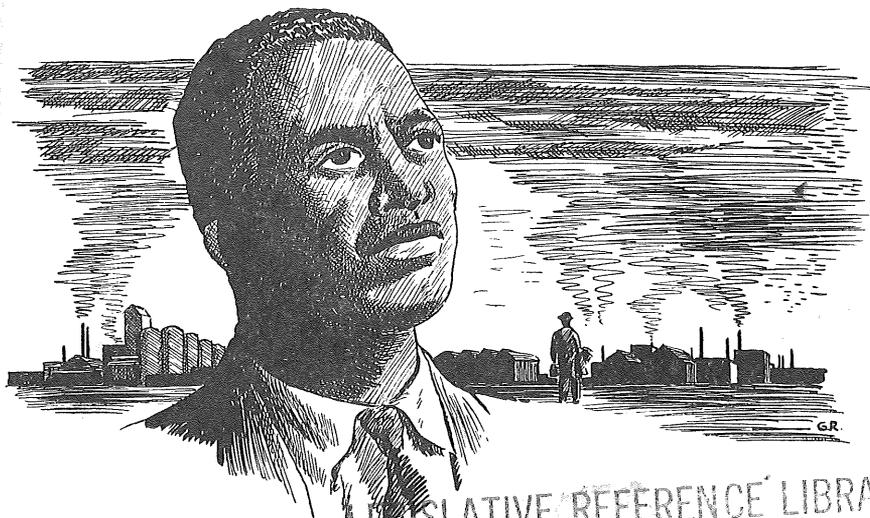


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# THE NEGRO WORKER in Minnesota



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A REPORT TO GOVERNOR EDWARD J. THYE

BY

GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMISSION  
OF MINNESOTA

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# THE NEGRO WORKER IN MINNESOTA

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TO  
GOVERNOR EDWARD J. THYE  
OF  
MINNESOTA  
BY  
THE GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL  
COMMISSION

March 10, 1945

*This is the first of a series of reports to the Governor on various racial and religious situations which may affect the public peace in Minnesota during the post-war years.*

# THE GOVERNOR'S INTERRACIAL COMMISSION



EDWARD J. THYE  
*Governor*

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*Secretary*

# A Foreword

by

*Governor Edward J. Thye  
of Minnesota*

At the end of the first World War there were serious outbreaks of race rioting and religious intolerance throughout the United States. Those evils were occasioned by the tensions bred by war. There is grave danger that those evils may reappear after this conflict.

Believing preventive action is always preferable to remedial measures, more than a year ago I established a Governor's Interracial Commission. It was my wish that the Commission acting as an advisory body would examine the interracial trends within the state, would study any significant conditions which might cause serious social disorders, and would from time to time make substantial reports to me.

This document, entitled "The Negro Worker in Minnesota," is one of the reports of the Commission to the Governor. It is printed now in pamphlet form for wider distribution.

The vital point in this report is the finding of the Commission that while during wartime all Negroes in Minnesota can obtain both full employment and a fair opportunity for upgrading, yet in peacetimes a much larger proportion of Negroes than white persons cannot secure any employment; and of the Negroes employed few enjoy opportunities for being upgraded. In addition to this information, the Commission has tried to explore the mind of industrial Minnesota to determine why the Negro is denied employment.

To the members of the Commission and its chairman, the Reverend Francis J. Gilligan, I wish to express my appreciation for the patience, thoroughness, and good judgment which they have brought to this work. Also I wish to thank Mr. S. Vincent Owens and Mr. Charles F. Rogers, of the Saint Paul Urban League, for the time and energy expended collecting data for the Commission.

To the citizens of the state, especially those residing in the urban areas, I recommend the study of this report. It is my hope that they will examine each of the four chapters, talk about them, judge them, and challenge them if they will, but always in the light of fundamental American principles.

If a considerable number of the citizens, whether they be employers, employees, customers or governmental officials, would read and discuss this report the racial patterns of employment would steadily change for the better. Our mistakes in this matter are attributable, I am confident, to a lack of information rather than to a deliberate disregard of American principles.

# Introduction

## I. *The Negro Comes to Minnesota*

As early as 1825 it is certain there were Negroes on parts of the land which is now designated as Minnesota. It is probable that in years prior to that date in the far north there were three or four trappers who were colored. The Negroes who were here in 1825 came as slaves of the Indian agent and of the army officers at Fort Snelling. Even Dred Scott was in the state for a short period. Sailing up the river, those Negro slaves saw a vast wilderness inhabited by 25,000 Sioux and Chippewa Indians, who held legal title to the land, and by a few hundred French and Swiss traders and settlers, some soldiers, and a few English speaking civilians who were agents for the fur trading companies. Those few slaves were quickly liberated and most of them chose to remain as free men. They were here before Minnesota was legally a territory.

Between 1850 and 1860 some free Negroes migrated into the territory, coming originally as workers on the steamboats which traveled up and down the rivers. The Minnesota regiments returning after the Civil War were accompanied by a few Negroes who had joined their ranks on Southern battlefields and were mustered out at Fort Snelling. Within five years after the war the Negro migration into the state was relatively heavy. It is recorded that in 1870 they were supporting their own newspaper. Ten years later there were approximately 2,000 within the state. Most of them were employed as waiters and porters, but some operated service businesses such as barber shops, two were governmental employees, and one was teaching in the public schools. But as the river traffic declined, so did the migration of Negroes. In 1900 there were only 5,000.

Whereas the first Negroes may have come unwillingly within several years after the Civil War, literally, hundreds migrated freely into Minnesota seeking not merely work—since work was available in the South—but “the betterment of the condition of the Afro-Americans, the opening of new

avenues of gaining a livelihood, and material assistance for the Afro-Americans in the South."

They came to Minnesota thinking that the beliefs of the Minnesotans were such that they would enjoy greater political and economic freedom. There was a basis for that belief. The Governor of the State, Alexander Ramsey, was in Washington on the day Fort Sumter surrendered. On that day he offered to the War Department 1,000 men from Minnesota, "the first tender of troops from any quarter." There was a basis for that belief in the pioneering spirit of the Minnesotan, and the Negroes thought that the men who could pioneer in land development so courageously would also pioneer in the development of better economic and political patterns. Although they may not have read it, they caught the spirit of the legend on the great seal of territorial Minnesota.

## ***II. The White Immigrant Travels to the Northwest***

Between 1845 and 1880 while that thin line of Negro migrants was timidly flowing into Minnesota, a much more turbulent and spreading river of immigrants from Europe was pouring in. In the year 1845 there were less than 5,000 white settlers here. But the census for 1880 showed a population of 780,773. There was first a small tide in 1848 made up of land-hungry persons from the states on the Atlantic seaboard. But great tides followed, the Germans, the Irish, the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Slavs, and lastly the Finns.

Seventy-one per cent of the population in 1880 was composed of Europeans of the first or second generation. Those immigrants came from a desire for political freedom. They came from a desire to be free from the economic barriers of Europe. They took possession of the state. The few French and Swiss settlers were absorbed, and the original holders of the land, the Indians, were eliminated either by purchase or by force. Today there are only about 12,000 of the Chippewa tribes living on reservations in the north and 500 of the Sioux to the south. Undoubtedly though, there are others who have mixed their blood with the Negroes and the white immigrants.

### III. *Current Population Statistics*

All immigration virtually ceased in 1920 and the white population now numbers 2,768,982. Yet it is interesting to note that by the census of 1940 there are in Hennepin and Ramsey counties alone over 106,000 persons who are foreign born. Of those, 28,000 came from Sweden; 15,000 from Norway; 11,000 from Germany; and 5,000 from Poland.

According to the census of 1940, there were 9,928 Negroes in Minnesota, and most of them were concentrated in the Twin Cities. There were 4,646 in Minneapolis, constituting about 0.9 per cent of the population, and 4,139 in St. Paul, constituting 1.4 per cent of the population.

During the preceding decade, the Negro population increased by only 482 persons. But a decadal federal census can never give a completely accurate statement of a situation. Populations shift from one year to another. Furthermore, in the matter of races, the census taker sometimes can err, classifying light-skinned Negroes as white persons. In such matters the testimony of trustworthy members of minority groups is valuable.

It is asserted by the leaders of the Negro group that between 1926 and 1940 many of the younger Negroes who had graduated from Minnesota high schools migrated from the state because of limited job opportunities. It is also conservatively estimated by them that in 1944 the Negro population of the state was about 12,000 persons. In Duluth the Negro population in 1940 was 314. It is said to have decreased to 200 in 1944.

For the purpose of presenting a complete picture, it is interesting to note that the last federal census listed, in addition to the 12,528 Indians and the 9,928 Negroes, 550 Chinese and 51 Japanese. The Mexicans were catalogued with the white group, but in 1930 there were 3,626 within the state. Since Pearl Harbor, the Federal Government has placed 1,396 Japanese-Americans in Minnesota through the War Relocation Authority.

#### ***IV. The Governor's Inter-Racial Commission***

During war periods, emotions become tense and animosities which smoulder at other times frequently break into great conflagrations. At the end of the last World War a wave of serious race riots swept the nation. In Chicago, Washington, East St. Louis, the riots lasted for days, hundreds of lives were lost and millions of dollars worth of property destroyed. It was immediately after the last World War also that the Ku Klux Klan was revived and, stemming up from the south into many northern states, it spread its destructive poison of racial and religious hatreds into the minds of millions of Americans.

It has been the custom in the past that after such riots the governor of the state or the mayor of the city involved would appoint a commission to investigate the causes of the riots and make recommendations for the correction of injustices in order that such calamities might be avoided in the future. Certainly such courses of action have effected improvements, though they had about them the quality of a post-mortem procedure.

Fortunately Minnesota has been free from the grosser disturbances. Yet it is probable that the seeds for social wrongs may now be germinating. So, believing that preventive measures were always preferable to remedial ones, Governor Edward J. Thye in December of 1943 appointed a Governor's Inter-Racial Commission to study the situation in Minnesota.

Although there are three or four racial and religious groups that are suffering from prejudice within Minnesota, the Commission decided that the most urgent topic for study was the status of the Negro within the state.

#### ***V. The Nature of the Problem***

In some respects the pattern of inter-racial relations which the Negro encounters in Minnesota is decidedly better than the patterns prevailing in many other places. In Minnesota he can vote without interference. He can ride public conveyances without hindrance. He can walk the

streets without being molested. He can send his children to the public schools.

**a—*Civil Rights***

Certainly however in the purchase of food, refreshments, lodging and sometimes hospital service he encounters discriminations. The degree varies from block to block and the discriminations themselves are often arbitrary. But they do persist. To a white citizen discussing the matter academically, these discriminatory practices may not seem significant; to a Negro encountering them day after day, they are intolerable.

Objectively, they are violations of the civil rights statute of the state. The remedy rests in part upon greater vigilance among law enforcement officials and in part upon some educational work among white consumers. Some success has recently been achieved in those fields by the work of private agencies.

**b—*Housing***

Within the Twin Cities the housing conditions of the Negroes are deplorable. The Negroes who must rent property pay excessively high rates for what they obtain. Facilities are tragically limited and often large families are crowded into two or three rooms. Some improvement must be effected. But the deplorable conditions which the Negro encounters are but an exaggerated development of serious conditions which many white persons in the Twin Cities experience. Yet present indications are that no practical change can be achieved in regard to housing for much more than a year. Building materials and skilled mechanics are not now available.

**c—*Employment***

Whereas the Commission must give serious study to this problem of housing, the more immediately practical problem at the present time seemed to be that of alleged job discrimination. The Negro's ability to buy a new house and other things depends largely upon his possession of a job both now and after the war. And there seemed to be sub-

stance to the allegation of job discrimination since in 1939 over 60 per cent of the Negroes in the Twin Cities were in some way or other on relief. The percentage of white persons in such condition was much lower.

Loss of jobs is ever more serious for the Negro in Minnesota since some of the white group can return to farms which the families operate, and since many white persons operate businesses. In Minnesota the Negroes are urban dwellers and employees. There are only 10 or 15 in the professions and about 80 who operate small businesses such as dry cleaning and barbering.

By many the regret will be expressed that the Negroes would have done much better if they had settled on the good farm land of Minnesota. Speculatively, that is true. The racial groups that have remained on the good farming soil are the groups that have grown in numbers and in economic resources. Practically though, the Negroes never acquired enough money to buy good land, and even if they attempted to buy farm homes, they would have encountered racial antagonisms. There are three or four who do own farms.

Job discrimination can be a lethal type of restriction for the members of any minority group in the United States. There are communities in the United States where inert custom or studied policy limited Negroes to domestic service and porter jobs. In those places, they can vision no dream of advancement. Often even those service jobs do not give full employment and in times of depressions the white group absorbs those.

As a consequence, the educated youth who would be the future leaders either migrate from the community or, if they remain, they become cynical and receptive to revolutionary philosophies. The older members inevitably lose initiative and many become charges upon public agencies.

It seemed important then to the members of the Commission that an effort be made to secure accurate and factual answers to four questions:

1. In Minnesota, what is the Negro's opportunity for securing employment and for being upgraded if qualified?

2. If the Negro is discriminated against in regard to jobs, what types of persons keep him from working?

3. If various groups discriminate against the Negro, what is the merit of the reasons which they cite to justify their actions?

4. Is there a basis for hoping that a constructive change can be effected within Minnesota?

## ***VI. Procedure of the Commission***

To assist the Governor's Inter-Racial Commission in its search for the answers to those questions, the St. Paul Urban League offered the facilities of its office and the part-time services of its industrial secretary. That offer was accepted both because of the varied experience of the Urban League in industrial relations, and because the Commission, drawing its only monetary resources from the modest contingent fund of the Governor, had to limit its expenditures almost entirely to printing and mailing.

Concise and specially prepared questionnaires were mailed to 2,231 employers in the Twin Cities and Duluth. Through these questionnaires an effort was made to ascertain the places where Negroes were employed, the places where they were not employed, the type of work they did, and the opinions of employers in regard to Negro workers. A sample questionnaire is attached to this report.

Six hundred and one of the 2,231 employers answered the questionnaires and returned them. In more than 100 instances, employers also wrote extended letters explaining more fully their attitudes, practices and opinions. Obviously this study would be more satisfying if all the employers had responded. Yet even for those who did not respond, the questionnaire must have had an educational value in bringing this problem to their attention.

Similarly, other types of questionnaires were mailed to all the labor unions in the same areas. The executive secretaries of both the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. organizations in the state wrote letters urging the cooperation of their affiliated groups, and those letters were mailed with the

questionnaires. Of the 350 A. F. of L. unions interrogated, 84 responded. Of the 102 C. I. O. unions questioned, 25 replied.

The labor unions were asked questions such as these:

1. Will your union accept Negroes to full membership?
2. If Negroes are not admitted, give the reason.

3. If white employees objected to working with a Negro would the union immediately go to the place of employment to dissuade the white worker from that procedure? In the appendix a sample of that questionnaire is presented.

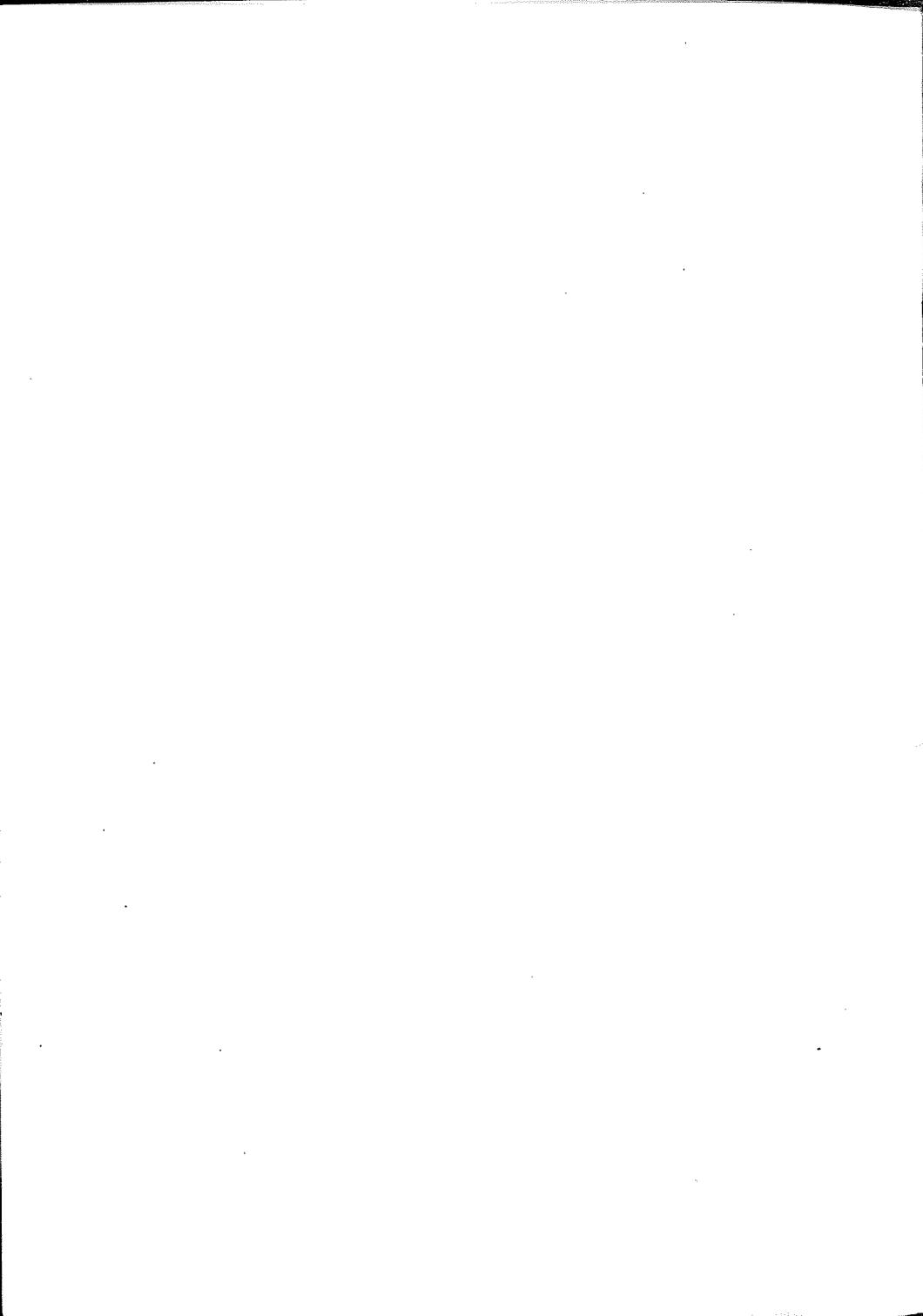
If each of the 2,231 employers and each of the 452 labor unions had answered and returned the questionnaires, the Commission would have possessed material for an almost complete statistical report on the status of the Negro workers in Minnesota. The possession of such data was the Commission's objective, and in its zeal for its attainment a second letter was sent to all failing to reply. Even personal interviews were attempted in some instances.

But even though the returns were not numerically complete, they were sufficiently substantial to give insight into the mind and practices of industrial Minnesota regarding the employment of Negroes. They constitute the bases for inferences as valid as most made in the field of human contacts.

Here the Commission desires to direct attention to the fact that, besides the return of the questionnaires, another source of information has been used. This second source was the statements made by the St. Paul and Minneapolis Urban League offices during the past 20 years. Those offices deal daily and almost exclusively with the task of placing Negroes in jobs. Their reports constitute a rich mine of information.

In some sections of this study, references are made to specific employers and specific labor unions. That is done because there is a decided disadvantage in remaining exclusively in the field of abstractions and statistical summaries.

Yet when concrete references are made, the source for such information is not one of the returned questionnaires. The Commission preferred to keep the names of the respondents anonymous. The source is some public fact which usually has been the subject of conversation within the Negro community for months and years. To those facts the Urban Leagues stand as witnesses. For example, the employment practices of the Twin Cities Ordnance plant as operated by the Federal Cartridge Corporation are known and discussed by many.



## CHAPTER I

# What is the Negro's Opportunity for Securing Employment in Minnesota?

The answer to the first question depends largely upon the times; that is, whether the United States is at war or at peace.

### I. DURING THE WAR YEARS

Certainly since the summer of 1942, every Negro in Minnesota capable of work has been able to secure a job at satisfactory wages. A goodly number of them have been upgraded. The acute manpower shortage swung open the door of employment. There is an old adage that every cloud has a silver lining. During this world-wide war, the Negro, like his white fellow-citizen, is bearing his share in all the hardships and restrictions. There are 712 Negroes from Minnesota in the armed forces. But the silver lining is that for the first time since the first World War, full employment and a variety of jobs have been offered the Negro.

The employment has been provided to the Negro largely by three different types of industries; either entirely new war industries such as the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant, older industries which built extensions for specific war work such as the Northwest Airlines, or established industries which, while continuing to produce the same products, are processing much larger quantities because of contracts with the armed forces, such as the meat packing plants.

At this time in the study it seems to be good constructive procedure to record the names of some of the larger corporations of these three types that are now not only employing 10 or more Negroes but offering positions above that of janitorial work and unskilled labor to the properly qualified. If it were at all practical, the Commission should present an honor roll of every war industry in Minnesota

that has upgraded any Negro worker. While that was not feasible because of limited resources the Commission does present this list of names in that spirit. Many of the managers of those industries are to be congratulated upon their practical good-will. And no white person can ever adequately appreciate what it means to a Negro to see a number of industries in one community offering something more than janitorial work to Negroes.

To make the statements as accurate as possible the Commission has urged the urban leagues to recheck several times the material that they presented. Yet due to clerical errors or human frailty there must be some omissions or errors. If any industry was inadvertently omitted, which should have received favorable comment, the Commission is not only regretful but will try to make amends by some future device. While allowing for a margin of error the Commission believes that the report gives a substantially accurate picture. Also the Commission wishes to observe that the material presented describes the conditions prevailing on the first of February, 1945. Within a few months obviously there can be a considerable change in the inter-racial patterns in one industry or another.

THE TWIN CITIES ORDNANCE PLANT, operated by Federal Cartridge Corp., is the employer of the greatest number of Negro workers. This plant has been constructed since the German invasion of Belgium and at times of peak production, its employees have numbered well over 20,000. Since the first week of construction, the management has insisted that both on the constructional work and on operations within the plant itself there must be no discrimination against Negroes. At times of maximum production, over 1,000 Negroes have been employed. (Incidentally, it should be observed that those Negro workers constituted more than 20 per cent of the adult Negro population within the State.) Those Negro men and women are engaged in 32 different job classifications with assignment requirements of job performance and responsibilities administered on the same basis as other employees. Some of the positions held by Negroes at Twin Cities Ordnance Plant are personnel di-

rector in the Labor Relations department, department supervisors, accountants, foremen, typists, clerks, job training instructors, ordnance inspectors, engineers, machinists, millwrights, nurses, photograph technicians, adjustors, operators, packers, guards, matrons, janitors, timekeepers, production clerks, ballisticians and gunners.

THE NORTHWEST AIRLINES, INC., did not employ Negroes before the war. Now there are over 26 Negroes working at a variety of jobs and being upgraded when they manifest the proper qualifications.

THE MUNSINGWEAR, INC., OF MINNEAPOLIS, manufacturers of clothing, had no experience with Negro labor until two years ago. When the company undertook war contracts, it accepted and conformed fully to the President's executive order 8802. The services of the Minneapolis Urban League, along with the aid of the C.I.O., were solicited in the selection of Negro workers. Negroes were introduced into departments and integrated without the slightest reverberation from the white employees. It is the company's policy to upgrade qualified persons within limits of their skills and ability. Qualified Negroes are holding jobs as follows: Office file clerks, messengers, knitters, order fillers, inspectors, sewing machine operators, shipping department attendants. At present 55 Negroes are employed.

INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY at first employed only a few Negro janitors. The events of war necessitated an expanded program, more Negroes were employed and upgraded in occupations where they had not been employed previously. They are now employed in such jobs as inspectors, operators, adjustors, machinist set-up men, etc. This industry has made a cooperative effort to give full employment to Negro citizens. Seventy-five Negroes are now employed.

GRIGGS, COOPER AND COMPANY, manufacturers and wholesale grocers, holding a war contract, employs Negroes on a thoroughly integrated basis. The company is now a strong advocate of fair play in its employment policies. Sixty-five Negroes are now employed.

RAYMOND LABORATORIES, INC., prior to the war manufactured cosmetics and employed only one or two Negroes as janitors. In recent months they have employed 55 Negroes in war production activities. The company has indicated it would use Negroes after the war.

BROWN AND BIGELOW, INC., printers and manufacturers of advertising specialties and an employer of many hundreds of persons in peace time, used Negroes only as janitors before the war. Since the development of defense projects, it has employed Negroes in some assembling and processing occupations, building maintenance and cafeteria work. Eighteen Negroes are now on the payroll.

D. W. ONAN AND SONS, manufacturers of electric generating equipment, employed no Negroes before the war. Now there are 32 Negroes engaged in production activities.

THE SEEGER REFRIGERATOR COMPANY prior to the war manufactured boxes for electric refrigerators and did not employ Negroes. At present 10 Negroes are engaged in production work.

SUPERIOR METAL PRODUCTS COMPANY prior to the war manufactured milk containers and did not employ Negroes. Now over 10 are employed.

NORTHWESTERN AERONAUTICAL CORPORATION was not in existence before the war. It is a defense industry which may remain after the war. Over 20 Negroes are employed, most of them in janitorial work, but from the beginning one Negro has been employed as an accountant.

THE A. O. SMITH CORPORATION, a new concern manufacturing airplane parts, employs over 20 Negroes in production, some holding responsible positions.

THE STRUTWEAR KNITTING COMPANY, manufacturers of clothing, did not employ Negroes before the war. Sixteen Negroes are now employed in production.

THE MINNEAPOLIS HONEYWELL REGULATOR CO. used Negroes prior to the war for janitorial work and similar tasks. At present they are using about 20

Negro men and women in the production processes and have taken a firm stand against employees or foremen who objected to the presence of the Negroes.

\* \* \*

There are also other concerns which have taken a progressive attitude such as the Donaldson Company and Guillaume Box and Lumber Company.

In the meat packing industry where Negroes have been employed for years, the number of Negro workers has been increased considerably. In Armour's there are now 250 employed, 45 in Cudahy's, and 35 in Swift's.

At Duluth the United States Steel and Wire Company is now employing over 28 Negroes. The Butler Brothers Ship Building Company has employed six as laborers and one as a master mechanic. The C.I.O. maritime union employs one Negro girl as a stenographer. In so far as it could be ascertained most of the other Negroes in Duluth with ten or so exceptions are employed as domestics or janitors.

\* \* \*

Although all the Negroes able to work in Minnesota are now employed, it should be noted that months after Pearl Harbor there was a surplus of Negro workers. Some large war industries consistently refused to give employment to Negroes in any jobs above that of janitorial work. The Minneapolis Urban League is the authority for the statement that one large industry within the jurisdiction of that office, which has trebled its production facilities during the war because of war contracts and which now employs over 8,000 persons, has refused to employ Negroes except five or six in janitorial work.

## II. DURING THE YEARS OF PEACE

Between 1930 and 1940, there were many white persons unemployed in the state. But in terms of proportions and percentages, there was no parity with the colored unemployed. In St. Paul, for example, from a study of relief rolls made by the Community Chest in 1936 it was found that 62 per cent of the Negro population was on relief or

had a dependent status, whereas only 23 per cent of the white population was in that category. In 1938 in the same city, exclusive of single persons and those receiving old age pensions, 69 per cent of the Negro families were on direct relief or on WPA. Presumably, similar conditions prevailed in Minneapolis.

In those days the Negro was just as anxious to work as he is during the war. The explanation for the phenomenal unemployment during that great depression is twofold: First, that a considerable number of Negroes were already unemployed prior to the stock market crash. Second, that when they worked they were limited largely to personal service occupations which are the first to contract in the face of a threatened depression.

For example, in the study of St. Paul relief rolls in 1936, it was found that 40 per cent of the Negroes had been in domestic or personal service and 19 per cent in unskilled work. And in Minneapolis in 1930, according to Abram L. Harris, former Urban League secretary, in "The Negro in Minneapolis," two-thirds of the colored workers were employed in three hotels as waiters, maids or housemen. He also found that 75 per cent of all Negroes in that city were in domestic work.

When the depression came, white workers occupied some of those domestic jobs. For example, in several hotels white girls were substituted for Negro men as waiters — partly because of a change in dining customs and partly because it was assumed that the customers would prefer white girls.

#### ***A. Where Negroes Had Only Limited Job Opportunities***

The gravity of the Negro unemployment situation prior to the war is probably best depicted by recording specifically some of the places where custom kept them from working at any job above the status of a janitor. The specific mention of these classifications is not done in the spirit of an indictment.

Most members of the white group believe that they are entirely free from racial prejudice. Yet when they are con-

fronted with some concrete situation, they so act that often their practical attitude towards the Negro is different from what their attitude would have been towards a white person. Those situations suggest that latent in many white persons is the virus of racial prejudice. To this tendency the people in the Twin Cities and Duluth are no exceptions. When they act as employers or employees or customers, they reflect that tendency and also the community pattern. And in most cases they are entirely unaware of the consequences of their own actions. Most white persons in those communities never suspect how difficult it is for the Negro to secure work. And they will never become conscious of it from reading general statements about unemployment among Negroes. The human mind does not function in that manner. The citizens will become concerned only when they are presented with a list of industries where Negroes do not work or are not upgraded.

The purpose of these subsequent paragraphs is to indicate the plain fact that in some places Negroes were not upgraded and sometimes did not even work. It is not done for the purpose of criticizing the management. The blame may rest upon other classes such as the workers or the consumers. It is even possible that in a few instances the Negroes never approached the management because they mistook an existing custom for a deliberate managerial policy. Also it is undoubtedly true that in one case or another a Negro may have been employed for a few months and the Commission was not informed of that fact. But despite those exceptions the Commission is satisfied that these statements are substantially accurate.

### *The Public Utilities*

The corporations dispensing telephone service, heat, light, and gas had on their combined payrolls well over 2,000 employees even during the depression. In one of the corporations there are about 20 Negroes employed as elevator operators, janitors, and matrons. In the second, there were two Negroes employed as matrons, one as a porter, one as a third class engineer or a fireman. One other corporation now has only two Negroes among 500 employees.

### ***Mail Order Houses***

Situated in the Twin Cities are at least two nationally known mail order houses. In one, about 10 Negroes are employed as janitors; in the other, Negroes are janitors or matrons.

### ***Producers of Beverages***

Much beer is produced in St. Paul and Minneapolis, both for many consumers within and without the state. No Negroes have worked on the production of this beverage, although in St. Paul alone about 1,500 persons are employed by the breweries. Before the war, one Negro was employed as a locker room attendant.

### ***The Department Stores***

Every morning thousands of women and men go downtown to earn their livelihood at large department stores in Minneapolis and St. Paul, one of them being reputedly the largest store of its kind north of Chicago. Yet, with the exception of a few Negroes employed as matrons, stock girls, and elevator operators, there are no Negroes on those payrolls. Years ago some of these stores may have employed Negroes as saleswomen, and the other clerks forced the discontinuance of such a policy. Such was the experience of one store in St. Paul. During the past Christmas season, some of these stores employed colored girls as wrappers. There are a few instances where Negro women are classified as matrons and expected to do the work of matrons but who are allowed to act as saleswomen in rush periods. But despite a considerable number of sales they have been refused any classification above that of matron.

### ***Manufacturing***

One corporation, manufacturers of adhesives for the automobile industry before the war, is one of the largest concerns in the capital city. Before the war, through weekly pay checks at that plant, thousands of St. Paul citizens earned the money essential for procuring food, clothing and shelter. Negroes are not employed in production or clerical processes. Even today there are only seven Negroes there.

Most are matrons, one is a warehouse checker and one a shoe shiner. There are other industries in which similar conditions prevail.

### ***Local Transportation Industries***

The corporation which operates the streetcars and buses in the Twin Cities has employed, since 1938, three Negroes in its shops and has upgraded them. But until the war came, Negroes did not act as operators of buses or streetcars. Such jobs are now open to them.

### ***Transfer and Trucking***

In this field, the reader is asked to try to count on the fingers of one hand the number of times that a colored delivery man has appeared at the door.

### ***The Printing Industry***

In the Twin Cities there are printing corporations which manufactured and distributed calendars and novelties across the nation. In those corporations in peace time, thousands of Twin Cities people found employment in a great variety of jobs. Negroes did not work in those shops with one or two exceptions. It is alleged by some Negroes that the typographical unions refused them membership.

### ***Large Offices***

Modern business methods have grown so complex that many persons must be engaged exclusively in jobs such as that of bookkeeping, filing, typing, stenographic work, office management, etc. Daily, thousands of persons supporting families secure their livelihood in the Twin Cities at such jobs in the large insurance offices, in the large banks and their subsidiaries, in the home railroad offices of two large systems, in wholesale houses, etc. But there were no Negroes thus employed although many colored girls have been trained for office work. Several of the social welfare officials and one or two church agencies used Negro girls for office work.

### ***The Milling Industry***

In the eastern states, people think of Minneapolis as the place where many popular types of flour are milled. There

is located there one of the largest flour mills in the world. Yet, in several of the large mills jointly employing 2,000 persons, there were no Negroes engaged except as janitors and one messenger. Since the war, some are employed as unskilled laborers. For a time one of those mills in response to constant urging employed a Negro as a draftsman. Later he was conscripted.

Located in the same city are several corporations which manufacture popular breakfast cereals. One or two of them at various times carried on their advertisements pictures of Negroes. They employ no Negroes.

Besides those larger corporations, there were smaller ones employing a hundred or so persons each, such as the manufacturers of batteries, machine shops, bakeries, etc. In most of those places Negroes did not work.

The reader is asked to think of the large factories, stores, offices and mills in which even during the depression over 200,000 white persons found work and consequently the means of life. The reader is asked to visualize the crowds that went to those places to work in the morning and returned in the evening. Then the reader is asked to remember that custom or prejudice kept the Negro from walking with those crowds. Unsuccessfully, he was seeking work when they left and still seeking it when they returned.

## ***B. Where the Negroes Did Work Before the War***

Although custom or prejudice kept Negroes from working in many places where white people were employed, some of them did have jobs. In the depression days, over 30 per cent were employed. Where did they get work? Here and there they found jobs as attendants in clubs, or housemen in hotels, or domestics in private families and as janitors. But were there any large industries to which any considerable number of Negroes went day after day?

### ***The Railroads***

Of private businesses, the railroads stand out as the industry which made the greatest contribution towards keeping Negroes of Minnesota alive during the depression years.

The Northern Pacific, The Great Northern, the Milwaukee and the Northwestern, and others gave employment to about 500 Negroes even in 1934. They worked as dining car waiters, Pullman porters, red caps, car cleaners, and in a few miscellaneous jobs. The railroads did provide jobs. Regrettably though, with the exception of a few waiters promoted to inspectors during the war period, and a few porters appointed to supervisory work, there was little upgrading. The great railroad unions such as that of the conductors did not assume any initiative to help them to be upgraded. Yet as consistent as the railroads were in providing jobs in peace times, they were not able to give employment to more than 10 per cent of the Negro applicants. It should be recorded that about 25 Negroes are employed about the roundhouse of the Milwaukee Road in Minneapolis.

Strangely, some otherwise intelligent white persons think that a Negro can obtain a job on the railroad at any time regardless of the volume of business and regardless of his health. Patently too, of all railroad employees the Negroes constitute but a small percentage since traditional patterns have restricted them to service jobs. It is interesting to note too that, while Negroes may work as porters, yet in St. Paul the Union Depot Company does not hire them as baggage men, though about 30 men are employed in that occupation.

### ***The Packing Plants***

For many years before the war, some of the packing plants gave employment to Negroes. It was estimated by the writer of a survey in 1934, that 169 Negroes were employed in the plants about South St. Paul.

### ***The Ford Plant***

The Ford Plant always employed about 10 Negroes in the paint and glass division and upgraded them.

### ***The Minneapolis Moline Company***

The Minneapolis Moline Company, manufacturers of farm machinery, employed about 10 Negroes before the war, including machinists, as far as can be ascertained.

### ***Northland Greyhound Lines, Inc.***

Northland Greyhound Lines, Inc., employed 10 Negroes as car washers, red caps, etc.

### ***United States Postal Department***

Besides the railroads and the packing plants, no private industry gave employment to any considerable number of Negroes. Ranking next to those industries was the postal department of the United States Government. In the St. Paul office, there were 41 Negroes employed before the war. Of that number, 32 were either window or postal clerks; eight were carriers, and one was a supervisor. In Minneapolis there were 30 employed in various classifications, ranging from freight handling to the office of branch superintendent. In the Duluth post office at present there is one Negro postal clerk and one Negro custodian, although years ago there were 11 employed.

### ***Other United States Agencies***

In some other Federal departments, there are a few Negroes now employed. In St. Paul, the Department of Internal Revenue has three or four Negroes; in the Office of Price Administration, are two Negro clerks; and the United States Employment Service has one Negro interviewer in the local office and one Negro addressograph operator in the state office. In Minneapolis, the United States Employment Service has one interviewer and one clerk-typist and the Federal building has several Negro charwomen. The Department of Agriculture has several Negro veterinarians and several lay inspectors.

### ***The State Government***

For over 40 years in the Governor's Office or Executive Department there have been employed one Negro clerk and one Negro assistant clerk. Those two men have worked there 40 years and hold responsible positions.

In the Minnesota State Department of Conservation, there is one Negro game warden. The Secretary of State's office has one Negro typist supervising the opening of first-class mail, and one typist and five clerical workers by appointment. The State Department of Highways has one Negro janitor foreman, 11 Negro janitors and one custodial

helper. The Department of Administration (Division of Public Property) has one Negro steam fireman (under Civil Service), one Negro mechanic, seven janitors and four janitresses. The State Unemployment Compensation has one Negro employee. In the State Civil Service Commissioner's office there is one Negro clerk-typist; in the Taxation Department, there is one Negro clerk, and in the Adjutant General's office there is one Negro holding the rank of Major in the state home guard, but he is not on active duty.

### ***The County Governments***

In Ramsey county there is one colored clerk in the County Auditor's office, one clerk in the County Treasurer's office, one Negro matron and one assistant Negro jailer in the County Sheriff's office; in the County Welfare Board, one Negro interviewer, and one colored clerk-typist; in the Ramsey County Probation Office, one Negro receptionist, one file clerk in the County Division of Child Welfare.

Hennepin County has one Negro Deputy Sheriff in the County Sheriff's office and two Negro stenographer-typists in the County Welfare Board, and in the Recorder of Deeds' office there are two Negro clerk-typists.

### ***The Municipal Governments***

Minneapolis has in its Law Enforcement Department four Negro officers, three serving as policemen and one as a detective. In the Fire Department, there was one Negro who was discharged in November. Forty years ago there were approximately 12 Negro firemen, but the number has gradually dwindled to none. The Minneapolis Relief Department has one case worker and did have one Negro who was a director.

St. Paul has two Negro employees in the city architect's office, one of these being a chief designer of the city, and the other is senior architectural draftsman. There are two policemen in the Law Enforcement Department and five Negro firemen. The Department of Public Works has one Negro engineer; in the City Hall there are several colored custodians; in the public schools, several school janitors and one public school teacher. That woman, incidentally, is the only Negro teaching in any public school in Minne-

sota. The Public Library has one Negro assistant librarian, one library clerk, one elevator operator, and two janitresses.

In Duluth there is one Negro working as custodian in the court house, another as custodian in a public school, and a third as a truck driver for the city.

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Some of those jobs in the state, county and municipal governments are excellent. They provide a good income to the worker. To the Negro youth in Minnesota, they constitute an objective basis for hoping that by earnest study and industry they can be appointed to jobs above the status of mere service and janitorial occupations to which so many of the race have been restricted. Yet the number of jobs above custodial work is not large and the sum total of all governmental jobs is not such that it affects the grave unemployment problem during peace times. The complete total does not surpass the number of Negroes employed in two of the smaller defense plants.

In summary then, with the exception of the railroads, the packing plants, and the Ford plant, there were very few jobs in private industry open to Minnesota Negroes before this world war.

What will happen when peace comes again? What will happen when the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant in New Brighton closes and places about 1,000 Negroes on the labor market? What will happen when over 700 Minnesota Negroes in the armed forces return to civil life? What will happen when the Northwest Airlines, the International Harvester and other plants must discontinue their war work and, in reducing employees, release many Negroes?

Prophecy regarding future events is an extremely hazardous activity for uninspired persons. No mortal man can foretell how much employment will be given to Negroes in the post-war world. Some Negroes will retain the new jobs they acquired during the war. But the Commission seriously fears that the amount of unemployment among Negroes will be tremendously high in terms of percentages unless some definite change can be effected in peace time industries. It is to peace time industries that the Negro worker must go.

## CHAPTER II

# Who Are the Persons in Minnesota Who Keep Negroes from Working?

The material in the preceding section indicated that in peace times the Negro finds it much more difficult than a white man either to secure work or to be upgraded. The cause clearly is race discrimination, either actively deliberate or calcified in the form of inert custom.

Yet race prejudice does not exist by itself as does a stone wall. It exists as a quality in human individuals. It is proper, then, to say that prejudiced individuals keep the Negro from working. They control the door to employment. In terms of categories, they are the employer, the employee, the staff members of vocational schools, and governmental officials.

### *The Employer*

Normally in peace time, if a white worker wishes to work, he goes to the employer, his manager or personnel director and files an application. The white worker knows that if he has the proper physical and mental qualifications, he enjoys a fair chance of getting a job. If there is a need for workers, if his application is satisfactory, the door is opened and he is taken to a department, presented to the foreman, and shown where he can hang his coat.

If a Negro seeks a job, the employer sees—not an individual applicant whose qualifications must be ascertained—but the American Race Problem. Immediately, he goes through a mental process quite different from that when the applicant is white. Figuratively, he puts on a different robe, a different mask, and plays an entirely different role. He views this applicant in the light of the American race dilemma and usually he refuses employment.

The Negro applicant is placed in a disheartening position. He may be stronger than Samson, he may have a col-

lege education, he may have a higher I. Q. than many of the whites, he may have special dexterity for the job. His only request is that he be judged on his personal qualities. Yet, the employer sees the Race Problem and often politely refuses employment.

That refusal is tragic for the Negro. For the employer holds a position of social responsibility. He opens or closes the gate to food, clothing and shelter, for it is only through the wage check that the average urban dweller can obtain any of these goods. The employer may think of himself merely as a private individual and may intend to run his own business without assuming any community responsibilities. But regardless of his thinking, he assumes a position of social responsibility by the very act of becoming an employer. He becomes a steward for distributing the nation's wealth. If employers as a class judge that they cannot hire Negroes, then Negroes are denied access to the nation's wealth.

During these war years, a fair number of employers were so pressed by the need for manpower that they disregarded the Race Problem and hired the applicant. In peace times some employers were always ready to give employment in janitorial service. A smaller number entertaining strong convictions about the evils of prejudice showed great courage, hired Negroes and upgraded them regardless of the attitudes of others. Most employers, however, judged that they could not hire them.

The individual Negro who is refused employment can do little by himself. However, there are organizations in each of the Twin Cities supported by the Community Chests to which the Negro can go, namely, the Urban Leagues. Yet the Urban League often has the same experience as the individual Negro when the agency solicits a job.

In St. Paul, for example, one large industry having war contracts was approached by the Urban League intermittently over a three year period. At the end of that time the company employed a few Negro matrons.

A defense manufacturing concern in Minneapolis, according to the Minneapolis Urban League, which customarily employed trainees from a vocational school in Minneapolis, interviewed two Negro youths, one of whom was taken to be an Indian and was employed. When it was discovered both were Negroes, employment was withheld from both because the company feared the reaction of its employees and wished to investigate the policies of other companies.

In Minneapolis one company employing several thousand workers and engaged in producing war material has stubbornly refused to give Negroes an opportunity to work in production activities. Instead it has recruited white workers from various sections of the nation, and has resisted efforts of the War Manpower Commission and other governmental agencies, including the Fair Employment Practice Committee, to introduce Negroes.

In one large mail order company in St. Paul which continuously advertises for workers, there have been several instances where Negro women have applied only to be told the positions were filled when it was learned they were colored. When the Urban League discussed the situation with the personnel department of the company, its statement was that the white employees would not work with Negroes.

### *The Motives of Some Employers*

From some of the employers' letters and returned questionnaires, an effort might be made to get behind the attitude of the employer and to determine the factors influencing his thinking. Here are reproduced the opinions of various employers as transmitted to the Commission through letter or questionnaire.

#### *Personal Convictions*

1. Their own personal convictions on race relations constitute the determining factor for some employers.

"We hire all new employees with the thought of training them for positions as salesmen, office, stock supervisory, etc. Negroes could not qualify for this work."

"To me, there is not a more perplexing problem today than the one of a Negro successfully dovetailing into our working lives. Although we have never had any experience with Negroes in our plant, our feeling has always been that the fact they were black would make absolutely no difference with us, but the regrettable fact is that from an ambition standpoint the Negro is definitely quite a different person from the white person. This is his heritage and to change it means to remake a race. This appears to be as tough a job as making a white person out of a Jap. Although many of the latter have received top education in our country, we now know that it has had no influence on changing the Jap from anything other than a Jap."

"We have never had an opportunity to hire Negroes, but the writer worked a number of years ago where we had colored help, but as soon as they had been taught the routine, they became arrogant and self-reliant, and acted as the white generation does today. 'Give them an inch, and they will take a mile.' I spent six weeks in Miami this winter, and the colored people down there were becoming a problem, just like a gas that has been released from compression."

"Would not consider working Negroes alongside of white in Minnesota. The writer understands the Negro fairly well and has no dislike for them. However, it has been very evident that Minnesota is just too far North for the white worker to understand the Negro and get along with him properly."

"I think Negroes should go on the farms; they need them in the Dakotas and the farmers' boys leave the farms. Negroes would do well, I believe, as share croppers—for the next 10 years farming is the best business and it is a respectable business. We need good mechanics and could not take chances."

"I don't want anything to do with Negroes—as I'm really afraid of them. In large plants where they have foremen over them, no doubt they could get employment."

## *Employee Opposition*

2. Fear of employee opposition was the factor more commonly mentioned, and allied with it in the mind of some was the belief that the introduction of Negro workers would necessarily involve the expense of constructing separate dressing and wash rooms.

"Our own employees will not allow them here. We have five Japanese-Americans working here, but the employees draw the line on Negroes. It is only because of them that we cannot hire Negroes. We have a fine group of employees, but they are prejudiced. Please do not send anyone here to talk to our employees. It will only hurt us as we do not want them to know that it is only because of their prejudice."

"I am afraid some women in the plant may not care to work with Negroes."

"If a Negro having seniority rights were placed in authority over white men, trouble might result."

"There are certain vocations to which Negroes can be adapted without conflicting with whites. I would hesitate personally to introduce any colored help into our plant, owing to the fact that we employ about 50 per cent of women who are all native of this North country."

"Our experienced whites do not care to work along side of colored. There should be enough porters, cleaners, helpers jobs available to colored who now refuse such work. We have had no colored help for the last 12 years."

"We believe that white employees do not like to use the same rest rooms as the colored people."

"We have no separate accommodations. Our present Negroes were stokers when they started and that work has been done away with."

"We have had no experience with employment of Negroes within the last 20 years. At that time our employees reacted unfavorably so we have not tried it since."

Some employers declared they checked sentiment in the plant before deciding not to hire Negroes.

"During the emergency we have tried to bring in colored girls to work on power machines but have met with so much opposition from our employees that we have had to give it up."

"We have taken a check of the matter of employing Negroes with our people, and we find that out of 35 employees, there are 15 people for and 20 people against working with them. This puts us in a peculiar position and, if we employ some of these Negroes, we would stand the risk of having 20 people walk out which would be a terrible injury for us. It is almost impossible to replace 20 experienced people at one time. However, there is a possibility that as soon as the labor situation is eased up we would be able to run this risk; and it is possible that some of these people here will see things in a better light."

### *Negro's Workmanship*

✓ 3. Unfavorable judgment about Negro's workmanship influenced some employers.

"Our experience with Negroes was far from satisfactory, as they usually work for a day or two and then would be absent for various periods and finally fail to show up at all without giving any notice of intention to quit to the superintendent at the plant where employed."

✓ "We have tried to get Negro help. But they do not seem to wish this kind of work. They have stayed too short a time to even class them as employees. The most an hour. We first asked our men, and then the Union. Both agreed. We have known Negro men personally, have asked them if they wished to work in the shop, machines and wood work, but none have shown up for work. We would like some Negro men who understand working with tools; we would gladly train them. We personally believe the Negro is a great deal responsible for the lack of cooperation."

### *Customer Opposition*

4. Customer opposition is also a matter of consideration.

"Negroes do not fit into bakery work. Their appearance in a bakery does not appeal to the public."

"Would have no personal prejudice against having Negroes employed. However, until the public is educated, because of our size there would be apt to be a feeling we were hiring them to save money. There might be a feeling the quality of our service was below that of our competitors."

"In our business of dealing directly with 99 per cent white housewives, I am afraid Negroes would not be acceptable."

"The majority of our employees are salesmen serving housewives. We might employ one Negro salesman to call on the colored trade exclusively and would be glad to discuss this with a representative of the Urban League."

***Labor Union's Position***

5. Doubt about the Labor Union's position is also a motive.

"We will hire Negroes if acceptable to Unions. Okay with management."

"Some employees said they would quit or strike. We have a closed shop and all help is supplied by the Union."

"Our help is entirely unionized and their organization does not admit Negroes."

"Our help is unionized. Certain rights for promotion become automatically effective as to each individual when once employed. It would be only a matter of time when supervisory jobs would be open to Negroes which would put them over whites. That would create an impossible situation from the standpoint of employing white help thereafter to work under Negro bosses."

"Would ask Union. Could be employed in most departments."

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Appropriately, the Commission might be asked what percentage of Minnesota employers will give jobs to Negroes. The Commission is not in a position to give a definite categorical answer. Prior to the war, a considerable num-

ber of employers denied employment to Negroes. Even during the war some employers have continued that policy. Only 601 out of 2,231 employers answered the questionnaire. Possibly the failure of many to respond may be attributed to a prejudicial attitude or indifference.

Of the 601 replying, 117 said they employed Negroes in some capacity or other. Three hundred twenty-one said they would be willing to employ; 89 said they would not; and 64 were undecided. One hundred twenty-one omitted the answer.

It should be noted that while these questionnaires were being mailed, the manpower shortage became acute. That factor may have had some influence.

In response to the question whether they would give employment to returning Negro soldiers, 265 said they would, 67 said they would not, and 65 were undecided, and 204 did not answer the question.

In terms of numbers, only a small percentage of the employers committed themselves regarding attitudes. Four hundred fifty-five said they had no experience with Negroes and would not then express reasons about Negro employment. Fifty-five thought whites would not work with Negroes, and 112 thought whites would. One hundred nineteen employers judged that Negroes were efficient, and 17 thought they were not. One hundred twenty-eight thought they would be honest and nine otherwise. Twelve thought customers would object and 69 thought customers would not. Twenty-six thought Negroes would be tardy and three thought they would be punctual.

## **II. *The Employee***

Obviously, next to the employer, the white employee holds the strategic position in the matter of employment for the Negro. Even if the employer is willing to hire all applicants, he is powerless if his skilled workers are adverse to working with Negroes.

Some proportion of the white workers are definitely prejudiced. A few have strong personal prejudices. The

determining factor with many of them, however, is that by working beside a Negro or in the same occupation they lose self-respect or social standing. The Negro came to this nation as a slave. Since the Civil War he has been restricted largely to service occupations. By working with him, employees believe they lower themselves to a servile capacity. Sometimes they are even taunted by their families.

About a year ago in St. Paul at the request of the Urban League, a laundry hired a colored girl. Immediately the other white girls refused to work with her. One reason they alleged was that Negroes were not clean. When they were asked how many belonged to a church, all raised their hands. At least two meetings were held; a clergyman pleaded with them on the basis of religion; a federal official on the basis of patriotism; a union official on the basis of fairness. Ultimately they agreed to work. Such scenes have been enacted more than once.

### *The Labor Unions*

Prior to 1932, relatively few white workers were members of labor unions. They were nevertheless prejudiced, and often refused to work with Negroes. Gradually, as the white workers were organized, they carried into the unions their former prejudices. Yet, because the labor union is an organized group with elected leaders, conditions of membership and a philosophy, it can be an excellent movement both for educating white workers and also disciplining them if they refuse to work with Negroes.

In Minnesota there have been cases where central labor bodies in the Twin Cities have used their influence to protect Negroes. In 1937 when a hotel in St. Paul decided to drop all Negro waiters and substitute white waiters taken in from St. Louis, the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly informed the hotel that it would take all the craftsmen out of the hotel if such a policy were activated. The Negro waiters stayed.

The milk drivers' union in St. Paul on application opened its ranks to a Negro and gave him an office in the union.

In Minneapolis the Central Labor Union body has also cooperated on request. Some C.I.O. locals have given definite cooperation.

Yet, according to the Minneapolis Urban League, a Negro bartender applying to the Bartenders' Union for registration by telephone was assured that upon presentation of the necessary references and union fee, he would be accepted and assigned to employment. Upon presenting himself with his references and fee, he was told by the union agent that the union could not use Negroes.

When pressure was brought upon the union agent, the prospective member was told to first get an employer to assure the agent he would give the Negro applicant employment at which time a card would be issued. A canvass by the applicant of possible employers revealed the procedure was to employ only persons referred by the union agent. Several employers indicated willingness to employ the Negro applicant, but expressed fear of reaction from the business agent.

Furthermore, some of the unions bar Negroes from membership by constitution or other devices; for example, the Brotherhood of Blacksmiths, Drop Forgers and Helpers, the Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders, Welders and Helpers, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, and the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association.

Below are listed some questions proposed to unions and the answers of several locals.

**A. *Will the Union accept Negroes to membership?***

A bakers' union said: "Individual employers are often reluctant to train Negroes, but the union draws no color lines."

A local of electrical workers: "We would if the power company hired them."

A union in the film exchange: "No to all questions."

A bricklayers, stone and marble masons union: "Yes, we have had them from time to time, but they go South when it gets cold."

A general drivers, helpers and inside employees union: "We will take them in."

A machinists' local: "Not sufficiently qualified for membership."

Another brotherhood of electrical workers: "No Negroes in line work in this part of the country, and our utility workers are hired by the companies direct with whom we have contracts."

A retail clerks' association: "The few members we have had are leftovers from the time we used to include matrons and maintenance workers in our union. Negroes do not make good retail clerks, principally because customers want whites to wait on them."

A federal labor union: "We have no lines to draw in color, race or religion. They are all alike to us."

A hotel and restaurant local: "Yes, the men receive the same rate of pay as any other employee, as per classifications, in our contract."

A musicians' association: "Once in a while some white from the South moves in and we hear grumbling, but it doesn't take long to convince him that the colored man must be kept up to our level or we will drag ourselves down to a level where some people would like to keep the Negro."

A printing pressmen and assistants' union: "We have never been confronted with this problem in Minneapolis to date. Most of our members are highly skilled workmen who have spent years of apprenticeship becoming such."

A textile workers' union: "I notice many of our white members go out of their way to talk to and joke with our colored members. They have been working in perfect harmony for about three years."

### **B. Do Negroes hold office in your local?**

A textile workers' union: "They have served on committees, but have not run for regular office. They can be elected."

A federation of public service employees: "We have had Negroes on committees who have made valuable contributions to the subjects discussed."

A public welfare employees' local: "We have had but two Negro members but both have been active and held important positions—I believe both have been delegates to the Trades and Labor Assembly where one was on a committee."

### **C. What is the method of referring men to jobs?**

A brotherhood of electrical workers: "We have a union shop agreement under which the employer hires the men; afterward they must become members."

An International Association of Machinists: "As they apply on our records."

A milk drivers and dairy employees union: "Employers call the union office, if no men are available from our members, the employers hire anyone. He then works 30 days on a permit. After the probation period, he joins the union."

A sign and pictorial painters' union: "First come, first served."

A bartenders' protective and benevolent association: "Employers' preference."

A bricklayers, stone and marble masons' union: "Employees, employers preference."

An apartment building service employees' international union: "Endeavor to place members in jobs best fitted for."

A carpenters' local: "We try to divide the work as fairly as possible, but do not have rotation."

### **D. Do Negroes drop out of unions?**

A bakers' union: "They seem to change jobs quite rapidly."

An apartment building service employees international union: "Come and go same as whites."

A meat cutters and butcher workman union: "General turnover."

A moulders and foundry workers union: "Leave trade."

A musicians' association: "Non-payment of dues, departure from city."

A retail clerks local: "Yes. They do not like to pay dues."

A longshoreman and warehouseman union: "They will join the union but do not attend meetings."

A united steelworkers union: "All Negroes with exception of new workers are members."

**E. Cite concrete examples where the local has fought for Negroes:**

A musicians' association: "We have on innumerable occasions waived restrictions which we have on white people in order to enable Negroes to go to work."

An association of street electric railway and motor coach employees: "A Negro member was discharged, and the officers had him re-instated with full seniority rights."

A textile workers' union: "Yes, when the company first started to hire Negroes, I called a meeting and explained our union position. After many questions a vote was taken and all promised to treat all peoples equal. They have all lived up to this agreement."

A brotherhood of electrical workers' union: "We have written senators and representatives many times on behalf of the Negro on the poll tax question. We have supported any measure brought to our attention for the betterment of the Negro's condition."

A general drivers, helpers and inside employees union: "Yes. Always fight for equalization of membership regardless of race or religion."

A bakery, yeast, tea and coffee drivers union: "Our union insisted that a Negro worker be given a place on the seniority list along with all other employees."

A general drivers, helpers and truck terminal employees union: "A Negro who owned his own delivery business was cut off by a firm. The union immediately insisted that this company continue his service, and negotiated for same, resulting in the firm's continuation of his services."

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Precise generalizations about attitudes of labor unions might be imprudent, since only 109 out of 450 answered the questionnaires. The failure of the others may be attributed possibly to prejudice or indifference. Yet, regarding those responding, there are a few interesting figures.

In the 109 unions reporting, there are 646 Negroes and 54,334 white persons.

In response to the question: "Will your local accept Negroes to full membership?" 101 answered Yes; three replied in the negative, and three did not know. To the question: "Do the Negroes have the same privileges as white applicants for apprenticeship training?" 83 said Yes, six said No, and five did not know.

To the question: "Would you accept Negroes if the employers would put them to work?" 90 said Yes, and three said No.

To the question: "Are separate locals organized for Negroes?" Ten said Yes, and 88 said No.

Ten out of 96 also said Negroes held offices in their unions. To the question: "Do Negroes drop out of unions?" 13 said Yes; 35 said No, and 61 did not answer the question. Regarding taking in returning Negro soldiers, 88 said Yes; four said No, and three did not know.

### III. Vocational Schools

At times the Negro seems to be caught in a vicious circle. The employer and the labor union state they cannot accept the applicant since a highly skilled craft is involved. Yet in vocational and other high schools, the Negro student is often told by vocational guidance counselors or other officials that he must not take training in certain trades because they are barred to Negroes. The counselor

justifies this type of guidance on the grounds it saves time and protects the Negro applicant from disappointment.

Yet the circle must be broken at some point, and the school is a good point at which to start might be made. It seems that Negro students should be counseled according to their interest and ability. Later, if employment is refused, other agencies can conduct a practical campaign to place him. To do otherwise is to lay the first wall of a segregation policy.

#### *IV. Governmental Agencies*

The branches of the various governmental agencies within the boundaries of Minnesota—federal, state, and local—employ as many persons as any large corporation. The specific statements in the preceding sections indicate in what governmental agencies Negroes are employed. At times, situations have arisen in which charges have been made by Negroes that some governmental agency or other was discriminating against a colored applicant. While the report was being prepared no concrete cases were cited to the Commission and consequently the Commission was not asked to pass judgment. Theoretically it might have been preferable if the Commission had attempted to examine the racial policy of every type of governmental agency. But neither the time nor the personnel were available for such procedures.

Certainly if there is any place where discriminations against Negroes are least tolerable it is in a governmental agency. For the primary function of government is to promote justice.

A partial crux in the matter relates to civil service. Usually the appointing officer has the right to select one out of three, and if the appointing officer has prejudice, the qualified Negro is not appointed.

There is one fact to which the Commission can bear testimony from its experience; namely that Governor Edward J. Thye is ever anxious to know all the facts and then in so far as it is within his power strives by many constructive conferences with the parties involved to correct any existing injustice.

## CHAPTER III

# What is the Merit of the Motives Influencing Those Attitudes?

In peace times many employers assume an attitude of reluctance in hiring Negroes, and employees an attitude of reluctance in working with them. Yet, to the extent that employers and employees act rationally, they must have reasons for their attitudes. Some of those reasons were previously cited.

But all reasons are not valid. Some are true and some false. Some are sound, others, unsound. If a fair-minded man can be convinced that the reason underlying his attitude is false, then there is a fair chance of persuading him to change his attitude.

The purport of this chapter is to analyze and to weigh the reasons which motivate discriminatory attitudes in industrial Minnesota. The factual material for this analysis is in a considerable measure the material presented in the first two sections, though additions are made intermittently. The Commission is of the opinion that the material yields some definite conclusions. The approach is dominantly that of drawing the threads out, and weaving them together.

### *A. Is it true that white employees will not work with Negroes?*

Some white workers hesitate to work with Negroes. Some few absolutely refuse. But many in Minnesota, despite personal preferences, will work with Negroes when the employer indicates that such is his will. The evidence:

#### 1. IN WAR YEARS:

In the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant, the International Harvester Company, Griggs Cooper Company, D. W. Onan & Sons Company, etc., thousands of white people are working alongside Negroes doing the same jobs quietly. They work together and in most instances use the same wash-

rooms. It is also worthy of note that in those plants the management succeeded in integrating Negroes at a time when a white worker could quit with much greater hope of getting a job than he would have in peace times.

## 2. YEARS OF PEACE:

In the post offices, white men worked at the same jobs that Negroes were doing. Indeed in a few cases the white postal employees had colored supervisors. The postal clerks did not object to working with a Negro when such was the condition for obtaining a job at the post office.

There was presented above a list of some office and secretarial jobs held by Negroes in the federal, state and county and municipal offices in the Twin Cities. White men and women want jobs in those places, so white clerks will work at them even though a Negro is in the office. In the county hospital in St. Paul, in University Hospitals, in St. Joseph's, and probably in others there are colored girls training for nursing. They worked alongside of white trainees and white graduate nurses and no person gave it a second thought.

The facts, then, seem to be that, regardless of theory, some white persons will work alongside of Negroes without any objection. Many others will do it when the management takes a firm position.

### ***B. Is it true that the unions bar Negroes from membership, thus preventing employers from hiring them?***

If all industries were covered by closed shop agreements in the Twin Cities and Duluth, the responsibility for job discrimination could be placed entirely on the unions.

Yet all industries do not have even preferential shop agreements. Within four miles of the St. Paul Court House are two large industries. One employs over 2,000 men and women. In that plant so far, no union has succeeded in getting a contract. Another industry much closer and employing about 700 persons, in the autumn of 1944, had yet

to sign its first contract with any union. In both plants combined there are seven Negroes holding only janitorial positions.

Unfortunately, some labor unions in Minnesota, either by constitutional provision or by delaying tactics, keep Negroes from jobs and thus actually exercise a racial monopoly over skilled jobs. That is especially true in the metal trades. Such specific cases could be stopped by unmerciful publicity for concrete cases in the daily press or, if necessary, by a legislative statute.

In some other cases the material presented in the second section indicates that some unions do admit Negroes. In the 109 unions reporting there were 646 Negroes and 54,334 white workers. Negroes have even been elected to offices by workers that are predominantly white. The vice-president of the union having contractual relations with International Harvester is a Negro.

In addition to the material previously presented, we would cite just one more concrete case. One large concern in St. Paul manufacturing printing materials and novelties hired two Negro women and placed them with a group of white women who were working on a unit operation. The white women refused to work with them. The management, facing this new experience, appealed to the St. Paul Urban League. The St. Paul Urban League appealed to the bookbinders' union which has a contract and jurisdiction over the women. The union officials called a meeting for the next night. There was much debate at the meeting. A vote was taken, and all but two women voted to work with the colored.

### ***C. Is it true that the Negro is a less efficient worker?***

All white workers do not possess similar qualifications. Some are bright, others dull; some industrious, others lazy. The employer does not expect them to be equal. He scrutinizes their qualities and selects the properly qualified. Likewise all Negroes are neither all highly gifted nor all dull. Yet is there a racial factor which makes the average

Negro applicant inferior to the whites, so that an employer would be justified in showing preference to whites?

Across the nation in the past 20 years there have been numerous studies made about this point. The conclusions do not warrant any discriminatory policy.

This report, however, pivots about Minnesota employers and Minnesota Negroes. Pertinently, then, some Minnesota employers should be consulted, since the employer is an excellent judge of a worker's efficiency; a laboratory test does not always reveal the moral qualities essential to a good employee.

The International Harvester Company of St. Paul has permitted the Commission to quote it that "Its Negro employees have been as efficient as other members of their personnel."

The D. W. Onan and Sons have asserted that the Commission may quote them explicitly that they have found Negroes as efficient as white workers.

The Griggs, Cooper and Company has also stated that the Commission may quote them to the effect that Negro workers are the equal of white workers.

From the questionnaires we present here the observations of some other employers.

A supply company in Duluth wrote: "From this report you will note that we have one Negro employed by our concern and that he is given the same treatment throughout the plant in his many duties as any other employee now working for us. We find his services very satisfactory and certainly would not hesitate to employ more Negroes on exactly the same plane as we employ whites."

A hat manufacturing company in Minneapolis stated: "We have employed Negroes, and found that their reaction to work, etc., is identical to that of whites. Some like to work and some don't. As far as being ambitious and progressive is concerned, they feel they have been employed too long in the capacity of porters, and would prefer to do work that has some future advantages."

"We did have some white boys who resented working alongside of Negroes, and did not hesitate to come up and tell us about it. Since the Negro boys were doing their work without complaint, and were good clean-cut kids, we didn't hesitate to let the white boys go. We do not wish to employ anyone who is race-conscious.

"In so far as honesty is concerned, given the same opportunities, we believe that race or color doesn't make any difference. We had no trouble with the colored boys; as a matter of fact, they work with rhythm, sing as they work, and make it pleasant for all around."

A milk and ice cream company from Duluth wrote: "All Negro employees have done fine work. Our only reason for not employing more is the Dairy Employees' Union has not as yet accepted them to membership. I think that everything that can be done along this line is fine and real American. Keep up the good work."

One large corporation which will operate after the war sent on to the Commission the opinions of its various supervisors. The assistant to the production superintendent, for example, stated he had never heard any of the crew chiefs or supervisors complain about the work of the Negro employees, and that to his knowledge they are above the average in cleanliness, punctuality and efficiency on their assigned jobs.

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It may be helpful to present here sketches of a few individual Negroes who have attracted attention in Minnesota industrial life.

Mr. E. J. Rickman of Duluth, Minnesota, a master machinist at the Walter Butler Ship Yard, is doing a good job. In the plant paper of the April, 1944, edition of "News and Views," Mr. Rickman was cited for having developed at the Riverside Yard a hooking device for picking up and holding propellers. This device is a special type of hook-up to hold the propellers for installation on the ship. This hook-up requires no slings and does not require any drilling of the propellers but holds the propeller plumb in line at

all times while being installed. Mr. Rickman was awarded a fifty dollar bond for this supposedly simple time saving device. It is said that the installation of a propeller by his device can be effected in two hours, which ordinarily takes from eight to 24 hours otherwise.

Mr. James Hughes has 25 years of service to his credit with the Consolidated Printing Ink Company, St. Paul. He makes rollers for all types of printing presses. By virtue of his continued service, initiative, skill and ingenuity he has been upgraded to superintendent of the roller department. On many occasions because of his experience and training he is used as a technical adviser for roller problems in printing plants in the Twin City area.

Mr. Frederic Jones, chief engineer at the United States Thermo Control Company in Minneapolis, has worked approximately 17 years with this company. Acclaim has recently come to him by inventing the automatic mobile refrigerator, making it possible for servicemen to have fresh vegetables, meat and ice cream on their menus in the most remote and obscure places on the battle front. Mr. Jones was elected to the American Society of Refrigeration Engineers and has been called to the Bureau of Standards in Washington to consult with the office of the quartermaster general. Mr. Jones is given credit for being one of the first exploring in the field of sound equipment. It is said that 75 per cent of the theatres in the Northwest use sound equipment developed by him.

\* \* \*

Regarding the returns to the questionnaire, only 116 of the 601 employers interrogated had had experience with Negro labor, so only they expressed opinions on these qualities. Yet 119 thought they were satisfactory and 19 unsatisfactory. Regarding punctuality, only 26 judged them unpunctual whereas 26 said they were punctual. In regard to absenteeism, only 53 plants expressed opinions and 49 related satisfactory experience. One hundred twenty-three found them cooperative and two non-cooperative. One hundred twenty-eight employers found them honest and nine

dishonest. And 10 out of 138 reporting found them satisfactory as far as cleanliness was involved.

The only fair inference is that the Negro applicant should be judged on his personal qualities.

***D. Is it true that customers do not wish to be served by Negroes?***

There are some white people who do not wish to be served by Negroes. Yet the objection is not too widespread.

Daily in the dining cars that cross Minnesota and in three hotels people are served at the table by Negroes. The Negroes handle their food and their liquids. No objection is heard. In the better clubs, much of the serving is done by Negroes.

If people do not object to a Negro handling bread in a dining room, it does not seem they would object to a colored girl's selling them stockings or hats. If people do not object to a Negro delivering mail, it does not seem they would object to a Negro bus driver or a Negro trucker.

The readiness with which white people accept Negroes in the few capacities through which they do have contact with consumers seems to outweigh any theoretical fears on this score.

The initiative might be taken by the public utilities since they are free from competition. Yet many competitive businesses have trade associations, and if a policy were agreed upon, then no one proprietor need feel that his virtue was the occasion for losing trade.

***E. Is it true that a white worker loses respect by permitting a Negro to work at the same job?***

**1. IN THEORY:**

If the white employee subscribes to the American philosophy that all men were created equal and that Lincoln was a hero because he opposed slavery, then the white employee should not lose his respect. On the contrary, if the

white worker and his associates subscribe to some theory of racial superiority such as that of the Nazis, then logically the white worker would lose cast and be humiliated.

## 2. IN REALITY:

Negroes and whites go to the same high schools, the same colleges, and the same state university and play on the same football teams. Working with a Negro later in life should not be a drastic innovation implying disgrace.

Actually the neighbors of the white postal clerk don't judge that the clerk has become a pariah because he worked with Negroes. The neighbors of the hundreds of white war workers who are working alongside of some Negroes do not seem to judge that those workers have become social outcasts.

In the white worker himself, indeed the fear of the loss of prestige from racial contact has a balloon-like quality. If there is a rumor that a Negro worker is to be introduced into a factory, the quality expands rapidly under the heat of conversation. But if the cold piercing prospect of losing a good job becomes acute because of the refusal to work with Negroes, then that quality seems to shrink so extremely that it is easily hidden and carried without burden.

## CHAPTER IV

# Can a Constructive Change Be Effected in Minnesota?

Truly broader than this specific problem are other questions about industrial life in Minnesota in the post-war period. What will happen when tens of thousands of war workers leave the Twin Cities Ordnance Plant, the Northern Pump, the International Harvester, the Northwest Airlines, and many other war industries seeking employment in peace time industries? What will happen when thousands of Minnesotans from the army, navy, and marine corps come back seeking employment? No mortal man can be certain that he holds the answer. Yet every intelligent Minnesotan is anxious that governmental agencies and industry will start planning now to achieve full employment.

Along with these broad questions consideration must be given to this one specific question:

Will the shameful pattern of 1939 be repeated? Again will there be 62 per cent of the Negroes dependent on relief agencies, while only 25 per cent of the white group are in the same situation?

When over 700 Negro soldiers, sailors, and marines return must they again be denied opportunity for employment or upgrading? If there is a fair degree of prosperity after the war, will Minnesota be unable to give substantial employment to the adult Negroes? At the most in the year 1945 they do not number more than 6,000 adults. Is this problem insoluble?

### *1. There is a basis for hope:*

During the war period some employers have hired Negroes. Through the questionnaires some others said they would give the matter sympathetic consideration. Many others have their prejudicial attitudes founded on false reasons. There is good probability if the falsity of those mo-

tives could be demonstrated to them their attitudes might change.

Some employees during the war period have worked with Negroes quietly and constructively. Some of the labor unions have been cooperative. There is a probability that through education the attitude of others might change.

During the past three years the treatment of matters affecting the Negroes in most of the Twin Cities newspapers has been splendid. The same is true of the radio stations.

In the attitude of some employers, some employees' newspapers and other groups there is an evidence of considerable good will in Minnesota and consequently a basis for some hope.

## **2. *Why the record of the past:***

Prejudice either active or as custom has been the cause of discrimination against Negroes in peace times; yet many prejudices can be corrected and dissolved.

The key to the situation in Minnesota is that there has not been a proportionate organized effort to correct this evil. Many groups, religious and civic, have treated one aspect or another. But no serious specific concrete drive has been made on the precise problem of giving the Negroes employment opportunities comparable to those of the whites. This matter has never been approached in the manner of the promotion of bond sales, or the promotion of a new airport. There is latent good will in Minnesota. It needs to be spark-plugged into action.

## **3. *The remedies:***

### **A. *The broad one is educational:***

I. THE RELIGIOUS GROUPS are the most effective educational agencies for furnishing enduring motives. They have been responsible for developing in the white persons a realization that all men have equal rights. They have been successful in developing a general attitude of rever-

(Action is the test Sincerity)

ence for the Negro. Yet their religious instruction needs to be correlated more definitely with the industrial picture, so that both employer and employée will realize that a problem of conscience is involved when a Negro applicant appears.

II. EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND TRADE GROUPS give employers much information and guidance about labor relations and kindred matters. In some measure they carry on some propaganda work. Necessarily they should concern themselves about the introduction of Negroes into peace time industries. Since the employer has a position of social responsibility, he opens and closes the gate to jobs and thence the gate to food, clothing and shelter. In most cases if he takes a firm stand the white employees will work with the Negro. If he refuses the colored applicant a job, the Negro does not work. The employer is the first hurdle the Negro must overcome.

III. OF THE LABOR UNIONS, many through their national bodies pass resolutions in favor of human rights and write letters to Congress protesting against poll taxes and the like. But too often their educational work is limited to resolutions and pronouncements. One excellent type of education is learning by doing. The presence of Negroes within the unions means much more than resolutions. Action is the test of sincerity.

IV. THE SCHOOLS: The civil governments in the interests of society make education mandatory for youth and in some measure regulate the subjects that are taught. In the school systems today there could be greater effort towards correcting these false reasons or motives which are behind prejudice against the Negroes, especially in regard to industrial life. Fittingly in the State Department of Education there could be a definite department that would concern itself with stimulating inter-cultural education. This applies to both urban and rural schools, since in some of the cases the white workers refusing to work beside Negroes had left rural areas of Minnesota only within the past four years. And whereas the newspapers and radio

stations have a creditable record, realistically there is more that they could do.

**B. The precise remedies:**

But in addition to these broad educational approaches, there is need of some specific developments. Except in the few occupations in which he was employed in the ante-bellum days such as railroading, the Negro does not go in and apply for a job as a white man does, with any hope of success. Because of racial prejudice the Negro needs an agent or a representative. The only exclusively interested agent is the Urban League.

I. THE URBAN LEAGUES in the two cities are organizations of white and Negro citizens having full time secretaries and supported by the Community Chests and their almost exclusive concern is that of widening the job opportunities for Negroes. It is largely through them that new jobs are opened for Negroes. Their financial programs need to be expanded, so that more time can be given to making contacts with employers and also examining the qualifications of the persons that are sent to work. The Urban League is an excellent corrective of the tendency on the part of some white groups to do things for Negroes rather than with them.

In the city of Duluth there is an urgent need for an Urban League program but the Negro population is too small to warrant a full-time secretary. The solution would seem to be that the city corporation or the council of social agencies would utilize the services of the Twin Cities leagues on a part-time basis.

II. THE NEGROES: Any group of persons such as the Negroes that year after year has faced repeated denials and widespread unemployment is in danger of becoming cynical, indifferent and neglectful of habits indispensable to industrial life. In Minnesota the leaders of Negro communities through churches, lodges, clubs and community houses have worked heroically to keep alive those habits even when there was no objective hope that they would

*Rockester  
now*

ever be exercised. The leaders of the community must continue those efforts, since punctuality, courtesy and constant application may still be the factors which will spell success in the post-war world.

Minnesota is fortunate in having two Negro papers, the Minneapolis Spokesman and the St. Paul Recorder, which, while ever alert to protest against all injustices to Negroes, have been ready to direct attention to the failings of its own group. The Commission knows of no other minority paper, labor, business, religious or fraternal, which has shown the same courage in that regard.

III. WOMEN'S CLUBS: Consumers are unorganized except for a few cooperative societies; yet if organized, they could exert tremendous changes in regard to the employment of Negroes. The numerous clubs of women are potential consumer organizations. Recently in the Twin Cities a group of 400 Protestant women representing the School of Missions petitioned most department store owners to liberalize their policies to include Negro citizens in sales and clerical positions. If other women's organizations would imitate them, there would be more Negroes employed as clerks.

IV. VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS: It is extremely fitting that veteran organizations should enjoy and exert widespread influence after the war. They have carried the heat and the burden of the battle. They have fought to preserve democracy. After the war over 700 Negro soldiers will return with them. Logically part of the activity of veteran organizations might be directed to the abolishment of job discrimination. The white soldiers fought with Negroes. They should be concerned that citizens work with Negroes.

V. THE STATE OF MINNESOTA: Yet most of these programs will not be set in motion or kept in motion unless there is one person who has no other concern. What is every man's task often becomes no man's task. Even the Urban Leagues need the help of some resourceful person who will present them to employers' organizations

and the like. Since the primary function of the state is to promote justice, the State of Minnesota could create an office of interracial coordinator. Such a man could give his full time to these problems and those of other racial groups. His work should be in the realm of persuasive coordination rather than that of law enforcement. The expenses of supporting such an officer would be much less than the tremendous drain that persistent unemployment among Negroes places upon unemployment compensation resources and other funds. It is good economics for any state to assist any group of citizens to become economically independent.

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The early settlers of Minnesota were pioneers. They developed the land and cleared the forest. Great waves of immigrants came after them and their children in numbers now dominate the state. Some Negroes were here with the early settlers before those waves of immigrants came in. Because of prejudice, Negro children have suffered while the children of immigrants prospered.

The children of both the early settlers and of those immigrants could pioneer now, not in land but in new patterns of job opportunities for the Negroes. To all the citizens of Minnesota, the Commission suggests the legend which was on the great seal of territorial Minnesota:

“I am resolved to see what lies beyond.”

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYERS

DATE:.....

1. NAME OF FIRM.....
2. ADDRESS .....  
Number Street City State
3. NATURE OF BUSINESS.....
4. ARE THERE NOW NEGROES NUMBERED AMONG YOUR  
EMPLOYEES .....
5. PLEASE GIVE NUMBER OF WHITE.....AND NEGRO.....  
EMPLOYEES.
6. IF ANY AGENCY SUCH AS THE URBAN LEAGUE WOULD AS-  
SUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE  
NEGRO APPLICANTS, WOULD YOU WELCOME THE SERVICE OF  
THAT AGENCY: AND THE NAMES OF EMPLOYERS WHO HAVE  
USED THEM SUCCESSFULLY?.....
7. WOULD YOU ANTICIPATE SPECIAL PROBLEMS ATTENDING  
THE ADDING OF NEGROES?.....  
If so, please state.....
8. IN WHAT JOBS ARE BOTH NEGROES AND WHITES EMPLOYED?  
.....
9. COULD NEGROES SECURE JOBS OR RECEIVE UPGRADING IF  
THEY QUALIFIED FOR THE WORK?.....
10. DOES MANAGEMENT PLAN TO OPERATE AFTER THE WAR?.....
11. WITHIN THE LAST 10 YEARS, HAS THERE BEEN ANY CHANGE  
IN YOUR POLICY IN REGARD TO EMPLOYING OR UPGRADING  
NEGROES?.....Please Specify .....

12. IN WHAT JOBS HAVE NEGROES PROVED MOST SATISFACTORY?  
.....

13. IN WHAT JOBS HAVE NEGROES PROVED LEAST SATISFACTORY?  
.....

14. WOULD YOU GIVE EMPLOYMENT TO RETURNING NEGRO SOLDIERS?  
.....

15. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH NEGRO EMPLOYEES? Please check the following:

(a) Readiness of white employees to work with Negroes..... ( )

Reluctance of white employees to work with them..... ( )

(b) Cooperative attitude on the part of foreman..... ( )

Prejudicial attitude on the part of foreman..... ( )

(c) Absenteeism ..... ( )

(d) Union problems ..... ( )

(e) Garnishees ..... ( )

Please insert "U" or "S" in parenthesis. ( )      U—Unsatisfactory  
S—satisfactory

(f) Workers' efficiency ..... ( )

(g) Honesty ..... ( )

(h) Cleanliness ..... ( )

(i) Reaction of customers..... ( )

(j) Punctuality ..... ( )

(k) Cooperativeness ..... ( )

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LABOR UNIONS

DATE:.....

1. EXACT NAME OF LOCAL ORGANIZATION.....
2. LIST NUMBER OF WHITE MEMBERS.....AND NEGRO MEMBERS .....
3. WILL YOUR UNION ACCEPT NEGROES TO FULL MEMBERSHIP? .....
4. DO NEGROES HAVE THE SAME PRIVILEGES AS WHITE APPLICANTS FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING?.....
5. IF NEGROES ARE NOT ADMITTED IN THE UNIONS GIVE THE REASON:  
RACIAL RESTRICTION OF THE: Constitution.....Ritual.....  
Inability to meet initiation fee.....Other.....  
..... please specify
6. WOULD YOU ACCEPT NEGROES IF THE EMPLOYER WOULD PUT THEM TO WORK? .....
7. ARE SEPARATE LOCALS ORGANIZED FOR NEGROES?.....
8. DO NEGROES HOLD OFFICE IN YOUR UNION?.....
9. HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION MADE EFFORT TO GET NEGRO MEMBERSHIP? .....
- With what success?.....  
What are their reasons for not joining?.....  
.....
10. HAS THE CO-OPERATION OF ANY AGENCY SUCH AS THE URBAN LEAGUE EVER BEEN ELICITED, OR SOUGHT IN YOUR PROGRAM OR ORGANIZATION?.....

- DO NEGROES DROP OUT OF UNIONS?.....WHY?.....
12. DO YOU REGARD THE ORGANIZATION OF NEGROES AS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT?.....
13. WHAT IS THE METHOD OF REFERRING MEN TO JOBS?.....  
CHECK: ( )
- Rotation..... Employer's Preference.....
- Business Agent preference.....Other.....  
Please specify.
14. IF AN EMPLOYER IS WILLING TO HIRE A NEGRO WOULD THE UNION READILY GRANT HIM MEMBERSHIP AND ACCESS TO SENIORITY PROVISION?.....
15. IF WHITE EMPLOYEES OBJECTED TO WORKING WITH A NEGRO, WOULD THE UNION OFFICIALS IMMEDIATELY GO TO THE PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT TO DISSUADE THE WHITE WORKERS FROM THAT PROCEDURE?.....
16. DOES YOUR UNION HAVE AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM THAT PERMITS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BETTER RACE RELATIONS BETWEEN WHITE AND NEGRO WORKERS?.....
17. WILL THE UNION TAKE IN RETURNING NEGRO SOLDIERS?.....
18. COULD YOU CITE SOME CONCRETE EXAMPLES, WHICH YOUR LOCAL HAS FOUGHT FOR THE NEGRO'S RIGHT TO WORK?.....  
PLEASE CITE BRIEFLY.....  
.....  
.....
19. STATE ANY OTHER SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS YOU WISH TO MAKE.....  
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