference to the sixty-five timber workers who were arrested following the Grabow Massacre. A. L. Emerson was the union leader in charge of the Grabow meeting when company guards opened fire on the strikers. See also note 133.
- 133 A number of local unions of silver and lead miners were organized in the Couer d'Alene area of Idaho during the 1880s, and in 1890 they came together to form the Consolidated Miners Union. By 1891 it controlled the entire area. In 1892 the operators locked out the union, and reduced wages by 25 per cent. Then the companies imported hundreds of scabs, and the mines resumed operations. Following a gun battle between company guards and the miners, the scabs were forced to withdraw from the pits. But when the governor complied with the operators' requests and ordered federal troops into the areas, the strikebreakers returned and several unionists were imprisoned. But the scabs could not learn the miners craft, and eventually all of the union miners were rehired. These same imprisoned miners helped form the Western Federation of Miners in 1893.
- Cabin Creek flows into the Kanawha River about ten miles east of Charleston, West Virginia, and extends southward through the mountains for twenty-five miles. In 1912-13 the first of several of the famous West Virginia "mine wars" was fought for union recognition and an improvement in conditions. The strikers, numbering about 7,500 soon witnessed the importation of large numbers of Baldwin-Felts guards whose job was to guard the mine property and scabs. Violence quickly erupted between the strikers and the guards and gun shots echoed in the mountains for months. At least fifty men lost their lives in the conflict, and the death toll from malnutrition among women and children was incalculable. Martial law was declared and the National Guard set up camp along the creek. A military court was established and long prison terms given to some of the strike leaders. During the strike Henry Hatfield was elected governor. More sympathetic to the miners than his predecessor, he dictated the terms of a peace which gave the miners a partial victory.
- The Brotherhood of Timber Workers affiliated with the Industrial Workers of the World in May 1912, and almost immediately resumed its struggle for improved conditions by going on strike. The operators' association responded by blacklisting the union men and locking them out. The operators conducted a campaign of terrorism against the strikers which peaked on July 7, 1912, at Grabow, Louisiana. During a demonstration outside one of the mills, company guards fired into a throng of union men, and the latter responded in kind. When the shooting was over, three men were dead and forty wounded, nearly all of whom were unionists. Nevertheless, the grand jury indicted the union men for the murder of a company guard. Sixty BTW men were held in a crowded and foul prison room of 42 x 30 feet. A jury acquitted the men and they were released in October.
- The Ludlow Massacre was the central event in a fourteen-month strike of the United Mine Workers of America against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. set policy from New York, while local barons presided over near slave conditions in the southern Colorado field. A UMWA strike broke out in 1904, but the instigators were deported to other states and the militia and company guards suppressed the others. After

secretly organizing for two years, the UMWA called a strike in 1913 for union recognition and remedy of a list of other grievances. The miners and their families were evicted from the company houses and repaired to tent colonies. The Baldwin-Felts detective agency was employed to provide company guards, and these men, some of whom rode in an armored car equipped with a Gatling gun, terrorized the tent colonies. The National Guard was ordered to intervene. But they soon began to terrorize the miners as well. Under the command of Lieutenant Kenneth E. Linderfelt, the troops charged the tent colony at Ludlow shooting into the tents and, according to one eyewitness, "tried to kill everybody; anything they saw move, even a dog, they shot at." The shooting over, tents were covered with oil and set on fire. Over thirty people were murdered at Ludlow, mostly women and children. Linderfelt and his men were tried and found guilty and punished by trifling changes in their eligibility for promotion.

- 134 John Sharp Williams (1854-1932), a lawyer-planter of Yazoo County, Mississippi, was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1892 and served as Democratic minority leader from 1903 to 1909. He defeated James K. Vardaman for the U.S. Senate. Although an ardent white supremacist, he favored a more moderate paternalistic approach to race relations than did Vardaman.

James Kimble Vardaman (1861-1930), a racist demagogue from Mississippi, served that state as a legislator (1890-1894), governor (1904-1908), and U.S. Senator (1913-1919). Mississippi was tightly controlled by a conservative Democratic elite, and after they rejected him twice for the gubernatorial nomination, he began to court the small white farmers. The strategy succeeded and Vardaman won the race for governor on a platform which in part called for the abolition of Negro education.

For Governor Hoke Smith, see note 50.

For Thomas Dixon and D. W. Griffith, see note 14.

- 135 T. Arnold Hill became the first director of the Urban League's Department of Industrial Relations in 1925, after serving in various capacities since 1914. Hill believed in the importance of opening the labor unions to black workers. He worked incessantly toward that end, chiding blacks for their anti-union and pro-employer attitudes on the one hand, while lamenting the failure of the American Federation of Labor to be more aggressive against racial discrimination on the other.

- 136 The "Rand School of Socialism," later the Rand School of Social Science, taught courses on and served as a forum for socialist ideas.

- 137 The "J. W. Sims" referred to is probably R. T. Sims, the first black organizer for the I.W.W. He attended the 1906 convention, was appointed to the "Good and Welfare Committee," and introduced a resolution protesting lynchings and anti-black riots. The resolution was adopted. In 1919 the National Brotherhood Workers of America was formed by black representatives from twelve states and the District of Columbia. It was a sort of confederation of black unions patterned after the American Federation of Labor. R. T. Sims was elected vice-president of the organization. See also note 104.

- 138 Benjamin Harrison Fletcher (1890-1949) was the most important of the black organizers for the Industrial Workers of the World. Born in Philadelphia, he organized the city's longshoremen into the Marine Transport Workers Union. Composed of more than 3,000 workers, primarily black, between 1913 and 1916 the MTW struck and won union control over the city's docks. During the "Red Scare" of 1918-19, employers and the federal government launched a campaign to suppress the IWW. In 1918, a Chicago jury convicted more than a hundred Wobblies in less than one hour,



and the judge sentenced Ben Fletcher to a ten year term in the Leavenworth, Kansas, penitentiary for conspiracy and violation of the Espionage Act. *The Messenger* and *The Crisis* conducted an editorial campaign to free Fletcher. President Warren G. Harding commuted his sentence, and later Franklin D. Roosevelt pardoned Fletcher.



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