The impact of the Urban League on a community

Frank Wilkerson
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A THESIS

THE IMPACT OF THE URBAN LEAGUE ON A COMMUNITY

Submitted by
Frank Wilkerson, A.B.

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the
Department of Sociology
of the
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1955
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PREFACE

The author expresses a sincere appreciation for the cooperation, guidance, and interest exemplified by the following:

Dr. Thomas Earl Sullenger, Department of Sociology, Head, University of Omaha.

Dr. George Wilber, Department of Sociology, University of Omaha.

Charles T. Steele, Executive Secretary, Louisville Urban League.

Whitney M. Young, Executive Secretary, Omaha Urban League.

The National Urban League.

Special acknowledgements are made to Mrs. Helen Wilkerson for her inspiration and patience and to Vicki Morris who is responsible for the typing of the thesis.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Urban League is a social service organization for the improvement of living and working conditions of Negroes. It is also interested in increasing cooperative and understanding relationships between white and colored citizens. Specifically, its program is one of research and community organization in the fields of (1) employment, industrial relations and vocational guidance, (2) housing, (3) health, (4) recreation, (5) race relations.

The local affiliates of the National Urban League carry out the basic program and objectives of the National Urban League, but adapt their methods and specific activities to the particular needs of the local community. The local Urban League is an autonomous agency having its own administration and local finance. This autonomy has been retained so that local program emphasis can be geared to local needs. However, it is equally important that a close relationship and a high degree of cooperation be maintained with the National Office.

The National Urban League and the local Urban Leagues are governed by interracial boards. Sometimes there are other committees, but they are usually interracial. Many Leagues, for example, have a committee on industrial relations. Each local office is staffed by a trained secretary who is the responsible head of the work. Other staff members
are social workers and office workers. The number is determined by the financial resources of the local Leagues. Forty-eight of the sixty local Urban Leagues are members of the Community Chest. Most of these receive the greater part and often all of their financial resources from this source. The majority of Urban Leagues have incomes from individual contributions; some receive membership dues. For much of their work, the local Leagues solicit voluntary services. These are usually teachers, doctors, and other public-spirited citizens in the Negro community. The National Urban League also renders a consultation program for communities not having an Urban League branch of the Community Chests and Councils, interested citizen groups and others. The Urban League is frequently called upon for consultation or community planning in the field of race relations. Civic groups usually interested in these services are Community Chests and Councils and other groups. Traditionally, the Urban League is a promoting and coordinating agency rather than a direct service agency. The majority of Urban communities provide in some degree services and facilities for family and child welfare; vocational training and placement; and, to a more limited extent, housing programs. The Urban League also promotes the extension of existing services and facilities to serve the entire community.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. In general, the main purpose of this study is to analyze the major services offered by the Urban League in terms of the objectives of the organization. In order to fulfill this purpose, the Louisville and the Omaha Urban Leagues are considered in some detail. These two local organizations of the National Urban League represent two different types of communities, the community of Omaha having northern characteristics and Louisville being southern in so far as race relations are concerned. Any conclusions from this study will be limited by the fact that only two local affiliates of the National Urban League are included in this analysis. There is no way of knowing at this point how representative the data may be.

The Urban League over a period of years has found it necessary to expand its services southward. This led to the organization of the Southern Field Division some thirty-one years ago. This division carries out the purposes of the National Urban League. It also concentrates on establishing a network of local Leagues and servicing communities in the Southern States. To support this division a South-wide Advisory Committee was formed, composed of fourteen distinguished Southerners of both races. They are under the leadership of a Negro businessman in Jacksonville, Florida. The Louisville Urban League is a member agency of this Southern Division.
In addition, the present investigation of this particular social agency is undertaken to portray the origin, development, and program of the Urban League.

**Importance of the study.** This study has some practical because significance because it contains a body of facts, methods, and contributions which the Urban League has made to social science in assisting Negroes in making adjustments to urban life. The general information contained will serve social workers in their field of activities as valuable arguments in behalf of improved race relations and better living conditions for Negroes. It is not the major concern of this study to analyze the programs of sixty affiliated Urban Leagues or the movement as such, but to compare programs of major activities of two typical Urban Leagues.

The Urban League is frequently classified as a social service agency with great influence in enlarging the opportunities of Negroes. It is felt that such a study will be of value to the Urban League in enabling it to analyze and to compare its program with the local Urban Leagues studied. This study will also enable Urban Leagues to plan future programs on a sounder basis of recorded fact. It is also felt that this study is an example of American teamwork exemplified by a group of interested citizens cooperating in an interracial organisation to promote understanding and equal economic opportunity for Negro citizens.

The Urban League promotes and coordinates rather than give direct service in approaching the problems of the Negro
community. This is difficult for the average layman, especially white, to appreciate. The major problems confronting the Negro are inadequate income, housing, recreation, and other social and economic disadvantages and racial friction. These disadvantages mean that gains in the community must be based upon understanding and acceptance. It also means that there must be an adequate interpretation of the League in relation to how it deals with community problems to accomplish particular goals.

Method. In terms of the main objective of the present study and the limitations of Omaha and Louisville, the task becomes one of comparative analysis. In other words, a comparison of the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues should provide a clue as to the general effectiveness of the organization. In conducting this comparison several techniques are employed, such as statistical analysis, documentary comparison, and even some interviews. The interviews, however, were limited in number, and designed to provide insight rather than draw conclusions.

Sources of Data. To secure adequate material for this study, it was necessary to examine the records of the Omaha, the Louisville, and the National Urban Leagues. These included studies from the National and Local Urban League, governmental documents, newspaper clippings, periodicals, memorandums, and speeches from the National Urban League. Among other sources were the monthly reports from the Executive, Industrial, and Community Organization secretaries of the
Louisville and Omaha Urban Leagues. It was deemed necessary to review these studies of the past in order to understand the present program and objectives.
The human race had its origin somewhere in Eurasia about a million years ago. Tribal conflicts and the search for food resulted in the dispersion of the early peoples over wide areas. One group migrated to Australia about one hundred thousand years ago and, because of its long period of isolation, seems to have formed a distinct branch of the human family, the Australoid. Another group migrated to Western Europe, and the descendants of these people are known as Caucasoids. Still others went to Africa, forming the basis of the Negroid group. From the sociological point of view one is concerned not so much with the physical characteristics of races as with the way in which people think, feel, and act about real or assumed physical differences. Almost everywhere at one time or another people have been on the move, so that race mixture has gone on for thousands of years. It is not surprising, therefore, that even an expert cannot sort the peoples of the world into neat, well-defined "races." He can only describe racial types and indicate the nature of the broad divisions to which most of the members of the human family can be assigned.  

When Negroes were brought to this country as slaves, they were concentrated in the south as there was very little use for slaves in the north. The end of the Civil War brought emancipation to the Negro which led to the removal of legal restrictions on his mobility. Owning little land, many chose to migrate to the northern areas.

The Great Migration, starting in 1895 and continuing in waves from then on, has brought changes in the distribution of Negroes in the United States. The proportion of all Negroes living in the north and west rose to 23.8 per cent in 1940, which signifies a total net migration between 1910 and 1940 of about 1,750,000 from the south.

In 1940, 90.1 per cent of all Negroes in northern states and western states outside of Missouri lived in urban areas. New York city alone claimed 16.9 per cent of all Negroes living in the north and west. If the Negroes of Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh are added to those of New York, the proportion rises to 47.2 per cent. The Urban League came into being to assist the unadjusted groups of Negroes migrating to northern and western urban areas, but it has spread to southern and western coast cities which have similar needs.

The National Urban League (inception). The Urban League has been, since its beginning, the only social agency

set up primarily to help Negroes. The League helps Negroes who have migrated from the rural south to the urban north to make adjustments. In 1906, William H. Baldwin, Jr., president of the Long Island Railroad and president of the General Education Board, formed an organization. It was called "The Committee for Improving the Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York City. In the same year Miss Frances Kellar formed "The League for the Protection of Colored Women." The purpose of the latter group was to assist colored girls and women in securing work and lodgings in the city of New York. In 1910, Mrs. William H. Baldwin, Jr. called a meeting in New York City of all social agencies interested in the Negro. She formed an organization called "The Committee on Urban Conditions among Negroes in the City of New York."

In the interest of economy, these groups were merged in 1911 to form the "National Urban League." All of these organizations had arisen to deal with the acute problems affecting the Negro population in New York. The philanthropists, social workers, and professionals who made up the nucleus of the new workers, and professionals who made up the nucleus of the new organization had a practical creed. They held that the Negro needed not alms, but opportunity—opportunity to work for which he was best fitted, with equal

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pay for equal work, and equal opportunity for advancement. The late professor, Edwin R. A. Seligman became the first president of the organisation.

During the first year the basic program was worked out under the direction of George Haynes. The program included the idea of selecting and training Negro College young people for social work in the urban centers. It also included organizing movements through the introduction of these workers in the north and south, and the development of research and publicity as a basis for remedial action.

New York was the first city organized. The training of workers was begun at Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee. George Haynes accepted the chair of social science on a part-time arrangement so that he could give directions to the whole movement.

Near the end of the year, through a mutual friend, Eugene Kinckle Jones of Louisville, Kentucky, was invited to join the work in New York. During the succeeding seven years they worked together in applying cooperative principles and methods to the growing urban problems which increased with the World War migration and its aftermath.

In founding the National Urban League, the leaders had little suspected that within five or six years their organization would become the most important agency in the country in dealing with the mass migration of Negroes to northern cities.

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From 1919 on, Urban Leagues sprang up in the industrial centers of the north to handle the problems of Negro migrants. During World War I they helped to screen the raw recruits to northern industry, assisted them in finding homes, and made available to them the resources of the social service agencies. Moreover, the Urban Leagues served as clearing houses of information on the migrants and became the centers of interracial efforts to assist the migrants in various ways. George E. Haynes, who played an important role in the development of the National Urban League, became special assistant to Secretary of Labor, Wilson from 1917-1918.

The Program of the Urban League. The following statements reflect some of the primary functions of the Urban League.6

To carry on constructive and preventive work among Negroes for improving their social and economic conditions in urban centers to bring about coordination and cooperation between existing agencies.

To work in the interest of Negroes.

To develop other social agencies where there is a need.

To secure and to train Social Workers.

To make studies in cities as may be required for the setting up of local Leagues and other objectives.

The League is similar to other social agencies in that it has recognized the inability of a group to effect good social adjustment under the strain of certain environmental

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factors. This is especially true of the Negro in the face of traditional barriers that manifest themselves in ingrained prejudices, denial of equal opportunities and lack of adequate housing, health, educational, and social benefits.

Negroes then as now, but with probably more disastrous results were with difficulty unable to find work for which they were fitted. Labor unions discriminated against them, employers consulted the attitude of their white employees before taking on Negro workers and sometimes justified their personal disinclination based on prejudice to give the part of their white employees to work with Negro fellow-workers.7

The Corporate seal of the National Urban League carries the phrase, "Not alas but Opportunity." The basic policy is reflected in a statement made by Mrs. Ruth Standish Baldwin. Mrs. Baldwin is responsible for the three organizations earlier mentioned merging together and later adopting the name of the Urban League. Mrs. Baldwin's statement:

Let us not work as colored people nor as white people for the narrow benefits of any group alone, but together as American citizens for the common good of our city, our common country.8

With this approach, the League at its beginning did not need to know exactly where it was heading or what its ultimate function would be. It began with a problem—the problem of Negro migrants, drawn to the city by economic and social forces which they did not comprehend. They experienced frustration, discrimination, and the loneliness of a big city.

The activities of local Urban Leagues touch such problems as education, home and neighborhood, problems of youth, recreation, vocational guidance and training, welfare work, housing, health, morals, and manners. To mitigate delinquency among Negroes they offer to cooperate with law enforcement agencies and to perform such tasks as furnishing supplementary parole supervision, safeguarding the interests of girls appearing in court, and, in some cases, finding homes for them. None of the local Leagues can afford to become active in all these fields, but a primary task of all Leagues is to find jobs, more jobs, better jobs for Negroes.

There are few informed persons in America, among either whites or Negroes, who do not appreciate the social service work done by the League. In many communities, however, white people often look upon the League as "dangerous," "radical," and too "friendly to labor." Among the younger Negro intellectuals, on the contrary, the League is commonly accused of being too "timid." The League has "made no serious effort to define its program in a fundamental way," it is said.9 Because of its dependence upon white philanthropy, it advocates "a policy of racial expediency and conciliation, which is characterized by extreme opportunism."10

Against these charges the League reports that "it is a social service organization attempting to perform a helpful task in a limited field." 11

... The League could not be considered as a Negro movement, but an organization of American citizens who are convinced that important developments in our democratic institutions include that of according to the large Negro minority in America their economic right... The League is truly an interracial movement and cooperatively interracial at that. It would be expected, therefore, that the League should advocate conciliation in its highest sense. Any movement of this character which advocates understanding through conference and discussion must necessarily refrain from advocating mass action of one race calculated to force the other group to make concessions. 12

Some Negro leaders see a need for a Negro movement with a broader and more radical economic program and they spend their fire in criticizing the Urban League which has been able to solicit so much help from whites to soothe so much suffering among Negro people. They should, instead, appreciate what is obvious to any impartial observer: namely, that this organization, even though its tasks have been lowly, has been able to maintain a fighting spirit. "It has been, and is now more than ever, pressing and fighting, intervening and proposing, educating and propagating for ideas and measures for equal opportunities. The Urban

11. Letter from Eugene Kinckle Jones (August 8, 1940)
12. Memorandum by Eugene Kinckle Jones (June 17, 1941)
League is headed in the right direction, but critics believe they are not drastic enough in their opinions. 13

The Effect of the War. Concerning the effect of the war on the activity of the Urban League, Lester B. Granger informs that "it has been to intensify and emphasize some of its activities rather than to change its program; for instance, in the employment field, attention has been put on war jobs for Negroes on the semi-skilled and skilled levels. Employers have been approached with a new argument--that of the need for all-out 100% use of every available labor resource. As the public employment service became more and more important in filling job orders, more attention was given to the Urban League in correcting unsound practices and inadequate policies of state employment resources. This concern was increased when first the President federalized all state employment services and merged them into the United States Employment Service. The war manpower commission, using U. S. E. S. facilities, was given authority in registering, classifying, assigning, and possibly drafting labor for war uses. In this situation, the professional placement experience of the Urban League has proven to be invaluable as to aid in educating and otherwise influencing public employment officials.

"The League has given a good deal of attention to war housing of Negroes in such key cities as Buffalo, Detroit, Baltimore, Kansas City, New Orleans, and Atlanta. Work with

13. Mydal, op. cit., p. 41."
local housing authorities has been accompanied by work with the National Housing Agency to insure a fair proportion of war housing for Negro workers. Local Urban Leagues have been active in the Civilian Defense Programs, recruiting and helping to train volunteer workers, assisting in the sale of defense and war bonds, disseminating information for consumers, and carrying on similar activities. 14

The exact time when the first Negro set foot on the land that comprises the state of Nebraska is not known. Legend has it that an exploring expedition headed by a monk, Fray Marcos, touched the south-eastern part of the state in 1539. A Negro servant is supposed to have been a member of the party. This same Negro is thought to have been with Coronado's expedition when he supposedly penetrated the southern part of Nebraska in 1541. The records of this expedition indicate that one or more Negroes were numbered among its members. Whether or not the Negro servant with Fray Marcos and a Negro with Coronado were the same individual is purely conjectural. In any event, if it be taken for granted that one or both of these expeditions crossed the present southern boundary of the state, then it is entirely possible that Negroes entered Nebraska as early as 1539 or 1541.

The oldest man in the state in 1894 was a full-blooded Negro, Baptiste, who lived on the Omaha reservation. He was then 112 years of age. He was captured many years before by the Indians near Bellevue, and was said to be the first Negro ever to cross the Missouri River into Nebraska.

In 1840 Tom Brown, the slave of a Missourian, accompanied his master to Nebraska on a buffalo hunt. He claimed to have visited the site of what is now Omaha where dwellings were Indian huts. He left and came back to Omaha in 1907 and remained there until his death at the age of ninety-five.16

The first formal Negro Church in Nebraska was the St. John African Methodist Episcopal, organized in Omaha in 1876. Its first minister, Rev. W. T. Osborne, was the first Negro minister to come to Nebraska. In 1874, a second church, the African Baptist, with Rev. Marshall, pastor, appeared in Omaha. In 1879 an Episcopal Church, St. Phillip the Deacon, was founded. Its first rector was Rev. Greene.

The first Negro Church service, and many of them even today, were conducted in inadequate churches, buildings used commercially during the week and as a place of worship on Sunday. This was all that many congregations could afford. Some of the leading Negro Churches of Nebraska today occupy comparatively satisfactory buildings. A number of these buildings are owned by the churches, though usually they are mortgaged. St. John's A. M. E. church began a building program in 1922 and completed the program in 1947.

With the growing numbers of the Negroes in Omaha, there has developed a growth in racial consciousness. This expression has found its outlet not only in the establishment of Negro business enterprises and the insistence that they be patron-

16. Ibid., p. 7.
ized by Negroes in Omaha as a means of preservation, but in the field of politics. Negroes have been elected to represent their districts in the legislature. Dr. M. O. Ricketts was the first Negro to be elected to the lower house of representatives. He was elected in 1892, and again in 1896. In 1927, two Negroes were elected to the lower house and in 1929, one was elected. In each effort they were supported by many white voters. The establishment of a Commercial Club for Negroes, with the aid of whites was the first concrete effort put forth to deal in an interracial way with some of the social and economic complexities in the community.

The establishment of the North Side Y. W. C. A. in 1920, the Cultural Center in 1926, and the Omaha Urban League in 1928, marked the beginning of constructive interracial efforts in creating better race relations in the city. The Y. W. C. A., Cultural Center and the Urban League have sponsored interracial meetings, presenting outstanding Negroes as speakers.

With the event of World War I, Negroes experienced a mobility never before realized; migration again began to increase. This was further enhanced by Omaha's becoming quite a railroad center and terminal of the upper mid-west. Negroes who worked on the railroads began to settle in Omaha and began to encourage others to come.

This new migration trend met with a different reception. There were fears of racial friction similar to that happening
in other parts of the country. There was by now definite opposition to Negro migration, but the dye was cast and migration continued. 17

By 1916 the Negro migrant to Omaha faced certain definite problems. There was opposition to his arrival. This opposition was not unique to the white citizens who saw in him a threat to their jobs and a source of racial conflict, but many of the Negroes saw in him a threat to their own security.

Fortunately, however, there were a few Negro leaders and sympathetic white citizens who saw the migrant as he was—a citizen who, much like themselves, had torn himself from suppression and with hopes and dreams had sought what he thought was a free world. The citizens knew within themselves that the migrant had every right to do this and they sincerely wanted to help. They also knew this adjustment would not be easy. Jobs for Negroes were difficult to find. Omaha had become a railroad center. The large meat packing companies such as Armour and Swifts had come in. These industries in other cities, recognizing the inability of the Negro to get into unions, capitalised on this discriminatory policy by using them as a means of cheap labor and as strike breakers. This has been the story in Chicago, Pittsburgh, New York and other large cities. 18

17. James H. Kerns, Industrial and Business Life of Negroes in Omaha, University of Omaha, 1938, p. 5.
Inception of the Omaha Urban League. By 1928 several factors in the present situation caused the Negro leaders to seek other methods by which the advancement of Negroes in Omaha could be improved. Previously there was an organization called the Community House, that took on all of the work that the proposed Urban League was to do. However, there were certain limitations as far as the Community House was concerned, so membership in the National Urban League was sought.

The first problem, of course, was a building in which to operate. This problem was solved when the Telephone Company gave to the Negro citizens a building for one dollar a year. This building served the purpose quite well and became the home of the first Urban League in Omaha. It was equipped with a gymnasium, recreation room, auditorium, two club rooms, two offices, and space enough for a kitchen.

Negroes in Louisville. The city of Louisville was first known as the "Beargrass Settlement," having been named in honor of Louis VI of France in recognition of services rendered by the French during the war of independence. It is said that the first white man ever to see the present site of Louisville was Robert Cavaler, a member of the party of the French explorer, Sieur de la Salle, who with his voyagers descended the Ohio in 1691, seeking a route to the Pacific and on to China and the Indies.

Louisville is situated on the northern border of Kentucky, at the falls of the Ohio, ninety miles southeast
of the center of population of the United States. It is the largest city in Kentucky and twenty-fifth in population in the United States. Louisville's industrial activity has been confined for the most part to production of consumer goods. Prior to World War II, tobacco and liquor were the most important industries in terms of value of manufactured products. At present the leading industrial lines in order of total employment are (1) metal products, (2) foods and carbonated beverages, (3) chemicals, including synthetic rubber, (4) wood products, (5) tobacco products, (6) distilled liquors, (7) textiles, including garments, (8) printing and publishing, and (9) ceramics.19

The first introduction of Negroes into what is now known as Kentucky began in 1775 when the state was part of Virginia. The institution of slavery continued in the state until the close of the Civil War.

When the first United States Census was taken (1790), 12,430 Negroes were in Kentucky, of whom 114 were free colored. By 1860 this number had increased to 125,483 slaves and 10,684 free Negroes. Louisville was the center of the most thriving slave market in the state. Though slavery flourished as an institution in Kentucky, and many could see no wrong in it, there was always from the beginning an element in the state which recognized and spoke boldly of the wrongs of slavery.20


Many prominent white citizens of Louisville were active in the anti-slavery movement and aided in the underground railroad which assisted slaves to escape from Louisville to near-by free states of Indiana and Ohio.

In October of 1845, Reverend Alexander M. Cowan, agent of the Kentucky Colonization Society, collected $5,000 which was to aid in purchasing forty square miles in Liberia to be called "Kentucky in Liberia." The first freed slaves for the proposed colony were sent from Louisville on January 7, 1846.21

On February 13, 1849, an enthusiastic emancipation meeting was held in Louisville. This was one of several meetings held in the state for the election of delegates to a convention to revise the constitution of the state and plan for the gradual emancipation of the slaves.22

The emancipation of the slaves was not only a burning political question in Louisville, but one in which there were many sharp issues of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. This schism arose after the passage of a law forbidding the buying and selling of men, women, and children with an intention of enslaving them. The sentiments of Kentuckians growing out of the slavery controversy were divided on the question of secession from the union. Many fathers and sons joined opposing armies in the great civil conflict.

21. Ibid., p. 176.
22. Ibid., p. 177.
The last recorded sale of slaves at auction in Kentucky took place near Louisville on December 3, 1803.23

During the war between the states, many free Negroes in Louisville are recorded as having enlisted in the Union Army. On April 18, 1864, two regiments of Negroes were enlisted and organized in Louisville to serve in northern states.

The first Negro to be made a free man in Kentucky was Monk Estill, a slave of Colonel Estill of Madison County, who was rewarded with freedom because of his loyalty to his master in the battle known as Estill's Defeat, 1782.24

Almost immediately following emancipation the Negroes in Louisville began to make their contributions to the business and professional life of the community. Early records indicate that many of the ex-slaves became leading artisans in the community, and others went into small business ventures. The beginning of organized religious activities among Negroes in Louisville through established churches preceded emancipation.

In establishing the early churches, masters, free Negroes, and slaves participated.

In November of 1829 the First African Baptist Church was organized (now Fifth Street Baptist Church). According to early records of the church, the membership consisted of five free persons and thirteen slaves.

23. Ibid., p. 379.

24. Ibid., p. 173.
A century later, in 1920, the Louisville Urban League was organized. The organization of the Urban League resulted after a group of local citizens met. They were interested in the social and economic problems of the local Negro citizens, and requested that a branch of the League be established in the city of Louisville. In cooperation with the local citizens a group of Negro women had interested themselves in the program of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters, organizations to provide guidance to Negro youth who were becoming involved in behavior problems in some of the blighted areas of the city. A group of men soon joined the women in their efforts, broadening their interests and activities to include other problems among the Negro citizens.

Shortly afterward, a committee representing the interests of various Negro groups in the community sponsored a public banquet for the purpose of raising funds and expanding the program. Dr. G. H. Hall, one of the early supporters of the National Urban League movement, was the guest speaker at this banquet. One thousand dollars was raised by this effort. This was the boost which enabled them to organize the Louisville Urban League.

The Louisville Urban League's first staff member was Elmer S. Carter, a trained social worker who served as the executive secretary for a period of three years.

In 1920, the Louisville Urban League became a member agency of the community chest.
The program and objectives of the Louisville Urban League are similar to those of the National Organisation, with special emphasis in the areas of Industrial Relations, Education and Recreation, Health and Housing, Research, Race Relations and Public Relations and Community Organisation.
CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF THE URBAN LEAGUE IN THE COMMUNITY

The philosophy of the Urban League movement requires that the Urban League work to assist colored persons in becoming live participants in all the various activities in the community. In accomplishing this aim the League must get colored persons to make use of existing facilities and services; and if these are closed to persons of color, it is the League's responsibility to work to open them. Failing in this, demonstration projects must be promoted to care for the need. Others should be encouraged to operate these projects, but if this cannot be achieved, the League must do so but only until other established groups take over. 25

The Urban League's importance and usefulness have made deep impressions on the public mind. Great masses of non-whites have been helped and have looked to the League for leadership. Citizens have found the opportunity for expression and have been encouraged to acquire knowledge by attending schools. Because of this, the great majority of Negro people have become firm supporters of the League. Industries and labor unions have gained confidence in the Urban League and have practiced a more liberal working relationship with them.

25. Warren M. Banner, Director, Research and Community Projects, NUL. (Gist of Speech made at NUL Annual Conference, Richmond, Virginia, Sept. 6, 1948).
One of the major tests of success for an Urban League is its ability to adapt itself to local conditions and to serve local needs. The national office in New York, in point of original foundation, may be reckoned as having performed miracles during the years of its early growth.

Perhaps the most comprehensive summary of the purposes and functions of this wide-awake social agency may be found in its own statement of its functions.

The Urban League works to increase economic opportunities for Negroes and to obtain new jobs, at higher skills, for Negroes in places where they were not hired before.

The Urban League is a social service organization for the improvement of living and working conditions among Negroes, and for increasing cooperation and understanding relationships between white and Negro citizens.

The League acts as the intermediary in the process of American industrialization. It is a process which requires the transmutation of human resources into new usefulness for a better civilization.

The new day demands selective competition, preparation for new skills of intelligent screening of possibilities. It is this service that the Urban League performs.

The League serves as a consultant to management in Commerce and industry, by giving advice on the avoidance or disposal of problems arising in connection with the use of Negroes in the work force, and by understanding the employment and industrial relations problems of management in an effort to solve them.

The general impact of the Urban League on the community can be seen through the activities. The program activity of the Local Urban League is wide in scope when applied to the variegated needs of poverty-stricken Negro communities.

It is apparent, however, that particularly in the south, the League's work is carried on under tremendous handicaps on account of indifference and even hostility from most white people and half-heartedness on the part of even white sponsors and friends.

It is also apparent that, all over the country, the efficiency of the work is kept down by inadequate financial resources. The League touches such problems as education, home and neighborhood, problems of youth, recreation, vocational guidance and training, welfare work, housing, health, morals, and manners.27

The Leagues carry on day nurseries, sometimes with baby clinics; child placement agencies; and, occasionally, schools for Negro mothers; neighborhood and other group clubs; training schools for janitors or domestics; parent-teacher associations; study groups in trade unionism; health weeks; and so on. To mitigate delinquency among Negroes they offer to cooperate with the law-enforcement agencies and to perform such tasks as furnishing supplementary parole supervisors, safeguarding the interests of girls appearing in court, and, in some cases, finding homes for them.

The Urban League wages fights against commercialized prostitution in the vicinity of Negro homes, schools and churches. Much of this welfare work involves considerable "case work." Though not desiring to duplicate the work of other agencies, the Leagues, nevertheless, find themselves involved in individual problems such as illness, old age, delinquency, unemployment, mental disorders, legal entanglement, drug addiction, illegitimacy and dependency.

None of the local Leagues can afford to become active in all these fields, but a primary task of all Leagues is to find jobs, more jobs, and preventing loss of jobs already held by Negroes. They have to get into contact with employers and trade union officers and try to "sell" Negro labor--impressing upon the employers that Negro labor is efficient and satisfactory, and upon the unionist that the Negro is a good and faithful fellow worker. A careful check-up has to be made on references, and a reputation must be gained and defended for the type of labor offered. The possibilities of vocational training have to be kept open to Negro youth, and the youth themselves have to be encouraged to be ambitious. The civil service boards have to be watched so that they do not discriminate against Negroes, and Negroes must be encouraged to take civil service examinations.

Not only in job placement activity, but also in attempting to get play grounds, housing projects, schools, and other public facilities, the local Leagues work as pressure groups--with a philosophy moderated by local
circumstances and by their financial dependence on the white community. They engage in educational propaganda among whites as well as among Negroes. Sometimes regular campaigns are staged. Some Leagues have—openly or under cover—sponsored boycotts on the formula, "Don't buy where you can't work."

The National Urban League. The National Urban League is the general staff for all this work. It directs, inspires, coordinates, and evaluates the experiments made in one place or another. It conducts community surveys and other research work. It educates and sometimes agitates, among the Negroes, to improve themselves, and among the whites, to reduce prejudices and to give the Negroes a fair chance. Sometimes it concentrates on a pressure campaign to reach a particular goal. It uses the radio, its own publication, Opportunity, pamphlets, books, the pulpit and the lecture platform. It initiates conferences and investigations and furnishes government agencies with expert advice.28

What the Urban League means to the Negro community can best be understood by observing the dire need for its activity in cities where there is no local branch. The impact of the League is seen as it fills such an unquestionable and eminently useful community need that—were it not for the peculiar American danger of corruption and undue influence when something becomes "political"—it is obvious that the

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28. Ibid., p. 839.
activity should be financed, and financed much more generously, from the public purse, the city, the state, and the federal government. The League's activity among maladjusted Negroes in the industrial cities of America has national importance. It is concerned with the effects of such nationwide American phenomena as the migration from rural areas—partly caused by national agricultural policy—and the almost universal economic discrimination against Negroes by whites.29

Community Planning. In order for the Urban League to do the job properly, it must have planners. The Urban League executive must have a comprehensive picture of his area of operation. The city planner, like the Urban League secretary, must be familiar with the area under his jurisdiction. Both have to be concerned about express highways, feeder routes, green areas, residential, business and commercial areas, and their zoning or rezoning, etc. The city planner also is interested in the economic and sociological factors.

Planners are usually delighted when they find that the Urban League has a broad and enlightened view of the responsibilities of cities to their population groups. They have found that the Urban League is interested in having the entire citizenry adequately cared for in the various avenues of endeavor.

Planners welcome League staff members to their files. They are glad to find them interested because the League’s area of operation is one which usually provides headaches for them.

When the Urban League’s Research Department comes to a city on an assignment, usually the first contacts are with the official city planner. The Urban League’s researcher is interested in employment (public and private), labor union activity, business ventures among colored people, health, housing, education, crime, and juvenile delinquency, recreation, the church, and the programs and activities of established welfare agencies.

There are times when the Urban League must be a participating member in other planning agencies. When unemployment grew, in the 1930's, beyond control with all its attendant hardships, when people had to be fed, clothed, and housed, when relief had to be defined and explained, Urban League secretaries became, in some instances, the sole Negro representatives on planning bodies, such as TERA, NYA, WPA, and other local state and federal agencies. Both the importance and necessity of Urban League participation was recognized, in most instances, because of its recognized competence in these areas of planning. The emphasis here extends two ways. First, in segments of its own specialized functions,
and second, in the larger community as a contributor to other agencies and groups planning to meet the needs of the whole area.31

Planning the War Years. Effective community planning requires investigation, research, and the acquisition of materials upon which planning structures must rest. This material is never static. It is always changing under the impact of new social forces and variations in the structure of society itself.

Employment problems today certainly are not what they were from 1923 to 1938, nor were they the same for 1938 to 1948. No northern industrial community remained the same after the impact of migration either in 1916, 1940, or 1948. The Urban League took the lead in planning for the expanding Negro populations, particularly in employment and housing.

Areas of Conflict. The exigencies of the war years forced Urban Leagues to expand into many new areas. In many cities, conditions were too potentially and actually dangerous for Urban Leagues alone. Force and authority were needed for planning, that could be backed up by authority. Detroit, the tragic example, planned too late. In many cities, local police, industrial and trade union representatives, ministers and lawyers, social workers, civic and professional representatives, were called together. The purpose was to prevent and to control violence. In some communities, disorder had

31. Ibid.
actually begun. There were fights at transportation points and inside industrial plants. Scurrulous leaflets attacking Jews and Negroes were circulated among war workers. Management had no experience in dealing with such situations, and did not know how to handle them. Unions blamed management and management blamed unions. Police had no training in riot control, and frequently aggravated dangerous situations by strong-arm methods. Every Urban League directors' meeting was a planning council. The executive secretary of each community realized the problems and gathered information and provided factual memoranda to other planning bodies for constructive action. Thus, tensions were eased, and order maintained by providing controls operating with Urban League participation.32

Urban League First to Recognize Needs. Local Urban Leagues are generally the first to recognize the need for social action. They follow trends and developments. They not only follow through on planning operations, but they set up machinery for action. By the conference method, the League demonstrates the necessity of advanced planning.

Summary. In order for the Urban League to accomplish its aim in fulfilling its role in the community it must get colored persons to make use of existing facilities, and if these are closed to persons of color, the League must open them.

32. Ibid., p. 5.
Although the efficiency of the League's work is kept down because of inadequate financial resources, the League carries on programs in community organization, industrial relations, vocational guidance and training, welfare work, housing, health, morals and manners.

Sometimes the National Urban League educates and agitates, among Negroes to improve themselves and among whites to reduce prejudices and to give Negroes a fair chance.

In line with the League's objectives and its role in the community, Urban League staff planners are generally the first to recognize the need for social action.

Perhaps one important factor that has made the Urban League a success is its ability to adapt itself to local conditions and to serve local needs.
CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIAL AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

I. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

In reviewing the objectives of the Urban League program and its impact on a community, industrial relations occupy a position of prime importance. The employment of minority groups is an "inextricable part of the tradition and fabric of the Urban League." Since its beginning the Urban League has had as one of its primary objectives the development of industrial opportunities for Negroes in cities. Restricted employment opportunities, discrimination on the job, and friction among workers as the result of faulty integration are, therefore, all factors of direct and serious import to Negroes in our industrial centers. Management and labor leadership must be educated not only to the justice, but also to the practical benefits of admitting Negro labor to full participation in industry. Negro workers must be provided with vocational guidance to make best use of their individual aptitude. Until such time as Negro workers are generally accepted, information as to their capacities and as to the experience of management and of unions in integrating colored workers into industry must be assembled for use in furthering this work.33

It is almost common knowledge that the Negro is worse off than his white countrymen. He has never had a fair break when it comes to jobs, wages, and promotion. He has had to lift himself by his own bootstraps, so to speak; and, at times, he has even had to imagine that he had any bootstraps. Two-thirds of southern Negro workers are still engaged in the relatively low-paid jobs of farming and domestic service. Negro professionals and business people depend almost entirely upon Negro patronage and most of them must cooperate with whites for what they get. They would not object to the latter if they could compete on a general, rather than a class basis, and were not forced to operate their businesses in Negro neighborhoods.34

The Urban League has over a period of years accumulated a number of important records consisting of statistics and facts about social and economic conditions of the Negro. This information has proved invaluable to social workers and has provided the League with a powerful argument in underlining the need for improved race relations.

The League has for many years maintained fellowships to provide training in the leading schools of social work. Its local chapters maintain departments of vocational guidance and occupational counseling to help direct young people into the fields for which they are best suited. The League

34. Ione G. Stanley, "Louisville Economy and the Negro," (Senior Essay), University of Louisville, 1953, p. 5.
has frequently gone directly to employers and persuaded them to accept qualified Negro employees in fields hitherto closed to them. The National Urban League plans, prods, and educates Negroes so that they may offer their talents and services freely in a free, competitive market. More and more, industry recognized the basic soundness and good sense of economic equality.

Negro income is up; there are more Negroes in skilled trades and professions. Moreover, the school enrollment has increased and so has the level of educational attainment; death rates are down, and life expectancy is improved. But in every one of these areas, though the gap between Negro and white has narrowed, there is still a gap.35

The Urban League for more than forty years has had the belief that the most fundamental issue among Americans is that of making a living. The League has placed special emphasis on the need of industry itself to bring about a change in the industrial process. This has resulted in a greater cooperation between the Urban League and industry.

The Urban League believes that the economy of America must run on an efficient level, but it must include all qualified workers in its productive process. Most businesses and industries recruit a great number of workers from schools, colleges, and other sources throughout the country. In

recent years, colleges have set up placement services so that business and industry may know of the quality of students available. It has been observed in many instances that personnel people who recruit for technical, industrial, and other jobs for the most part have no information as to the locations and functions of Negro Colleges. The national and local Urban Leagues have in a small way informed and directed personnel people to Negro graduates.

Trends in Occupation and Employment. A superficial analysis of the 1930 census led the magazine, "U. S. News and World Report," to comment, "Better jobs appear to be opening up for them (i.e. for the Negro workers, V.P.) in the south as well as in other regions."

Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People wrote:

The employment problems of Negroes, particularly at the semi-skilled and skilled levels, are still more acute than those of any other racial group. But steady, at times extraordinary, progress is being made in this field. Though far from perfect, the situation is markedly better than it was immediately after World War I or at any time between the two world wars.

To test the statements, let us look first at the broad occupational distribution of non-farm workers gainfully employed in 1940 and 1950. (See Table I.)

The first groups listed include the most favored occupations. Professionals and proprietors generally have better incomes and in many cases, ownership of capital. Clerical and sales, or white collar jobs, even when salaries

are low, often involve less onerous toil. Craftsmen and foremen are skilled or more highly paid workers in industry and construction.

**TABLE I**

Percentage Distribution of Occupation Groups of Employed Non-Farm Workers, White and Negro, 1940 and 1950.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Group</th>
<th>NEGR0 1940</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>WHITE 1940</th>
<th>1950</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total occupations reported</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors, Managers</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Workers</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Persons</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, foremen</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Household Workers</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Service Workers</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: computed from pc-7, No. 2, Table 6
Reprint from the Saturday Review of Literature by the committee of 100.

Within these five groups, there was a large gain for Negroes over the decade in clerical jobs, moderate gains in sales and skilled labor jobs, a small gain in professional jobs, but a reduction in the percentage having a direct proprietary interest, the managers, officials, and proprietors. Among white gainful workers, there were also percentage gains in four of the five groups, the exception being sales persons.

Negro professionals are pre-dominantly clergymen and teachers who are poorly paid or are engaged in "semi-professional" occupation. Relatively few Negroes are lawyers, doctors, engineers, or college professors, the high occupations within the group.

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South and North. The wartime demand for labor led many Negroes to move from the south. In the south the occupational distribution of Negro workers showed more definite improvement than the north, and the difference between the two areas in the occupational grouping of Negroes was reduced as noted in the following table. (Table II.)

TABLE II

Percentage Distribution of Occupational Groups of Negroes Employed as Non-Farm Workers, South and North 1940-1950.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Group</th>
<th>South 1940</th>
<th>South 1950</th>
<th>North 1940</th>
<th>North 1950</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total occupations reported</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors, Managers</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Workers</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Persons</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, foremen</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Household workers</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other service workers</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In the south there was a relative increase in the Negro professionals, proprietors, and sales persons. This means a slight development of the Negro middle class, a slight improvement in the extent to which the Negro people can buy in shops owned by Negroes, get waited on by Negro sales persons, and be attended by Negro doctors.

But in the north the number of Negroes in such occupations barely kept pace with, or dropped, in relation to the
increased Negro population. Particularly noticeable is the decline in the proportion of Negro proprietors, managers, and officials.

**National Urban League (Industrial Relations.)** Julius A. Thomas, the League director of industrial relations has built over a period of years a plan involving more than 200 major corporations. He also has a good working relationship with line and staff people on all levels. The League reaches the industry policy through a Commerce and Industry Council of twenty-seven top executives. The executives names make up a blue book of American business. In cooperation with a Commerce and Industry Council, the National Urban League has organized a Trade Union Committee in which the League keeps in contact with labor. In working with the Management Advisory Committee, the League stays close to the industrial and personnel relations men who do the hiring. The technique used by the League is to flood these committees with suggestions, literature and job applicants. In this cooperative relationship the League recruits and funnels desired applicants through local League offices.

The Urban Leagues local chapters (now numbering 60) have provided plot forms upon which Negro and white leaders have the opportunity to meet and discuss programs. These particular programs deal with social and economic improvements which work to their mutual advantage. The League has been instrumental in presenting the problems of the Negro to organized labor. They have a favorable relationship and have aided Negro laborers in adjusting to unionism.
With the public employment services equipped to handle mass placement of Negroes with white job applicants, the League's Industrial Relations activities are being increasingly aimed at the special type of placement—the special Negro worker in the special job with the special employer, to open "doors" for other Negro workers to follow behind the success of the "pilot." This process defined in "Pilot Placement Project" continues to be highly successful in the higher skilled jobs.

In July, 1952, Fortune published a progress report on Negro employment by John A. Davis. Davis traced the trends toward increased Negro employment from the turn of the century. He followed up pointing out gains made during the First World War and emphasized the grave setbacks of the depression years, the upsurge during the Second World War, and the recent post-war consolidation of many of those gains.

He found that since 1945 eleven states and twenty-two municipalities with combined populations of 60,000,000 people have passed laws against discrimination in employment. Eighteen states now prohibit discrimination in union membership on account of race or religion. This study further points out that a number of the large industrial firms have taken the initiative in eliminating discrimination in states where there are no such laws. International Harvester, for example, in its big new plant in Memphis, hired employees solely on the basis of their skill. Negroes and whites work side by
side, doing the same job and receiving the same pay. 38
The work of the Urban League has been a continuous fight for
the elimination of social and economic restrictions which have
combined to prevent the general improvement of race relations.
David J. McDonald makes the following statement:

"We of the United Steelworkers are proud to have had
some part in the work which the League has done and
to have been associated with you in the development
of interracial cooperation. This cooperation has
played a significant part in uniting hundreds of
thousands of men and women of all races, colors, and
religions in the trade union movement, where they
have been educated to discard their differences in
favor of constructive deliberation and action which
has not only advanced our common welfare but also
that of the community, the state and the nation."

For more than forty years the Urban League has done a
highly constructive job of helping to bring about full inte-
gration of Negroes into all types of industries. Operating
under the leadership of Lester Granger, Julius Thomas, Maurice
Moss, Guichard Parris and their associates in scores of branches

38. Roy E. Larsen, "The Worthiness of the Urban League's
Story", Speech delivered at the 1952 annual conference of NUL,
Hotel Hollenden, Cleveland, Ohio, Thursday, Sept. 4th, 1952.

39. David J. McDonald, Secretary-Treasurer, U. S. Steel
Workers of America (CIO) Speech delivered at the annual NUL
conference on Wednesday, Sept. 3, 1952, Hotel Hollenden,
Cleveland, Ohio.
throughout the country, the organization commands the respect of industrialists and labor leaders alike.

This is because after laws have been enacted and executive orders have been issued, the Urban League answers the question: Where do we go from here? The techniques are simple. Young people are encouraged to take vocational courses in the colleges and technical schools, and recruiting agents of industries are encouraged to offer jobs to those who qualify. Once on the job the League offers counseling in adjustment and competency, and suggests ways and means of achieving promotions. This is how simple it is. And the interesting thing about it is that it is no longer a question of how to open the doors of industrial opportunities but of how rapidly prepared Negroes can be found to enter these doors.40

The Urban League has sought to secure equality of opportunity for Negro citizens and has concentrated on the occupational problems of Negroes, young and old. In the past three decades the Urban League has placed special emphasis upon the training and careers of Negro youth. However, the League's ultimate goal in this important phase of its program has been equal opportunity for work training, equal opportunity for job placement and elimination of discriminatory practices from industry and labor.41


Industrial Relations and Employment. Almost all Negroes think that they and other Negroes should be given any job for which they qualify, but many of them have no idea how to prepare for and to secure the better jobs. The Urban League, therefore, does continually urge Negroes to prepare themselves even when there are no jobs open to them. If Negroes are prepared they may be ready if opportunities are created. Thus it is possible that during the Second World War, more colored girls could have secured skilled office jobs had they possessed the training for such positions when the war commenced. Negroes have to acquire a technique in such matters. In particular, colored job applicants have the special problem of learning how to "go back for more" when they have been rebuffed. Many Negroes, especially those from rural areas and the south are untrained for any kind of business or industrial work. They are unfamiliar with the discipline of a steady job in an urban factory or office.

The Urban League acts as the intermediary in the process of American industrialization, which is related structurally to the growth of the American city. It is a process which requires the transmutation of human resources into new usefulness for a new kind of civilization that is now inevitable... The new day demands selected competition, preparation for new skills, and a kind of intelligent screening of possibilities that only an organization intimately concerned and properly equipped can give.42

It is this to American economic life that the Urban League performs, although under the more understandable and popular guise of helping Negroes help themselves.43

So that Negroes may be able to help themselves economically in Omaha, the Industrial Relations Department of the Omaha Urban League was organized five years ago. It has worked with non-whites to ascertain economic facts concerning these groups. Minorities in Omaha do suffer numerous and diversified industrial, economic and social disparities. Unemployment and under-employment are the contributing factors with the following two basic difficulties affecting Negro citizens in Omaha:

1) The indigenous practice of refusing to hire Negroes at numerous establishments and placing occupational ceilings over them at an even larger number of establishments... Fortunately, there are some establishments in Omaha that are rather fair about employing minorities along with all citizens.

2) There are 770 major labor market employers in Omaha. These major employers represent about ten per cent of the total number of employers; however, they employ about seventy-three per cent of the gainfully employed workers in Omaha. Of the more than 66,000 workers which major market firms employ, 5.7 per cent or approximately 3,900 are Negroes.44

The full impact of the Omaha Urban League's Industrial Relations Department can be observed by comparing the 21st

43. Ibid., p. 10.
Annual Progress Report of 1948 with the 24th Annual Report of 1951. The report of 1948: "Getting suitable employment for Negro applicants continues to be a major problem. The employment opportunities in general are confined to relatively menial and unskilled jobs. Young colored Omahans are now graduating in sizeable numbers from numerous schools and colleges with diplomas, certificates, and degrees fitting them for various professional, technical, and skilled positions. Those who are trained as grade school teachers or nurses may find placement in Omaha, while others are likely to find the doors of opportunity closed."

The annual report of Omaha Urban League of 1951 reveals thirty-one job openings. "These jobs, secured through efforts of our industrial department, represent areas heretofore closed to Negro citizens. Prominent among these openings were: Driver-Salesman for Roberts and Alamito Dairies, Assistant Librarian in Omaha Public Library, Claims Official at the Nebraska State Employment Service, Sales-girls in several theaters, Child Guidance Teacher in Omaha Public Schools, Architectural Draftsman in a large firm, Stenographers in several Federal jobs, and one at Beth Israel Synagogue. In addition, the Omaha Urban League received definite commitments from several department stores for salespersons. Among others stated in the 1950 report are listed: the employment of two long-distance operators at the telephone company, five clerical jobs at the public utility firms, two laboratory assistants and a laboratory technician."
TABLE III

Analysis of Major Activities, Industrial Relations Department, Omaha Urban League, 1947-1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Job Orders</th>
<th>Referrals</th>
<th>Placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>2,076</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,829</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2,034</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1,023</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Reports of the Industrial Relations Department of the Omaha Urban League.

In the above table, Table III, one notes a great decrease in the major activities of the Industrial Relations Department when comparing the years 1947 through 1951. The Omaha Urban League, in planning its own program in terms of local needs and of available resources in money and personnel, felt that the first need was to develop new and better job opportunities for its trained citizens. With this goal in mind the League made a survey of the employment services and found them to be equipped to handle mass placements of Negro and white applicants. Therefore, the League now specializes in the placement of Negroes in clerical, skilled, semi-skilled, and professional jobs.

TABLE IV

Omaha Urban League--Field Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With Employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual reports of the Industrial Relations Department of the Omaha Urban League.
Comparing field visits of the Louisville Urban League with those of the Omaha Urban League over the past five years, it is noted that the Louisville League has a higher number of field visits with both employers and with unions. This may be due to the employment patterns of the locality. In 1949, the Omaha Urban League reported a total Negro labor force estimated at 8,800 and there were 2,500 job seekers. This meant that one out of every four Negroes was without employment.

Field contacts are of utmost importance. The Industrial Secretaries in most all Urban Leagues use the field contact method. They have found that through personal contacts with industries and unions it is much easier to advise and to sell surplus trained Negro skills to employers.

The new objective in the Omaha Urban League is to obtain from employers a special type employment for qualified non-whites and to put these special Negroes in the special jobs with the special employers. This also permits the Industrial Secretary to make more field contacts and to concentrate on a more specialized type program. The 1951 figures are low, but, in terms of responsibility and justification for an industrial relations department, the League is now doing a job that the employment services cannot do for Negroes. The Urban League is responsible for more Negroes being employed in clerical, skilled, semi-skilled and professional type employment.
The principal categories of Negro employment are as follows:

### TABLE V

**JOB CATEGORIES OF OMAHA NEGROES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and Retail</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat Packing Plants</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factories and Plants (not meat pkg.)</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroad Industry</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Home Employees</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov't., Educ., Cultural and Charitable</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employed</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Davis Wilkerson Brooks, "Occupational Trends of the Negro Youth of Omaha" University of Omaha, p. 16

The Utility Firms which employed very few Negroes twenty years ago are now employing 25 to 30. Not only have these utility firms, the Omaha Public Power District, the Metropolitan Utilities District, and the Bell Telephone Company, employed more Negroes, but through the Urban League industrial relations work they are employing Negroes in white-collar and skilled positions.

The Omaha Urban League secures from twelve to fifteen new employment placements a year. The League also secures additional jobs in places where Negroes have worked over a period of time.

During the years 1951 and 1952, new and additional job areas were secured. They are listed in the following table. (Table VI)
TABLE VI
New Trends in Job Placements, Industrial Relations Department 1951-1982

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Category</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1962</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stenographers and Typists</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptionists</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcribers, Clerks and Bookkeepers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping clerks.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant librarians</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Clerks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Omaha Urban League, Industrial Relations Department

Industrial Relations (Louisville Urban League)

Kentucky is a poor state. It is slow to change and opposed to any violations of customs. There is noticeable apathy, complacency and stubborn clinging to the old. Two concrete examples are seen in the state's slowness in changing from agriculture to industry. The state completely refused to modernize its constitution. The state is neither hot nor cold, northern or southern. Perhaps the only thing that alarms its citizens is the so-called interference of a northerner in what southerners believe is theirs alone to solve in their own way—the race problem. The state ranks very low in general income due to the high cost of the duel system and the failure to make full utilization of the skills of all of its citizens. The Negro population is continually declining state-wise, but the percentage of increase in Louisville is not keeping pace with that of whites. Undoubtedly, the main reason is limited opportunities in employment, civil rights, and general welfare. Kentucky and Louisville have failed
to provide sufficient attraction to those who are looking for a better way of life. In the area of employment for example, the Negro earns about half as much proportionately as whites do. The median annual income for white families is $2,225.00, while that of Negroes is $1,161.00.

Only 2% of the Negro wage earners have an income exceeding $4,500.00 and more than one-fourth (26.5%) earn less than $500.00. More than 15% of Kentucky whites earn $4,500 and over, with only 16% of them less than $500.00 income.45

One significant cause of this disparity is found in the type of employment Negroes get:

**TABLE VII**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>Whites</th>
<th>Non-whites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating-Drinking Places</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Service</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Households</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table, (Table VII) shows the employment in major occupations by race, in Kentucky. The large number of Negroes hired in private households, 22.3 per cent compared with whites 1.1 per cent is significant. It is also noted that most Negroes are hired as laborers or in other menial job capacities.

The Industrial Relations Department of the Louisville Urban League has operated as a part-time program for a period of thirty-three years. The Urban League has been the leading agency in Louisville to deal with special industrial problems among Negroes. A few years ago it was the Executive Secretary of the Louisville Urban League who conferred with employers in an effort to secure job opportunities for Negroes or to expand their employment opportunities in industries now using their services. The League's office secretary devotes some of her attention to making employment placements, all in the area of domestic and personal service jobs. This particular service is very small as the League now specializes in the placement of non-whites in the skilled professional and clerical type jobs. The industrial activities at this time were inadequate for there was a definite need for additional staff to serve the increased needs of helping Negroes secure gainful employment and to screen applicants for work employers.

On July 1, 1951, the Louisville Urban League hired its first Industrial secretary and established a new full time Industrial Relations Department. The purpose of this new department was to obtain maximum utilization of qualified Negro workers in industry and business. After one year of operation of the new Industrial Relations Department (July 1, 1951--July 1, 1952), several gains in employment and race relations have resulted for Negro citizens of Louisville.
"Our Industrial Department has from July 1st, 1951 to June 30th, 1952, made the following gains. 46

1) Made placement of 42 job seekers in professional, clerical, skilled, and semi-skilled jobs, most of them in industries or positions where Negroes previously have not been employed, thereby bringing a total of $100,000 in new income to the Negro community. This, with the other 47 placements made in part-time and unskilled jobs resulting in an income of over $125,000.00 income for the Negro community, is a result of our placement program.

2) 204 visits and conferences have been held with employers and management in the interest of Negro workers. This represents approximately 60 companies.

3) 33 conferences have been held with union officials and Executive Boards for improving the understanding between the Negro worker and the unions.

4) 647 applicants have been interviewed for possible employment with approximately one-fourth of this number receiving further assistance in the form of vocational guidance.

5) A clerical training program instituted whereby clerical trainees are given an opportunity to have actual working experience in an office which enhances their opportunity for future employment."

The following table (Table VIII) shows employment activities of the Louisville Urban League covering the years 1947 through 1951. In 1951 there was a substantial decrease in the total number of activities of the Louisville Urban League. This was due to the emphasis on specialized placement activities. This specialized placement activity directs

exceptionally qualified young Negroes into jobs for which they are trained. In line with the program of specialized placement activities the League influence follows these new workers in every phase of their unaccustomed experience in job assignments, in plant training, union membership and off the job activities.

TABLE VIII
Analysis of the Major Industrial Relations Activities of the Louisville Urban League

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applications</th>
<th>Job Orders</th>
<th>Referrals</th>
<th>Placements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1,751</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1,634</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Annual reports of the Louisville Urban League

The Louisville Urban League's industrial activities have been inadequate during the thirty years which it has operated. There was a definite need for additional staff to meet the demands which came to the League from employers and employees.

A 1948 survey by J. Harvey Kerns prompted him to recommend that "the industrial program be substantially broadened in scope and facilities, with a full-time industrial secretary of experience and resourcefulness." 47

Employment is probably the most important area in the Urban League's program. It is reflected in the large number of applicants who come to the League seeking employment. Most citizens, if asked the purpose of the Urban League, will emphasize job placement.

It was also recommended in Kern's study on Louisville Urban League activities, "that an industrial program should concentrate on the following:

a) The securing of new openings for Negroes in industry, particularly in skilled and technical positions.

b) The skillful education of employers and the public generally regarding the potentialities of Negro labor.

c) The securing of cooperation among local groups in developing worker's education activities.

d) The situation of opportunities for broader occupational, apprenticeship, and other training programs for Negro workers. That a closer cooperative relationship be established with the public schools in an effort to develop within the schools a more adequate guidance program.48

Cooperation with Department of Economic Security

(Employment Service) A documented plan of cooperation between the Louisville Urban League and the department of economic security was agreed on in August, 1962. This plan is beneficial to the two agencies and particularly Negroes as it permits:

48. Ibid., p. 251.
1) An exchange of information on all methods and techniques in dealing with employers;

2) Two agencies may jointly work on problems of local skill shortages;

3) Regular contact schedules are to be drawn up. This arrangement will enable the industrial secretary to go along with the employment services contact men to industry and business.49

TABLE IX

Louisville Urban League Field Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Visits With Employers</th>
<th>Number of Visits With Unions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual reports of the Louisville Urban League

In 1951 a total of 204 visits and conferences were held between Urban League officials with employers in the interest of securing jobs for Negro workers. The number of visits with employers represents approximately 60 different companies.

Thirty-three conferences were held in 1951 with union officials and executive boards for improving the understanding between the Negro worker and the unions.

In Retrospect. Everything that any Urban League does furthers understanding among an ever-widening circle—as, for example, in the constant effort to broaden job opportunities for Negroes on their merits and to find qualified workers

49. Louisville Urban League, "Minutes: Industrial Advisory Committee" February 6, 1953.
workers for jobs that are opened up. As these jobs are filled, people working side by side at common tasks learn to know and respect each other and this helps to destroy the evil myths that would poison the well-springs of our democratic faith.

All of the Urban League’s efforts help directly to raise the standard of living of the most depressed portion of the community; as a result the whole community is the gainer—in economic terms through "increased self-respect and capacity for self help."  

Summary. Through the Industrial Relations Department the Urban League has continually made comprehensive reviews of the needs of the Negro population.

The Urban League bases its program on the assumption that Negro citizens are faced with a new day and that this day demands selective competition, preparation for new skills, and intelligent screening. It is this service that the Urban League performs in helping to build a bigger and greater American economy.

In Louisville, the Negro does not earn half as much proportionately as whites do. The median annual income for white families is $2,222,500 while that of Negroes is only $1,116,000.

In Omaha, the average salary for Negro workers is $2,029; average annual income for the white workers is $3,217. Minorities in Omaha as in Louisville suffer numerous and diversified industrial, economic, and social disparities.

The establishment of Industrial Relations Departments in the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues means that Negro people will not have to continue to pay the price in wasted resources and that their best talents may be gainfully utilized. In addition, the League's Pilot Placement program is especially designed to place technically and professionally trained Negroes in satisfactory positions in private industry and commerce. This plan also involves a systematic follow up of the employer and employee for analyzing and documenting the experiences gained by both.

The true fact, in summary, may be stated that if democracy was completely realized, Negroes would constitute no special minority problem, and their work experience would be no more difficult than that of others in the community. However, it is necessary to have an Urban League and of utmost importance to have an industrial relations department with responsibilities of working in behalf of raising the economic status of minority groups.
CHAPTER VI

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

In order to do an effective job in industrial relations there must be vocational guidance and counseling of Negro youth. There is too often inherited belief among Negro boys and girls that there is no use in training themselves in special skills when their only apparent job opportunities are in domestic or other unskilled work. This makes for low morale; it also has the result that, when skilled job opportunities are created through educational work with management, it is difficult to find qualified workers. To break up this vicious circle, the National Urban League has taken this leadership in stimulating and organizing vocational guidance for Negroes, especially in schools and colleges. The definite accomplishments in this field of service naturally benefit the situation in all cities where local Urban Leagues are operating.

Minority oppression is one of the direct results of a low economic status. It can hardly be disputed that the Negro is near the very bottom of the economic ladder. At best he is a marginal worker. Only a small percentage of the Negroes in these United States are in a position to exercise a degree of freedom in their vocational selections comparable to that enjoyed by whites. The majority, even though trained, are still domestic servants, menials and unskilled laborers of one kind or another. Added to the Negro's limitations imposed by his own poverty, ignorance, and often times rank indifference, are racial prejudice and segregation. These prejudices close
out many avenues of social participation that could and un­
doubtedly would increase the Negroes' potential adjusting

capacities.

There was a time when parents could be turned to for
help to give children counseling and guidance, but frequently
today this is not possible. During the past few years many
grown-ups have become uncertain and fearful of the future
which is due to the constantly changing world. Too often
they have had their own ideas ruthlessly crushed and destroyed,
and they hesitate to instill too many fond hopes in their
sons and daughters.

The unemployed youth have more and more begun to seek
the aid of professional guidance counselors. More and more
it is becoming a job of these trained advisors to prepare
youth—those in school and out of school, those employed and
unemployed—for a sane and healthy adulthood. This is done
by probing their backgrounds and abilities. For Negro guidance
counselors this task is especially difficult because the prob­
lem of dealing with Negroes is at its best a most intricate
one. However, there are many Negro guidance counselors who
see beyond the limitations of the color line.51 The staff
members of the Urban League know that the possibilities of
youth's adjustment and happiness are too great to be lost
through wrong judgments.

51. Elmer H. Carter, "Editorial", Opportunity,
If there ever was a time when American youth, both Negro and white, needed vocational guidance, now is the time. In particular, Negro youth, confronted with cruel and unreasonable occupational barriers, need to be made conscious first of their own aptitudes, secondly of the possible opportunities for employment in the field of their choice. And then--perhaps more important than anything else--Negro youth must be impressed with the value of training and the discipline that must be acquired to achieve success in the modern world. The National Urban League long ago recognized the importance of vocational guidance and inspiration. Each year the Negro, by virtue of the campaigns conducted by the League, has increasingly become aware of the importance of this phase of educational activity. Today in many Negro schools and colleges, vocational guidance departments are being developed by trained counselors. In place of the haphazard methods of orientation of students which prevailed a few years ago, there is now scientific guidance in the choice of courses available to hundreds of thousands of young men and women. Thus results already achieved have fully justified the vision which inaugurated the Urban League's vocational guidance campaigns.  

The following, "Of Human Interest," is a case study presented as a technique of the Urban League in guiding an individual.

---

"The Industrial Secretary looked up to greet another applicant. He saw a young man, unkept, needing a hair cut, wearing soiled clothing. After inviting him to sit down the Industrial Secretary leaned back to listen.

"The Story!

"He had come to Denver from Chicago where he had been employed for the past year. He had heard that opportunities were better in Denver. He became stranded in Pueblo and wrote to his stepmother in a southern state for assistance. No reply. He managed to get to Denver. Now he needed help!

"It was an old, familiar story, and the Industrial Secretary made the usual referrals—the Citizen's Mission, Traveler's Aid—and gave a few additional instructions. He also sent a telegram to the stepmother asking her to contact the Urban League.

"Three days later the applicant returned on time for this appointment. Nothing had changed. He had not gotten a job, and there had been no news from his stepmother.

"Well his story sounded straight, he's punctual and has followed every suggestion faithfully, he's young and somehow stirs a response. He needs a job. We have a job. What about his references? Thinking it would probably be a waste of time, the Industrial Secretary contacted the former employer in Chicago. "Yes, he was in our employ for a year. A good worker, dependable—came to work every day!"

"This makes the decision easier. The local employer is called and told the whole story. An interview is set up for the applicant. The Industrial Secretary turns to the applicant and says, 'Come with me.' A trip to the barbershop, a bath, clean underwear, a clean shirt, tie, and an overcoat brings about a new appearance, a new confidence. The interview brings a job.

"An investment of a little time, a little money, and the Industrial Secretary's belief in human decency may have salvaged another citizen. Who knows?"

The Vocational Opportunity Campaign originated in the spring of 1950. It is now a regular phase of the program of the National Urban League, and it represents a nation-wide emphasis on training in job opportunities for Negro youth. In each successive campaign, the objective has been to stimulate Negro youth to prepare for jobs.

This program has proved to be one of the main activities of the Urban League. The true fact is "as job opportunities increase for Negroes, the Urban League is able to open more and more jobs to Negroes. This program is important and there must be more guidance because more people will want better jobs, better training.

What the National Urban League's Vocational Opportunity Campaign means to the Negro can be observed in its theme and slogan, 'The future is yours—Plan and Prepare.'

VOC week calls not only upon the Negro youth to carve out his own future by training for a job, choosing a job,
getting a job, and keeping a job, but upon all America
"to cooperate in providing employment opportunities for this
youth." It is a challenge to all citizens to recognize that
the establishment of economic equality for Negroes is a por-
tion of our democratic government. Fifty-four cities in
twenty-seven states, fifty colleges, eight hundred secondary
schools, as well as many organizations helped to make VOC
week significant for the nation, and Henry A. Wallace, Secretary
of Commerce, indorsed the campaign, saying in part: "The Negroes
of the country will have a better chance than ever before to
improve their abilities as individuals...Whatever we do to
better the position of the Negro in the political, economic
and educational spheres of our national life, the most im-
portant contribution toward the bettering of his position
will be made by the Negro himself."

Omaha and Louisville Urban League (Vocational Guidance.)
In the Omaha and the Louisville communities the local Urban
Leagues have formulated a program of Vocational Opportunity
Campaigns to acquaint students and faculties with the realities
of job opportunities. They have pointed out to students the
changes of employment patterns and the importance of selecting
and preparing for a particular career.

Each year both Leagues conduct a Vocational Opportunity
program for the benefit of Negro students. In Louisville the

54. School and Society--Vocational Opportunity Campaign,
Vocational Opportunity program is usually co-sponsored by the Louisville Urban League and the Central High School (the only public high school for Negroes.)

The Vocational Opportunity program in Louisville is a week-long program which reaches some 1,300 high school students of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. Students are informed by some forty or more consultants representing business, industry, government, and the professions. These consultants describe the particular vocation which students are interested in. The program also consists of conferences with outstanding consultants and resource people, displays, panels, movies, and distribution of literature during the week. One of the widest gaps in the opportunities for equal education in Louisville is in the field of vocational training. A few introductory courses are taught to Negro boys in the industrial arts, and a few taught to Negro girls in the domestic sciences in the junior high school grades. On the high school level the vocational, occupational choices are limited and in those courses which are taught the equipment and supplies are, on the whole, insufficient and inadequate. Since schooling should prepare one to make a living as well as to prepare one to live, Louisville schools for Negroes have neglected an important obligation to their Negro youth.

However, plans for more extensive vocational opportunities for Negro high school youth have been given careful study by a special committee on vocational curriculum of the Central High School Parent-Teacher Association.
The Urban League made recommendations to this committee to include more extensive vocational facilities in the new Central High School. These recommendations were adopted by the Board of Education and are to be included in the new Central High School in the fall of 1952.

The Omaha Urban League sponsors, with the help of other interested organizations, an annual Vocational Opportunity Campaign during one week of March each year. Special emphasis is placed on making parents and youth more aware of the need for job preparation.

The city of Omaha, having interracial schools differs from the Louisville school system, which makes it difficult to counsel non-white students. The League's Industrial Secretary has found it necessary to participate in the high schools as a counselor in a special guidance and counseling clinic for students. In addition to his program, a committee of Negro students plan, under the direction of the League, an annual Vocational Opportunity Campaign. This campaign is carried on in the Negro community and its purpose is to encourage Negro youth to prepare themselves for a career.

Later in the week, a public meeting is held either at one of the larger Negro churches or at the Near Northside YMCA where young people are counseled by outstanding Negro consultants and resource persons. During March 1951, the Omaha Urban League staff was able to reach over 600 teen-age youth.

In helping the Negro to choose and secure occupations and professions, the Omaha and the Louisville Urban Leagues
have activated a five point program:

1. Secure and make available the best information about current and prospective job opportunities in League communities.

2. Take a census of available skills of all persons who are employed and under employed; especially in those areas where a manpower shortage may exist.

3. Develop an aggressive educational contact program to advise employers and potential employers of the reserves of trained manpower available.

4. Expand the League's vocational guidance program to keep manpower funneled into categories where most is needed.

5. Contact schools and employers to be sure there is a program ready to train Negroes for new skills to take new jobs, or to replace losses made by transfer of personnel.

Plans should be developed and activated to assure that all racial and ethnic groups may develop their potentialities and apprenticeship training programs.

An editorial "Vocational Guidance" appeared in the December 19, 1952 issue of the Louisville Defender. This editorial complemented the Louisville Urban League, National Urban League and Board of Education for conducting a successful vocational guidance institute for teachers. "For years we have been deploiring the fact that a scarcity of gainful jobs always faced the student upon graduation from high school. During the past two decades we have seen more and more jobs open for young men and women of the Negro race and we have noticed a woeeful lack of qualified applicants for the jobs... Teachers must be concerned that they are only turning out that
which will eventually be dragged on a flooded market while thousands of jobs are going unfilled for want of qualified personnel which they could be helping supply... With the expanded opportunities offered and promised at the new central high school in Louisville more attention will naturally be paid to vocational training for youth. The Vocational Guidance Institute is belated but nevertheless timely because too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the vocational training which we so badly need and so long have ignored."

"VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE is the process of... helping a person to choose, prepare for... and enter into an occupation.

"An applicant with a college degree in sociology came to us looking for employment. He had been able to get help at two agencies and was upset because a counselor at his University Guidance Center had suggested that he return to his pre-college job as a bellboy. He had told the counselor that he had spent four years in college training himself for a better job and was, therefore, not ready to accept this proposal.

"He said that test results had indicated his interests to be in the area of working with people, and the interview indicated a desire for employment in the social work field or related areas.

"We telephoned two public agencies, one of which suggested that he file applications for a pending examination for employment with their agency. He scored high on the examination and
was subsequently hired as a case worker with the Denver Department of Welfare.

"He plans to continue his education in this area and feels that he would like to make his career in social work." 55

**Expanded Vocational Services.** The National Urban League in 1951 received a grant from the Dorothy H. and Lewis Rosenstiel Foundation for the expansion of the League’s vocational guidance activities of the southern division. As a result the League was able to conduct career conferences on the campuses of four southern colleges, thus bringing to more than 5,000 students the personal advice of over 150 speakers and consultants from commerce and industry, government, labor, agriculture, and the professions.

"Developing Skills for Manpower Needs" has been the slogan of these career conferences, and they have given ambitious students a chance to talk face to face with these consultants about real work situations, to learn about jobs and training for jobs. Equally important, employers have had an opportunity to discover untapped reservoirs of vital human resources. 56

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Summary. Adequate guidance and training is necessary for the economic adjustment of non-whites. The Urban League recognizes that the depressed conditions among so many Negro families was due to the fact that they had no training for the better and higher paying jobs.

In 1930, the National Urban League launched a national program, Vocational Opportunity Campaign, for the purpose of stimulating and guiding young people into desirable fields. The Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues conduct, each year, a Vocational Opportunity campaign for non-white students.

Vocational Opportunity week calls not only upon the Negro youth to carve out his own future by training for a job, choosing a job, getting a job, and keeping a job, but upon all America "to cooperate in providing opportunities for youth."

The Urban League contacts schools and employers to be sure there is a program ready to train Negroes for new skills to take new jobs, or to replace losses made by the transfer of personnel.

Vocational Guidance and Counseling, a daily activity in the Industrial Relations Department of the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues, is where youths and adults are prepared. Those in school and out of school, those employed and unemployed, all are given vocational tests and counseling for future jobs.
CHAPTER VII

HOUSING

Despite the Negro workers' improved economic status, the 1950 Housing Census still reveals that housing of Negroes is three to five times worse than that of the general population. Twenty-seven per cent of all the homes of non-white families were dilapidated compared with seven per cent of all families. Although the Negro population increased substantially, the Negro dweller occupied a somewhat smaller portion of all occupied dwelling units. The Negro was found to be nine and nine-tenths per cent of the entire population but occupied only 8.3 per cent of the occupied dwelling units.

While ownership among Negroes increased at a higher rate than whites—66 per cent to 54 per cent—Negro renters in urban localities across the nation were four times more over-crowded in 1950 than in 1940. Over-crowded conditions of non-white households actually increased during the decade from 20 to 23 per cent. A vast proportion of low-income families still are inadequately housed. The social changes, however, have brought about a higher education, better jobs and increased urbanisation. There are increased demands for more housing for Negro families of moderate and middle incomes.

The broad objective of the Housing Committee of the National Urban League is to improve, expand and encourage better housing opportunities for the Negro population. At the present time a considerable amount of emphasis is upon privately built and privately financed housing.
The inadequacies and difficulties that confront Negroes are familiar. There are not enough desirable existing housing facilities available for Negro occupancy. Although the Supreme Court has declared racial restrictive covenants invalid, the decision has been circumvented by "gentlemen's agreements" not to sell, rent or finance properties for Negro occupancy. "Open occupancy" is still a new term. It is widely used because there are not enough areas where there is privately financed housing with open occupancy available. There are some builders familiar with the fact that the educational and employment opportunities have changed the Negro's ability to buy and rent desirable housing. The vast majority of builders are not aware of the fact. It is far more difficult to obtain credit for financing homes for Negro families than for white and that frequently the rates are greater is known. Even Negro owned financial institutions have been slow to recognize the changed economic status of many members of their own race. As of December 1950 there were twenty-seven legal reserve life insurance companies which were owned and operated by Negroes ranging in size from something under $500,000 to approximately $50,000,000 and their mortgage portfolios were very small. One of the greatest problems facing the American community is how to rehouse minorities who are being displaced by slum clearance for urban redevelopment.

Population. Significant changes have taken place in both the size and distribution of the Negro population in the
decade 1940-1950. The 1950 Census shows that there were 14,894,000 Negroes in the United States and they represented 9.9 per cent of the entire population.

Between 1940 and 1950, the Negro population increased 15.8 per cent while the entire population increased 14.5 per cent.

The shift of Negroes in the past decade from farms to cities—particularly northern communities—has been wide and rapid.

While the non-white population was doubling in 30 metropolitan areas, whites were decreasing in number in 26 of the cities. The increase of the white population for the same period was 48.5 per cent. This increase was heaviest in the standard metropolitan areas of the west where the increase was 127.6 per cent as compared with 48.9 per cent, ranging from Buffalo with 100.1 per cent for the San Francisco Oakland area.

Income and Employment Status. Significant changes in the Negro's employment status are noted in their wider distribution in all major occupational groups and a significant declining in farming and in domestic service. Besides moving into occupations with higher incomes and increased prestige, the Negro family increased the number of workers in the family unit. Increased school enrollment has made the Negro wage earner a better educated and more responsible worker. It has increased his job security and enhanced, also increased, his demands for better housing.
TABLE X

Population, By Color, For Standard Metropolitan Areas of Omaha, Nebr. and Louisville, Ky. 1940-1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Metropolitan Area</th>
<th>WHITE 1950</th>
<th>WHITE 1940</th>
<th>% Increase 1950</th>
<th>NON-WHITE 1950</th>
<th>NON-WHITE 1940</th>
<th>% Increase 1950</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louisville, Ky.</td>
<td>510,491</td>
<td>397,121</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>66,409</td>
<td>54,353</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaha, Nebraska</td>
<td>343,480</td>
<td>312,309</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>17,918</td>
<td>12,844</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce 1950 Census of Population "Population of Standard Metropolitan Areas and Cities of 50,000 or More By Color" 1950-1940 12-16-51 Series PC-14 No. 1

The total population of standard metropolitan area in Louisville on April 1, 1950; 576,900 representing an increase of 125,427 inhabitants, or 27.9 per cent over than of 1940. The white population of Louisville increased at a slightly higher rate (28.5 per cent) than that of the non-white population at 22.2 per cent.

In Omaha the total standard metropolitan area experienced a 12.7 per cent increase. The white population had an 11.6 per cent increase, while the non-whites population of Omaha increased at a rate of 39 per cent. The actual characteristics of Omaha population according to the Census report of 1950 reveals that the white native population numbers 216; the foreign born 17,304; the non-white 17304, and of this number 16,832 are Negro and 571 are of other races.

Housing, Omaha Urban League. The spatial pattern of residential segregation among Negroes in Omaha is in general similar to that which may be found in most northern cities.
A study by the Omaha Urban League in 1949 revealed that the population increased by 10,000 Negroes in 8 years; during the same period only 15 new homes were build for Negro occupancy.

The 1945 Mayor’s Housing Committee Survey revealed the following conditions of Negro housing:

1) 15.2% of Negro homes should be condemned.
2) 9.2% need major repairs.
3) only 50% of all homes appraised met minimum standards of good housing.

The outlook of improvement in Negro housing in Omaha brightens just a bit. However, much still remains to be done. One out of every two Negroes in Omaha still lives in a house that does not meet the minimum standards of adequate housing.

It is interesting to note from the “Facts about the Negro in Omaha” as compiled by the Omaha Urban League, 1952 the following:

A. Over-crowded housing condition—population increased 39.6% in 10 years as compared with 12% for over-all population; during same period 9,200 rental and sale units were built in Omaha but only 25 available to Negro citizens.

B. Restrictive rental, financing, so called “Gentlemen’s Agreements,” and general sales practices operate to prevent freedom of movement by qualified Negro citizens.

C. In 1945 Mayor’s Housing Committee Survey revealed the following conditions of Negro housing:
1) 15.2% of Negro homes should be condemned.
2) 9.2% need major repairs.
3) only 50% of all homes appraised are meeting minimum standards of good housing.

Survey made by Omaha Urban League 1949.
D. Near Northside "Negro Community" characterized by:

1) over-crowded, 34.9 per acre; most densely populated single dwelling area in the city.
2) Poor traffic control; highest accident rate in city.
3) Recreational facilities though inadequate, not fully utilized; 6,553 children of ages 6-18. Group work agencies in the Near Northside are have registration of 1,706; these agencies include Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, YWCA, YMCA, Christ Child, and City Recreation. The new Kellom Center can accommodate approximately 1,000.

Out of the 700 public housing units scheduled to be built in 1950-1951, some were placed in areas where many Negroes are now living. The League admits that the problem of housing faces all people but feel that the Negro is further handicapped by discriminatory policies and unwritten laws that would eventually reduce him to the ghetto status.59

The Omaha Urban League cooperates with the Housing Committee in an attempt to secure homes for Negroes in the community, and staff and board members serve on various housing committees. Included among these the Mayor's Housing Committee.

In 1952 the Omaha Housing authority took a very important stand when they issued a statement that "Negro citizens living in public housing will no longer be stigmatized by being set apart in separate units." This was a highly significant accomplishment by the Housing Committee of the Urban League along with the support of representative citizens and groups throughout the city.


Housing, Louisville Urban League. The housing problem as related to the Negro in Louisville is an especially serious one, since only limited districts are available to him for residential purposes; and those districts where he is not restricted have become over-crowded because of population increases.

The devices used to restrict the movement of Negro home seekers are varied. Civic Improvement Association objections, racial restrictive covenants, condemnations, mutual agreements among property owners, inclusion of clauses in leases which prohibit the leasing or sub-leasing of houses to "undesirable tenants" have all been used.

TABLE XI

Occupied Standard Dwelling Units, 1950. Omaha, Nebraska and Louisville, Kentucky

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Report No.</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>All Dwelling Units (preliminary)</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>Total Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>369,129</td>
<td>111,711</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>34,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaha</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>351,117</td>
<td>73,941</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>15,263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table (Table XI) shows population and the number of occupied standard units of the cities of Louisville and Omaha. Louisville, according to the 1950 census, had a total of 111,711 standard dwelling units, and a population of 369,129. The city of Omaha in 1950 had a population of 351,117 and 73,941 standard dwelling units.


**TABLE XII**

Occupied Substandard Dwelling Units, By Tenure and Color, for Selected Areas--Louisville, Kentucky and Omaha, Nebraska

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>Substandard dwelling units</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Occupied</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total White</td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisville</td>
<td>34,444</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaha</td>
<td>13,263</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above data in Table XIII is based on tabulations of data from the 1950 Census of Population and Housing. The table shows Louisville with 34,444 substandard dwelling units with Negroes occupying 30.8% of them. Omaha has 13,263 substandard dwelling units with non-whites occupying 13.3 per cent of these units. Non-whites in Louisville own 7.2 per cent of substandard homes and rent 23.6 per cent; in Omaha the picture is a bit different, for here non-whites owned only 5.3 per cent and rent 8.0 per cent of substandard houses.

The Louisville Urban League Board Members and the Executive Secretary work with rent control committees so that they can protect the majority of people until adequate housing can be attained.

The League has worked to relocate families who have been displaced through the redevelopment of certain areas of the city; it continually works for slum clearance and low cost housing.

The problem among Negroes is more acute because of their inability to obtain available houses which are being constructed by private builders with the exception of the commendable...
consideration given Negroes by the Louisville Municipal Housing Commission. Fewer than 200 houses have been built in Louisville for Negro occupancy during the past twenty-five years. For the most part the physical surroundings of the Negro family in the areas of largest concentration are poor. In "Parkland" commonly referred to as "Little Africa," an area south of Broadway and west of twenty-eighth Street, most of the Negro population lives in districts where the quality of the housing is substandard. Many of the houses are "shacks" built by the present occupants.

The Louisville Urban League staff serves on housing committees and urges and plans with the Louisville Municipal Housing Commission, for low rent public housing, particularly for minority groups.

"HOUSE TO RENT FOR NEGRO OCCUPANCY"60

"If the truth were admitted, the following would be a typical advertisement describing rental property for Negro occupancy in one of our larger cities.

TEN ROOM HOUSE, at least sixty years of age, badly in need of repair and redecoration. House is cold in winter and hot in summer. Conveniently located near smoky factories, noisy railroad yards. The neighborhood is highly deteriorated and is well supplied with all the factors that encourage crime and delinquency. Heavy truck traffic in area, no nearby playgrounds, and fire-trap school house within walking distance. Best thing available for nice Negro family at exorbitant rent."

Summary. The 1950 Housing Census revealed in 1950 that housing of Negroes is three to five times worse than that of the general population. Twenty-seven per cent of all homes of

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60. From a paper by Reginald A. Johnson, Director of Field Services of the National Urban League, presented at the Annual Conference of the NUL at Camp Atwater, Mass., in Sept., 1947.
non-white families were dilapidated compared with seven percent of all families.

The broad objective of the Housing Committee of the National Urban League is to "improve, expand, and encourage housing opportunities for the Negro population. There are not enough desirable existing housing facilities available for Negro occupancy. Although the Supreme Court has declared racial restrictive covenants invalid, the decision has been circumvented by "gentlemen's agreements" not to sell, rent, or finance properties for Negro occupancy.

A study conducted by the Omaha Urban League in 1949 revealed that the population increased by 10,000 Negroes in eight years; during the same period only 15 new homes were build for Negro occupancy. The Urban League admits that the problem of housing faces all people but feels that the Negro is further handicapped by discriminatory policies and unwritten laws that would eventually reduce him to the ghetto status.

A high significant accomplishment was made by the Omaha Urban League's Housing Committee when they and other groups asked the Omaha Housing Authority to issue a statement that "Negro citizens living in public housing will no longer be stigmatized by being set apart in separate units," and it was issued.

The housing problem as related to the Negro in Louisville is an especially serious one, since only a few limited districts are available to him for residential purposes, and these districts are over crowded.
According to the 1950 Census of Population and Housing, Louisville had 34,444 substandard dwellings with Negroes occupying 30.8% of these units. Omaha had 13,263 substandard dwelling units with non-whites occupying 13.3 per cent of these units.
CHAPTER VIII
HEALTH

Better housing means that Negroes will enjoy better health. There have been definite improvements in the Negro's health as witnessed by his lowered death rate. The Negro community continues to suffer poor health conditions. The fact is that there are not enough Negro doctors, hospitals, and other facilities available. Those available are often inadequate and/or complicated by the quota system. The lowered economic condition of Negroes does not allow them to purchase needed medical care; and ignorance of the rudiments of good health practices increases the mortality rates.

In 1940 a report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights indicated that the ratio of Negro physicians to the total population of the country was about one to 3,377, while that of the total number of physicians to general population of the country was one to 750. The condition was worse in the south where in 1940 there were about 2,000 Negro doctors, or only one to every 4,900 colored persons. There are fewer dentists and other professional personnel in proportion to the population. It is generally recognized that there are definite limitations on the supply of such personnel as a result of economics and discrimination.

Policies of some schools definitely limit the number of applicants according to a predetermined quota system based on religion and race. Further, hospitals and clinics in many
places do not provide opportunities for skills to be sharpened. This serves to increase disorganization in the Negro community by withholding health services to those in need.

This condition is evidenced by problems presented by a number of Urban Leagues which have attacked the evils. Atlanta Urban League made a study which ascertained that hospital and clinic facilities were not provided in proportion to the needs of the Negro population. It also learned that the Negro professional personnel is definitely handicapped and stultified since nowhere in the city may a Negro physician serve an internship or residency. Negroes could not participate in postgraduate activities and were not kept abreast of advance in the medical sciences. The latter situation has been cleared somewhat by the League in securing the cooperation of Emory University to provide weekly post-graduate clinics for the thirty-seven Atlanta Negro doctors.

In the matter of hospital facilities for tuberculosis, Dr. Julian Lewis indicated that the number of hospital and sanitorium beds for colored patients is woefully insufficient. To compare the North and South there is even greater deficiency in the north, where beds are seldom set aside for Negroes, and others are given preference for available beds. The simple facts of health and life as they relate to the Negro are amazing, and alarming to say the least. If you are a colored American your life expectancy at birth is 10 years less than your non-Negro compatriot as a general rule. If you are a male you may expect an average of 57¼ years, if you are female you are favored by 61 years expectancy. On the other hand, white
male expectancy is 65.1 years and white female expectancy is 70.3 years, a general difference of some $7\frac{1}{2}$ years in favor of the white male child and 9 years in favor of the white female child. To be sure these differences vary in different decades. The gap becomes less with increased ages, yet the fact remains that, generally, a far too short life expectancy exists in the non-white population. Let us first take note of some of the causes of the difference in life expectancy. Reports reveal that the Negroes' losses are due to the (1) respiratory diseases, including tuberculosis, pneumonia and influenza; (2) syphilis; (3) degenerative diseases, including cerebral hemorrhage and nephritis; (4) homicides.

During the last 12 years there have been many gains in the health of the American Negro. There still remains, however, a wide disparity between the mortality figures of the white and colored populations. It should be stated that education, improvement of living standards and economic conditions have helped raise the standard of Negro health. The development of health opportunities among Negroes over the past 12 years has proven the ability of the Negro to respond favorably to all measures of health betterment. Thus, during the last decade we have seen the gap between the two races as relates to mortality grow smaller and smaller.

Infant mortality is still 55% higher on a national basis. To be sure there are evident trends toward lower rates in all these areas. These areas still remain too high and are actually
appalling in some southern communities and likewise in some congested northern urban areas. In other words, has the medical magic of our present day eluded the Negro population on a national level; if so why? By statistical evaluation we must agree that the mortality rates of the Negro population today are those of the whites twenty years ago. These are the sad facts of health, but they are nevertheless true.

One of the reasons for high mortality lies in the status of the health professions. It takes physicians, dentists, nurses and auxiliary personnel to provide health resources. Latest reports show 201,000 physicians in the United States. In 1900 there were 120,000. There has, therefore, been an increase of two-thirds in the medical force in the last 50 years. There are some revealing and startling items in this general picture. First about 37% of the total medical force are specialists. This means generally there are about 74,000 specialists. About 63% of the remainder are general practitioners with about 15% of this group who are doing some special work. This medical group is broken down further in the following manner: about 3,700 are in administrative capacities, about 24,878 are interns and residents. About 12,563 are in governmental service and 150,417 are in practice. There are less than 4,000 Negro physicians in the entire United States, roughly less than 2% of the total. There are about 120 certified specialists in the entire group, compared with 74,000 in other groups. The bulk of the Negro population, some 10 to 11 millions, live in the south, where medical services are desperately needed.
and woefully lacking on a general basis. In some areas health facilities for the Negro are largely non-existent. By ratio we find that there is one colored physician for about every 3,500 Negroes. The population standard of medical care requires a ratio of one to 1,500. In the south the ratio of Negro physicians to population is one to 6,200 persons. Five thousand more physicians are needed to render even a borderline standard of medical service to Negro people.

One reason for the great deficit in medical personnel lies in the attitudes and policies of the 79 medical schools in the United States. Only two of these medical schools admit Negroes freely. Howard and Meharry produce about 130 physicians yearly; the other 77 medical schools in the United States produce about 15 doctors (Negro) yearly. The production of only 145 doctors is inadequate to meet the community needs.61

In Louisville one of the most discussed problems is in general health education for Negroes. In this community there is a lack of opportunity for professional improvement for Negro physicians in the General Hospital, and lack of nursing training. The city of Louisville and that state as a whole do not attract new doctors. As a result the number of physicians and dentists has steadily declined in the last twenty years.62

61. Remus G. Robinson, Diplomat, American College of Surgeons, and President, Detroit Urban League (Speech delivered at the 1950 Annual Conference of the NUL, Sept. 5, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The Louisville Urban League's staff members are particularly interested in this particular problem. They serve on various health committees and encourage responsible citizens to open all health facilities for Negroes.

The Louisville Urban League has worked with other agencies on health problems for 30 years. They know that "low economic status, rather than inherent racial characteristics, is the reaction to disease, thus appears to account in a large measure for the higher disability vote observed among Negroes. From this fact it follows that the health problems of Negroes are more than the average white population since they represent in the mass a low-income group, unleavened, as in the white population, by any considerable number in the higher income range."63

The League considered it necessary to take as one of its main problems "Improving Health Facilities for Negroes." A joint committee of the southern regional council and the Louisville Urban League to implement the permissive legislative measures contained in HB #447, which was passed in the general assembly, had as its main objectives the following five points:

1) Work to carry out the intent and spirit of the Bill as well as the actual provisions.
2) To have Negro trainees enroll in General Hospital's Nurse training course as well as to have the affiliation with Red Cross Hospital.
3) To obtain internships for Negro physicians in General Hospital.

4) To explore the possibilities for enrollment of Negro trainees in the Nurse training course of private hospitals.

5) To make possible opportunities for post-graduate work and courtesy and privileges for Negro physicians in General Hospital and other hospitals throughout the state.

On Tuesday, March 16, 1948, at the General Assembly, House Bill No. 447 was reported to the senate from the House. It was enacted by the General Assembly of the commonwealth of Kentucky that "the provision of K.R.S. 183.020 shall not be construed to prohibit the giving of instructions in nursing, medicine, surgery, or other related courses of graduate grade or on the professional level within any hospital, if the governing body of the hospital, by majority vote of its members, so elects."

Until 1951, the Louisville Urban League was a co-sponsor of Negro Health Week. Health workshops were held through the cooperation of other agencies. Neighborhood groups were urged to use rat control and to participate in clean-up campaigns in an effort to raise health standards and conditions in the community.

The health problems of Omaha citizens are of special concern to the Omaha Urban League and to the entire nation.

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64. Resume of Purposes and Minutes of the Southern Regional Council and the Louisville Urban League, Committee on Hospital Bill # 447.

To quote from the 1947 Omaha Urban League annual report: "If comparative vital statistics may be used as an index of health status of a minority groups, then the health of the Negro in Omaha is neither better nor worse than that of other citizens. However, other conditions in the Negro community (employment and housing) being what they are, there are reasons to believe the Negro has a higher illness rate than other groups."

Opportunities for Negroes in medical and nursing educations in Omaha and the state are increasing. But the state and the private universities offer courses to Negroes leading to degrees in medicine, dentistry, and nursing in the local hospitals only to a limited degree.

During 1948 the League, through its Health Committee, sponsored a youth Health Institute, distributed 3,000 pieces of health literature in 1,500 Negro homes, made a health survey of 915 families and made available to the community a health speakers bureau. The health survey pointed out a number of factors affecting Negro health in Omaha; namely, less than one-half of all parents interviewed had even a general knowledge of the health facilities and services available in the community; about the same proportion of families had regular family physicians and only one of every four families had used the services of a physician or clinic within a two year period. Eight of every ten children, however, had been immunized against the common diseases of children.

As of December 1, 1948, the Health Committee initiated a year-round health education program for the purpose of
reaching every Negro family in Omaha. The Committee makes available on request a health education service made up of a physician, a nurse and health films. The Urban League cooperates with community, public and private health agencies to the end that Omaha will be a healthier place in which to live.

Cooperating with the Nebraska Tuberculosis Association, the Urban League Health Committee organized and educated the community for an X-ray survey. Door to door canvassing was made by civic groups who urged each household to take advantage of the Survey.

According to "Facts About the Negro in Omaha" compiled by the Omaha Urban League in the 1952 report; Negroes have a higher incidence of illness than do whites in the community; while Negro citizens are admitted to all of the eleven hospitals, only four permit them to stay in wards with white patients; and, the existing health facilities, visiting nurses services, Well-baby clinics, T.B. X-ray Survey, etc., are only given token utilization.

Summary. The Negro community continues to suffer poor health. In the medical profession (in Louisville) Negro doctors are not admitted to the A.M.A. local medical societies and are thus prevented from practicing in white hospitals. They have no chance to become specialists by practice and training.

If you are a colored American, your life expectancy at birth is ten years less than non-Negro citizens.
The majority of Negro deaths are due to (1) respiratory diseases, including tuberculosis, pneumonia and influenza; (2) syphilis; (3) degenerative diseases, including cerebral hemorrhage and nephritis; (4) Homicides.

In some areas health facilities for the Negro are largely non-existent. By ratio it was observed that there is one colored physician for about every 3,500 Negroes.

There are 79 medical schools in the country but only two of these schools admit Negroes freely. Howard and Meharry (Negro Schools) produce approximately 130 physicians yearly; the other 77 medical schools in the United States produce about 15 Negro doctors yearly; this totals 145 doctors which is inadequate to meet the communities needs.

To bring about better health facilities the Louisville Urban League cooperated with the Southern Regional Council to implement the passing of bill #447 at the General Assembly. The passing of the bill now permits Negroes to (1) enroll in the General Hospitals nurse training courses (2) to obtain internships for Negro physicians in General Hospital.

The Omaha Urban League, though its health committee sponsors youth health institutes, circulated general health literature, makes health surveys and makes available to the community a health speakers bureau.
CHAPTER IX

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

Community organization is one of the major services of the Urban League in terms of developing civic pride and potential leadership in the community. The Urban League is in a strategic position to point out the need for changes in the environment. These changes will give Negro migrants a better chance of passing successfully through the crisis of rebirth. If intolerable living conditions, inadequate public services, and job discrimination are making a difficult process even more difficult, the Urban League has the responsibility of enlisting community action to overcome these conditions. This is the function which the League fulfills through its increasingly effective community relations projects and through its special campaigns on such issues as housing, community betterment, etc.66

The National Urban League defines community organization as the organization of a specific area of a community by the residents to improve the living conditions of the neighborhood and to make the most of the facilities already provided. Supervision and direction of the "neighborhood blocks" activities are normally carried on through the Urban Leagues Community Organization and group work programs.

The Local Urban Leagues through their community planning provide programs to fill in gaps in services which usually is a constant operation. This is so because as one gap is filled

others are opened. In fact, citizens will not hold to the same old programs initiated many years ago. The American community has become dynamic in character which has brought about the necessity to introduce new building codes, new zoning regulations and new sanitation codes. In many cases the schools are found to be on short sessions; the attendance officers and the juvenile court officers seem to have an understanding with the truants and the delinquents. It is this for these reasons that the academic mortality of youth progresses despite the opportunities in public education.

In the American Community today are observed an overcrowding and demand for rental property. Finance agencies have the money but builders aren't interested in construction for the common man. The taxpayer's money is spent for preventive and recreational programs, but areas of congestion remain without them.

**Neighborhood Organization (Louisville Urban League.)**
The Urban League has found it necessary to go to the "grass roots" in order to build community spirit in the Negro community. This is a technique used in many of the local Leagues, that is, to divide the Negro community into neighborhoods and blocks with a program based on common community needs.

Community Organization, a department of the Louisville Urban League, was inaugurated in March, 1949. The purpose of the program was to organize the community on a neighborhood basis so that residents of a particular area might properly handle their
neighborhood problems. This program attempts to bring together Negro citizen's needs with the community resources available to help them. It's primarily concerned with getting better housing, health and recreational facilities and welfare services for Negroes—and to further public education on the subject of Negroes and racial problems.

Its major functions include:

1) Doing research on problems affecting Negroes.
2) Serving as a center of information on Negro life and making this information available to the community.
3) Planning, initiating and supervising adult education programs for Negroes in the low income group.
4) Cooperating actively with public and private agencies in the solution of common community social welfare problems.
5) Stimulating public and private agencies to provide services on a truly democratic basis.
6) Working to improve race relations.
7) Providing professional staff services to neighborhood clubs.

More specifically, the clubs are concerned with carrying out the following programs:

1) Conduct educational activities that will help the Negro to take his rightful place in the life of the city.
2) Reduce crime and delinquency by providing wholesome neighborhood recreation and entertainment.
3) Provide an effective means of cooperating with public and private agencies in all programs for the good of the community.
4) Provide a means of community action whenever it is required to solve a problem of importance to the community as a whole.
5) Stimulate good public housekeeping on the part of owners and tenants.

The Neighborhood Improvement program of the Louisville Urban League has a full time professional staff worker who
heads up this particular program. The duties of this Community Organization Secretary are to organize and supervise the program of neighborhood clubs, and to refer club members to the proper authorities whenever a neighborhood problem arises which the club is desirous of having corrected. In Louisville the Community Organization Secretary has organized eight neighborhood clubs into self-respecting units. In every case after the organization of these clubs it was observed that morale had been strengthened, potential leadership spotted and encouraged; and, more important still, a great many people have been made to feel that they have a stake in the democratic way of life. Playgrounds have been set up and equipped with recreational facilities in some of our most blighted areas—places that hitherto had been ideal breeding grounds for juvenile delinquency. 67

The neighborhood clubs work has resulted in more bus stops in particular areas; the installation of traffic controls; the elimination of some health hazards in the neighborhoods; securing sewers and running water for their area; a clean up and rat control program inaugulated and recreational facilities made available. 68


68. Ibid.
One of the clubs contacted several industries encouraging them to improve the physical appearance of their plants giving special emphasis to the paper and trash which collected around the plants detracting from the appearance of the entire community.

Some other problems these clubs have worked on:

1) Worked with the air-pollution board to curb the debris and flying ash which was circulating from a defective smoke stack at a local lumber yard.
2) Cooperated with the crime prevention bureau in trying to eliminate a tavern in the community which was having a detrimental influence upon its youth.
3) Participated in the clean-up and yard beautification campaigns.
4) Obtained sewers for a neighborhood.
5) Secured street lights.
6) Obtained a water line.
7) Initiated a project to obtain Kindergarten in a neighborhood.
8) Solicited blood donors for the American Red Cross.
9) Through concerted efforts eliminated the raising of hogs in the community.
10) Obtained additional bus transportation, street lights and caution signs at dangerous intersections.

The fact that the Urban League is able to reach important city, county, and state officials does mean that it is in a position to exert some influences toward securing better community services.

Omaha (Community Organization.) There is an awareness on the part of the Omaha Urban League Board of Directors that certain progress has been achieved in race relations. However, to insure further progress the League requested in 1952 that the budget committee of the Omaha Community Chest give serious and sympathetic considerations toward the hiring of a full-time Community Organization Secretary.
This proposed plan as presented to the Community Chest for a Community organization secretary consisted of several purposes:

A. To improve and develop the well-being of the Negro citizen and his family.
B. To encourage the Negro citizen to face the adversities of his community constructively and courageously.

The immediate objective would be the organizing of existing neighborhood groups (over 60 in all) for a program of community improvement through intelligent utilization of existing agencies, resources, and through a program of education and projects designed to stimulate a sense of pride and challenge in individual, and family, and community self-improvement.

Examples of activities in addition to the daily and interpretive job would be:

1. Setting up paint up and clean up contest.
2. Sponsoring back and front yard beautification projects.
3. Arrange clinics with existing resources for family budgeting and meal planning, also home decoration.
4. Join your PTA Week for parents.
6. Assist health authorities in promoting physical exams, blood tests, TB X-rays, prenatal and maternal education, mental health programs, and proper sanitation.
7. Forums and meetings on financing for homes or home improvements.

In 1953, the Community Chest approved the recommendation of the budget committee for the development of a community organization department and for the hiring of a full-time community organization secretary to head up this work.

Summary. The Urban League has the responsibility of enlisting community action to overcome intolerable living conditions, inadequate public services and job discrimination.

The organization of eight neighborhood clubs into self-respecting units by the Louisville Urban League has strengthened the morale of the Negro citizens. The work of the neighborhood clubs have resulted in more bus stops, the installation of traffic controls; the elimination of some health hazards in the neighborhoods; and securing sewers and running water for their area.

In Omaha during 1953, there will be a Community Organization program organized. The proposed program's purposes as presented to the Community Chest are to improve and develop the well being of the Negro citizen and his family and to encourage the Negro citizen to face the adversities of his community constructively and courageously.
CHAPTER X

RACE RELATIONS

Race relations is undoubtedly the most important foundation upon which the entire Urban League program rests. Its successful functioning can, in part, determine the future of the community, the country, the world. Interracial understanding, in the long run, is best judged by the willingness of every individual to regard all people as similar individuals having the same desires, ambitions, and goals. Many may contend that this is an ideal never to be realized, but it is an ideal embodied in the American Creed to which the Urban League is dedicated. Sociologists and students of racial problems from abroad have marveled that there has been relatively little trouble accompanying the process of race adjustment in America. Particularly in this case when they attempt to measure the social impact of the migration of upwards of a million Negroes from the South to the industrial centers of the North during the past quarter century.

There can be no question that race relations have been amazingly good when one considers all the factors involved in the steady expansion of the Negro population that has characterized urban communities. Those of us who live close to this problem sometimes forget that the maintenance of cordial relations between the two racial groups is not due to accident or the indifference of the white population, or to some peculiar trait of the Negro himself, but to the conscious efforts of a few Negro and white

citizens who, without fanfare, have exerted every effort to adjust the Negro to his environment on one hand, and to align and make effective the forces of constructive good will among the white population on the other. 71

The effort involved in the development of a program which was designed to raise the living standards of Negroes and, at the same time, to win the respect of the dominant white population. Such a program the National Urban League has given to America. It is a program which has withstood the assaults of time and change because it has met a dire need. The same need exists still. 72

The Omaha Urban League and the Louisville Urban League used practically the same techniques in serving the community to foster good relations. Staff members of both Leagues are called upon several times a month to make speeches and talks to various civic groups, clubs, and other organizations to discuss techniques of better racial understandings. The Urban League endorses and fights for "progressive" legislation such as F.E.P.C. and Housing bills on a national and local level.

Radio stations and television stations have from time to time presented programs promoting interracial good will and have worked hand in hand with the League in its annual Vocational Opportunities week. "The area of race relations generally embraces every phase of the Urban League program. Specifically, the functions are those of promoting interracial understanding. It is believed that the eradication of prejudice is dependent upon the opportunity for people of all races to know and to understand each other." 73

72. Ibid, p. 58.
Prejudice is universal. Whenever you hear an individual begin by saying, "I have no prejudice in this matter at all", then you understand that this individual does not understand what he is talking about. We all have prejudices; most prejudices cause all of us to act in prescribed ways, to evaluate people according to certain accepted schemes. But in addition to these prejudices which we absorb through group attitudes, we also have a good many prejudices which arise out of our own individual personal needs - psychiatrists call them agressive needs.

The person who is secure of a sense of his own knowledge, his own place in the world, and his own rights, does not feel it necessary to expose his prejudices or even to have them.74

Negroes have always been America's most conspicuous minority group. This has been true partly because they constitute a full ten per cent of the population, partly because most of them have physical features which allow them to be distinguished from most other Americans, and partly because they have been the objects of greater prejudice and discrimination. There is another and more significant reason: a large part of America's historical development, its politics, its relations with other nations, and even its internal culture have been determined by the conflict between whites and Negroes. The great majority of American Negroes have been concentrated in the Southern States. It would be no exaggeration to say that the major determinant in the white Southerner's life - at least, insofar as it is distinguished from the white Northerner's life - has been his relations with Negroes.75


Other Groups at Work. In more recent years, there has been a rise in the number of liberal white groups interested in the spread of democratic policies to Negroes as well as to whites. Not only have there arisen small groups in both North and South whose main activity has been to work for a more democratic status for Negroes, but there have been a host of organizations with other purposes which insist on equality for Negroes in their programs. These include labor unions, church groups, legislative pressure groups, and - above all - the federal government since the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The C.I.O. unions have racial equality as part of their formal policy, and the A.F.L. unions have come a long way toward protecting Negro workers in the industries they have organized. Some of the largest unions have committees to combat intolerance. The Federal Council of Churches has a Race Relations Department, and so do many of the individual Protestant denominations. The Catholic Church has interracial councils organized in almost every city and, in a few cities, has the equivalent of interracial settlement houses. Almost all religious leaders are trying to break down segregation in their churches and schools, though only a few have been successful. The Jewish defense organizations (the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Jewish Labor Committee) spend a good deal of time and effort in helping to secure rights for Negroes. Some of the defense organizations - Jewish, Catholic, Negro, Japanese, (Urban League), etc. - serve to bring pressure on Congress and some state legislatures to enact legislation for civil rights which benefit Negroes as well as others. Housing reform groups, civic improvement associations, lobbies for organized labor, civil liberties
committees, etc., often put into their propaganda a plug for equal rights for Negroes.76

**Teamwork in Action.** The mass arrival of Negro migrants to urban cities has been taken too lightly by city officials and, consequently, too often have they been forgotten, particularly, when it comes to dispensing the public services of health and sanitation, police protection, clinic facilities, and the like. This responsibility is one that the Urban League has taken in representing these new unwanted citizens.

The organized influence of the League's interracial leadership follows a series of events in order to help solve minority problems. The offices of Mayors and Health and Safety Commissions and educational authorities, and the meeting rooms of city Councils and hospital boards became regular ports of call for the Urban League staff. There were many heated arguments forty years ago when League spokesmen debated with public officials the simple issue of equal distribution of public services on the basis of need and the public interest rather than the racial complexion of neighborhoods.

Today it is the exceptional community in most parts of the country that needs this kind of argument. This phase of the League's work has been done well enough to impress upon federal, state, and local officials the terrific alternative cost borne by the community when the basic needs of people are neglected -- and that these costs make the left-handed practice of racial prejudice by shortsighted officials an extremely expensive matter to the whole community. The Urban League has just about worked itself out of this job in most sections.

76. Ibid, p. 11.
Similarly, under the persistent hammering of Urban League insistence, the public employment services in most states are now accepting as their responsibility the task of placing Negro job applicants in employment suited to their capabilities. It scarcely seems possible today, but as recently as a dozen years ago, directors of state employment services argued with honest conviction that racially discriminatory job orders presented by employers must not be even mildly challenged by the interviewers receiving the order for fear that the service would lose the employer's custom—i.e., lose the opportunity to give the employer a free service that he could not duplicate elsewhere without considerable cost.77

Due to the representation of the Urban League for twenty years or more as an authority in working with minority problems, the United States Employment Service and the Urban League have a working agreement. This agreement brings local Urban Leagues and their state employment services in thirty states into a close cooperative relationship in the wholesale placement of Negro job seekers.

One notes a tremendous change having taken place over the past forty years. Social agencies that once drew the color line are very rare. However, there are still problems of inadequate standards of care for Negro clients; racial segregation in the use of facilities, a bone of contention in numerous communities.78

Changes in Legal Status. There has been little change in the problem of legal protection since 1940. In all probability, there is no appreciable decline in beating, threatening, or physical coercion of Negroes in the South, or in cheating them or destroying their property. Lynching, which decreased steadily from 1900 to 1940,

reached a low plateau in the latter year and does not seem to disappear, even though public sentiment against it mounts in both North and South. 79 During the year 1952, there were no recorded cases of lynching.

Negroes today, as never before, are increasing their protest which has heightened race pride and has aided in raising the morale of Negroes. Especially since the Second World War, there has been a greater tendency to act as a unified group in matters affecting Negroes as a group. Negroes have more understanding, more self-confidence of daily issues that affect their lives.

The reaction of whites to these changes within the Negro group takes various forms. Some whites are increasingly antagonized by what they regard as a smart Negro. Others are mostly concerned with how far Negroes will go in demanding full equality and constantly ask Negroes, "Would you be satisfied if you had this, but not that?" Still others have become impressed by the increasing power of the Negro group, and have sought to make alliance with Negroes.

Louisville, Kentucky

Louisville, sandwiched between Tennessee, a traditional jim crow state; West Virginia, only lukewarm in treating Negroes fairly; Indiana, which regards Kentucky as its unkept backyard; and Ohio, where civil rights adorn the statute books, makes Louisville citizens the victims of conflicting influences. Considerable progress has been made in Louisville and environs, but there are many old timers who recall that the Negro was better off there at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. At this time, segregation was not practiced

79. Rose, loc. cit.
in the public auditoriums, parks, and playgrounds. Certain skills were almost dominated by Negroes, and resulted in more comparative group wealth.

In 1953, Louisville is still a jim crow town. There is no question of the fact that Negroes die earlier than whites, that the pattern of housing is still that of slums and getto; that in spite of relatively minor gains, the over all pattern of employment remains one of rank discrimination and virtually without opportunity for on-the-job training and upgrading. Thus, one finds only one Negro stenographer employed in the City Hall (an Urban League placement); no switchboard operators, and no bus drivers or cab drivers employed by white firms. The Urban League was able to place two salesgirls in one of the smaller department stores but has no success in making this project universal in all stores. Two of Louisville's largest department stores, Stewart's and Selman's, refuse to permit Negroes to try on garments. None of the hotels will openly house or feed Negroes. The theaters, parks, eating places, baseball park, railway stations, municipal auditorium, service clubs, churches, common schools, hospitals, professional societies and employment services are all segregated. Kentucky pays a tremendous price for this prejudice.

Even at this, Louisville is more liberal than other cities in the commonwealth, but it is legally bound to observe the laws of the state. The state constitution requires separate common schools. Until 1950, at the General Assembly, Negroes were admitted only to the graduate school of the University of Kentucky, and it took a court order to do this.
Opening of the parks will be one of the steps toward equality. It will eliminate and discourage Negroes from driving to Indiana to enjoy recreation unlimited and suffering the inconveniences of extra distance and time, to say nothing of being denied admission to facilities which their own tax dollars help to maintain.

Louisville was among the first southern cities to have Negro policemen and firemen. However, only Negro policemen walk together in the most concentrated Negro area known as the second district.

On the other hand, Negroes cannot remember when they were segregated on street cars and buses. Yellow and Checker Cabs gladly haul them. There is a Negro deputy county tax commissioner, an assistant commonwealth attorney. Also, one finds deputy sheriffs, welfare court, and other government workers. Negroes are represented on the Board of Aldermen, Library Board, Community Chest Board, Housing Commission, Girl Scouts, Y.W.C.A. boards, and several welfare agencies.

Undoubtedly, the biggest gain interracially has been in the field of education. Subsequent to the forced admission to the University of Kentucky, the General Assembly amended the day law and Negroes were voluntarily admitted to the following schools: University of Louisville, Bellarmine, Nazareth and Ursuline College, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; the Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Berea College, which graduated Negroes prior to 1904 and, by the passing of the Day Law, also has several students.
Summary. The entire foundation of the Urban League is basically a philosophy of race relations. Without a good interracial cooperative program, there would not be an Urban League. It is this type of race relations that enables one to evaluate the achievements of an Urban League.

The National Urban League has given to America a program designed to raise the living standards of Negroes and, at the same time, has won the respect of the dominant whites.

The Omaha and the Louisville Urban Leagues engage in practically the same methods and techniques in effecting better community and race relations. Among some techniques used are the promotions of racial understanding through speeches and talks to various club groups.

Labor unions have made contributions toward racial equality by accepting Negroes as members and then protecting Negro workers in the industries which they have organized.

There are several other organizations, Jewish, Catholic, Japanese, and Negro, which have contributed to improved race relations.

In recent years, one notices a greater degree of understanding between white and Negro people; this partly is due to the rise of a larger number of liberal white groups who are interested in the spread of democratic policies. These groups are found in both the south and the north and they include labor unions, church groups, legislative pressure groups, and above all, the federal government.
The organized influences of the League's interracial leadership permits the Urban League to have a close working relationship with the offices of the mayor, health and safety commissions, educational authorities, and provides staff members to meet regularly with other city and state officials.

The Urban League usually takes the lead in formulating basic constructive theories for the improvement of racial understanding among all American people.

During the year 1952, there were no known recorded cases of lynching.

In Louisville, Kentucky, and Omaha, Nebraska, race relations have improved, yet jim crow practices still exist. Perhaps the biggest interracial gain in Louisville has been in the field of education. Negroes now attend all of the local colleges.

It is generally agreed that the Urban League has achieved success in the matter of improved race relations. The precise influence of the League is difficult to gauge, since other organizations have also aimed at improving race relations. However, in employment and housing the Urban League has played a rather unique role and must be credited with having a significant impact on these increasingly equalitarian conditions.
The end of the Civil War brought emancipation to the Negro which led to the removal of legal restrictions on his mobility. Because he owned little land he chose to migrate to the northern areas. The great migration, starting in 1895 and continuing in waves from then, brought changes in the distribution of Negroes in the United States.

In 1906, William H. Baldwin, Jr., President of the Long Island Railroad and President of the General Education Board, formed an organization called "The Committee for Improving the Industrial Condition of Negroes in New York City." In the same year Miss Frances Kellor formed "The League for the protection of Colored Women." There was also one other organization. In 1911 these groups, interested in improving the economic conditions among Urban Negroes, united to form the National Urban League. In a few years the Urban League became the most important agency in America in dealing with the mass migration of Negroes to northern communities. The National Urban League, with its central office in New York, is the parent organization. In order to expand the work of the League in southern communities, it has a Southern Field Branch Office in Atlanta, Georgia. The National Urban League is governed by an executive interracial board.

The sixty local Urban Leagues carry on multiple activities: day nurseries, sometimes baby clinics and child placement agencies, and occasionally schools for Negro girls who have become pregnant;
clubs for boys, girls, mothers, neighborhoods and other groups; training schools for clerical workers and janitors or domestics; Parent-Teachers Associations; study groups in trade unionism; health week, and so on.

None of the Local Urban Leagues can afford to become active in all these fields, but a primary task of all Leagues is to find jobs, more jobs, better jobs for Negroes. The possibilities of vocational training have been kept open to Negro youth, and the youth themselves have to be encouraged to be ambitious. The National Urban League is the general staff for all this work. It directs and inspires, it coordinates and evaluates the experiments made in one place or another, it conducts community surveys and other research work, it educates and sometimes agitates among Negroes to improve themselves, among whites to reduce prejudice and give Negroes a fair chance.

Local Urban Leagues have been active in the Civilian Defense Program, recruiting and helping to train volunteer workers, assisting in the sale of defense and war bonds, disseminating information for consumers, and carrying on similar activities.

The exact time when the first Negro set foot on Nebraska soil is not known. Legend has it that an exploring expedition headed by a monk, Fray Marcos, touched the south eastern part of the state in 1539. A Negro servant is supposed to have been a member of the party.
The first formal Negro Church in Nebraska was the St. John's African Methodist Episcopal, organized in 1876. The establishment of a commercial club for Negroes, with the aid of whites was the first concrete effort put forth to deal in an interracial way with some of the social-economic complexities in the community. The establishment of the North Side YWCA in 1920, the Cultural Center in 1926, and the Omaha Urban League in 1928, marked the beginning of constructive interracial efforts in creating better race relations in the city.

In 1916 the Negro migrant to Omaha faced an opposition to his arrival. The white citizen saw in him a threat to his job and racial conflict.

The problem of housing an Urban League was solved when the Bell Telephone Company gave the Negro citizens a building for an exchange of one dollar a year.

Louisville is situated on the northern border of Kentucky, at the falls of the Ohio, ninety miles south east of the center of the population of the United States. It is the largest city in Kentucky and is the twenty-fifth in population in the United States. The first introduction of Negroes into what is known as Kentucky began in 1775 when the state was part of Virginia. Slavery continued until the close of the Civil War.

When the first United Census was taken (1790), 12,430 Negroes were in Kentucky, of whom 114 were free colored. By 1860 this number had increased to 225,483 slaves and 10,684 free Negroes.
Almost immediately following emancipation, the Negroes in Louisville began to make their contributions to the business and professional life of the community. In November, 1829, the First African Baptist Church was organized (now Fifth Street Baptist Church.) After the organization of the church, several years later (1920) the Louisville Urban League was organized.

The program and objectives of the Louisville Urban League are similar to those of the National organization, specializing in the areas of Industrial Relations and public relations and community organization.

In order for the Urban League to accomplish its aims in fulfilling its role in the community it must get colored persons to make use of existing facilities, and if these are closed to persons of color, the League must open them.

The Urban League is a social service organization for the improvement of living and working conditions among Negroes, and for increasing cooperation and understanding relationships between white and Negro citizens.

Although the efficiency of the League's work is kept down because of inadequate financial resources, the League carries on programs in Community Organisation, industrial relations, vocational guidance and training, welfare work, housing, health, morals and manners.

Several Urban Leagues engage in educational propaganda among white and Negro citizens toward obtaining better jobs, playgrounds, housing projects, schools and other public facilities.
The Urban League bases its industrial program on the assumption that Negro citizens are faced with a new day and that this day demands selective competition, preparation for new skills, and intelligent screening.

The establishment of Industrial Relations Departments in the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues means in all probability that Negro people will not have to continue to pay the price in wasted resources and their best talents may be utilized gainfully.

If democracy was completely realized, Negroes would constitute no special minority problem, and their work experiences would be no more difficult than those of others in the community.

The documented plan of cooperation between the Louisville Urban League and the Department of Economic Security is beneficial to both organizations as the exchange of information, methods and techniques will aid the organizations to better serve minority groups.

Each year one notices important employment gains made as a result of work by the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues. Adequate guidance and training is necessary for the economic adjustment of Negroes. The Urban League recognizes that depressed conditions among so many Negro families is due to the fact that they have no training for the better and higher paying jobs.

Vocational guidance, a daily activity in the Industrial Relations Departments of the Omaha and Louisville Urban Leagues,
is where youth and adults are prepared—those in school and out of school, those employed and unemployed; all are given vocational tests and counseling for future jobs.

The broad objective of the housing committee of the National and local Urban Leagues is to improve, expand, and encourage housing opportunities for the Negro population. A study by the Omaha Urban League in 1949 revealed that the population increased by 10,000 Negroes in 8 years; during the same period, only 15 new homes were built for Negro occupancy. Fifteen and two tenths per cent of Negro homes should be condemned.

A significant accomplishment of the Omaha Urban League took place in 1952 when the Omaha Housing Authority took the stand that "Negro citizens living in public houses will no longer be stigmatized by being set apart in separate units.

The housing problem in Louisville is serious since only limited districts are available for residential purposes. These districts are overcrowded. Fewer than 200 houses have been built in Louisville for Negro occupancy during the past twenty-five years. Louisville has 34,444 substandard dwelling units with Negroes occupying 38.8% of these units. Omaha has 13,263 substandard units with Negroes occupying only 13.3% of these units.

The Negro community continues to suffer poor health. The majority of Negro deaths are due to (1) respiratory diseases, (2) syphilis, (3) degenerative diseases, and (4) homicides.
To bring about better health facilities the Louisville Urban League cooperated with the Southern Regional Council to implement the passing of bill #477 at the General Assembly. This bill permits Negroes to (1) enroll in the General Hospital's nurse training courses, (2) to obtain internships for Negro physicians in General Hospital.

The Omaha Urban League, through its health committee—which sponsors youth institutes—circulates general health literature, makes health surveys, and makes available health speakers.

The Urban League has the responsibility of enlisting community action to overcome intolerable living conditions, inadequate public services. The organization of eight neighborhood clubs into self-respecting units by the Louisville Urban League has strengthened the morale of Negro citizens. The work of the neighborhood clubs have resulted in more bus stops; the installation of traffic controls; the elimination of some health hazards in the neighborhoods; and securing sewers and running water for their areas. A Community Organization program is now being organized in Omaha.

The entire foundation of the Urban League is based on a philosophy of race relations and understanding. Interracial cooperation is one way of evaluating the achievements of the League. In more recent years one notices a greater degree of understanding between white and Negro people; this is due partly to the rise of a larger number of liberal white groups.
who are interested in the spread of democratic policies. The organised influence of the League's interracial leadership permits the Urban League to have a close working relation with the city and state government.

In analyzing the major services offered by the Urban League in terms of objectives of the organization it is generally agreed the Urban League has achieved success in the matter of race relations. The precise influences of the League are difficult to gauge, since other organizations have also aimed at improving race relations. However, in employment, vocational guidance, housing, and community organization, the League has played a very important role. The League must be credited with having a significant impact on these increasingly equalitarian conditions.

To meet the challenges of the day, the Urban League must remain what it was originally and has sought consistently to be: a pioneering agency moving always with the times, but a step ahead of established opinions and practices in developing programs that influence the present and prepare the way for the future.

The Urban League's influence has become one of national recognition. In 60 cities throughout the country the League has welded working teams of Negro and white leaders and employed professional staff leadership in a sustained effort to open doors to equal economic opportunity for a hard-pressed Negro population.
Today there are solid working bases in nearly three-score important industrial communities (local Urban League cities) serving approximately one-half of the country's urban Negro population. The big job in many Urban League cities is to stimulate Negroes to prepare themselves academically and vocationally. The Urban League has definitely played an important role in raising the morale of Negroes by attacking problems which deny citizens the right to equal economic opportunities. Special emphasis is placed upon developing training and careers for Negro youth. However, the League's ultimate phase of its program has been equal opportunity for work training, equal opportunity for job placement and elimination of discriminatory practices from industry and labor. It is the Urban League's responsibility to steer youth into training courses so that they may qualify for employment opportunities. The League must encourage Negro leadership to ease inbred suspicions, defensiveness and cynicism so frequently characterizing racial outlook, and white leadership must develop more honest cooperation and less condescension.

In analyzing the major services of the Urban League and its objectives, it is safe to say that it is important that the League continues to work with housing officials, public and private, to make certain that as more housing becomes available the needs of the Negro population will be recognized and served. It is also advisable to continue emphasis upon education, guidance and support for leadership within the Negro community.
It is recommended as a portion of the summary that more emphasis be placed on the following programs:

1) To broaden employment and training opportunities for Negroes through increased field visits with business and industrial management and trade union leadership.

2) Encourage Negro workers to produce at maximum performance levels.

3) Guide Negro youth toward wise occupational and career choices through vocational guidance programs.

4) Support programs for better housing.

5) Work to break down barriers to adequate health and recreational services.

6) Continue community studies and advisory services to avert dangers of heightened racial tensions and conflicts.
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