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AN AMERICAN DILEMMA

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The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy

by

GUNNAR MYRDAL

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

RICHARD STERNER

AND

ARNOLD ROSE

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS

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AN AMERICAN DILEMMA

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FOREWORD

I have been asked to write a prefatory note for this book, because of the part played by the Carnegie Corporation in inaugurating the comprehensive study of which it is the outcome. In the public mind, the American foundations are associated with gifts for endowment and buildings to universities, colleges and other cultural and scientific institutions, and to a lesser degree with the financial support of fundamental research. It is true that a great part of the funds for which their Trustees are responsible have been distributed for these purposes, but the foundations do other things not so generally recognized. There are, for example, problems which face the American people, and sometimes mankind in general, which call for studies upon a scale too broad for any single institution or association to undertake, and in recent years certain foundations have devoted a considerable part of their available resources to the financing of such comprehensive studies.

The primary purpose of studies of this character is the collection, analysis and interpretation of existing knowledge; it is true that considerable research may prove necessary to fill the gaps as they reveal themselves, but such research is a secondary rather than a primary part of the undertaking as a whole. Provided the foundation limits itself to its proper function, namely to make the facts available and let them speak for themselves, and does not undertake to instruct the public as to what to do about them, studies of this kind provide a wholly proper and, as experience has shown, sometimes a highly important use of their funds.

As examples, we may take the inquiry and report of the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care (1928-1933), made possible by a group of foundations. Lord Hailey's memorable study, *An African Survey*, in the thirties was financed by the Carnegie Corporation. The significance of such undertakings cannot be measured by their cost. The volumes on the Poor Whites of South Africa, published in 1932, represent a relatively modest enterprise, but they have largely changed the thinking of the South Africans upon a social question of great importance to them.

While the underlying purpose of these studies is to contribute to the general "advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding," to quote the Charter of the Carnegie Corporation, it sometimes happens that a secondary factor, namely the need of the foundation itself for fuller light in the formulation and development of its own program, has been

influential in their inception. This is true in the present case. The wide sweep of Andrew Carnegie's interests included the Negro, he gave generously to Negro institutions, and was closely identified with both Hampton and Tuskegee Institutes. The Corporation which he created maintained that interest, and during the years between its organization in 1911 and the inauguration of the present study, it made grants of more than two and one-half million dollars in direct response thereto.

In 1931, the late Newton D. Baker joined the Corporation Board. He was the son of a Confederate officer, attended the Episcopal Academy in Virginia and the Law School of Washington and Lee University, and spent the greater part of his early years in the Border states of West Virginia and Maryland. His services first as City Solicitor and later as Mayor of Cleveland gave him direct experience with the growing Negro populations in Northern cities, and as Secretary of War he had faced the special problems which the presence of the Negro element in our population inevitably creates in time of national crisis.

Mr. Baker knew so much more than the rest of us on the Board about these questions, and his mind had been so deeply concerned with them, that we readily agreed when he told us that more knowledge and better organized and interrelated knowledge were essential before the Corporation could intelligently distribute its own funds. We agreed with him further in believing that the gathering and digestion of the material might well have a usefulness far beyond our own needs.

The direction of such a comprehensive study of the Negro in America, as the Board thereupon authorized, was a serious question. There was no lack of competent scholars in the United States who were deeply interested in the problem and had already devoted themselves to its study, but the whole question had been for nearly a hundred years so charged with emotion that it appeared wise to seek as the responsible head of the undertaking someone who could approach his task with a fresh mind, uninfluenced by traditional attitudes or by earlier conclusions, and it was therefore decided to "import" a general director—somewhat as the late Charles P. Howland was called across the Atlantic to supervise the repatriation of the Greeks in Asia Minor after the close of the first World War. And since the emotional factor affects the Negroes no less than the whites, the search was limited to countries of high intellectual and scholarly standards but with no background or traditions of imperialism which might lessen the confidence of the Negroes in the United States as to the complete impartiality of the study and the validity of its findings. Under these limitations, the obvious places to look were Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries, and the search ended in the selection of Dr. Gunnar Myrdal, a scholar who despite his youth had already achieved an international reputation as a social economist, a professor in the University of Stockholm, economic

adviser to the Swedish Government, and a member of the Swedish Senate. Dr. Myrdal had a decade earlier spent a year in the United States as a Fellow of the Spelman Fund, and when the invitation was extended to him by the Corporation in 1937, was about to make a second visit at the invitation of Harvard University to deliver the Godkin Lectures.

It was understood that he should be free to appoint and organize a staff of his own selection in the United States and that he should draw upon the experience of other scholars and experts in less formal fashion, but that the report as finally drawn up and presented to the public should represent and portray his own decisions, alike in the selection of data and in the conclusions as to their relative importance. Upon him rested the responsibility, and to him should go the credit for what I for one believe to be a remarkable accomplishment.

The difficulties of Dr. Myrdal's task, which would have been great enough in any event, were much increased by the outbreak of the present war. At a critical point in the development of the enterprise, he returned to Sweden to confer with his colleagues in the Government and the University, and only after nine months was he enabled to return by a long and circuitous route. Meanwhile, defense and war needs here had taken more and more of the time and energies of his collaborators. Despite all these difficulties, delays and complications, his task has now been completed and is presented in these volumes. The Carnegie Corporation is under deep and lasting obligation to Dr. Myrdal. The full degree of this obligation will be appreciated only when the material he has gathered and interpreted becomes generally known.

Though he has achieved an extraordinary mastery of the English language, Dr. Myrdal is not writing in his mother tongue. As a result, there is a freshness and often a piquancy in his choice of words and phrases which is an element of strength. Here and there it may lead to the possibility of misunderstanding of some word or some phrase. This is a risk that has been deliberately taken. It would have been possible for some American to edit the very life out of Dr. Myrdal's manuscript in an effort to avoid all possibility of offending the susceptibilities of his readers, but the result would have been a less vital and a far less valuable document than it is in its present form.

Thanks are also due to the Director's many associates and advisers, and in particular to Professor Samuel A. Stouffer and Dr. Richard Sterner, who during Dr. Myrdal's absence carried the burden of direction and decision, and to Messrs. Shelby M. Harrison, William F. Ogburn and Donald R. Young for their generously given editorial services in connection with the publication of some of the research memoranda prepared by Dr. Myrdal's collaborators.

When the Trustees of the Carnegie Corporation asked for the preparation

of this report in 1937, no one (except possibly Adolf Hitler) could have foreseen that it would be made public at a day when the place of the Negro in our American life would be the subject of greatly heightened interest in the United States, because of the social questions which the war has brought in its train both in our military and in our industrial life. It is a day, furthermore, when the eyes of men of all races the world over are turned upon us to see how the people of the most powerful of the United Nations are dealing *at home* with a major problem of race relations.

It would have been better in some ways if the book could have appeared somewhat earlier, for the process of digestion would then have taken place under more favorable conditions, but, be that as it may, it is fortunate that its appearance is no longer delayed.

I venture to close these introductory paragraphs with a personal word dealing with a matter upon which Dr. Myrdal himself has touched in his preface, but which I feel moved to state in my own words. It is inevitable that many a reader will find in these volumes statements and conclusions to which he strongly objects, be he white or colored, Northerner or Southerner. May I urge upon each such reader that he make every effort to react to these statements intellectually and not emotionally. This advice, I realize, is much more easy to give than to follow, but it is given with a serious purpose. The author is under no delusions of omniscience; as a scholar, he is inured to taking hard knocks as well as giving them, and he will be the first to welcome challenges as to the accuracy of any data he has presented, the soundness of any general conclusions he has reached, and the relative weight assigned by him to any factor or factors in the complicated picture he draws. Criticism and correction on these lines will add greatly to the value of the whole undertaking.

F. P. KEPPEL

December 15, 1942.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Late in the summer of 1937 Frederick P. Keppel, on behalf of the Trustees of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, of which he was then President, invited me to become the director of "a comprehensive study of the Negro in the United States, to be undertaken in a wholly objective and dispassionate way as a social phenomenon."

> Our idea, so far as we have developed it, would be to invite one man to be responsible for the study as a whole, but to place at his disposal the services of a group of associates, Americans, who would be competent to deal as experts with the anthropological, economic, educational and social aspects of the question, including public health and public administration.[a]

After some correspondence and, later, personal conferences in the spring of 1938, when I was in the United States for another purpose, the matter was settled. It was envisaged that the study would require a minimum of two years of intensive work, but that it might take a longer time before the final report could be submitted.

On September 10, 1938, I arrived in America to start the work. Richard Sterner of the Royal Social Board, Stockholm, had been asked to accompany me. On Mr. Keppel's advice, we started out in the beginning of October on a two months' exploratory journey through the Southern states. Jackson Davis, of the General Education Board, who has behind him the experiences of a whole life devoted to improving race relations in the South and is himself a Southerner, kindly agreed to be our guide, and has since then remained a friend and an advisor.

> We traveled by car from Richmond, Virginia, and passed through most of the Southern states. We established contact with a great number of white and Negro leaders in various activities; visited universities, colleges, schools, churches, and various state and community agencies as well as factories and plantations; talked to police officers, teachers, preachers, politicians, journalists, agriculturists, workers, sharecroppers, and in fact, all sorts of people, colored and white . . .
>
> During this trip the State Agents for Negro Education in the various states were our key contacts. They were all extremely generous with their time and interest, and were very helpful.
>
> The trip was an exploratory journey: we went around with our eyes wide open and gathered impressions, but did not feel ready, and in any case, had not the necessary time to collect in an original way data and material for the Study. The experience

[a] Letter from Mr. Frederick P. Keppel, August 12, 1937.

however, was necessary. Without it our later studies will have no concrete points at which to be fixed.[a]

After a period of library work a first memorandum on the planning of the research to be undertaken was submitted to Mr. Keppel on January 28, 1939. It was later mimeographed, and I had, at this stage of the study, the advantage of criticisms and suggestions, in oral discussions and by letter, from a number of scholars and experts, among whom were: W. W. Alexander, Ruth Benedict, Franz Boas, Midian O. Bousfield, Sterling Brown, W. O. Brown, Ralph J. Bunche, Eveline Burns, Horace Cayton, Allison Davis, Jackson Davis, John Dollard, W. E. B. Du Bois, Edwin Embree, Earl Engle, Clark Foreman, E. Franklin Frazier, Abram L. Harris, Melville J. Herskovits, Charles S. Johnson, Guion G. Johnson, Guy B. Johnson, Eugene Kinckle Jones, Thomas Jesse Jones, Otto Klineberg, Ralph Linton, Alain Locke, Frank Lorimer, George Lundberg, Frank Notestein, Howard W. Odum, Frederick Osborn, Robert E. Park, Hortense Powdermaker, Arthur Raper, Ira DeA. Reid, E. B. Reuter, Sterling Spero, Dorothy Swaine Thomas, W. I. Thomas, Charles H. Thompson, Edward L. Thorndike, Rupert B. Vance, Jacob Viner, Walter White, Doxey A. Wilkerson, Faith Williams, Louis Wirth, L. Hollingsworth Wood, Thomas J. Woofter, Jr., Donald R. Young.

During the further planning of the study in terms of specific research projects and collaborators, Donald R. Young of the Social Science Research Council, Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University, and Thomas J. Woofter, Jr., then of the Works Progress Administration, were relied upon heavily for advice. Mr. Young, in particular, during this entire stage of the study, was continuously consulted not only on all major questions but on many smaller concerns as they arose from day to day, and he placed at my disposal his great familiarity with the field of study as well as with available academic personnel. Upon the basis of the reactions I had received, I reworked my plans and gradually gave them a more definite form in terms of feasible approaches and the manner of actually handling the problems. A conference was held at Asbury Park, New Jersey, from April 23 to April 28 inclusive, at which were present: Ralph J. Bunche, Charles S. Johnson, Guy B. Johnson, Richard Sterner, Dorothy S. Thomas, Thomas J. Woofter, Jr., and Donald R. Young. As a result of the conference I submitted to Mr. Keppel, in a letter of April 28, 1939, a more definite plan for the next stage of the study. The general terms of reference were defined in the following way:

> The study, thus conceived, should aim at determining the social, political, educational, and economic status of the Negro in the United States as well as defining opinions held by different groups of Negroes and whites as to his "right" status. It must, further, be concerned with both recent changes and current trends with respect

[a] Memorandum to Mr. Keppel, January 28, 1939.

to the Negro's position in American society. Attention must also be given to the total American picture with particular emphasis on relations between the two races. Finally, it must consider what changes are being or can be induced by education, legislation, interracial efforts, concerted action by Negro groups, etc.

Mr. Keppel, who from the start had given me the benefit of his most personal interest and advice, and who had followed the gradual development of the approach, gave his approval to the practical plans. Needed were a working staff, consisting of experts who could devote their whole time to the project, and, in addition, the collaboration of other experts to prepare research memoranda on special subjects. I was most fortunate in securing the cooperation needed. The following staff members were engaged, besides Richard Sterner: Ralph J. Bunche, Guy B. Johnson, Paul H. Norgren, Dorothy S. Thomas, and Doxey A. Wilkerson. Norgren did not join the staff until November 1, 1939. Mrs. Thomas left the study on January 15, 1940, for another engagement. Outside the staff, the following persons undertook various research tasks, namely: M. F. Ashley-Montagu, Margaret Brenman, Sterling Brown, Barbara Burks, Allison Davis, J. G. St. Clair Drake, Harold F. Dorn, G. James Fleming, Lyonel C. Florant, E. Franklin Frazier, Herbert Goldhamer, Melville J. Herskovits, T. Arnold Hill, Eugene L. Horowitz, Eleanor C. Isbell, Charles S. Johnson, Guion G. Johnson, Dudley Kirk, Louise K. Kiser, Otto Klineberg, Ruth Landes, Gunnar Lange, T. C. McCormick, Benjamin Malzberg, Gladys Palmer, Arthur Raper, Ira DeA. Reid, Edward Shils, Bernhard J. Stern, Louis Wirth, T. J. Woofter, Jr. There were the following assistants to staff members and outside collaborators, who worked for various periods: Berta Asch, Lloyd H. Bailer, Louis Boone, Frieda Brim, Vincent Brown, William B. Bryant, Elwood C. Chisolm, Walter Chivers, Kenneth Clark, Belle Cooper, Lenore Epstein, Edmonia Grant, Louis O. Harper, James Healy, Mary C. Ingham, James E. Jackson, Jr., Wilhelmina Jackson, Anne De B. Johnson, Louis W. Jones, Alan D. Kandel, Simon Marcson, Felix E. Moore, Jr., Rose K. Nelson, Herbert R. Northrup, Edward N. Palmer, Lemuel A. Penn, Glaucia B. Roberts, Arnold M. Rose, George C. Stoney, Joseph Taylor, Benjamin Tepping, Harry J. Walker, Richard B. Whitten, Milton Woll, Rowena Wyant, and Walter Wynne. Mrs. Rowena Hadsell Saeger was the executive secretary of the study throughout this stage.

During the summer of 1939 I prepared a detailed plan for the study.[a] The work on the various research memoranda started gradually during the summer and fall of 1939, and I remained in close touch with all my collaborators. As I wanted to be able to corroborate, as far as possible,

[a] "Memorandum on the Disposition of the Study on the American Negro."

information in the literary sources and in the research memoranda being prepared for the study, by looking at interracial relations in various parts

of the country with my own eyes, I continued to reserve as much of my time as possible for work in the field.

After the Germans had invaded Denmark and Norway in April, 1940, Mr. Keppel and I agreed that my duty was to go home to Sweden. Samuel A. Stouffer—who, meanwhile, had undertaken the responsibilities on the staff which Mrs. Thomas had left—agreed to take upon himself the burden of directing the project in my absence. Without reserve, he unselfishly devoted all his talents and all his energy to the task of bringing the research to completion by September 1, 1940, and he succeeded. I shall always remain in deep gratitude to Stouffer for what he did during those months and for the moral support he thereafter has unfailingly given me and the project.

Because of the delay in the completion of the work—and, indeed, the uncertainty as to whether I would ever be able to return to the task of writing a final report—the Corporation decided, in the fall of 1940, to facilitate the publication of some of the memoranda. A Committee to advise in the selection of those contributions most nearly ready for publication was appointed, consisting of Donald R. Young, Chairman, Shelby M. Harrison and William F. Ogburn. Samuel A. Stouffer served as Secretary to this committee. The following volumes have been published:

Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941.

Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943.

Richard Sterner, *The Negro's Share.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943.

A fourth volume is to be published later:

Otto Klineberg, editor, *Characteristics of the American Negro.* New York: Harper & Brothers.

This volume contains the following research memoranda, the manuscripts of which will be deposited in the Schomburg Collection of the New York Public Library.

Otto Klineberg, "Tests of Negro Intelligence," "Experimental Studies of Negro Personality."

Benjamin Malzberg, "Mental Disease among American Negroes: A Statistical Analysis."

Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer, "The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation."

Eugene L. Horowitz, " 'Race' Attitudes."

Guy Johnson, "The Stereotypes of the American Negro."

The following unpublished manuscripts, prepared for the study—after some provision has been made to preserve the authors' rights—are being

deposited in the Schomburg Collection of the New York Public Library where they will be available for scientific reference:[a]

M. F. Ashley-Montagu, "Origin, Composition and Physical Characteristics of the American Negro Population."
Margaret Brenman, "Personality Traits of Urban Negro Girls."
Sterling Brown, "The Negro in American Culture" (fragment).
Ralph Bunche, "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," "The Programs, Ideologies, Tactics, and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," "The Political Status of the Negro."
Barbara Burks, "The Present Status of the Nature-Nurture Problem as It Relates to Intelligence."
Allison Davis, "Negro Churches and Associations in the Lower South."
Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro."
J. G. St. Clair Drake, "Negro Churches and Associations in Chicago."
G. James Fleming, "The Negro Press."
Lyonel C. Florant, "Critique of the Census of the United States," "Negro Migration—1860-1940" (revised edition, 1942, of the Stouffer-Florant manuscript).
E. Franklin Frazier, "Recreation and Amusement among American Negroes," "Stories of Experiences with Whites."
T. Arnold Hill, "Digest and Analysis of Questionnaires Submitted by Urban League Secretaries for 'The Negro in America.' Churches and Lodges, Negro Business and Businessmen, Racial Attitudes, Recreation and Leisure Time."
E. C. Isbell, "The Negro Family in America," "Statistics of Population Growth and Composition."
Guion G. Johnson, "A History of Racial Ideologies in the United States with Reference to the Negro."
Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, "The Church and the Race Problem in the United States."
Guy B. Johnson and Louise K. Kiser, "The Negro and Crime."
Dudley Kirk, "The Fertility of the Negro."
Ruth Landes, "The Ethos of the Negro in the New World."
Gunnar Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," "The Agricultural Adjustment Program and the Negro" (fragment).
T. C. McCormick, "The Negro in Agriculture."
Benjamin Malzberg, "A Study of Delusions among Negroes with Mental Diseases."
Paul Norgren, "Negro Labor and Its Problems."

[a] In addition to the unpublished research memoranda listed, the following material is also deposited in the Schomburg Collection:

Memorandum to Mr. Keppel, January 28, 1939 (containing the first plan of the Study)
Memorandum to the Staff, "Disposition of the Study on the American Negro," September 10, 1939 (containing the definitive research program)
Memorandum to the Staff, "Main Viewpoints and Emphases of the Study," February 8, 1940
Memorandum to the Staff, "Preparation of Manuscripts," February 8, 1940
Memorandum to the Staff, "Bibliographies," October 31, 1939

E. Nelson Palmer, "A Note on the Development of Negro Lodges in the United States."
Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures."
Ira DeA. Reid, "The Negro in the American Economic System."
Edward A. Shils, "The Bases of Social Stratification in Negro Society."
Bernhard J. Stern, "The Negro in Adult Education."
Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyonel C. Florant, "Negro Population and Negro Population Movements: 1860-1940, in Relation to Social and Economic Factors."
Doxey Wilkerson, "The Negro in American Education" (fragment).
T. J. Woofter, Jr., "The Negro and Agricultural Policy."

The Advisory Committee appointed by the Corporation has gone through all the published and unpublished memoranda listed above. Coming to the material from outside and viewing it with fresh eyes, the Committee felt justified in giving the following appraisal:

> The Committee found that every manuscript submitted offered significant contributions. In serving the purposes of the Study so well, the contributors necessarily subordinated their individual publication interests to the interests of the central project. This is evidence of unselfish team-play which deserves respect and commendation.[a]

To this high appreciation, which needs no amplification on my part, I want to add some words of personal gratitude to my colleagues in the first stage of the study. The collaboration in the study—which embraced, in friendship and concerted efforts, white and Negro men and women of different specialties, ages, and previous accomplishments—gave more than is contained in the 15,000 typewritten pages of manuscript. Even about the specific problems of race relations, which we were studying together, I learned much more from our informal conferences than I can ever duly account for in this book.

To Mrs. Rowena Hadsell Saeger I remain grateful for her great devotion and, specifically, for the efficient manner in which she relieved me of much office work in directing the study, thereby allowing me to use much of the year for continuing my field trips.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, The Urban League, The Commission for Interracial Cooperation, private and public research institutions, several branches of the federal government, and state and municipal authorities in different parts of the country, and, in addition, a great number of individuals, have aided me and my collaborators to an extent which makes any detailed acknowledgment difficult.

The first stage of the study closed with the completion of the several research memoranda which are published or, in unpublished form, are made available for students of the Negro problem.

[a] Foreword by the Committee to: Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), p. x.

The second stage of the study began when I returned to America on March 6, 1941. In writing the present book, which has been produced during this second stage, I have utilized the unpublished manuscripts, prepared for the study during its first stage, in the same manner as I have used the printed literature. I have, therefore, had frequent occasion to cite them. As a glance at the footnotes will reveal, the *unpublished* manuscripts on which I have relied most heavily are those by Bunche, Norgren, Raper, Stouffer and Florant, and, in the next place, those of Dorn, Drake, Kirk and Lange. I have, of course, depended upon the printed literature to an even greater extent than upon the specially prepared monographs. Much of the library work was done during the summer of 1941 in the excellent Baker Library of Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. Use was also made of the Columbia University Library, the New York Public Library, the Princeton University Library and the Russell Sage Foundation's library. I have also drawn upon my personal observations of conditions and attitudes in various parts of the country and upon the observations of Sterner and Rose. Most of the book was written in Princeton, New Jersey.

In September, 1941, I was joined by Richard Sterner and Arnold Rose, whose names rightly appear on the title page as assistants. Richard Sterner has been my associate in this work from the first day. Together we explored the Negro problem in America, which was so new and foreign to us both, and together we discussed the task to be accomplished. Sterner assisted in an essential way in outlining the program for the first stage of the work. Besides the special investigation of the Negro's standard of living, which he later undertook as one of the staff members and which resulted in his now published book, *The Negro's Share: In Income, Consumption, Housing and Public Assistance,* he kept, upon my request, a general interest and a general responsibility for the wider economic problems of the Negro in America. For the present book he has prepared manuscripts in draft form for nine chapters in Part IV on economic problems. Appendix 6, "Pre-War Conditions of the Negro Wage Earner in Selected Industries and Occupations," is written by him. He has carefully gone through the several succeeding drafts of other parts of the book and has given me criticism which has not only referred to details but often to fundamental views and arrangement. For the final shape of Part V on the political problems, for instance, his criticism has been of greatest importance since it has led me to stress, much more than I had succeeded in doing in a first draft, the elements of actual and pending change in the political scene of the South. His critique of this and other parts has had a specific functional value for the writing of this book, as he, being a stranger like myself and having the same cultural background, was inside the points of view which have been applied throughout the work. I should also mention that when state-

ments in this book are made in a conjectural form and based on personal observations, these observations are often made by Sterner or by both Sterner and myself.

Arnold Rose has prepared drafts for Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 on problems connected with race and population, Chapter 22 on the present political scene, Chapter 29 on the patterns of discrimination, Chapters 41 and 42 on church and education, and Appendices 4, 7 and 8. He has also prepared drafts for many sections of other chapters. For still other chapters he has assembled data and filled in gaps. For the final formulation of the main methodological analysis in Appendix 2 on facts and values in social science, his contribution has been of great importance. He has read the manuscripts of all parts and edited them. His editing work has included much more than polishing the English. It has, rather, been a most conscientious checking of basic data as well as of inferences, and a critical consideration of arrangement, viewpoints and conclusions. Both his criticisms and suggestions have, with few exceptions, led to changes in the final manuscript, and many of these changes are important. His wide knowledge of the social science literature and his sound judgment on methodological problems have, in this critical work, been significant. When I delivered the manuscript and departed from America, there was still a great deal of checking to be done and gaps to be filled in for which he was responsible, as well as for the proof reading. He also had to write Chapters 43 and 44, on the Negro community and culture, and Sections 1 and 4 of Appendix 10. For the present form of these two chapters and the appendix, Rose is himself responsible.

About the contributions of both Sterner and Rose I want to add the following. The size of the book, and still more the scope of the problems involved, will make it understandable even to the reader who is not himself familiar with many of the specific fields, that the work done has been immense. We have had to dig deep into primary sources in many fields of social science and a major part of this digging has been done by them. The collaboration, which stretched ruthlessly over evenings and weekends, has been a sheer pleasure to me, as I have felt more than I have ever experienced before the stimulation of an ideal cooperation where we not only added together the results of our labor but imagined that we in our concerted endeavors sometimes reached higher than an arithmetical sum. A similar outlook on the methodological problems of social science and a mutually shared scientific curiosity in seeing our structure of hypothesis, data, and conclusion rise, have given to our collaboration a spirit of intellectual exploration which I will not soon forget.

To Miss Ruth Moulik, who has been our secretary and who will continue to stay with the book until it has come through the press, we are grateful for her skill and great devotion. Besides the responsibility for

the office and, particularly, for the typing and checking of the manuscript, she has helped us by statistical computations, by digging up sources in the library, by checking statistical data and quotations, and in many other ways.

In the last, hectic stage of the study, from September through December, 1942, Caroline Baer Rose was a member of the little group of three who had to carry on after Sterner and I departed for Sweden. She worked unselfishly through all hours, including evenings and weekends, and brought to the study her frank personality and broad background. She assisted Mr. Rose in checking data and filling in gaps and was especially helpful in doing these things on the economics part. She also wrote the first draft of Chapter 44, Section 4, on "Recreation."

Before making my final revision of the manuscript I have had the invaluable help of having it read critically and carefully by two friends who are at the same time outstanding social scientists with a great familiarity with the problems treated in the book: Professors E. Franklin Frazier of Howard University and Louis Wirth of the University of Chicago. They have not spared any effort, and as a result I have had their criticisms and suggestions often from page to page, referring to everything from the syntax and the arrangement of chapters and appendices to fundamental problems of approach and to conclusions. In my revision nearly every point raised by them has caused omissions, additions, rearrangements, clarifications or other alterations. Paul H. Norgren has read Appendix 6 and a first draft of Chapter 19. Gunnar Lange has read Chapters 10 to 12 and a first draft of Chapter 18. The final manuscript has benefited by their criticism. Alva Myrdal has read various chapters; her criticism of Appendix 1 and Chapter 41 on Negro education has been particularly valuable.

The relation of the study to the Carnegie Corporation of New York must be accounted for. The study has an unusual character as it was not initiated by any individual scholar or academic institution but sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation itself and, in a sense, carried out within the Corporation. The general plan that a number of American experts should be asked to collaborate by preparing research monographs while the director himself should write a final report, was also developed by the Corporation. All decisions on practical and financial matters have been taken on the responsibility of the Corporation. The Trustees of the Corporation have been most generous and prompt in appropriating necessary funds for the study.

Mr. Keppel has had to keep in closer touch with the progress of the work than is usual when a study is sponsored by an outside institution. No conventional words of appreciation can express what his unfailing personal interest in the project has meant in upholding the courage of the present author throughout his tribulations. Charles Dollard, the Assistant to the President of the Carnegie Corporation, has followed the work in all its

practical details and has, with Keppel, contributed most in terms of moral support and advice. Both Keppel and Dollard have read the manuscript and given me their criticisms and suggestions, which have been very valuable.

For the content of the book, I am solely responsible.

The scope and main direction of this book will be explained in the "Introduction." There are, however, some few notes of a more personal character for which the proper place is at the close of this preface. To invite a foreigner—someone "in a nonimperialistic country with no background of domination of one race over another" who, presumably "would approach the situation with an entirely fresh mind"; I am here again quoting Keppel's first letter, August 12, 1937—to review the most serious race problem in the country, is an idea singularly American. In any other country such a proposal would have been defeated by afterthoughts of practical and political expediency. Many will deem it a foolish idea. But more fundamentally it is a new demonstration, in a minor matter, of American moralism, rationalism, and optimism—and a demonstration of America's unfailing conviction of its basic soundness and strength. Early in the course of this work, when I had found out the seriousness of the task before me, I proposed to Mr. Keppel that a committee be formed of a Southern white, a Northern white, and a Negro. In such a group we could have allowed for political considerations and worked out a basis for practical understanding, to which each one could have subscribed, since the representation of different viewpoints would have accounted for the intellectual compromises involved. This was, however, not at all what he wanted. He told me that everyone would generously help and advise me—and there he proved right—but that I would have to find out for myself, and upon my own responsibility, the truth in the matter without any side glances as to what was politically desirable and expedient.

This book is the result. Let it be added at once that the author does not have any pretension of having produced the definitive statement of the Negro problem in America. The problem is too big and too complicated, and also things are rapidly changing while one writes. Time has, as always, been a limitation. When I now leave the work, I know that many chapters could be improved. But apart from such shortcomings, there is a more basic relativism which the reader should keep in mind. *Things look different, depending upon "where you stand"* as the American expression runs. The author fully realizes, and hopes the reader will remember, that he has never been subject to the strains involved in living in a black-white society and never has had to become adjusted to such a situation—and that this condition was the very reason why he was asked to undertake the work. He was requested to see things as a stranger. Indeed, he was asked to be

both the subject and the object of a cultural experiment in the field of social science.

As he, in this problem—to which he previously had given hardly a thought—was nearly stripped of all the familiar and conventional moorings of viewpoints and valuations, he had to construct for himself a system of coordinates. He found this in the American ideals of equality and liberty. Being a stranger to the problem, he has had perhaps a greater awareness of the extent to which human valuations everywhere enter into our scientific discussion of the Negro problem. In two appendices on valuations, beliefs, and facts he has attempted to clear the methodological ground for a scientific approach which keeps the valuations explicit and hinders them from going underground in the form of biases distorting the facts. And he has followed the rule all through the book of inserting the terms "the American Creed" and "value premise" and of specifying those value premises and printing them in italics. The reader will be less irritated by their repetition if he understands that these terms are placed as signs of warning to the reader and to the writer alike: the search for scientific knowledge and the drawing of practical conclusions are dependent upon valuations as well as upon facts.

When, in this way, the data on the American Negro problem are marshaled under the high ideals of the American Creed, the fact must be faced that the result is rather dark. Indeed, as will be pointed out in the first chapter, the Negro problem in America represents a moral lag in the development of the nation and a study of it must record nearly everything which is bad and wrong in America. The reading of this book must be somewhat of an ordeal to the good citizen. I do not know if it can be offered as a consolation that the writing of the book, for much the same reason, has been an ordeal to the author who loves and admires America next to his own country—and does it even more sincerely after having had to become an expert on American imperfections. To a scholar a work is always something of a fate. His personal controls are diminutive; he is in the hands of the facts, of his professional standards, and of the fundamental approach chosen.

If this book gives a more complete record than is up to now available of American shortcomings in this field, I hope, however, that it also accounts more completely for the mutability in relations, the hope for great improvement in the near future and, particularly, the dominant role of ideals in the social dynamics of America. When looking back over the long manuscript, one main conclusion—which should be stressed here since it cannot be reiterated through the whole book—is this: that *not since Reconstruction has there been more reason to anticipate fundamental changes in American race relations, changes which will involve a development toward the American ideals.*

To the friends, colleagues, experts, and administrators of both races who have been helpful to me in the course of this study, I want to say plainly that in a job of this kind the attempt to be completely honest involves the author in the risk of losing friends. If this does not happen in the present instance, I shall ascribe this to the singular American magnanimity which is demonstrated in the very initiative of calling for this study.

GUNNAR MYRDAL

Stockholm, October, 1942
University of Stockholm

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CONTENTS

Foreword, by Frederick P. Keppel v

Author's Preface ix

Introduction xli

1. The Negro Problem as a Moral Issue
2. Valuations and Beliefs
3. A White Man's Problem
4. Not an Isolated Problem
5. Some Further Notes on the Scope and Direction of This Study
6. A Warning to the Reader

PART I. THE APPROACH

Chapter 1. *American Ideals and the American Conscience* 3

1. Unity of Ideals and Diversity of Culture
2. American Nationalism
3. Some Historical Reflections
4. The Roots of the American Creed in the Philosophy of Enlightenment
5. The Roots in Christianity
6. The Roots in English Law
7. American Conservatism
8. The American Conception of Law and Order
9. Natural Law and American Puritanism
10. The Faltering Judicial Order
11. Intellectual Defeatism
12. "Lip-Service"
13. Value Premises in This Study

Chapter 2. *Encountering the Negro Problem* 26

1. On the Minds of the Whites
2. To the Negroes Themselves
3. Explaining the Problem Away
4. Explorations in Escape
5. The Etiquette of Discussion
6. The Convenience of Ignorance
7. Negro and White Voices
8. The North and the South

Chapter 3. *Facets of the Negro Problem* 50

1. American Minority Problems
2. The Anti-Amalgamation Doctrine
3. The White Man's Theory of Color Caste
4. The "Rank Order of Discriminations"
5. Relationships between Lower Class Groups
6. The Manifoldness and the Unity of the Negro Problem
7. The Theory of the Vicious Circle
8. A Theory of Democracy

PART II. RACE

Chapter 4. *Racial Beliefs* 83

1. Biology and Moral Equalitarianism
2. The Ideological Clash in America
3. The Ideological Compromise
4. Reflections in Science
5. The Position of the Negro Writers
6. The Racial Beliefs of the Unsophisticated
7. Beliefs with a Purpose
8. Specific Rationalization Needs
9. Rectifying Beliefs
10. The Study of Beliefs

Chapter 5. *Race and Ancestry* 113

1. The American Definition of "Negro"
2. African Ancestry
3. Changes in Physical Appearance
4. Early Miscegenation
5. *Ante-Bellum* Miscegenation
6. Miscegenation in Recent Times
7. "Passing"
8. Social and Biological Selection
9. Present and Future Genetic Composition Trends

Chapter 6. *Racial Characteristics* 137

1. Physical Traits
2. Biological Susceptibility to Disease
3. Psychic Traits
4. Frontiers of Constructive Research

PART III. POPULATION AND MIGRATION

Chapter 7. *Population* 157

1. The Growth of the Negro Population
2. Births and Deaths
3. Summary
4. Ends and Means of Population Policy
5. Controlling the Death Rate

6. The Case for Controlling the Negro Birth Rate
7. Birth Control Facilities for Negroes

Chapter 8. *Migration* 182

1. Overview
2. A Closer View
3. The Great Migration to the Urban North
4. Continued Northward Migration
5. The Future of Negro Migration

PART IV. ECONOMICS

Chapter 9. *Economic Inequality* 205

1. Negro Poverty
2. Our Main Hypothesis: The Vicious Circle
3. The Value Premises
4. The Conflict of Valuations

Chapter 10. *The Tradition of Slavery* 220

1. Economic Exploitation
2. Slavery and Caste
3. The Land Problem
4. The Tenancy Problem

Chapter 11. *The Southern Plantation Economy and the Negro Farmer* 230

1. Southern Agriculture as a Problem
2. Overpopulation and Soil Erosion
3. Tenancy, Credit and Cotton
4. The Boll Weevil
5. Main Agricultural Classes
6. The Negro Landowner
7. Historical Reasons for the Relative Lack of Negro Farm Owners
8. Tenants and Wage Laborers
9. The Plantation Tenant

Chapter 12. *New Blows to Southern Agriculture During the 'Thirties: Trends and Policies* 251

1. Agricultural Trends during the 'Thirties
2. The Disappearing Sharecropper
3. The Role of the A.A.A. in Regard to Cotton
4. A.A.A. and the Negro
5. The Local Administration of the A.A.A.
6. Mechanization
7. Labor Organizations
8. The Dilemma of Agricultural Policy
9. Economic Evaluation of the A.A.A.
10. Social Evaluation of the A.A.A.
11. Constructive Measures
12. Farm Security Programs

Chapter 13. *Seeking Jobs Outside Agriculture* 279
1. Perspective on the Urbanization of the Negro People
2. In the South
3. A Closer View
4. Southern Trends during the 'Thirties
5. In the North
6. A Closer View on Northern Trends
7. The Employment Hazards of Unskilled Work
8. The Size of the Negro Labor Force and Negro Employment
9. Negro and White Unemployment

Chapter 14. *The Negro in Business, the Professions, Public Service and Other White Collar Occupations* 304
1. Overview
2. The Negro in Business
3. Negro Finance
4. The Negro Teacher
5. The Negro Minister
6. The Negro in Medical Professions
7. Other Negro Professionals
8. Negro Officials and White Collar Workers in Public Service
9. Negro Professionals of the Stage, Screen and Orchestra
10. Note on Shady Occupations

Chapter 15. *The Negro in the Public Economy* 333
1. The Public Budget
2. Discrimination in Public Service
3. Education
4. Public Health
5. Recreational Facilities
6. Public Housing Policies
7. Social Security and Public Assistance
8. Specialized Social Welfare Programs during the Period After 1935
9. The Social Security Program
10. Assistance to Special Groups
11. Work Relief
12. Assistance to Youth
13. General Relief and Assistance in Kind

Chapter 16. *Income, Consumption and Housing* 364
1. Family Income
2. Income and Family Size
3. The Family Budget
4. Budget Items
5. Food Consumption
6. Housing Conditions

Chapter 17. *The Mechanics of Economic Discrimination as a Practical Problem* 380
1. The Practical Problem
2. The Ignorance and Lack of Concern of Northern Whites

3. Migration Policy
4. The Regular Industrial Labor Market in the North
5. The Problem of Vocational Training
6. The Self-Perpetuating Color Bar
7. A Position of "Indifferent Equilibrium"
8. In the South

Chapter 18. *Pre-War Labor Market Controls and Their Consequences for the Negro* 397

1. The Wages and Hours Law and the Dilemma of the Marginal Worker
2. Other Economic Policies
3. Labor Unions and the Negro
4. A Weak Movement Getting Strong Powers

Chapter 19. *The War Boom—and Thereafter* 409

1. The Negro Wage Earner and the War Boom
2. A Closer View
3. Government Policy in Regard to the Negro in War Production
4. The Negro in the Armed Forces
5. . . . And Afterwards?

PART V. POLITICS

Chapter 20. *Underlying Factors* 429

1. The Negro *in* American Politics and *as* a Political Issue
2. The Wave of Democracy and the Need for Bureaucracy
3. The North and the South
4. The Southern Defense Ideology
5. The Reconstruction Amendments
6. Memories of Reconstruction
7. The Tradition of Illegality

Chapter 21. *Southern Conservatism and Liberalism* 452

1. The "Solid South"
2. Southern Conservatism
3. Is the South Fascist?
4. The Changing South
5. Southern Liberalism

Chapter 22. *Political Practices Today* 474

1. The Southern Political Scene
2. Southern Techniques for Disfranchising the Negroes
3. The Negro Vote in the South
4. The Negro in Northern Politics
5. What the Negro Gets Out of Politics

Chapter 23. *Trends and Possibilities* 505

1. The Negro's Political Bargaining Power
2. The Negro's Party Allegiance

3. Negro Suffrage in the South as an Issue
4. An Unstable Situation
5. The Stake of the North
6. Practical Conclusions

PART VI. JUSTICE

Chapter 24. *Inequality of Justice* 523

1. Democracy and Justice
2. Relative Equality in the North
3. The Southern Heritage

Chapter 25. *The Police and Other Public Contacts* 535

1. Local Petty Officials
2. The Southern Policeman
3. The Policeman in the Negro Neighborhood
4. Trends and Outlook
5. Another Type of Public Contact

Chapter 26. *Courts, Sentences and Prisons* 547

1. The Southern Courts
2. Discrimination in Court
3. Sentences and Prisons
4. Trends and Outlook

Chapter 27. *Violence and Intimidation* 558

1. The Pattern of Violence
2. Lynching
3. The Psychopathology of Lynching
4. Trends and Outlook
5. Riots

PART VII. SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Chapter 28. *The Basis of Social Inequality* 573

1. The Value Premise
2. The One-Sidedness of the System of Segregation
3. The Beginning in Slavery
4. The Jim Crow Laws
5. Beliefs Supporting Social Inequality
6. The Popular Theory of "No Social Equality"
7. Critical Evaluation of the "No Social Equality" Theory
8. Attitudes among Different Classes of Whites in the South
9. Social Segregation and Discrimination in the North

Chapter 29. *Patterns of Social Segregation and Discrimination* 605

1. Facts and Beliefs Regarding Segregation and Discrimination
2. Segregation and Discrimination in Interpersonal Relations
3. Housing Segregation

4. Sanctions for Residential Segregation
5. The General Character of Institutional Segregation
6. Segregation in Specific Types of Institutions

Chapter 30. *Effects of Social Inequality* 640

1. The Incidence of Social Inequality
2. Increasing Isolation
3. Interracial Contacts
4. The Factor of Ignorance
5. Present Dynamics

PART VIII. SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Chapter 31. *Caste and Class* 667

1. The Concepts "Caste" and "Class"
2. The "Meaning" of the Concepts "Caste" and "Class"
3. The Caste Struggle
4. Crossing the Caste Line

Chapter 32. *The Negro Class Structure* 689

1. The Negro Class Order in the American Caste System
2. Caste Determines Class
3. Color and Class
4. The Classes in the Negro Community

PART IX. LEADERSHIP AND CONCERTED ACTION

Chapter 33. *The American Pattern of Individual Leadership and Mass Passivity* 709

1. "Intelligent Leadership"
2. "Community Leaders"
3. Mass Passivity
4. The Patterns Exemplified in Politics and throughout the American Social Structure

Chapter 34. *Accommodating Leadership* 720

1. Leadership and Caste
2. The Interests of Whites and Negroes with Respect to Negro Leadership
3. In the North and on the National Scene
4. The "Glass Plate"
5. Accommodating Leadership and Class
6. Several Qualifications
7. Accommodating Leaders in the North
8. The Glamour Personalities

Chapter 35. *The Negro Protest* 736

1. The Slave Revolts

2. The Negro Abolitionists and Reconstruction Politicians
3. The Tuskegee Compromise
4. The Spirit of Niagara and Harper's Ferry
5. The Protest Is Still Rising
6. The Shock of the First World War and the Post-War Crisis
7. The Garvey Movement
8. Post-War Radicalism among Negro Intellectuals
9. Negro History and Culture
10. The Great Depression and the Second World War

Chapter 36. *The Protest Motive and Negro Personality* 757

1. A Mental Reservation
2. The Struggle Against Defeatism
3. The Struggle for Balance
4. Negro Sensitiveness
5. Negro Aggression
6. Upper Class Reactions
7. The "Function" of Racial Solidarity

Chapter 37. *Compromise Leadership* 768

1. The Daily Compromise
2. The Vulnerability of the Negro Leader
3. Impersonal Motives
4. The Protest Motive
5. The Double Role
6. Negro Leadership Techniques
7. Moral Consequences
8. Leadership Rivalry
9. Qualifications
10. In Southern Cities
11. In the North
12. On the National Scene

Chapter 38. *Negro Popular Theories* 781

1. Instability
2. Negro Provincialism
3. The Thinking on the Negro Problem
4. Courting the "Best People Among the Whites"
5. The Doctrine of Labor Solidarity
6. Some Critical Observations
7. The Pragmatic "Truth" of the Labor Solidarity Doctrine
8. "The Advantages of the Disadvantages"
9. Condoning Segregation
10. Boosting Negro Business
11. Criticism of Negro Business Chauvinism
12. "Back to Africa"
13. Miscellaneous Ideologies

Chapter 39. *Negro Improvement and Protest Organizations* 810

1. A General American Pattern

2. Nationalist Movements
3. Business and Professional Organizations
4. The National Negro Congress Movement
5. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
6. The N.A.A.C.P. Branches
7. The N.A.A.C.P. National Office
8. The Strategy of the N.A.A.C.P.
9. Critique of the N.A.A.C.P.
10. The Urban League
11. The Commission on Interracial Cooperation
12. The Negro Organizations during the War
13. Negro Strategy

Chapter 40. *The Negro Church* 858

1. Non-Political Agencies for Negro Concerted Action
2. Some Historical Notes
3. The Negro Church and the General American Pattern of Religious Activity
4. A Segregated Church
5. Its Weakness
6. Trends and Outlook

Chapter 41. *The Negro School* 879

1. Negro Education as Concerted Action
2. Education in American Thought and Life
3. The Development of Negro Education in the South
4. The Whites' Attitudes toward Negro Education
5. "Industrial" *versus* "Classical" Education of Negroes
6. Negro Attitudes
7. Trends and Problems

Chapter 42. *The Negro Press* 908

1. An Organ for the Negro Protest
2. The Growth of the Negro Press
3. Characteristics of the Negro Press
4. The Controls of the Negro Press
5. Outlook

PART X. THE NEGRO COMMUNITY

Chapter 43. *Institutions* 927

1. The Negro Community as a Pathological Form of an American Community
2. The Negro Family
3. The Negro Church in the Negro Community
4. The Negro School and Negro Education
5. Voluntary Associations

Chapter 44. *Non-Institutional Aspects of the Negro Community* 956

1. "Peculiarities" of Negro Culture and Personality
2. Crime
3. Mental Disorders and Suicide
4. Recreation
5. Negro Achievements

PART XI. AN AMERICAN DILEMMA

Chapter 45. *America Again at the Crossroads in the Negro Problem* 997

1. The Negro Problem and the War
2. Social Trends
3. The Decay of the Caste Theory
4. Negroes in the War Crisis
5. The War and the Whites
6. The North Moves Toward Equality
7. Tension in the South
8. International Aspects
9. Making the Peace
10. America's Opportunity

Appendix 1. *A Methodological Note on Valuations and Beliefs* 1027

1. The Mechanism of Rationalization
2. Theoretical Critique of the Concept "Mores"
3. Valuation Dynamics

Appendix 2. *A Methodological Note on Facts and Valuations in Social Science* 1035

1. Biases in the Research on the American Negro Problem
2. Methods of Mitigating Biases in Social Science
3. The History and Logic of the Hidden Valuations in Social Science
4. The Points of View Adopted in This Book

Appendix 3. *A Methodological Note on the Principle of Cumulation* 1065

Appendix 4. *Note on the Meaning of Regional Terms as Used in This Book* 1071

Appendix 5. *A Parallel to the Negro Problem* 1073

Appendix 6. *Pre-War Conditions of the Negro Wage Earner in Selected Industries and Occupations* 1079

1. General Characteristics of Negro Jobs

2. Domestic Service
3. Other Service Occupations
4. Turpentine Farms
5. Lumber
6. The Fertilizer Industry
7. Longshore Work
8. Building Workers
9. Railroad Workers
10. Tobacco Workers
11. Textile Workers
12. Coal Miners
13. Iron and Steel Workers
14. Automobile Workers
15. The Slaughtering and Meat Packing Industry

Appendix 7. *Distribution of Negro Residences in Selected Cities* 1125

Appendix 8. *Research on Caste and Class in a Negro Community* 1129

Appendix 9. *Research on Negro Leadership* 1133

Appendix 10. *Quantitative Studies of Race Attitudes* 1136

1. Existing Studies of Race Attitudes
2. The Empirical Study of Valuations and Beliefs
3. "Personal" and "Political" Opinions
4. The Practical Study of Race Prejudice

List of Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, and Other Material Referred to in This Book 1144

Numbered Footnotes 1181

Index 1441

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 5

Table 1. Carey's Estimates of the Number of Slaves Imported into the United States at Various Time Periods 118

Footnote 59. Comparison of Variabilities of the American Negro Population with the American White Population and with the West African Negro Population in Twenty-three Selected Traits 1211

Chapter 7

Table 1. Net Reproduction Rates by Color and Urban-Rural Residence, for the United States, by Regions: 1930 and 1940 160

Footnote 24. Net Reproduction Rates in Southern Regions: 1940 1222

Chapter 11

Table 1. Negro and White Agricultural Workers in the South, by Tenure: 1930 236

Chapter 12

Table 1. Number of Farm Operators in the South, by Tenure and Color: 1930, 1935, and 1940 253

Footnote 3. Index Numbers for Gross Cash Income from Marketings 1244

Footnote 13. Counties in Selected Southern States by Increase or Decrease in Number of Colored and White Owners, Tenants (Other Than Croppers), and Croppers: 1930–1935 1246

Footnote 33. Number of Motor Trucks and Tractors on Farms: 1930 and 1940 1248

Chapter 13

Table 1. Number of All Male Workers and of Negro Male Workers in Nonagricultural Pursuits, by Section: 1890–1930 285

Table 2. Changes in Population and in Male Labor Force in Selected Northern and Southern Cities: 1930–1940 288

Table 3. Number and Proportion of Nonwhite Workers in Selected Industries, 1940; and Negroes as a Percentage of the Gainful Workers, 1930—in the South 290
Table 4. Negro and White Male Workers in Nonagricultural Pursuits by Social-Economic Status, in the North and in the South: 1930 296
Table 5. Total Persons and Labor Force in Nonfarm Areas of the United States, by Employment Status, Sex, and Race: 1940 298
Table 6. Labor Force as a Percentage of All Persons, 14 Years of Age and Over, and Unemployed Workers as a Percentage of Total Labor Force, in Selected Large Cities, by Sex and Race: 1940 300

Chapter 14

Table 1. Negro Workers in Business, Professional, and White Collar Occupations, by Sex: 1910, 1920, and 1930 306
Table 2. Number of Negro Entrepreneurs and White Collar Workers in Selected Trade and Service Industries: 1910 309
Table 3. Principal Groups of Negro Professional Workers: 1910 and 1930 319

Chapter 15

Footnote 19. Median Expenditure for Teachers' Salaries in Counties with Specified Proportion of Negroes in the School Population, Aged 5–19: 1930–1931 1271
Footnote 57. "Paupers" in Almshouses in 1890 1277

Chapter 16

Table 1. Median Incomes of Negro and Native White Families in Selected Cities: 1935–1936 365
Table 2. Per Cent Distribution of Total Family Consumption Items, for Normal Nonrelief Families in Selected Community and Income Groups, by Race: 1935–1936 369
Table 3. Percentage of Normal Nonrelief Families Who During a Survey Period of One Week in 1936 Failed to Consume Specified Foods 372
Table 4. Average Value (in Cents) per Meal per Food-Expenditure-Unit in Small and Large Normal Nonrelief Families, by Race 374
Table 5. Diets of Normal Nonrelief Negro and White Families in the Southeast Classified by Grade: 1936–1937 375

Table 6. Percentage of Urban Families Showing Various Degrees of Crowding, by Region and Race: 1935–1936 378
Footnote 1. Median Incomes for Negro and White Farm Families in Three Southeastern Sample Areas: 1935–1936 1284
Footnote 34. Percentage of Negro and White Families in the Southeast with Diets Furnishing Less than Optimum Requirements of Specified Nutrients: 1936–1937 1290
Footnote 40. Large Families Living in Homes with More Than 1.5 Person per Room as a Percentage of All Large Farm Families, by Color and Tenure: 1935–1936 1291

Chapter 18

Footnote 4. Percentage Increase in Number of Wage Earners in Virginia Manufacturing Industries, 1930–1939; and Percentage of Nonwhite Wage Earners, 1930–1939 1296

Chapter 19

Footnote 1. Percentage of Nonwhites in the Total Population, 1940, and among Recent In-migrants According to Surveys Made during the Latter Half of 1941, in Selected Cities 1301

Chapter 22

Table 1. Per Cent of Major Party Vote for Roosevelt, 1932, 1936, 1940, in Each Ward Having More Than Half Its Population Negro, Selected Cities 496

Chapter 40

Table 1. Negro Membership in Harlem Churches by Denomination: 1930 865

Chapter 43

Table 1. Number and Rate of Illegitimate Births, by Nativity, Section and Rural-Urban Residence: 1936 932
Table 2. Proportion Broken Families of All Families: 1930 934
Table 3. School Attendance in the United States, Ages 5–20, by Race: 1850–1940 942
Table 4. School Attendance, Ages 7–20, by Race and Region: 1930 943
Table 5. Years of School Completed, by Persons 25 Years Old and Over, by Race, for the United States, Rural and Urban Areas: 1940 944

Table 6. Ratio of Negro to White Pupils in Public Schools by Grades, in 18 Southern States: 1933–1934 944
Footnote 20. Organizations and Activities of 609 Urban Churches 1427

Chapter 44

Table 1. Prisoners Received from Courts by State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories by Sex, Race and Nativity: 1939 971
Table 2. Male Felony Prisoners Received from Courts by State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories, by Geographic Areas and by Race and Nativity: 1939 971
Table 3. Distribution of Arrests according to Race and Type of Offense (Excluding Those under Fifteen Years of Age): 1940 973

Appendix 4

Table 1. Various Definitions of the South 1072

Appendix 6

Table 1. Nonagricultural Industries and Service Groups Having 15,000 Negro Workers or More: 1930 1081
Table 2. Percentage of Nonrelief White Families, in Selected Income Groups, Who Had Expenditure for Household Help: 1935–1936 1084
Table 3. Range between Local Wage Rates for Domestic Work, in Selected States, according to Estimates by State Employment Offices: January, 1939 1085
Table 4. Average Earnings and Hours of Work for Lumber Workers in the South by Type and Branch of Industry and by Color: 1939–1940 1093
Table 5. Percentage Distribution of Logging and Sawmill Workers by Average Hourly Earnings, by Type and Branch of Industry and by Color, in the South: 1939–1940 1093
Table 6. Occupations in Lumber Mills (Sawmills, Logging, Maintenance and Service Branches) by Average Hourly Earnings of White Workers, and Difference between Average Earnings of White and Negro Workers, in the South: 1939–1940 1094
Table 7. Percentage of Negroes among Longshoremen and Stevedores in Selected States: 1910 and 1930 1097

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Negro Population of the United States: 1790 to 1940 158
Figure 2. Ratio of Nonwhite to White Mortality Rates for Selected Causes of Death, United States: 1920–1931 173
Figure 3. The Proportion of Negroes in the Population, by States: 1940 184
Figure 4. The Northward Migration 192
Figure 5. Average Size of Farm, and Average Value of Land and Buildings per Acre and per Farm, by Color and Tenure, in the South: 1920 and 1940 239

INTRODUCTION

1. The Negro Problem as a Moral Issue

There is a "Negro problem" in the United States and most Americans are aware of it, although it assumes varying forms and intensity in different regions of the country and among diverse groups of the American people. Americans have to react to it, politically as citizens and, where there are Negroes present in the community, privately as neighbors.

To the great majority of white Americans the Negro problem has distinctly negative connotations. It suggests something difficult to settle and equally difficult to leave alone. It is embarrassing. It makes for moral uneasiness. The very presence of the Negro in America[a]; his fate in this country through slavery, Civil War and Reconstruction; his recent career and his present status; his accommodation; his protest and his aspiration; in fact his entire biological, historical and social existence as a participant American represent to the ordinary white man in the North as well as in the South an anomaly in the very structure of American society. To many, this takes on the proportion of a menace—biological, economic, social, cultural, and, at times, political. This anxiety may be mingled with a feeling of individual and collective guilt. A few see the problem as a challenge to statesmanship. To all it is a trouble.

These and many other mutually inconsistent attitudes are blended into none too logical a scheme which, in turn, may be quite inconsistent with the wider personal, moral, religious, and civic sentiments and ideas of the Americans. Now and then, even the least sophisticated individual becomes aware of his own confusion and the contradiction in his attitudes. Occasionally he may recognize, even if only for a moment, the incongruence of his state of mind and find it so intolerable that the whole organization of his moral precepts is shaken. But most people, most of the time, suppress such threats to their moral integrity together with all of the confusion, the ambiguity, and inconsistency which lurks in the basement of man's soul. This, however, is rarely accomplished without mental strain. Out of the strain comes a sense of uneasiness and awkwardness which always seems attached to the Negro problem.

The strain is increased in democratic America by the freedom left open

[a] The word *America* will be used in this book as a synonym for continental United States.

—even in the South,[a] to a considerable extent—for the advocates of the Negro, his rights and welfare. All "pro-Negro" forces in American society, whether organized or not, and irrespective of their wide differences in both strategy and tactics, sense that this is the situation. They all work on the national conscience. They all seek to fix everybody's attention on the suppressed moral conflict. No wonder that they are often regarded as public nuisances, or worse—even when they succeed in getting grudging concessions to Negro rights and welfare.

At this point it must be observed that America, relative to all the other branches of Western civilization, is moralistic and "moral-conscious." The ordinary American is the opposite of a cynic. He is on the average more of a believer and a defender of the faith in humanity than the rest of the Occidentals. It is a relatively important matter to him to be true to his own ideals and to carry them out in actual life. We recognize the American, wherever we meet him, as a practical idealist. Compared with members of other nations of Western civilization, the ordinary American is a rationalistic being, and there are close relations between his moralism and his rationalism. Even romanticism, transcendentalism, and mysticism tend to be, in the American culture, rational, pragmatic and optimistic. American civilization early acquired a flavor of enlightenment which has affected the ordinary American's whole personality and especially his conception of how ideas and ideals ought to "click" together. He has never developed that particular brand of tired mysticism and romanticism which finds delight in the inextricable confusion in the order of things and in ineffectuality of the human mind. He finds such leanings intellectually perverse.

These generalizations might seem venturesome and questionable to the reflective American himself, who, naturally enough, has his attention directed more on the dissimilarities than on the similarities within his culture. What is common is usually not obvious, and it never becomes striking. But to the stranger it is obvious and even striking. In the social sciences, for instance, the American has, more courageously than anywhere else on the globe, started to measure, not only human intelligence, aptitudes, and personality traits, but moral leanings and the "goodness" of communities. This man is a rationalist; he wants intellectual order in his moral set-up; he wants to pursue his own inclinations into their hidden haunts; and he is likely to expose himself and his kind in a most undiplomatic manner.

In hasty strokes we are now depicting the essentials of the American *ethos*. This moralism and rationalism are to many of us—among them the author of this book—the glory of the nation, its youthful strength, perhaps the salvation of mankind. The analysis of this "American Creed" and its

[a] The more precise meaning of the words, *South*, *North*, and other terms for regions in America will be explained in Appendix 4.

implications have an important place in our inquiry. While on the one hand, to such a moralistic and rationalistic being as the ordinary American, the Negro problem and his own confused and contradictory attitudes toward it must be disturbing; on the other hand, the very mass of unsettled problems in his heterogeneous and changing culture, and the inherited liberalistic trust that things will ultimately take care of themselves and get settled in one way or another, enable the ordinary American to live on happily, with recognized contradictions around him and within him, in a kind of bright fatalism which is unmatched in the rest of the Western world. This fatalism also belongs to the national *ethos*.

The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American. It is there that the interracial tension has its focus. It is there that the decisive struggle goes on. This is the central viewpoint of this treatise. Though our study includes economic, social, and political race relations, at bottom our problem is the moral dilemma of the American—the conflict between his moral valuations on various levels of consciousness and generality. The "American Dilemma," referred to in the title of this book, is the ever-raging conflict between, on the one hand, the valuations preserved on the general plane which we shall call the "American Creed," where the American thinks, talks, and acts under the influence of high national and Christian precepts, and, on the other hand, the valuations on specific planes of individual and group living, where personal and local interests; economic, social, and sexual jealousies; considerations of community prestige and conformity; group prejudice against particular persons or types of people; and all sorts of miscellaneous wants, impulses, and habits dominate his outlook.

The American philosopher, John Dewey, whose immense influence is to be explained by his rare gift for projecting faithfully the aspirations and possibilities of the culture he was born into, in the maturity of age and wisdom has written a book on *Freedom and Culture*, in which he says:

> Anything that obscures the fundamentally moral nature of the social problem is harmful, no matter whether it proceeds from the side of physical or of psychological theory. Any doctrine that eliminates or even obscures the function of choice of values and enlistment of desires and emotions in behalf of those chosen weakens personal responsibility for judgment and for action. It thus helps create the attitudes that welcome and support the totalitarian state.[1]

We shall attempt to follow through Dewey's conception of what a social problem really is.

2. Valuations and Beliefs

The Negro problem in America would be of a different nature, and, indeed, would be simpler to handle scientifically, if the moral conflict

raged only between valuations held by different persons and groups of persons. The essence of the moral situation is, however, that the conflicting valuations are also held by the same person. *The moral struggle goes on within people and not only between them. As people's valuations are conflicting, behavior normally becomes a moral compromise. There are no homogeneous "attitudes" behind human behavior but a mesh of struggling inclinations, interests, and ideals, some held conscious and some suppressed for long intervals but all active in bending behavior in their direction.*

The unity of a culture consists in the fact that all valuations are mutually shared in some degree. We shall find that even a poor and uneducated white person in some isolated and backward rural region in the Deep South, who is violently prejudiced against the Negro and intent upon depriving him of civic rights and human independence, has also a whole compartment in his valuation sphere housing the entire American Creed of liberty, equality, justice, and fair opportunity for everybody. He is actually also a good Christian and honestly devoted to the ideals of human brotherhood and the Golden Rule. And these more general valuations—more general in the sense that they refer to all human beings—are, to some extent, effective in shaping his behavior. Indeed, it would be impossible to understand why the Negro does not fare worse in some regions of America if it were not constantly kept in mind that behavior is the outcome of a compromise between valuations, among which the equalitarian ideal is one. At the other end, there are few liberals, even in New England, who have not a well-furnished compartment of race prejudice, even if it is usually suppressed from conscious attention. Even the American Negroes share in this community of valuations: they have eagerly imbibed the American Creed and the revolutionary Christian teaching of common brotherhood; under closer study, they usually reveal also that they hold something of the majority prejudice against their own kind and its characteristics.

The intensities and proportions in which these conflicting valuations are present vary considerably from one American to another, and within the same individual, from one situation to another. The cultural unity of the nation consists, however, in the fact that *most Americans have most valuations in common* though they are arranged differently in the sphere of valuations of different individuals and groups and bear different intensity coefficients. This cultural unity is the indispensable basis for discussion between persons and groups. It is the floor upon which the democratic process goes on.

In America as everywhere else people agree, as an abstract proposition, that *the more general valuations—those which refer to man as such and not to any particular group or temporary situation—are morally higher.* These valuations are also given the sanction of religion and national legislation. They are incorporated into the American Creed. The other

valuations—which refer to various smaller groups of mankind or to particular occasions—are commonly referred to as "irrational" or "prejudiced," sometimes even by people who express and stress them. They are defended in terms of tradition, expediency or utility.

Trying to defend their behavior to others, and primarily to themselves, people will attempt to conceal the conflict between their different valuations of what is desirable and undesirable, right or wrong, by keeping away some valuations from awareness and by focusing attention on others. For the same opportune purpose, *people will twist and mutilate their beliefs of how social reality actually is.* In our study we encounter whole systems of firmly entrenched popular beliefs concerning the Negro and his relations to the larger society, which are bluntly false and which can only be understood when we remember the opportunistic *ad hoc* purposes they serve. These "popular theories," because of the rationalizing function they serve, are heavily loaded with emotions. But people also want to be rational. Scientific truth-seeking and education are slowly rectifying the beliefs and thereby also influencing the valuations. In a rationalistic civilization it is not only that the beliefs are shaped by the valuations, but also that the valuations depend upon the beliefs.[a]

Our task in this inquiry is to ascertain social reality as it is. We shall seek to depict the actual life conditions of the American Negro people and their manifold relations to the larger American society. We must describe, in as much detail as our observations and space here allow, who the American Negro is, and how he fares. Whenever possible, we shall present quantitative indices of his existence and of the material conditions for his existence. But this is not all and, from our point of view, not even the most important part of social reality. We must go further and attempt to discover and dissect the doctrines and ideologies, valuations and beliefs, embedded in the minds of white and Negro Americans. We want to follow through W. I. Thomas's theme, namely, that when people define situations as real, they *are* real.[2] We shall try to remember throughout our inquiry that material facts in large measure are the product of what people think, feel and believe. The actual conditions, as they are, indicate from this point of view the great disparities between the whites' and the Negroes' aspirations and realizations. The interrelations between the material facts and people's valuations of and beliefs about these facts are precisely what make the Negro a social problem.

It is sometimes assumed to be the mark of "sound" research to disregard the fact that people are moral beings and that they are struggling for their conscience. In our view, this is a bias and a blindness, dangerous to

[a] The theory of human behavior and its motivation, which is sketched in the text and is basic to our approach to the Negro problem, is explained in Appendix 1, "A Methodological Note on Valuations and Beliefs."

the possibility of enabling scientific study to arrive at true knowledge. Every social study must have its center in an investigation of people's conflicting valuations and their opportune beliefs. They are social facts and can be observed by direct and indirect manifestations. We are, of course, also interested in discovering how these inclinations and loyalties came about and what the factors are upon which they rest. We want to keep free, however, at least at the outset, from any preconceived doctrine or theory, whether of the type making biological characteristics, or economic interests, sexual complexes, power relations, or anything else, the "ultimate" or "basic" cause of these valuations. We hope to come out with a type of systematic understanding as eclectic as common sense itself when it is open-minded.

When we thus choose to view the Negro problem as primarily a moral issue, we are in line with popular thinking. It is as a moral issue that this problem presents itself in the daily life of ordinary people; it is as a moral issue that they brood over it in their thoughtful moments. It is in terms of conflicting moral valuations that it is discussed in church and school, in the family circle, in the workshop, on the street corner, as well as in the press, over the radio, in trade union meetings, in the state legislatures, the Congress and the Supreme Court. The social scientist, in his effort to lay bare concealed truths and to become maximally useful in guiding practical and political action, is prudent when, in the approach to a problem, he sticks as closely as possible to the common man's ideas and formulations, even though he knows that further investigation will carry him into tracts uncharted in the popular consciousness. There is a pragmatic common sense in people's ideas about themselves and their worries, which we cannot afford to miss when we start out to explore social reality. Otherwise we are often too easily distracted by our learned arbitrariness and our pet theories, concepts, and hypotheses, not to mention our barbarous terminology, which we generally are tempted to mistake for something more than mere words. *Throughout this study we will constantly take our starting point in the ordinary man's own ideas, doctrines, theories and mental constructs.*

In approaching the Negro problem as primarily a moral issue of conflicting valuations, it is not implied, of course, that ours is the prerogative of pronouncing on *a priori* grounds which values are "right" and which are "wrong." In fact, such judgments are out of the realm of social science, and will not be attempted in this inquiry. Our investigation will naturally be an analysis *of* morals and not *in* morals. In so far as we make our own judgments of value, they will be based on explicitly stated value premises, selected from among those valuations actually observed as existing in the minds of the white and Negro Americans and tested as to their social and

political relevance and significance. Our value judgments are thus derived and have no greater validity than the value premises postulated.

3. A WHITE MAN'S PROBLEM

Although the Negro problem is a moral issue both to Negroes and to whites in America, we shall in this book have to give *primary* attention to what goes on in the minds of white Americans. To explain this direction of our interest a general conclusion from our studies needs to be stated at this point. When the present investigator started his inquiry, his preconception was that it had to be focused on the Negro people and their peculiarities. This is understandable since, from a superficial view, Negro Americans, not only in physical appearance, but also in thoughts, feelings, and in manner of life, seemed stranger to him than did white Americans. Furthermore, most of the literature on the Negro problem dealt with the Negroes: their racial and cultural characteristics, their living standards and occupational pursuits, their stratification in social classes, their migration, their family organization, their religion, their illiteracy, delinquency and disease, and so on. But as he proceeded in his studies into the Negro problem, it became increasingly evident that little, if anything, could be scientifically explained in terms of the peculiarities of the Negroes themselves.

As a matter of fact, in their basic human traits the Negroes are inherently not much different from other people. Neither are, incidentally, the white Americans. But Negroes and whites in the United States live in singular human relations with each other. All the circumstances of life—the "environmental" conditions in the broadest meaning of that term—diverge more from the "normal" for the Negroes than for the whites, if only because of the statistical fact that the Negroes are the smaller group. The average Negro must experience many times more of the "abnormal" interracial relations than the average white man in America.[a] The more important fact, however, is that practically all the economic, social, and political power is held by whites. The Negroes do not by far have anything approaching a tenth of the things worth having in America.

It is thus the white majority group that naturally determines the Negro's "place." All our attempts to reach scientific explanations of why the Negroes are what they are and why they live as they do have regularly led to determinants on the white side of the race line. In the practical and political struggles of effecting changes, the views and attitudes of the white Americans are likewise strategic. The Negro's entire life, and, consequently, also his opinions on the Negro problem, are, in the main, to be considered as secondary reactions to more primary pressures from the side of the dominant white majority.

[a] This is less true, of course, in communities where the ratio between the number of Negroes and the number of whites diverges sharply from the average ratio of one to ten for the whole nation.

The Negro was brought to America for the sake of the white man's profit. He was kept in slavery for generations in the same interest. A civil war was fought between two regional groups of white Americans. For two years no one wanted Negroes involved in the fighting. Later on some two hundred thousand Negro soldiers fought in the Northern army, in addition to all the Negro laborers, servants, spies, and helpers in both armies. But it was not the Negroes' war. As a result of the war, which took a toll of some half million killed and many more wounded, the four million Negro slaves were liberated. Since then the Negro's "place" in American society has been precarious, uncertain and changing; he was no longer so necessary and profitable to the white man as in slavery before the Civil War. In the main, however, the conflicting and vacillating valuations of the white majority have been decisive, whether the issue was segregation in the schools, discrimination with reference to public facilities, equal justice and protection under the laws, enjoyment of the franchise, or the freedom to enter a vocation and earn an honest living. The Negro, as a minority, and a poor and suppressed minority at that, in the final analysis, has had little other strategy open to him than to play on the conflicting values held in the white majority group. In so doing, he has been able to identify his cause with broader issues in American politics and social life and with moral principles held dear by the white Americans. This is the situation even today and will remain so in the foreseeable future. In that sense, "this is a white man's country."

This stress in the formulation of our problem, it must be repeated, is motivated by an ambition to be realistic about the actual power relations in American society. It should not be taken as a doctrinaire approach. In the degree that the Negro people succeed in acquiring and institutionalizing footholds of power in society with the help of interested white groups—for example, if they can freely use their votes, as they can in the North, or press themselves into the industrial labor market and the trade unions—they will increasingly be able to act and not only to react. Under all circumstances, in fact even in slavery, the attitudes and activities of the Negro people do, to a certain extent, influence the attitudes and policies of the white majority group in power, as account is taken by the whites of the Negro's reactions. Even if the prevailing power situation is reason enough to look for the primary responsibility for what happens in the valuations of the white people, these same valuations are themselves the product of a two-way interracial relationship.

4. Not an Isolated Problem

Closely related to the thesis that the Negro problem is predominantly a white man's problem is another conclusion, which slowly dawned upon the author, though it undoubtedly is not news to many of his American

readers: *The Negro problem is an integral part of, or a special phase of, the whole complex of problems in the larger American civilization. It cannot be treated in isolation.* There is no single side of the Negro problem—whether it be the Negro's political status, the education he gets, his place in the labor market, his cultural and personality traits, or anything else—which is not predominantly determined by its total American setting. We shall, therefore, constantly be studying the American civilization in its entirety, though viewed in its implications for the most disadvantaged population group.

There is a natural tendency on the part of white people in America to attempt to localize and demarcate the Negro problem into the segregated sector of American society where the Negroes live. This tendency is visible even in many scientific treatments of the Negro problem. The Negro spokesmen, on their side, are often equally tempted to stress the singularity of their grievances to the extent of not considering the broader setting. The fact of segregation also often makes them less familiar with the American society at large. The Negro social scientists have their special opportunity in knowing intimately the Negro community and will—with a few outstanding exceptions [3]—treat their problems in isolation.

The assumption underlying the approach in this book is, on the contrary, that the Negro problem exists and changes because of conditions and forces operating in the larger American society. Establishing this integration is thought to make the analysis more realistic. This will explain and, the author believes, justify the fact that in all parts of this inquiry attention is given to the characteristics of the American society at large in which the Negro becomes a problem.

The relationship between American society and the Negro problem is not one-sided. The entire structure of American society is itself greatly conditioned by the presence of the thirteen million Negro citizens. American politics, the labor market, education, religious life, civic ideals, art, and recreation are as they are partly because of the important conditioning factor working throughout the history of the nation. New impulses from the Negro people are constantly affecting the American way of life, bending in some degree all American institutions and bringing changes in every aspect of the American's complex world view. While primary attention will be focused on the Negro people and on the influences *from* the larger society working on them, their influence *back on* white society will not be ignored.

This plan of keeping the entire American culture within the focus of our study will, of course, increase the difficulties of our task. There are some ideas concerning the larger society, in which our special problem has its play, which are so general that they are hard to grasp and give definite form and, in any case, almost impossible to prove. Everyone has such

ideas, and of necessity, they determine the scientific treatment of a specific social problem. In few instances is it possible to check them by present-day scientific tools. It is still less possible to check one's ideas about the larger society within the frame of a specialized investigation. In the main, they remain unchecked, as they are derived by common sense intuition and everyday reflection. They are generalized inductions from a vast mass of unassorted, scientifically uncontrolled personal experience. Few of them are obtained from books dealing with the larger society. But since they determine the study, they should be accounted for as far as possible. This is usually difficult, as these ideas—in the degree they conform to the cultural *milieu*—do not stand out clearly in the consciousness of an investigator. No doubt most social scientists honestly believe they have no such preconceptions. Their prevalence becomes obvious, however, when time has passed and the *milieu* has changed. Then we see how the scientists in the past period unconsciously worked under certain preconceptions, which we now find erroneous or not adequate for the present situation. These general ideas can also become explicit when one becomes acquainted with a different civilization and views one's own society through the prism of such an alien *milieu*.

The present writer has been looking not only at the Negro people but at all America from the outside. In fact, it has been his chief and sometimes overwhelming difficulty in this work that he had to start from the beginning and try to understand not only the Negro problem but the entire American culture in which it is encompassed. Comparatively little in American civilization is natural to him. He is constantly reminded of the preconceptions he utilizes to understand the larger American society. The difference is not that he has preconceptions and his American colleagues do not. The difference is that, being an outsider, he is compelled to be more conscious of them, and has had to try to reach them by deliberate intellectual efforts. In this situation he is tempted to turn a deficiency into a virtue. At any rate, he is under the pressure to state to himself what he thinks about this somewhat strange culture. He can then attempt an experiment in more rigorous social science methods in the interests of objectivity by laying open even this type of preconception. He is thereby attempting rationally to assist his critics. Not only in the next few chapters but everywhere in the book I express general views on the larger American society; many general statements about the Negro and race relations belong to the same type of judgment.

Some readers may disagree with many of my preconceptions of America. All will probably disagree with some. Just because in this experiment the preconceptions are not hidden but are openly set out, the reader is offered a guide to the specific mistakes which, in pursuing the study, might have been committed on account of false preconceptions about the larger Ameri-

can society and the Negro problem. If the reader is equally careful he will, however, also remember that, at least in the present stage of social research, it is next to impossible to judge rationally our most general assumptions concerning a civilization. The possibility always remains, therefore, that on some points he is wrong, and I am right. But a good result will in any case be reached, as we shall have determined the locus of fundamental disagreement, and thus we shall be better prepared to direct further research toward its scientific solution.

These assumptions are all, in a sense, subjective. I have, naturally, tried to acquire as objectively true an understanding of America and the American Negro as I am capable of reaching. And, equally naturally, it would be most fortunate to the investigation if these main assumptions approached objective truth and were relevant to the problems under study. But they are, of course, not proved; they are not part of scientifically verified truth. The only definite statement I can make is that the picture is subjectively "true"; that is, that it faithfully represents what the author, upon careful consideration, believes to be true.

5. Some Further Notes on the Scope and Direction of this Study

This book is an analysis, not a description. It presents facts only for the sake of their meaning in the interpretation. Since, however, an attempt at a comprehensive analysis was made, the scope of the facts, even when compressed into outline form, is extensive, though, we hope, selective. The author had available not only the vast existing published literature, but also some specially prepared research memoranda, a portion of which are being published, and all of which are made available to the inquiring reader.[a]

On the theoretical[b] side, the aim of this book is to formulate tentative generalizations on the basis of known facts. A corollary of this scientific task is to indicate gaps in knowledge. These gaps will be noted in passing, and in some respects positive suggestions for investigation will be offered. Undoubtedly, we shall sometimes be found to have overlooked existing sources. In view of the scope of the investigation this is inevitable but, nevertheless, regrettable.

As the known and verified facts are scarce, a courageous use will be made of the writer's own observations. Their conjectural character will always be made explicit. They are the author's best judgments, when published data

[a] A list of these will be found in the Preface. The unpublished memoranda can be consulted in the Schomburg Collection of the New York Public Library.

[b] The terms *theoretical* and *practical* (or *political*) are used in this book as in the discipline of philosophy. The former word implies thinking in terms of causes and effects; the latter words imply thinking in terms of means and ends. (See Appendix 2, Section 4.)

are insufficient, as to what is the truth, and they should be taken only for what they are. For the outlining of further research they may serve as the projection of plausible hypotheses.

On the practical side, the aim of this book is to throw light on the future, and to construct, in a preliminary way, bases for rational policy. This is one reason why the theoretical analysis will stress interrelations and trends. Even though reliable prognoses cannot be made in many respects, various possibilities can be presented and their probabilities estimated.

Explicit value premises will be introduced, usually in the beginning of each main part of the inquiry. As a source for the value premises, the relatively comprehensive and definite body of political ideals contained in the "American Creed" will be used; we shall sketch the historical origin of the American Creed in the first chapter. The use of explicit value premises serves three main purposes: (1) to purge as far as possible the scientific investigation of distorting biases which are usually the result of hidden biases; (2) to determine in a rational way the statement of problems and the definition of terms for the theoretical analysis; (3) to lay a logical basis for practical and political conclusions.[a]

Our aim is to organize the entire treatise around one single sequence of thoughts. We shall proceed from the American scene at large to the facts and problems of Negro life, to the trends, to the specific policies, to their final integration into the structure of national policies. This plan is, within limits, the basis of organization for each major part of the inquiry.

The main axes to be drawn through our subject and in accordance with which we shall organize the materials are pretty much determined by the object under study. Those of most general relevance are: color, region, urban-rural residence, social class, education, sex, and age. Comparisons between Negroes and whites—in such things, for example, as vital indices, criminality, family patterns—will not be made indiscriminately but, as far as possible, will be standardized by comparing Negroes with a duly defined control group of whites, or by comparing subgroups of Negroes and whites of equal social, economic, and educational status. This attempt is, however, all too often frustrated through insurmountable difficulties due to the scarcity of available data.

The book concentrates on present conditions but does not neglect the future. While it would add to our comprehension to examine the historical development behind the existing situation, this is beyond the scope of our inquiry. In a sense and to a degree present conditions and trends can be analyzed without consideration of their antecedents. This should not be

[a] The problem of bias, of theoretical and practical research, and of the utilization of the scientific technique of explicit value premises are treated in Appendix 2, "A Methodological Note on Facts and Valuations in Social Science." The author may be allowed to point out that a critical study of this inquiry assumes the reading of Appendix 2.

taken to mean that the author has not tried—within the time available—to familiarize himself with the history of the Negro problem in America, but merely that this book has a limited scope and does not intend to give the history of the Negro problem. Where, in the course of the presentation, it is deemed necessary to review some aspect of the past in order to understand present problems, historical outlines will be offered. We are, however, not concerned with the past for its own sake, but merely in so far as important happenings in the past have influenced present situations and trends. Even in this narrower sphere we do not have the historian's interest in the "uniquely historical datum" but the social scientist's interest in broad and general relations and main trends.

Other problems of race relations in the United States and the Negro problem in areas outside of the United States will be left entirely outside the scope of the present inquiry. Good reasons could be given for stretching the boundaries of the study considerably in both directions. Unquestionably it could contribute vastly to a more complete understanding of the American Negro problem. Obvious restrictions of space and capacity, however, stand in the way.

The book has grown to considerable length, and the author realizes that some readers cannot afford the time or energy to read it all. The main parts have, therefore, been arranged so that they can be read independently. This has involved some repetitions of facts and main viewpoints. Even for the reader who reads the whole book, the repetitions have been thought to be less burdensome than the risk of obscurity. When he surveyed a wide field of American culture, James Bryce said:

> Whenever it has been necessary to trace a phenomenon to its source or to explain the connection between several phenomena, I have not hesitated, knowing that one must not expect a reader to carry in his mind all that has been told already, to re-state a material fact, or re-enforce a view which gives to the facts what I conceive to be their true significance.[4]

Technical terms will be avoided except when they are necessary for clarity. Words will be used in their common sense meaning unless the danger of ambiguity forces us explicitly to restrict the meaning of the term. Some of the main terms which are understood to be value loaded—such as discrimination, disfranchisement, caste, and class—will be expressly defined in relation to our set of value premises.[a]

If we have departed from the usual techniques of style in minor respects, we have done so with the hope of helping the reader. One thing may be mentioned here: We have classified footnotes into two groups. Those marked by letters of the alphabet are placed at the bottom of the page; we believe that they should be read with the text since they are integral

[a] See Appendix 2, Section 4.

parts of it, but would make the text clumsy if they were to be inserted in it. Those marked by numbers are placed at the end of the book; they are mainly for scholars who wish concrete evidence of sources, but we believe the general reader will wish to skim over them. Our classification is subjective and does not rigidly follow any rules.

6. A WARNING TO THE READER

Before embarking upon the study, the simple old reminder should be repeated that no person or culture can be judged solely by its imperfections. The subject of this book—American attitudes and actions with respect to the Negro and the disparity between American ideals and behavior in this field—forces us to dig in dark corners and to wash dirty linen in public. But we wish to warn the reader that we do not, and he should not, regard our analysis as a complete evaluation of America.

As interests in social studies are often concentrated on problem groups and areas, a delusion is easily created that the situation in America is worse than it actually is. "Moral statistics" consist traditionally of a recording of all the negative items in a culture: crime, illegitimacy, suicide and so on. This tradition has arisen because data for abnormalities are available. Figures on divorces have been calculated in all countries—and, of course, America ranks among the highest—but there has never been any comprehensive enumeration of the happy marriages. There are statistics on crime—and they are ugly for America—but none on civil decency. The method of measuring moral levels by statistics and descriptions of what is extremely bad and wrong in a society is thus heavily loaded against a nation with a particularly wide range of moral behavior. This is a fact not always taken into account even by the American specialists on the evils and the wrongs of society.

In setting out upon investigating a subject matter, which is bound to deal for the most part with various forms of social pathology in America, the author must stress that, in his opinion, large groups of the American population probably live a more "righteous" life, measured by whatever standard one chooses, than any large group of people anywhere else in the Western world. Even in the large cities with a shocking amount of political corruption, crime, and vice, by far the greater part of the population has no more contact with these phenomena than if they lived in another country. *The moral latitude is so very wide in America: if there is abnormally much that is very bad, there is also unusually much that is extremely good.*

Thus a study of America centered upon the Negro problem must not be expected to give a comprehensive and balanced cultural analysis of the nation any more than would a study centered on crime or political corruption. Under a broader perspective the Negro is only a corner—although a fairly big one—of American civilization. This corner is one of the least

clean in the national household: we shall see plenty of law-breaking, crime and corruption, poverty and distress, heartlessness and ignorance. We shall continuously be dealing with the frictions, worries and shortcomings of America.

Studying the Negro problem gives a "frog-perspective" of the cultural situation, not a bird's eye view. Although the frog-perspective does reveal some of the real virtues of a society, as we shall find, it focuses more completely on its faults. For a general purpose, it is not a true perspective.[5] I am eager to have the warning expressly stated in the introduction to this book, that *anyone who uncritically utilizes the viewpoints and findings of this inquiry on the American Negro problem for wider conclusions concerning the United States and its civilization than are warranted by its direction of interest is misusing them.*

Part I

THE APPROACH

CHAPTER I

AMERICAN IDEALS AND THE AMERICAN CONSCIENCE

1. Unity of Ideals and Diversity of Culture

It is a commonplace to point out the heterogeneity of the American nation and the swift succession of all sorts of changes in all its component parts and, as it often seems, in every conceivable direction. America is truly a shock to the stranger. The bewildering impression it gives of dissimilarity throughout and of chaotic unrest is indicated by the fact that few outside observers—and, indeed, few native Americans—have been able to avoid the intellectual escape of speaking about America as "paradoxical."

Still there is evidently a strong unity in this nation and a basic homogeneity and stability in its valuations. Americans of all national origins, classes, regions, creeds, and colors, have something in common: a social *ethos*, a political creed. It is difficult to avoid the judgment that this "American Creed" is the cement in the structure of this great and disparate nation.

When the American Creed is once detected, the cacophony becomes a melody. The further observation then becomes apparent: that America, compared to every other country in Western civilization, large or small, has the *most explicitly expressed* system of general ideals in reference to human interrelations. This body of ideals is more widely understood and appreciated than similar ideals are anywhere else. The American Creed is not merely—as in some other countries—the implicit background of the nation's political and judicial order as it functions. To be sure, the political creed of America is not very satisfactorily effectuated in actual social life. But as principles which *ought* to rule, the Creed has been made conscious to everyone in American society.

Sometimes one even gets the impression that there is a relation between the intense apprehension of high and uncompromising ideals and the spotty reality. One feels that it is, perhaps, the difficulty of giving reality to the *ethos* in this young and still somewhat unorganized nation—that it is the prevalence of "wrongs" in America, "wrongs" judged by the high standards of the national Creed—which helps make the ideals stand out so

clearly. America is continously struggling for its soul. These principles of social ethics have been hammered into easily remembered formulas. All means of intellectual communication are utilized to stamp them into everybody's mind. The schools teach them, the churches preach them. The courts pronounce their judicial decisions in their terms. They permeate editorials with a pattern of idealism so ingrained that the writers could scarcely free themselves from it even if they tried. They have fixed a custom of indulging in high-sounding generalities in all written or spoken addresses to the American public, otherwise so splendidly gifted for the matter-of-fact approach to things and problems. Even the stranger, when he has to appear before an American audience, feels this, if he is sensitive at all, and finds himself espousing the national Creed, as this is the only means by which a speaker can obtain human response from the people to whom he talks.

The Negro people in America are no exception to the national pattern. "It was a revelation to me to hear Negroes sometimes indulge in a glorification of American democracy in the same uncritical way as unsophisticated whites often do," relates the Dutch observer, Bertram Schrieke.[1] A Negro political scientist, Ralph Bunche, observes:

> Every man in the street, white, black, red or yellow, knows that this is "the land of the free," the "land of opportunity," the "cradle of liberty," the "home of democracy," that the American flag symbolizes the "equality of all men" and guarantees to us all "the protection of life, liberty and property," freedom of speech, freedom of religion and racial tolerance.[2]

The present writer has made the same observation. The American Negroes know that they are a subordinated group experiencing, more than anybody else in the nation, the consequences of the fact that the Creed is not lived up to in America. Yet their faith in the Creed is not simply a means of pleading their unfulfilled rights. They, like the whites, are under the spell of the great national suggestion. With one part of themselves they actually believe, as do the whites, that the Creed is ruling America.

These ideals of the essential dignity of the individual human being, of the fundamental equality of all men, and of certain inalienable rights to freedom, justice, and a fair opportunity represent to the American people the essential meaning of the nation's early struggle for independence. In the clarity and intellectual boldness of the Enlightenment period these tenets were written into the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and into the constitutions of the several states. The ideals of the American Creed have thus become the highest law of the land. The Supreme Court pays its reverence to these general principles when it declares what is constitutional and what is not. They have been elaborated upon by all national leaders, thinkers and

statesmen. America has had, throughout its history, a continuous discussion of the principles and implications of democracy, a discussion which, in every epoch, measured by any standard, remained high, not only quantitatively but also qualitatively. The flow of learned treatises and popular tracts on the subject has not ebbed, nor is it likely to do so. In all wars, including the present one, the American Creed has been the ideological foundation of national morale.

2. AMERICAN NATIONALISM

The American Creed is identified with America's peculiar brand of nationalism, and it gives the common American his feeling of the historical mission of America in the world—a fact which just now becomes of global importance but which is also of highest significance for the particular problem studied in this book. The great national historian of the middle nineteenth century, George Bancroft, expressed this national feeling of pride and responsibility:

> In the fulness of time a republic rose in the wilderness of America. Thousands of years had passed away before this child of the ages could be born. From whatever there was of good in the systems of the former centuries she drew her nourishment; the wrecks of the past were her warnings . . . The fame of this only daughter of freedom went out into all the lands of the earth; from her the human race drew hope.[3]

And Frederick J. Turner, who injected the naturalistic explanation into history that American democracy was a native-born product of the Western frontier, early in this century wrote in a similar vein:

> Other nations have been rich and prosperous and powerful. But the United States has believed that it had an original contribution to make to the history of society by the production of a self-determining, self-restrained, intelligent democracy.[4]

Wilson's fourteen points and Roosevelt's four freedoms have more recently expressed to the world the boundless idealistic aspirations of this American Creed. For a century and more before the present epoch, when the oceans gave reality to the Monroe Doctrine, America at least applauded heartily every uprising of the people in any corner of the world. This was a tradition from America's own Revolution. The political revolutionaries of foreign countries were approved even by the conservatives in America. And America wanted generously to share its precious ideals and its happiness in enjoying a society ruled by its own people with all who would come here. James Truslow Adams tells us:

> The American dream that has lured tens of millions of all nations to our shores in the past century has not been a dream of merely material plenty, though that has doubtless counted heavily. It has been much more than that. It has been a dream of

> being able to grow to fullest development as man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class. And that dream has been realized more fully in actual life here than anywhere else, though very imperfectly even among ourselves.[5]

This is what the Western frontier country could say to the "East." And even the skeptic cannot help feeling that, perhaps, this youthful exuberant America has the destiny to do for the whole Old World what the frontier did to the old colonies. *American nationalism is permeated by the American Creed,* and therefore becomes international in its essence.

3. Some Historical Reflections

It is remarkable that a vast democracy with so many cultural disparities has been able to reach this unanimity of ideals and to elevate them supremely over the threshold of popular perception. Totalitarian fascism and nazism have not in their own countries—at least not in the short range of their present rule—succeeded in accomplishing a similar result, in spite of the fact that those governments, after having subdued the principal precepts most akin to the American Creed, have attempted to coerce the minds of their people by means of a centrally controlled, ruthless, and scientifically contrived apparatus of propaganda and violence.

There are more things to be wondered about. The disparity of national origin, language, religion, and culture, during the long era of mass immigration into the United States, has been closely correlated with income differences and social class distinctions. Successive vintages of "Old Americans" have owned the country and held the dominant political power; they have often despised and exploited "the foreigners." To this extent conditions in America must be said to have been particularly favorable to the stratification of a rigid class society.

But it has not come to be. On the question of why the trend took the other course, the historians, from Turner on, point to the free land and the boundless resources. The persistent drive from the Western frontier—now and then swelling into great tides as in the Jeffersonian movement around 1800, the Jacksonian movement a generation later, and the successive third-party movements and breaks in the traditional parties—could, however, reach its historical potency only because of the fact that America, from the Revolution onward, had an equalitarian creed as a going national *ethos*. The economic determinants and the force of the ideals can be shown to be interrelated. But the latter should not be relegated to merely a dependent variable. Vernon L. Parrington, the great historian of the development of the American mind, writes thus:

> The humanitarian idealism of the Declaration [of Independence] has always echoed as a battle-cry in the hearts of those who dream of an America dedicated to

> democratic ends. It cannot be long ignored or repudiated, for sooner or later it returns to plague the council of practical politics. It is constantly breaking out in fresh revolt. . . . Without its freshening influence our political history would have been much more sordid and materialistic.[6]

Indeed, the new republic began its career with a reaction. Charles Beard, in *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*,[7] and a group of modern historians, throwing aside the much cherished national mythology which had blurred the difference in spirit between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, have shown that the latter was conceived in considerable suspicion against democracy and fear of "the people." It was dominated by property consciousness and designed as a defense against the democratic spirit let loose during the Revolution.

But, admitting all this, the Constitution which actually emerged out of the compromises in the drafting convention provided for the most democratic state structure in existence anywhere in the world at that time. And many of the safeguards so skillfully thought out by the conservatives to protect "the rich, the wellborn, and the capable" against majority rule melted when the new order began to function. Other conservative safeguards have fastened themselves into the political pattern. And "in the ceaseless conflict between the man and the dollar, between democracy and property"—again to quote Parrington[8]—property has for long periods triumphed and blocked the will of the people. And there are today large geographical regions and fields of human life which, particularly when measured by the high goals of the American Creed, are conspicuously lagging. But taking the broad historical view, the American Creed has triumphed. It has given the main direction to change in this country. America has had gifted conservative statesmen and national leaders, and they have often determined the course of public affairs. But with few exceptions, only the liberals have gone down in history as national heroes.[9] America is, as we shall point out, conservative in fundamental principles, and in much more than that, though hopefully experimentalistic in regard to much of the practical arrangements in society. But *the principles conserved are liberal* and some, indeed, are radical.

America got this dynamic Creed much as a political convenience and a device of strategy during the long struggle with the English Crown, the London Parliament and the various British powerholders in the colonies. It served as the rallying center for the growing national unity that was needed. Later it was a necessary device for building up a national morale in order to enlist and sustain the people in the Revolutionary War. In this spirit the famous declarations were resolved, the glorious speeches made, the inciting pamphlets written and spread. "The appeal to arms would seem to have been brought about by a minority of the American people,

directed by a small group of skillful leaders, who, like Indian scouts, covered their tracks so cleverly, that only the keenest trailers can now follow their course and understand their strategy."[10]

But the Creed, once set forth and disseminated among the American people, became so strongly entrenched in their hearts, and the circumstances have since then been so relatively favorable, that it has succeeded in keeping itself very much alive for more than a century and a half.

4. The Roots of the American Creed in the Philosophy of Enlightenment

The American Creed is a humanistic liberalism developing out of the epoch of Enlightenment when America received its national consciousness and its political structure. The Revolution did not stop short of anything less than the heroic desire for the "emancipation of human nature." The enticing flavor of the eighteenth century, so dear to every intellectual and rationalist, has not been lost on the long journey up to the present time. Let us quote a contemporary exegesis:

> Democracy is a form of political association in which the general control and direction of the commonwealth is habitually determined by the bulk of the community in accordance with understandings and procedures providing for popular participation and consent. Its postulates are:
>
> 1. The essential dignity of man, the importance of protecting and cultivating his personality on a fraternal rather than upon a differential basis, of reconciling the needs of the personality within the frame-work of the common good in a formula of liberty, justice, welfare.
> 2. The perfectibility of man; confidence in the possibilities of the human personality, as over against the doctrines of caste, class, and slavery.
> 3. That the gains of commonwealths are essentially mass gains rather than the efforts of the few and should be diffused as promptly as possible throughout the community without too great delay or too wide a spread in differentials.
> 4. Confidence in the value of the consent of the governed expressed in institutions, understandings and practices as a basis of order, liberty, justice.
> 5. The value of decisions arrived at by common counsel rather than by violence and brutality.
>
> These postulates rest upon (1) reason in regarding the essential nature of the political man, upon (2) observation, experience and inference, and (3) the fulfillment of the democratic ideal is strengthened by a faith in the final triumph of ideals of human behavior in general and of political behavior in particular.[11]

For practical purposes the main norms of the American Creed as usually pronounced are centered in the belief in equality and in the rights to liberty.[12] In the Declaration of Independence—as in the earlier Virginia Bill of Rights—equality was given the supreme rank and the rights to liberty are posited as derived from equality. This logic was even more clearly expressed in Jefferson's original formulation of the first of the

"self-evident truths": "All men are created equal *and from that equal creation* they derive rights inherent and unalienable, among which are the preservation of life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness."[13]

Liberty, in a sense, was easiest to reach. It is a vague ideal: everything turns around *whose* liberty is preserved, to *what extent* and *in what direction.* In society liberty for one may mean the suppression of liberty for others. The result of competition will be determined by who got a head start and who is handicapped. In America as everywhere else—and sometimes, perhaps, on the average, a little more ruthlessly—liberty often provided an opportunity for the stronger to rob the weaker. Against this, the equalitarianism in the Creed has been persistently revolting. The struggle is far from ended. The reason why American liberty was not more dangerous to equality was, of course, the open frontier and the free land. When opportunity became bounded in the last generation, the inherent conflict between equality and liberty flared up. Equality is slowly winning. The New Deal during the 'thirties was a landslide.[a]

5. THE ROOTS IN CHRISTIANITY

If the European philosophy of Enlightenment was one of the ideological roots of the American Creed, another equally important one was Christianity, particularly as it took the form in the colonies of various lower class Protestant sects, split off from the Anglican Church.[b] "Democracy was envisaged in religious terms long before it assumed a political terminology." [14]

It is true that modern history has relegated to the category of the pious patriotic myths the popular belief that *all* the colonies had been founded to get religious liberty, which could not be had in the Old World. Some of the colonies were commercial adventures and the settlers came to them, and even to the religious colonies later, to improve their economic status. It is also true that the churches in the early colonial times did not always exactly represent the idea of democratic government in America but most often a harsher tyranny over people's souls and behavior than either King or Parliament ever cared to wield.

But the myth itself is a social reality with important effects. It was strong

[a] New Dealers, like most American liberals today, pronounce liberty before equality. But they do so in the eighteenth century Jeffersonian sense, not in the American businessman's sense. The "four freedoms" of Franklin D. Roosevelt are liberties, but they are liberties to get equality, not liberties of the stronger to infringe on the weaker. In this sense, equality is logically derivable from liberty, just as liberty is from equality: if there is real liberty for all there will be equal opportunity and equal justice for all, and there will even be social equality limited only by minor biological inequalities.

[b] While the Protestant sects emphasized the elements of the American Creed, it should not be forgotten that there was an older trait of humanitarianism and equalitarianism in the creed of the Medieval Church.

already in the period of the Revolution and continued to grow. A small proportion of new immigrants throughout the nineteenth century came for religious reasons, or partly so, and a great many more wanted to rationalize their uprooting and transplantation in such terms. So religion itself in America took on a spirit of fight for liberty. The Bible is full of support for such a spirit. It consists to a large extent of the tales of oppression and redemption from oppression: in the Old Testament of the Jewish people and in the New Testament of the early Christians. The rich and mighty are most often the wrongdoers, while the poor and lowly are the followers of God and Christ.

The basic teaching of Protestant Christianity is democratic. We are all poor sinners and have the same heavenly father. The concept of natural rights in the philosophy of Enlightenment corresponded rather closely with the idea of moral law in the Christian faith:

> The doctrine of the free individual, postulating the gradual escape of men from external political control, as they learned to obey the moral law, had its counterpart in the emphasis of evangelicism upon the freedom of the regenerated man from the terrors of the Old Testament code framed for the curbing of unruly and sinful generations. The philosophy of progress was similar to the Utopian hopes of the millennarians. The mission of American democracy to save the world from the oppression of autocrats was a secular version of the destiny of Christianity to save the world from the governance of Satan.[15]

But apart from the historical problem of the extent to which church and religion in America actually inspired the American Creed, they became a powerful container and preserver of the Creed when it was once in existence. This was true from the beginning. While in Europe after the Napoleonic Wars the increasing power of the churches everywhere spelled a period of reaction, the great revivals beginning around 1800 in America were a sort of religious continuation of the Revolution.

> In this way great numbers whom the more-or-less involved theory of natural rights had escaped came under the leveling influence of a religious doctrine which held that all men were equal in the sight of God. Throughout the Revival period the upper classes looked upon the movement as "a religious distemper" which spread like a contagious disease, and they pointed out that it made its greatest appeal to "those of weak intellect and unstable emotions, women, adolescents, and Negroes." But to the poor farmer who had helped to win the Revolution only to find himself oppressed as much by the American ruling classes as he had ever been by Crown officials, the movement was "the greatest stir of Religion since the day of Pentecost."[16]

Religion is still a potent force in American life. "They are a religious people," observed Lord Bryce about Americans a half a century ago, with great understanding for the importance of this fact for their national ideology.[17] American scientific observers are likely to get their attentions

fixed upon the process of progressive secularization to the extent that they do not see this main fact, that America probably is still the most religious country in the Western world. Political leaders are continuously deducing the American Creed out of the Bible. Vice-President Henry Wallace, in his historic speech of May 8, 1942, to the Free World Association, where he declared the present war to be "a fight between a slave world and a free world" and declared himself for "a people's peace" to inaugurate "the century of the common man," spoke thus:

> The idea of freedom—the freedom that we in the United States know and love so well—is derived from the Bible with its extraordinary emphasis on the dignity of the individual. Democracy is the only true political expression of Christianity.
>
> The prophets of the Old Testament were the first to preach social justice. But that which was sensed by the prophets many centuries before Christ was not given complete and powerful political expression until our Nation was formed as a Federal Union a century and a half ago.[18]

Ministers have often been reactionaries in America. They have often tried to stifle free speech; they have organized persecution of unpopular dissenters and have even, in some regions, been active as the organizers of the Ku Klux Klan and similar "un-American" (in terms of the American Creed) movements. But, on the whole, church and religion in America are a force strengthening the American Creed. The fundamental tenets of Christianity press for expression even in the most bigoted setting. And, again on the whole, American religion is not particularly bigoted, but on the contrary, rather open-minded. The mere fact that there are many denominations, and that there is competition between them, forces American churches to a greater tolerance and ecumenical understanding and to a greater humanism and interest in social problems than the people in the churches would otherwise call for.

I also believe that American churches and their teachings have contributed something essential to the emotional temper of the Creed and, indeed, of the American people. Competent and sympathetic foreign observers have always noted the generosity and helpfulness of Americans.[19] This and the equally conspicuous formal democracy in human contacts have undoubtedly had much to do with the predominantly lower class origin of the American people, and even more perhaps, with the mobility and the opportunities—what de Tocqueville called the "equality of condition"—in the nation when it was in its formative stage. But I cannot help feeling that the Christian neighborliness of the common American reflects, also, an influence from the churches. Apart from its origin, this temper of the Americans is part and parcel of the American Creed. It shows up in the Americans' readiness to make financial sacrifices for charitable purposes. No country has so many cheerful givers as America. It was not only "rugged individ-

ualism," nor a relatively continuous prosperity, that made it possible for America to get along without a publicly organized welfare policy almost up to the Great Depression in the 'thirties but it was also the world's most generous private charity.

6. The Roots in English Law

The third main ideological influence behind the American Creed is English law. The indebtedness of American civilization to the culture of the mother country is nowhere else as great as in respect to the democratic concept of law and order, which it inherited almost without noticing it. It is the glory of England that, after many generations of hard struggle, it established the principles of justice, equity, and equality before the law even in an age when the rest of Europe (except for the cultural islands of Switzerland, Iceland, and Scandinavia) based personal security on the arbitrary police and on *lettres de cachet.*

This concept of a government "of laws and not of men" contained certain fundamentals of both equality and liberty. It will be a part of our task to study how these elemental demands are not nearly realized even in present-day America. But in the American Creed they have never been questioned. And it is no exaggeration to state that the philosophical ideas of human equality and the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and property, hastily sowed on American ground in a period of revolution when they were opportune—even allowing ever so much credit to the influences from the free life on the Western frontier—would not have struck root as they did if the soil had not already been cultivated by English law.

Law and order represent such a crucial element both in the American Creed and in the spotty American reality that, at a later stage of our argument in this chapter, we shall have to devote some further remarks to this particular set of ideological roots.

7. American Conservatism

These ideological forces—the Christian religion and the English law—also explain why America through all its adventures has so doggedly stuck to its high ideals: why it has been so conservative in keeping to liberalism as a national creed even if not as its actual way of life. This conservatism, in fundamental principles, has, to a great extent, been perverted into a nearly fetishistic cult of the Constitution. This is unfortunate since the 150-year-old Constitution is in many respects impractical and ill-suited for modern conditions and since, furthermore, the drafters of the document made it technically difficult to change even if there were no popular feeling against change.

The worship of the Constitution also is a most flagrant violation of the

American Creed which, as far as the technical arrangements for executing the power of the people are concerned, is strongly opposed to stiff formulas. Jefferson actually referred to the American form of government as an experiment. The young Walt Whitman, among many other liberals before and after him, expressed the spirit of the American Revolution more faithfully when he demanded "continual additions to our great experiment of how much liberty society will bear." Modern historical studies of how the Constitution came to be as it is reveal that the Constitutional Convention was nearly a plot against the common people. Until recently, the Constitution has been used to block the popular will: the Fourteenth Amendment inserted after the Civil War to protect the civil rights of the poor freedmen has, for instance, been used more to protect business corporations against public control.[a]

But when all this is said, it does not give more than one side of the cult of the Constitution. The common American is not informed on the technicalities and has never thought of any great difference in spirit between the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. When he worships the Constitution, it is an act of American nationalism, and in this the American Creed is inextricably blended. The liberal Creed, even in its dynamic formulation by Jefferson, is adhered to by every American. The unanimity around, and the explicitness of, this Creed is the great wonder of America. The "Old Americans," all those who have thoroughly come to identify themselves with the nation—which are many more than the Sons and Daughters of the Revolution—adhere to the Creed as the faith of their ancestors. The others—the Negroes, the new immigrants, the Jews, and other disadvantaged and unpopular groups—could not possibly have invented a system of political ideals which better corresponded to their interests. So, by the logic of the unique American history, it has developed that the rich and secure, out of pride and conservatism, and the poor and insecure, out of dire need, have come to profess the identical social ideals. The reflecting observer comes to feel that this spiritual convergence, more than America's strategic position behind the oceans and its immense material resources, is what makes the nation great and what promises it a still greater future. Behind it all is the historical reality which makes it possible for the President to appeal to all in the nation in this way: "Let us not forget that we are all descendants from revolutionaries and immigrants."

8. THE AMERICAN CONCEPTION OF LAW AND ORDER

While the Creed is important and is enacted into law, it is not lived up to in practice. To understand this we shall have to examine American

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 5.

attitudes toward law. It is necessary to discuss the legal tradition of America at the outset, since it gives a unique twist to each of the specific problems that we shall take up in ensuing chapters.[a]

Americans are accustomed to inscribe their ideals in laws, ranging from their national Constitution to their local traffic rules. American laws thus often contain, in addition to the actually enforced rules (that is, "laws" in the ordinary technical meaning of the term), other rules which are not valid or operative but merely express the legislators' hopes, desires, advice or dreams. There is nothing in the legal form to distinguish the latter rules from the former ones. Much of the political discussion has to do with the question of strengthening the administration of laws or taking other measures so as to enforce them. Between the completely enforced rules and the unenforceable ones there are many intermediary types which are sometimes, under some conditions, or in some part, only conditionally and incompletely enforced.

To an extent this peculiar cultural trait of America is explainable by the fact that the nation is young and, even more, that it owes its state structure to a revolution—a revolution in the courageously rationalistic age of Enlightenment. Americans have kept to this custom of inscribing their ideals in laws.[b]

The "function," from the legislator's point of view, of legislating national ideals is, of course, a pedagogical one of giving them high publicity and prestige. Legislating ideals has also a "function" of dedicating the nation to the task of gradually approaching them. In a new nation made up of immigrants from all corners of the world and constantly growing by the arrival of other immigrants, carrying with them a greatly diversified cultural heritage, these goals must have stood out as important to statesmen and political thinkers.

Another cultural trait of Americans is a relatively low degree of respect for law and order. This trait, as well as the other one just mentioned, is of paramount importance for the Negro problem as we shall show in some detail in later chapters. There is a relation between these two traits, of high ideals in some laws and low respect for all laws, but this relation is by no means as simple as it appears.

[a] Our analysis is somewhat parallel to that of James Truslow Adams, "Our Lawless Heritage," *Atlantic Monthly* (December, 1928), pp. 732-740.

[b] Other countries, and I am thinking primarily of Great Britain, Holland, and Scandinavia, also sometimes commit their ideals to legislation, but they do so rarely and with great circumspection and extreme caution. On the whole, these countries have left even the essential liberties of citizens in a democracy unformulated as merely implied in all legislation and judicial procedure. Yet they have afforded a greater protection of the common citizens' liberties under the law than America (although they have not faced the same problems as America).

9. NATURAL LAW AND AMERICAN PURITANISM

On this point we must observe somewhat more closely the moralistic attitude toward law in America, expressed in the common belief that there is a "higher law" behind and above the specific laws contained in constitutions, statutes and other regulations.

The idea of a "natural law" has long been a part of our common line of legal tradition. When the elected "lawman" in pre-Christian times "spoke the law" to the assembled arm-bearing freemen, he was not assumed to make the law or invent it but to expound something which existed prior to and independent of himself and all others participating in the procedure. The idea of a "higher law," as well as the whole procedure of letting it become a social reality and, indeed, the entire legal system as it functioned and grew in the northern countries, had deep roots in primitive religion and magic, as is revealed by studies of the contemporary mythology and the peculiar formalistic mechanisms of the creation and operation of law. The distinguishing mark of the particular type of magical thinking in these countries was, however, that out of it developed what we now understand to be the characteristic respect for law of modern democracy.

When representative bodies, among them the English Parliament, emerged as political institutions, they also did not conceive of themselves as "legislatures" in the modern sense, but pretended only to state the law that already "existed." Even when these legislatures began to take on new functions and to make rules to meet new situations, they still kept up the fiction that they only "declared" or "explained" the law as it existed. The modern idea of creating laws by "legislation" is thus a late product in the historical development of Western democracy, and it was never totally freed from the connotation of its subordination to a "higher law" existing independent of all formally fixed rules.

In America the Revolution gave a tremendous spread to this primitive idea of "natural law" as it, in the meantime, had been developed in the philosophies of Enlightenment under the further influences of Greek speculation, Roman law, medieval scholasticism, and free naturalistic speculation since Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes and Hugo Grotius. American religion supported it strongly. The idea fixed itself upon the entire American state structure. "A peculiarity of American democracy had been from the beginning that it put its faith in a higher law rather than in the changing will of the people."[20] The role given to the Supreme Court and the tradition of this tribunal not to "legislate," which as a court it could hardly have the right to do, but to refer to the higher principles back of the Constitution strengthened still more the grip of this old idea on the mind of the Americans.

The adherence even in modern times to this idealistic conception of the

origin and reality of the judicial order undoubtedly, in one way, raised its moral prestige among the American people as it had done earlier in the history of the Old World. No careful observer of the present American scene should miss seeing, in spite of everything we shall discuss presently, the common American's pride in and devotion to the nation's judicial system and its legal institutions. Government authorities constantly appeal to this idealistic pride and devotion of the citizens in order to enforce the law. In America, there is a continuous endeavor to keep the judicial system orderly, and there is a continuous educational campaign on behalf of this idealism. Undoubtedly *the idealistic concept of American law as an emanation of "natural law" is a force which strengthens the rule of law in America.*

But, in another way, it is at the same time most detrimental to automatic, unreflecting law observance on the part of the citizens. Laws become disputable on moral grounds. Each legislative statute is judged by the common citizen in terms of his conception of the higher "natural law." He decides whether it is "just" or "unjust" and has *the dangerous attitude that, if it is unjust, he may feel free to disobey it.*[21] The strong stress on individual rights and the almost complete silence on the citizen's duties in the American Creed make this reaction the more natural. The Jeffersonian distrust of government—"that government is best which governs least"—soon took the form, particularly on the Western frontier, of a distrust and disrespect for the enacted laws. The doctrine of a higher law fosters an "extra-legal" disposition towards the state and excuses illegal acts.

But the frontier was not, in this respect, fundamentally different from the old colonies. Without stepping outside the American tradition, Garrison could pronounce even the Constitution to be a "compact with Hell" on the slavery issue. This, by itself, would not have been dangerous to democracy, if he had meant to argue only for a change of the Constitution. But he and many more Northerners of conscientious inclinations found it a moral obligation not to obey the fugitive slave laws. Here the citizen does not stop to criticize the laws and the judicial system and demand a change in them, but he sets his own conception of the "higher law" above the existing laws in society and feels it his right to disobey them. It is against this background also that we shall have to study the amazing disrespect for law and order which even today characterizes the Southern states in America and constitutes such a large part of the Negro problem. This anarchistic tendency founded upon a primitive concept of natural law has never left American political speculation or American popular thought.[22]

This anarchistic tendency in America's legal culture becomes even more dangerous because of the presence of a quite different tendency: *a desire to regulate human behavior tyrannically by means of formal laws.* This last tendency is a heritage from early American puritanism which was some-

times fanatical and dogmatic and always had a strong inclination to mind other people's business. So we find that this American, who is so proud to announce that he will not obey laws other than those which are "good" and "just," as soon as the discussion turns to something which in his opinion is bad and unjust, will emphatically pronounce that "there ought to be a law against . . ." To demand and legislate all sorts of laws against this or that is just as much part of American freedom as to disobey the laws when they are enacted. America has become a country where exceedingly much is permitted in practice but at the same time exceedingly much is forbidden in law.

By instituting a national prohibition of the sale of liquor without taking adequate steps for its enforcement, America was nearly drenched in corruption and organized crime until the statute was repealed. The laws against gambling have, on a smaller scale, the same effect at the present time. And many more of those unrespected laws are damaging in so far as they, for example, prevent a rational organization of various public activities, or when they can be used by individuals for blackmailing purposes or by the state or municipal authorities to persecute unpopular individuals or groups. Such practices are conducive to a general disrespect for law in America. Actually today it is a necessity in everyday living for the common good American citizen to decide for himself which laws should be observed and which not.

10. THE FALTERING JUDICIAL ORDER

We shall meet this conflict as a central theme in all angles of the Negro problem. The conflict should not, however, be formulated only in terms of the national ideology. Or, rather, this ideology is not fully explainable in terms of the thoughts and feelings out of which the American Creed was composed.

A low degree of law observance already became habitual and nationally cherished in colonial times when the British Parliament and Crown, increasingly looked upon as a foreign ruler by the Americans, insisted upon passing laws which the Americans considered unwise, impractical or simply unjust. The free life on the frontier also strained legal bonds. There the conflict between puritanical intolerance and untamed desire for individual freedom clashed more severely than anywhere else. The mass immigration and the cultural heterogeneity were other factors hampering the fixation of a firm legal order in America. The presence of states within the nation with different sets of laws and the high mobility between states were contributing factors. The jurisdictional friction between states and the federal government, the technical and political difficulties in changing the federal Constitution, the consequent great complexity of the American legal system, and the mass of legal fiction and plain trickery also are among the

important factors. For example, it cannot be conducive to the highest respect for the legal system that the federal government is forced to carry out important social legislation under the fiction that it is regulating "interstate commerce," or that federal prosecuting agencies punish dangerous gangsters for income tax evasion rather than for the felonies they have committed.

So this idealistic America also became the country of legalistic formalism. Contrary to America's basic ideology of natural law and its strong practical sense, "the letter of the law," as opposed to its "spirit," came to have an excessive importance. The weak bureaucracy[a] became tangled up in "red tape." The clever lawyer came to play a large and unsavory role in politics, in business, and in the everyday life of the citizens. The Americans thus got a judicial order which is in many respects contrary to all their inclinations.

Under the influence of all these and many other factors the common American citizen has acquired a comparatively low degree of personal identification with the state and the legal machinery. An American, when he accidentally comes by the scene of a crime or of an attempt by the police to seize an offender, is, on the average, more inclined to hurry on in order not to get involved in something unpleasant, and less inclined to stop and help the arm of the law, than a Britisher or a Scandinavian would be under similar circumstances. He is more likely to look on his country's and his community's politics and administration as something to be indulged and tolerated, as outside his own responsibility, and less likely to think and act as a would-be legislator, in a cooperative endeavor to organize a decent social life.[b] He is even inclined to dissociate himself from politics as something unworthy and to take measures to keep the worthy things "out of politics." This is part of what Lord Bryce called "the fatalism of the multitude" in America. This political fatalism and the lack of identification and participation work as a vicious circle, being both cause and effect of corruption and political machine rule.

The authorities, when not relying upon the idealistic appeal, will most often meet the citizen's individualistic inclinations by trying to educate him to obey the law less in terms of collective interest than in terms of self-interest. They try to tell the young that "crime does not pay," which, in some areas, is a statement of doubtful truth.

In the exploitation of the new continent business leaders were not particular about whether or not the means they used corresponded either with the natural law or with the specific laws of the nation or the states. This became of greater importance because of the central position of business in the formation of national aspirations and ideals. When Theodore

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 2.

[b] The low degree of participation will be discussed in Chapter 33.

Roosevelt exclaimed: "Damn the law! I want the canal built," he spoke the language of his contemporary business world and of the ordinary American.

We have to conceive of all the numerous breaches of law, which an American citizen commits or learns about in the course of ordinary living, as psychologically a series of shocks which condition him and the entire society to a low degree of law observance. The American nation has, further, experienced disappointments in its attempts to legislate social change, which, with few exceptions, have been badly prepared and inefficiently carried out. The almost traumatic effects of these historical disappointments have been enhanced by America's conspicuous success in so many fields other than legislation. One of the trauma was the Reconstruction legislation, which attempted to give Negroes civil rights in the South; another one was the anti-trust legislation pressed by the Western farmers and enacted to curb the growth of monopolistic finance capitalism; a third one was the prohibition amendment.

II. INTELLECTUAL DEFEATISM

Against this background, and remembering the puritan tendency in America to make all sorts of haphazard laws directed at symptoms and not at causes and without much consideration for social facts and possibilities,[23] it is understandable that the social scientists, particularly the sociologists, in America have developed a defeatist attitude towards the possibility of inducing social change by means of legislation.[a] The political "do-nothing" tendency is strong in present-day social science in America. It is, typically enough, developed as a *general* theory—actually as a scientific translation of the old natural law idea in its negative import. The social scientists simply reflect the general distrust of politics and legislation that is widespread among the educated classes of Americans.

Of particular importance to us is that this view is common even among Negro intellectuals when reflecting on various aspects of the Negro problem. The failure of Reconstruction had especially severe effects on them. Younger Negro intellectuals are disposed to express disbelief in the possibility that much can be won by politics, legislation, and law suits, and have become inclined to set their hopes on what they conceive of as more fundamental changes of the economic structure. Sometimes they think in terms of an economic revolution. But, whether their thoughts take such a radical direction or stay conservative, a common trait is fatalism in regard to politics and legislation. Fatalism in regard to *res publica* is, however,

[a] These points are developed at greater length in Appendix 2. We are here referring not to the specialists on law and law enforcement but to the general sociologist, economist, or political scientist when he meets legislation as an angle of his respective problems.

by no means a Negro characteristic. It is a common American disease of the democratic spirit which is on the way to becoming chronic.

We shall meet this tendency as it affects various aspects of the Negro problem as we go along. A few critical remarks on the general theory that "stateways cannot change folkways" need to be made at the start. In this abstract form and as applied to various specific problems, the theory cannot be true, since in other parts of the world similar changes are effectuated by means of legislation. The theory must, therefore, be qualified in the light of specific American conditions. But even in America new legislation, infringing upon old customs and upon individual and local interests, is often made fairly watertight nowadays.[24] The general explanation why some laws have been more successful than others in America is that *they have been better prepared and better administered.*

This means that, among the explanations for the general disrepute and deficiency of law and order in America, there are two other factors: *the habit of passing laws without careful investigation, and the relatively low standard of American administration of law.* To the latter point we shall return in a later chapter,[a] where we shall point also to the new but strong tendency in America toward the building up of an independent and legal administration. On the former point we shall restrict ourselves to quoting a high authority: "For nothing is done with so little of scientific or orderly method as the legislative making of laws."[25]

These two factors are strategic. When the foolish attempts to suppress symptoms of ills while leaving the causes untouched become censored, and when lawmaking increasingly becomes an important task of scientific social engineering, and when, further, administration becomes independent, legal, impartial, and efficient, better laws will be made, and they will be better enforced even in America. It is a problem to explain why lawmaking and administration have been so backward in a nation where private business and also private agencies for public good are often excellently organized.

The mere possibility of change in these two factors shows the fallacy of the general theory that law cannot change custom. In the face of the tendency in American society toward more careful lawmaking and improved administration the theory appears politically as well as theoretically biased; biased against induced change. In this book we shall meet other dynamic tendencies in American society favoring the same development, the chief among them being, perhaps, the growing cultural homogeneity and the increasing political and social participation of the masses. Many social scientists tend not only to ignore these changes, but to deny them and, in some cases, to oppose them.

If in the course of time Americans are brought to be a law-abiding people, and if they at the same time succeed in keeping alive not only their

[a] See Chapter 20.

conservatism in fundamental principles and their pride and devotion to their national political institutions, but also some of their puritan eagerness and courage in attempting to reform themselves and the world—redirected somewhat from the old Biblical inclination of thinking only in terms of prescriptions and purges—this great nation may become the master builder of a stable but progressive commonwealth.

12. "LIP-SERVICE"

The conflict in the American concept of law and order is only one side of the "moral overstrain" of the nation. America believes in and aspires to something much higher than its plane of actual life. The subordinate position of Negroes is perhaps the most glaring conflict in the American conscience and the greatest unsolved task for American democracy. But it is by no means the only one. Donald Young complains:

> In our more introspective moments, nearly all of us Americans will admit that our government contains imperfections and anachronisms. We who have been born and brought up under the evils of gang rule, graft, political incompetence, inadequate representation, and some of the other weaknesses of democracy, American plan, have developed mental callouses and are no longer sensitive to them.[26]

The *popular* explanation of the disparity in America between ideals and actual behavior is that Americans do not have the slightest intention of living up to the ideals which they talk about and put into their Constitution and laws. Many Americans are accustomed to talk loosely and disparagingly about adherence to the American Creed as "lip-service" and even "hypocrisy." Foreigners are even more prone to make such a characterization.

This explanation is too superficial. To begin with, the true hypocrite sins in secret; he conceals his faults. The American, on the contrary, is strongly and sincerely "against sin," even, and not least, his own sins. He investigates his faults, puts them on record, and shouts them from the housetops, adding the most severe recriminations against himself, including the accusation of hypocrisy. If all the world is well informed about the political corruption, organized crime, and faltering system of justice in America, it is primarily not due to its malice but to American publicity about its own imperfections. America's handling of the Negro problem has been criticized most emphatically by white Americans since long before the Revolution, and the criticism has steadily gone on and will not stop until America has completely reformed itself.

Bryce observed: "They know, and are content that all the world should know, the worst as well as the best of themselves. They have a boundless faith in free inquiry and full discussion. They admit the possibility of any number of temporary errors and delusions."[27] The present author remembers, from his first visit to this country as an inexperienced social scientist

at the end of the 'twenties, how confused he often felt when Americans in all walks of life were trustingly asking him to tell them what was "wrong with this country." It is true that this open-mindedness, particularly against the outside world, may have decreased considerably since then on account of the depression, and that the present War might work in the same direction, though this is not certain; and it is true also that the opposite tendency always had its strong representation in America. But, by and large, America has been and will remain, in all probability, a society which is eager to indulge in self-scrutiny and to welcome criticism.

This American eagerness to get on record one's sins and their causes is illustrated in the often quoted letter by Patrick Henry (1772), where he confessed that he had slaves because he was "drawn along by the general inconvenience of living here without them."

> I will not, I cannot, justify it. However culpable my conduct, I will so far pay my devoir to virtue as to own the excellence and rectitude of her precepts, and lament my want of conformity to them.[28]

American rationalism and moralism spoke through Patrick Henry. America as a nation is like its courageous and eloquent son of the Revolution. It is continuously paying its *devoir* to virtue; it is repeating its allegiance to the full American Creed by lamenting its want of conformity to it. The strength and security of the nation helped this puritan tradition to continue. No weak nation anxious for its future could ever have done it. Americans believe in their own ability and in progress. They are at bottom moral optimists.

In a great nation there is, of course, division of labor. Some Americans do most of the sinning, but most do some of it. Some specialize in muckraking, preaching, and lamentation; but there is a little of the muckraker and preacher in all Americans. On the other hand, superficially viewed, Americans often appear cynical. Their social science has lately developed along a deterministic track of amoralistic nonconcernedness; but this is itself easily seen to be a moralistic reaction. As a matter of fact, this young nation is the least cynical of all nations. It is not hypocritical in the usual sense of the word, but labors persistently with its moral problems. It is taking its Creed very seriously indeed, and this is the reason why the ideals are not only continuously discussed but also represent a social force—why they receive more than "lip-service" in the collective life of the nation. The cultural unity of the nation is this common sharing in both the consciousness of sins and the devotion to high ideals.

Americans accuse themselves, and are accused by others, of being materialists. But they are equally extreme in the other direction. Sometimes an American feels moved to put the matter right, as Josiah Royce did when he explained:

> When foreigners accuse us of extraordinary love for gain, and of practical materialism, they fail to see how largely we are a nation of idealists. Yet that we are such a nation is something constantly brought to the attention of those whose calling requires them to observe any of the tendencies prevalent in our recent intellectual life in America.[29]

The American problem to be studied in this book would, indeed, have an entirely different prognosis if this fact were forgotten.

13. VALUE PREMISES IN THIS STUDY

For the study of a national problem which cuts so sharply through the whole body politic as does the Negro problem, no other set of valuations could serve as adequately as the norm for an incisive formulation of our value premises as can the American Creed. No other norm could compete in authority over people's minds. "The American democratic faith is a pattern of ideals providing standards of value with which the accomplishments of realistic democracy may be judged," observes an author surveying the historical trends of American thinking.[30]

And there is no doubt that these ideals are active realities. The student of American history must be professionally near-sighted or blinded by a doctrinal belief in a materialistic determinism if he fails to see the significance of tracing how the Creed is gradually realizing itself. *The American Creed is itself one of the dominant "social trends."* "Call it a dream or call it vision," says John Dewey, "it has been interwoven in a tradition that has had an immense effect upon American life."[31] Or, to quote a distinguished Negro thinker, the late Kelly Miller:

> In this country political, social and economic conditions gravitate toward equality. We may continue to expect thunderstorms in the political firmament so long as there exists inequality of political temperature in the atmosphere of the two regions. Neither Massachusetts nor Mississippi will rest satisfied until there is an equality of political condition in both States. . . . Democratic institutions can no more tolerate a double political status than two standards of ethics or discrepant units of weight and measure.[32]

But apart from trends, the American Creed represents the national conscience. The Negro is a "problem" to the average American partly because of a palpable conflict between the status actually awarded him and those ideals.

The American Creed, just because it is a living reality in a developing democracy, is not a fixed and clear-cut dogma. It is still growing. During the Revolutionary epoch the interests of statesmen and philosophers and of the general public were focused on the more formal aspects of freedom, equality and justice. After a long period of material expansion but not rapid spiritual growth, the American Creed is in this generation again in

a formative stage. It is now discovering its ideals in the social and economic sphere and in the realm of international organization.

While this is going on, there are great disparities in opinions even on fundamentals in these new fields of valuation—as there were during the Revolution concerning the ideals which then became crystallized. Some Americans see in trade unions a denial of the rights to human liberty; others see in the unions an expression of the common man's right to reach for greater equality and freedom. Some Americans want to tax property and nationalize public utilities in order to defend equality of opportunity for the masses of the people and to preserve their liberties; others see in such attempts an assault upon American principles of liberty. In the international field American ideals in recent decades and even today seem divided and rambling in the wide space of the triangle marked by the three points: absolute isolationism, an organized world democracy, and American world imperialism.

These great disparities of opinion would, in any other social problem, considerably increase the technical difficulties of utilizing the Creed as a set of specified and definite value premises for research. When in later chapters we face the task of defining our value premises specifically, we shall find that this is not the case in the Negro problem. The Creed is expressive and definite in practically all respects of importance for the Negro problem. Most of the value premises with which we shall be concerned have actually been incorporated for a long time in the national Constitution and in the constitutions and laws of the several states.

The deeper reason for the technical simplicity of the value aspect of the Negro problem is this: From the point of view of the American Creed the status accorded the Negro in America represents nothing more and nothing less than a century-long lag of public morals. In principle the Negro problem was settled long ago; in practice the solution is not effectuated. The Negro in America has not yet been given the elemental civil and political rights of formal democracy, including a fair opportunity to earn his living, upon which a general accord was already won when the American Creed was first taking form. And this anachronism constitutes the contemporary "problem" both to Negroes and to whites.

If those rights were respected, many other pressing social problems would, of course, still remain. Many Negroes would, together with many whites, belong to groups which would invoke the old ideals of equality and liberty in demanding more effective protection for their social and economic opportunities. But there would no longer be a *Negro* problem. This does not mean that the Negro problem is an easy problem to solve. It is a tremendous task for theoretical research to find out why the Negro's status is what it is. In its unsolved form it further intertwines with all other social problems. It is simple only in the technical sense that in America the value

premises—if they are conceived to be the ideals of the American Creed—are extraordinarily specific and definite.

Finally, in order to avoid possible misunderstandings, it should be explained that we have called this Creed "American" in the sense that it is adhered to by the Americans. This is the only matter which interests us in this book, which is focused upon the Negro problem as part of American life and American politics. But this Creed is, of course, no American monopoly. With minor variations, some of which, however, are not without importance, the American Creed is the common democratic creed. "American ideals" are just humane ideals as they have matured in our common Western civilization upon the foundation of Christianity and pre-Christian legalism and under the influence of the economic, scientific, and political development over a number of centuries. The American Creed is older and wider than America itself.

CHAPTER 2

ENCOUNTERING THE NEGRO PROBLEM

1. On the Minds of the Whites

When we say that there is a Negro *problem* in America, what we mean is that the Americans are worried about it. It is on their minds and on their consciences.

To begin with, the Negro is a problem to himself. If a multitude of first-hand random observations, such as we have made over the whole country, are any evidence, the contented Negro, whose mind is at peace on the race issue, is a rare phenomenon. As a generalization he is definitely a myth. Whether the myth was ever wholly true in the past, I cannot say. It is evident, however, that for a long time the Negro protest has been rising. This trend became sharply accentuated during the First World War. The present War will, in all probability, increase their discontent with their status in America.

The Negro problem is working on the white man's mind too, even, and not least, when he wants to convince himself and others that it is settled for all time. The problem has varying degrees of importance in different regions, depending partly on their historical backgrounds and on the relative proportion of Negroes in their populations, as also in different social classes and under different religious, educational and ideological influences. Over large areas of America where there are few or no Negroes, the Negro problem is of minor importance to the people living there. To these ordinary white Americans, the only reason why the Negro problem has a higher salience than, say, the problem of British imperialism in India or, earlier, the Irish question, is his citizenship in the United States and, consequently, his feeling of national responsibility. The frequent reminders in the press and in public discussions of the practice of lynching and the agitation around the proposed anti-lynching legislation, the reports of Negro criminality, the continuous recollections of discrimination in education and in the labor market, and just now the public discomfort around the racial angle of both the larger world conflict and the war efforts at home—all constantly actualize to some degree this feeling of responsibility.

This national participation in the Negro problem should not be exag-

gerated. Neither should it be minimized. It is the writer's conclusion that even in those Northern states with few Negroes, the Negro problem is always present though relatively quiescent. Nearly everybody in America is prepared to discuss the issue, and almost nobody is entirely without opinions on it. The opinions vary. They may be vague and hesitating or even questioning, or they may be hardened and articulate. But few Americans are unaware of the Negro problem.

So it seems always to have been. Wandering around the stacks of a good American library, one is amazed at the huge amount of printed material on the Negro problem. A really complete bibliography would run up to several hundred thousand titles.[1] Nobody has ever mastered this material exhaustively, and probably nobody ever will. The intellectual energy spent on the Negro problem in America should, if concentrated in a single direction, have moved mountains.

This does not imply that the Negro problem approaches the status of a dominant issue. It is not now a main divider of opinions in national politics, although it was so in the decades before and after the Civil War. There were other periods in American history, however, when it was in the background, perhaps never so much as in the decades before the First World War. But as a secondary problem and as a peculiar influence on all the dominant national issues, it has always held a rank among the most conspicuous. Through the generations, it has disturbed the religious moralists, the political philosophers, the statesmen, the philanthropists, the social scientists, the politicians, the businessmen and the plain citizens.

A number of factors underlie the present trends—such as the danger of continued and, after the Second World War, intensified economic dislocation with its serious effects on Negro employment; the rising tension around democracy as a form of government and a way of life; and, finally, the rising educational level and intensified group consciousness and discontent of the Negro people themselves. All this makes it probable that the Negro problem in America is again going to mount high in relative importance among national issues.

2. To the Negroes Themselves

To the Negro himself, the problem is all-important. A Negro probably seldom talks to a white man, and still less to a white woman, without consciousness of this problem. Even in a mixed white and Negro group of closest friends in Northern intellectual circles, and probably even in an all-Negro group, the Negro problem constantly looms in the background of social intercourse. It steers the jokes and the allusions, if it is not one of the dominant topics of conversation. As an inescapable overtone in social relations, "race" is probably just as strong as sex—even in those most

emancipated American environments where apparently sex is relatively released and "race" is suppressed.

The Negro leader, the Negro social scientist, the Negro man of art and letters is disposed to view all social, economic, political, indeed, even esthetic and philosophical issues from the Negro angle. What is more, he is expected to do so. He would seem entirely out of place if he spoke simply as a member of a community, a citizen of America or as a man of the world. In the existing American civilization he can grow to a degree of distinction, but always as a representative of "his people," not as an ordinary American or an individual in humanity. He might protest; if he does it for the proper audience and in the proper forms, he is allowed to protest: but he protests as a Negro. He can criticize, but only as a Negro defending Negro interests. That is the social role awarded him, and he cannot step out of it. He is defined as a "race man" regardless of the role he might wish to choose for himself. He cannot publicly argue about collective bargaining generally in America, the need of a national budgetary reform, monetary schemes for world organization, moral philosophies and esthetic principles.

Even if originally he should have had the interests and the aptitudes for wider knowledge and a broader career, the pressure of this expectancy on the part of society conditions his personality and forces him, willy-nilly, into the role of a Negro champion. This expectancy is entrenched in all institutions in American society, including universities, learned societies and foundations. It animates even the staunchest friends and protectors of the Negro minority, often, indeed, for the reason that the Negroes sorely need their leadership. The same expectancy of their leaders is shared by the Negro people. The Negro leader, sensing that his own people need him and conscious that his racial origin offers him an easy opportunity for a role in life, thus acquires his characteristic direction. Even women in modern times do not have their souls so pressed into one single narrow furrow of human interests by the tyrannic expectancy of society, although the women's lot in this, as in many other respects, offers the nearest analogy. The Negro genius is imprisoned in the Negro problem. There is throughout the entire history of the United States no single example of an exception to this rule important enough to be cited.[2]

The difference in this respect between the Negro and other "racial" minorities—the Jews, for example—is notable. The difference is not explainable simply in terms of differences in natural and cultural abilities between the two groups. A Jewish economist is not expected to be a specialist on Jewish labor. A Jewish sociologist is not assumed to confine himself always to studying the Ghetto. A Jewish singer is not doomed eternally to perform Jewish folk songs. A Jew is not out of place either as a governor of a state or as a planner of world reconstruction. The Jew is discriminated against in America, but there is a quantitative difference between this and

the discrimination against the Negro which is so great that it becomes qualitative. On the intellectual level, which we are now discussing, the fettering of the Negro spirit within the Negro problem is not accomplished so much by simple discrimination as by the prejudice inherent even in the most friendly but restrictive expectancy, including the expectancy of the Negro people.

So far we have been commenting on the fate of those rare persons with extraordinary talents who, if any, should have both the intellectual strength and the opportunities to break out of the prison of the Negro problem. To the ordinary members of the Negro upper and middle class, even the window shutters of the prison are closed. It will be the theme of following chapters to show in some detail how Negro preachers, teachers, professionals, and businessmen have had to build their whole economic and social existence on the basis of the segregation of their people, in response to the dictates of the white society. To state the situation bluntly: these upper class Negroes are left free to earn their living and their reputation in the backwater of discrimination, but they are not free to go into the main current of the river itself. On the one hand, they are kept fully aware of the wider range of opportunities from which they are excluded by segregation and discrimination. On the other hand, they know equally well how they are sheltered by the monopoly left to them in their little world apart. In their whole outlook on life and society they are forced into an impossible and tragic dilemma.

The masses of the Negro people, however, unlike the more advantaged leaders, professionals, and businessmen, derive almost none of the compensatory gains from the caste system. They sense how they are hampered and enclosed behind the walls of segregation and discrimination more acutely than might be expected.

They do not usually spend too much of their mental energy on theorizing over the Negro problem. Their days are filled with toil and more personal troubles and pleasures. But, as we shall find, in most of these varied activities, the Negro problem enters as a loud overtone. It is heard in church, in school, on the work place, in the play yard and on the street. They, too, are imprisoned in the Negro problem.

The broad masses of Negroes are also enclosed in the prison as effectively by the restrictive expectancy of their friends as by the persecutions of their enemies.

> The patronizing attitude is really more damning than the competitive struggle. The stone wall of calm assumption of his inferiority is to the Negro a keener hurt and a greater obstacle than the battle which admits an adversary worth fighting against. It is hard to keep ambition alive and to maintain morale when those for whom you have fondness and respect keep thinking and saying that you are only children, that you can never grow up, that you are cast by God in an inferior mould.[3]

The late James Weldon Johnson sums up this situation of the Negro people in the following way:

> And this is the dwarfing, warping, distorting influence which operates upon each and every coloured man in the United States. He is forced to take his outlook on all things, not from the view-point of a citizen, or a man, or even a human being, but from the view-point of a *coloured* man. It is wonderful to me that the race has progressed so broadly as it has, since most of its thought and all of its activity must run through the narrow neck of this one funnel.[4]

3. EXPLAINING THE PROBLEM AWAY

To the white Americans the possibilities of keeping the Negro problem out of their minds are, naturally, greater and, in addition, they have certainly good selfish reasons for keeping it below the level of consciousness. To be sure, it was a not unusual experience of the writer to be told confidently sometimes by the learned, but most often by the laity, that there is "no Negro problem" in America and that, if there ever was one, it is solved and settled for all time and to the full satisfaction of both parties. Everything is quiet on the racial front. We think the Negroes are all right in their place; and they on their part do not want things changed. In fact, they are the happiest lot on earth. Just look at them: how they laugh and enjoy themselves; how they sing and praise the Lord.

This attitude was met most frequently and expressed most emphatically in the Deep South. It was often maliciously added that there was surely a Negro problem in the North, but only because the Yankees have not yet learned to know the Negro and how to keep him in his proper place. The situation, if true, would certainly deserve to be called paradoxical: The Negroes should be least of a problem to the whites in the regions where they are most numerous. They should show up among the human and national worries, though certainly not as a principal one, of a Minnesota farmer who never sees Negroes, but be no problem at all to the Southern planter who works them in scores and is always surrounded by them.

All this is not true, of course. A contrary statement, that the white South is virtually obsessed by the Negro problem, that the South has allowed the Negro problem to rule its politics and its business, fetter its intelligence and human liberties, and hamper its progress in all directions, would be nearer the truth.[5] A brilliant Northerner, Frank Tannenbaum,[6] has taken up this thought and, presumably fully in earnest, suggested, as the only hope of solving the Southern problem, that the Southerners get other worries to keep their minds off the Negro: they should get labor troubles, try to get immigrants and develop a complex at home against white "foreigners," and generally get some real issues into their petty politics. This might be carrying an idea to an extreme for educational purposes, but certainly there is a kernel of sense in it.

Apart from the few intellectuals of pronounced liberal leanings, however, statements to the effect that there really is no Negro problem have become part of the common stock of stereotyped opinions in the South, and they are not entirely absent from the North. But such statements cover a volcanic ground of doubt, disagreement, concern, and even anxiety—of moral tension and need for escape and defense. To furnish such a covering is, from a psychological point of view, their very "function." The prevalence of such opinions and the intensity with which they are expressed might serve as an index of the latent interracial tension felt in the white world.

The usefulness of this escape rationalization has a limit, however. The limit is reached when overt interracial struggles appear. The notion of "no Negro problem" is then suddenly transformed into an alarming awareness that the contrary is so. This contrary reaction can be invoked experimentally, simply by directing attention to the potentialities of conflict. Particularly when talking to people among the poorer classes of whites with less intellectual control over their thoughts and feelings, the writer has repeatedly observed the most flagrant contradictions on this point, sometimes appearing within the same sentence. A white Southerner can defend, for instance, the suppression of the Negroes by saying that they are satisfied with their status and lack a desire for change. Without any intermediate remarks, he can then proceed to explain that suppression is necessary, that Negroes must be kept down by all means, and that Negroes have an ineradicable craving to be like white people. Attempts on the part of the interlocutor to draw attention to the contradiction have seldom succeeded.

Some light might be thrown on this state of mind of many American whites by observing the different state of mind of the Negroes. The Negroes cannot, of course, feel an equivalent need for this special type of self-defense, that there is "no Negro problem," which in the white world is a defense against one's own thoughts and feelings and the opinions of other whites. Actually, it often happened that the writer was told by Negroes in the South that race relations in their part of the country offered no particular difficulties and were not much of a problem. White people present at such pronouncements took great pleasure in the corroboration of their own statements. It would seem that such statements from Negro leaders are part of the moral tribute expected from those leaders at all public interracial affairs, such as school festivals, programs of entertainment centered around Negro singers, interchurch meetings, and other occasions where white representatives are present. That the Negroes should be allowed to voice complaints, even though only in a cautious tone, constituted the radical departure in the innovation of interracial commissions after the First World War. Their meetings are between the "best people of the two races," and are typically not open to the general public.

Statements that interracial relations are good thus belong in the South to the etiquette of Negro college presidents, principals and teachers of Negro schools, and all other Negroes enjoying upper or middle class status under the sanction of the power of appointment and dismissal in the hands of white boards or officials. They are also widely accepted as a way of getting along by a considerable number of Negro preachers and by the handful of thriving and successful Negro businessmen. In return, these persons are allowed much leeway, particularly in the Upper South. These sentiments are sometimes also expressed by Negro professionals who are aware of the local requirements for successful leadership.

But, even in these cases, the statements that there is "no Negro problem" have an easily detected difference in tone when pronounced by Negroes. To begin with, they are usually restricted expressly to the local community, and often qualified by certain reservations as to this or that which might need improvement, while the corresponding white pronouncements are mostly broad and absolute in character. They are, further, as a defense mechanism, primarily directed against provoking the suspicions of the other group. They are, finally, not to be taken too seriously. The writer repeatedly made the observation, both in the Deep South and in the Upper South, as well as in the North, that a Negro seldom took this position when talking freely and when there was no point in hiding his real feelings.

The difference between the two groups, with respect to the recognition of the Negro problem, corresponds, of course, to the fundamental fact that the white group is above and the Negro group is below, that the one is intent upon preserving the *status quo,* while the other wants change and relief from the pressure of the dominant group. The one group is tempted to convince itself and others that there is "no problem." The other group has a contrary interest to see clearly and even make visible to others the existence of a real problem. This latter group may be hushed by fear or opportunistic calculations. These calculations can, of course, be of the most respectable character; indeed, they often are part of the cautious Negro patriot's wise policy of trying to safeguard his people from needless sufferings and to gain favors for them from the dominating white group. But, in any case, the explanation is not to be sought in such deep-seated internal tensions as with the white people. The Negro's rationalization, when it is articulated, is likely to be much more overt and, indeed, sometimes cynically so. It has not the same character of a self-deceiving defense construction against one's own moral feelings.

4. EXPLORATIONS IN ESCAPE

In a big city in the Deep South I was once taken by a friend to an upper class club for a social luncheon party. The conversation turned around world affairs, the business trend, art, literature and some personal gossiping; the tone was most con-

genial and free, perhaps even carefree, and had the distinctive mark of skeptical openmindedness which accompanies social security and a lifelong experience of unhampered cultural opportunities. Near the intended end of the party, my friend announced the peculiar reason for my being in America at the present time and invited the company to tell me their frank opinions on the Negro problem.

For a moment a somewhat awkward silence descended upon our party, a queer feeling that our relation of human understanding was broken. An illusion was shattered. Here we had all been behaving on the understanding that we were men of the world, members of that select cosmopolitan fellowship which senses no strong local ties and whose minds meet in most broad topics of general and human interest; and then suddenly my friend had violated this understanding by addressing all the others as a local fraternity sharing a dark secret together, while I was marked off as the stranger peeping in on them and their secret, the Negro problem.

The situation most urgently had to be redefined. The responsibility was shouldered by an elderly, very distinguished doctor. He made a short speech (the discussion had suddenly turned very formal) to the effect that in the South there was "no Negro problem"; a static equilibrium had been reached, and was going to remain, and it fitted the situation as a glove fits the hand. More particularly, he went on, the relations between the two races in the South corresponded to their inherited abilities and aptitudes. A long time ago those relations had been stratified into "folkways and mores," known and respected by both races and taken for granted, or rather as self-evident, in view of the inferior endowments of the African race and the superior qualities of the Anglo-Saxon master race. The doctor ended up by pointing out that it was, in fact, inherent in this very notion of "mores," that they could never be questioned or disputed or even consciously analyzed. There could, indeed, by definition, never be a "problem" concerning the mores of society. The very question was nonsensical. The mores were the ground everybody walked upon, the axioms of social life, even more unquestioned than the religious truths and for more substantial psychological reasons.

The doctor finished. Everybody agreed, and there was really nothing in the issue to discuss. The few moments' stress was eased, and a measure of congeniality again restored. I then reflected that the South was, as I was finding out, now on the way to giving the Negroes a real chance in education. I referred to the continuous improvement of public schools even for Negroes and to the growing number of Negro youths who were permitted to acquire a higher education of a kind, even in the South. It had occurred to me, I continued, that this tread in education—leaving many other primary causes of change unmentioned—represented a dynamic factor of cumulative importance. If it was given time, and if the direct and indirect effects in all spheres of life were allowed to accumulate, the resultant social change might finally attain a momentum where it could seriously challenge, or at least move quite a bit, the "folkways and mores" our doctor had rooted so firmly, not only in tradition, but in the very nature of things and particularly in the biology of the races. Yes, it might make it difficult to keep the Negro in his place. It might, for instance, make it much less easy to hold him disfranchised; in all certainty it would soon render obsolete one of the principal arguments and constitutional instruments for denying him the ballot—namely, his illiteracy.

After this remark, I did not need to say anything more for the next hour or two

but could lean back and listen to one of the most revealing and most ably performed, though sometimes heated, intellectual debates on the Negro problem in America I had, up till then, and even thereafter, heard. This was not a theater performance staged for my benefit; the arguments were too well considered and reasoned to be suspected of being improvised for the occasion; I was, indeed, happily forgotten most of the time. There was genuine concern, and there was serious disagreement. Professor Sumner's theory of folkways and mores had evaporated into the thinnest nothing; even the doctor never said a word more about the mystically unproblematic "mores." At the end I had the opportunity to restore good feeling between the debaters in a roar of understanding laughter when I closed my thanks for Southern hospitality with the observation that apparently they seemed to have a most disturbing Negro problem on their minds down in the Old South.

A situation in the Negro world parallel to this experience showing how the problem burns under the cover of a placid stereotype was given me in one of the very first weeks of my study of the Negro problem in America. When I and my Swedish associate (accompanied at this occasion by a white friend of the Negro people, a professor at a Southern university) visited a Negro leader prominent in banking and insurance in a city of the Upper South, he had kindly arranged for a gathering in his office of a group of about thirty Negro gentlemen of upper class status, representing business, church, university and professions. One of his subordinates had been given the function of relating statistics on the progress of Negro business in America. He fulfilled his task with much ability and eloquence. The figures sometimes rose to millions and hundreds of millions and, nevertheless, were presented to the last unit; they marched along solemnly and created an illusion of greatness and success. The lecture ended up in a cheerful and challenging mood. All had listened as to a sermon and felt duly elevated.

This spirit prevailed until I happened to touch off some of the unfortunate realities so guardedly concealed within the statistical house of cards that had just been erected. I referred to the facts, that one of the white companies alone had more Negro insurance business than all the Negro companies together, while the latter had practically no white business at all; that Negro banking had a rather serious record of bankruptcies; that Negroes were practically excluded from all production and wholesale trade; that they controlled only an inconsiderable fraction of retail trade even in the Negro consumers' market and practically none in the white market.

My remarks were formulated as questions, and I was hoping for some discussion. But I had never expected the tumultuous and agitated controversy which, much to the embarrassment of our dignified host, broke loose. The comforting unanimity a few minutes before was suddenly decomposed into the wide and glaring spectrum of American Negro ideologies, bearing not only on business but on all other aspects of life as well. All possible opinions were vented in a debate where seldom one spoke at a time, ranging from an old-fashioned revolutionism demanding violent resistance and aggression by force against the white suppressors, on the infra-red end, to a pious religious plea, voiced by an elderly preacher, for endurance, forbearance, and patience under the sufferings, on the ultra-violet end.

As these two occurrences exemplify, the artificially constructed escapist consensus is liable to crash if pushed from the outside. It is inherent in the situation, however, that such pushes do not originate from inside, or, if they

do, that an attempt is made to canalize them safely. An unstable equilibrium is retained and actually believed to be stable.

I once visited an art exhibition in one of the cultural centers of the Old South where everything from the city plan to the interests and manners of the people carries the cherished memories of the romantic, glorious past. Among other exhibits was a man-sized sculpture in terra cotta called "Soldier in Rain," representing a Negro man lynched by hanging. The piece was forcefully done; and, as I thought, a real masterpiece. The hanging man was clothed only in a shirt and a pair of trousers tightly stretched around the body by the rain. On the chest there was a medal affixed to the shirt; a raindrop was suspended under the medal. I was absorbed in admiring the sculpture with two ladies who were supervising the exhibition. They were true experts in art appreciation and had kindly followed me around and told me many things which I could not otherwise have seen for myself.

Quite unintentionally I happened to refer to the sculpture as representing a lynching. My hostesses immediately reacted as to a shock and explained eagerly that I was totally mistaken. The sculpture represented a soldier being hanged, probably behind the front for some offense, a soldier *in abstracto*, "just any soldier." It had nothing to do with the Negro problem. They were bent on convincing me that I was wrong; they mentioned that none of all the thousands of visitors to the exhibition had ever hinted at the possibility that the sculpture represented a lynched Negro and eagerly showed me newspaper clippings with reviews where the sculpture was discussed in terms of "a soldier," "a simple soldier," "a soldier behind the line." I answered that soldiers were never anywhere executed by hanging either at or behind the line, and that in the whole world hanging was, in the popular conception, which is the important thing for an artist, usually associated with the English custom of hanging petty thieves and with American lynching parties. I was even brought to point out that the sculptor had endowed the hanged man with the long limbs and facial characteristics commonly ascribed to the Negro race. But no arguments had any weight. I am convinced that they sincerely believed they were right, and I preposterously wrong. The visit ended with some mutually felt embarrassment.

As my curiosity was awakened, I went to see the sculptor. He is an immigrant from one of the republics of Latin America and is of nearly pure Indian descent. I was told later that because of his slightly dark color, he sometimes had met some difficulties when he was not personally recognized. On one occasion, quite recently, he had been beaten by the police when he had appeared on the street one night with a white woman. I now told him about my experience at the exhibition and asked him to clear up the matter for me. His first answer was that there was nothing to clear up: his sculpture was an abstract piece of art and represented a soldier being hanged, "any soldier." We discussed the matter for a while on this line. But gradually, I must confess, I came to feel slightly exasperated, and I said, "If you, the artist, do not know what you have created, I know it as an art spectator. You have depicted a lynching, and, more particularly, a lynching of a Negro." The sculptor then suddenly changed personality, became intimate and open, and said: "I believe you are right. And I have intended it all the time." I asked, "Don't you think everybody must know it?" He said, "Yes, in a way, but they don't want to know it." I asked again, "Why have you spent your time in producing this piece? You understand as well as I that, even if it is admirable and is also being greatly admired by

the whole public, nobody is actually going to buy it. Personally, I would not dare to have it in the cellar of my house, still less in a room where I lived." He answered, "I know. I suppose that I have made this for myself. I am going to keep it in a closet. This is the 'American Skeleton in the Closet.' That would be the right name of my sculpture. 'Soldier in Rain' is only a fake, a deception between me and the public down here."

The situation described is a beautiful crystallization of moral escape. A sculptor, with so much color in his skin and such life experiences because of his skin color that a degree of identification with the American Negro people has been established, is living out his aggression in a piece of art which, in reality, is meant as an accusation against society. In the layer of his mind where his artistic imagination works and directs his skilful hands, he is clear and bent on his purpose; and the result is forceful and exact. In the layer where he meets the community, there is twilight. He gave me two contradictory statements as to what the sculpture actually represented, and he was, as I believe, serious and honest both times. The art appreciative public in this refined old city shares in his twilight. They accept his fake with grace and gratitude. To some extent they also share in the deep meaning of the sculpture to its creator. They probably even "get a kick" out of an obvious association which, however, they suppress. Probably none of the visitors to the exhibition would ever take part in a lynching or have anything but regret for its occurrence. But they partake in a national and regional responsibility. Lynching, further, stands only as a symbol for a whole system of suppression measures, in which they daily are participants. Their valuations are in conflict. Art, particularly when presented in such a tactful way, has a function of releasing the tension of suppressed moral conflicts.

5. The Etiquette of Discussion

Generally the form of a matter becomes important when the matter itself is touchy. Explosives must be handled with care. Educators, reformers, and journalists with liberal leanings in the South have a standard text which they recite to please one another and the visitor. Everything can be said in the South if it is said "in the right way." Criticisms and even factual statements should be phrased in such a manner that they do not "offend" or create "embarrassment." I have listened again and again to the pronouncements of this theory of Southern indirectness from liberal white Southerners who have been most eager that I should understand, not only the esthetics, but also the pragmatic purpose of this escape machinery. I have been told countless examples, where, as my interlocutor confided to me, he was able to "get by" in saying so and so to such and such a person because he phrased it in this or that way, or how this or that change for the better in interracial relations was "put over" on the public by letting it appear in a euphe-

mistic light. I have sensed the high subjective pleasure of this persistent balancing on the margins and the corresponding pleasures of the less liberal audience in being merely teased but never affronted by the sore points. I have come to understand how a whole system of moral escape has become polite form in the South. This form is applicable even to scientific writings and, definitely, to public discussion and teaching on all levels. It is sometimes developed into an exquisite and absorbing art.

It renders the spoken or written word less effective. It is contrary to the aims of raising issues and facing problems; it makes difficult an effective choice of words. It represents an extra encumbrance in intellectual intercourse. At the same time as it purposively opens a means of escape, it also fetters everything to the very complex suppressed by this means: the Negro problem on their minds.

This form has even crystallized into a peculiar theory of induced social change. It has become policy. There is nearly common agreement in the South that reforms in interracial relations should be introduced with as little discussion about them as possible. It is actually assumed that the race issue is a half dormant, but easily awakened, beast. It is a complex which is irrational and uncontrollable, laden with emotions, and to be touched as little as possible.

When talking about the Negro problem, everybody—not only the intellectual liberals—is thus anxious to locate race prejudice outside himself. The impersonal "public opinion" or "community feelings" are held responsible. The whites practically never discuss the issue in terms of "I" or "we" but always in terms of "they," "people in the South," "people in this community," or "folks down here will not stand for . . ." this or that. One can go around for weeks talking to white people in all walks of life and constantly hear about the wishes and beliefs of this collective being, yet seldom meeting a person who actually identifies himself with it. But he follows it.

In the more formal life of the community the Negro problem and, in fact, the Negro himself, is almost completely avoided. "In effect the Negro is segregated in public thought as well as in public carriers," complains Robert R. Moton.[7] The subject is only seldom referred to in the church. In the school it will be circumvented like sex; it does not fit naturally in any one of the regular courses given. Sometimes, but rarely, the topic will be taken up for ostentatious treatment as part of an effort toward interracial good-will. The press, with remarkable exceptions, ignores the Negroes, except for their crimes. There was earlier an unwritten rule in the South that a picture of a Negro should never appear in print, and even now it is rare. The public affairs of community and state are ordinarily discussed as if Negroes were not part of the population. The strange unreality of this situation becomes apparent when one comes to realize that for

generations hardly any public issue of importance has been free from a heavy load of the race issue, and that the entire culture of the region—its religion, literature, art, music, dance, its politics and education, its language and cooking—are partly to be explained by positive or negative influences from the Negro.

If the Negro is a shunned topic in formal intercourse among whites in the South, he enters all informal life to a disproportionate extent. He creeps up as soon as the white Southerner is at ease and not restraining himself. He is the standard joke. It is interesting to notice the great pleasure white people in all classes take in these stereotyped jokes and in indulging in discussions about the Negro and what he does, says and thinks. It is apparently felt as a release. Ray Stannard Baker, surveying the South and the Negro problem a generation ago, told a story, which the present writer has encountered several times and which seems to define the situation properly.[8]

> A Negro minister I met told me a story of a boy who went as a sort of butler's assistant in the home of a prominent family in Atlanta. His people were naturally curious about what went on in the white man's house. One day they asked him:
> "What do they talk about when they are eating?"
>
> The boy thought a moment; then he said:
> "Mostly they discusses us cullud folks."

As Baker adds, the same consuming interest exists among Negroes. A large part of their conversation deals with the race question. One gets the feeling that the two groups are sitting behind their fences, publicly ignoring each other but privately giving free rein to a curiosity emotionalized to the highest degree.

The stories and the jokes give release to troubled people. It is no accident that Americans generally are a story-telling nation, and that jokes play a particularly important role in the lives of the Southerners, white and black, and specifically in race relations. It should not surprise us that sex relations are another field of human life with a great prolification of jokes. There is much of human brotherhood in humor—a sort of fundamental democracy in a plane deeper than the usual one. It usually conveys a notion that we are all sinners before the Lord. When people are up against great inconsistencies in their creed and behavior which they cannot, or do not want to, account for rationally, humor is a way out. It gives a symbolic excuse for inperfections, a point to what would otherwise be ambiguous. It gives also a compensation to the sufferer. The "understanding laugh" is an intuitive absolution between sinners and sometimes also between the sinner and his victim. The main "function" of the joke is thus to create a collective surreptitious approbation for something which cannot be approved explicitly because of moral inhibitions. To the whites the Negro jokes further serve the function of "proving" the inferiority of the Negro. To the

Negroes the function of anti-white jokes is partly to pose the whites in a ridiculous light, which to them is a compensation. Partly it is a mechanism of psychological adjustment; they "laugh off" their misfortunes, their faults, their inferiority.

In this situation the minds of people are, however, likely to show signs of deep-seated ambivalence. White Southerners like and love individual Negroes and sometimes Negroes in general; they apparently also hate them. I have often witnessed how the feeling tone can pass from the one emotional pole to the other abruptly as a result of a remark changing the imagined type of interrelation toward which the person reacts.

What applies to the emotional level may also be found on the intellectual level. Thus a Southerner, while extolling the virtues of the "good old Negroes" he used to know and deploring the vices of the young who go to school and are recalcitrant, may suddenly turn an intellectual somersault and bemoan the ignorance and backwardness of the older group and become enthusiastic about the intelligence and progressiveness of the young. I have come to know how fundamental and common this ambivalence of Southern white people is toward the relative value of the different Negro generations and how strategically important it is for policy, educational policy particularly.

Sometimes mental contradictions are elaborated into theories and find their way into learned treatises and documents of state policy. An example is the theory that Negroes have "lower costs of living," which defends—in the writers' minds— lower salaries for Negroes against the equalitarian principles of the Constitution. The all-embracing Jim Crow doctrine "equal but separate" belongs to the same category of systematized intellectual and moral inconsistency. A partial blinding of a person's knowledge of reality is sometimes necessary. There are plenty of people in the South who will tell you, honestly and sincerely, that Negroes have equal educational opportunities with whites. I think they believe it—for a moment, in a way, and with a part of their minds. Their conviction rests on two contradictory principles between which they shift.

This mental training of the Southerner, which makes him shift between principles according to momentary change or stimulus, spreads from the Negro problem to other issues. The Negro problem is unique only in intensity. But in most of the other issues, the Negro problem is, directly or indirectly, involved. One meets it in the attitude toward trade unionism, factory legislation, social security programs, educational policies, and virtually all other public issues.

I once went to see the director of the Department of Labor in a Southern capital. The discussion started by his asking me if trade unions were strong in Sweden, to which I answered, "Yes." Without any initiative from my side, he then told me how the trade union movement in this region had the great sympathy of the state

and municipal authorities, and how it was favored in all ways. I said to him, "Look here, I am an economist. I know that this state is not rich. Your infant industry has to overcome a ruthless competition from the North where industry is long established. Trade unions mean higher production costs. Is it really a wise policy to lay this extra burden upon your young industry?" My interlocutor immediately changed mood. "Now you hit the point. And this is the reason why we try to keep the unions out of this state." Then he started to tell me the techniques used to keep out labor organizers from the state.

I changed the subject of conversation and told him I had been visiting some mills and felt that there was too little interest shown for security measures to protect the workers against accidents. The official started out to give me a vivid impression of factory legislation and factory inspection as being the very thing nearest to the legislators' hearts in this state. Again I invoked my profession as an economist, emphasized the cost factor and the competitive situation; and again I got the answer, "You hit the point" and the totally different story about the attitude of the state.

These inconsistencies and contradictions should not be taken as indicating simply personal insincerity. They are, rather, symptoms of much deeper, unsettled conflicts of valuations. The absorbing interest in the form of a matter; the indirectness of approach to a person, a subject, or a policy; the training to circumvent sore points and touchy complexes—which we consider as symptoms of escape—are developing into a pattern of thinking and behavior which molds the entire personality. People become trained generally to sacrifice truth, realism, and accuracy for the sake of keeping superficial harmony in every social situation. Discussion is subdued; criticism is enveloped in praise. Agreement is elevated as the true social value irrespective of what is to be agreed upon. Grace becomes the supreme virtue; to be "matter of fact" is crude. It is said about the Southern Negro that he is apt to tell you what he thinks you want him to say. This characteristic ascribed to the Negro fits, to a considerable extent, the whole civilization where he lives.

This escape mechanism works, however, only to a point. When that point is reached, it can suddenly be thrown out of gear. Then grace and chivalry, in fact, all decent form, is forgotten; criticism becomes bitter; opinions are asserted with a vehemence bordering on violence; and disagreement can turn into physical conflict. Then it is no longer a question of escape. The conflict is raging in the open.

6. THE CONVENIENCE OF IGNORANCE

In this connection the remarkable lack of correct information about the Negroes and their living conditions should at least be hinted at. One need not be a trained student of the race problem to learn a lot in a couple of days about the Negroes in a community which is not known by even its otherwise enlightened white residents. To an extent this ignorance is not simply "natural" but is part of the opportunistic escape reaction.

It thus happens that not only the man in the street, but also the professional man, shows ignorance in his own field of work. One meets physicians who hold absurd ideas about the anatomical characteristics of the Negro people or about the frequency of disease among the Negroes in their own community; educators who have succeeded in keeping wholly unaware of the results of modern intelligence research; lawyers who believe that practically all the lynchings are caused by rape; ministers of the gospel who know practically nothing about Negro churches in their own town. In the North, particularly in such groups where contacts with Negroes are lacking or scarce, the knowledge might not be greater, but the number of erroneous conceptions seems much smaller. The important thing and the reason for suspecting this ignorance to be part of the escape apparatus is that knowledge is constantly twisted in one direction—toward classifying the Negro low and the white high.

The ignorance about the Negro is the more striking as the Southerner is himself convinced that he "knows the Negro," while the Yankee is supposedly ignorant on the subject. The insistence on the part of the Southern whites that they have reliable and intimate knowledge about the Negro problem is one of the most pathetic stereotypes in the South. In fact, the average Southerner "knows" the Negro and the interracial problem as the patient "knows" the toothache—in the sense that he feels a concern—not as the diagnosing dentist knows his own or his patient's trouble. He further "knows" the Negro in the sense that he is brought up to use a social technique in dealing with Negroes by which he is able to get them into submissive patterns of behavior. This technique is simple; I have often observed that merely speaking the Southern dialect works the trick.

Segregation is now becoming so complete that the white Southerner practically never sees a Negro except as his servant and in other standardized and formalized caste situations. The situation may have been different in the old patriarchial times with their greater abundance of primary contacts. Today the average Southerner of middle or upper class status seems to be just as likely as the typical Northerner to judge all Negroes by his cook, and he is definitely more disposed than the Northerner to draw the widest conclusions from this restricted source of information. I have also found that the white participants in the work of the local interracial commissions—who are not typical Southerners because they are extraordinarily friendly to the Negro and are looked upon as local experts on the race problem—regularly stress the importance of those meetings in bringing together representatives of the two races so that they can "come to know each other." They often confess how vastly their own knowledge of the Negro has increased because they, in these meetings, had a chance to talk to Reverend So-and-so or Doctor So-and-so. These testimonies are the more telling when one has been present at a few of these interracial meetings

and observed how strictly formal and ruled by mental inhibitions they are. It is also astounding to observe that at such meetings Negro members, by relating simple and obvious facts in the local situation, can reveal things unknown to the whites present. Even when true friendliness is the basis for the approach, the awkwardness and anxiety shown in these interracial contacts is often apparent.

The ignorance about the Negro is not, it must be stressed, just a random lack of interest and knowledge. It is a tense and highstrung restriction and distortion of knowledge, and it indicates much deeper dislocations within the minds of the Southern whites. The blind spots are clearly visible in stereotyped opinions. The "function" of those stereotypes is, in fact, to serve as intellectual blinds.[9] Thinking and talking in terms of stereotypes appear to be more common in the Negro problem than in other issues and more dominant in the regions of America where the race problem is prominent.

The stereotypes are ideological fragments which have been coined and sanctioned. They are abstract and unqualified, as popular thinking always tends to be. They express a belief that "all niggers" are thus and so. But, in addition, they are loaded with pretention to deep insight. It is because of this emotional charge that they can serve to block accurate observation in everyday living and detached thinking. They are treated as magical formulas. It is amazing to see the stern look of even educated people when they repeat these trite and worn banalities, inherited through the generations, as if they were pointing out something new and tremendously important, and also to watch their consternation and confusion when one tries to disturb their conventional thoughtways by "outlandish" questions.

7. Negro and White Voices

What is at the bottom of this elaborated escape psychology? Has the old Negro fighter and scholar W. E. B. Du Bois struck a vein of truth when he remarks:

> Nor does the paradox and danger of this situation fail to interest and perplex the best conscience of the South. Deeply religious and intensely democratic as are the mass of the whites, they feel acutely the false position in which the Negro problems place them. Such an essentially honest-hearted and generous people cannot cite the caste levelling precepts of Christianity, or believe in equality of opportunity for all men, without coming to feel more and more with each generation that the present drawing of the color-line is a flat contradiction to their beliefs and professions.[10]

He certainly expresses the opinion of enlightened Negroes. Booker T. Washington said, in essence, the same thing when, in discussing white people's prejudice against and their fear of the Negro, he explained that they

. . . are moved by a bad conscience. If they really believe there is danger from the Negro it must be because they do not intend to give him justice. Injustice always breeds fear.[11]

James Weldon Johnson, a third Negro leader, pointed out that

. . . the main difficulty of the race question does not lie so much in the actual condition of the blacks as it does in the mental attitude of the whites.[12]

And again:

The race question involves the saving of black America's body and white America's soul.[13]

White people have seen the same thing. Ray Stannard Baker wrote:

It keeps coming to me that this is more a white man's problem than it is a Negro problem.[14]

A Southern academician, Thomas P. Bailey, whose book on the Negro problem has not been surpassed in scrupulous moral honesty, said:

The real problem is not the negro but the white man's attitude toward the negro.

and

Yes, we Southerners need a freedom from suspicion, fear, anxiety, doubt, unrest, hate, contempt, disgust, and all the rest of the race-feeling-begotten brood of viperous emotions.[15]

The Negroes base their fundamental strategy for improving their status on this insight. Moton tells us:

. . . the careful observer will discover another characteristic of Negro psychology—his quick perception of physical disadvantage and his equally quick adjustment to secure the moral advantage. In all the agitation concerning the Negro's status in America, the moral advantage has always been on his side, and with that as a lever he has steadily effected progress in spite of material disadvantages.[16]

James Weldon Johnson puts it this way:

Black America is called upon to stand as the protagonist of tolerance, of fair play, of justice, and of good will. Until white America heeds, we shall never let its conscience sleep. . . . White America cannot save itself if it prevents us from being saved.[17]

And the moral situation of white Southerners is such that Johnson can confidently explain:

Negroes in the South have a simple and direct manner of estimating the moral worth of a white man. He is good or bad according to his attitude toward colored people. This test is not only a practical and logical one for Negroes to use, but the absolute truth of its results averages pretty high. The results on the positive side are, I think, invariably correct; I myself have yet to know a Southern white man who is

liberal in his attitude toward the Negro and on the race question and is not a man of moral worth.[18]

The white man is driven to apologies, not by the Negro, because the Negro is not so strong, but by his own moral principles. We shall have to study those apologies intensively in this inquiry. Only as a foretaste we quote James Truslow Adams, who pleads:

> The condition of the portion of that continent from which he came was one not only of savagery but of chronic warfare, quite irrespective of the activities of the slave traders. A negro in his native land was liable at any moment to be attacked, captured, enslaved by other blacks, torn from his family, or killed and in some cases eaten. Would the 12,000,000 of negroes in the United States today prefer that their ancestors had never been enslaved and that therefore they themselves, if alive, should at this moment be living as savages or barbarians in the African jungle? Would a DuBois prefer to be head man to an African chief instead of a Harvard graduate, scholar and writer? Would a Robeson prefer beating a tom tom to thrilling audiences throughout the world with his beautiful voice? Would the colored washerwoman I had in the North give up her comfortable house and her car, in which she motored her family to Virginia each summer, for the ancestral grass hut in the jungle?[19]

An editorial commenting upon certain demands raised by a committee of Negro citizens of the City of New York and presented under the auspices of a wartime organization for the propagation of democracy in America reads:

> . . . as a group, even in this great free city, they [the Negroes] haven't enjoyed equality of opportunity. They have been at a disadvantage in housing. . . . For no reason except color, they find many jobs closed to them . . . the Negro suffers from an undeserved historic misfortune. He does not enjoy, anywhere in the United States, opportunities equal to his individual capacity. . . . It is time that more of his white neighbors stopped being so patient about this situation. An injustice to any group, whether we realize the truth or not, hurts all of us.[20]

And so the conflict in the troubled white man's soul goes on.

8. THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH

In the North the observer finds a different mental situation in regard to the Negro problem. The South is divergent from the rest of the country not only in having the bulk of the Negro population within its region but also in a number of other traits and circumstances—all, as we shall find, directly or indirectly connected with the Negro problem.

There has been less social change in the South. Industrialization has lagged until recently. The South is more agricultural and rural. Parts of it are isolated. There has been relatively little immigration from foreign countries or from the North; practically all migration has been internal

or outward. The South is poorer on the average: it is true both that there are more poor people in the South and that they are poorer than in the North.[a] Farm tenancy is common in the South but rarer in the North. The tradition of the "independent farmer" is largely a Northern tradition. On the other hand, the tradition of aristocracy is much stronger in the South; "the Southern gentlemen," "the Southern lady," and "Southern hospitality" are proverbial, even if stereotyped.

Because of this tradition and because of the relative lack of industrialization, a main way to get and remain rich in the South has been to exploit the Negroes and other weaker people, rather than to work diligently, make oneself indispensable and have brilliant ideas. The South has been relatively intolerant of reform movements of any sort. Circumstances connected not only with the Negro problem but also with such traditions as state's rights make change seem more hazardous than in the North. Education for all groups and on all levels has been inferior in the South. The trauma of the Civil War is still acute. The observer finds many Southerners still "fighting" the Civil War. In the North it is forgotten.

The mere existence of a more rapid tempo of life in the North, the constant changes, and the feeling of progress push the Negro problem into the background. And the human capacity for interesting oneself in social problems is crowded by many other worries. There have been more frequent clashes of political opinions in the North. The North has been made to feel labor problems. The Northern farmers have been more restless and articulate in their demands. The continuous mass immigration of foreigners has created local problems of exploitation and poverty, maladjustment and cultural assimilation. Placed beside these problems a local Negro problem, where it existed in the North, became robbed of its singularity and shrank in significance.

The Negro problem has nowhere in the North the importance it has in the South. "Too often we find," complained a Southern student of the Negro problem long ago, "that when our Northern journalism discusses wrongs at the North or at the West, it criticizes the *wrongs*, but when it discusses wrongs at the South, it criticizes the *South*."[21] This is a correct observation. But the explanation and, we must add, the justification of this fact is, first, that the Negro problem actually is a main determinant of all local, regional, and national issues, whether political, economic, or broadly cultural, in the South, while this is not true in the North; and, second, that there is a "Solid South" backing the "wrongs" in the one region, while opinions are much more diversified in the North.

[a] Contrary to the general impression, however, the well-to-do whites in the South are in about the same proportion in the population as are the well-to-do whites in the North. (We except here the very few tremendous fortunes in the North which are more numerous than in the South.) Also, the Southern whites *as a whole* have about the same income as do Northern whites: a large proportion of the poor in the South are Negroes. (See Chapter 16.)

There are few Negroes living in most of the North. This is especially true of the rural regions. Where Negroes live in small cities, particularly in the New England states, they are a small element of the population who have never been much of a problem. In the big cities where the greater part of the total Northern Negro population lives, the whites are protected from getting the Negro problem too much on their minds by the anonymity of life and the spatial segregation of racial, ethnic, and economic groups typical of the metropolitan organization of social relations.

The Northern whites have also been able to console themselves by comparing the favorable treatment of Negroes in the North with that of the South. Negroes have votes in the North and are, on the whole, guaranteed equality before the law. No cumbersome racial etiquette in personal relations is insisted upon. The whole caste system has big holes in the North, even if prejudice in personal relations is pronounced, and the Negroes are generally kept out of the better jobs. Reports of how Negroes fare in the South tend to make the Northerners satisfied with themselves, if not smug, without, in most cases, making them want to start again to reform the South. We fought a Civil War over the Negroes once, they will say; it didn't do any good and we are not going to do it again.

The mass migration of Southern Negroes to the North since the beginning of the First World War leads naturally—especially in periods of economic depression—to the reflection on the part of the Northerners that improvement of conditions for Negroes in their own communities is dangerous as it will encourage more Southern Negroes to come North. Most white Northerners seem to hold that the Negroes ought to stay on Southern land, and that, in any case, they cannot be asked to accept any responsibility for recent Negro migrants. Few Northerners have any idea that the Negroes are being pushed off the land in the South by the development of *world* competition against Southern agricultural products in combination with a *national* agricultural policy discriminating severely against the Negroes. This argument that Negroes should not be encouraged to come North—which is in the minds of many Northern city authorities—is a chief factor in hampering a sound welfare policy for Negroes.

This "passing the buck" is, of course, not only a device of Northerners to quiet their conscience. It is prominently displayed also by Southerners. The latter get satisfaction out of every indication that Negroes are not treated well in the North and, indeed, that groups other than Negroes are living in distress in the North. Such things help to assuage their own conscience. They need a rationalization against their sympathy for the underdog and against their dislike of the caste pressure inflicted upon the Negro. This situation has prevailed since before the Civil War. The horrors of Northern free-labor slavery and Northern city slums have never left the Southerner's mind. The object of this maltreatment, namely, the poor

Negro in both South and North, is the loser. Meanwhile each of the two guilty regions points to the other's sins—the South assuaging its conscience by the fact that "the Negro problem is finally becoming national in scope" and the North that "Negroes are much worse off in the South."

The Civil War, even if it does not figure so highly in Northern consciousness as the corresponding memories in the South, is a definite source of historical pride in the North. Many families, particularly in the higher social classes which contain "Old Americans," have ancestors who fought in the War, the recollection of which carries emotional identification with the Northern cause. The teaching in the schools of the North spreads an identification and a vicarious pride even to the Northerners whose ancestors were Europeans at the time of the Civil War. The liberation of the slaves plays an important part in this idealization. But, paradoxically enough, it turns against the Negro in his present situation: "We gave him full citizenship," the Northerner will say. "Now it is his own funeral if he hasn't got the guts to take care of himself. It would be an injustice in the opposite direction to do more for him than for people in general just because of his race. The Negro shouldn't be the ward of the nation. Look at all other poor, hardworking people in America. My grandfather had to sweat and work before he got through the mill."

This rationalized political valuation, which can be heard anywhere in the North, goes back to the Northern ideological retreat and the national compromise of the 1870's. It still, in disguised forms, creeps into even the scientific writings of Yankee authors. Donald Young, for example, writes:

> With the Civil War came emancipation, enfranchisement, and guaranties of equal rights for black and white. If anything, Northern politicians did their best to give the Negro a favored status which in effect would have made him almost a ward of the government. . . . Although a reaction to slavery was naturally to be expected, it would have been a mistake to give the freedman any more protection from private or public persecution than is afforded a citizen of any other color. Fortunately, the United States Supreme Court and the post-Civil War decline in emotionalism and increase in political sanity prevented the consummation of such attempts at special Negro legislation protection as the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments and Sumner's Civil Rights Bill originally intended.[22]

The logic of this argument is weak. From the basic equalitarian assumption, it could not, of course, be deemed to be an unjust favoring of the Negro people on account of their race, if they were protected from the specific discriminations which are inflicted upon them just because of their race. Guaranteeing them civil liberties as citizens could not be said to be making them the wards of the nation in this particular sense. But even if this Northern rationalization is, in fact, an escape notion like many others we have found in the South, it is not charged with much emotion. The

Northerner does not have his social conscience and all his political thinking permeated with the Negro problem as the Southerner does.

Rather, he succeeds in forgetting about it most of the time. The Northern newspapers help him by minimizing all Negro news, except crime news. The Northerners want to hear as little as possible about the Negroes, both in the South and in the North, and they have, of course, good reasons for that. The result is an astonishing ignorance about the Negro on the part of the white public in the North. White Southerners, too, are ignorant of many phases of the Negro's life, but their ignorance has not such a simple and unemotional character as that in the North. There are many educated Northerners who are well informed about foreign problems but almost absolutely ignorant about Negro conditions both in their own city and in the nation as a whole.

This has great practical importance for the Negro people. A great many Northerners, perhaps the majority, get shocked and shaken in their conscience when they learn the facts. The average Northerner does not understand the reality and the effects of such discriminations as those in which he himself is taking part in his routine of life. *To get publicity is of the highest strategic importance to the Negro people.* The Negro protection and betterment organizations and many white liberals see this clearly and work hard to articulate the sufferings of the Negroes.

There is no doubt, in the writer's opinion, that a great majority of white people in America would be prepared to give the Negro a substantially better deal if they knew the facts. But to understand the difficulty the Negroes have to overcome in order to get publicity, we must never forget the opportunistic desire of the whites for ignorance. It is so much more comfortable to know as little as possible about Negroes, except that there are a lot of them in Harlem, the Black Belt, or whatever name is given to the segregated slum quarters where they live, and that there are still more of them in the South; that they are criminal and of disgustingly, but somewhat enticingly, loose sexual morals; that they are religious and have a gift for dancing and singing; and that they are the happy-go-lucky children of nature who get a kick out of life which white people are too civilized to get.

Just one note more should be added: the Southerners are not entirely different on this last point from the Northerners. I have become convinced also that a majority even of Southerners would be prepared for much more justice to the Negro if they were really brought to know the situation. The younger generations of Southern whites are less indoctrinated against the Negro than their parents were. But they are also farther away from him, know less about him and, sometimes, get more irritated by what little they see. We do not share the skepticism against education as a means of mitigating racial intolerance which recently has spread among American

sociologists as a reaction against an important doctrine in the American Creed. *The simple fact is that an educational offensive against racial intolerance, going deeper than the reiteration of the "glittering generalities" in the nation's political creed, has never seriously been attempted in America.*

CHAPTER 3

FACETS OF THE NEGRO PROBLEM

1. American Minority Problems

For some decades there has been a tendency to incorporate the American Negro problem into the broader American minority problem.[1] In the United States, the term "minority people" has a connotation different from that in other parts of the world and especially in Central and Eastern Europe, where minority problems have existed. This difference in problem is due to a difference in situation. The minority peoples of the United States are fighting for status in the larger society; the minorities of Europe are mainly fighting for independence from it. In the United States the so-called minority groups as they exist today—except the Indians and the Negroes—are mostly the result of a relatively recent immigration, which it was for a long time the established policy to welcome as a nationally advantageous means of populating and cultivating the country. The newcomers themselves were bent upon giving up their language and other cultural heritages and acquiring the ways and attitudes of the new nation. There have been degrees of friction and delay in this assimilation process, and even a partial conscious resistance by certain immigrant groups. But these elements of friction and resistance are really only of a character and magnitude to bring into relief the fundamental difference between the typical American minority problems and those in, say, the old Austrian Empire. Of greatest importance, finally, is the fact that the official political creed of America denounced, in general but vigorous terms, all forms of suppression and discrimination, and affirmed human equality.

In addition to a cultural difference between the native-born and the foreign-born in the United States, there was always a class difference. At every point of time many of those who were already established in the new country had acquired wealth and power, and were thus in a position to lay down the rules to late-comers. The immigrants, who left their native lands mainly because they had little wealth, had to fit themselves as best they could into the new situation. Their lack of familiarity with the English language and ways of life also made them an easy prey of economic exploitation. But as long as the West was open to expansion, immigrant groups could avoid becoming a subordinate class by going to a place

where they were the only class. Gradually the frontier filled up, and free land no longer offered the immigrants cultural independence and economic self-protection. Increasingly they tended to come from lands where the cultures were ever more distant from the established American standards. They became distinguished more markedly as half-digested isolates, set down in the slums of American cities, and the level of discrimination rose.

The first stage of their assimilation often took them through the worst slums of the nation. Group after group of immigrants from every part of the world had their first course in Americanization in the squalid and congested quarters of New York's East Side and similar surroundings. They found themselves placed in the midst of utter poverty, crime, prostitution, lawlessness, and other undesirable social conditions. The assimilation process brought the immigrants through totally uncontrolled labor conditions and often through personal misery and social pressures of all kinds. The American social scientist might direct his curiosity to the occasional failures of the assimilation process and the tension created in the entire structure of larger society during its course. To the outside observer, on the other hand, the relative success will forever remain the first and greatest riddle to solve, when he sees that the children and grandchildren of these unassimilated foreigners are well-adjusted Americans. He will have to account for the basic human power of resistance and the flexibility of people's minds and cultures. He will have to appreciate the tremendous force in the American educational system. But it will not suffice as an explanation. He will be tempted to infer the influence upon the immigrant of a great national *ethos*, in which optimism and carelessness, generosity and callousness, were so blended as to provide him with hope and endurance.

From the viewpoint of the struggling immigrant himself, the harsh class structure, which thrust him to the bottom of the social heap, did not seem to be a rigid social determinant. In two or three generations, if not in one, the immigrant and his descendants moved into, and identified themselves with, the dominant American group, and—with luck and ability—took their position in the higher strata. Only because of this continuous movement of former immigrants and their descendants up and into the established group could the so-called "Americans" remain the majority during a century which saw more than a score of millions of immigrants added to its population. The causal mechanism of this social process has been aptly described as a continuous "push upwards" by a steady stream of new masses of toiling immigrants filling the ranks of the lower social strata. The class structure remained, therefore, fairly stable, while millions of individuals were continuously climbing the social ladder which it constituted. The unceasing process of social mobility and the prospect of its continuation, and also the established Creed of America promising and sanctioning social

mobility, together with many other factors of importance, kept the minority groups contented and bent on assimilation.

Religious differences, differences in fundamental attitudes, and "racial" differences entered early as elements of friction in the process of assimilation and as reasons for discrimination while the process was going on. With the growing importance of the new immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe in the decades before the War, these factors acquired increased importance. They are, in a considerable degree, responsible for the fact that even recent community surveys, undertaken decades after the end of the mass immigration, give a picture of American class stratification which closely corresponds to the differentiation in national groups. This type of differentiation is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the American social order.

The split of the nation into a dominant "American" group and a large number of minority groups means that American civilization is permeated by animosities and prejudices attached to ethnic origin or what is popularly recognized as the "race" of a person.[a] These animosities or prejudices are commonly advanced in defense of various discriminations which tend to keep the minority groups in a disadvantaged economic and social status. They are contrary to the American Creed, which is emphatic in denouncing differences made on account of "race, creed or color." In regard to the Negro, as well as more generally to all the other minorities, this conflict is what constitutes the problem, and it also contains the main factors in the dynamic development. Taking a cross-sectional view at any point of time, there is thus revealed an inconsistency in practically every American's social orientation. The inconsistency is not dissolved, at least not in the short run. Race prejudice and discrimination persist. But neither will the American Creed be thrown out. It is a hasty conclusion from the actual

[a] The popular term "race prejudice," as it is commonly used, embraces the whole complex of valuations and beliefs which are behind discriminatory behavior on the part of the majority group (or, sometimes, also on the part of the minority group) and which are contrary to the equalitarian ideals in the American Creed. In this very inclusive sense the term will be used in this inquiry. It should be noted that little is explained when we say that "discrimination is due to prejudice." The concept "race prejudice" unfortunately carries connotations that the intergroup situation is fairly stable and that the complex of attitudes behind discrimination is homogeneous and solid. (This is, incidentally, the danger with the concept of "attitude" as it is often used; see Appendix 1.) For a discussion of the empirical study of race prejudice, see Appendix 10, Section 4.

We do not need to enter into a discussion of whether "anti-minority feelings" in general are different from the "race prejudices" as they are displayed against Negroes. On the one hand, people in general also refer the former attitude to what they usually perceive of as "race." As Donald Young points out, there is also something of a common pattern in all discriminations (see footnote 1 to this chapter). On the other hand, there is this significant difference which we shall stress, that in regard to the colored minorities, amalgamation is violently denied them, while in regard to all the other minorities, it is welcomed as a long-run process.

facts of discrimination that the Creed will be without influence in the long run, even if it is suppressed for the moment, or even that it is uninfluential in the short run.

In trying to reconcile conflicting valuations the ordinary American apparently is inclined to believe that, as generations pass on, the remaining minority groups—with certain distinct exceptions which will presently be discussed—will be assimilated into a homogeneous nation.[2] The American Creed is at least partially responsible for this, as well as for the American's inclination to deem this assimilation desirable. Of course, this view is also based on the memories of previous absorption of minority groups into the dominant "American" population. Even the American Indians are now considered as ultimately assimilable. "The American Indian, once constituting an inferior caste in the social hierarchy, now constitutes little more than a social class, since today his inferior status may be sloughed off by the process of cultural assimilation." [3] This, incidentally, speaks against the doctrine that race prejudice under all circumstances is an unchangeable pattern of attitudes.

This long-range view of ultimate assimilation can be found to coexist with any degree of race prejudice in the actual present-day situation. In many parts of the country Mexicans are kept in a status similar to the Negro's or only a step above. Likewise, in most places anti-Semitism is strong and has apparently been growing for the last ten years.[4] Italians, Poles, Finns, are distrusted in some communities; Germans, Scandinavians, and the Irish are disliked in others, or sometimes the same communities. There are sections of the majority group which draw the circle exclusively and who hate all "foreigners." There are others who keep a somewhat distinct line only around the more exotic peoples. The individual, regional, and class differentials in anti-minority feeling are great.[5]

In spite of all race prejudice, few Americans seem to doubt that it is the ultimate fate of this nation to incorporate without distinction not only all the Northern European stocks, but also the people from Eastern and Southern Europe, the Near East and Mexico. They see obstacles; they emphasize the religious and "racial" differences; they believe it will take a long time. But they assume that it is going to happen, and do not have, on the whole, strong objections to it—provided it is located in a distant future.

2. THE ANTI-AMALGAMATION DOCTRINE

The Negroes, on the other hand, are commonly assumed to be unassimilable and this is the reason why the characterization of the Negro problem as a minority problem does not exhaust its true import.[a] The Negroes are set apart, together with other colored peoples, principally the Chinese and

[a] See Chapter 4.

the Japanese. America fears the segregation into distinctive isolated groups of all other elements of its population and looks upon the preservation of their separate national attributes and group loyalties as a hazard to American institutions. Considerable efforts are directed toward "Americanizing" all groups of alien origin. But in regard to the colored peoples, the American policy is the reverse. They are excluded from assimilation. Even by their best friends in the dominant white group and by the promoters of racial peace and good-will, they are usually advised to keep to themselves and develop a race pride of their own.

Among the groups commonly considered unassimilable, the Negro people is by far the largest. The Negroes do not, like the Japanese and the Chinese, have a politically organized nation and an accepted culture of their own outside of America to fall back upon. Unlike the Oriental, there attaches to the Negro an historical memory of slavery and inferiority. It is more difficult for them to answer prejudice with prejudice and, as the Orientals may do, to consider themselves and their history superior to the white Americans and their recent cultural achievements. The Negroes do not have these fortifications for self-respect. They are more helplessly imprisoned as a subordinate caste in America, a caste[a] of people deemed to be lacking a cultural past and assumed to be incapable of a cultural future.

To the ordinary white American the caste line between whites and Negroes is based upon, and defended by, the anti-amalgamation doctrine. This doctrine, more than anything else, gives the Negro problem its uniqueness among other problems of lower status groups, not only in terms of intensity of feelings but more fundamentally in the character of the problem. We follow a general methodological principle, presented previously, when we now start out from the ordinary white man's notion of what constitutes the heart of the Negro problem.

When the Negro people, unlike the white minority groups, is commonly characterized as unassimilable, it is not, of course, implied that amalgamation is not biologically possible. But crossbreeding is considered undesirable. Sometimes the view is expressed that the offspring of crossbreeding is inferior to both parental stocks. Usually it is only asserted that it is inferior to the "pure" white stock. The assumption evidently held is that the Negro stock is "inferior" to the white stock. On the inherited

[a] In this inquiry we shall use the term "caste" to denote the social status difference between Negroes and whites in America. The concept and its implications will be discussed in some detail in Part VIII. It should be emphasized that, although the *dividing line* between Negroes and whites is held fixed and rigid so that no Negro legitimately can pass over from his caste to the higher white caste, the *relations* between members of the two castes are different in different regions and social classes and changing in time. It is true that the term "caste" commonly connotes a static situation even in the latter respect. However, for a social phenomenon we prefer to use a social concept with too static connotations rather than the biological concept "race" which, of course, carries not only static but many much more erroneous connotations.

inferiority of the Negro people there exists among white Americans a whole folklore, which is remarkably similar throughout the country. To this we shall refer in the next chapter.

Whether this concept of the inferiority of the Negro stock is psychologically basic to the doctrine that amalgamation should be prohibited, or is only a rationalization of this doctrine, may for the moment be left open. The two notions, at any rate, appear together. The fact that one is used as argument for the other does not necessarily prove such a causal psychic relation between them. In many cases one meets an unargued and not further dissolvable *primary* valuation, which is assumed to be self-evident even without support of the inferiority premise. Miscegenation[a] is said to be a threat to "racial purity." It is alleged to be contrary to "human instincts." It is "contrary to nature" and "detestable." Not only in the South but often also in the North the stereotyped and hypothetical question is regularly raised without any intermediary reasoning as to its applicability or relevance to the social problem discussed: "Would you like to have your sister or daughter marry a Negro?" This is an unargued appeal to "racial solidarity" as a primary valuation. It is corollary to this attitude that in America the offspring of miscegenation is relegated to the Negro race.

A remarkable and hardly expected peculiarity of this American doctrine, expounded so directly in biological and racial terms, is that it is applied with a vast discretion depending upon the purely social and legal circumstances under which miscegenation takes place. As far as lawful marriage is concerned, the racial doctrine is laden with emotion. Even in the Northern states where, for the most part, intermarriage is not barred by the force of law, the social sanctions blocking its way are serious. Mixed couples are punished by nearly complete social ostracism. On the other hand, in many regions, especially in the South where the prohibition against intermarriage and the general reprehension against miscegenation have the strongest moorings, illicit relations have been widespread and occasionally allowed to acquire a nearly institutional character. Even if, as we shall find later when we come to analyze the matter more in detail,[b] such relations are perhaps now on the decline, they are still not entirely stamped out.

Considering the biological emphasis of the anti-amalgamation doctrine and the strong social sanctions against intermarriage tied to that doctrine, the astonishing fact is the great indifference of most white Americans

[a] Miscegenation is mainly an American term and is in America almost always used to denote only relations between Negroes and whites. Although it literally implies only mixture of genes between members of different races, it has acquired a definite emotional connotation. We use it in its literal sense—without implying necessarily that it is undesirable—as a convenient synonym of amalgamation.

[b] See Chapter 5.

toward real but illicit miscegenation. In spite of the doctrine, in some regions with a large Negro population, cohabitation with a Negro woman is, apparently, considered a less serious breach of sexual morals than illicit intercourse with a white woman. The illicit relations freely allowed or only frowned upon are, however, restricted to those between white men and Negro women. A white woman's relation with a Negro man is met by the full fury of anti-amalgamation sanctions.

If we now turn to the American Negro people, we can hardly avoid the strong impression that what there is of reluctance in principle toward amalgamation is merely in the nature of a reaction or response to the white doctrine, which thus stands as primary in the causal sense and strategic in a practical sense. It is true that white people, when facing the Negro group, make an ideological application of the general Jim Crow principle—"equal but separate" treatment and accommodations for the two racial groups—and proceed from the assertion that both races are good to the explanation that there is a value in keeping them unmixed. They appeal also to the Negroes' "race pride" and their interest in keeping their own blood "pure." But this is a white, not a Negro, argument.

The Negro will be found to doubt the sincerity of the white folks' interest in the purity of the Negro race. It will sound to him too much like a rationalization, in strained equalitarian terms, of the white supremacy doctrine of race purity. "But the outstanding joke is to hear a white man talk about race integrity, though at this the Negro is in doubt whether to laugh or swear."[6] Even the Negro in the uneducated classes is sensitive to the nuances of sincerity, trained as he is both in slavery and afterwards to be a good dissembler himself. The Negro will, furthermore, encounter considerable intellectual difficulties inherent in the idea of keeping his blood pure, owing to the fact that the large majority of American Negroes actually are of mixed descent. They already have white and Indian ancestry as well as African Negro blood. And in general they are aware of this fact.

In spite of this, race pride, with this particular connotation of the undesirability of miscegenation, has been growing in the Negro group. This is, however, probably to be interpreted as a defense reaction, a derived *secondary* attitude as are so many other attitudes of the Negro people.[a] After weighing all available evidence carefully, it seems frankly incredible that the Negro people in America should feel inclined to develop any particular race pride at all or have any dislike for amalgamation, were it not for the common white opinion of the racial inferiority of the Negro people and the whites' intense dislike for miscegenation. The fact that a large amount of exploitative sexual intercourse between white men and Negro women has always been, and still is, part of interracial relations, coupled with the further fact that the Negroes sense the disgrace of their women who are

[a] See Appendix 10, Section 4

not accepted into matrimony, and the inferior status of their mixed offspring, is a strong practical reason for the Negro's preaching "race pride" in his own group. But it is almost certainly not based on any fundamental feeling condemning miscegenation on racial or biological grounds.

On this central point, as on so many others, the whites' attitudes are primary and decisive; the Negroes' are in the nature of accommodation or protest.

3. THE WHITE MAN'S THEORY OF COLOR CASTE

We have attempted to present in compressed and abstract formulation the white supremacy doctrine as applied to amalgamation, sex relations and marriage. The difficulty inherent in this task is great. As no scientifically controlled nation-wide investigations have been made, the author has here, as in other sections, had to rely on his own observations.[7]

Every widening of the writer's experience of white Americans has only driven home to him more strongly that the opinion that the Negro is unassimilable, or, rather, that his amalgamation into the American nation is undesirable, is held more commonly, absolutely, and intensely than would be assumed from a general knowledge of American thoughtways. Except for a handful of rational intellectual liberals—who also, in many cases, add to their acceptance in principle of amalgamation an admission that they personally feel an irrational emotional inhibition against it—it is a rare case to meet a white American who will confess that, if it were not for public opinion and social sanctions not removable by private choice, he would have no strong objection to intermarriage.

The intensity of the attitude seems to be markedly stronger in the South than in the North. Its strength seems generally to be inversely related to the economic and social status of the informant and his educational level. It is usually strong even in most of the non-colored minority groups, if they are above the lowest plane of indifference. To the poor and socially insecure, but struggling, white individual, a fixed opinion on this point seems an important matter of prestige and distinction.

But even a liberal-minded Northerner of cosmopolitan culture and with a minimum of conventional blinds will, in nine cases out of ten, express a definite feeling against amalgamation. He will not be willing usually to hinder intermarriage by law. Individual liberty is to him a higher principle and, what is more important, he actually invokes it. But he will regret the exceptional cases that occur. He may sometimes hold a philosophical view that in centuries to come amalgamation is bound to happen and might become the solution. But he will be inclined to look on it as an inevitable deterioration.[8]

[8] The response is likely to be anything but pleasant if one jestingly argues that possibly a small fraction of Negro blood in the American people, if it were blended well with all

This attitude of refusing to consider amalgamation—felt and expressed in the entire country—constitutes the center in the complex of attitudes which can be described as the "common denominator" in the problem. It defines the Negro group in contradistinction to all the non-colored minority groups in America and all other lower class groups. The boundary between Negro and white is not simply a class line which can be successfully crossed by education, integration into the national culture, and individual economic advancement. The boundary is fixed. It is not a temporary expediency during an apprenticeship in the national culture. It is a bar erected with the intention of permanency. It is directed against the whole group. Actually, however, "passing" as a white person is possible when a Negro is white enough to conceal his Negro heritage. But the difference between "passing" and ordinary social climbing reveals the distinction between a class line, in the ordinary sense, and a caste line.

This brings us to the point where we shall attempt to sketch, only in an abstract and preliminary form, the social mechanism by which the anti-amalgamation maxim determines race relations. This mechanism is perceived by nearly everybody in America, but most clearly in the South. Almost unanimously white Americans have communicated to the author the following logic of the caste situation which we shall call the *"white man's theory of color caste."*

(1) The concern for "race purity" is basic in the whole issue; the primary and essential command is to prevent amalgamation; the whites are determined to utilize every means to this end.

(2) Rejection of "social equality" is to be understood as a precaution to hinder miscegenation and particularly intermarriage.

(3) The danger of miscegenation is so tremendous that the segregation and discrimination inherent in the refusal of "social equality" must be extended to nearly all spheres of life. There must be segregation and discrimination in recreation, in religious service, in education, before the law, in politics, in housing, in stores and in breadwinning.

This popular theory of the American caste mechanism is, of course, open to criticism. It can be criticized from a valuational point of view by main-

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the other good stuff brought over to the new continent, might create a race of unsurpassed excellence: a people with just a little sunburn without extra trouble and even through the winter; with some curl in the hair without the cost of a permanent wave; with, perhaps, a little more emotional warmth in their souls; and a little more religion, music, laughter, and carefreeness in their lives. Amalgamation is, to the ordinary American, not a proper subject for jokes at all, unless it can be pulled down to the level of dirty stories, where, however, it enjoys a favored place. Referred to society as a whole and viewed as a principle, the anti-amalgamation maxim is held holy; it is a consecrated taboo. The maxim might, indeed, be a remnant of something really in the "mores." It is kept unproblematic, which is certainly not the case with all the rest of etiquette and segregation and discrimination patterns, for which this quality is sometimes erroneously claimed.

taining that hindering miscegenation is not a worthwhile end, or that as an end it is not sufficiently worthwhile to counterbalance the sufferings inflicted upon the suppressed caste and the general depression of productive efficiency, standards of living and human culture in the American society at large—costs appreciated by all parties concerned. This criticism does not, however, endanger the theory which assumes that white people actually are following another valuation of means and ends and are prepared to pay the costs for attaining the ends. A second criticism would point out that, assuming the desirability of the end, this end could be reached without the complicated and, in all respects, socially expensive caste apparatus now employed. This criticism, however adequate though it be on the practical or political plane of discussion, does not disprove that people believe otherwise, and that the popular theory is a true representation of their beliefs and actions.

To undermine the popular theory of the caste mechanism, as based on the anti-amalgamation maxim, it would, of course, be necessary to prove that people really are influenced by other motives than the ones pronounced. Much material has, as we shall find, been brought together indicating that, among other things, competitive economic interests, which do not figure at all in the popular rationalization referred to, play a decisive role. The announced concern about racial purity is, when this economic motive it taken into account, no longer awarded the exclusive role as the *basic* cause in the psychology of the race problem.

Though the popular theory of color caste turns out to be a rationalization, this does not destroy it. For among the forces in the minds of the white people are certainly not only economic interests (if these were the only ones, the popular theory would be utterly demolished), but also sexual urges, inhibitions, and jealousies, and social fears and cravings for prestige and security. When they come under the scrutiny of scientific research, both the sexual and the social complexes take on unexpected designs. We shall then also get a clue to understanding the remarkable tendency of this presumably biological doctrine, that it refers only to legal marriage and to relations between Negro men and white women, but not to extra-marital sex relations between white men and Negro women.

However these sexual and social complexes might turn out when analyzed, they will reveal the psychological nature of the anti-amalgamation doctrine and show its "meaning." They will also explain the compressed emotion attached to the Negro problem. It is inherent in our type of modern Western civilization that sex and social status are for most individuals the danger points, the directions whence he fears the sinister onslaughts on his personal security. These two factors are more likely than anything else to push a life problem deep down into the subconscious and load it with emotions. There is some probability that in America both com-

plexes are particularly laden with emotions. The American puritan tradition gives everything connected with sex a higher emotional charge. The roads for social climbing have been kept more open in America than perhaps anywhere else in the world, but in this upward struggle the competition for social status has also become more absorbing. In a manner and to a degree most uncomfortable for the Negro people in America, both the sexual and the social complexes have become related to the Negro problem.

These complexes are most of the time kept concealed. In occasional groups of persons and situations they break into the open. Even when not consciously perceived or expressed, they ordinarily determine interracial behavior on the white side.

4. THE "RANK ORDER OF DISCRIMINATIONS"

The anti-amalgamation doctrine represents a strategic constellation of forces in race relations. Their charting will allow us a first general overview of the discrimination patterns and will have the advantage that white Americans themselves will recognize their own paths on the map we draw. When white Southerners are asked to rank, in order of importance, various types of discrimination,[a] they consistently present a list in which these types of discrimination are ranked according to the degree of closeness of their relation to the anti-amalgamation doctrine. This rank order—which will be referred to as *"the white man's rank order of discriminations"*—will serve as an organizing principle in this book. It appears, actually, only as an elaboration of the popular theory of color caste sketched above. Like that theory, it is most clearly and distinctly perceived in the South; in the North ideas are more vague but, on the whole, not greatly divergent. Neither the popular theory of caste nor the rank order of discriminations has been noted much in scientific literature on the Negro problem.

The rank order held nearly unanimously is the following:

Rank 1. Highest in this order stands the bar against intermarriage and sexual intercourse involving white women.

Rank 2. Next come the several etiquettes and discriminations, which specifically concern behavior in personal relations. (These are the barriers against dancing, bathing, eating, drinking together, and social intercourse generally; peculiar rules as to handshaking, hat lifting, use of titles, house entrance to be used, social forms when meeting on streets and in work, and so forth. These patterns are sometimes referred to as the denial of "social equality" in the narrow meaning of the term.)

[a] In this introductory sketch the distinction between "segregation" and "discrimination" is entirely disregarded. This distinction, signified by the popular theory and legal construct "separate but equal," is mainly to be regarded as an equalitarian rationalization on the part of the white Americans, indicating the fundamental conflict of valuations involved in the matter. "Segregation" means only separation and does not, in principle, imply "discrimination." In practice it almost always does. (See Chapter 28.)

Rank 3. Thereafter follow the segregations and discriminations in use of public facilities such as schools, churches and means of conveyance.

Rank 4. Next comes political disfranchisement.

Rank 5. Thereafter come discriminations in law courts, by the police, and by other public servants.

Rank 6. Finally come the discriminations in securing land, credit, jobs, or other means of earning a living, and discriminations in public relief and other social welfare activities.

It is unfortunate that this cornerstone in our edifice of basic hypotheses, like many of our other generalizations, has to be constructed upon the author's observations.[8] It is desirable that scientifically controlled, quantitative knowledge be substituted for impressionistic judgments as soon as possible.[9] It should be noted that the rank order is very apparently determined by the factors of sex and social status, so that the closer the association of a type of interracial behavior is to sexual and social intercourse on an equalitarian basis, the higher it ranks among the forbidden things.

Next in importance to the fact of the white man's rank order of discriminations is the fact that *the Negro's own rank order is just about parallel, but inverse, to that of the white man.* The Negro resists least the discrimination on the ranks placed highest in the white man's evaluation and resents most any discrimination on the lowest level. This is in accord with the Negro's immediate interests. Negroes are in desperate need of jobs and bread, even more so than of justice in the courts, and of the vote. These latter needs are, in their turn, more urgent even than better schools and playgrounds, or, rather, they are primary means of reaching equality in the use of community facilities. Such facilities are, in turn, more important than civil courtesies. The marriage matter, finally, is of rather distant and doubtful interest.

Such reflections are obvious; and most Negroes have them in their minds. It is another matter, however, whether the white man is prepared to stick honestly to the rank order which he is so explicit and emphatic in announcing. The question is whether he is really prepared to give the Negro a good job, or even the vote, rather than to allow him entrance to his front door or to ride beside him in the street car.

Upon the assumption that this question is given an affirmative answer, that the white man is actually prepared to carry out in practice the implications of his theories, this inverse relationship between the Negro's and the white man's rank orders becomes of strategical importance in the practical and political sphere of the Negro problem. Although not formulated in this way, such a relationship, or such a minimum moral demand on the ordinary white man, has always been the basis of all attempts to compromise and come to a better understanding between leaders of the two groups. It has

been the basis for all interracial policy and also for most of the practical work actually carried out by Negro betterment organizations. Followed to its logical end, it should fundamentally change the race situation in America.

It has thus always been a primary requirement upon every Negro leader —who aspires to get any hearing at all from the white majority group, and who does not want to appear dangerously radical to the Negro group and at the same time hurt the "race pride" it has built up as a defense—that he shall explicitly condone the anti-amalgamation maxim, which is the keystone in the white man's structure of race prejudice, and forbear to express any desire on the part of the Negro people to aspire to intermarriage with the whites. The request for intermarriage is easy for the Negro leader to give up. Intermarriage cannot possibly be a practical object of Negro public policy. Independent of the Negroes' wishes, the opportunity for intermarriage is not favorable as long as the great majority of the white population dislikes the very idea. As a defense reaction a strong attitude against intermarriage has developed in the Negro people itself.[10] And the Negro people have no interest in defending the exploitative illicit relations between white men and Negro women. This race mingling is, on the contrary, commonly felt among Negroes to be disgraceful. And it often arouses the jealousy of Negro men.

The required soothing gesture toward the anti-amalgamation doctrine is, therefore, readily delivered. It is iterated at every convenient opportunity and belongs to the established routine of Negro leadership. For example, Robert R. Moton writes:

> As for amalgamation, very few expect it; still fewer want it; no one advocates it; and only a constantly diminishing minority practise it, and that surreptitiously. It is generally accepted on both sides of the colour line that it is best for the two races to remain ethnologically distinct.[11]

There seems thus to be unanimity among Negro leaders on the point deemed crucial by white Americans. If we attend carefully, we shall, however, detect some important differences in formulation. The Negro spokesman will never, to begin with, accept the common white premise of racial inferiority of the Negro stock. To quote Moton again:

> . . . even in the matter of the mingling of racial strains, however undesirable it might seem to be from a social point of view, he [the Negro] would never admit that his blood carries any taint of physiological, mental, or spiritual inferiority.[12]

A doctrine of equal natural endowments—a doctrine contrary to the white man's assumption of Negro inferiority, which is at the basis of the anti-amalgamation theory—has been consistently upheld. If a Negro leader publicly even hinted at the possibility of inherent racial inferiority, he

would immediately lose his following. The entire Negro press watches the Negro leaders on this point.

Even Booker T. Washington, the supreme diplomat of the Negro people through a generation filled with severe trials, who was able by studied unobtrusiveness to wring so many favors from the white majority, never dared to allude to such a possibility, though he sometimes criticized most severely his own people for lack of thrift, skill, perseverance and general culture. In fact, there is no reason to think that he did not firmly believe in the fundamental equality of inherent capacities. Privately, local Negro leaders might find it advisable to admit Negro inferiority and, particularly earlier, many individual Negroes might have shared the white man's view. But it will not be expressed by national leaders and, in fact, never when they are under public scrutiny.[13] An emphatic assertion of equal endowments is article number one in the growing Negro "race pride."

Another deviation of the Negro faith in the anti-amalgamation doctrine is the stress that they, for natural reasons, lay on condemning exploitative illicit amalgamation. They turn the tables and accuse white men of debasing Negro womanhood, and the entire white culture for not rising up against this practice as their expressed antagonism against miscegenation should demand. Here they have a strong point, and they know how to press it.[14]

A third qualification in the Negro's acceptance of the anti-amalgamation doctrine, expressed not only by the more "radical" and outspoken Negro leaders, is the assertion that intermarriage should not be barred by law. The respect for individual liberty is invoked as an argument. But, in addition, it is pointed out that this barrier, by releasing the white man from the consequences of intimacy with a Negro woman, actually has the effect of inducing such intimacy and thus tends to increase miscegenation. Moton makes this point:

> The Negro woman suffers not only from the handicap of economic and social discriminations imposed upon the race as a whole, but is in addition the victim of unfavourable legislation incorporated in the marriage laws of twenty-nine states, which forbid the intermarriage of black and white. The disadvantage of these statutes lies, not as is generally represented, in the legal obstacle they present to social equality, but rather in the fact that such laws specifically deny to the Negro woman and her offspring that safeguard from abuse and exploitation with which the women of the white race are abundantly surrounded. On the other side, the effect of such legislation leaves the white man, who is so inclined, free of any responsibility attending his amatory excursions across the colour line and leaves the coloured woman without redress for any of the consequences of her defencelessness; whereas white women have every protection, from fine and imprisonment under the law to enforced marriage and lynching outside the law.[15]

But even with all these qualifications, the anti-amalgamation doctrine, the necessity of assenting to which is understood by nearly everybody,

obviously encounters some difficulties in the minds of intellectual Negroes. They can hardly be expected to accept it as a just rule of conduct. They tend to accept it merely as a temporary expedient necessitated by human weakness. Kelly Miller thus wrote:

> . . . you would hardly expect the Negro, in derogation of his common human qualities, to proclaim that he is so diverse from God's other human creatures as to make the blending of the races contrary to the law of nature. The Negro refuses to become excited or share in your frenzy on this subject. The amalgamation of the races is an ultimate possibility, though not an immediate probability. But what have you and I to do with ultimate questions, anyway?[16]

And a few years later, he said:

> It must be taken for granted in the final outcome of things that the color line will be wholly obliterated. While blood may be thicker than water, it does not possess the spissitude or inherency of everlasting principle. The brotherhood of man is more fundamental than the fellowship of race. A physical and spiritual identity of all peoples occupying common territory is a logical necessity of thought. The clear seeing mind refuses to yield or give its assent to any other ultimate conclusion. This consummation, however, is far too removed from the sphere of present probability to have decisive influence upon practical procedure.[17]

This problem is, of course, tied up with the freedom of the individual. "Theoretically Negroes would all subscribe to the right of freedom of choice in marriage even between the two races,"[18] wrote Moton. And Du Bois formulates it in stronger terms:

> . . . a woman may say, I do not want to marry this black man, or this red man, or this white man. . . . But the impudent and vicious demand that all colored folk shall write themselves down as brutes by a general assertion of their unfitness to marry other decent folk is a nightmare.[19]

Negroes have always pointed out that the white man must not be very certain of his woman's lack of interest when he rises to such frenzy on behalf of the danger to her and feels compelled to build up such formidable fences to prevent her from marrying a Negro.

With these reservations both Negro leadership and the Negro masses acquiesce in the white anti-amalgamation doctrine. This attitude is noted with satisfaction in the white camp. The writer has observed, however, that the average white man, particularly in the South, does not feel quite convinced of the Negro's acquiescence. In several conversations, the same white person, in the same breath, has assured me, on the one hand, that the Negroes are perfectly satisfied in their position and would not like to be treated as equals, and on the other hand, that the only thing these Negroes long for is to be like white people and to marry their daughters.

Whereas the Negro spokesman finds it possible to assent to the first rank of discrimination, namely, that involving miscegenation, it is more

difficult for him to give his approval to the second rank of discrimination, namely, that involving "etiquette" and consisting in the white man's refusal to extend the ordinary courtesies to Negroes in daily life and his expectation of receiving certain symbolic signs of submissiveness from the Negro. The Negro leader could not do so without serious risk of censorship by his own people and rebuke by the Negro press. In all articulate groups of Negroes there is a demand to have white men call them by their titles of Mr., Mrs., and Miss; to have white men take off their hats on entering a Negro's house; to be able to enter a white man's house through the front door rather than the back door, and so on. But on the whole, and in spite of the rule that they stand up for "social equality" in this sense, most Negroes in the South obey the white man's rules.

Booker T. Washington went a long way, it is true, in his Atlanta speech in 1895 where he explained that: "In all things that are purely social we [the two races] can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."[20] He there seemed to condone not only these rules of "etiquette" but also the denial of "social equality" in a broader sense, including some of the further categories in the white man's rank order of discrimination. He himself was always most eager to observe the rules. But Washington was bitterly rebuked for this capitulation, particularly by Negroes in the North. And a long time has passed since then; the whole spirit in the Negro world has changed considerably in three decades.

The modern Negro leader will try to solve this dilemma by iterating that no Negroes want to intrude upon white people's private lives. But this is not what Southern white opinion asks for. It is not satisfied with the natural rules of polite conduct that no individual, of whatever race, shall push his presence on a society where he is not wanted. It asks for a general order according to which *all* Negroes are placed under *all* white people and excluded from not only the white man's society but also from the ordinary symbols of respect. No Negro shall ever aspire to them, and no white shall be allowed to offer them.

Thus, on this second rank of discrimination there is a wide gap between the ideologies of the two groups. As we then continue downward in our rank order and arrive at the ordinary Jim Crow practices, the segregation in schools, the disfranchisement, and the discrimination in employment, we find, on the one hand, that increasingly larger groups of white people are prepared to take a stand against these discriminations. Many a liberal white professor in the South who, for his own welfare, would not dare to entertain a Negro in his home and perhaps not even speak to him in a friendly manner on the street, will be found prepared publicly to condemn disfranchisement, lynching, and the forcing of the Negro out of employment. Also, on the other hand, Negro spokesmen are becoming increasingly firm in

their opposition to discrimination on these lower levels. It is principally on these lower levels of the white man's rank order of discriminations that the race struggle goes on. The struggle will widen to embrace all the thousand problems of education, politics, economic standards, and so forth, and the frontier will shift from day to day according to varying events.

Even a superficial view of discrimination in America will reveal to the observer: first, that there are great differences, not only between larger regions, but between neighboring communities; and, second, that even in the same community, changes occur from one time to another. There is also, contrary to the rule that all Negroes are to be treated alike, a certain amount of discretion depending upon the class and social status of the Negro in question. A white person, especially if he has high status in the community, is, furthermore, supposed to be free, within limits, to overstep the rules. The rules are primarily to govern the Negro's behavior.

Some of these differences and changes can be explained. But the need for their interpretation is perhaps less than has sometimes been assumed. The variations in discrimination between local communities or from one time to another are often not of primary consequence. All of these thousand and one precepts, etiquettes, taboos, and disabilities inflicted upon the Negro have a common purpose: to express the subordinate status of the Negro people and the exalted position of the whites. They have their meaning and chief function as symbols. As symbols they are, however, interchangeable to an extent: one can serve in place of another without causing material difference in the essential social relations in the community.

The differences in patterns of discrimination between the larger regions of the country and the temporal changes of patterns within one region, which reveal a definite trend, have, on the contrary, more material import. These differences and changes imply, in fact, a considerable margin of variation within the very notion of American caste, which is not true of all the other minor differences between the changes in localities within a single region—hence the reason for a clear distinction. For exemplification it may suffice here to refer only to the differentials in space. As one moves from the Deep South through the Upper South and the Border states to the North, the manifestations of discrimination decrease in extent and intensity; at the same time the rules become more uncertain and capricious. The "color line" becomes a broad ribbon of arbitrariness. The old New England states stand, on the whole, as the antipode to the Deep South. This generalization requires important qualifications, and the relations are in process of change.

The decreasing discrimination as we go from South to North in the United States is apparently related to a weaker basic prejudice. In the North the Negroes have fair justice and are not disfranchised; they are not Jim-Crowed in public means of conveyance; educational institutions

are less segregated. The interesting thing is that the decrease of discrimination does *not* regularly follow the white man's rank order. Thus intermarriage, placed on the top of the rank order, is legally permitted in all but one of the Northern states east of the Mississippi. The racial etiquette, being the most conspicuous element in the second rank, is, practically speaking, absent from the North. On the other hand, employment discriminations, placed at the bottom of the rank order, at times are equally severe, or more so, in some Northern communities than in the South, even if it is true that Negroes have been able to press themselves into many more new avenues of employment during the last generation in the North than in the South.

There is plenty of discrimination in the North. But it is—or rather its rationalization is—kept hidden. We can, in the North, witness the legislators' obedience to the American Creed when they solemnly pass laws and regulations to condemn and punish such acts of discrimination which, as a matter of routine, are committed daily by the great majority of the white citizens and by the legislators themselves. In the North, as indeed often in the South, public speakers frequently pronounce principles of human and civic equality. We see here revealed in relief the Negro problem as an American Dilemma.

5. Relationships Between Lower Class Groups

It was important to compare the Negro problem with American minority problems in general because both the similarities and the dissimilarities are instructive. Comparisons give leads, and they furnish perspective.

This same reason permits us to point out that the consideration of the Negro problem as one minority problem among others is far too narrow. The Negro has usually the same disadvantages and some extra ones in addition. To these other disadvantaged groups in America belong not only the groups recognized as minorities, but all economically weak classes in the nation, the bulk of the Southern people, women,[a] and others. This country is a "white man's country," but, in addition, it is a country belonging primarily to the elderly, male, upper class, Protestant Northerner. Viewed in this setting the Negro problem in America is but one local and temporary facet of that eternal problem of world dimension—how to regulate the conflicting interests of groups in the best interest of justice and fairness. The latter ideals are vague and conflicting, and their meaning is changing in the course of the struggle.

There seems to be a general structure of social relations between groups on different levels of power and advantage. From a consideration of our

[a] The parallel between the status of Negroes and of women, who are neither a minority group nor a low social class, is particularly instructive; see Appendix 5, "A Parallel to the Negro Problem."

exaggeratedly "typical" case—the Negro—we may hope to reach some suggestions toward a more satisfactory general theory about this social power structure in general. Our hypothesis is that in a society where there are broad social classes and, in addition, more minute distinctions and splits in the lower strata, *the lower class groups will, to a great extent, take care of keeping each other subdued,* thus relieving, to that extent, the higher classes of this otherwise painful task necessary to the monopolization of the power and the advantages.

It will be observed that this hypothesis is contrary to the Marxian theory of class society, which in the period between the two World Wars has been so powerful, directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously, in American social science thinking generally. The Marxian scheme assumes that there is an actual solidarity between the several lower class groups against the higher classes, or, in any case, a potential solidarity which as a matter of natural development is bound to emerge. The inevitable result is a "class struggle" where all poor and disadvantaged groups are united behind the barricades.

Such a construction has had a considerable vogue in all discussions on the American Negro problem since the First World War. We are not here taking issue with the political desirability of a common front between the poorer classes of whites and the Negro people who, for the most part, belong to the proletariat. In fact, we can well see that such a practical judgment is motivated as a conclusion from certain value premises in line with the American Creed. But the thesis has also been given a theoretical content as describing actual trends in reality and not only political *desiderata.* A solidarity between poor whites and Negroes has been said to be "natural" and the conflicts to be due to "illusions." This thesis, which will be discussed in some detail in Chapter 38, has been a leading one in the field and much has been made of even the faintest demonstration of such solidarity.

In partial anticipation of what is to follow later in this volume, we might be permitted to make a few general, and perhaps rather dogmatic, remarks in criticism of this theory. Everything we know about human frustration and aggression, and the displacement of aggression, speaks against it. For an individual to feel interest solidarity with a group assumes his psychological identification with the group. This identification must be of considerable strength, as the very meaning of solidarity is that he is prepared to set aside and even sacrifice his own short-range private interests for the long-range interests of his group. Every vertical split within the lower class aggregate will stand as an obstacle to the feeling of solidarity. Even within the white working class itself, as within the entire American nation, the feeling of solidarity and loyalty is relatively low.[a] Despite the

[a] See Chapter 33.

considerable mobility, especially in the North, the Negroes are held apart from the whites by caste, which furnishes a formidable bar to mutual identification and solidarity.

It has often occurred to me, when reflecting upon the responses I get from white laboring people on this strategic question, that my friends among the younger Negro intellectuals, whose judgment I otherwise have learned to admire greatly, have perhaps, and for natural reasons, not had enough occasion to find out for themselves what a bitter, spiteful, and relentless feeling often prevails against the Negroes among lower class white people in America. Again relying upon my own observations, I have become convinced that the laboring Negroes do not resent whites in any degree comparable with the resentment shown in the opposite direction by the laboring whites. The competitive situation is, and is likely to remain, highly unstable.

It must be admitted that, in the midst of harsh caste resentment, signs of newborn working class solidarity are not entirely lacking; we shall have to discuss these recent tendencies in some detail in order to evaluate the resultant trend and the prospects for the future.[a] On this point there seems, however, to be a danger of wishful thinking present in most writings on the subject. The Marxian solidarity between the toilers of all the earth will, indeed, have a long way to go as far as concerns solidarity of the poor white Americans with the toiling Negro. This is particularly true of the South but true also of the communities in the North where the Negroes are numerous and competing with the whites for employment.

Our hypothesis is similar to the view taken by an older group of Negro writers and by most white writers who have touched this crucial question: that the Negro's friend—or the one who is least unfriendly—is still rather the upper class of white people, the people with economic and social security who are truly a "noncompeting group." There are many things in the economic, political, and social history of the Negro which are simply inexplicable by the Marxian theory of class solidarity but which fit into our hypothesis of the predominance of internal lower class struggle. Du Bois, in *Black Reconstruction,* argues that it would have been desirable if after the Civil War the landless Negroes and the poor whites had joined hands to retain political power and carry out a land reform and a progressive government in the Southern states; one sometimes feels that he thinks it would have been a possibility.[21] From our point of view such a possibility did not exist at all, and the negative outcome was neither an accident nor a result of simple deception or delusion. These two groups, illiterate and insecure in an impoverished South, placed in an intensified competition with each other, lacking every trace of primary solidarity, and marked off from each other by color and tradition, could not possibly be expected to

[a] See Chapter 18.

clasp hands. There is a Swedish proverb: "When the feed-box is empty, the horses will bite each other."

That part of the country where, even today, the Negro is dealt with most severely, the South, is also a disadvantaged and, in most respects, backward region in the nation. The Negro lives there in the midst of other relatively subordinated groups. Like the Negro, the entire South is a problem. We do not want to minimize other obvious explanations of the harsher treatment of the Negro in the South: his concentration there in large numbers, the tradition of subordination retained from slavery, and the traumatic effect of the Civil War and Reconstruction; but we do want to stress the fact that the masses of white Southerners are poor and to keep in mind the tendency of lower class groups to struggle against each other.[a]

[a] The great similarity in cultural situation—on a different level—between the Negro people in all America and the white South should not be overlooked. Many of the general things which can be said about the Negroes hold true, in large measure, of the white Southerners, or something quite similar can be asserted. Thus, just as the Negro sees himself economically excluded and exploited, so the Southern white man has been trained to think of his economy as a colony for Yankee exploitation. As the Negro has been compelled to develop race pride and a "protective" community, so the white South has also a strong group feeling. The white South is also something of a nation within a nation. It is certainly no accident that a "regional approach" in social science has been stressed in the South. The Southerner, like the Negro, is apt to be sensitive and to take any personal remark or observation as a rebuke, and a rebuke not only against himself but against the whole South. In analyzing himself, he finds the same general traits of extreme individualism and romanticism which are ascribed to the Negro. His educators and intellectual leaders find it necessary to complain of the same shortcomings in him as he finds in the Negro: violence, laziness, lack of thrift, lack of rational efficiency and respect for law and social order, lack of punctuality and respect for deadlines. The rickety rocking-chair on the porch has a symbolic meaning in the South not entirely different from that of the Negro's watermelon, although there is more an association of gloom and dreariness around the former stereotype, and happy-go-lucky carefreeness around the latter. The expression "C.P.T."—colored people's time—is often referred to in the South, but nearly as frequently it is jestingly suggested that it fits the folkways also of the white Southerners. The casual carrying of weapons, which is so associated in the Northerners' minds with the Negro, is commonplace among white Southerners. Both groups are on the average more religious than the rest of America, and the preacher is, or has been, more powerful in society. In both groups there is also a tendency toward fundamentalism and emotionalism, the former characteristic more important for the whites, the latter for the Negroes. The general educational level in the South has, for lack of school facilities, been lower than the national norm, and as a result an obvious double standard in favor of Southerners is actually being applied by higher educational institutions and by such organizations as foundations awarding fellowships and encouraging research projects. The Yankee prejudice against the South often takes the form of a paternalistic favoring of a weaker group. The white writers of the South, like the Negro writers, are accustomed to work mainly for a "foreign" public of readers. And they have, for the benefit of the out-group, exploited the in-group's romance and oddness. During the 'twenties both groups had a literary renaissance, commonly described in both cases as an emancipation from outside determinants and as a new earthbound realism. This list could be continued to a considerable length, but it has already been made understandable both why the Negro in a way feels so much at home in the South and why his lot there sometimes becomes so sad and even tragic.

A few remarks are now relevant on the internal social stratification of the Negro group itself. The stratification of the Negro caste into classes is well developed and the significance attached to class distinctions is great. This is not surprising in view of the fact that caste barriers, which prevent individuals of the lower group from rising out of it, force all social climbing to occur within the caste and encourage an increase in internal social competition for the symbols of prestige and power. Caste consigns the overwhelming majority of Negroes to the lower class. But at the same time as it makes higher class status rarer, it accentuates the desire for prestige and social distance within the Negro caste. It fact it sometimes causes a more minute class division than the ordinary one, and always invests it with more subjective importance.[a] The social distinctions within a disadvantaged group for this reason become a fairly adequate index of the group's social isolation from the larger society.

Caste produces, on the one hand, a strong feeling of mutuality of fate, of in-group fellowship—much stronger than a general low class position can develop. The Negro community is a protective community, and we shall, in the following chapters, see this trait reflected in practically all aspects of the Negro problem. But, on the other hand, the interclass strivings, often heightened to vigorous mutual repulsion and resentment, are equally conspicuous.

Negro writers, especially newspapermen, particularly when directing themselves to a Negro audience, have always pointed out, as the great fault of the race, its lack of solidarity. The same note is struck in practically every public address and often in sermons when the preacher for a moment leaves his other-worldliness. It is the campaign cry of the organizations for Negro business. Everywhere one meets the same endless complaints: that the Negroes won't stick together, that they don't trust each other but rather the white man, that they can't plan and act in common, that they don't back their leaders, that the leaders can't agree, or that they deceive the people and sell out their interests to the whites.

In order not to be dogmatic in a direction opposite to the one criticized, we should point out that the principle of internal struggle in the lower classes is only one social force among many. Other forces are making for solidarity in the lower classes. In both of the two problems raised—the solidarity *between* lower class whites and Negroes and the internal solidarity *within* the Negro group—there can be any degree of solidarity, ranging between utter mistrust and complete trustfulness. The scientific problem is to find out and measure the degree of solidarity and the social forces determining it, not just to assume that solidarity will come about "naturally" and "inevitably." The factors making for solidarity are both irrational and rational. Among the irrational factors are tradition, fear, charisma, brute

[a] See Chapter 32.

force, propaganda. The main rational factors are economic and social security and a planned program of civic education.

While visiting in Southern Negro communities, the writer was forced to the observation that often the most effective Negro leaders—those with a rational balance of courage and restraint, a realistic understanding of the power situation, and an unfailing loyalty to the Negro cause—were federal employees (for example, postal clerks), petty railway officials, or other persons with their economic basis outside the local white or Negro community and who had consequently a measure of economic security and some leisure time for thinking and studying. They were, unfortunately, few. Generally speaking, whenever the masses, in any part of the world, have permanently improved their social, economic, and political status through orderly organizations founded upon solidarity, these masses have not been a semi-illiterate proletariat, but have already achieved a measure of economic security and education. The vanguards of such mass reform movements have always belonged to the upper fringe of the lower classes concerned.

If this hypothesis is correct and if the lower classes have interests in common, the steady trend in this country toward improved educational facilities and toward widened social security for the masses of the people will work for increased solidarity between the lower class groups. But changes in this direction will probably be slow, both because of some general factors impeding broad democratic mass movements in America[a] and—in our special problems, solidarity between whites and Negroes—because of the existence of caste.

In this connection we must not forget the influence of ideological forces. And we must guard against the common mistake of reducing them solely to secondary expressions of economic interests. Independent (that is, independent of the economic interests involved in the Negro problem) ideological forces of a liberal character are particularly strong in America because of the central and influential position of the American Creed in people's valuations.

It may be suggested as an hypothesis, already fairly well substantiated by research and by common observation, that those liberal ideological forces tend to create a tie between the problems of all disadvantaged groups in society, and that they work for solidarity between these groups. A study of opinions in the Negro problem will reveal, we believe, that persons who are inclined to favor measures to help the underdog generally, are also, and as a part of this attitude, usually inclined to give the Negro a lift. There is a correlation between political opinions in different issues,[b] which probably rests upon a basis of temperamental personality traits and has its

[a] See Chapter 33.

[b] For a discussion of the correlation of opinions in different issues, see Appendix 2, Section 1.

deeper roots in all the cultural influences working upon a personality. If this correlation is represented by a composite scale running from radicalism, through liberalism and conservatism, to reactionism, it is suggested that it will be found that all subordinate groups—Negroes, women, minorities in general, poor people, prisoners, and so forth—will find their interests more favored in political opinion as we move toward the left of the scale. This hypothesis of a system of opinion correlation will, however, have to be taken with a grain of salt, since this correlation is obviously far from complete.

In general, poor people are not radical and not even liberal, though to have such political opinions would often be in their interest. Liberalism is not characteristic of Negroes either, except, of course, that they take a radical position in the Negro problem. We must guard against a superficial bias (probably of Marxian origin) which makes us believe that the lower classes are naturally prepared to take a broad point of view and a friendly attitude toward all disadvantaged groups. A liberal outlook is much more likely to emerge among people in a somewhat secure social and economic situation and with a background of education. The problem for political liberalism—if, for example, we might be allowed to pose the problem in the practical, instead of the theoretical mode—appears to be first to lift the masses to security and education and then to work to make them liberal.

The South, compared to the other regions of America, has the least economic security, the lowest educational level, and is most conservative. The South's conservatism is manifested not only with respect to the Negro problem but also with respect to all the other important problems of the last decades—woman suffrage, trade unionism, labor legislation, social security reforms, penal reforms, civil liberties—and with respect to broad philosophical matters, such as the character of religious beliefs and practices. Even at present the South does not have a full spectrum of political opinions represented within its public discussion. There are relatively few liberals in the South and practically no radicals.[a]

The recent economic stagnation (which for the rural South has lasted much more than ten years), the flood of social reforms thrust upon the South by the federal government, and the fact that the rate of industrialization in the South is higher than in the rest of the nation, may well come to cause an upheaval in the South's entire opinion structure. The importance of this for the Negro problem may be considerable.[b]

6. THE MANIFOLDNESS AND THE UNITY OF THE NEGRO PROBLEM

The Negro problem has the manifoldness of human life. Like the women's problem, it touches every other social issue, or rather, it represents an angle of them all. A glance at the table of contents of this volume

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 5.

[b] See Chapter 21, Section 4.

shows that in our attempt to analyze the Negro problem we have not been able to avoid anything: race, culture, population, breadwinning, economic and social policy, law, crime, class, family, recreation, school, church, press, organizations, politics, attitudes.

The perplexities and manifoldness of the Negro problem have even increased considerably during the last generation. One reason is migration and industrialization. The Negro has left his seclusion. A much smaller portion of the Negro people of today lives in the static, rather inarticulate folk society of the old plantation economy. The Negro people have increasingly stepped into the midst of America's high-geared metropolitan life, and they have by their coming added to the complication of these already tremendously complicated communities. This mass movement of Negroes from farms to cities and from the South to the North has, contrary to expectation, kept up in bad times as in good, and is likely to continue.

Another and equally important reason why the Negro problem shows an increasing involvement with all sorts of other special problems is the fact that America, especially during the last ten years, has started to use the state as an instrument for induced social change. The New Deal has actually changed the whole configuration of the Negro problem. Particularly when looked upon from the practical and political viewpoints, the contrast between the present situation and the one prior to the New Deal is striking.

Until then the practical Negro problem involved civil rights, education, charity, and little more. Now it has widened, in pace with public policy in the new "welfare state," and involves housing, nutrition, medicine, education, relief and social security, wages and hours, working conditions, child and woman labor, and, lately, the armed forces and the war industries. The Negro's share may be meager in all this new state activity, but he has been given a share. He has been given a broader and more variegated front to defend and from which to push forward. This is the great import of the New Deal to the Negro. For almost the first time in the history of the nation the state has done something substantial in a social way without excluding the Negro.

In this situation it has sometimes appeared as if there were no longer a Negro problem distinct from all the other social problems in the United States. In popular periodicals, articles on the general Negro problem gave way to much more specific subjects during the 'thirties. Even on the theoretical level it has occurred to many that it was time to stop studying the Negro problem in itself. The younger generation of Negro intellectuals have become tired of all the talk about the Negro problem on which they were brought up, and which sometimes seemed to them so barren of real deliveries. They started to criticize the older generation of Negroes for their obsession with the Negro problem. In many ways this was a move-

ment which could be considered as the continuation, during the 'thirties, of the "New Negro Movement" of the 'twenties.

We hear it said nowadays that there is no "race problem," but only a "class problem." The Negro sharecropper is alleged to be destitute not because of his color but because of his class position—and it is pointed out that there are white people who are equally poor. From a practical angle there is a point in this reasoning. But from a theoretical angle it contains escapism in new form.[a] It also draws too heavily on the idealistic Marxian doctrine of the "class struggle." And it tends to conceal the whole system of special deprivations visited upon the Negro only because he is not white. We find also that as soon as the Negro scholar, ideologist, or reformer leaves these general ideas about how the Negro should think, he finds himself discussing nothing but Negro rights, the Negro's share, injustices against Negroes, discrimination against Negroes, Negro interests—nothing, indeed, but the old familiar Negro problem, though in some new political relations. He is back again in the "race issue." And there is substantial reason for it.

The reason, of course, is that there is really a common tie and, therefore, a unity in all the special angles of the Negro problem. All these specific problems are only outcroppings of one fundamental complex of human valuations—that of American caste. This fundamental complex derives its emotional charge from the equally common race prejudice, from its manifestations in a general tendency toward discrimination, and from its political potentialities through its very inconsistency with the American Creed.

7. THE THEORY OF THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

A deeper reason for the unity of the Negro problem will be apparent when we now try to formulate our hypothesis concerning its dynamic causation. The mechanism that operates here is the "principle of cumulation," also commonly called the "vicious circle."[b] This principle has a much wider application in social relations. It is, or should be developed into, a main theoretical tool in studying social change.

Throughout this inquiry, we shall assume a general interdependence between all the factors in the Negro problem. White prejudice and discrimination keep the Negro low in standards of living, health, education, manners and morals. This, in its turn, gives support to white prejudice. White prejudice and Negro standards thus mutually "cause" each other. If things remain about as they are and have been, this means that the two

[a] See Chapter 38, Sections 5 to 7.

[b] See Appendix 3, "A Methodological Note on the Principle of Cumulation." We call the principle the "principle of cumulation" rather than "vicious circle" because it can work in an "upward" desirable direction as well as in a "downward" undesirable direction.

forces happen to balance each other. Such a static "accommodation" is, however; entirely accidental. If either of the factors changes, this will cause a change in the other factor, too, and start a process of interaction where the change in one factor will continuously be supported by the reaction of the other factor. The whole system will be moving in the direction of the primary change, but much further. This is what we mean by cumulative causation.

If, for example, we assume that for some reason white prejudice could be decreased and discrimination mitigated, this is likely to cause a rise in Negro standards, which may decrease white prejudice still a little more, which would again allow Negro standards to rise, and so on through mutual interaction. If, instead, discrimination should become intensified, we should see the vicious circle spiraling downward. The original change can as easily be a change of *Negro standards* upward or downward. The effects would, in a similar manner, run back and forth in the interlocking system of interdependent causation. In any case, the initial change would be supported by consecutive waves of back-effects from the reactions of the other factor.

The same principle holds true if we split one of our two variables into component factors. A rise in Negro employment, for instance, will raise family incomes, standards of nutrition, housing, and health, the possibilities of giving the Negro youth more education, and so forth, and all these effects of the initial change, will, in their turn, improve the Negroes' possibilities of getting employment and earning a living. The original push could have been on some other factor than employment, say, for example, an improvement of health or educational facilities for Negroes. Through action and interaction the whole system of the Negro's "status" would have been set in motion in the direction indicated by the first push. Much the same thing holds true of the development of white prejudice. Even assuming no changes in Negro standards, white prejudice can change, for example, as a result of an increased general knowledge about biology, eradicating some of the false beliefs among whites concerning Negro racial inferiority. If this is accomplished, it will in some degree censor the hostile and derogatory valuations which fortify the false beliefs, and education will then be able to fight racial beliefs with more success.

By this we have only wanted to give a hint of an explanatory scheme of dynamic causation which we are going to utilize throughout this inquiry. As pointed out in Appendix 3, and as we shall find in later chapters, the interrelations are in reality much more complicated than in our abstract illustrations, and there are all sorts of irregularities in the reaction of various factors. But the complications should not force us to give up our main hypothesis that a cumulative principle is working in social change. It is actually this hypothesis which gives a theoretical meaning to the Negro

problem as a special phase of all other social problems in America. Behind the barrier of common discrimination, there is unity and close interrelation between the Negro's political power; his civil rights; his employment opportunities; his standards of housing, nutrition and clothing; his health, manners, and law observance; his ideals and ideologies. The unity is largely the result of cumulative causation binding them all together in a system and tying them to white discrimination. It is useful, therefore, to interpret all the separate factors from a central vantage point—the point of view of the Negro problem.

Another corollary from our hypothesis is practical. In the field of Negro politics any push upward directed on any one of those factors—if our main hypothesis is correct—moves all other factors in the same direction and has, through them, a cumulative effect upon general Negro status. An upward trend of Negro status in general can be effected by any number of measures, rather independent of where the initial push is localized. By the process of cumulation it will be transferred through the whole system.

But, as in the field of economic anti-depression policy, it matters a lot how the measures are proportioned and applied. The directing and proportioning of the measures is the task of social engineering. This engineering should be based on a knowledge of how all the factors are actually interrelated: what effect a primary change upon each factor will have on all other factors. It can be generally stated, however, that it is likely that *a rational policy will never work by changing only one factor,* least of all if attempted suddenly and with great force. In most cases that would either throw the system entirely out of gear or else prove to be a wasteful expenditure of effort which could reach much further by being spread strategically over various factors in the system and over a period of time.

This—and the impracticability of getting political support for a great and sudden change of just one factor—is the rational refutation of so-called panaceas. Panaceas are now generally repudiated in the literature on the Negro problem, though usually without much rational motivation. There still exists, however, another theoretical idea which is similar to the idea of panacea: the idea that there is *one* predominant factor, a "basic factor." Usually the so-called "economic factor" is assumed to be this basic factor. A vague conception of economic determinism has, in fact, come to color most of the modern writings on the Negro problem far outside the Marxist school. Such a view has unwarrantedly acquired the prestige of being a particularly "hard-boiled" scientific approach.

As we look upon the problem of dynamic social causation, this approach is unrealistic and narrow. We do not, of course, deny that the conditions under which Negroes are allowed to earn a living are tremendously important for their welfare. But these conditions are closely interrelated

to all other conditions of Negro life. When studying the variegated causes of discrimination in the labor market, it is, indeed, difficult to perceive what precisely is meant by "the economic factor." The Negro's legal and political status and all the causes behind this, considerations by whites of social prestige, and everything else in the Negro problem belong to the causation of discrimination in the labor market, in exactly the same way as the Negro's low economic status is influential in keeping down his health, his educational level, his political power, and his status in other respects. Neither from a theoretical point of view—in seeking to explain the Negro's caste status in American society—nor from a practical point of view—in attempting to assign the strategic points which can most effectively be attacked in order to raise his status—is there any reason, or, indeed, any possibility of singling out "the economic factor" as basic. In an interdependent system of dynamic causation there is no "primary cause" but everything is cause *to* everything else.

If this theoretical approach is bound to do away in the practical sphere with all panaceas, it is, on the other hand, equally bound to encourage the reformer. The principle of cumulation—in so far as it holds true—promises final effects of greater magnitude than the efforts and costs of the reforms themselves. The low status of the Negro is tremendously wasteful all around—the low educational standard causes low earnings and health deficiencies, for example. The cumulatively magnified effect of a push upward on any one of the relevant factors is, in one sense, a demonstration and a measure of the earlier existing waste. In the end, the cost of raising the status of the Negro may not involve any "real costs" at all for society, but instead may result in great "social gains" and actual savings for society. A movement downward will, for the same reason, increase "social waste" out of proportion to the original saving involved in the push downward of one factor or another.

These dynamic concepts of "social waste," "social gain," and "real costs" are mental tools originated in the practical man's workshop. To give them a clearer meaning—which implies expressing also the underlying social value premises—and to measure them in quantitative terms represents from a practical viewpoint a main task of social science. Fulfilling that task in a truly comprehensive way is a stage of dynamic social theory still to be reached but definitely within vision.

8. A THEORY OF DEMOCRACY

The factors working on the white side in our system of dynamic causation were brought together under the heading "race prejudice." For our present purpose, it is defined as discrimination by whites against Negroes. One viewpoint on race prejudice needs to be presented at this point, chiefly because of its close relation to our hypothesis of cumulative causation.

The chemists talk about "irreversible processes," meaning a trait of a chemical process to go in one direction with ease but, for all practical purposes, to be unchangeable back to its original state (as when a house burns down). When we observe race prejudice as it appears in American daily life, it is difficult to avoid the reflection that it seems so much easier to increase than to decrease race prejudice. One is reminded of the old saying that nineteen fresh apples do not make a single rotten apple fresh, but that one rotten apple rapidly turns the fresh ones rotten. When we come to consider the various causative factors underlying race prejudice—economic competition; urges and fears for social status; and sexual drives, fears, jealousies, and inhibitions—this view will come to be understandable. It is a common observation that the white Northerner who settles in the South will rapidly take on the stronger race prejudice of the new surroundings; while the Southerner going North is likely to keep his race prejudice rather unchanged and perhaps even to communicate it to those he meets. The Northerner in the South will find the whole community intent upon his conforming to local patterns. The Southerner in the North will not meet such concerted action, but will feel, rather, that others are adjusting toward him wherever he goes. If the local hotel in a New England town has accommodated a few Negro guests without much worry one way or the other, the appearance one evening of a single white guest who makes an angry protest against it might permanently change the policy of the hotel.

If we assume that a decrease in race prejudice is desirable—on grounds of the value premise of the American Creed and of the mechanism of cumulative wastage just discussed—such a general tendency, inherent in the psychology of race prejudice, would be likely to force us to a pessimistic outlook. One would expect a constant tendency toward increased race prejudice, and the interlocking causation with the several factors on the Negro side would be expected to reinforce the movement. Aside from all valuations, the question must be raised: Why is race prejudice, in spite of this tendency to continued intensification which we have observed, nevertheless, on the whole not increasing but decreasing?

This question is, in fact, only a special variant of the enigma of philosophers for several thousands of years: the problem of Good and Evil in the world. One is reminded of that cynical but wise old man, Thomas Hobbes, who proved rather conclusively that, while any person's actual possibilities to improve the lot of his fellow creatures amounted to almost nothing, everyone's opportunity to do damage was always immense. The wisest and most virtuous man will hardly leave a print in the sand behind him, meant Hobbes, but an imbecile crank can set fire to a whole town. Why is the world, then, not steadily and rapidly deteriorating, but rather, at least over long periods, progressing? Hobbes raised this question. His

answer was, as we know: the State, *Leviathan.* Our own tentative answer to the more specific but still overwhelmingly general question we have raised above will have something in common with that of the post-Elizabethan materialist and hedonist, but it will have its stress placed differently, as we shall subsequently see.

Two principal points will be made by way of a preliminary and hypothetical answer, as they influence greatly our general approach to the Negro problem. The first point is the American Creed, the relation of which to the Negro problem will become apparent as our inquiry proceeds. The Creed of progress, liberty, equality, and humanitarianism is not so uninfluential on everyday life as might sometimes appear.

The second point is the existence in society of huge institutional structures like the church, the school, the university, the foundation, the trade union, the association generally, and, of course, the state. It is true, as we shall find, that these institutional structures in their operation show an accommodation to local and temporary interests and prejudices—they could not be expected to do otherwise as they are made up of individuals with all their local and temporary characteristics. As institutions they are, however, devoted to certain broad ideals. It is in these institutions that the American Creed has its instruments: it plays upon them as on mighty organs. In adhering to these ideals, the institutions show a pertinacity, matched only by their great flexibility in local and temporary accommodation.

The school, in every community, is likely to be a degree more broad-minded than local opinion. So is the sermon in church. The national labor assembly is prone to decide slightly above the prejudice of the median member. Legislation will, on the whole, be more equitable than the legislators are themselves as private individuals. When the man in the street acts through his orderly collective bodies, he acts more as an American, as a Christian, and as a humanitarian than if he were acting independently. He thus shapes social controls which are going to condition even himself.

Through these huge institutional structures, a constant pressure is brought to bear on race prejudice, counteracting the natural tendency for it to spread and become more intense. The same people are acting in the institutions as when manifesting personal prejudice. But they obey different moral valuations on different planes of life. In their institutions they have invested more than their everyday ideas which parallel their actual behavior. They have placed in them their ideals of how the world rightly ought to be. The ideals thereby gain fortifications of power and influence in society. This is a theory of social self-healing that applies to the type of society we call democracy.

Part II

RACE

CHAPTER 4

RACIAL BELIEFS

1. Biology and Moral Equalitarianism

Few problems are more heavily loaded with political valuations and, consequently, wishful thinking than the controversy concerning the relative importance of nature and nurture. Opinions on this question signify more than anything else where each of us stands on the scale between extreme conservatism and radicalism. The liberal is inclined to believe that it is the occasion that makes the thief, while the conservative is likely to hold that the thief is likely to create the occasion. The individual and society can, therefore, according to the liberal, be purposively improved through education and social reform. The conservative, on the other hand, thinks that it is "human nature" and not its environment which, on the whole, makes individuals and society what they are. He sees therein a reason and a justification for his skepticism in regard to reforms.[a]

The liberalism of the Enlightenment which later developed such strong roots in this country tended to minimize the differences between individuals and peoples as to inborn capacities and aptitudes. To Locke, the newborn child was a *tabula rasa* upon which the "sensations"—that is, in modern language, the entirety of life experiences—made their imprint. Environment was thus made supreme. As to the inborn capacities and inclinations, men were, on the whole, supposed to be similar; apparent differences were of cultural origin, and men could be changed through education. This was the basis for the philosophical radicalism and the rationalistic optimism which French, and also some English, writers developed during the eighteenth century. Individual differences in mental traits were sometimes recognized. But so far as groups of people were concerned—social classes, nations, and what was beginning to be called "races"—equality of natural endowments was the general assumption.

It should be remembered that these philosophers were primarily reacting

[a] The generalization expressed in this paragraph has its exceptions. Though it is hardly possible to be a true biological determinist and yet a political liberal, it is possible to be an environmentalist and yet a conservative. The easiest rationalization in the latter case is to perceive of the environment as very tough against politically induced changes. William Sumner and his theory of mores is the classical American example of such a marriage between a radical environmentalism and an extreme political conservatism. (See Appendix 2.)

against that particular extension of feudalism into modern times which was represented in their home countries by the theories of mercantilism and the social order of estates and privileges. Dissimilar minority races were not much in the foreground of their political thinking, but social classes were. The upper classes in England and France, as everywhere else, developed a vague popular theory that the lower classes, urban proletariat, and rural peasantry were less well endowed by nature.[a] It was against this convenient belief that the radical philosophers of the Enlightenment reacted. Their main interest was, however, not naturalistic but moralistic. Equality in "natural rights of man," rather than equality in natural endowments, was central in their thought.

The former equality was, of course, not necessarily made dependent upon the latter. Even if some people were weaker, the moral philosophers did not think that this was a sound reason for giving them less protection in their natural rights. But the radical and optimistic belief in the possibility of social improvement, which they also held, did require the environmentalistic assumption. Thus a strong tendency toward a belief in natural equality became associated with the doctrine of moral equality in the philosophy of the Enlightenment.

When transferred to America the equality doctrine became even more bent toward the moral sphere. There are several reasons for this. Originally the doctrine had a function in the political disputes with the mother country, England. These disputes concerned rights and not natural endowments. The strong impact of religion in America following the Revolution is another reason. A third reason was the actual presence within America of a different "race."

There is thus no doubt that the declaration that all men were "created equal" and, therefore, endowed with natural rights has to be understood in the moral sense that they were born equal as to human rights. Nevertheless, the moral equality doctrine carried with it, even in America, a tendency toward a belief in biological equalitarianism. Among the educated classes, race prejudice was low in the generation around the Revolution. This is easily seen even by a superficial survey of the American political literature of the age.

2. The Ideological Clash in America

When the Negro was first enslaved, his subjugation was not justified in terms of his biological inferiority. Prior to the influences of the Enlightenment, human servitude was taken as a much more unquestioned element in the existing order of economic classes and social estates, since this way

[a] It should be noted that just as a biological rationalization was then and is now invoked to justify class, so arguments concerning the "social order" have always been employed to justify Negro slavery and, later, color caste. (See Chapter 28, Section 5.)

of thinking was taken over from feudal and post-feudal Europe. The historical literature on this early period also records that the imported Negroes—and the captured Indians—originally were kept in much the same status as the white indentured servants.[1] When later the Negroes gradually were pushed down into chattel slavery while the white servants were allowed to work off their bond, the need was felt, in this Christian country, for some kind of justification above mere economic expediency and the might of the strong. The arguments called forth by this need were, however, for a time not biological in character, although they later easily merged into the dogma of natural inequality. The arguments were broadly these: that the Negro was a heathen and a barbarian, an outcast among the peoples of the earth, a descendant of Noah's son Ham, cursed by God himself and doomed to be a servant forever on account of an ancient sin.[2]

The ideas of the American Revolution added their influence to those of some early Christian thinkers and preachers, particularly among the Quakers, in deprecating these arguments. And they gave an entirely new vision of society as it is and as it ought to be. This vision was dominated by a radically equalitarian political morality and could not possibly include slavery as a social institution. The philosophical ideas of man's natural rights merged with the Golden Rule of Christianity, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

How it actually looked in the minds of the enlightened slaveholders who played a prominent role in the Revolution is well known, since they were under the urge to intellectual clarity of their age, and in pamphlets, speeches, and letters frequently discussed the troubles of their conscience. Most of them saw clearly the inconsistency between American democracy and Negro slavery. To these men slavery was an "abominable crime," a "wicked cause," a "supreme misfortune," an "inherited evil," a "cancer in the body politic." Jefferson himself made several attacks on the institution of slavery, and some of them were politically nearly successful. Later in his life (1821) he wrote in his autobiography:

> . . . it was found that the public mind would not bear the proposition [of gradual emancipation], nor will it bear it even at this day. Yet the day is not far distant when it must bear it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free.[3]

It was among Washington's first wishes ". . . to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it [slavery]; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished and that is by legislative authority. . . ."[4] In this period the main American religious denominations also went on record to denounce slavery.

Even in terms of economic usefulness slavery seemed for a time to be a decaying institution. Slave prices were falling. Public opinion also was

definitely in motion. In the North where it was most unprofitable, slavery was abolished in state after state during this revolutionary era. Also Southern states took certain legislative steps against slave trade and relaxed their slave codes and their laws on manumission. It is probable that the majority of Americans considered Negro slavery to be doomed. But in the South the slaves represented an enormous investment to the slave owners, and the agricultural economy was largely founded on slave labor. When the Constitution was written, slavery had to be taken as an economic and political fact. It is, however, indicative of the moral situation in America at that time that the words "slave" and "slavery" were avoided. "Somehow," reflects Kelly Miller, "the fathers and fashioners of this basic document of liberty hoped that the reprobated institution would in time pass away when there should be no verbal survival as a memorial of its previous existence."[5]

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the Abolitionist movement was as strong in the South as in the North, if not stronger. A most fateful economic factor had, however, entered into the historical development, and it profoundly changed the complexion of the issue. Several inventions in the process of cotton manufacture, and principally Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1794, transformed Southern agriculture. Increased cotton production and its profitability gave impetus to a southward and westward migration from the old liberal Upper South, and raised the prices of slaves which had previously been declining.[6]

In explaining the ensuing ideological reaction in the South we must not forget, however, that the revolutionary movement, typified by the Declaration of Independence, represented a considerable over-exertion of American liberalism generally, and that by the time of the writing of the Constitution a reaction was on its way. In Europe after the Napoleonic Wars a reaction set in, visible in all countries and in all fields of culture. The North released itself rather completely from the influences of the European reaction. The South, on the contrary, imbibed it and continued on an accentuated political and cultural reaction even when the European movement had turned again toward liberalism. Around the 1830's, the pro-slavery sentiment in the South began to stiffen. During the three decades leading up to the Civil War, an elaborate ideology developed in defense of slavery. This Southern ideology was contrary to the democratic creed of the Old Virginia statesmen of the American Revolution.

The pro-slavery theory of the *ante-bellum* South is basic to certain ideas, attitudes, and policies prevalent in all fields of human relations even at the present time.[a] The central theme in the Southern theory is the moral and political dictum that slavery did not violate the "higher law," that it was

[a] See Chapters 10, 20, 24 and 28.

condoned by the Bible and by the "laws of nature," and that "free society," in contrast, was a violation of those laws.

More and more boldly as the conflict drew nearer, churchmen, writers, and statesmen of the South came out against the principle of equality as formulated in the Declaration of Independence. This principle came to be ridiculed as a set of empty generalities and meaningless abstractions. Common experience and everyday observation showed that it was wrong. Indeed, it was "exuberantly false, and arborescently fallacious":

> Is it not palpably nearer the truth to say that no man was ever born free and no two men were ever born equal, than to say that all men are born free and equal? . . . Man is born to subjection. . . . The proclivity of the natural man is to domineer or to be subservient.[7]

Here we should recall that Jefferson and his contemporaries, when they said that men were equal, had meant it primarily in the moral sense that they should have equal rights, the weaker not less than the stronger.[8] This was fundamentally what the South denied. So far as the Negroes were concerned, the South departed radically from the American Creed. Lincoln later made the matter plain when he observed that one section of the country thought slavery was *right* while the other held it to be *wrong*.

The militant Northern Abolitionists strongly pressed the view that human slavery was an offense against the fundamental moral law. Their spiritual ground was puritan Christianity and the revolutionary philosophy of human rights. They campaigned widely, but most Northerners—sensing the dynamite in the issue and not liking too well the few Negroes they had with them in the North—kept aloof. In the South the break from the unmodified American Creed continued and widened. Free discussion was effectively cut off at least after 1840. Around this central moral conflict a whole complex of economic and political conflicts between the North and the South grew up.[a] The most bloody contest in history before the First World War became inevitable. De Tocqueville's forecast that the abolition of slavery would not mean the end of the Negro problem came true. It is with the American nation today, and it is not likely to be settled tomorrow.

It should be observed that in the pro-slavery thinking of the *ante-bellum* South, the Southerners stuck to the American Creed *as far as whites were concerned*; in fact, they argued that slavery was necessary in order to establish equality and liberty for the whites. In the precarious ideological situation—where the South wanted to defend a political and civic institution of inequality which showed increasingly great prospects for new land exploitation and commercial profit, but where they also wanted to retain the democratic creed of the nation—*the race doctrine of biological inequality*

[a] The role of the Negro and slavery as causative factors for the War will be commented upon in Chapter 20.

between whites and Negroes offered the most convenient solution.[9] The logic forcing the static and conservative ideology of the South to base itself partly on a belief in natural inequality is parallel but opposite to the tendency of the original philosophy of Enlightenment in Europe and the American Revolution to evolve a doctrine of natural equality in order to make room for progress and liberalism.[10]

3. THE IDEOLOGICAL COMPROMISE

After the War and Emancipation, the race dogma was retained in the South as necessary to justify the caste system which succeeded slavery as the social organization of Negro-white relations. In fact, it is probable that racial prejudice increased in the South at least up to the end of Reconstruction and probably until the beginning of the twentieth century.[11]

The North never had cleansed its own record in its dealing with the Negro even if it freed him and gave him permanent civil rights and the vote. In the North, however, race prejudice was never so deep and so widespread as in the South. During and after the Civil War it is probable that the North relaxed its prejudices even further. But Reconstruction was followed by the national compromise of the 1870's when the North allowed the South to have its own way with the Negroes in obvious contradiction to what a decade earlier had been declared to be the ideals of the victorious North and the polity of the nation. The North now also needed the race dogma to justify its course. As the North itself did not retreat from most of the Reconstruction legislation, and as the whole matter did not concern the average Northerner so much, the pressure on him was not hard, and the belief in racial inequality never became intense. But this period was, in this field, one of reaction in the North, too.

The fact that the same rationalizations are used to defend slavery and caste is one of the connecting links between the two social institutions. In the South the connection is psychologically direct. Even today the average white Southerner really uses the race dogma to defend not only the present caste situation but also *ante-bellum* slavery and, consequently, the righteousness of the Southern cause in the Civil War. This psychological unity of defense is one strong reason, among others, why the generally advanced assertion is correct that the slavery tradition is a tremendous impediment in the way of improvement of the Negro's lot. The caste system has inherited the defense ideology of slavery.

The partial exclusion of the Negro from American democracy, however, has in no way dethroned the American Creed. This faith actually became strengthened by the victorious War which saved the Union and stopped the Southerners from publicly denouncing the cherished national principles that all men are born equal and have inalienable civil rights. The question can be asked: What do the millions of white people in the South and in

the North actually think when, year after year, on the national holidays dedicated to the service of the democratic ideals, they read, recite, and listen to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution? Do they or do they not include Negroes among "all men"? The same question is raised when we observe how, in newspaper editorials and public speeches, unqualified general statements are made asserting the principles and the fact of American democracy. Our tentative answer is this: In solemn moments, Americans try to forget about the Negroes as about other worries. If this is not possible they think in vague and irrational terms; in these terms the idea of the Negroes' biological inferiority is a nearly necessary rationalization.

The dogma of racial inequality may, in a sense, be regarded as a strange fruit of the Enlightenment. The fateful word *race* itself is actually not yet two hundred years old. The biological ideology had to be utilized as an intellectual explanation of, and a moral apology for, slavery in a society which went out emphatically to invoke as its highest principles the ideals of the inalienable rights of all men to freedom and equality of opportunity. It was born out of the conflict between an old harshly nonequalitarian institution—which was not, or perhaps in a short time could not be, erased—and the new shining faith in human liberty and democracy. Another accomplishment of early rationalistic Enlightenment had laid the theoretical basis for the racial defense of slavery; the recognition of *Homo sapiens* as only a species of the animal world and the emerging study of the human body and mind as biological phenomena. Until this philosophical basis was laid, racialism was not an intellectual possibility.

The influences from the American Creed thus had, and still have, a double-direction. On the other hand, the equalitarian Creed operates directly to supress the dogma of the Negro's racial inferiority and to make people's thoughts more and more "independent of race, creed or color," as the American slogan runs. On the other hand, it indirectly calls forth the same dogma to justify a blatant exception to the Creed. The race dogma is nearly the only way out for a people so moralistically equalitarian, if it is not prepared to live up to its faith. A nation less fervently committed to democracy could, probably, live happily in a caste system with a somewhat less intensive belief in the biological inferiority of the subordinate group. *The need for race prejudice is, from this point of view, a need for defense on the part of the Americans against their own national Creed, against their own most cherished ideals.* And race prejudice is, in this sense, a function of equalitarianism. The former is a perversion of the latter.[12]

4. REFLECTIONS IN SCIENCE

This split in the American soul has been, and still is, reflected in scientific thought and in the literature on the Negro race and its characteristics.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and the supreme exponent of early American liberalism, in his famous *Notes on Virginia* (1781-1782) deals with the Negro problem in a chapter on "The Administration of Justice and the Description of the Laws." He posits his ideas about race as an argument for emancipating the slaves, educating them, and assisting them to settle in Africa:

> Deep-rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances, will divide us into parties, and produce convulsions, which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race.[13]

He goes on to enumerate the "real distinctions" between Negroes and whites and gives a fairly complete list of them as they were seen by liberal people of his time: color, hair form, secretion, less physiological need of sleep but sleepiness in work, lack of reasoning power, lack of depth in emotion, poverty of imagination and so on. In all these respects he is inclined to believe that "it is not their condition, then, but nature, which has produced the distinction." But he is cautious in tone, has his attention upon the fact that popular opinions are prejudiced, and points to the possibility that further scientific studies may, or may not, verify his conjectures.[14]

This guarded treatment of the subject marks a high point in the early history of the literature on Negro racial characteristics. In critical sense and in the reservation for the results of further research, it was not surpassed by white writers until recent decades. As the Civil War drew nearer, intellectuals were increasingly mobilized to serve the Southern cause and to satisfy the Southern needs for rationalization. After Reconstruction their theories were taken over by the whole nation. Biology and ethnology were increasingly supplanting theology and history in providing justification for slavery and, later, caste. Even the friends of the Negroes assumed great racial differences, even if, out of charity, they avoided elaborating on them. The numerous enemies of the Negro left a whole crop of pseudo-scientific writings in the libraries, emphasizing racial differences. Robert W. Shufeldt's book, *America's Greatest Problem: the Negro*[15] which had considerable influence for a time—illustrating the inferiority argument by a picture of a Negro lad between two monkeys and filled with an imposing mass of presumed evidences for Negro inferiority—is a late example of this literature at its worst.[16]

Without much change this situation continued into the twentieth century. At this time the heavily prejudiced position of science on the race problem was, however, beginning to be undermined. Professor Franz Boas and a whole school of anthropologists had already come out against these argu-

ments for racial differences based on the primitive people's lack of culture.[17] The outlines of a radically environmentalistic sociology were being drawn by W. G. Sumner, W. I. Thomas and C. H. Cooley. The early research on intelligence pronounced that there were considerable racial differences but it had already encountered some doubts as to validity.[a] Improved techniques in the fields of anatomy and anthropometry had begun to disprove earlier statements on Negro physical traits.[b]

The last two or three decades have seen a veritable revolution in scientific thought on the racial characteristics of the Negro. This revolution has actually a much wider scope: it embraces not only the whole race issue even outside the Negro problem, but the fundamental assumptions on the nature-nurture question. The social sciences in America, and particularly sociology, anthropology, and psychology,[18] have gone through a conspicuous development, increasingly giving the preponderance to environment instead of to heredity.

In order to retain a proper perspective on this scientific revolution, we have to recall that American social science is not many decades old. The biological sciences and medicine, firmly entrenched much earlier in American universities, had not, and have not yet, the same close ideological ties to the American Creed. They have been associated in America, as in the rest of the world, with conservative and even reactionary ideologies.[19] Under their long hegemony, there has been a tendency to assume biological causation without question, and to accept social explanations only under the duress of a siege of irresistible evidence. In political questions, this tendency favored a do-nothing policy. This tendency also, in the main, for a century and more, determined people's attitudes toward the racial traits of the Negro. In the years around the First World War, it exploded in a cascade of scientific and popular writings[20] with a strong racialistic bias, rationalizing

[a] Cooley challenged Galton's hereditary explanation of racial genius in 1897. (Charles H. Cooley, "Genius, Fame and the Comparison of Races," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [May, 1897], pp. 317-358); see Chapter 6, Section 3.

[b] Several scientists, for example, had criticized much of the early research on brain and skull differences. One of the most notorious of the exposés was that of Robert B. Bean by Franklin P. Mall. Bean was a Southern student of Mall's in the latter's laboratory at Johns Hopkins. In an elaborate study of Negro skulls and brains, he attempted to show that the skulls were smaller than the skulls of white men, and that the brains were less convoluted and otherwise deficient. After Bean published his findings (Robert B. Bean, "Some Racial Peculiarities of the Negro Brain," *American Journal of Anatomy* [September, 1906], pp. 27-432), Mall repeated the measurements on many of the same specimens and found that Bean had completely distorted his measurements and conclusions. (Franklin P. Mall, "On Several Anatomical Characters of the Human Brain, Said to Vary According to Race and Sex, With Especial Reference to the Weight of the Frontal Lobe," *American Journal of Anatomy* [February, 1909], pp. 1-32). Bean's sample, too, was grossly inadequate; it consisted of 103 Negroes and 49 whites in the Baltimore morgue who had been unclaimed at death.

the growing feeling in America against the "new" immigrants pouring into a country whose last frontier was now occupied and congregating in the big cities where they competed with American labor. In addition to the social friction they created, the idea that these newcomers represented an inferior stock provided much of the popular theory for the restrictive immigration legislation.[21]

The wave of racialism for a time swayed not only public opinion but also some psychologists who were measuring psychic traits, especially intelligence, and perhaps also some few representatives of related social sciences.[22] But the social sciences had now developed strength and were well on the way toward freeing themselves entirely from the old biologistic tendency. The social sciences received an impetus to their modern development by reacting against this biologistic onslaught. They fought for the theory of environmental causation. Their primary object of suspicion became more and more the old static entity, "human nature," and the belief that fundamental differences between economic, social, or racial groups were due to "nature."

From the vantage point of their present research front, the situation looks somewhat like this: a handful of social and biological scientists over the last fifty years have gradually forced informed people to give up some of the more blatant of our biological errors. But there must be still other countless errors of the same sort that no living man can yet detect, because of the fog within which our type of Western culture envelops us. Cultural influences have set up the assumptions about the mind, the body, and the universe with which we begin; pose the questions we ask; influence the facts we seek; determine the interpretation we give these facts; and direct our reaction to these interpretations and conclusions.

Social research has thus become militantly critical. It goes from discovery to discovery by challenging this basic assumption in various areas of life. It is constantly disproving inherent differences and explaining apparent ones in cultural and social terms. By inventing and applying ingenious specialized research methods, the popular race dogma is being victoriously pursued into every corner and effectively exposed as fallacious or at least unsubstantiated. So this research becomes truly revolutionary in the spirit of the cherished American tradition. A contrast is apparent not only in comparison with earlier stands of American social science but also with contemporary scientific trends in other countries. The democratic ones have, on the whole, followed a similar course, but America has been leading. It is interesting to observe how on this point the radical tendency in American social research of today dominates even the work and writings of scientists who feel and pronounce their own political inclination to be conservative.

What has happened is in line with the great traditions of the American

Creed, the principles of which are themselves, actually, piecemeal becoming substantiated by research and elaborated into scientific theory. American social scientists might—in a natural effort to defend their objectivity—dislike this characterization, but to the outsider it is a simple and obvious fact that the social sciences in America at present have definitely a spirit in many respects reminiscent of eighteenth century Enlightenment. The ordinary man's ideas have not, however, kept up to those of the scientist. Hardly anywhere else or in any other issue is there—in spite of intensive and laudable efforts to popularize the new results of research—such a wide gap between scientific thought and popular belief. At least potentially these ideas have, however, a much greater importance in America than could be assumed upon casual observation and for the reason that the ordinary American has a most honored place in his heart for equalitarianism.

This trend in social sciences to discount earlier notions of great differences in "nature" between the advantaged and the disadvantaged groups (rich-poor, men-women, whites-Negroes) runs parallel to another equally conspicuous trend in American political ideology since the First World War: an increased interest and belief in social reforms. The latter trend broke through in the course of the Great Depression following the crisis of 1929; and it materialized in the New Deal, whose principles, even if not methods, are now widely accepted. We have already stressed the strategic importance for political liberalism and radicalism of the modern social science point of view on the basic problem of nurture *versus* nature, The scientific trend in non-democratic countries during the same period—and specifically the sway of racialism over German universities and research centers under the Nazi regime—provides a contrast which vividly illustrates our thesis.

As always, we can, of course, assume that basically both the scientific trend and the political development in a civilization are functions of a larger synchronized development of social ideology. A suspicion is, then, natural that fundamentally the scientific trend in America is a rationalization of changed political valuations. This trend has, however, had its course during a remarkable improvement of observation and measurement techniques and has been determined by real efforts to criticize research methods and the manner in which scientific inferences are made from research data. It has, to a large extent, been running against expectation and, we may assume, wishes. This is the general reason why, in spite of the natural suspicion, we can feel confident that the scientific trend is, on the whole, a definite approach toward objective truth.

5. THE POSITION OF THE NEGRO WRITERS

As creators of original scientific theories and as independent research workers in the field of social science, as in other fields, the Negroes came late and are even now rather exceptional. This is a consequence of the

American caste system. But for a much longer time they have had gifted essayists well in touch with the trends in social sciences. From the beginning, Negro writers took the stand that the American dogma of racial inequality was a scientific fake.[23] The late Kelly Miller, particularly, knew how to present the Negro's case effectively. He had well digested the anthropological criticism against the argument that the Negroes had never produced a culture of their own in Africa and knew how to turn it around:

> Because any particular race or class has not yet been caught up by the current of the world movement is no adequate reason to conclude that it must forever fall without the reach of its onward flow. If history teaches any clear lesson, it is that civilization is communicable to the tougher and hardier breeds of men, whose physical stamina can endure the awful stress of transmission. To damn a people to everlasting inferiority because of deficiency in historical distinction shows the same faultiness of logic as the assumption that what never has been never can be. The application of this test a thousand years ago would have placed under the ban of reproach all of the vigorous and virile nations of modern times.[24]

and:

> . . . history plays havoc with the vainglorious boasting of national and racial conceit. Where are the Babylonians, the Assyrians and the Egyptians, who once lorded it over the earth? In the historical recessional of races they are "one with Nineveh and Tyre." Expeditions must be sent from some distanct continent to unearth the glorious monuments of their ancestors from beneath the very feet of their degenerate descendants. The lordly Greeks who ruled the world through the achievements of the mind, who gave the world Homer and Socrates and Phidias in the heyday of their glory, have so sunken in the scale of excellence that, to use the language of Macaulay, "their people have degenerated into timid slaves and their language into a barbarous jargon." On the other hand, the barbarians who, Aristotle tells us, could not count beyond ten fingers in his day subsequently produced Kant and Shakespeare and Newton.[25]

Miller reminds his white countrymen:

> Our own country has not escaped the odium of intellectual inferiority. The generation has scarcely passed away in whose ears used to ring the standing sneer, "Who reads an American book?" It was in the day of Thomas Jefferson that a learned European declared: "America has not produced one good poet, one able mathematician, one man of genius in a single art or science." In response to this charge Jefferson enters an eloquent special plea. He says: "When we shall have existed as a people as long as the Greeks did before they produced a Homer, the Romans, a Virgil, the French, a Racine, the English, a Shakespeare and Milton, should this reproach be still true, we will inquire from what unfriendly cause it has proceeded." How analogous to this is the reproach which you [Thomas Dixon, Jr.] and Mr. Watson, treading the track of Thomas Nelson Page, and those of his school of thought, now hurl against the Negro race? The response of Jefferson defending the American colonies from the reproach of innate inferiority will apply with

augmented emphasis to ward off similar charges against the despised and rejected Negro.[26]

To the Southerners particularly he gave the following rejoinder:

> The white people of the South claim, or rather boast of, a race prepotency and inheritance as great as that of any breed of men in the world. But they clearly fail to show like attainment.[27]

and added maliciously:

> Has it ever occurred to you that the people of New England blood, who have done and are doing most to make the white race great and glorious in this land, are the most reticent about extravagant claims to everlasting superiority? You protest too much. Your loud pretensions, backed up by such exclamatory outburst of passion, make upon the reflecting mind the impression that you entertain a sneaking suspicion of their validity.[28]

This is heated polemics but not without its point. On the central issue his best formulated argument is probably contained in the following sentences:

> The Negro has never, during the whole course of history, been surrounded by those influences which tend to strengthen and develop the mind. To expect the Negroes of Georgia to produce a great general like Napoleon when they are not even allowed to carry arms, or to deride them for not producing scholars like those of the Renaissance when a few years ago they were forbidden the use of letters, verges closely upon the outer rim of absurdity. Do you look for great Negro statesmen in States where black men are not allowed to vote?[29]

Concerning the physical disabilities of the Negro, he was full of scorn:

> Do you recall the school of pro-slavery scientists who demonstrated beyond doubt that the Negro's skull was too thick to comprehend the substance of Aryan knowledge? Have you not read in the now discredited scientific books of that period with what triumphant acclaim it was shown that the shape and size of the Negro's skull, facial angle, and cephalic configuration rendered him forever impervious to the white man's civilization? But all enlightened minds are now as ashamed of that doctrine as they are of the one-time dogma that the Negro had no soul.[30]

If at the time when he was writing, he could have seen the modern development of intelligence research, on which we shall comment in a later chapter, he would have had still more arrows for his bow.

Miller has been quoted at some length here because his attitude is typical of the thinking of the intellectual Negroes on this issue for several decades,[31] in fact, from the first time the Negro people had a group of individuals trained to independent scholarly thinking. These early Negro intellectuals were in all certainty just as much driven by their rationalization interests as their white colleagues. Only their interest went in the opposite direction. In the development of intelligence research it is apparent that Negroes and members of other minority groups always had a tendency to

find environmental explanations for differences in intelligence performance, while the "American" scientists and, particularly, Southerners and other Americans who for one reason or other felt tender toward the Southern cause, for a long time labored under the bias of expecting to find innate differences.

From one point of view it is, of course, merely an historical accident that modern research has tended to confirm the Negroes' view and not the whites'. The Negro writers constantly have proceeded upon the assumption, later formulated by Du Bois in *Black Reconstruction:* ". . . that the Negro in America and in general is an average and ordinary human being, who under given environment develops like other human beings. . . ."[32] This assumption is now, but was not a couple of decades ago, also the assumption of white writers.[33] Negro writings from around the turn of the century, therefore, sound so much more modern than white writings. It is mainly this historical accident which explains why, for example, Du Bois' study of the Philadelphia Negro community,[34] published in the 'nineties, stands out even today as a most valuable contribution, while white authors like H. W. Odum and C. C. Brigham have been compelled—and have had the scientific integrity and personal courage—to retreat from writings of earlier decades even though they were published after Du Bois' study.[35] The white authors have changed while the Negro authors can stand by their guns. It is also apparent, when going through the literature on the Negro, that the whole tone, the "degree of friendliness" in viewpoints and conclusions, has been modified immensely in favor of the Negro since the beginning of the 'twenties.[36] This trend is, of course, intimately related to the general trend in social sciences, referred to above, and to the still broader political and social development in the American nation.

The Negro intellectuals' resistance to the white race dogma has been widely popularized among the Negro people through the Negro press, the Negro school and the Negro pulpit. As it corresponds closely to Negro interests, it will now be found to emerge as a popular belief in all Negro communities in America, except the backward ones. It may be assumed that formerly the Negroes more often took over white beliefs as a matter of accommodation.

The spread of the same conclusions from modern research has been much slower among whites, which is also natural, as they do not coincide with their interest in defending the caste order, and in any case, do not have the same relevance to their own personal problems of adjustment. One most important result is, however, that *it is now becoming difficult for even popular writers to express other views than the ones of racial equalitarianism and still retain intellectual respect.* This inhibition works also on the journalists, even in the South and even outside of the important circle of Southern white liberals. The final result of this change might, in

time, be considerable. Research and education are bolstering the American Creed in its influence toward greater equalitarianism.

6. THE RACIAL BELIEFS OF THE UNSOPHISTICATED

Our characterization of the race dogma as a reaction against the equalitarian Creed of revolutionary America is a schematization too simple to be exact unless reservations are added. Undoubtedly the low regard for the Negro people before the eighteenth century contained intellectual elements which later could have been recognized as a racial theory in disguise. The division of mankind into whites, blacks, and yellows stretches back to ancient civilization. A loose idea that barbarism is something inherent in certain peoples is equally old. On the other hand, the masses of white Americans even today do not always, when they refer to the inferiority of the Negro race, think clearly in straight biological terms.

The race dogma developed gradually. The older Biblical and sociopolitical arguments in defense of slavery retained in the South much of their force long beyond the Civil War. Under the duress of the ideological need of justification for Negro slavery, they were even for a time becoming increasingly elaborated. Their decline during recent decades is probably a result of the secularization and urbanization of the American people, which in these respects, as in so many others, represents a continuation of the main trend begun by the revolutionary ideological impulses of the eighteenth century. In this development, the biological inferiority dogma threatens to become the lone surviving ideological support of color caste in America.

In trying to understand how ordinary white people came to believe in the Negro's biological inferiority, we must observe that there was a shift from theological to biological thinking after the eighteenth century. As soon as the idea was spread that man belongs to the biological universe, the conclusion that the Negro was *biologically* inferior was natural to the unsophisticated white man. It is obvious to the ordinary unsophisticated white man, from his everyday experience, that the Negro is inferior. *And inferior the Negro really is;* so he shows up even under scientific study. He is, on the average, poorer; his body is more often deformed; his health is more precarious and his mortality rate higher; his intelligence performance, manners, and morals are lower. The *correct* observation that the Negro is inferior was tied up to the *correct* belief that man belongs to the biological universe, and, by twisting logic, the *incorrect* deduction was made that the inferiority is biological in nature.

Race is a comparatively simple idea which easily becomes applied to certain outward signs of "social visibility," such as physiognomy. Explanations in terms of environment, on the contrary, tax knowledge and imagination heavily. It is difficult for the ordinary man to envisage clearly how

such factors as malnutrition, bad housing, and lack of schooling actually deform the body and the soul of people. The ordinary white man cannot be expected to be aware of such subtle influences as the denial of certain outlets for ambitions, social disparagement, cultural isolation, and the early conditioning of the Negro child's mind by the caste situation, as factors molding the Negro's personality and behavior. The white man is, therefore, speaking in good faith when he says that he sincerely believes that the Negro is racially inferior, not merely because he has an interest in this belief, but simply because he has seen it. He "knows" it.

Tradition strengthens this honest faith. The factors of environment were, to the ordinary white man, still less of a concrete reality one hundred years ago when the racial dogma began to crystallize. Originally the imported Negro slaves had hardly a trace of Western culture. The tremendous cultural difference between whites and Negroes was maintained [a] and, perhaps, relatively increased by the Negroes being kept, first, in slavery and, later, in a subordinate caste, while American white culture changed apace. By both institutions the Negroes' acculturation was hampered and steered in certain directions. The Negroes, moreover, showed obvious differences in physical appearance.

From the beginning these two concomitant differences—the physical and the cultural—must have been associated in the minds of white people. "When color differences coincide with differences in cultural levels, then color becomes symbolic and each individual is automatically classified by the racial uniform he wears."[37] Darker color, woolly hair, and other conspicuous physical Negro characteristics became steadily associated with servile status, backward culture, low intelligence performance and lack of morals. All unfavorable reactions to Negroes—which for social if not for biological reasons, are relatively much more numerous than favorable reactions—became thus easily attributed to *every* Negro as a Negro, that is, to the *race* and to the individual only secondarily as a member of the race. Whites categorize Negroes. As has been observed also in other racial contacts, visible characteristics have a power to overshadow all other characteristics and to create an illusion of a greater similarity between the individuals of the out-race and a greater difference from the in-race than is actually warranted.[38]

This last factor is the more important as the unsophisticated mind is much more "theoretical"—in the popular meaning of being bent upon simple, abstract, clear-cut generalizations—than the scientifically trained mind.[39] This works in favor of the race dogma. To conceive that apparent differences in capacities and aptitudes could be cultural in origin means a deferment of judgment that is foreign to popular thinking. It requires

[a] When we say that cultural differences were maintained, we do not refer one way or the other to the retention of African culture.

difficult and complicated thinking about a multitude of mutually dependent variables, thinking which does not easily break into the lazy formalism of unintellectual people.

We should not be understood, however, to assume that the simpler concept of race is clear in the popular mind. From the beginning, as is apparent from the literature through the decades, environmental factors to some extent, have been taken into account. But they are discounted, and they are applied in a loose way—partly under the influence of vulgarized pre-Darwinian and Darwinian evolutionism—to the race rather than to the individual. The Negro race is said to be several hundreds or thousands of years behind the white man in "development." Culture is then assumed to be an accumulated mass of memories *in the race*, transmitted through the genes. A definite biological ceiling is usually provided: the mind of the Negro race cannot be improved beyond a given level. This odd theory is repeated through more than a century of literature: it is phrased as an excuse by the Negro's friends and as an accusation by his enemies. The present writer has met it everywhere in contemporary white America.

Closely related to this popular theory is the historical and cultural demonstration of Negro inferiority already referred to. It is constantly pointed out as a proof of his racial backwardness that in Africa the Negro was never able to achieve a culture of his own. Descriptions of hideous conditions in Africa have belonged to this popular theory from the beginning. Civilization is alleged to be the accomplishment of the white race; the Negro, particularly, is without a share in it. As typical not only of long literature but, what is here important, of the actual beliefs among ordinary white people in America, two quotations from a fairly recent exponent of the theory may be given:

> To begin with, the black peoples have no historic pasts. Never having evolved civilizations of their own, they are practically devoid of that accumulated mass of beliefs, thoughts, and experiences which render Asiatics so impenetrable and so hostile to white influences. . . . Left to himself, he [the Negro] remained a savage, and in the past his only quickening has been where brown men have imposed their ideas and altered his blood. The originating powers of the European and the Asiatic are not in him.[40]
>
> The black race has never shown real constructive power. It has never built up a native civilization. Such progress as certain negro groups have made has been due to external pressure and has never long outlived that pressure's removal, for the negro, when left to himself, as in Haiti and Liberia, rapidly reverts to his ancestral ways. The negro is a facile, even eager, imitator; but there he stops. He adopts, but he does not adapt, assimilate, and give forth creatively again. . . .
>
> Unless, then, every lesson of history is to be disregarded, we must conclude that black Africa is unable to stand alone. The black man's numbers may increase prodigiously and acquire alien veneers, but the black man's nature will not change.[41]

Without any doubt there is also in the white man's concept of the Negro "race" an irrational element which cannot be grasped in terms of either biological or cultural differences. It is like the concept "unclean" in primitive religion. It is invoked by the metaphor "blood" when describing ancestry. The ordinary man means something particular but beyond secular and rational understanding when he refers to "blood." The one who has got the smallest drop of "Negro blood" is as one who is smitten by a hideous disease. It does not help if he is good and honest, educated and intelligent, a good worker, an excellent citizen and an agreeable fellow. Inside him are hidden some unknown and dangerous potentialities, something which will sooner or later crop up. This totally irrational, actually magical, belief is implied in the system of specific taboos to be analyzed in Part VII. White intellectuals, particularly in the South, have often, in attempting to clarify to the writer their own attitude toward taboos, referred to this irrational element and described it in the terms utilized above. They sometimes talked of it as an "instinct," but were well aware that they could not grasp it by this too sober physio-psychological analogy.

In this magical sphere of the white man's mind, the Negro is inferior, totally independent of rational proofs or disproofs. And he is inferior in a deep and mystical sense. *The "reality" of his inferiority is the white man's own indubitable sensing of it, and that feeling applies to every single Negro.* This is a manifestation of the most primitive form of religion. There is fear of the unknown in this feeling, which is "superstition" in the literal sense of this old word. Fear is only increased by the difficulties in expressing it in rational language and explaining it in such a way that it makes sense. So the Negro becomes a "contrast conception." He is "the opposite race"—an inner enemy, "antithesis of character and properties of the white man."[42] His name is the antonym of white. As the color white is associated with everything good, with Christ and the angels, with heaven, fairness, cleanliness, virtue, intelligence, courage, and progress, so black has, through the ages, carried associations with all that is bad and low: black stands for dirt, sin, and the devil.[43] It becomes understandable and "natural" on a deeper magical plane of reasoning that the Negro is believed to be stupid, immoral, diseased, lazy, incompetent, and *dangerous*—dangerous to the white man's virtue and social order.

The Negro is segregated, and one deep idea behind segregation is that of quarantining what is evil, shameful, and feared in society.[a] When one speaks about "Americans" or "Southerners," the Negro is not counted in. When the "public" is invited, he is not expected. Like the devil and all his synonyms and satellites, he is enticing at the same time that he is

[a] To illustrate this point and to exemplify how racial beliefs develop in an individual, we have included as footnote 44 to this chapter one of the clearest analyses of his own former prejudices by a Southerner to be found in the literature.

disgusting. Like them he is also humorous in a way, and it is possible to pity him. As the devil with his goat's foot is earth-bound in a sinister sense, so the Negro is also more part of "nature" than the white man. The old theologians of the South meant something specific when they equipped the Negro with a disproportionate amount of original sin just as Christian theologians generally characterize the devil as a fallen angel. Behind all these associations is the heritage of magic and primitive religion which we carry from prehistoric time and which is always with us in metaphorical meanings attached to the words we use.

The stereotyped opinions of the Negro express themselves in institutionalized behavior, in jokes and stories, and in fiction. Fiction as a sounding board for, and as a magnifier of, popular prejudices is an object for research which deserves much more attention. The printed word has an easily detected magical import and authority for the unintellectual mind.[a] It is generalized. People want to see their favorite opinions set forth and elaborated in print.[45] One of the sources for studying the stereotyped opinions on the Negro is, therefore, fiction.[46]

7. BELIEFS WITH A PURPOSE

The low plane of living, the cultural isolation, and all the resulting bodily, intellectual, and moral disabilities and distortions of the average Negro make it natural for the ordinary white man not only to see that the Negro is inferior but also to believe honestly that the Negro's inferiority is inborn. This belief means, of course, that all attempts to improve the Negro by education, health reforms, or merely by giving him his rights as a worker and a citizen must seem to be less promising of success than they otherwise would be. The Negro is judged to be fundamentally incorrigible and he is, therefore, kept in a slum existence which, in its turn, leaves the imprint upon his body and soul which makes it natural for the white man to believe in his inferiority.[b] This is a vicious circle; it is, indeed, one of the chief examples of cumulative causation.[c] From a practical point of view, it signifies that one of the ways, in the long run, to raise the white man's estimate of the Negro is to improve the Negro's status and, thereby, his qualities. It means also, however, that one of the chief hindrances to improving the Negro is the white man's firm belief in his inferiority. ". . . what the greater part of white America merely *thinks* about us is an influ-

[a] Every lawyer knows from experience that by presenting a printed blank of a drafted contract, he can much more easily get anyone to sign it than if it was written for the occasion.

[b] ". . . the haughty American Nation . . . makes the negro clean its boots and then proves the moral and physical inferiority of the negro by the fact that he is a shoeblack." (George Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman* [1916; first edition, 1903], p. xviii.)

[c] See Chapter 3, Section 7.

ential factor in making our *actual condition* what it is," complains James Weldon Johnson.[47]

The Negro's situation being what it is and the unsophisticated white man's mind working as it does, the white man can honestly think and say that his beliefs are founded upon close personal experience and hard facts. He is not deliberately deceiving himself; but the beliefs are opportunistic. The typical white individual does not fabricate his theory for a purpose. The ordinary white American is an upright and honest fellow who tries to think straight and wants to be just to everybody. He does not consciously concoct his prejudices for a purpose.

But unscrupulous demagogues do it all the time with great profit. Many other white individuals will occasionally find it to their private interests to stretch their biased beliefs a little more in a direction unfavorable to the Negro. Much of this might happen just on the margin of what is consciously acknowledged. Practically no white people are sufficiently incited by self-interest to scrutinize their beliefs critically. And so *through the generations, strengthened by tradition and community consensus, a public opinion among whites is formulated which is plainly opportunistic in the interest of the majority group.* The individual in the group can remain confident in his moral and intellectual integrity. He "sees" the facts for himself. Tradition and consensus seem to him to be additional intellectual evidence and moral sanction for what he already believes. They relieve him of any duty he otherwise might have felt to criticize seriously his observations and inferences. The recognition that the racial beliefs thus have a social purpose opens up a perspective on the causal mechanism behind their formation and gives us a clue for the further study of their structure, to which we now proceed.

If white Americans can believe that Negro Americans belong to a lower biological species than they themselves, this provides a motivation for their doctrine that the white race should be kept pure and that amalgamation should, by all means, be prevented. The theory of the inborn inferiority of the Negro people is, accordingly, used as an argument for the anti-amalgamation doctrine. This doctrine, in its turn, has, as we have seen, a central position in the American system of color caste.[a] The belief in biological inferiority is thus another basic support, in addition to the no-social-equality, anti-amalgamation doctrine, of the system of segregation and discrimination. Whereas the anti-amalgamation doctrine has its main importance in the "social" field, the belief in the Negro's biological inferiority is basic to discrimination in all fields. White Americans have an interest in deprecating the Negro race in so far as they identify themselves with the prevailing system of color caste. They have such an interest, though in a lower degree, even if their only attachment to the caste order

[a] See Chapter 3, Section 2.

is that they do not stand up energetically as individuals and citizens to eradicate it.

We are not under any obligation, of course, to extend civil courtesies, equal justice, suffrage, and fair competition to animals, however much we love them. Kind treatment of animals is not a "right" of theirs but is rather construed as an obligation to our own humane feelings and to those of our equals. In so far as the Negro can be placed lower in the biological order than the white man and nearer to the animals, he is also, to an extent, kept outside the white man's social and moral order. The white man's entire system of discrimination is then in no need of moral defense. The Negro becomes deprived of the "natural rights of man," and will, instead, have his protection in the civil kindness toward inferior and dependent beings, which behooves a Christian society. He will be asked not to insist on "rights" but to pray for favors.

> . . . the thought of the older South—the sincere and passionate belief that somewhere between men and cattle, God created a *tertium quid*, and called it a Negro—a clownish, simple creature, at times even lovable within its limitations, but straitly foreordained to walk within the Veil. To be sure, behind the thought lurks the afterthought—some of them with favoring chance might become men, but in sheer self-defense we dare not let them, and we build about them walls so high, and hang between them and the light a veil so thick, that they shall not even think of breaking through.[48]

Another analogy may be found in the status of women and children.* They, too, were—in a considerable measure—wards of the adult males, particularly in the period when the race dogma was being built up. They did not enjoy "equal rights" but had to rely for their protection upon kindly considerations from their superiors. Their status was also partly explained and justified by biological inferiority or lack of maturity. The Negro can be classified as nearer the animal but still a man, although not a mature man. Unlike children, he can be assumed never to grow to full maturity. Not only the individual Negro but the Negro race as a whole can be said to be "undeveloped" and "childish."

The dominant interest in rationalizing and defending the caste system can be specified in the demand that the following statements shall be held true:

(1) The Negro people belongs to a separate race of mankind.
(2) The Negro race has an entirely different ancestry.
(3) The Negro race is inferior in as many capacities as possible.
(4) The Negro race has a place in the biological hierarchy somewhere between the white man and the anthropoids.
(5) The Negro race is so different both in ancestry and in characteristics

* See Appendix 5.

that all white peoples in America, in contradistinction to the Negroes, can be considered a homogeneous race.

(6) The individuals in the Negro race are comparatively similar to one another and, in any case, all of them are definitely more akin to one another than to any white man.

Our assumption is that the abstract scheme of opportunistic ideas, stated in the six points above, represents the ordinary white American's *ad hoc* theory on the Negro race. The assumption is based on the fact that the scheme closely corresponds to obvious needs for rationalization inherent in the American caste situation. Not only can the scheme be deduced from the rationalization needs, but it has been induced from our observations of opinions actually held among unsophisticated whites over the whole country. Such beliefs seem to have particular strength in the South and in other regions and groups where the Negro problem has a high salience. Their strength seems everywhere to stand in a close inverse relation to the individual white's level of education. Its relation to social class—*if standardized for education*—seems more doubtful. The white upper class person might feel a greater biological distance from the average Negro, but he has not the same need to emphasize the race dogma, since the social distance is so great and so secure. He will often be found both more willing to recognize individual Negroes as exceptions to the race dogma and more likely to classify poor whites as of an inferior stock, and, sometimes, "just as bad as" the average Negro. The lower classes of whites seem to be much more careful to keep the race dogma straight in both these respects.

In adhering to this biological rationalization, specified in the six points stated above, the white man meets certain difficulties. A factual difficulty to begin with is that individual Negroes and even larger groups of Negroes often, in spite of the handicaps they encounter, show themselves to be better than they ought to be according to the popular theory. A whole defense system serves to minimize this disturbance of the racial dogma, which insists that *all* Negroes are inferior. From one point of view, segregation of the Negro people fulfills a function in this defense system. It is, of course, not consciously devised for this purpose, and it serves other purposes as well, but this does not make its defense function less important. Segregation isolates in particular the middle and upper class Negroes,[a] and thus permits the ordinary white man in America to avoid meeting an educated Negro. The systematic tendency to leave the Negro out when discussing public affairs and to avoid mentioning anything about Negroes in the press except their crimes also serves this purpose.[b] The aggressive and derogatory attitude toward "uppity" Negroes and, in particular, the

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2, and Chapter 32.

[b] See Chapter 2, and Chapter 30, Section 3.

tendency to relegate all educated Negroes to this group also belongs to the defense system.[a]

Since he has a psychological need to believe the popular theory of Negro racial inferiority, it is understandable why the ordinary white man is disinclined to hear about good qualities or achievements of Negroes. "The merits of Negro soldiers should not be too warmly praised, especially in the presence of Americans," reads one of the advices which the French Military Mission, stationed with the American Expeditionary Army during the First World War, circulated but later withdrew.[49] It should be added that white people who work to help the Negro people and to improve race relations see the strategic importance of this factor and direct their work toward spreading information about Negroes of quality among the whites.

Another difficulty has always been the mulatto.[b] White Americans want to keep biological distance from the out-race and will, therefore, be tempted to discount the proportion of mulattoes and believe that a greater part of the Negro people is pure bred than is warranted by the facts. A sort of collective guilt on the part of white people for the large-scale miscegenation, which has so apparently changed the racial character of the Negro people, enforces this interest.

The literature on the Negro problem strengthens this hypothesis. Only some exceptional authors, usually Negroes, gave more adequate estimates of the proportion of mixed breeds,[50] and it was left to Hrdlička and Herskovits in the late 'twenties to set this whole problem on a more scientific basis.[c] The under-enumeration of mulattoes by the census takers decade after decade and also, until recently, the rather uncritical utilization of this material, indicate a tendency toward bias. The observations of the present author have, practically without exception, indicated that the non-expert white population shows a systematic tendency grossly to underestimate the number of mulattoes in the Negro population.

It may, of course, be said against this assumption of a hidden purpose that one should not assume the ability of uninformed and untrained persons to distinguish a mulatto from a pure bred Negro. But the facts of historical and actual miscegenation are fairly well known, at least in the South, and are discussed with interest everywhere. And if a wrong estimate systematically goes in the same direction, there is reason to ask for a cause. It has also

[a] See Chapter 31. The term "uppity" is a Southern white man's term for all Negroes who try to rise, or have risen, out of the lower classes. Negroes use the term also, but are more inclined to substitute "biggity" for it.

[b] The term "mulatto" is, according to American custom, understood to include all Negroes of mixed ancestry, regardless of the degree of intermixture and the remoteness of its occurrence. The term includes in addition to "true" mulattoes also quadroons and octoroons and all other types of cross-breeds. In America they are all grouped with the Negro race. (See Chapter 5, Section 1.)

[c] See Chapter 5, Section 6.

been observed that the ordinary white American gets disturbed when encountering the new scientific estimates that the great majority of American Negroes are not of pure African descent. Similarly, the ordinary white American is disturbed when he hears that Negroes sometimes pass for white. He wants, and he must want, to keep biological distance.

But the mulatto is a disturbance to the popular race theory not only because of his numbers. The question is also raised: Is the mulatto a deteriorated or an improved Negro? In fact, there seems never to have been popular agreement among white Americans whether the mulatto is worse than the pure bred Negro, or whether he is better because of his partially white ancestry. The former belief should *per se* strengthen the anti-amalgamation doctrine, in fact, make adherence to it to the interest of the entire society. The second belief can serve a purpose of explaining away Negro accomplishments which are, with few exceptions, made by mulattoes and which then could be ascribed to the white blood.[51] Actually, I have often heard the same man use both arguments.

8. Specific Rationalization Needs

When analyzing the actual beliefs, we must take account of much more specific needs for rationalization. Specific beliefs seem to have specific rationalization purposes besides the general one of justifying the caste order as a whole. Practically every type of white-Negro relation, every type of discrimination behavior, every type of interracial policy, raises its own peculiar demands for justification. And practically every special Negro characteristic, actual or only presumed, opens the possibility of meeting one or more of these special demands.

The specific demands are embraced in the general one, in the same way as the caste order consists after all of the aggregate of a great number of specific discriminations and disabilities. Some of the beliefs are directly connected with a purpose of rationalizing a particular phase of the caste order. Others are only indirectly connected with such a specific purpose. The connection is sometimes obvious, as when a certain belief is regularly brought forward as a reason for a certain item of the caste order. Sometimes the connection is less apparent to the observer; we shall even have to expect that at times it will be hidden from both the consciousness of the believer and the superficial observation of the investigator. The following exemplifications in most cases indicate only those direct connections between beliefs and specific purposes which are more apparent. All the beliefs to be mentioned have been scientifically disproved, as we shall find in the next two chapters.

The beliefs that Negroes get sleepy when working with machines and that they, on the whole, lack mechanical aptitudes, serve a need for justification of their being kept out of industry. The beliefs of their general

unreliability, their inborn lack of aptitude for sustained mental activity, and, particularly, their lower intelligence, help to justify this vocational segregation and to excuse the barriers against promotion of Negroes to skilled and supervisory positions. The beliefs that the Negro race is "childish," immature, undeveloped, servile, lacking in initiative, are used to justify the denial of full civic rights and suffrage to Negroes.

The Negro's presumed lower intelligence and the belief that the mind of the Negro cannot be improved beyond a given level have always been main arguments for discrimination in education, and, specifically, for directing Negro education toward developing his hands and not his brains. The beliefs that Negroes have a much smaller cranial capacity and lower brain weight, a less complicated brain structure, thicker skull bones, an earlier closing of the cranial sutures, have a function to explain and fortify the beliefs in the lesser development of the Negro's higher brain centers and, consequently, his lower intelligence and reasoning power.

The beliefs in the Negro's inborn laziness and thriftlessness, his happy-go-lucky nature, his lack of morals, his criminal tendencies, and so on, serve the purpose of easing the conscience of the good, upright white citizen when he thinks of the physical and moral slum conditions which are allowed in the Negro sections of all communities in America. They also rationalize the demand for housing segregation, and tend, on the whole, to picture the Negro as a menace to orderly society unless "kept in his place" by the caste system. The exaggerated beliefs in the Negro's higher susceptibility to various diseases have, in particular, the function to explain, in a way less compromising for the larger community, the high mortality rates and the bad health conditions among the Negro population. Until recently, these beliefs have discouraged all programs of health improvement among Negroes.

The belief in a peculiar "hircine odor" of Negroes, like similar beliefs concerning other races, touches a personal sphere and is useful to justify the denial of social intercourse and the use of public conveniences which would imply close contact, such as restaurants, theaters and public conveyances. It is remarkable that it does not hinder the utilization of Negroes in even the most intimate household work and personal services.

There are many popular beliefs deprecating the mulatto: that they are more criminally disposed even than Negroes in general; that they tend to be sterile; that they—having parents of two distinct races—are not harmoniously proportioned, but have a trait of one parent side by side with a trait of the other parent, paired in such a way that the two cannot function together properly; that they are more susceptible to tuberculosis; that, because Negroes have relatively long, narrow heads, Negro women, with narrow pelvises, and their mulatto offspring are endangered when they bear children of white men whose heads are rounder, and so on.

These beliefs are all of a nature to discourage miscegenation and to keep up biological distance even in regard to cross-breeds. The assertion, particularly common among Southerners, that there are infallible signs to detect everyone with the slightest amount of Negro blood, which is so easy for the observer to disprove by experiment, is a reassuring belief with a similar function.

The belief that practically all Negro women lack virtue and sexual morals bolsters up a collective bad conscience for the many generations of miscegenation. At the same time, it is, occasionally, a wishful expression of sexual appetite on the part of white men. The belief in the strong sexual urge and the superior sexual skill and capacity of Negro women (the "tigress" myth) has more obviously this latter function. The belief that Negro males have extraordinarily large genitalia is to be taken as an expression of a similar sexual envy and, at the same time, as part of the social control devices to aid in preventing intercourse between Negro males and white females.

There are also popular beliefs which are friendly and actually ascribe some sort of superiority to the Negro: for example, that he is more gifted in music, the arts, dancing, and acting than white people; that he is better in handling animals or, sometimes, children; that he is loyal and reliable as a servant (often the opposite is, however, asserted); that he is, on the whole, a more happy and mentally balanced human being; that he has more emotional warmth; that he can take sorrows and disappointments more easily; that he is more religious in his nature. All such favorable beliefs seem to have this in common, that they do not raise any question concerning the advisability or righteousness of keeping the Negro in his place in the caste order. They do not react against the major need for justification. They rather make it natural that he shall remain subordinate.

The list of beliefs with specific purposes could be made much longer. The underlying hypothesis is this, that in analyzing the popular beliefs, we have to work as a detective reconstructing the solution of a crime from scattered evidence. For both the student of popular beliefs on the Negro and the detective, the guide to the explanation is given in the question: To whose good? Beliefs are opportune; they are in the service of interests. It is these general and specific rationalization needs which give the beliefs their pertinacity. They give to the stereotypes their emotional load, and their "value" to the people who hold to them.[52]

9. Rectifying Beliefs

The rationalization needs do not work in an intellectual vacuum. They must have raw material to shape into the desired form. This material consists of white people's experiences of Negroes, how they behave and what they are, from his point of view. We have already observed that the

ordinary white man's actual observations of average Negroes in their present inferior status make most of his beliefs natural and reasonable to him. The dependent Negro's attempts to accommodate to the wishes and expectations of the dominant white group facilitate this tendency. This all refers to the South. In the North, white people may have few personal experiences of Negroes, but they take over the myths, legends, and stereotypes that are existent in their culture.

Assuming as our *value premise* that we want to reduce the bias in white people's racial beliefs concerning Negroes,* our first practical conclusion is that we can effect this result to a degree by actually improving Negro status, Negro behavior, Negro characteristics. The impediment in the way of this strategy is, of course, that white beliefs, directly and indirectly, are active forces in keeping the Negroes low. We have already referred to this vicious circle.

A second line of strategy must be to rectify the ordinary white man's observations of Negro characteristics and inform him of the specific mistakes he is making in ascribing them wholesale to inborn racial traits. We may assume that, until the Negro people were studied scientifically—which in a strict sense of the term means not until recent decades—the raw material for beliefs which the average white man had at his disposal in the form of transmitted knowledge and personal observations placed only the most flexible limits to his opportunistic imagination. When, however, scientific knowledge is being spread among people and becomes absorbed by them through popular literature, press, radio, school, and church, this means that the beliefs are gradually placed under firmer control of reality. *People want to be rational, to be honest and well informed.* This want, if it is properly nourished, acts as a competing force among the opportunistic interests. To a degree the desire to be rational slowly overcomes the resistance of the desire to build false rationalizations. The resistance is, however, keen. Professor Young tells us:

> More than five hundred students of the author continued to rank the "American" as the superior "race" *after* completing a course on race relations! The "will to believe" . . . is strong![53]

The paramount practical importance of scientific research on the Negro is apparent for improvement of interracial relations. It is no accident that popular beliefs are biased heavily in a direction unfavorable to the Negro people—because they are steered by white people's needs for justification of the caste order. And it is, consequently, no accident either that scientific research, as it is progressing, is unmasking and rejecting these beliefs and giving rational reasons for beliefs more favorable to the Negroes. It is

* The desire to be rational, to know the truth, and to think straight is—as need not be elaborated upon—central in the American Creed, and is accepted by everybody in principle.

principally through encouraging research and through exposing the masses of people to its results that society can correct the false popular beliefs—by objectivizing the material out of which beliefs are fabricated. Seen in long-range perspective, a cautious optimism as to the results of gathering and spreading true information among the American people in racial matters seems warranted. The impression of the author is that the younger, and better educated, generation has, on the whole, somewhat fewer superstitious beliefs, and that, during the last decade at least, the racial beliefs have begun to be slowly rectified in the whole nation.

A third line of strategy is, naturally, to attack the valuations for the rationalization of which false beliefs are employed. This must mean strengthening the American Creed in its primary function of bending people's minds toward equalitarianism. Everything done to modify the caste order must diminish the moral conflict in the hearts of the Americans and thus decrease the defense needs which give emotional energy to the false racial beliefs. Indirectly, the valuations conflicting with the Creed also are becoming deflated as beliefs are becoming rectified. Valuations depend, to an extent, on the availability of functional beliefs in which they can be "lived out" and expressed.[a]

In this way the moral and the intellectual tasks of education are closely related. The interrelation extends even to our first line of strategy. Every improvement of the actual level of Negro character will increase the effectiveness of both the intellectual and moral education of white people in racial matters and *vice versa*. It is this mechanism of mutual and cumulative dynamic causation which explains the actual situation in theory and, at the same time, affords the basis for constructive practical policy.

10. THE STUDY OF BELIEFS

It should by this time be clear that *it is the popular beliefs, and they only, which enter directly into the causal mechanism of interracial relations.* The scientific *facts* of race and racial characteristics of the Negro people are only of secondary and indirect importance for the social problem under study in this volume. In themselves they are only virtual but not actual social facts. ". . . to understand race conflict we need fundamentally to understand *conflict* and not *race*."[54] We have concluded, further, from the actual power situation in America *that the beliefs held by white people rather than those held by Negroes are of primary importance.*[b]

The popular beliefs concerning the Negro race pose two different tasks for scientific research. One task is to criticize and refute the beliefs when they are wrong. American anthropology and psychology have, in recent decades, worked in this direction. It was, in fact, a necessary work to be

[a] See Appendix 1.

[b] See Introduction, Section 3.

performed in order to free science itself from the load of inherited racial bias. Another task which, in the end, might turn out to be of equal practical importance and which has a more central theoretical relevance is *to study the racial beliefs themselves as social facts:* to record them carefully; to analyze their causation and explain their role in people's emotions, thoughts, and actions; their "function" in the caste order of American society.

Practically nothing has been done in a comprehensive and systematic compass to study the popular racial beliefs as social facts.[55] The racial beliefs have not even been recorded in a scientifically controlled manner. It is true that the beliefs can be perceived by an observer in America. They can also be recorded from the press and the popular literature. Selected fragments of evidence on various sectors of racial beliefs have, for a long time, been recorded in the scientific literature on the Negro problem.[56] Until a few decades ago, however, even this literature had more the character of folklore itself than of a study of folklore. Impressionistic information of this type permits discussion of the problem in a hypothetical manner. It allows the outlining of a problem for study but not its solution. The foregoing pages are written in this vein. In order to lay the factual basis for a truly scientific analysis, which is more than suggestive and conjectural in character, *beliefs must be observed and recorded in a systematic way under controlled research conditions.*[57]

In such studies the assumption should be that *people's beliefs are not necessarily consistent.* The utmost care should be taken not to press upon the informants a greater systematic order than there actually exists in their beliefs. For our assumption is, further, that *the very inconsistencies are illuminating* and of highest importance, particularly for the analytical approach to the deeper problem of the causation of the beliefs. Our hypothesis is that *the beliefs are opportunistic* and have the "function" to defend interests. The ordinary American's interests in the Negro problem should not be assumed to be simple and harmonious. They are, instead, complicated and conflicting. The conflicts are largely suppressed and only vaguely conscious.

The analysis of the racial beliefs will, therefore, reach down to the deeper-seated *conflicts of valuations.* As people's thought, speech, and behavior regularly are in the nature of moral compromises, this deeper analysis cannot be accomplished simply by recording and systematizing the actual beliefs themselves, but must endeavor—by comparing various beliefs and particularly their inconsistencies—to understand them by inferences as to their "function" in the individual's opportunistic world view.

In this deeper analysis—and only in this stage of the belief study—the scientific facts of race and racial traits become of importance. They have no direct importance *per se*; indirectly they are of importance in that they

always, to an extent determined by exposure to education, form part of the raw material out of which actual beliefs are shaped. But in the analysis of beliefs they contribute *the objective norms in relation to which the degree of incompleteness and the degree and direction of falsification of the actual beliefs can be scientifically ascertained and measured.* As the distortion of truth in the beliefs is assumed to signify the opportunism of the latter, its measurement opens the door to *a scientific study of the fundamental conflicts in valuations.*[a]

The main conclusion from this conjectural discussion of racial beliefs is, therefore, that a set of most fascinating research problems of great theoretical and practical importance is waiting for investigation. Such studies will demonstrate to what extent the hypotheses developed above will hold true when tested against properly recorded research data.

[a] See Appendix 1, Section 3.

CHAPTER 5

RACE AND ANCESTRY

1. The American Definition of "Negro"

The "Negro race" is defined in America by the white people. It is defined in terms of parentage. Everybody having a *known* trace of Negro blood in his veins—no matter how far back it was acquired—is classified as a Negro. No amount of white ancestry, except one hundred per cent, will permit entrance to the white race. As miscegenation has largely been an affair between white men and Negro women, it is a fair approximation to characterize the Negro race in America as the descendants of Negro women and Negro or white men through the generations—minus the persons having "passed" from the Negro into the white group and their offspring.[a]

This definition of the Negro race in the United States is at variance with that held in the rest of the American continent. "In Latin America whoever is not black is white: in teutonic America whoever is not white is black."[1] This definition differs also from that of the British colonies and dominions, primarily South Africa, where the hybrids (half-castes) are considered as a group distinct from both whites and Negroes. Even in the United States many persons with a mixture of Indian and white blood are regarded as whites (for example, ex-Vice President Curtis and Will Rogers).

Legislation in this respect tends to conform to social usage, although often it is not so exclusive.[2] In some states one Negro grandparent defines a person as a Negro for legal purposes, in other states any Negro ancestor —no matter how far removed—is sufficient. In the Southern states definitions of who is a Negro are often conflicting. Since Reconstruction, there has been a tendency to broaden the definition. The Northeastern states generally have no definition of a Negro in law. These legal definitions and their changes and differences should not be taken too seriously, however. The more absolutistic "social" definition is, in most life situations, the decisive one.[3]

[a] This approximative summary neglects, of course, the Indian element in the ancestry of some Negroes, and the passing of part-Negro persons into the American Indian population, as well as the relatively few part-Negro offspring of white mothers.

This social definition of the Negro race, even if it does not change anything in the biological situation, increases the number of individuals actually included in the Negro race. It relegates a large number of individuals who look like white people, or almost so, to the Negro race and causes the Negro race to show a greater variability generally than it would show if the race were defined more narrowly in accordance with quantitative ethnological or biological criteria. "The farcical side of the color question in the States"—says Sir Harry H. Johnston—"is that at least a considerable proportion of the 'colored people' are almost white-skinned, and belong in the preponderance of their descent and in their mental associations to the white race."[4] In the American white population the so-called Nordic type, which is popularly assumed to be the opposite extreme from the black Negro, is a rare phenomenon. This statement is especially true after the "new" immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe and from the Near East. But even the "Old American stock" was preponderantly "non-Nordic."[a] There are, however, also American Negroes with the clearest of white skin, the bluest of blue eyes, and the long and narrow head which happens to be both a Negro and a "Nordic" trait.

The popular belief rationalizing the exclusive social definition of the Negro race is well expressed by the high priest of racialism in America, Madison Grant, in the following words:

> It must be borne in mind that the specializations which characterize the higher races are of relatively recent development, are highly unstable and when mixed with generalized or primitive characters tend to disappear. Whether we like to admit it or not, the result of the mixture of two races, in the long run, gives us a race reverting to the more ancient, generalized and lower type. The cross between a white man and an Indian is an Indian; the cross between a white man and a Negro is a Negro; the cross between a white man and a Hindu is a Hindu; and the cross between any of three European races and a Jew is a Jew.[5]

The fact that this belief is contrary to scientifically established truth does not diminish its force as a belief. An additional fortification in the sphere of beliefs is the "black baby myth," the popular theory that the slightest amount of Negro ancestry in an individual, who does not show even a trace of Negro characteristics, can cause a "throw-back" and that he—in a mating with a white individual—can become the parent of a black baby.[b]

There has been much speculation about how this very exclusive racial

[a] In making his famous study of the physical traits of "Old Americans" (practically all of English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, French, or German ancestry), Hrdlička encountered great difficulty in finding persons of pure "Nordic" ancestry. (See Aleš Hrdlička, *The Old Americans* [1925], especially p. 5.)

Even in the population of Sweden, supposed to be the purest "Nordic" stock in existence, only some 15 per cent can be classified as "Nordics" on strict anthropometric grounds.

[b] Here two additional popular beliefs are added to our list in Chapter 4, Section 7, of beliefs with a special purpose. Concerning the black baby myth, see Section 7 of this chapter.

definition came to fasten itself on America. These speculations run all the way from an often asserted, particularly strong "racial instinct" in the "Anglo-Saxon race" to Embree's remark that "this custom grew up during slavery in order to increase the number of slaves, who constituted valuable property."[6] When attempting to account for the historical origin of the social definition of the Negro, the fact should be taken into account that mixed offspring were almost always the result of illegitimate sex relations in which, according to common law, the ordinary paternal lineage becomes broken. This question of how the very inclusive definition of the Negro race arose in American cultural history is not solved.

The definition of the "Negro race" is thus a social and conventional, not a biological concept. The social definition and not the biological facts actually determines the status of an individual and his place in interracial relations.[a] This also relieves us of the otherwise cumbersome duty of explaining exhaustively what we, in a scientific sense, could understand by "race" as an ethnological and biological entity.[7] In modern biological or ethnological research "race" as a scientific concept has lost sharpness of meaning, and the term is disappearing in sober writings. In something even remotely approaching its strict sense, it applies only to exceptionally isolated population groups, usually with a backward culture, which thus seems to be the concomitant of "racial purity."

Thus the scientific concept of race is *totally inapplicable at the very spots where we recognize "race problems."* It is being replaced by quantitative notions of the relative frequency of common ancestry and differentiating traits. "Racial purity" is thus relativized, and the hybridity of all peoples on earth is no longer minimized. Only the ignorant talk about the "Swedish" or "Scandinavian race," not to speak of the "Anglo-Saxon" or "German race." The "white American race" is gradually beginning to be merely a joke even among the populace, except in the South. The great variability of traits among individuals in every population group is becoming stressed, and the considerable amount of overlapping between all existing groups increasingly recognized. Besides the recognized differences among individuals in any one group, the differences among averages of groups tend to pale into insignificance.

The fundamental unity and similarity of mankind—above minor individual and group differentials—is becoming scientifically established. While formerly attention was fixed on the few obvious distinguishing characteristics, and while the assumption was always that there existed

[a] In recognition of this, we regularly substitute in this book the terms the "Negro people," the "Negro group" or the "Negro population" for the term, the "Negro race." When we sometimes, for the sake of convenience, talk about "race," "racial" characteristics, or "racial" relations, we should be understood to refer to the popular conception of the word, not the scientific one.

other differences in regard to less observable facts, scientists now stress the unity of mankind and are skeptical of differences until they are demonstrated. The old custom of describing population groups in terms of "types" —the so-called "Nordic" type, for instance—which were not true types in the statistical sense but idealized, or caricatured, types, is being discredited. Even the use of average or modal figures for measuring traits is beginning to be considered scientifically unsatisfactory. It is recognized that the representation of the traits of a group should be made in the form of curves of frequency distribution or scatter diagrams. An absolutistic metaphysical system of opportunistic beliefs is, in this way, gradually being demolished, and humble, relativistic scientific knowledge raised on its ruins. Qualitative conceptions are translated into quantitative ones. This is a common trend of modern scientific development.

The common belief that the races could be ordered as higher or lower in an evolutionary series, so that Negroids could be deemed more ape-like than Caucasoids, is entirely discredited. It is now commonly assumed by expert opinion that man—the species *Homo sapiens*—evolved only once, and that such average differences as now exist between men are due to living under different geographic conditions after having separated from the common place of origin. Independent of this hypothesis, which, of course, can hardly be checked, it is a fact that the Negro is no more akin to the apes than the white man is. Of the four most noticeable characteristics generally ascribed to the average or typical Negro—dark skin, broad nose, woolly hair, thick lips—only the first two make him slightly more similar to the apes. The white man's thin lips and straight hair are, on the other hand, much nearer to the traits of the apes.

When all this is said, when anticipating some later conclusions, it is recognized that the great majority of American Negroes have Caucasoid ancestry as well as Negroid, and when it is also recognized that modern psychological research has discounted the previously held opinions that there are great innate mental differentials between racially defined population groups, it still does not follow that the race concept is unimportant in the Negro problem, and that continued and intensified ethnological, biological, and psychological research on the American Negro people is unnecessary. In spite of all heterogeneity, the average white man's unmistakable observation is that *most Negroes in America have dark skin and woolly hair,* and he is, of course, right.

He is also right in ascribing the occurrence of these characteristics to African ancestry. His delineation of the Negro race might be ever so arbitrary and scientifically inaccurate; his ideas about concomitant mental and moral traits might be fantastic and untenable; but the fact is that "race" in *his* definition is the basis of the social caste system as it exists in America. Because of social visibility and of community knowledge of the parentage

of individuals, "race" has tremendous cultural consequences. Under the exposure of science and education the white people in America might, in times to come, gradually rectify their opportunistic beliefs and even change their valuations to agree more with the national Creed of justice and equality of opportunity, so that these cultural consequences will be mitigated or obliterated. But for the time being, this is not so.

From one viewpoint the entire Negro problem in America hinges upon this social definition of "race." Should America wake up one morning with all knowledge about the African ancestry of part of its population and all memories of color caste absolutely forgotten and find all the outward physical characteristics of the Negro people eradicated, but no change in their mental or moral characteristics, nothing we know about this group and other population groups in America would lead us to believe that the American Negro would not rapidly come to fit in as a well-adjusted ordinary American. His poverty and general backwardness would mean a low starting point and cause a larger portion of this population group to remain in the lower social strata. But, having been relieved of the specific caste deprivations and hindrances, his relative preponderance in the disadvantaged classes would, from the beginning, decrease.

His earlier relative isolation in America through slavery and subordinate caste position and, perhaps, also a few faint traditions and customs kept from Africa, would, for a time, endow him with remnants of some peculiar cultural and personality traits. But they would be negligible even in the beginning—if, as we assume, they are unrelated through social visibility to his caste status—compared with the much more glaring and "non-American" peculiarities of various groups of recent immigrants.

But this is only a dream. The Negro has to be defined according to social usage, and his African ancestry and physical characteristics are fixed to his person much more ineffaceably than the yellow star is fixed to the Jew during the Nazi regime in Germany. With the social definition comes the whole stock of valuations, beliefs, and expectations in the two groups, causing and constituting the order of color caste in America.

This defines our problem in this and the next chapters. Our task is to describe the ancestry and the characteristics of this clearly delineated social group in America which is known under the somewhat incorrect term of the Negro "race."

2. AFRICAN ANCESTRY

Part of the ancestry of the American Negro people is African, and it is proper to start out from this line of parentage as it is the one from which their name and status are derived. Too, the fact must not be ignored that the major proportion of their ancestors, back to the time of the first contact between Negroes and whites, is African Negro.[8]

No official registration records were kept of the number of slaves imported, but compilations have been made on the basis of ship captains' reports and port records. The compilation which has been most extensively quoted has been that of Henry C. Carey, as modified by the United States Bureau of the Census. Carey estimated that a total of about 333,000 Negroes had been imported into the United States up to 1808, when federal law prohibited the slave trade.[9] Of this figure the Census Bureau said, "It is claimed, however, that this total is too small, and that a closer estimate would bring the number to 370,000 or even 400,000."[a] These slaves were brought from Africa and from the West Indies.[b]

TABLE 1

CAREY'S ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF SLAVES IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED STATES AT VARIOUS TIME PERIODS

Time Period	Number of Slaves Imported	Avrage Import Pe Year
Prior to 1715	30,000	—
1715–1750	90,000	2,500
1751–1760	35,000	3,500
1761–1770	74,500	7,400
1771–1790	34,000	1,700
1791–1808	70,000	3,900
Total	333,500	

Source: Henry C. Carey, *The Slave Trade* (1853), p. 18.

Some 50,000 more slaves were brought within the boundaries of the United States between 1790 and 1860 by annexations of territory—principally of Louisiana, Florida and Texas.[10] There are not even private records to guide us in estimating how many slaves were smuggled into the country between 1808 and 1860. Herskovits mentions the fantastically high figure of two and a half millions.[11] Dublin, after examining the data on smuggling and on births and deaths, concluded: "The unlawful trade in Negroes can at most account for the increase of less than one-half of 1 per

[a] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth in the United States: 1790-1900* (1909), p. 36. A figure of slightly below 400,000 slaves imported before 1808 seems reasonable in the light of the fact that the total Negro population was only 757,000 in 1790 and that this estimate allows for an import of 330,000 up to 1790.

[b] It is impossible to estimate how many came from Africa and how many from the West Indies, not only because no adequate records were kept, but also because there was the custom of bringing slaves intended for the United States first to the West Indies for a few years where they were made accustomed to their new life by the older West Indian slaves. It seems to be the consensus of opinion, however, that the proportion of West Indian slaves brought to the United States did not become significant until the nineteenth century.

cent a year. The rest of the increase, namely, about 2 per cent . . . represented the excess of births over deaths."[12] Dublin's proportion of smuggled Negroes is equivalent to an absolute figure of about 563,000,[a] but even this must be taken, as he says, to be a maximum figure. All estimates of the number of slaves smuggled in between 1808 and 1860 must be regarded in the light of the fact that apparently only 330,000 to 400,000 Negroes were imported during the entire period before 1808, when the slave trade was federally legal. Although it is possible that there were more slaves smuggled into the United States between 1808 and 1860 than there were legally imported in the two centuries before 1808, it is probable that the former figure was, at best, not much larger. A good many of the Negro slaves who were liberated after the Civil War were African-born. Whatever historical research ultimately determines these two figures to be, it is extremely likely that the total number of slaves imported into the United States before 1860, by whatever means, was less than a million.

The Negroid element in the ancestry of the present-day American Negro people, whether brought here directly or via the West Indies, had its original home in Africa and in the islands close to that continent.[13] The population of Africa was not homogeneous during the period of the slave trade.[14] In the region of the Sahara Desert and surrounding districts, there had been intermixtures between Negroids and Caucasoids for an unknown number of centuries. In the Southern portion of the Continent were the Bushmen and the Hottentots. In the section known as the "West Coast"—which is really only the central part of the African coast facing the Atlantic Ocean—lived the "true Negro."[b] The remainder of Central and Southern Africa was inhabited by various groups of Negroes who are often lumped together for convenience and called the "Bantu-speaking stocks."

These problems—from what regions and from what Negroid peoples in Africa the Negro ancestors of the present-day American Negroes came, and in what proportions during various periods of the slave trade the direct and indirect import to America was furnished—are still far from settled in a conclusive way. Since anthropometric evidence is difficult or impossible to bring to bear on these problems—due, among other things, to the later miscegenation of the various Negro groups in America—anthropologists have had to rely on the relatively meager historical evidence that can be discovered, scanty oral traditions in Africa, and cultural remnants in the

[a] The census reports an increase of 3,064,022 Negroes between 1810 and 1860. The application of Dublin's ratio (4 to 1) to this gives 612,804 Negroes who had to be accounted for by factors other than natural increase. Some 50,000 of these came into the country when new territory was annexed. This leaves 562,804 as a maximum figure for the number smuggled.

[b] This is a technical anthropological term, according to Herskovits, and should not be taken to imply a value judgment that the West Coast Negroes are "truer" Negroes than any others.

New World.[15] This evidence seems to indicate that the great majority of slaves brought directly to the United States came from the West Coast and hence belonged predominantly to that racial group known as the "true Negroes." A small proportion of the slaves came from other points in Central and South Africa and from Madagascar, some few also from East Africa and North Africa.[16] It would seem probable, however, that the proportion of slaves from parts of Africa other than the West Coast increased toward the end of the slave trade era, as it became increasingly difficult to get enough West Coast Negroes. But the proportion from other parts of Africa never became predominant. During the later period also, slaves were brought from the West Indies, and the Negro ancestors of these people came from all over Africa.[17]

Since Emancipation there has been an addition to the American Negro population through immigration. This has never been large, however. In 1940 there were only about 84,000 foreign-born Negroes in the entire United States. Three-fourths of these were from the West Indies and so may be presumed to have a significant proportion of white and Indian ancestry.[18] Only about 1,000 came from Africa, but this does not necessarily mean that they were of unmixed Negroid stock.[a] In common with most foreign-born groups, these foreign-born Negroes have a high birth rate,[19] and so tend to have an effect on the genetic composition of the American Negro people in slightly larger proportion than their small numbers would indicate. This effect is largely offset, however, by the facts that they are genetically much more like the native American Negro and that they are concentrated in Northern cities where the birth rate rapidly becomes depressed. Consequently, they will tend not to have such an important effect on the genetic composition of the American Negro population.

3. Changes in Physical Appearance

Even if we ignore the fact that there has been an admixture of white and Indian blood[b] into the American Negro population, there have been some changes in this population stock which make it different from those African tribes from which it has descended. Those who became slaves in America were only a selection of Africans, not a representative sample of them. They were probably made even less representative by the rigors of the displacement from Africa to America, which killed off a certain number of them. After the Negroes came to America, their biological composition was probably changed by differential reproductivity and possibly by mutations. There may also have been environmentally caused changes in

[a] While the total figures are from the 1940 Census, the proportions from the West Indies and from Africa are from the 1930 Census. The latter figures for 1940 are not yet available. It is probable that these proportions have not changed significantly from 1930 to 1940.

[b] Race mixture will be discussed in the following sections.

physical appearance which have no relation to genetic changes. About the effects of most of these causes of change, our knowledge is conjectural.

The slave trade itself could be assumed to follow a selective pattern. It has been part of the system of popular beliefs of white people in America to assume that the captured slaves were predominantly of low class origin, of a docile nature and with less intelligence and courage than the average in their homeland. Modern research tends to rectify the idea of the extreme submissiveness shown by the American Negro in slavery—a belief which became of particularly great importance as part of the Southern ideological armor before and immediately after the Civil War—and also to render probable that the slaves were a cross-section of the population from which they were drawn.[20] Several instances of African royalty and nobility are recorded among the slaves. The means by which Africans were made slaves cannot be used to argue for any unfavorable selection. Persons who had been captured in war, who had committed crimes, or who had failed to pay their debts, were sold to traders. Other slaves were those who were simply kidnapped by the white traders or by their black assistants. Warfare and kidnapping were nonselective. Punishment for crimes or debt was certainly socially selective, but there is no evidence that it was biologically selective. In any case, this source of slaves was of rather small importance.

Another source of selectivity—this one in the positive direction—might have been the rigors of the voyage from Africa to America. Available evidence is contradictory as to the extent of mortality during the period from the seizure of slaves in Africa to their ultimate sale in America. The old standard evidence pointed to a death rate as high as five-sixths of all Negroes captured. Some recent sources of information, however, mention a mortality as low as 13 per cent.[21] Even if the evidence were not contradictory as to the extent of mortality, the biologically selective nature of this mortality would not be definitely known—although it seems reasonable to suppose that the weakest died first. More definitely selective than the death rate was the unwillingness of the slavers to ship sick, disabled or weak persons. They were looking for the able-bodied to be sent as slaves.

Slavery as an institution must, in various ways, have had selective effects upon the genetic composition of the American Negro population. Plantation owners, particularly in the slave-breeding states in the Upper South during the first half of the nineteenth century, took measures of positive eugenics in controlling mating.[22] The slave breeders can generally be assumed to have favored the reproduction of docile and physically strong specimens of the slave population. The historical sources give frequent references to such practices. Other practices—such as the killing of slaves who attempted to escape and the selling of "bad niggers" down the river to the Deep South where life expectancy was shorter—may also have had some genetic effect.

It is also possible to speculate about the eugenic effects of such selective factors of reproduction as the bad health conditions and the high mortality rates in the freed Negro population up to the present time and of the looser sex mores in the Negro population. But in these respects, as in regard to all the other sources of selectiveness mentioned above, the prudent conclusion must be that our factual knowledge of each source is next to nothing, and that there is no possibility of weighing them together into a conclusion concerning their resultant effect upon the genetic composition of the Negro people. It is probable that we shall *never* come to know, in a scientific way, what these various selective factors have meant for the genetic composition of the American Negro people.

Mutations, as well as selection, m . have made the American Negro different in some respects and in some degree from the corresponding population groups of the African continent. There is no knowledge as to the number or character of the genetic mutations that have occurred in the Negro population since coming to the Western Hemisphere, but there have undoubtedly been some. Since the cessation of the slave trade, the Africans, too, must have had mutations that did not get transmitted to the American Negro people because of isolation. About this we know nothing.

Such mutations must be distinguished from changes which appear to be "biological" but yet are not, or may not be, inherited by transmission of genes. In recent decades there have been many studies, usually not with specific reference to the Negro, indicating how such things as glandular activity, diet, and physical handling of infants may affect physical traits. Since Negroes experienced changes in climate, diet, and customary practices in care of infants, and perhaps even in glandular activity, when they made the drastic transition from Africa to America, their physical traits may be expected to have changed. The studies of physical changes of immigrants inaugurated by Boas [23] open the possibility that changes may occur even in such standard traits as head form. Since no anthropometric studies were made of Negroes before they were shipped to America, knowledge is lacking as to the specific character of the changes in physical form. But that there were some of this type, there is good reason to expect.[24] Changes in cultural conditions since the period of slave importation, and the more recent migration from the rural South to the urban North, may also have modified the Negro's physical appearance since he landed on American shores.[a]

The influences affecting the Negro's physical appearance are sometimes of an intentional type which do not need gross changes in environment to exert their effects. The Negro woman can, and does, lighten her face

[a] In this paragraph we are considering only the physical changes due to direct environmental influences. The psychic changes—which are probably more important—will be treated in Chapter 6.

with powder and bleaches. The Negro can—but does not, usually, because of the high cost—remodel the shape of his nose and lips. The changes which can be effected by this conscious type of modification of physical appearance are not numerous, but they may increase with advances in medical and surgical knowledge.

4. EARLY MISCEGENATION

The slaves imported from Africa by no means represented "pure Negro races." Of the original tribal stocks many had an admixture of Caucasoid genes from crosses with Mediterranean peoples. During the slave trade more white genes were added. The Portuguese who settled on the Guinea Coast had relations with the natives. The slave traders themselves were known frequently to have had promiscuous intercourse with their female merchandise. Even more important as a source of infiltration of white blood into the Negro slave population before arriving in what is now the United States was slavery in the West Indies. While some of the slaves in these islands came directly from Africa, others were brought indirectly by way of Spain and Portugal. The importation of Negro slaves into those European countries was in practice by the beginning of the sixteenth century, and by 1539 there is some evidence that it reached the figure of 10,000 to 12,000 a year.[25] It seems that there was extensive miscegenation in these two European nations. Part of the offspring remained and became engulfed in the population of the Iberian Peninsula. Those brought over to the West Indies formed a large proportion of their slave population. This continuously received further additions of non-Negro blood from the white and Indian inhabitants of these islands. No one knows exactly what proportion of the slave population of the United States was brought by way of the West Indies, but the proportion would be significant. As the slave import from the West Indies formed an increasing proportion of all slave importation during the later periods of slavery in America, and as Negro immigration after Emancipation has been largely from the West Indies, the elements in the American Negro people with the shortest line of ancestry in this country are, therefore, not of purer breed but rather the contrary.[26]

Upon their arrival in the New World, one type of mixture which is important, although not often referred to in this relation, did not *per se* involve Indian and white stock. We refer to the wholesale mingling of the various African stocks with each other. Historical sources from the period often ascribe to the slaveholders a conscious purpose to break up tribal coherence and allegiance between the slave masses in order to decrease their resistance against slavery. It was part of their being "broken in."[27] But even apart from such a purpose, a compulsory labor system managed by persons who, in any case, had no feeling for upholding tribal differentia-

tion, even when they did not consciously follow the opposite policy, must have had this result. This intermingling between the African tribes also had its beginnings in Africa, where commerce and wars, slaveholding and slave trade, for thousands of years, had this effect.[28] The extensive slave trading by Europeans after the discovery of the New World, and the stirring up of population movements in Africa caused thereby, only intensified a process already taking place. Its final consummation occurred in America.[a]

In the United States miscegenation with Indians and whites occurred from the very beginning. Indians were held as slaves in some of the American colonies while Negro slaves were being imported. Equality of social status between Indians and Negroes favored intermingling. The whites had little interest in hindering it.[29] As the number of Negro slaves increased, the Indian slaves gradually disappeared into the larger Negro population. Whole tribes of Indians became untraceably lost in the Negro population of the South.[b] Some Indian tribes held Negro slaves with whom they mingled, and some were active in the internal Negro slave trade. Runaway Negro slaves and free Negroes often took refuge in the Indian camps, where they then were kept as slaves or were adopted. They took part in the wars and insurrections and became completely amalgamated in the Indian tribes with which they lived. In a few cases the intermixture produced a group that was recognized neither as Indian nor as Negro. A few isolated groups of this type remain to the present day.[30]

During the nineteenth century, the Indians declined as a significant element in the population of the South, and those who remained began to take on the attitudes of the white man toward the Negro. From this time on, Indian-Negro mixture was probably no more important than Indian-white mixture in the South. But the early interbreeding between Negroes and Indians has been of greater importance for the genetic composition of the American Negro population than has until recently been realized.[31] Twenty-seven and three-tenths per cent of the Negro sample of 1,551 individuals examined by Herskovits claimed some Indian ancestry.[32]

The relations between Negro and white indentured servants during the seventeenth century had much the same social basis as the Negro-Indian intermixture. As already pointed out, some time lapsed before the imported Negroes were pushed down to the lower status of chattel slavery, and racial prejudice developed only gradually. All through the colonial period, the white population showed a marked excess of males and a scarcity of females—as did also the Negro population—which *per se* is a factor tending

[a] This intermingling, both in Africa and in America, will be considered again when we discuss the possible consequence of a new "brown race" in America. (See Section 9 of this chapter.)

[b] Many other Indian tribes, of course, moved West, so that the relative absence of Indians in the South is by no means due solely to amalgamation with the more numerous Negroes.

to promote interracial sex relations.[33] It seems from the historical records that the two dependent groups—Negro and white servants—were often bound together by considerable sympathy during most of the seventeenth century; the extreme contempt and hatred between Negroes and poor whites which has prevailed into the present time seems, in any case, to be a later development.[34]

Sexual relations occurred under these conditions rather freely and a half-breed stock appeared early. Some of those early relations involved, as the sporadic historical sources reveal, white women; some of the relations in both directions had the character of legal marriage. But from the beginning the much larger portion of the intermixture occurred between white men and Negro women and most of it was extra-marital. When a mulatto generation came into existence, it served as a new stimulus to relations between the Negro and white groups, as mulatto women were preferred to pure-blooded Negroes as sexual objects. Even if in these early relations it seems that most of the time the white male partner belonged to the lower classes, the higher classes, who owned and could dispose of their slave women, already had given a share to the paternity of the growing Negro population of America.

Parallel to the stratification of the lower slave status for Negroes, the various states started to pass laws against intermarriage and other types of interracial sex relations.[35] It is apparent from a casual inspection of these laws that they were largely guided by the property holders' interest in keeping parents and offspring in slavery.[a] Their chief effect upon interracial sex relations was probably to drive them even more toward the illicit type. It probably did not diminish their actual occurrence to any appreciable degree, since there was practically no attempt to enforce the law prohibiting interracial intercourse outside of marriage.

5. ANTE-BELLUM MISCEGENATION

As the slavery and plantation system became more firmly established in the early eighteenth century, a second stage was reached in Negro-white sex relations. White servitude was already on the decline while the number of Negro slaves was increasing. Some authors hold the opinion that, as a result, miscegenation decreased considerably, but their arguments are not convincing.[36]

A final answer to this question will probably never be reached, the less so as the matter of interracial sex relations had become an important issue between the white Southerners and the Northern Abolitionists in the decades preceding the Civil War. The accusation that there was sexual

[a] Before these laws were passed, there was some question as to whether the offspring of a free person and a slave was free or not. There was also some question as to the legal status of both parents in such a case.

exploitation of Negro women was one of the most effective means of consolidating public opinion against slavery in the puritan North. Thus Southern writers of the period avoided mentioning the point, especially as it involved white men of the master class and their female slaves. What the present writer has been able to read in historical sources and, in addition, to learn from the rumors in the South leads him to believe that Wirth gives a balanced statement on the "amount of miscegenation during the period of slavery" when he says:

> The contemporary observers, on the whole, tend to leave an impression that no likely looking Negro, or more especially mulatto, girl was apt to be left unmolested by the white males; that very few of the young white men grew up "virtuously," and that their loss of virtue was scarcely to be attributed to cohabitation with white women. While such impressionistic statements lead to the inference that interracial sexual relations were normal experiences for at least the white men of well-to-do families, they reveal nothing concerning the proportion of Negro women and, of lesser importance, of Negro men, who entered into interracial unions. It is quite conceivable that the very great emphasis on the sexual activities of the white male has tended to obscure the extent to which large numbers of Negro women may have been free from any sexual experiences with men of the white race.[37]

It should not be assumed that interracial sex relations were a pattern only of the Southern rural plantations. There is general agreement, among the authors who have studied the question of interracial sexual relations of this period, that such relations—measured in proportion to Negro women involved—were even more frequent in the Southern cities and in the North. The Negro population in these urban communities contained a larger proportion of mulattoes, partly as a result of race mixture there and partly because slaveholding fathers of mulatto children sometimes freed their offspring and moved them to the cities or to the free territory in the North. The North contained more light-colored Negroes also because there were many states without laws prohibiting intermarriage. Mulatto women have always been preferred to full-blooded Negroes as sex mates. A large proportion of city Negroes were free; in the North all Negroes were free. City life—both in the South and in the North—was more anonymous, even for the slaves. In cities a larger proportion of Negroes were engaged in household work. They were fewer and were more scattered through the white population. All these factors tended to make interracial sex relations relatively more numerous in the Southern and Northern cities than in the Southern rural areas. The only factor, apparently, working in the opposite direction—to decrease sex contacts between the races in the North—was the North's lack of interest in breeding mulattoes for the slave market. These interracial sex relations in the North and in Southern cities had only a minor influence on the genetic composition of the total Negro population,

however, since the bulk of the Negro population during the slavery period was rural Southern.

6. MISCEGENATION IN RECENT TIMES

The third stage of Negro-white sex contact came with the Civil War and its aftermath. The Northern army left an unknown amount of Yankee genes in the Southern Negro people.[38] The prolonged disturbances following the War were probably even more important. Reuter summarizes the situation in these words:

> The emancipation of the slaves and the breakdown of the master-slave relationship was followed by a prolonged period of profound disorganization. Restraints were removed and the manumitted slaves wandered in celebration. The period was one of more or less unrestrained promiscuity.[39]

This period was not a short one. When the Negro population gradually settled down in the caste status which had been substituted for slavery, sexual mores can be assumed to have been continued much along *ante-bellum* lines. The only new element in the situation, apparently, was the lack of interest in breeding mulatto children for the slave market, because the latter no longer existed. What evidence there is on interracial sexual relations during the later decades of the nineteenth century does not indicate that such relations were considerably less frequent than during slavery; they might even have been somewhat more frequent.

It is more difficult to form even a conjectural judgment as to the amount of interracial sexual relations during the twentieth century and as to the present trend than it is to ascertain broadly the facts for earlier periods. Interracial sexual relations are more closely guarded than ever, and life is more anonymous and less fixed in groups about whose behavior simple and valid generalizations might be made. The slight increase in scientific research on the subject has not compensated for these trends. Among factors which might have tended to increase interracial sexual contact must be reckoned: increased Negro migration to cities and the North; slow but gradual urbanization even of rural districts in the South; and the secularization of sexual morals, particularly among the white population. Among factors tending to have an opposite effect are: in the white population, the gradual breakdown of the sexual double standard (making for easier accessibility of white women for extra-marital purposes), the balancing of the sex ratio, and the publicity about the high rate of venereal disease among Negroes; in the Negro population, the gradually increasing race pride, the relatively lessened value of concubinage with a white man, the slowly spreading middle class morality in sex matters. Public opinion in the South also has become firmer in condemning white men's sex relations with Negro women, and the segregation of the Negro people has become more complete.

There have been no scientific studies which even suggest tentatively the actual quantitative trend of interracial sexual relations. Most of the informants the writer has questioned on local trends—but by no means all—have agreed in the belief that sex relations between members of the two groups are decreasing. The same opinion is expressed in the literature.[40] It should, however, be considered with the greatest reservation, as such an opinon is opportune in both the white and the Negro groups. The matter is of great social importance because of the way in which the Negro problem has been defined in America, and it is, therefore, urgent that science should bring light upon this phase of social life—in spite of the natural reluctance and perhaps even resistance from the side of the public.

But even if interracial sexual relations were not decreasing, the offspring from intermixture may be decreasing. The scanty evidence available seems to point in this direction.[41] In considering trends in the injection of white genes into the American Negro population, the amount of sex relations between members of the two races is not the only factor which must be taken into consideration.

An increased utilization of effective contraception, decreasing the relative and absolute amount of mixed offspring, has the same genetic effect as decreased interracial sexual relations. Writers who have considered recent trends in miscegenation generally tend to ignore trends in use of contraceptive devices.[42] It is possible that, as means of effective birth control have become spread among the American population, they have been utilized with particular eagerness and efficiency in mixed sexual relations.[43] The writer has, from the information he has been able to gather from doctors, social workers, Negroes with wide community knowledge, and, occasionally, from average Negroes themselves, got the impression that, at least in cities, even Negroes in lower strata have kept pace with knowledge about contraceptives.[44]

Even more important is a change in the character of interracial sexual relations. The more stable type of sex unions—marriage and concubinage—have probably been decreasing,[45] and these are the types of relations most productive of offspring.[a] On the other hand, prostitution is mostly sterile, while other casual types of relations may have increasingly involved the use of contraceptives.[46]

The probable decline in offspring with one white parent and one Negro parent should, therefore, not be taken to mean that interracial sex contacts have necessarily decreased: a rise in prostitution and other casual sex contacts may have counterbalanced the decline in marriage and concubinage. From a genetic standpoint, the only sex relations which matter are those

[a] The cultural, social, and personal side of miscegenation, the different types of sexual unions, the legislation against intermarriage and the research on intermarriage will be dealt with in later chapters on discrimination and caste. (See Chapters 29 and 31.)

leading to mixed offspring. The scanty quantitative evidence and general opinion seem to indicate that there has been a decline in the rate at which white genes are being added to the Negro population.

7. "PASSING"

Because of the American caste rule of classifying all hybrids as Negroes, it might be thought that no Negro blood would ever get into the white population. However, some extremely light Negroes—usually having more white ancestry than Negro—leave the Negro caste and become "white." "Passing" is the backwash of miscegenation, and one of its surest results. Passing must have been going on in America ever since the time when mulattoes first appeared. Passing may occur only for segmented areas of life—such as the occupational or recreational—or it may be complete; it may be temporary or permanent; it may be voluntary or involuntary; it may be with knowledge on the part of the passer or without his knowledge; it may be individual or collective.[47] Usually the only kind that is important for the genetic composition of both the white and the Negro population is that kind which is complete and permanent.[a]

Usually only the lighter colored Negroes pass in the United States. However, some of the darker do also by pretending to be Filipinos, Spaniards, Italians or Mexicans. Day's study further reveals how capable of passing are persons with one-fourth, three-eighths, and even one-half, Negro blood, not to speak of persons with even smaller admixtures.[48] Because those who pass usually have more white ancestors than Negro, it is genetically less important that these people go over into the white world than if they were to remain in the Negro. Passing, therefore, involves far greater change in social definition of the individual than it does in his biological classification.

It is difficult to determine the extent of passing. Those who have passed conceal it, and some who have passed permanently are not even aware of it themselves because their parents or grandparents hid the knowledge from them. Census data and vital statistics are not accurate enough to permit of estimates within reasonable limits. The possible methods for estimating the extent of passing are: (1) getting at genealogies by direct questioning or other means; (2) noting discrepancies between the observed numbers of Negroes in the census and those which may be expected on the basis of the previous census and birth and death figures for the intercensal years; (3) noting deviations from normal in the sex ratio of Negroes. All these methods have been employed, but—for one reason or another—have not permitted us to state the extent of passing.[49]

[a] The cultural, social, and personal problems raised by the phenomenon of passing will be discussed in Chapter 31.

Passing has genetic significance for both whites and Negroes.[a] The whites get a certain admixture of Negro genes. This may modify certain characteristics of their physical structure to an extent which must be slight, on account of both the great size of the white population and the predominance of Caucasoid genes in the passers. It cannot make the white population much darker even if continued for a long time.[50] The main genetic consequence of passing for the Negro people is that some of the near-Caucasoid elements are being constantly removed from the possibility of reducing the proportion of Negroid genes in the remaining American Negro population. This is, of course, a relative matter, since far from all light Negroes attempt to pass, and since many who cannot pass have a large admixture of white blood. Passing is apparently more common to men than to women, judging by opinion and the sex ratio.[b] This does not reduce the genetic significance of passing, however, since the contribution of genes by a father is just as great as that by a mother. Of some consequence for genetic composition is the fact that young adults are those who pass most frequently. These are the persons who bear most children, who are, consequently, usually lost to the Negro group.

8. Social and Biological Selection

There are no data to permit the conclusion that, in the rural South where most of the miscegenation has taken place, one social class of the white population was more responsible for the existence of the mixed-blood population than corresponds to its relative proportion in the population. Neither does the available evidence allow the contrary conclusion. But even if one social class of white people in the South should have been more predominantly involved in miscegenation, this would not necessarily have great genetic importance, since it is not scientifically established that social classes of whites in the South differed significantly in genetic composition, in spite of the popular opinion that poor whites are degenerate.[51] It is also not possible to state that within the various social classes of whites, miscegenation has followed any pattern of *individual* selection.

Turning to the Negro partners in miscegenation it would, however, on *a priori* grounds, seem probable that a factor of positive selection in mating could have been at work, at least until recent times when Negro pride became important. The Negro girl whose physical appearance and cultural manners approximated the prevalent standards in the higher caste would

[a] In the following discussion and throughout the book, we discuss certain implications of the inheritance of skin color as an example of all physical traits which have significance for social status, such as breadth of nose, thickness of lips and hair form.

[b] This probably occurs because passing usually involves economic advantages to Negro males who must compete in a white man's world, but economic disadvantages to a Negro female who could get a white husband only from the lower classes, but possibly a Negro husband from the upper classes.

certainly be preferred as a sexual partner. Such girls tended, at least after the first generation in America, to be mulattoes rather than pure-blooded Negroes. The fact that a similar preference probably occurred in the choice of Negro girls for household work, where they became more exposed to sexual advances, would strengthen its importance. Within the Negro marriage market the mulattoes' lighter skin has had, and continues to have, a strong competitive value. This can again be assumed to work as a factor of positive selection favoring the mulatto group: Dark males who have distinguished themselves in any way tend to take light mulatto women as wives.

> As a result of this marriage selection, whatever talent there is among the mulattoes remains among the mulattoes; whatever talent there is among the black group marries into the mulatto caste. In either event the talent of the Negro race finds its way into the mulatto groups. The descendants of these talented men are mulattoes, and whatever of the father's superior mentality and energy they may show or carry becomes an asset to the mulatto group, and the full-blood group is correspondingly impoverished. The mulatto caste loses none of its native worth and is constantly reinforced by the addition to it of the best of the variant types which appear among the numerically larger group.[52]

We cannot accept this line of reasoning, however, without qualifications, since it is not certain that whites have predominantly selected innately superior Negro girls to have sex relations with, or that socially successful dark Negroes who marry light girls are also biologically superior, or that the inferiority of the white parents of mulattoes has not balanced the superiority of their Negro parents. The proof that mulattoes are biologically superior to full-blooded Negroes must go beyond the finding that mulattoes have made greater achievements than pure-blooded Negroes, since the latter have had more social handicaps than the former.[53]

Differences in fertility and mortality between groups with a varying degree of white ancestry must, through the generations, have affected the results of miscegenation upon the genetic composition of the present-day American Negro people. While opportunistic opinions have been expressed both to the effect that mulattoes were sterile, or more sterile, than full-blooded Negroes, on the one hand, and that they were unusually prolific, on the other hand, there is not the slightest shred of scientific evidence for either of these opposing popular beliefs.[54]

It is certain, however, that mulattoes are concentrated in cities in the higher economic brackets, where—because of greater use of effective birth control—they have a lower fertility than the Negro population as a whole. Nor does the probable lower death rate of mulattoes entirely counterbalance their lower birth rate. This differential reproductivity has been tending to reduce the proportion of white genes in the total Negro population. While other effects on genetic composition by differential reproduc-

tivity have been claimed (such as the presumed selective migration of superior Negroes to the cities, where the birth rate is low),[55] these have thus far no basis in demonstrated facts.

Length of residence of different elements of the Negro population in the United States must have had an influence on the genetic composition of the American Negro people. Because the Negro net reproduction rate has, until recently, been far above unity—so that a given group of American Negroes has always more than reproduced itself in the next generation—the earlier a certain element has entered the American Negro population, the greater the proportion of the total Negro population does this element form,[a] in relation to its original size. This factor operates on the genetic distribution of the descendants of the various African races in favor of the "true Negroes" from the West Coast, since Africans outside this latter group were probably not brought to America in significant numbers until the nineteenth century. The factor also makes less important the relative numbers of Negroes coming *via* the West Indies, who also did not come in significant numbers until relatively recently. It also enhances the genetic significance of the earlier interracial sex contacts with the Indians and the indentured white servants brought from Europe in the seventeenth century. Finally, it makes more important the interracial sex contacts with the North and West Europeans that occurred in the earlier days than those with South and East Europeans that have tended to become relatively more numerous since the Civil War.

9. Present and Future Genetic Composition Trends

Everything said so far about the racial character of the slaves originally imported, about miscegenation and passing in this country, and about the various general factors which have influenced the American Negro stock, has been highly conjectural and speculative. Summing up this unsatisfactory knowledge can hardly lead to anything more than an expectation that the American Negro people should show up as a considerably mixed population group. It is the merit of Professor Melville J. Herskovits[56] that he has finally approached this problem directly and, taking his departure in anthropometric research of the present Negro group in America and its genealogy, has tried to ascertain the actual composition of the group.

Herskovits' most significant finding was that 71.7 per cent of his presumably representative sample of 1,551 Negroes had knowledge of some white ancestry, and that 27.2 per cent knew of some Indian ancestry.[57] Herskovits claims that his sample is representative because the groups of Negroes from various sections of the country were found to be similar in several

[a] The element need not have remained intact in certain family lines, of course. The statement in the text refers to the proportion of genes in the Negro population, therefore, and not to the proportion of persons.

physical traits. This does not constitute proof of representativeness, however, because it is likely that each group of Negroes (from each section of the country) is an upper class group, and Herskovits does not define the degree of closeness of trait which constitutes similarity. Too, the list of traits which were compared does not include color or other important differentiating traits. It is likely that Herskovits' sample contains too many upper class Negroes who are known to have a disproportionate amount of white ancestry.[a] The fact that many Negroes may not know of white ancestry of several generations back[58] may, however, counterbalance the selective factor in Herskovits' sample and leave his figure of 71.7 per cent with white ancestry not too inaccurate. Thus, while we cannot say that existing research permits a definitive answer to the question as to how many Negroes have some white blood, the best available evidence and expert opinion point to a figure around 70 per cent. This figure must tend to increase with time, if for no other reason than that full-blooded Negroes intermarry with mixed bloods and their offspring become mixed bloods. Herskovits' other important conclusion—that in many physical traits the present American Negro population shows less variability than its parent African Negro, American white, and American Indian populations, and so are rapidly forming a genetically homogeneous group—cannot be accepted as demonstrated.[59]

A forecast of the future trend of genetic changes must, in its very nature, be highly conjectural, and, if stretched beyond the next few decades, it cannot possibly be more than an amateurish guess. Even for the immediate future it can amount to little more than an enumeration of the relevant factors and a consideration of their interrelations. Any statement concerning the resultant effect of the forces at play has no greater validity than the specific premises stated concerning the primary factors at work.

Miscegenation between American Negroes and whites is commonly believed to be on the decrease. Even if it is not certain that sex relations between members of the two groups are decreasing, there is more reason to feel confident that children of white-Negro unions are becoming rarer, in both absolute numbers and relative proportions. Information on, and accessibility to, contraceptive devices is increasing; and their further technical perfection is generally expected among population experts. A decreasing rate of birth of offspring with parents representing the two races will not, of course, decrease the proportion of white genes in the Negro people but will slow down their further increase and postpone the distant possibility of full amalgamation.

Passing is becoming easier in the more mobile and anonymous society of today and tomorrow. The more recent immigration of darker peoples

[a] It also seems that Herskovits' sample contains too many Negroes from the Atlantic seaboard states, who are known to have a disproportionate amount of white ancestry.

from Eastern Europe and from around the Mediterranean Sea and also from Latin America, especially from Mexico, and the rising social respectability of the American Indian, have made passing easier for the Negro. Warmer relations with the republics of South America will perhaps be an influence in the same direction. The increasing segregation, on the other hand, which tends to create economic and social monopolies for the Negro upper class (to which most of the light-colored mulattoes belong) will tend to decrease the desire to pass. So also will the rising race pride.[a] America is unique among all countries having a mixed population—not excluding countries like Brazil where discrimination is so much milder—in having a significant number of white or almost white Negroes, who could easily pass but prefer not to do so.

As the individuals who pass must be near-white, the extent of passing is a function of the number of such individuals. Continued miscegenation between whites and Negroes will tend to increase that number; miscegenation between mulattoes and darker Negroes—as well as low reproduction rates for mulattoes—will tend to decrease it. What the trend of passing is, and will be, resulting from the interplay of these various factors, is impossible to ascertain on the basis of present evidence.

The effect of passing, whatever its extent, is to neutralize the effect of miscegenation on the genetic composition of the Negro people.[b] It is even possible to conceive of a temporary condition in which the rate of passing would exceed the rate of addition of new white blood into the Negro group so that there would be a tendency for the American Negro group to become more negroidized.

Differential reproductivity is a factor which can be expected to have a continuing importance within the next decades.[60] Our knowledge of social and economic conditions among the Negro people and of the development of differential reproductivity in other countries which are more advanced in birth control rather favors the forecast that present fertility differences between the various Negro groups are not going to decrease much for a long time.[c] Infant mortality and, generally, mortality in the lower age groups may be expected, on the other hand, to become gradually more equalized.[d] There are, further, no sure signs that light-colored people will not remain in the upper class. Since, with increasing segregation, the Negro

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

[b] The effect of passing on the American *white* population can never become important because those who pass usually have more Caucasoid genes than Negroid, and because the numbers who pass are insignificant compared to the huge American white population.

[c] Fertility differentials may decrease, however, if Southern states extend the policy, which a few of them now have, of setting up birth control clinics in rural areas. (See Chapter 7, Section 7.)

[d] See Chapter 7, Section 2.

upper class is relatively growing, it can come to include a relatively greater number of black Negroes without losing many of its mulattoes.

Reproduction differences have, in the main, the same effect on the Negro group as passing, except that the effect is not so exclusively concentrated on the extremely light-colored Negroes.[a] This factor, therefore, enters into the balance between miscegenation and passing and makes it more probable that the effects of miscegenation can be fully, or more than fully, counterweighted.

Internal miscegenation within the Negro group between individuals with a varying degree of white ancestry is, and will in the future be, going on. The result is a tendency toward a slow but continuous equalization of Negro and white genes in the Negro people, decreasing the relative numbers at both the black and white extremes and concentrating the individuals ever closer to the average. The changes in position of the average itself will depend upon the balance, referred to above, between white-Negro miscegenation, on the one hand, and passing and reproductivity differentials, on the other hand.

Immigration of Negroes (and mixed bloods) from the West Indies and from South America—the latter of which might become more important in the future—will, in so far as the immigrants enter the country as Negroes, somewhat change the genetic composition of the Negro people in a direction dependent upon the genetic constitution of the newcomers. As the stocks are not very different,[b] this factor, even if the immigration should increase, will not effect great changes in the American Negro people.

The three main problems to be stressed in a theoretical analysis starting out from such considerations as those stated above—assuming immigration inconsequential, and disregarding the effects on the white population—are:

(1) The interdependence between the various factors. Passing is, for example, a function of Negro-white and Negro-mulatto miscegenation and of differential reproductivity.

(2) The position of the average in the various traits which differentiate whites from Negroes. This position is a function of miscegenation, passing and differential reproductivity.

(3) The homogeneity of the Negro population. The degree of dispersion around the average is generally a function of internal miscegenation and, particularly in regard to the form of the frequency curve at the white end, a function of external miscegenation, passing and differential reproductivity.

[a] It has, of course, in contradistinction to passing, no effects at all on the white population.

[b] They contain, however, relatively more genes of other original African stocks than the "true Negro," which predominated in the import to the United States, and of different groups of Indians than those that were to be found in the United States. They also bring their own mutations and other physical changes of the last four hundred years.

The above generalizations may be integrated into a system of simple mathematical equations. In view of the paucity of data on the extent and trends of miscegenation, passing, and differential reproductivity, such a mathematical formulation could not be used to predict the probable future genetic composition and physical appearance of American Negroes. However, it might have the value of allowing the student to realize more easily the logical possibilities in the future. It may also have the value of checking the looser type of judgments made even by respectable authors. The construction of such a theoretical model, however, is a major task in itself and is beyond the scope of this book.

This chapter has mainly been a review of a great number of questions upon which science does not as yet provide precise and definite answers. We can, however, state confidently that there are no reasons to believe that a more complete amalgamation between whites and Negroes will occur within the surveyable future. It is even possible, though not certain, that the proportion of very light mulattoes who now, so to speak, form a bridge between the two population groups will decrease by passing and by marriage with darker Negroes. That the Negro group is not disappearing will be a theme of Chapter 7. Finally, we remind the reader again that the concept of the American Negro is a social concept and not a biological one. Even considerable changes in the genetic composition of the Negro people may leave the social problems, around which this inquiry is centered, unchanged.

CHAPTER 6

RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Physical Traits

In our discussion of "racial" characteristics, which is only a brief summary, we are separating those traits which are physical from those which are psychic, thus following the traditional division between anthropology and psychology. In presenting the facts, particularly on the physical traits, but also on the psychic traits, we have to build upon studies mainly concerned with those traits in which Negroes differ from whites, which, by itself, represents a biased statement of the problem tending to exaggerate differences and minimize similarities. We are, furthermore, limited almost to what we have ourselves criticized—namely, presenting differences between the means of the two groups—because these are practically all the facts available. The dispersion around the means is usually measured only by standard deviation and other abstract indices which do not allow an intensive study of the concrete distribution and of overlapping. Still worse, the available data are so weak that even the differences between means cannot be said to be satisfactorily established.

Ascertaining the differences between Negroes and whites in respect to physical traits involves not only measurements of Negroes but also the establishment of a "standard" set of measurements of whites. No anthropometric measurements of the American population have ever been undertaken on such a large scale and with such methodological precautions that valid comparisons between one sub-group and the rest of the population are made possible. Nearest the ideal in regard to large number of cases was the Army study,[1] but the technique of measurement had several weaknesses.[2]

There are, however, a large number of studies on small samples of American Negroes and various groups of whites. For the Negroes, Herskovits' study is by far the best available. During his investigations, Herskovits tried to determine the representativeness of his sample; we have in the preceding chapter accounted for the general reasons why we cannot accept his claims. The investigators of white samples have not even made efforts to get representativeness.

Apart from this question of representativeness, which is particularly

important because of the heterogeneous origin of the American population, the samples are often too small to allow even for reliability in a formal statistical sense, especially after differences in age and sex have been taken into account. There are also differences in criteria and in techniques of measurement utilized in the various studies which make comparisons extremely hazardous. Some of these differences can be accounted for, but some are hidden in the results and, consequently, unknown. Only when the two groups have been studied by one investigator in one integrated study is there full security on this point, but few such studies have been made; and they have no claims to representativeness and reliability.[3]

The white population most often used for furnishing a standard set of measurements of whites has been Hrdlička's *Old Americans*.[4] Hrdlička's sample—which includes 900 complete and 1,000 incomplete cases of individuals measured over a period of 15 years—is not, and was never meant to be, representative of the white American population. It is instead a sample of those white Americans whose ancestors had been longest in this country—predominantly British, Germans and Scandinavians. To get his sample, Hrdlička took only Americans whose ancestors on both sides had been in the United States for at least two generations. The exclusiveness as to ancestral stock implied in this selection is coupled with a definite bias toward including a disproportionate number of persons of high socio-economic status. Only those "Old Americans" who did not marry the poorer immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe were accepted as proper ancestors to the individuals in the sample. An even stronger source of bias in the same direction was Hrdlička's device of selecting persons from patriotic societies, especially the Daughters of the American Revolution, and from large Eastern universities.[5] Also he made an intentional selection of persons who were healthy and "normal." The socio-economic bias generally, and particularly the demand for healthiness and "normality," must be considered to be the more important as several physical traits are known, and some others are suspected, not to be true hereditary traits but to be determined also by nutrition and other environmental factors.

Thus, to sum up, when Negroes are compared with whites, in the United States, and Hrdlička's sample is used, they are compared with a vaguely defined group of "normal," healthy, white persons of Western European ancestry in which the upper classes were heavily over-represented. Hrdlička's study has many outstanding qualities, but it offers a poor substitute for the standard set of measurements of a representative sample of the American white population needed for comparison when Negro physical traits are to be determined.

It is no exaggeration to say that no physical difference between the average American Negro and the average American white, not even difference in color, has yet been measured quantitatively by research methods

which conform to the rigid standards of statistics. The present undeveloped state of this field of physical anthropology should not lead us to accept low scientific standards and to make conclusions which are not warranted. At the maximum we are justified in drawing from available studies only rather qualitative statements concerning average differences, the actual quantities of which—as well as the actual spreads around the means—are not known or known only approximately, so that words and not figures are their more appropriate expressions.

Compared to the average white man, the average Negro of the present day seems to exhibit the following physical traits:[6] head slightly longer and narrower; cranial capacity slightly less; interpupillary distance greater; nose broader; lips thicker; external ear shorter; nasal depth greater; nose and head shorter; torso shorter; arms and legs longer; pelvis narrower and smaller; stature shorter; skin with greater amount of black pigment; hair wavy, curly, frizzly or woolly; distribution of hair less thick; more sweat glands. Prognathism is greater, not because the brain case stops growing in early childhood, but because the upper jawbone continues to grow after the age at which that of the white man stops. A larger proportion of Negroes have brown eyes, black hair, and sacral pigment spots than do Old Americans.[7] This summary contains all those physical traits, reported by more than one anthropologist, that distinguish the American Negro from the Old American. The traits vary greatly among different groups of Negroes and in the total population of Negroes at different times, since—as we have seen—Negroes are not genetically homogeneous and stable. Stature, cranial capacity, and perhaps other traits are also modifiable by environmental changes over time, and the differences do not, therefore, necessarily, or wholly, represent hereditary traits.

In many of these traits Negroes differ only slightly from white men; in nearly all of them there is some overlapping between Negroes and whites. The average person is, for these reasons, not aware of some of these differences. Some of the traits are outstanding and easily visible in the average Negro—although nearly or entirely lacking in many individual members of the Negro group—such as dark skin, woolly hair, broad nose, thick lips and prognathism. They are the basic traits that account for the Negro's "social visibility."

The white man might be aware of other differences but grossly exaggerates them in his imagination, not because he has observed the differences, but because he has certain opportunistic beliefs which he fortifies by hearsay testimony and by such occasional experiences of his own as happen to confirm his beliefs. He also usually attaches an incorrect interpretation to them. An example is the slightly smaller cranial capacity of the average Negro which the white man associates with alleged lower reasoning power

of the Negro despite the fact that no connection has been proved between cranial capacity and mental capacity.

Certain traits are found only in popular beliefs and have no foundation at all in fact. Such are the beliefs that the time of suture closure in the brain case of the Negro is earlier than that of the Caucasoid, that the Negro's hands and feet are larger, and that his forehead slopes more. It would be instructive to trace the psychological significance of these and other false beliefs to those who hold them.[a] To the same category belongs the belief that the Negro has different vocal cords. This is associated with the rather unique pronunciation and speech habits of a large proportion of the Negro population.[b]

Certain common beliefs have as yet not been checked by scientific research. This is, for instance, true of the beliefs that male Negroes have extraordinarily large genitalia and all Negroes a peculiar odor.[8] These beliefs have a strategic function in the justification of the American caste system.[c] Occasionally even social scientists express the stereotypes with no evidence behind them. These beliefs are certainly not "the cause" of race prejudice, but they enter into its fixation.

Since measurements of the American Negro are intended to be those of the average individual, and since the majority of American Negroes are mulattoes, the traits measured are predominantly those of mulattoes. Little is known of the actual mechanism of inheritance of the various traits when races cross, except that it is far from being simple Mendelian inheritance. Anthropologists who have studied the biological effects of miscegenation have been forced to use the indirect technique of observing what differences are found on the average between persons of varying degrees of white blood. They find the changes in traits from those of the pure Negro type to be roughly proportional,[9] on the whole, to the amount of admixture of white blood.[10]

Little is known about the functional correlates of the physical traits of Negroes, although it might be expected that there are some. There has been some speculation, for example, as to what anatomical traits of Negroes cause their supposed superiority in athletics, but no one has yet succeeded in proving any hypothesis, and, therefore, it is not known whether the superiority, if it exists, has a genetic basis or not.[11]

2. Biological Susceptibility to Disease

There is one type of physical trait which has not usually been discussed by anthropologists but which has occupied medical students for generations

[a] See Chapter 4, Section 7.
[b] Such cultural differences will be discussed in Chapter 44.
[c] See Chapter 4, Section 7, and Chapter 28, Section 5.

and which, if substantiated, would have great practical importance. We refer to the possibility of a differential susceptibility to various diseases.

The discussion concerning whether the Negro is innately susceptible to certain diseases has had a history similar to the discussion concerning whether the Negro is mentally inferior to the white man.[12] The first inference was that the difference in specific disease rates was due to differences in biological constitution. An elaborate explanation was built up in terms of the Negro's biological inability to adapt to a cold climate, the dark color of the Negro's viscera, the maldistribution of the Negro's nerve cells, and so on. The great decline in the Negro death rate since the turn of the century, almost paralleling, at a higher level, the decline in the white death rate,[a] forced investigators to recognize environmental factors.

The mode of investigation then became one of holding constant a few environmental factors—such as rural-urban residence and economic status—and attributing the remaining discrepancies to differences in innate susceptibility. In some studies the explicit assumption is made, without evidence, that there are no other relevant differences in the average living conditions of Negroes and whites. In other studies the same assumption is made implicitly. Few, if any, investigators have realized fully that the whole mode of existence of Negroes—with their segregation, over-crowding, and ignorance—helps to create a higher disease rate as compared to whites; and that these factors cannot be held constant completely because there is no group exactly comparable in the white world.

The implication is that only an experimental procedure, in which all environmental factors were controllable, would answer the question as to what degree the present difference in disease and death rates is due to an inferior biological constitution on the part of the Negroes. This experiment would have to take into consideration the fact that resistance to disease is a function not only of heredity and environment at a certain time, but also of environmental conditions throughout the life history of the individuals under observation—for resistance to disease is built up in an individual during his childhood and even before his birth.[13]

We may briefly consider the facts concerning differences in disease and death rates between Negroes and whites.[14] First, we must observe that the reporting of deaths and the designation of a cause of death are very inadequate. This has significance in studying differences between Negroes and whites, for Negroes are concentrated in those population groups for which reporting is least complete. Second, the fact that certain beliefs are prevalent about Negro susceptibilities, and that there is often a question as to what shall be reported as the "cause of death," make the official statistics an imperfect source for determining ethnic differences in disease. This is especially important in the case of those diseases to which Negroes

[a] See Chapter 7, Section 2.

are traditionally supposed to be relatively immune, such as scarlet fever and diabetes. Diseases which are not frequently a cause of death are reported so badly or are reported for such inadequate samples that it is almost inevitable that Negroes would appear to be immune to them even if they were not really so. Such diseases include hookworm, gout, goiter and skin diseases.

Most of the discussion, however, has been relative to the diseases to which Negroes may be especially susceptible, because their rates in these diseases are higher than those for whites. A large number of such diseases have been recorded by different investigators,[15] but we shall consider only those which are important as causes of death and those for which the differences between Negroes and whites are large enough to indicate that they are due to real differences and not to errors in sampling[16] or observation. This narrows our problem down to pellagra, syphilis, nephritis, tuberculosis, and pneumonia-influenza as important diseases which are definitely more prevalent among Negroes than among whites. No one seems to have advanced the claim that the Negro's higher death rates due to pellagra, syphilis, or nephritis result from his biological constitution. The question of innate racial differences seems to have cropped up mainly with reference to tuberculosis and pneumonia-influenza. Enough facts are available to indicate that the main reasons for the discrepancy between Negroes and whites in the incidence of tuberculosis are environmental and not hereditary:

1. A study made before the Civil War shows that the incidence of tuberculosis at that time was considerably higher for whites than for Negroes.[17] A survey made by Dr. Frederick L. Hoffman indicated: "The opinion of southern physicians who practised among Negroes before the Civil War was almost unanimous that consumption was less frequent among the colored population than among the whites."[18] It was only after Emancipation that the Negro rate jumped high above that of the whites.

2. Negro deaths from tuberculosis have decreased considerably in recent years as public health facilities have been improved and made more available to Negroes. Between 1920 and 1933, the rate per 100,000 population declined from 344 to 232 in the North, and from 229 to 130 in the South.[19]

3. While, since the Civil War, the Negro tuberculosis rate has always been higher than the white tuberculosis rate, the Negro rate today is lower than the white rate was a few decades ago.[20]

4. In a few unusual communities in Tennessee, where the Negroes have a higher occupational status than whites, the tuberculosis rates are higher for whites than for Negroes.[21]

There is not so much direct evidence that the higher pneumonia-influenza rate for Negroes is due to environmental causes. However, other etiological studies of these allied diseases have not succeeded in finding a strong

hereditary susceptibility. Also a report by Love and Davenport,[22] on the incidence of these diseases among World War troops, indicates that Negroes are no more susceptible to both these diseases together but are more likely to get the more dangerous pneumonia and less likely to get the less dangerous influenza. This suggests that when influenza strikes, it takes a more serious form among Negroes because their constitution is not so strong—which, of course, does not indicate a hereditary trait—but that Negroes are no more susceptible in the first instance to pneumonia-influenza.

In trying to determine whether Negroes have any special susceptibility to *mental* disease, there are even more difficulties than in the case of physical disease.[a] The only information comes from hospitals, which vary greatly in their policy respecting admittance. Some of the mental diseases have a known physical basis; for others no physical basis has been discovered. When Pollock, for example, tried to show that Negroes were more susceptible to dementia praecox, by pointing out that in Illinois, Negroes had a rate of 57.1 as compared to 15.6 for whites, it was easy to disprove his conclusion.[23] In New York, the discrepancy between the races was not so great.[24] In both Illinois and New York, Negroes were concentrated in cities, which generally have a rate twice as high as the rural areas. Negroes were also concentrated in those age and income groups with the highest rates of dementia praecox. Further, the Negro population of New York and Chicago contained a much larger proportion of recent migrants, and instability seems to have a connection with dementia praecox.

Another type of difficulty in the way of determining whether there is any hereditary difference in susceptibility is illustrated by the data on general paresis. The rate for Negroes in New York State (1929-1931) was 25.0 as compared to 7.0 for whites. The ratio of the Negro rate to the white rate remained high when considered for New York City alone (3.9 to 1) and when standardized for age (4.1 to 1). The explanation seems to be simply that New York Negroes have much more syphilis than whites, and syphilis is the major cause of paresis. Thus, Negroes have a greater incidence of paresis because they have more syphilis, but no racial susceptibility to syphilis has been demonstrated. In view of all these complications, recent students of mental disease have tended to avoid completely the question as to whether Negroes have any special susceptibilities to mental disease.

In general, we must conclude that no innate susceptibilities or immunities to specific diseases on the part of the Negro have yet been conclusively demonstrated. Disease is the result of a complicated interplay of hereditary and environmental factors, and no one has yet succeeded in holding constant

[a] At this point we shall consider only the question as to whether there are hereditary racial differences in mental disease. For other aspects of mental disease, see Chapter 44, Section 3.

the environmental factors to determine that the heredity of the Negro is such as to make him more or less susceptible to certain diseases than the white man. Even disease susceptibilities and immunities that are passed on from parent to child may not be genetic, since infection may occur before or after birth, and some environmental influences on the mother are visited upon her unborn children.

That there may be hereditary differences in mental or physical diseases we cannot deny.[a] But what we do know about the changes in the disease rate and the differentials in incidence under different environmental conditions leads us to the conclusion that any hereditary differentials in susceptibility (which may ultimately be detected) are likely to be small in comparison to the changes which can be brought about by varying the mode of living and the quality of medical care. Too, susceptibility does not mean disease: for proper preventive efforts can reduce the ill-effects of any degree of susceptibility. Our practical conclusion is, therefore, that there is no reason for feeling complacent about the higher disease and death rates of Negroes on the ground that they have a greater innate susceptibility.

3. Psychic Traits

Most of the physical differences between Negroes and whites may be directly translated into terms of esthetic valuation, capacity for physical labor, and bodily healthiness. Except in the first respect, which, of course, is subjective, they do not, even if exaggerated, warrant any great depreciation of the Negro as a fellow human being. The differences, assumed or factual, as to size and structure of the brain have, in addition, been utilized for supporting beliefs in innate characteristics which are vastly more important—namely, the Negro's mental abilities and general psychic inclinations, and, consequently, his capacity for culture and morals. The

[a] The fact that the Negro is somewhat different physically from the white man makes it likely that there are small racial differences in susceptibility. But nothing is definitely known about this, and the physical differences may have a complicated effect, as the following example will show. The black pigment in the Negro's skin is a protection against sunlight, and some investigators—but not all—think this involves a lessening of the amount of ultra-violet light absorbed by Negroes. Since ultra-violet light is a preventive of rickets, and since Negroes seem to have more than their fair share of rickets, some have claimed that the Negro's black skin has given him a greater biological susceptibility to rickets. But the skin of Negroes secretes more sebum, which makes ultra-violet light more potent. Too, diet deficiencies are a demonstrated cause of rickets, and Southern Negroes have notorious diet deficiencies. (See Julian Herman Lewis, *The Biology of the Negro* [1942], pp. 94-96.)

Similarly, the Negro's supposed emotional traits have been advanced to explain certain of the diseases for which he has a high rate. For example, his excitability is supposed to cause hypertension of the heart, but his lack of excitability has been advanced by some to explain his high rate of angina pectoris—another heart disease. Neither the emotional traits nor their connection with the diseases in Negroes have been demonstrated. (*Ibid.*, pp. 291-299.)

belief in the innate inferiority of the Negro in mental capacities and moral traits has naturally been central in the race dogma from the beginning. It is strategic in the justification of color caste. Obvious culture inferiorities, existing in the Negro population, made an inference back to innate cultural capacities not only opportune but also easy and, in fact, to be expected.

When direct attempts were made to study scientifically these psychic differences and to measure their magnitude, virtually no one—or at least very few[25]—had any doubts that they really existed as biological traits, and that they were large. The history of the measurement of the psychic traits of the American Negro began with attempts to quantify what was already "known" about him. And usually the scientists found what they were seeking.

Ferguson,[26] for example, proceeding on his "demonstration" that the superiority of whites was "indubitable," even after various environmental influences were held "constant," correlated performance with skin color and found a perfect upward progression from pure Negro, through three-fourths pure Negro, mulattoes, and quadroons.[27] Ferguson even went so far as to attempt a quantitative statement of intelligence differences among the different color groups. "It is probably correct to say that pure Negroes, Negroes three-fourths pure, mulattoes and quadroons, have, roughly, 60, 70, 80, and 90 per cent, respectively, of white intellectual efficiency." He dismissed the possibility that social differences may have caused the differences in performance: "Among Negroes in general there are no considerable social distinctions based on color. A colored person is a Colored person, whether he be mulatto or Negro, and all mingle together as one race." Another example may be taken from the report of one of the earliest and most publicized studies of Negro-white personality differences.[28] The author, who concludes that Negroes are much less able to inhibit their impulses, significantly begins his paper with the statement: "It is with the issue here raised that the present study primarily concerns itself. Namely: what is the psychological explanation of the impulsiveness, improvidence and immorality which the Negro everywhere manifests?"

For a time it seemed as if finally a firm basis was being laid for a science of psychic racial differences, extending our knowledge, not only by quantifying the apparent differences in innate cultural capacities, but by specifying the particular respects in which the Negro was inherently inferior to the white man. When we now look back on this stage of psychological research, we must remember that there was this common belief of Negro inferiority and, in addition, that many of the earlier studies had a direct or indirect connection with practical questions, such as segregation in schools, which tended to enforce the opportunistic bias.

Independent of any special bias, or of the general bias inherent in the total cultural situation of American caste society, the scientist of that day

had to say to himself, as most authors are saying today, that psychic differences simply are to be expected. We know that individuals are different, and that heredity is an appreciable component in individual differences. We know also that there are average physical differences between Negroes and whites, although we have not succeeded in measuring them. Hence why should there not be innate *psychic* differences as well? Why should not the differences in ancestry and in the natural and cultural factors which have influenced biological history somewhat differently for the average American Negro also show up in differences as to average character, temperament, sensory powers and intelligence? Professor Boas, who certainly did not share in any bias in favor of racial differences, said:

> It does not seem probable that the minds of races which show variations in their anatomical structure should act in exactly the same way. Differences of structure must be accompanied by differences of function, physiological as well as psychological; and, as we found clear evidence of difference in structure between the races, we must anticipate that differences in mental characteristics will be found.[29]

With particular reference to Negro-white differences, Boas said:

> . . . it would be erroneous to assume that there are no differences in the mental make-up of the Negro race and of other races, and that their activities should mix in the same lines. On the contrary, if there is any meaning in correlation of anatomical structure and physiological function, we must expect that differences exist.[30]

Such statements are made by almost everyone who touches the problem.

In view of these presumptions and biases, whether valid or invalid, the startling thing is that psychological research has failed to prove what it set out to prove. Huxley and Haddon—who, like most of the others, emphasize that "It is clear that there must exist innate genetic differences between human groups in regard to intelligence, temperament, and other psychological traits . . ."[31]—make the important remark that it is "not without significance that such an enormous mass of investigation has failed to demonstrate what so many are eager to prove."[32] This fact is of some importance as it should increase our right to feel confident in the results of the scientific trend, on the part of scientists, toward finding no psychic difference between Negroes and whites. The desire to attain methodologically valid results is tending to overcome—in the long run—presumptions and biases.

Research on psychic differences has, almost from the beginning, been dominated by methodological criticism and a gradual refinement of research methods. The story has been told several times in technical and popular works and will not be retold here.[33] A few generalizations may suffice.

As in the case of the similar problems in regard to the differences between social classes and between the two sexes, the great differences between individuals within each of the two groups tended from the beginning to

make judgments more relativistic concerning the differences between the averages of the groups. The large amount of overlapping brought out the fact that both Negroes and whites belonged to the same human species and had many more similarities than differences. The averages themselves tended to come nearer each other when the measurements were refined to exclude more and more the influences of differences in environment, such as education, cultural background and experience, socio-economic class; and the social factors in the test situation itself, such as motivation and rapport with the tester.

The intensive studies of these last influences proved, in addition, that no psychological tests yet invented come even close to measuring innate psychic traits, absolutely undistorted by these influences. They rather rendered it probable that average differences would practically disappear if all environmental factors could be controlled. Psychologists are coming to realize that they are not, and probably never will be, measuring innate traits directly but are, rather, measuring performance in a limited number of selected tasks, and that performance is determined—in a most complex fashion—by many influences besides innate capacity.

Most of this work has concerned intelligence, as measured by the Intelligence Quotient. The inferences to be drawn are, on the whole, negative as far as hereditary differences are concerned: it has not been possible to prove beyond doubt the existence of any differences at all in innate intelligence between American Negroes and whites; neither has it been possible to prove, on the other hand, that no differences exist. In regard to environmental factors the inferences are, however, positive: it has been proved that environmental differences account for large differences in the measured intelligence performances. Present evidence seems, therefore, to make it highly improbable that innate differences exist which are as large as is popularly assumed and as was assumed even by scholars a few decades ago.

What is here said about the general level of intelligence applies also to more specific mental traits. Nothing is definitely proved in the nature of qualitative differences; even the suggestion that Negro children have superior memory is not proved.[34] Neither is it made credible that there are fewer Negroes in the highest ranges of intelligence.[35] The earlier assumed difference that the intelligence of Negro youth ceases to develop at an earlier age does not stand criticism.[36] Nothing is proved concerning differences between Negroes and whites in sensory powers. Other personality traits have been studied, but such studies have yielded no conclusions with regard to innate differences which could be considered valid.[37] Finally it should be mentioned that studies of different groups of American Negroes with a different amount of white blood have not given more positive results.[38]

These negative conclusions from many decades of the most painstaking

scientific labor stand in glaring contrast to the ordinary white American's firm conviction that there are fundamental psychic differences between Negroes and whites. The reason for this contrast is not so much that the ordinary white American has made an error in observation, for most studies of intelligence show that the average Negro in the sample, if judged by performance on the test, is inferior to the average white person in the sample,[a] and some studies show that the average Negro has certain specific personality differences from the white man,[b] but that he has made an error in inferring that observed differences were innate and a part of "nature." He has not been able to discern the influence of gross environmental differences, much less the influence of more subtle life experiences. The fact should not be ignored, however, that he has also made many observational errors, because his observations have been limited and biased.

Even as long ago as 1930—and that is long ago in this field of study, which is comparatively recent and has developed rapidly—a questionnaire circulated among "competent scholars in the field of racial differences" revealed that only 4 per cent of the respondents believed in race superiority and inferiority.[c] It is doubtful whether the proportion would be as large

[a] Summaries of studies using intelligence tests make it quite clear that Negroes rank below whites. See: (1) T. R. Garth, *Race Psychology* (1931); (2) Paul A. Witty and H. C. Lehman, "Racial Differences: The Dogma of Superiority," *Journal of Social Psychology* (August, 1930), pp. 394-418; (3) Rudolph Pintner, *Intelligence Testing* (1931), pp. 432-433; (4) Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published, manuscript pages 1-119. Not *all* groups of Negroes have been found inferior to *all* groups of whites, however. In the Army intelligence tests during the First World War, for example, the Negroes of the Northern states of Ohio, Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania topped the whites of the Southern states of Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky and Georgia. See Otto Klineberg, *Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration* (1935), p. 2.

[b] It is not so much in the simple personality traits—measurable by existing psychological tests—that Negroes differ from whites, but in the complex traits connected with the cultural differences. Klineberg's recent summary shows that few, if any, psychological studies indicate Negro-white personality differences. ("Experimental Studies of Negro Personality," in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, manuscript pages 1-65.) For a discussion of Negro personality and culture, see Chapters 36, 43 and 44.

[c] Charles H. Thompson, "The Conclusions of Scientists Relative to Racial Differences," *The Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1934), pp. 494-512. Although this study was not published until 1934, the questionnaire on which it was based was circulated in 1929-1930.

This trend toward the repudiation of all positive findings with respect to racial differences may be exemplified further by a statement made by Professor C. C. Brigham, whose *A Study of American Intelligence* (1923) was one of the references most frequently cited by those who held to Negro-white differences in intelligence. After reviewing studies made by others in the late 'twenties, Brigham concludes:

"This review has summarized some of the more recent test findings which show that comparative studies of various national and racial groups may not be made with existing tests, and which show, in particular, that one of the most pretentious of these comparative racial studies—the writer's own—was without foundation." ("Intelligence Tests of Immigrant Groups," *Psychological Review* (March, 1930), p. 165).

today. The attitude of the psychologists reflects the state of the scientific findings in their field.

But while they seem to be negative, these conclusions of psychological research have probably been more revolutionary and practically important, with respect to the Negro problem, than the conclusions from any other sphere of science. It is true that science's last word has not been said even on the Negro's innate intelligence and still less on his other psychic traits. But the undermining of the basis of certitude for popular beliefs has been accomplished. Also the research literature on the subject indicates that even if future research should be able to establish and measure certain innate psychic differences between American Negroes and whites, on the average, *it is highly improbable that such differences would be so large, that—particularly when the overlapping is considered—they could justify a differential treatment in matters of public policy, such as in education, suffrage and entrance to various sections of the labor market.* This is a practical conclusion of immense importance.

For the theoretical study of the Negro problem in all its other branches —from breadwinning and crime to institutions and cultural accomplishments—the negative results in regard to heredity and the positive findings in regard to *milieu* are also of paramount importance. It means that when *we approach those problems on the hypothesis that differences in behavior are to be explained largely in terms of social and cultural factors, we are on scientifically safe ground. If we should, however, approach them on the hypothesis that they are to be explained primarily in terms of heredity, we do not have any scientific basis for our assumption.*

4. FRONTIERS OF CONSTRUCTIVE RESEARCH

The main need in physical anthropology is an application of some of the general precepts of statistics. No accurate description can be made of the physical traits of a group of people unless one measures a representative sample of that group. It may be stated bluntly that no anthropologist has yet measured a representative sample of Americans, or any specific subgroup of Americans.[a] In making measurements, differences in age, sex, economic status, and ethnic background need to be taken into consideration. These demands on representativeness and specification will imply demands for larger samples than individual investigators can be expected to handle on their own resources and, consequently, planned cooperative work is necessary.[89] In the selection of traits to be measured, a more unbiased and comprehensive approach should be adhered to, so that interest is awarded equally to traits where groups can be expected to be similar on the average and to traits where the expectation is the contrary. Instead of reporting results only in terms of abstract averages, standard deviations, and coeffi-

[a] See footnotes 3, 4, and 5 of this chapter.

cients of correlation, they should be presented in terms of the concrete frequency distributions as well, so that dispersion, exceptions, overlapping, and number of cases may be easily determined.[40]

The importance of environmental factors for physical traits needs more stress. Indeed a new direction in problems for research may be had by turning from *existing* averages and limits to *changes* in traits which accompany certain unplanned or induced changes in environment and biological functions. Boas' research[41] on the changes in the physical traits of immigrants opened up problems for further research which are still far from solved after an interval of over thirty years. For the anthropology of the Negro, it may be observed that the possible physical correlates of the northward migration, of the improvements in diet, of the decline in many specific disease rates, of the increased wearing of shoes, and of many other changes, have never been studied. Controlled biological experiments on the Negro are not out of the question: Concentrated vitamin B_1 has been administered to white persons and the effects of greater energy and optimism and lesser susceptibility to fatigue noted.[42] Is it not a reasonable and verifiable hypothesis that the administration of concentrated doses of vitamins would have even greater effects on Negroes, whose diets are, on the average, even more deficient than those of whites?

The possibilities of redirecting psychological investigation are perhaps even greater. Even if the intelligence and personality measurement devices cannot be used to measure innate differences between Negroes and whites, they may be invaluable in detecting cultural differences and thereby in suggesting spots where education could improve Negroes. Recently, students of the Negro—following the lead of social anthropologists[43]—have been putting mental testing devices to this use.[44] In general, psychological measuring devices can be used as instruments for detecting social differences, for predicting individual behavior in certain types of situations, and for suggesting techniques of control and improvement.

The idea of using the intelligence tests as devices for measuring the psychological effects of unplanned or induced changes is not new to the psychologists. A large number of studies have been made of the effects of foster homes on the Intelligence Quotient of children.[45] In 1935, Klineberg reported a study in which he showed that there was a correlation between the I.Q. of Negro school children who had immigrated to New York from the South and the length of their residence in New York.[46] Canady has reported that a group of Negro students showed an average I.Q. six points higher when tested by a Negro psychologist than when tested by a white psychologist, and that a group of white students showed an average I.Q. six points lower when tested by a Negro psychologist than when tested by a white psychologist.[47]

While many other examples could be cited of the use of intelligence tests

to measure the influences of various environmental changes on the I.Q., this field has, however, as yet scarcely been tapped. With reference to the Negro, the writer knows of no studies which have been made to determine the effect on test performance of such influences as: the shock of the Negro child when he first learns that he is a Negro and realizes the social import of this fact; foster-placement in white homes; isolated development in white neighborhoods while still in the parental Negro home; shock of news about lynching as compared to other types of shock unconnected with race relations; group testing of Negroes isolated among white children as over against group testing of these same Negroes among other Negro children; various locations for the administration of tests to the same group of Southern Negroes, such as Negro schools, white schools, and courthouses; new schools and educational equipment in the same or different locales; special training in language usage, vocabulary, and logic; special rewards of different types (having some significance in the Negro world and in race relations) for high performance; and other significant influences.[48] To determine the effect on test performance of such influences the experiment must be set up very carefully. The effect of the influences should be noted, not only on intelligence test performance, but also on performance on the various types of personality trait measurement devices.

The type of research suggested here would involve a radical change in point of view in psychological research. It would be freed from the traditional discussion of *racial* traits and no longer look upon the environmental factors and their psychic effects as simple modifiers which hinder the attempt to determine psychic traits conceived of as static biological entities, a measurement of which would be eternally valid. It would rather look on environmental factors and their effects as the main objects for study. The psychic traits would be comprehended as continually changing ways of acting, and as the product of an individual's original endowment and all his life experiences as actively integrated by him into a unity.

Environmental stimuli would be studied as experiences from the point of view of the individual, and effects on intelligence and personality would be correlated with these experiences and not simply with external economic status, education, housing and so on. The effect of a new experience is not simply one of addition or subtraction, since an individual defines this experience in terms of all his previous experiences. No environmental stimulus has the same effect upon different individuals since it affects different individuals after they have had different experiences in different succession.

The question as to what extent and in what ways biological constitution determines individual differences in performance on intelligence and personality tests can no longer be answered by conceiving of certain inherited traits as constituting independent variables which can be thought of as

isolated. Two of the specific questions which should be asked—from the point of view discussed here—to determine the role of heredity in intelligence and personality have been stated in a report sponsored by the Social Science Research Council:

> In studying this problem two questions should be considered. First, to what extent do individuals differ in degree of flexibility to environmental influences—i.e., are the congenital attributes of some persons less subject to modification by environmental forces than are those of other persons? Secondly, to what extent does the congenital equipment of the person determine his subsequent environment—i.e., to what extent do his congenital traits predispose him to select or modify various aspects of his environment?[49]

Little of the existing research on the role of heredity in the determination of psychic traits and capacities has been undertaken with either of these two questions in mind. As we have seen, the presumption has been—and still is, among most students—that, because there are certain physical differences between Negroes and whites, there may also be expected to be certain psychological differences. This does not necessarily follow, however, and the use of the presumption as a working hypothesis is a source of bias, for the following reason: Everything we know—from the work of the child psychologists, the psychiatrists, and the social psychologists—about development in the individual indicates that specific psychic traits, especially personality traits, but also the components of intelligence,[50] are *not* present at birth and do not "maturate" but *actually develop through experience.* Specific psychological traits, therefore, cannot be compared with specific physical traits in respect to their hereditary determination.

Whether underlying capacities and the most general personality traits—speed of reaction, for example—differ in average between the two races is not known, but it should not be forgotten that *they are never subject to direct observation in the same sense that physical traits are.* Thus, even if there were some hereditary differences in psychic traits and capacities, it would still not be necessary for empirically observable traits and capacities to differ at all between the two races. It is possible that we shall never know if there are hereditary differences in psychic traits between the average Negro and the average white man. The fact of being a Negro is so interwoven with all other aspects of a Negro's life that to hold constant these other aspects (e.g., economic and social status, education, and so on) would be equivalent to holding the racial factor constant also.

From the standpoint of the attainment of pure scientific knowledge, it is, of course, unfortunate that the early measurement of psychic traits of different social groups was guided by biased assumptions. When viewed in an historical context, however, it becomes apparent that biased popular opinion gave psychologists the stimulus to go out and try to measure the things which were previously only the subjects of impression. After the

biased conclusions were made, they came to be criticized on grounds of methodological inadequacy. Thus began a trend toward improvement of techniques and qualification of conclusions that led to much of the present knowledge about the actual forces determining the intelligence and personality of disadvantaged groups. Such knowledge has been used and is being used to great advantage in the correction of popular beliefs.

Now that this phase of scientific effort is coming to a climax, psychologists can begin to direct their efforts in a more positive direction. While the pioneer outposts of this new research have given us several stimulating hints of the direction of this research, the field is still open for challenging hypotheses as yet not thought of.

Part III

POPULATION AND MIGRATION

CHAPTER 7

POPULATION

1. The Growth of the Negro Population

There were about 17 times as many Negroes in the United States in 1940 as there were in 1790, when the first census was taken, but in the same period the white population increased 37 times (Figure 1). Negroes were 19.3 per cent of the American population in 1790, but only 9.8 per cent in 1940. Except for the first decade in the nineteenth century and the 1930's, this proportion has been steadily declining. The trend in the proportion has been governed by the natural increase of the two population stocks, by expansion of the territorial limits of the United States and by immigration. Since all figures on these things are uncertain, it is not possible to make an accurate imputation of the changes in the relative importance of these factors. Since descendants of immigrants after the second generation are included in the category of "native born," it is still less possible to calculate what the proportion of Negroes would have been had there been no immigration of either race to the United States after 1790.

In a previous chapter we have discussed the considerable slave import, legal up to 1808 and illegal from then until the Civil War. After the War immigration of Negroes became inconsequential.[a] The immigration of whites from Europe was much heavier, even in relation to the larger white stock, during practically the whole period.[b] There is no doubt that this factor accounts for the great decline in the proportion of Negroes until recently. Additions of territory to continental United States have brought in a more than proportional share of whites.[c]

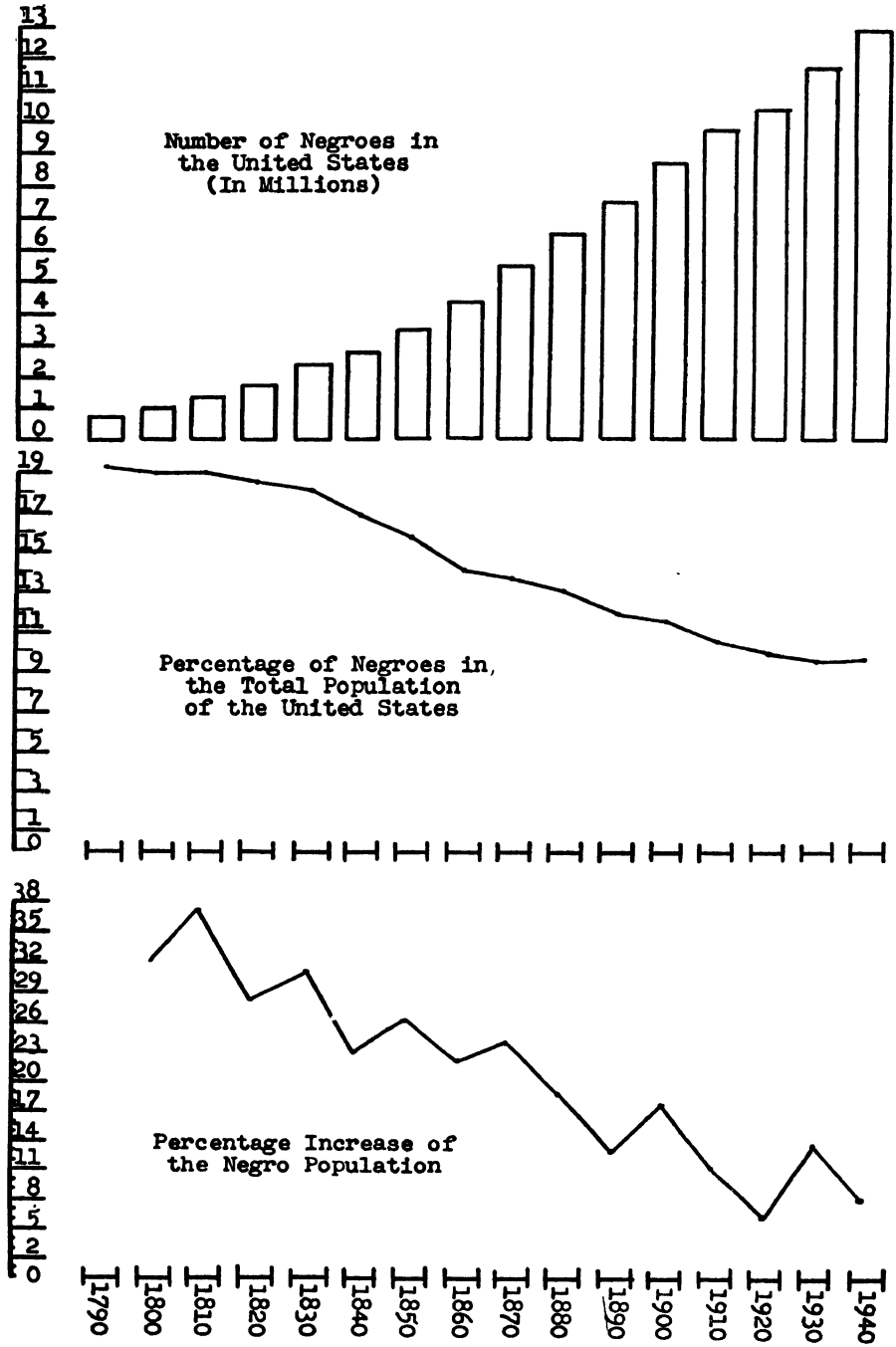
There has been a radical change in these factors, a change which promises to stop the downward trend of the proportion of Negroes and probably send it slightly upward. There have been no acquisitions of continental territory for a long while, and it is not likely that there will be any more. Immigration from Europe was largely halted by the First World War,

[a] See Chapter 5, Section 2.

[b] The immigration of foreign-born whites has meant much not only for its direct additions to the white American population, but also because the foreign-born have had a high birth rate.

[c] Only the acquisition of Louisiana in 1803 and of Florida in 1819 brought in significant numbers of Negroes.

FIGURE 1. NEGRO POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES: 1790 TO 1940



Source: United States Census.

Note: Population of 1870 taken as midpoint between population of 1860 and 1880.

and the restrictive legislation of the 1920's[a]—not likely to be repealed—has continued to hold that immigration low. Economic stagnation during the 1930's operated to reduce the immigration below the legal quota, even when the latter was temporarily further reduced by Executive Order.[1] Only the refugees coming after 1933 made the immigration from Europe at all significant. It is not likely that immigration from Europe will rise after the present War. We can assume that from now on, as during the 1930's, the immigration from Europe will not greatly exceed the emigration to Europe.

Both white and Negro population groups are, therefore, now changing and will continue to change—if our assumption is correct—almost entirely in accord with their respective birth and death rates. One important exception to this is the continuing immigration of Mexicans and Canadians.[b] These groups will continue to provide a small but steady addition to the white population. Like immigration, passing may be ignored as relatively negligible in the estimation of probable changes in the relative numbers of Negroes and whites.[c]

While there are more statistics on population than in most other fields, they are less adequate for many of the problems we are interested in. There is continuous registration of births and deaths, compiled annually, but the failure to register large numbers of births and deaths makes it extremely hazardous to use these statistics.[2] Much more complete is the decennial census, but for our purposes this also is inadequate since young children are frequently overlooked (in different degree for the different regions and races), and since the census asked no direct question on internal migration until 1940.[3]

The inadequacies of both vital registration and census enumeration are greater for the South than for the North, greater for rural areas than for urban, and even in the same areas, greater for Negroes than for whites. We are handicapped also by the fact that, at the time of writing (summer, 1942) the compilation of the 1940 Census is far from complete, and the 1930 Census is too old to be of much use in showing the present situation. For all these reasons it will be somewhat hazardous to present the facts about population beyond the crude trends we have already noted. We shall present only those facts about which we feel fairly certain, but it should be understood that the figures cited are approximations.

[a] See Chapter 4, footnote 21.

[b] Although there is no provision in law setting quotas on immigrants from other American countries, actually there are serious restrictions which keep down this immigration. Every prospective immigrant must pass a strict examination before the American consul to whom he applies for his permit: he must meet certain standards of physical and mental health, literacy, and show the ability to support himself. There is no appeal from the decision of the consul.

[c] See Chapter 5, Section 7.

For our first observation of Negro and white natural increase—that is, the balance of births and deaths—we may turn to the *net reproduction rate.* This rate is a combined measure of the birth and death rates adjusted to a stable age distribution of the population. It is the number of girls which 1,000 newborn girls may be expected to bear during their lifetime, assuming existing rates of fertility and mortality. Estimates of the Bureau of the Census, based on a 5 per cent cross-section of the 1940 Census returns, indicate a net reproduction of 107 for nonwhites and 94 for whites including Mexicans (Table 1).[4] For 1930 the comparable rates—calculated from all census returns—were 110 and 111, respectively.[5] Despite errors in the data, it is possible to derive the following tentative conclusions: (1) that Negroes,

TABLE 1

NET REPRODUCTION RATES BY COLOR AND URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE, FOR THE UNITED STATES, BY REGIONS: 1930 AND 1940

(1940 data are estimates based on a preliminary tabulation of a 5 per cent cross-section of the 1940 Census returns.)

Region and Color	1940				1930			
	Total	Urban	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm	Total	Urban	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm
All Classes								
United States	96	74	114	144	111	88	132	159
North	87	74	109	133	103	90	128	150
South	111	75	118	150	127	86	138	165
West	95	75	120	138	101	80	129	155
White								
United States	94	74	114	140	111	90	133	159
North	87	74	109	133	104	91	128	150
South	110	76	120	145	132	92	145	169
West	94	76	119	134	99	79	128	151
Nonwhite								
United States	107	74	114	160	110	75	119	156
North	83	79	(a)	(a)	87	82	(a)	(a)
South	113	71	112	160	115	71	116	153
West	119	(a)	(a)	(a)	157	(a)	(a)	(a)

Source: Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population. Preliminary Release; Series P-5, No. 13

(a) Rates not shown for those population groups which, in 1940, had fewer than 20,000 females under 5 years old.

like whites, are not reproducing themselves so rapidly as they used to, (2) that probably their rate is now higher than that of the whites, and (3) that this differential is a new phenomenon, at least in so far as it is significant. If such a differential continues into the future and if it is not fully compensated for by immigration of whites, the proportion of Negroes in the American population may be expected to rise, though slowly.[6]

While in the country as a whole, around 1930, the net reproduction rate for Negroes and for whites was about the same, the Negro rate was significantly below the white rate in each region of the country and in rural and urban areas taken separately. This situation occurred, of course, because Negroes were concentrated in the South and in rural areas, which have high rates for both whites and Negroes compared to other areas. In other words, it was only because of their unusual geographic distribution that Negroes were reproducing themselves as rapidly as whites. During the 1930's, however, it would seem that a fundamental change took place: the white rates had dropped until they were no longer above the Negro rates in each region and in rural and urban areas taken separately.[a] If the 1940 rates for the whole country are "standardized" to show what the rates would be if both color groups were distributed by residence areas in the same proportion as the total population, the whites rise from 94 to 97 and the nonwhites drop from 107 to 102.[7] That is, even if differences in regional and rural-urban residence are "held constant," Negroes now have a higher net reproduction rate than whites. Since the errors in the census are greater for Negroes than for whites and, therefore, the discrepancy is greater—if anything—than shown by the figures we have presented, we feel justified in presenting the following as a fourth conclusion from the net reproduction figures: (4) Even within regions and rural-urban areas taken separately, Negroes are no longer reproducing themselves at a lower rate than whites. In fact, the figures suggest that they are reproducing themselves more—thus reversing the position they held in 1930 and earlier.

2. BIRTHS AND DEATHS

To determine the causes of these differentials and trends, we shall first have to go to the birth and death rates which compose the net reproduction rates. Unfortunately these rates are even more unreliable than the composite net reproduction rate.[8] Certain general conclusions are justified, however, even if we cannot rely on the exact magnitudes.

The Negro birth rate, like the white birth rate, has been falling at least since 1880 and perhaps longer.[9] And since 1850 it has been consistently higher than the white birth rate. These important generalizations about the birth rate have held true in recent years: in 1928-1932 the corrected gross reproduction rate[b] was 136 for Negroes—as compared to 122 for whites (1930)—and by 1933-1937 the Negro rate had fallen to 130.[10]

[a] These rates apply in the North only to the urban areas.

[b] The gross reproduction rate is a refined birth rate adjusted to a stable age distribution. It is the number of girl babies born to the average woman throughout her reproductive period. It is computed by applying crude birth rates to a life table population of 1,000 women and summing the age specific fertility rates thus obtained. The rates for Negroes were calculated and corrected for under-registration by Kirk, and the rates for whites were calculated by Lotka from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's files. (See

While there are proportionately more Negro than white infants born, significantly fewer of the Negro infants live. During 1940, 73 out of every 1,000 live Negro infants were recorded to have died before reaching their first birthday, as compared to 43 white babies out of every 1,000 born.[11] If the official statistics were more accurate, they would undoubtedly reveal a much greater differential in infant mortality rates. While a good many more Negro infants die than white infants, in proportion to their total numbers, the difference in death rates for children and mature adults is apparently even greater.[12] Only at ages above 50 does the Negro death rate apparently begin to fall to the level of the white death rate. If a Negro child is born alive,[13] it has (in 1930), on the average, a life expectancy of roughly 48.5 years, while the average white newborn child can expect to reach the age of 60.9 years.[14] For a stationary population with a stable age distribution, these expectancy figures would correspond to a death rate for Negroes of 20.6 per thousand population and for whites of 16.4. The actually registered death rates were, in 1930, 16.5 per thousand for Negroes and 10.8 for whites.[15] The lower actual rates are due not only to under-registration, but also to the abnormal age structure: both Negroes and whites have a disproportionate number of young adults.

As we said, the birth rate has been falling for both Negroes and whites. The fall in fertility is the major factor behind the secular decline in net reproduction for both population groups; the decrease in mortality has not been able to effect more than a rather slight checking of this decline. It is probable that since 1930 the birth rate for whites has fallen more rapidly than the birth rate for Negroes.[16]

The existing data regarding trends in the death rate are so faulty and self-contradictory that it is hardly worth while to quote them. The available data do not permit us to compare trends in the Negro and white death rates.[17] If the death rates have been falling for both groups, it would seem that they were falling more rapidly for whites than for Negroes until 1930. In 1930 the mortality rate for the Negro population was higher than the rate for the white population thirty years previously, in 1900.[18] It is likely that since 1930 the death rate has fallen more rapidly for Negroes than for whites.[19]

The decline in the birth rate for both whites and Negroes has been changing the *age structure* of the populations and this, in turn, is having certain effects on both birth and death rates. Even if the age specific birth rates (that is, the birth rate for each age group of women) should remain constant, the crude birth rate (that is, the birth rate for the entire population) will ultimately drop as the population grows older. The crude birth rate is now

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Dudley Kirk, "The Fertility of the Negroes," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 14.) Not only are there errors due to under-registration in these calculations, but there are also errors due to misreporting of age by women.

abnormally high, since there is an abnormally large number of persons in the child-bearing age groups (this is so because they were born in a period with higher fertility). This is slightly more true of Negroes than of whites, since most of the foreign-born are white, and they are now mostly in the older age groups. In 1940, 41.1 per cent of the nonwhite females, as compared to 39.2 per cent of the white females, were between the ages of 20 and 45.[20] The effect on the white birth rate will come sooner, both because Negroes have had a somewhat higher birth rate and because they, as a result of higher mortality and fewer foreign-born, have, and probably will continue to have, a relatively smaller proportion of persons in ages above the fertile age groups. Likewise, even though the death rate declines somewhat for each age group of both white and Negro populations, the crude death rate will tend to increase as the proportion of persons in high age groups increases. And for the same reasons, the rise in the death rate will come sooner for whites than for Negroes.

Considering the differences in age structure alone, which are causing the decline in the crude birth rate and the rise in the crude rate to come sooner for whites than for Negroes, we have another reason why—for a while at least—the proportion of Negroes in the total population will increase. It must be remembered, however, that future changes in fertility and mortality will change the entire pattern. Of particular interest for our present problem would be the effects of a large-scale disease prevention campaign. Since Negro death rates are now considerably higher than white death rates, it is more possible to bring them down. Any impartial efforts to reduce sickness and death in the nation will have much more effect on Negroes than on whites simply because Negroes have much more preventable and curable disease to begin with.[a] We have observed that a more rapid fall of Negro mortality has probably already occurred during the 'thirties.

Migration will continue to be a great importance for future trends in Negro birth and death rates. Migration from rural to urban areas universally reduces the birth rate.[21] It has been related to the main set of causal factors behind the reduction of both white and Negro fertility over the last 70 years. In recent decades the effects have probably been more pronounced for the Negroes than for the whites, since a larger proportion of Negroes have left the farms for the cities, and since the rural South and the urban North represent more the extremes of country and city than the places whites predominantly come from and go to.[22] Even within the South the places to which Negroes have been migrating—the larger cities and the rural areas of the Mississippi Valley[23]—are those of lowest birth rate. While whites also are moving to cities and to rural areas in the western part of the South, their birth rates are apparently not lowered so

[a] See Section 5 of this chapter.

much as those of Negroes.[24] In the migration to cities the Negro birth rate is affected by two special factors: (1) When they migrate to cities, Negro women seek jobs more than white women do, and all urban occupations, especially domestic service, in which Negroes are concentrated, make child-bearing disadvantageous.[25] (2) When Negroes have migrated to cities, the men have gone more to some cities and the women more to other cities than in the case of the whites. This is because Negro women seek jobs in cities more than do white women, and they have gone mainly to commercial cities where there is a greater demand for domestic servants. Negro men, on the other hand, find more opportunities in industrial cities than the Negro women do. The result is that migration involves a greater unbalancing of the *sex ratio* for Negroes than for whites, and consequently the birth rate is reduced more.

Also, migration has probably meant a somewhat reduced death rate for the Negroes,[26] but the decline in death rate has not balanced the decline in birth rate. In 1940, the nonwhite net reproduction rate for rural-farm areas was 154, as compared to 76 for urban areas; for whites the comparable figures were 132 and 76, respectively.[27]

The future of Negro migration is, of course, uncertain. In following chapters we shall find that there are reasons to anticipate that Negroes, more than whites, will be pushed from the Southern land and also that they, more than whites, will attempt to come North. If we consider migration alone, therefore, the effects of urbanization on fertility seem likely to continue to be somewhat greater for Negroes than for whites. This is uncertain, however, as the fertility of urban whites now has dropped sharply and may continue to fall more rapidly than Negro fertility. The sex ratio for Negroes has been tending to even out and will continue to do so. Negroes are becoming more accustomed to the strains of city life and its effects on their health may not be so great as has been the case in the last two decades. The death rate of Negroes in Northern cities might also decrease considerably if better health facilities are made available to them and taken advantage of by them. For all these reasons, the net reproduction rate might reach a lower limit which would be higher than the white rate.

Other differentials between various classes and groups of Negroes are important in estimating trends in Negro population. First, there is the *income differential.* Among Negroes, as among whites, the larger the income, the lower the birth rate, the lower the death rate, and the lower the net reproduction rate.[28] These relations are characteristic only during the period before the practice of birth control is taken up by the lower socio-economic groups. But for America as a whole, and particularly for the Negro people, this phase is likely to last for many more decades. What significance these differentials will have for the future of the Negro population it is difficult to say. As we do not foresee any great rise of economic

status for the masses of Negroes in the immediate future, and not even a great increase in the small upper and middle strata,[a] it is not likely that the factor of a rising standard of living will *per se* be of great importance for either fertility or mortality.

The future development of *welfare policy* might become much more important, but its effect would be different from a direct rise in income. If the social security system is extended and if allowances are going to be given to children, and if other welfare policies—in regard to public housing, nutrition, and health—are developed and directed more upon the welfare of children, this might stop the decline in fertility, decrease mortality and raise net reproduction. These effects would be greater for poor people than for the well-to-do people, and therefore would be greater for Negroes than for whites—since Negroes are more concentrated in the lower income strata. If there is an increased spread of information on *birth control*, there will be a decrease in fertility, mortality and net reproduction.

Another possible influence on the future of Negro population in the United States is *immigration*. In the 1940 Census, there were enumerated only 84,000 foreign-born Negroes in the entire country.[29] In 1900, there were 41,000 foreign-born Negroes in the country. The total Negro population in that year was 8,833,994.[30] The bulk of the foreign-born Negroes came from the West Indies. Lack of opportunities for Negroes in the United States makes it improbable that the rate of Negro immigration will become significant, but there is always a possibility. Despite the fact that the majority of these immigrant Negroes live in New York City, and most of the remainder live in other cities, they seem to have a high fertility.[31]

3. SUMMARY

Popular theories on the growth of the Negro population in America have been diverse. At times it has been claimed that Negroes "breed like rabbits," and that they will ultimately crowd out the whites if they are not deported or their procreation restricted. At other times it has been pronounced that they are a "dying race," bound to lose out in the "struggle for survival." Statistics—both of the comprehensive kind in the United States Census and the limited kind gathered in sample surveys—have been used to bolster both arguments.[32]

With the very insufficient and inadequate measures of the factors of change affecting the reproduction of the Negro population in America, it is difficult to piece together a satisfactory prediction of the future course of the total number and the proportion of Negroes in the United States. It can be stated confidently, though, that both these extremes of popular

[a] See Part IV.

ideas are wrong. *In their reproduction American Negroes are like American whites and show the same sort of differentials by regions and groups.*

From 1790 to 1930 the proportion of Negroes in America decreased to about a half of what it had been in the beginning of this period (Figure 1). But this was due, not to any peculiarities in reproduction, but to the overweight of white immigration. The situation began to change during the First World War and the 'twenties: the immigration of whites from Europe fell until it was no longer significant. If there is no substantial change in foreign immigration again, and if conditions affecting births and deaths of both whites and Negroes remain about the same as they are now, or change so that the effect on whites is similar to the effect on Negroes, it is probable that the proportion of Negroes in the total population will rise slowly. There was a rise of one-tenth of 1 per cent of the proportion of Negroes in the total population during the 'thirties. This increase may continue and even become somewhat more marked, but not much. The main reason for this is that Negroes are concentrated in the rural South where the birth rate is generally very high.

If Negroes continue to migrate to Southern and Northern cities, the rate of Negro reproduction will be lowered in relation to the white rate—although possibly not so much as in the past. If there were an economic improvement among Negroes, which does not seem immediately likely, it would seem probable that this would also tend to decrease fertility more than mortality. The development of a social welfare policy, which seems much more probable, would in all likelihood brake the fall in fertility as well as decrease mortality. A mitigation of discrimination in the granting of medical and other health advantages to Negroes, particularly if concomitant with a general improvement of these advantages for all poor people, would have profound effects in reducing the large Negro death rate and in raising Negro reproduction. The spread of birth control among Negroes will decrease the rate of reproduction. Immigration of foreign-born Negroes—which does not promise to become important—would increase the Negro population, not only because it adds directly to their numbers, but also because these immigrants seem to have a high fertility.

Of course, changes affecting the Negro population will not go on *in vacuo*, and there will be similar changes in the white population—all of which will affect the future proportion of Negroes in the total population of the United States. A dominating factor will be the decline in fertility in both population groups. Comparisons with other countries, as well as between different groups in America, make it seem highly probable that this decline will continue. But for several reasons which we have noted, it is likely that, for a short time at least, the decline in the white birth rate will be more rapid than the decline in the Negro birth rate.

4. ENDS AND MEANS OF POPULATION POLICY[a]

As is apparent from what we have said, several of the factors of change are dependent upon policy, and we shall now turn to programs instead of prognoses. Our discussion of population policy will have to be most abstract and, in part, conjectural. For not only are the basic data poor, but there has been less thinking in America devoted to the broad problem of a rational population policy than to other spheres of social engineering.

One reason for the inarticulateness and inadequacy of American discussion of population policy is the heterogeneity of America's population, and the fact that some of its component groups are commonly considered to be inferior. This complicates tremendously the formulation of a rational and unified population policy. It creates conflicts of valuations which make it uncomfortable to discuss the problem. The strength of church and religion in America presents another inhibition. Specifically, the fundamentalistic Protestant religion in some of the regions where fertility is highest in the South and the Catholic Church in the big Northern cities are against discussions of population policy.[33]

We shall avoid the unsettled problem of an American population policy at large and restrict our treatment to the Negro angle of it. In stating our *value premises* a distinction must be made between ends and means.[34] We shall find that for the white people the desired quantitative goal conflicts sharply with their valuation of the means of attaining that goal. For Negroes no such conflict is present.

If we forget about the means, for the moment, and consider only the quantitative goal for Negro population policy, there is no doubt that *the overwhelming majority of white Americans desire that there be as few Negroes as possible in America.* If the Negroes could be eliminated from America or greatly decreased in numbers, this would meet the whites' approval—*provided that it could be accomplished by means which are also approved.* Correspondingly, an increase of the proportion of Negroes in the American population is commonly looked upon as undesirable. These opinions are seldom expressed publicly. As the opinions, for reasons which we shall develop, are not practicable either, they are not much in the foreground of public attention. But as general valuations they are nearly always present. Commonly it is considered a great misfortune for America that Negro slaves were ever imported. The presence of Negroes in America today is usually considered as a "plight" of the nation, and particularly of the South. It should be noted that the general valuation of the desirability

[a] This section will be concerned with policy only as it deals with the total number of Negroes in the United States. Population policy as it deals with the distribution of Negroes within the United States will be discussed in the next chapter. Population policy as it deals with the migration of the Negro people will be discussed in Chapter 17, Section 3.

of a decrease of the Negro population is not necessarily hostile to the Negro people. It is shared even by enlightened white Americans who do not hold the common belief that Negroes are inferior as a race. Usually it is pointed out that Negroes fare better and meet less prejudice when they are few in number.

There is an important qualification to be made to these statements. As we have found at many points in this study, people are not always consistent in their valuations. Many white Southerners live by exploiting Negroes, and many fortunes have been built up by cheating Negroes; many white Southerners realize their economic dependence on the Negro and would not like to lose him. Many white Southerners have opposed all "back-to-Africa" or "forty-ninth State" movements, which would eliminate Negroes from their midst. When Negroes began to migrate northward in great numbers during the First World War, many white Southerners made strenuous efforts to stop them: propaganda was distributed; threats were made; Negro leaders were bribed; favors were bestowed; Northern labor agents were prohibited, fined or beaten up. The dominant upper and middle classes of whites in the South realize, for the most part, that they would stand to lose economically if the Negro were to disappear. With the decline of the cotton economy, which we shall analyze in Chapters 11 and 12, the valuation is not so strong now as in 1917-1918. Too, the valuation is not held by most Northerners or by Southern poor whites. And this valuation in the economic sphere is not necessarily tied to the Negro. If poor whites could be exploited with the same facility, the dominant white Southerners would be glad to be rid of the Negro. The valuation in the socio-political sphere, however, *is* tied to the Negro: the Negro is a problem and practically all Southerners (as practically all Northerners) would like to get rid of him. More important from a practical and political standpoint is that the valuation in the economic sphere is only a short-time attitude. Southerners who gain economically from the presence of the Negro are concerned only that the Negro should not disappear during their lifetime or, at most, their children's lifetime. When they think in terms of a long span of future generations, the valuation that the Negro should be eliminated is almost completely dominant. And as we shall presently see, all white Americans agree that, if the Negro is to be eliminated, he must be eliminated slowly so as not to hurt any living individual Negroes. Therefore, the dominant American valuation is that the Negro should be eliminated from the American scene, but *slowly*.

The Negroes cannot be expected to have the same view on the quantitative goal of Negro population. Of course Negroes are familiar with the general fact that prejudice against them is in part a function of their number. But I have never met a Negro who drew the conclusion from this that a decrease of the American Negro population would be advantageous.

Rather it is sometimes contended that the Negro's power would increase with his numbers, and that the most virile people is the one that survives in the universal struggle. With the increase in "race pride" and "race consciousness," which is a consequence of the rising tide of the Negro protest,[a] *almost every Negro, who is brought to think about the problem, wants the Negro population to be as large as possible.* This is sometimes even expressed in writing. W. Montague Cobb, for instance, opens his summary "prescription" for the Negro with the following precepts:

1. He should maintain his high birth rate, observing the conditions of life necessary to this end. This alone has made him able to increase, in spite of decimating mortality and hardships. If the tide should turn against him later, strength will be better than weakness in numbers.
2. He should make a fetish of health. Progressive eradication of tuberculosis, venereal disease, pneumonia, and maternal and infant mortality, will give him sounder and more abundant parental stock and offspring.
3. He should cultivate excellence in sports. This spreads healthful habits.[35]

While whites and Negroes have widely divergent valuations in regard to the desirable quantity of the American Negro population, they agree on the qualitative goal. It is implicit in the American Creed, with its stress on the value and dignity of the individual human being, that *both white and Negro Americans in principle find it desirable to raise the quality of the Negro people* Du Bois, for example, criticized those Negroes who

> . . . are quite led away by the fallacy of numbers. They want the black race to survive. They are cheered by a census return of increasing numbers and a high rate of increase. They must learn that among human races and groups, as among vegetables, quality and not mere quantity really counts.[36]

Since the biological principles of eugenics cannot be applied until environmental conditions are more equalized,[37] and since the American Creed places inhibitions in the way of applying eugenics, to improve the quality of the Negro people means primarily to improve their environmental conditions. It is true that the average white American does not want to sacrifice much himself in order to improve the living conditions of Negroes. This is the explanation of discrimination in public service generally. But on this point the American Creed is quite clear and explicit, and we can proceed safely on the value premise that *the medical and health facilities and, indeed, all public measures in the field of education, sanitation, housing, nutrition, hospitalization and so forth, to improve the quality of the population and to advance individuals and groups physically, mentally, or morally, should be made just as available for Negroes as for whites in similar circumstances and with similar needs.* This value premise has, in fact, sanction in the Constitution of the United States.

[a] See Chapter 35.

In our further discussion of the means in Negro population policy we might start out from the desire of the politically dominant white population to get rid of the Negroes. This is a goal difficult to reach by approved means, and the desire has never been translated into action directly, and probably never will be. All the most obvious means go strongly against the American Creed. The Negroes cannot be killed off. Compulsory deportation would infringe upon personal liberty in such a radical fashion that it is excluded. Voluntary exportation of Negroes could not be carried on extensively because of unwillingness on the part of recipient nations as well as on the part of the American Negroes themselves, who usually do not want to leave the country but prefer to stay and fight it out here.[a] Neither is it possible to effectuate the goal by keeping up the Negro death rate. A high death rate is an unhumanitarian and undemocratic way to restrict the Negro population and, in addition, expensive to society and dangerous to the white population. The only possible way of decreasing Negro population is by means of controlling fertility. But as we shall find, even birth control—for Negroes as well as for whites—will, in practice, have to be considered primarily as a means to other ends than that of decreasing the Negro population.

In the final analysis *all these theoretically possible policies to effectuate the white desire to decrease the Negro population are blocked by the American Creed* (except birth control which, however, is largely attached to other ends). This is why the desire is never publicly expressed. The influence of the American Creed goes even further. Should America in the future, when the net reproduction of the nation has decreased still further, embark upon a policy to stimulate the bearing and rearing of children, the democratic Creed of this country will come to prescribe that aids to families be *equally available to Negroes and other unpopular groups, "independent of creed, color or race."*

In sum, if America does not turn fascist, the numerically and politically dominant white population will be driven by its national *ethos* to abstain from taking any practical measures to realize its desire to decrease the Negro population. Instead, it will be compelled to extend to the Negroes the population measures taken primarily to build up the white population. *This is, of course, exactly what the Negroes want, and a unity of purpose becomes established on the basis of the American Creed.*

Meanwhile, the basic conflict of valuations on the part of the dominant whites is, as we pointed out, one of the explanations why there is so little discussion of broad population policy in America. It helps, further, to explain much of the discrimination and indifference about Negro welfare and the great difficulty in stamping it out. On the other hand, it should, at least, give an extra impetus to make effective birth control available

[a] See, however, Chapter 38, Section 12.

to Negroes. We can see signs of this already in several of the Southern states.

5. CONTROLLING THE DEATH RATE

Since there is no evidence at present that certain diseases are genetically more characteristic or less characteristic of Negroes than of whites—although it is possible that slight differences in one direction or the other may some day be revealed—it is not necessary to single out Negroes for special attention in any efforts to cure or prevent disease.[a] The application of the equalitarian principles of "need" in the cure of disease and ill health and of "equality of opportunity" in their prevention—which are our value premises in this section—will suffice to eliminate any special Negro disabilities.

If disease prevention work is to be effective, it must be planned on a national basis without regard to the color of the inhabitants. In the South as well as in the North there is an increasing popular recognition among whites that "diseases cannot be segregated," and that high rates of death, sickness, and poor health among Negroes carry tremendous social costs, directly and indirectly, even if they cannot be calculated accurately in dollars and cents.

There are special social costs connected with infant mortality. There are costs to society as well as to the parents of bearing and raising a child if it dies before it contributes to the world by its labor and other personal qualities. From practically any point of view, it would be better not to have certain children born at all rather than to have them die before completing a normal lifetime. And if healthy children are born, it is in the interest of everyone to see that they are given the opportunity to remain healthy.

These considerations apply to both Negroes and whites. But they apply with greater forcefulness to Negroes since differential death rates reveal that equalization of health conditions, even without advance in medical knowledge or practice, would pull the Negro death rate down sharply. To give Negroes adequate medical facilities fits in both with the equalitarian Creed and with the interests of whites. The observer finds in the South that the propaganda by experts and humanitarians regularly and bluntly makes this appeal to "enlightened self-interest."

Medical knowledge has advanced beyond medical practice, and medical practice has advanced far beyond most people's opportunity to take advantage of it. A reduction in these lags would have tremendous consequences for the well-being and happiness of every person in the nation. Of special significance to the Negroes is the lag of opportunity for some people to obtain the advantages of medical practices available to other people. Area for area, class for class, Negroes cannot get the same advantages in the

[a] See Chapter 6, Section 2.

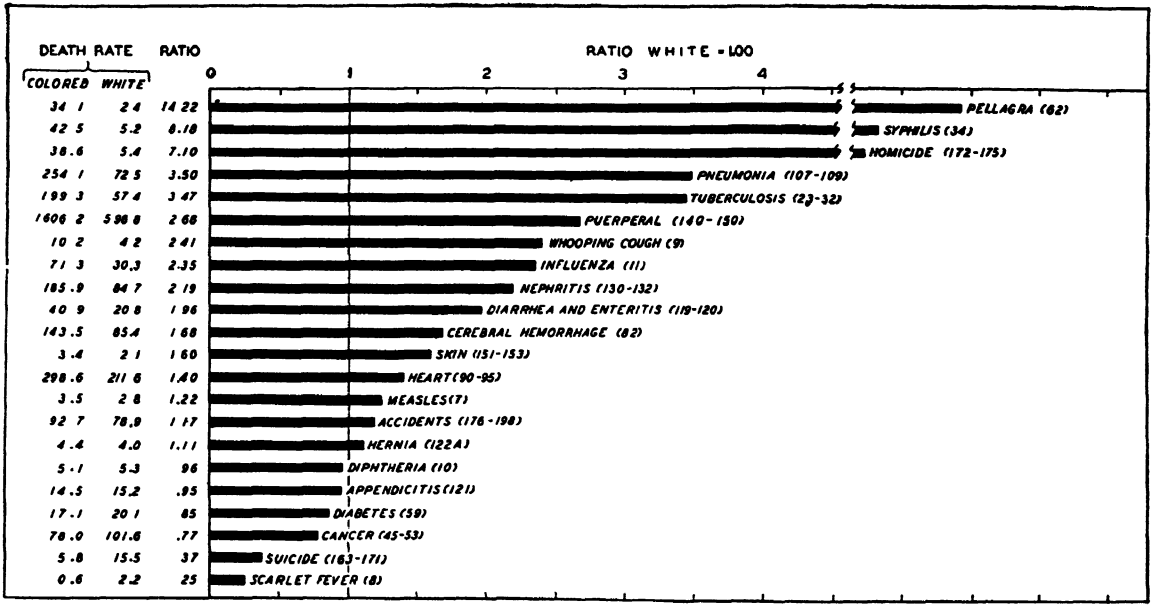
way of prevention and cure of disease that the whites can. There is discrimination against the Negro in the availability to him of medical facilities.

It is hard to separate the effects of discrimination from those of concentration of Negroes in areas where medical facilities are not easily available and in those income brackets which do not permit the purchase of medical facilities in the competitive market. Discrimination increases Negro sickness and death both directly and indirectly and manifests itself both consciously and unconsciously. Discrimination is involved when hospitals will not take in Negro patients; or when—if they do permit Negro patients—they restrict their numbers, give them the poorest quarters, and refuse to hire Negro doctors and nurses to attend them.[a] The number of hospital beds recently available to Negroes in the South is not known except in Mississippi (1938)[38] where there were 0.7 beds per 1,000 Negroes as compared to 2.4 per 1,000 whites, and in the Carolinas (1938)[39] where there were 1.2 beds per 1,000 Negroes as compared to 2.1 per 1,000 whites. In 1928 there was available in the United States one hospital bed for each 139 of the white population, but only one hospital bed for each 1,941 of the colored population. This means that at that time each white inhabitant of the United States had 14 times as good a chance for proper hospital care as had the colored citizen.[40] The facilities for Negroes are generally of a much poorer quality than for whites. In 1937 only about 35 per cent of Southern Negro babies were delivered by a physician, as compared to 90 per cent of Southern white babies and 98 per cent of Northern white and Negro babies.[41] In the whole United States in 1930 there were only about 3,805 Negro doctors, 5,728 Negro nurses, and 1,773 Negro dentists, and a disproportionate number of these were employed in the North.[42] It is true, of course, that Negroes cannot afford doctors and hospitals to the same extent as whites, but that does not eliminate the fact of discrimination.

Discrimination manifesting itself against the Negro's health is indirect as well as direct, and fits into the pattern of the vicious circle. Inadequate education for Negroes, partly due to economic inability to keep young people in schools and partly due to inferior schools for Negroes in the South, not only prevents the training of Negro medical experts, but also keeps knowledge about sanitation and health in the general population at an extremely low level. Magical and superstitious practices continue in an unenlightened Negro population,[43] and customary patterns of behavior dangerous to health are brought from the South to the North. Ill health reduces the chances of economic advancement, which in turn operates to

[a] For a summary of the facts on health facilities and medical care for Negroes, see Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 94a-114b and 131-208. Efforts by the government and private organizations to improve health conditions among Negroes will be taken up in Chapter 15, Section 4.

FIGURE 2. RATIO OF NONWHITE TO WHITE MORTALITY RATES FOR SELECTED CAUSES OF DEATH, UNITED STATES: 1929-1931



Source: Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), figure 7.

Note: The figure "1" indicates that the two races have the same death rate, the figure "2" indicates that the nonwhite rate is twice the white rate, and so on. Texas is not included in the computations, since data were not available for it. Nonwhite rates were standardized on the total white population of death registration states of 1930. The rate for puerperal causes is per 100,000 births, including stillbirths.

reduce the chances of getting adequate medical facilities or the knowledge necessary for personal health care.

Any intelligent efforts to reduce Negro morbidity and mortality will result in striking success. This we may deduce from a knowledge of the vicious circle mechanism and from a knowledge of existing Negro-white differentials. Perhaps the greatest need of the Negroes, in the way of reducing sickness and death, is for a dissemination of knowledge on how to take care of the body in both its normal and its pathological state. Other needs are indicated by the diseases for which the Negro rate is strikingly higher than the white rate (Figure 2).[a] These include pellagra (a result of dietary deficiency), syphilis (a function of inadequate information, on the one hand, and social disorganization, on the other), homicide (partly a result of cultural isolation of a subordinated people and lack of police protection in Negro communities),[b] pneumonia and influenza (a function of inadequate care), and tuberculosis (a result, largely, of inadequate sanitation and poor diet).[c] These diseases not only kill, but also reduce the efficiency of Negroes to a much greater extent than that of whites. Pellagra, syphilis, and tuberculosis, at least, can easily be recognized as public problems—the eradication of which is necessary to the health and efficiency of the entire nation.

The infant mortality rate as registered is 69 per cent higher among Negroes than among whites (1940); the actual difference is probably even greater.[44] The discrepancy in maternal mortality rates between the two races is much higher—official figures indicate that the rate for Negro mothers is two and one-half times as high as the rate for white mothers (1940).[45] Both infant mortality and maternal mortality among the Negroes have been declining in the last decade. But the fact that they are still much higher for Negroes indicates that much can yet be done to reduce these types of death among Negroes.

Ill health reduces the birth rate in ways other than killing off mothers in their child-bearing period. In the first place, it increases sterility among men and women. That there is more sterility among Negroes than among whites is shown by the fact that there are more childless women, both married and unmarried, among Negroes and that the higher Negro birth rate is due to a higher average number of children per mother.[46] This sterility is not innate, as Pearl[47] has demonstrated, but is caused by general

[a] We use the data on causes of death to get an index of Negro-white differentials in disease. Only the causes of death which have a marked differential effect on Negroes and whites are mentioned here. Practically all causes have some differential effects in favor of the whites. The only possible exceptions—which seem to affect whites more than Negroes—are scarlet fever, cancer, diabetes, and perhaps a few of the minor rich man's diseases such as gout.

[b] See Parts V and IX.

[c] See Chapter 6, Section 2.

diseases, venereal diseases, induced abortion and organic deficiencies. All these things may be reduced by means available to modern science or by more general diffusion of a few simple items of information. The same causes keep the Negro stillbirth rate high, and so lower the birth rate. In 1940, the reported Negro stillbirth rate was 58.1 per 1,000 live births as compared to 27.6 for whites.[48] If the unreported stillbirths and spontaneous abortions were added to this, the discrepancy would, no doubt, be much greater.

All these types of death rates have apparently been falling recently, for Negroes as well as for whites. It is useless to cite statistics because the reporting of deaths has progressively improved and, therefore, no adequate comparison can be made between two periods.[a] But the direct and indirect evidence available shows a decline in the death rates.[49] The greatest progress seems to be in reducing deaths among Negroes due to tuberculosis, syphilis, diphtheria, whooping cough, diarrhea, and enteritis. But the Negro rates are still much higher than the white rates, and there is much that can be done for both Negroes and whites.

In Chapter 15, Section 4, we shall comment somewhat more in detail both upon what is being done in the way of public policy to prevent and cure disease and upon the actual discrimination against the Negroes which up to now has rendered the public measures less effective for them. We can conclude from known facts and the stated value premises that what is needed in the way of special attention to Negroes is constant vigilance against popular and official prejudice in the application of a general medical and health program. In view of the racial attitudes prevalent in the South, and in view of the generally greater needs and smaller resources of the South, it is almost necessary that national organizations, and specifically the federal government, take a firm lead in this work. A national policy, working toward an improvement of health and a decline in disease, will increase the happiness and efficiency, not only of those directly served, but also of the general population. It will also, if carried out with intelligence and fairness, be a major example of the democratic process.

6. THE CASE FOR CONTROLLING THE NEGRO BIRTH RATE

Aside from any desire on the part of white people to check the growth of the Negro population, there are in the South a great number of Negroes —as of whites—who are so destitute that from a general social point of view it would be highly desirable that they did not procreate. The same is true, though to a much lesser degree, about the North. Many of these people are

[a] It is not reasonable to compare Negro death rates even in those Northern states that have had adequate registration for a long while, since in these states the Negro population has changed drastically due to migration from the South. For the available data, however, see Section 2 of this chapter.

so ignorant and so poor that they are not desirable parents and cannot offer their children a reasonably good home. The chances of their children dying at any early age are much greater than those of other children. No social policy, however radically framed, would be able to lift the standards of these people immediately. The most direct way of meeting the problem, not taking account of the value premises in the American Creed, would be to sterilize them. The fact that most whites would want to decrease the Negro population—particularly the lower class Negroes—would strengthen the argument for sterilization of destitute Negroes.

We find, however, that such proposals, if they are made at all, are almost as repugnant to the average white American in the South and the North as to the Negro. In general he is not inclined to consider sterilization as a means of birth control except to prevent the reproduction of the feeble-minded, the insane, and the severely malformed when a hereditary causation can be shown.[50] Outside of those rare cases he is against sterilization even if entirely voluntary.

For this he gives not only the reason that in many regions of the South the political and judicial system is such that, for Negroes and perhaps other poor people, a system of "voluntary" sterilization might in practice turn out to be compulsory. His resistance goes deeper. He reacts against the idea that any individual, for reasons which have no biological but only social causes, should undergo an unnatural restriction of his procreative possibilities. Outside the narrow field of negative eugenics, sterilization is, therefore, excluded as a means of controlling fertility. Except for individual cases in which life or health is threatened by child-bearing, the average American takes a similar attitude toward induced abortion. In his opinion, life should not be extinguished. Abortion, further, is not entirely free from health risks.[a]

The type of birth control which we shall have to discuss as a means of population policy is thus for all practical purposes restricted to contraception. As we have already seen, the whites' desire to decrease the Negro population becomes, even in regard to birth control, entirely overshadowed by quite other valuations centered on the health and happiness of the individual parents and children, which are all backed by the American Creed and shared by the Negroes. The full possibilities of these latter valuations in permitting a birth control policy in America have not yet been realized. Under their sanction birth control facilities could be extended relatively more to Negroes than to whites, since Negroes are more concentrated in the lower income and education classes and since they now know less about modern techniques of birth control. On this score there would probably be no conflict of policy between Negroes and whites.

[a] The prevalence of this political attitude does not prevent individuals from resorting to abortion when they want to interrupt undesired pregnancies.

Without going into the general reasons for spreading birth control in any population,[51] a few remarks on the special reasons for Negroes are in point. One of the most obvious misfortunes which a reduced birth rate could relieve is the poverty of the Negro masses. This is especially true as new legislation, urbanization, and technological advance operate to diminish child labor. It is particularly strong as long as the state shares only slightly in paying for the investment in a new generation and leaves the rising costs of bearing and rearing children almost entirely to the individual families. Since Negro women are employed to a greater extent than white women, the periods of pregnancy, delivery, and dependency are a relatively greater economic burden to Negro families. If pregnancies occur too frequently, the mother's health is endangered. To poor Negro mothers in communities which do not provide proper natal and pre-natal care for Negroes, any pregnancy is a health risk.

Besides poverty, there are other conditions among Negroes which motivate birth control. One is the high disease rate. In so far as diseases of parents are transmitted to their children, killing or permanently maiming them, such parents ought to be encouraged not to have children. The special reference here, of course, is to the venereal diseases which afflict Negroes to a much greater extent than whites.[52] Poindexter[53] estimates that of the conceptions of untreated syphilitic women, about 30 per cent die *in utero*, 40 per cent die within the first two years of life, and the remaining 30 per cent, while they live past the age of two, usually have some permanent defect. There can be no excuse for having children under such circumstances, and the provision of contraceptive information and devices would be to everyone's advantage. There are in the United States over 2,500 clinics[54] the function of which is to cure cases of venereal disease. Since a good proportion of the cost of these clinics is borne by the federal government,[55] they are roughly distributed in accordance with need. Thus the South, with only 31 per cent of the total population but 79 per cent of the Negro population, had 61 per cent of these clinics in 1940.[56] In connection with the work of these clinics there is much publicity on the prevention and cure of venereal disease. It would be a simple matter, and one much in accord with the purpose of this work, for the clinics to provide, and give information about, contraceptives to those who have the diseases which they are combating. The funds for these activities need to be increased, and clinics set up where none are now available. A case could also be made for extending the scope of the circumstances under which physicians may legally perform therapeutic abortions.[57]

A third special problem in connection with the formation of a policy toward Negro fertility is suggested by the extremely high illegitimacy rate among Negroes.[a] Reported illegitimate births constituted 16.2 per cent of

[a] The causes of this high birth rate to unmarried mothers will be considered in Chapter 43, Section 2.

all reported births among nonwhites in 1936, and 2.0 per cent among whites. The illegitimate child is under many handicaps and seldom has the opportunity to develop into a desirable citizen.[58] Even if he has a good mother, she cannot give him the proper care since she must usually earn her own living and cannot afford to place him under proper supervision. The absence of a father is detrimental to the development of a child's personality, as is the mockery from the outside world which the illegitimate child is sometimes forced to experience.[a] Too, the unwed mother tends —although there are many exceptions—to have looser morals and lower standards, and in this respect does not provide the proper *milieu* for her child. It would be better both for society in general and for the mother if she had no child.

In all these respects the extra strength of the reasons for birth control among Negroes is due only to the fact that, as a group, they are more touched by poverty, disease, and family disorganization than is common among the whites in America. If caste with all its consequences were to disappear, there would, from these viewpoints, be no more need for birth control among Negroes than among whites. But the general reasons for family limitation would remain, and they would have a strength depending upon the extent to which society was reformed to become a more favorable environment for families with children.[59] Until these reforms are carried out, and as long as the burden of caste is laid upon American Negroes, even an extreme birth control program is warranted by reasons of individual and social welfare.

7. Birth Control Facilities for Negroes

The birth control movement in America was one which had the support of liberals but met the fiercest opposition of the Catholic Church and other organized groups with conservative leanings. It also had to deal with the inertia and puritanical morality of the masses.[60] Only in the last fifteen years has it become possible to discuss the subject publicly without being criticized or condemned as immoral. Only in the last five years has the legal prohibition against dissemination of information about birth control let up significantly, and there are still all sorts of legal obstacles to the movement.[61]

In the last decade some significant changes have occurred. Public opinion, as measured by polls, is increasingly in favor of birth control. National magazines have had frank articles on it. The number of contraceptive clinics rose from 34 in 1930 to 803 in 1942.[62] In three states—North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama—*public* health authorities have taken the lead in bringing birth control clinics to rural areas, where they are most

[a] There is much less social derogation of the illegitimate child among Negroes than among whites. See Chapter 43, Section 2.

needed. Several other Southern states are on the verge of following the example of these three. In 1937 the conservative American Medical Association accepted birth control as an "integral part of medical practice and education." These rapid changes are partly the result of the general trend toward social amelioration and secularization. They are also the result of the excellent propaganda and organizational work under the movement now known as the Planned Parenthood Federation of America. The leading spirit in the movement, since 1916, has been Mrs. Margaret Sanger.

While the birth control movement is generally considered to be a liberal movement, and the South is generally the least hospitable section of the country to liberal movements, the South now leads other sections of the country in accepting birth control.[63] The relative absence of Roman Catholics in the South, the great attention recently of the birth control organizations to the South, and the greater need of the South are important reasons for this. But it is reasonable to assume that the large number of undesired Negroes in the rural districts also has something to do with the lack of opposition on the part of the white South.[a]

There is some variation in the technical organization of the programs in the three Southern states which now have public birth control clinics, but there is enough in common to describe a general pattern.[64] These clinics were started by the action of the chief health officer in each state; he sent letters to each of the local health officers to ask them if they would accept birth control clinics as a part of their regular health clinics. Those who accepted[b]—and this now includes most of the local health officers in North Carolina and a significant proportion in South Carolina and Alabama —received advice, instruction and special supplies. The regular local health offices—some of which, therefore, now have birth control clinics—are paid for by the state governments and by the Children's Bureau of the federal government on a grant-in-aid basis, but they are under the control of locally appointed health officers. The cost of birth control supplies is often borne by the private birth control organization of the state. When the public clinics began in North Carolina, a nurse whose salary and expenses were paid by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America gave instruction and supplies to the local doctors and nurses. The clinics in the other states had a similar start. Thus at the beginning the expenses of the program were borne by private groups, but there is a strong tendency

[a] As we observed in the previous sections of this chapter, Southerners will never publicly admit that they would like to see the Negro population decrease, but they do point to the poverty that could be avoided if there were fewer Negroes. Another indication that the presence of the Negroes is a main reason for the lack of opposition to birth control in the South is that, despite lack of opposition to it, birth control is taboo as a subject for public or polite conversation even more in the South than in the North.

[b] In many cases the local health officer had to get the approval of the county medical society.

toward state support with federal aid. Sometimes the patients pay a nominal fee.

Most of the 452 privately supported birth control clinics in the United States in 1942 were under the sponsorship of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America or its local affiliates. Most of these are in cities. The Harlem section of New York got a clinic in 1930. The Federation—with funds made available by a white philanthropist—is conducting two demonstration projects important to Negroes: one in urban Nashville, Tennessee, and the other in rural Berkeley County, South Carolina. Both projects are for Negroes only. The Federation has a Division of Negro Service whose primary function is educational. Aided by a national Negro Advisory Council of 34 eminent Negro leaders, it works through the Urban Leagues, Negro doctors and nurses, the National Hospital Association, the Negro press and Negro clubwomen.[65] Some 200 of the Negro Jeanes teachers have requested information of the Federation's Division of Negro Service, as have hundreds of Southern white health officers and doctors.[66]

The activity of the birth control movement's workers, the Southern whites, and the Negro leaders—all with the same aim of spreading birth control among Negroes—promises a great development of the movement in the future. Since few Negroes are Catholics, and since they do not live in areas where Catholics predominate, the chief remaining weakness, as far as Negroes are concerned, is the lack of funds for educational work. It would seem that, more and more, the Southern states are on the way to making public funds available for birth control work. Too, it is likely that philanthropy will be more willing to come into this field since it has become legal and popularly acceptable in the last five years.

A more serious difficulty is that of educating Southern Negroes to the advantages of birth control. Negroes, on the whole, have all the prejudices against it that other poor, ignorant, superstitious people have.[67] More serious is the fact that even when they do accept it, they are not very efficient in obeying instructions and sometimes they come to feel that it is a fake.[68] An intensive educational campaign is needed, giving special recognition to the prejudices and ignorance of the people whom the campaign is to benefit. The use of Negro doctors and nurses is essential.

With the growing popular and legal acceptance of birth control, it would seem that a shift in emphasis is needed.[69] None of the present activities should be cut out, but the time has come for more direct and more widespread educational work. The birth control organizations, having been stung so many times, are chary of direct propaganda that might antagonize doctors and others among the "best people." It is true that they seek to reach the masses of Negroes through the Urban Leagues, Negro newspapers, Jeanes teachers, and Negro clubwomen. But they only tell people to see a doctor and so do not get over the fact that there are more easily

accessible devices for birth control and venereal prophylaxis than the ones usually prescribed by physicians.[70]

Of course special cases do require medical attention, and all persons should be told to see a doctor if possible.[71] Medical advice will always be an asset in getting over improved techniques of birth control, in adjusting individual problems and in securing general health improvement. But there is no need for all people to refrain from birth control or prophylaxis until they have seen a doctor. So far contraception has been most successful on a mass basis among city people who learn about simple methods from their friends, not from doctors. What city Negroes now know—as evidenced by their low birth rate—merely needs to be told to country Negroes. The birth control organizations can do this more effectively, more speedily, and more scientifically, than can rumors and jokes.

The main reason for advocating this shift in emphasis is that mass instruction and propaganda reach more people in less time and at lower cost than the clinics run by doctors and nurses.[72] The need for birth control is common, and is only slightly touched by present activities, despite their high cost. If birth control is to achieve mass utilization, there must be a shift in emphasis from time-consuming and expensive instruction of individuals to a speedy and inexpensive education of groups. And there should not only be groups of women, but also groups of men. Birth control is fundamentally a simple matter, and it calls for adult education before clinical consultation.

CHAPTER 8

MIGRATION

1. Overview

There are no comprehensive statistics on internal migration in America. Census data on population increase of the several regions from one decade to another, and on the state of birth of individuals, will have to be relied upon for giving what indirect information on migration they can. What we get from these sources is merely *a very approximate measure of the trend of long-range net migration, between regions, of Negroes as compared with whites.*[1] Our interest in this chapter will be focused on migration defined in this way.

Ever since they were brought to this country as slaves, Negroes have been concentrated in the South. There had been little use for slaves in the North, and the Northern state governments early abolished what slavery there was. The South, on the other hand, after an initial period of experimentation, came to regard slavery as an essential part of its economy, and brought Negroes in as long as it was legally possible to do so, and after that bred and smuggled them to increase the number of slaves. Part of the frontier was then in the Southeast and the Negroes were brought along as slaves in the great southward and westward movement of the plantation economy. The restriction of slavery to the South, among many other factors, limited this forced migration to this new region. The stream of free Negroes and fugitive slaves to the North, though highly important politically, was not quantitatively significant.[2] If the southward and westward movement within the slave territory be ignored, the distribution of Negroes in the main regions of the country was substantially the same in 1860 as it was in 1790. In 1860 there was only a scattering of Negroes in the North and practically none in the West.[a]

The Civil War removed the legal restrictions on Negro mobility. It also removed the slave owners' interest in moving the Negroes to places where they could be most profitably used. There was apparently much

[a] In 1860, 94.9 per cent of the Negroes in the United States lived in the South (including Missouri). Only one-tenth of 1 per cent lived in non-Southern states west of the Mississippi River, and the remaining 5 per cent lived in Northern states east of the Mississippi River. (*Eighth Census of the United States: 1860.* Vol. I, p. xiii.)

wandering locally. Perhaps, Negroes moved locally more than did whites in the South since Emancipation gave them a psychological release, and since they did not own much land to tie them down. Even today Negroes are less "attached to the soil" than whites, and the turnover of Negro share tenants is high.[a] But there was, for a long time, little long-distance migration out of the South. And even within the South the Negroes seem, on the whole, to have become rather more tied to the districts where they lived before Emancipation than they had been earlier when they were productive capital owned by the employers, and when the plantation economy was in its expanding stage. Outside the local migration, the only numerically significant migration of Negroes between the Civil War and the World War was from rural areas to cities within the South (including Washington, D.C.).

The proportion of Negroes in the North and West[b] rose from 5.1 per cent in 1860 to 10.4 per cent in 1910. In 1910 Negroes made up only 1.6 per cent of the total Northern and Western population (it was 1.2 per cent in 1860). In 1910, 79.3 per cent of all Northern Negroes lived in cities (it was 64.3 per cent in 1860). The urban Negro population in the South increased during the same period from 6.7 to 22.0 per cent of the total Negro population in the region. In 1860 Negroes constituted 19.3 per cent of the Southern urban population and 24.5 per cent in 1910.

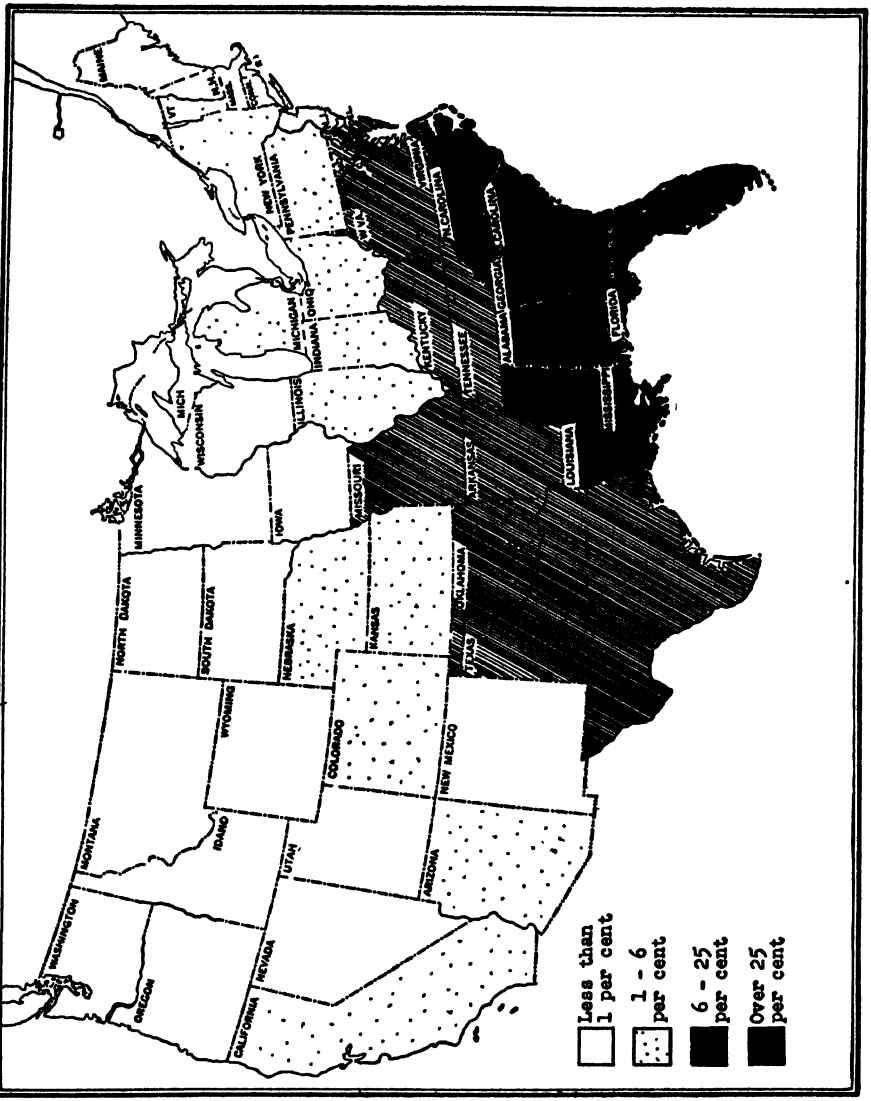
The Great Migration, starting in 1915 and continuing in waves from then on, has brought changes in the distribution of Negroes in the United States. The proportion of all Negroes living in the North and West rose to 23.8 per cent in 1940, which signifies a total net migration between 1910 and 1940 of about 1,750,000 from the South.[a] Negroes constituted, in 1940, 3.7 per cent of the total Northern population. Practically all of the migrants had gone to the cities and almost all to the big cities. In 1940, 90.1 per cent of all Negroes in Northern and Western states outside of Missouri lived in urban areas. New York City alone claimed 16.9 per cent of all Negroes living in the North and West. If the Negroes of Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh are added to those of New York, the proportion rises to 47.2 per cent. The rural North and West still remain practically void of Negroes. The total Negro rural-farm population outside the South was only 269,760 in 1940[c] as against 190,572 in 1910. In most smaller cities in the North Negroes are also absent, or

[a] See Chapter 11, Section 8.

[b] In this chapter we include Missouri in the South together with the 16 states and the District of Columbia, defined by the census as the South. The West, as we define it here, includes all states west of the Mississippi River except Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Texas and Oklahoma.

[c] Of these 269,760 Negroes, 218,963 were rural-nonfarm Negroes and only 50,797 were rural farm Negroes. A comparable breakdown in the figures for 1910 is not available.

FIGURE 3. THE PROPORTION OF NEGROES IN THE POPULATION, BY STATES: 1940



Source: United States Census.

the small stock of old Negro inhabitants has not been materially increased.

In the South the proportion of the Negro population that lived in cities increased from 22.0 per cent to 37.3 per cent between 1910 and 1940. Negroes now make up 22.3 per cent of the total urban population of the South, while a generation ago the corresponding figure was 24.5 per cent. The Southern rural Negro population has shrunk from 78.0 per cent of the total number of Southern Negroes in 1910 to 62.7 per cent in 1940. The rural Negroes are still distributed in various parts of the South in much the same way as in 1910 and, indeed, as in 1860 on the eve of the Civil War.

In spite of the considerable mobility in the last thirty years, the great majority of Negroes in the United States still live in the South (Figure 3).

2. A CLOSER VIEW

Why has the Negro not moved around more in America? And why have his moves—even in the last generation—been so restricted to a few main streams? A satisfactory answer cannot be given because of fragmentary knowledge. Our attempted answer will have to be abstract, as practically all phases of the Negro problem are involved.[a]

After Emancipation the great masses of American Negroes were concentrated in the rural South, actually some four-fifths of the total Negro population. Theoretically, there were four possible types of places where they could move. First, they could leave the United States. Second, they could take part in the settlement of the frontier West. Third, they could move to the growing cities of the South or to other rural areas in the South. Finally, they could go North. A consideration of why the Negro did, or did not, make each of these types of movements, and of his motives for so doing, will at least formulate some of the main problems involved.[b]

Colonization abroad had been attempted in the *ante-bellum* South as a method of getting rid of the free Negroes. The back-to-Africa movement is interesting from an ideological point of view.[c] Its quantitative effects upon the Negro population in America were, however, almost nothing. Not many white people were ever deeply interested; fewer still were prepared to make the necessary financial sacrifices for the passage and settlement of Negroes abroad. Most Negroes were not willing to leave

[a] For a more intensive treatment of several factors only hinted at in this chapter, we refer the reader to later parts of this book, particularly Part IV on the economic status of the Negro.

[b] Most of the factual material for this discussion has been taken from Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyonel C. Florant, "Negro Population and Negro Population Movements:—1860-1940, in Relation to Social and Economic Factors," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940, revised by Lyonel Florant under title, "Negro Migration:—1860-1940" [1942]).

[c] See Chapter 38, Section 12. Also see Stouffer and Florant, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38.

America. Nevertheless, the idea of mass emigration to Africa or some other place outside the United States is still not completely out of American thinking,[a] although in practice it has not amounted to much so far.

Some ten thousand Negroes went to Liberia and some thousands to Haiti before the Civil War, but after the War this emigration practically ceased.[4] Particularly after the Civil War, Negroes in small numbers traveled back and forth between the United States and the West Indies, but there has been little opportunity for any large-scale emigration to these heavily populated, small islands. South America—especially Brazil, where there is already a large proportion of Negroes—would seem to offer many possibilities to Negroes who wish to leave the United States. Although it is conceivable that the closer cultural relations now opening between the United States and South America will lead to a significant intermigration between these two areas, few have yet taken advantage of those opportunities.

Negroes did not participate in the settlement of the West. In fact, there are not many Negroes in the West even today. In 1940 only 2.2 per cent of all American Negroes lived west of the Mississippi River (outside of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, which states may be considered as part of the South rather than the West). Most of the Negro migration to the West has occurred in the last decade: the Western population of Negroes increased 21.1 per cent between 1930 and 1940. But there was little migration when the West was a frontier, and land was cheap. In 1890 there were only 100,986 Negroes in the West, in 1910 still only 135,872.

The reasons for this are not clear, and some historian can do a service by investigating the problem. We know that the settlement of Negro freedmen in the West was a frequently discussed possibility immediately after the Civil War. A few movements to get away from the South developed rather soon. By far the biggest one was to Kansas, and may have brought as many as 40,000 Negroes to that state.[5] There are reasons to believe that the lack of capital and experience on the part of Southern Negroes is only a small part of the explanation as to why westward migration generally became abortive. There were Negroes who had the little capital necessary to get started on their own in the West; others could have begun as laborers, who were needed not only on the farms but in the huge construction work going on. The primary explanation seems to be that in rural areas of the West, white settlers decided that there were not to be any Negroes.[b] The same seems to have been true in most rural areas of the Northeast and in

[a] See Chapter 38, Section 12.

[b] This is all the more incomprehensible because Chinese were imported to do the construction work in the West, and there was much greater prejudice against them than against Negroes.

most small towns of the entire North. The closer neighborhood controls in smaller communities seem to have blocked the Negro from moving in when he was no longer protected as a slave. Even apart from actual pressure there must have been imagined pressure: individuals in a lower caste, like the Negroes, are always on the lookout for discrimination and intimidation and probably felt that it was not safe to venture into the loneliness of a small community. At any rate, it soon became a popular belief among Southern Negroes that the only outlet from the Southern Black Belt was to the cities and preferably to the big cities, where Negro neighborhoods were already established. Negro migration thus early tended to become migration between fairly large-sized Negro communities or to be stopped altogether.

But there were cities in the West, and a few of these grew rapidly. In them small Negro communities developed, and the Negro inhabitants found that there was less prejudice in these new cities than even in the Northeastern cities. James Weldon Johnson described San Francisco, for example, in 1905:

> I was delighted with San Francisco. Here was a civilized center, metropolitan and urbane. With respect to the Negro race, I found it a freer city than New York. I encountered no bar against me in hotels, restaurants, theaters, or other places of public accommodation and entertainment. We hired a furnished apartment in the business area, and took our meals wherever it was most convenient. I moved about with a sense of confidence and security, and entirely from under that cloud of doubt and apprehension that constantly hangs over an intelligent Negro in every Southern city and in a great many cities of the North. . . . The black population was relatively small, but the colored people that I met and visited lived in good homes and appeared to be prosperous. I talked with some of them about race conditions; the consensus of their comment was that San Francisco was the best city in the United States for a Negro. This may, of course, have been in some degree a reflex of prevalent Pacific Coast boosting.[6]

It is surprising that cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle did not attract a greater Negro population. Perhaps the long and expensive journey to the Western cities has been a deterrent. The competition from Orientals and Mexicans as domestics and laborers also has played a role. But we are not satisfied with this explanation, although we have nothing better to offer.

The South also had its western frontier. In 1860, there was relatively little population in the large area which is now Oklahoma and Western Texas. After 1860, whites began to flow in from more eastern places in the South. Later, as the boll weevil, erosion, and mechanization shifted cotton westward; and as new occupations developed in agriculture, in livestock production, in mining, and in manufacturing in these areas, whites moved in at an increasing rate. But Negroes did not come in any significant

numbers. By 1940, Negroes constituted only 12.5 per cent of the population of Texas and Oklahoma, and they were not often employed in the new occupations. Oil and gas wells in these two states gave employment to 90,000 in 1930, of whom only 800 were Negroes. In the cities, Negroes had little opportunity outside of domestic and personal service: in 1930 they constituted only 8 per cent of the gainfully occupied in nonagricultural pursuits aside from domestic and personal service. Negroes did not even get much of a share in the new cotton production of these states.[a] Southern prejudice against the Negro seems to be the most potent factor in keeping the Negro out of the new opportunities in Texas and Oklahoma. In some towns Negroes are not permitted to remain over 24 hours; everywhere the Negro is "kept in his place." Another factor has been the competition from the Mexicans, who went into the lowest occupations and filled the traditional "Negro jobs."

Negroes did go to the Southern cities but not nearly to the same extent as did the whites. In 1940, Negroes constituted only 22.4 per cent of the population of Southern cities over 100,000, and 22.5 per cent of the cities of that size having 20 per cent of their employed workers in manufacturing and construction industries. The growth of the city represents the greatest economic change in the South that has occurred since the Civil War. The Industrial Revolution, with all its connotation of modern progress and new opportunity, came to the South later than it did to the North, but it did come. Negroes, however, were not allowed to share in many of its fruits. The tradition persisted that Negroes could not operate machines, or at least this was the rationalization used to keep them from the new occupations. Negroes lost out in many of the skilled occupations they had formerly had. In the Southern city, the Negro is now mainly an unskilled laborer or a servant.[b]

While the Negroes have probably moved around locally in the South a great deal since 1860, the net result of this movement has been surprisingly insignificant. Negroes have not been permitted to take advantage of new opportunities in rural areas any more than they have been in urban areas. By a reclassification of the South into 140 districts which are much more homogeneous in regard to Negroes than the political units formerly used by the Census Bureau,[7] Stouffer and Wyant have shown three striking facts:

1. Those Southern districts which tended to have relatively few Negroes in 1860 grew faster both absolutely and relatively between 1860 and 1930 than those with many Negroes. The former included most of the districts which were destined to be most heavily urban in 1930.

[a] See Chapter 11, Section 4, and Chapter 12, Section 6.

[b] For a more detailed description of the Negro in Southern industry, see Chapter 13.

2. Those Southern districts which tended to have relatively few Negroes in 1860 also had relatively few in 1930.[8]
3. In 1930, as in 1860, the regions of dense Negro population were concentrated in the crescent, sometimes narrow, sometimes broad, between the Potomac and Texas and between the mountains and the sea (see Figure 2). This old plantation belt is "black" today, as it was at the time of Emancipation, although the proportion of Negroes in the population has declined. The two great mountain regions—the Appalachians and the Ozarks—were still almost entirely devoid of Negroes, and areas in the Border states outside the mountains tended to show decreases rather than increases in the percentage Negro.

Not only did the Negro not share in the expanding opportunities in the South, but also the areas in which the Negroes lived declined from an economic standpoint. Most important was the deterioration of cotton production in the Black Belt of the Southeast. In the states east of Mississippi, Negro-operated farms produced 643,000 fewer bales of cotton in 1929 than in 1909, while white-operated farms increased production by 90,000 bales.[9]

Thus we have seen that the Negro did not share much in the growth of the West and of the South. For a long while—until the World War, in fact—it did not seem that he would share in the even greater growth of the North. During and immediately after the First World War came the Great Migration, and ever since then Negroes have not stopped coming to the urban North.[10] Negroes probably came in greater relative numbers than the Southern whites who had more opportunities within the old South and in the new South of Texas and Oklahoma, but they did not come as rapidly after 1915 as did the white immigrants from Europe before the First World War. By 1940 there were 2,439,201 Negroes living in the North, east of the Mississippi River, or 19.0 per cent of the total Negro population in the country and 3.9 per cent of the total Northern population. Population distribution within the South was, of course, somewhat affected by the northward migration after 1914. Many Negroes went North from the Border states, and their number was not quite replenished by Negroes coming from farther South. Those portions of Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia which lie east of the mountains lost Negro population most heavily, but have made it up—except for the Piedmont area—by natural increase.[11]

The inadequate explanation that we gave in discussing lack of migration to the West is all we have to account for the extreme concentration in a few Northern cities. There is enough industrial activity, and there could be opportunity for anonymity, as well as a low level of race prejudice, in many of the smaller cities of the North to permit a significant immigration

of Negroes. That Negroes have not migrated to these places is as much of a mystery as the relative absence of migration to the West.

Another mystery—which is not entirely outside our problem, as the conditions and behavior of Negroes are constantly compared with those of their white neighbors—is why poor white Southerners during the entire period after the Civil War did not move in greater numbers to the North than they did. The Industrial Revolution came to the Northern cities long before the Civil War. But the period since 1860 has witnessed the greatest mechanization and expansion of industry. Over-population and poverty have loomed over the South all the time. It is true that the whites could move to the Southwest which was mostly closed to the Negroes. The whites also reserved for themselves most of the jobs in the developing industry in the South. But industrial wages were low and many whites were pressed down to share tenancy in the rural districts.[a] As compared to the European immigrants, who formed the bulk of the labor supply for the factories in the North, they should have had the advantage of knowing the language and of being more familiar with American ways and manners.

In 1930 the percentage of all Southern-born Negroes who lived in the Northern states east of the Mississippi River was double the percentage of Southern-born whites living in these Northern states. Most of the Southern whites living in the North were from the Border states. If we leave the Border states out of consideration, the proportion of Negroes born in the Lower South and living in the North outnumbered, by a ratio of five to one, the proportion of whites born in the Lower South and living in the North. Despite the fact that most Southern-born whites living in the North came from the Border states, Negroes born in the Border states and living in the North outnumbered, by a ratio of two to one, the proportion of whites born in the Border states and living in the North.[12] This lack of migration of whites from the South is especially striking when it is realized that there were almost as many Northern-born whites in the South as there were Southern-born whites in the North. In 1930 there were 1,931,799 Southern-born whites living in the Northern states outside of the Mountain and Pacific Divisions; but there were 1,821,678 whites born in these Northern states living in the South.[13] Even if we subtract Northern-born whites living in Washington, D.C., from the latter figure, we have 1,732,120 Northern-born whites living in the South.[14]

The corresponding figures for Negroes were: 1,355,789 Southern-born Negroes living in the Northern states outside of the Mountain and Pacific Divisions and 52,338 Negroes born in these Northern states living in the South. Of the latter, 4,621 were living in Washington, D.C., which left only 47,717 Northern-born Negroes living in the rest of the South.[15] The difference between numbers of Southern whites and Southern Negroes

[a] See Chapter 11.

living in the North is even more striking when it is remembered that there were more than two and a half times as many whites born in the South as there were Negroes. Thus, when discussing the causes as to why the stream of Negro migrants to the North before 1915 was so small, it should be remembered that the Southern whites followed the same pattern. And the Great Migration of Negroes after 1915 is the more significant when it is realized that it was much bigger—relative to the size of the respective population—than the corresponding migration of Southern whites.

3. THE GREAT MIGRATION TO THE URBAN NORTH[16]

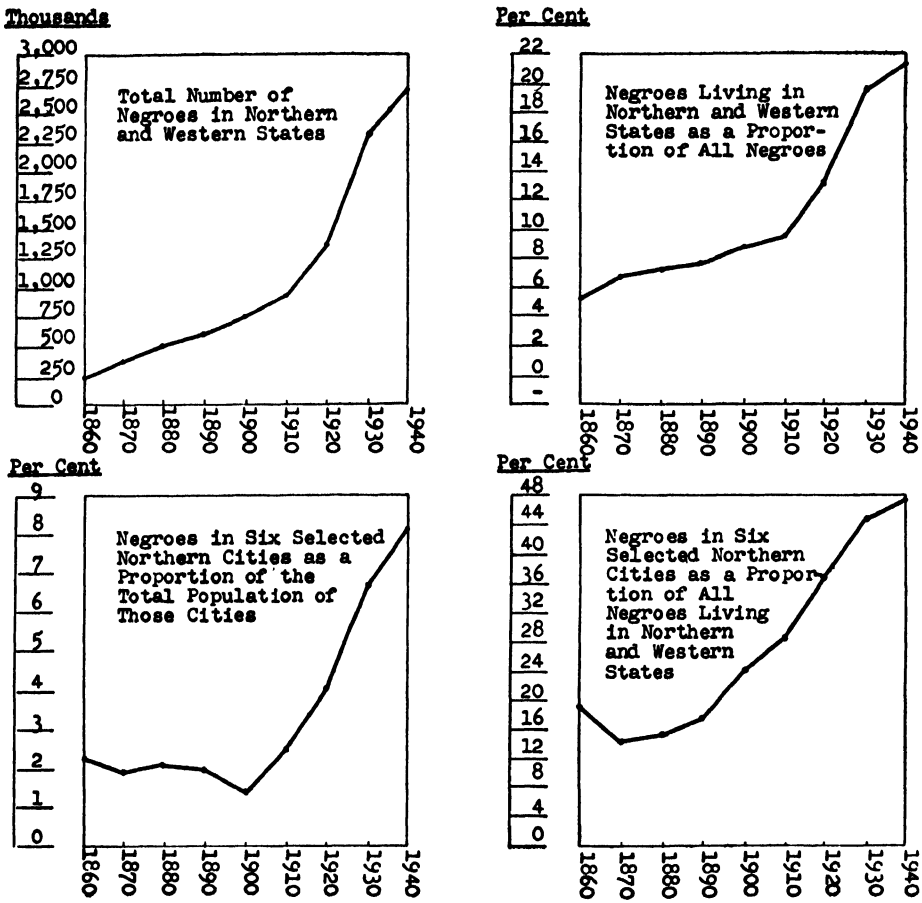
For the average Negro, living conditions in the North have always been more favorable than in the South. The North has—in spite of considerable discrimination—offered him more economic opportunities (in relief if not in employment), more security as a citizen, and a greater freedom as a human being. The concrete import of this general statement will become clearer as we proceed in our inquiry. Nevertheless, this great difference did not, by itself, cause more than a tiny stream of northward migration for almost two generations.

On the whole, the difference was probably widening after 1870. Jim Crow legislation and disfranchisement were being perfected in the South in the decades around the turn of the century. Lynching and legal insecurity did not start to decrease until the 1890's, and the drop was not great until the 1920's. Schools for Negroes were generally improved but not so fast as for the whites and not nearly so fast as in the North. The slow trend toward Negro landownership was broken just after the turn of the century. The natural increase of the Southern population was large, and the corresponding expansion of employment opportunities retarded. Negroes were not allowed to share much in the opportunities that did develop. Whites began to monopolize the new cotton growing in the Southwest and also to infringe on the traditional "Negro jobs." Except for a small proportion of Negro professionals and businessmen who served their own people, few Negroes in the South had opportunity to improve their economic position. At least in a subjective sense—which is the important thing in discussing human motivation—the difference in desirability between South and North widened as Southern Negroes became more educated and came to know the outside world better.

In the North, industrial expansion was tremendous after the Civil War, creating new employment opportunities for millions of immigrants. The few Negroes in the North were largely kept out of industrial employment but found a ready demand as domestics and in other service jobs. In many places it was a fashion among the wealthy to hire Negroes as servants in preference to European immigrants. Many middle class whites also came to prefer Negroes—largely because they did not object to the hardest work

and did not expect much in wages. A second important demand factor came from the big industries when white workers went out on strike. A third element in the migration before the First World War was the escape

FIGURE 4. THE NORTHWARD MIGRATION



Source: United States Census.

Notes: In each diagram, the calculation for 1870 is based on the assumption that the figures are mid-way between those of 1860 and 1880. Missouri is considered as part of the South.

The six selected Northern cities are: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland and Pittsburgh. These cities are those Northern ones, outside of cities in Missouri, which contained the largest Negro populations in 1930. Brooklyn is included in New York City even before the date on which it was legally incorporated with it.

of upper class Negroes who desired to improve themselves. These were few in number, and many managed to get placed in commerce and industry on an almost equal basis with the whites.[17]

But—except for occasional sudden influxes of Negroes as a result of the demands for strikebreakers—the stream of Negroes moving to the North never swelled much (Figure 4). In the normal case the industrial employers found their demand for unskilled labor well filled by European immigrants. The workers themselves often resented Negro competition. This is not a full explanation of why the North did not attract more Negroes, however, since the labor market was immense in comparison to the supply of Negro labor, and since the service occupations would, even at that time, have been preferable to Southern Negroes, particularly when we remember all the other advantages for a Negro in the North. The slow but accelerating increase in northward Negro net migration (Figure 4) confirms our general hypothesis of a widening gap in the subjective desirability between the two regions as places to live. But, as we said, the rate of migration did not become large until the World War. Much in the Great Migration after 1915 is left unexplained if we do not assume that there was before 1915 *an existing and widening difference in living conditions between South and North which did not express itself in a mass migration simply because the latter did not get a start and become a pattern.*

In this situation of accumulated migration potentialities several factors of change coincided and created a shock effect after 1915. In the South "white infiltration" into the types of work formerly monopolized by Negroes, the relative shift westward of cotton growing, and the ravages of the boll weevil made the Negro cotton farmer still worse off. Drought, too, made farming difficult in 1916 and 1917. The First World War stirred up people's minds and prepared them for change. The draft actually moved a great number of Negro men from their home communities. The draft of white workers, the stopping of immigration, and the general war prosperity forced Northern industry to turn actively to Negroes for new workers. There was a "push" in the South and there was a "pull" in the North, widening tremendously the already existing differences in opportunities for a Negro in the two regions. When factors of inertia were once overcome and the northward mass migration was started, the movement quickly took on momentum. A new pattern of behavior was set; a new hope in the possibilities in the North was created. Lines of communication between North and South were established.

If the migration is thus explained in terms of "conditions" and "factors" and a "difference in opportunities," it should, of course, not be assumed that an accurate picture has thereby been given of the actual motivation of the individuals moving. The motivation was probably different for each Negro who migrated, and it involved a conscious consideration of all the personal elements in the situation that the individual happened to think of and judged as relevant—not only, and sometimes not even primarily, the economic opportunities.[18] It also involved a number of poorly-thought-

out elements, unconscious influences and "chance" factors. The precipitating "cause" of migration of an individual might be such an event as the spurning of a young man by his sweetheart, or the death of a grandmother who was too old to be moved.[19]

What actually happened to a great number of Negroes at the start of the Great Migration must have been that they were unsettled, like everyone else, by the War and by all the changes occurring in the industrial system and the labor market. They found their chances in the South particularly bad. In addition, they heard about new openings in the North. Negroes already in the North wrote letters to relatives or friends in the South. Such letters were often passed around the community or their contents were passed on by word of mouth among the illiterates. To these means of communication were added those of the Negro press and the labor agents. Negro newspapers stimulated migration not only by printing advertisements of specific jobs, but also by editorials and news comments on the better conditions for Negroes in the North. These affected individual Negroes and also set the topic of friendly social discussion in many Negro communities.

It is impossible to estimate the influence of agents, both white and Negro, sent out by Northern industries. At first they were ignored by the Southern whites, but during the boom days of 1917 and thereafter, their activities were hampered in many ways, both legally and illegally. Not only were there agents with specific promises of jobs and money to pay the railroad fare of Negroes who desired to take these jobs, but there were rumors of agents who did not exist except in the distorted perceptions or imaginations of rumor-spreaders. Negroes who were influenced by such rumors did not have much difficulty in getting jobs during the War, but they had to pay their own railroad fare when they had not expected to.

A desire to improve oneself economically by going North was, of course, a chief motive for migration. Many had heard about specific job opportunities, and many had friends who had become well-to-do in the North, but just as important was the general myth of Northern prosperity. Generally, the Negro was sought as an unskilled laborer and in such an occupation, for the most part, he had to stay. The North, as well as the South, has been hesitant to mix the machine and the Negro;[a] and yet, whether measured in terms of proportions in "desirable" occupations, average income, availability of unemployment relief, or of other types of social security benefits, the Negro is considerably better off in the North than in the South.[b]

Allied with the desire for economic improvement was a desire for social improvement. Like many other oppressed people, Negroes placed a high premium on education. In the North, Negroes not only had access to more

[a] For evidence, see Chapter 13.

[b] For statistical documentation of these statements, see Chapters 13, 14, 15 and 16.

and better schools, but they could more easily earn the money to go to them. Many Negroes also felt they could no longer tolerate their subordinate and restricted position. Both the fact and the myth of Northern equality played a role in stimulating some Negroes to go North. Such Negroes were usually those who had some taste of a society in which their position was not so low—such as those who read books or corresponded with Northern friends, or those who had served in the United States Army during the World War. The general freedom, excitement, and anonymity of city life also attracted many rural Southern Negroes. A small number of Negroes went North because they found themselves *persona non grata* with Southern whites for one reason or another.

There were a number of things which retarded migration. Even the Great Migration during and after the World War brought only a small proportion of Southern Negroes to the North. Perhaps a majority of them were not even considering migrating. Except during the war boom, Negroes realized that there were only a limited number of jobs in the North. Owners of Northern industry were not very willing to hire Negro workers except when orders were pilling up, and European immigrant laborers could not be had because of the War or legal restrictions on immigration. Northern industrialists often believed in the stereotype of the lazy and inefficient Negro, and often their limited observations strengthened their belief. Some had the legitimate doubt whether Negroes, used to forced labor on farms, could be adapted to free labor in factories. Too, they did not wish to offend their white workers, who were in the majority. Most white unions, faced with Negroes coming into their industries, fought the Negroes; and white workers generally opposed black competition. On the other hand, some Negroes were, or felt they were, fairly well established economically in the South. In some cases the economic tie was actually a chain. In the turpentine industry, for example, Negroes worked and lived in isolated camps, and were forced to buy in company stores. The owners, in order to maintain a steady and cheap labor supply, saw to it that the Negro laborers ran into debt, and connived with the law-enforcement agencies to prevent Negroes from escaping that debt.

There were not only economic ties, but also all sorts of social ties. Few persons like to leave permanently their families and friends and places familiar to them to go to a strange place. This fear of the unknown was enhanced by the stories that grew up about the North as a lawless and licentious place. It was—being North—a cold place, where Negroes—being used to warm climates—died in droves. A few migrants disliked the North so much that they returned South, and discouraged their friends.[20] Then, too, many Negroes did not know how to go about getting a train ticket, and others did not have enough money to buy one.

Negro leaders were divided as to the desirability of a northward migra-

tion. Some saw the North as a place where members of their race could get a new start in life, economically, socially and politically. Others felt that migration was a disrupting force, and that the Negro problem could not be solved by running away from it. Some professionals and businessmen in the South were afraid of losing their clientele, and some community leaders were afraid of losing their communities. A number of them joined in the caravan, but the ones left behind were not particularly happy about it all. The upper class Negroes in the North had mixed feelings with respect to the new migration. On the one hand, they saw their own social status decreasing: prejudice mounted against Negroes in the North as a reaction to the sudden influx of rough Southern Negroes.[a] On the other hand, the economic basis of their businesses or professions broadened as the Negro community grew.

4. CONTINUED NORTHWARD MIGRATION

After the First World War many of the same influences continued, and Negroes kept up their migration northward. After a few years of depression, unprecedented prosperity brought a new demand for industrial goods. Immigration laws effectively kept out competitors to American labor, except for Mexicans and a few French-Canadians. Cotton production in the South Atlantic and East South Central states was still in the doldrums, though not so badly as during the War. Also important was the fact that a pattern of migration had been well started; fear and local ties were no longer so potent in deterring migration as they had been before the War. Jobs, however, were not so plentiful in the North, and a housing shortage for Negroes, who were kept in segregated quarters of the cities, caused rents to eat up a large part of the Negro's wage.

With the depression beginning in 1929, a new set of circumstances arose to determine the extent of the Negro's migration northward. There were no longer new jobs for Negroes in the North; in fact, Negroes there were laid off by the thousands. In November, 1937, 39 per cent of the male nonwhite labor force in Northern states outside of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast Divisions were unemployed.[21]

[a] An elderly upper class Negro woman who had lived all her life in the North told an interviewer in 1927:

"The Negro invasion began about 1915. Until that time we had been accepted as equals but as soon as the Southern Negroes began coming in we were relegated to their class. Our white friends shunned us and we were really without social life until our own group was better organized. . . . We really do not mingle with the Southern Negro and they do not come near us as they know that we are Northerners."

This woman was president of a local society composed of Negroes who had lived in the North for at least 35 years, or their descendants. (Unpublished document in possession of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago, "History of Douglas," document No. 15).

But a new form of livelihood arose to take the place of jobs. This was public assistance in its many forms. It was much harder for Negroes who needed it to get relief in the South than in the North. In 1935 around half of all Negro families in the North were on relief.[a] Hence Negroes were again attracted northward—though not to the same extent as during the period of the World War and the 1920's. Many Northern states set up residence requirements—ranging up to five years—to keep out migrants seeking relief. These requirements were not rigorously enforced in the early days of the depression, but even when they were, Negroes felt it better to trust to luck for odd jobs or to their friends until the residence requirements had been met, rather than to meet almost sure starvation in the South.[b] Relief and the residence requirements for relief also had the effect of cutting down on the remigration to the South.[c]

Economic conditions had become relatively worse for Negroes in the South during the depression. Whites who had lost their small farms or their better jobs in the cities began to encroach on the Negroes in the heavy unskilled occupations and even in the service occupations—the traditional jobs of the Southern Negro. Southern agriculture became worse, and the poorest owners and tenants—which included a disproportionate share of Negroes—were forced out. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration of the federal government—in an effort to aid Southern agriculture—forced out the poorest among both white and Negro agriculturists even more.[d] Most of these—including practically all the whites—went on relief, but many of the Negroes could not get relief and so moved North where no color distinction was made in the administration of public assistance.[e]

Most experts believed, during the 'thirties, that the northward Negro migration had diminished considerably. Now that the preliminary results of the 1940 Census are available, we know that it has kept up. It was not so high during the 'thirties as it had been from 1915 to 1930, but the remarkable thing is that it has kept up at all in the absence of employment opportunities in the North.[22]

5. THE FUTURE OF NEGRO MIGRATION

Taking the long historical view, the main observations to be made about Negro migration are that the Negro people have tended to stay where

[a] See Chapter 15.

[b] See Chapter 16.

[c] Also, persons who are able to support themselves after a fashion but know that they may be in need of relief sometime in the future, often consider local relief differentials when deciding on whether or not they want to migrate. Such potential relief clients are particularly numerous, of course, in the Negro group.

[d] See Chapter 12.

[e] For the statistical facts on unemployment, public assistance, and agriculture in the South, see Part IV of this book.

they were. Their movements between the regions of the country have been decidedly more restricted in amount and direction than those of the whites. This trend is as significant as the slower growth of the Negro population when compared with the white population, which we analyzed in the preceding chapter.

The restriction of long-range mobility of Negroes is—to an extent and in a certain direction—a thing of the past. We found that the long immobility of the Negroes was not unrelated to the white immigration, which filled the demand for unskilled labor in the fast-growing industrial structure of the North. The white Southerners had a natural increase large enough to fill most of those jobs in the lagging industry of the South. The stopping of immigration during the First World War was one of the factors suddenly giving the Negro a chance in Northern industry. But the influence of immigration as a cause of immobility and the stoppage of immigration as a cause, later, of greater mobility were interwoven in a complicated fashion with many other factors. Northern industry went into a period of mechanization, decreasing tremendously its demand for unskilled labor. During the 'thirties a great industrial stagnation hampered the growth of employment opportunities. But once unleashed, the northward Negro migration continued through good and bad times.

To forecast the future of Negro migration is, of course, difficult. It will be determined by social trends and by public policy. Certain of the main conditioning factors stand out rather clearly.

The liberty of the individual to move freely in the country is a firmly entrenched principle of the American Creed. The future development will probably be to reinforce still more in practice the individual's freedom to migrate.[23] It is true that Northern cities are usually not desirous of having Negroes move in. There are a number of measures which can be taken in order to keep out Negro migrants. But none are effective, at least not in the big cities where Negroes have already gained a strong foothold. Smaller cities have often kept out Negroes by social pressure or resort to intimidation. In the South peonage or semi-peonage has prevented some Negroes from moving away. This practice has largely been stamped out during the 'thirties by legal action or is losing its motivation because of the oversupply of Negro labor.[a]

There would, on the contrary, be *a possibility of establishing a positive migration policy of helping the Negroes get to the places where their opportunities on the labor market are best.* Such a policy would be consistent with the American Creed.[b] It seems not improbable that such a labor information service will develop as part of the public control of the labor

[a] See Chapter 12 and Chapter 26, Section 2.

[b] See Chapter 9. The details of our suggestion will be presented in Chapter 27, Section 3.

market which is beginning to take shape during the present War and which will become still more of a necessity in the post-war economic crisis.

Leaving this prospect aside, there seem to be good reasons to expect a continuation of the northward migration, in spite of depressions and booms. The pattern is now set and the lines of communication established. The War and the post-war crisis are again stirring up the Negro people, and the psychological effects will probably be cumulative as in the First World War. The general level of education and knowledge of the outside world is rising among Southern Negroes. In the South the continued crisis in cotton growing, which we foresee, and the concentration of its effects on the Negro farmers will continue to act as a tremendous push.[a] The low Negro reproduction rate in Southern cities will, by itself, give space for a continual influx from the surrounding rural areas. Industrialization in the South also is perhaps going to continue at a more rapid rate than in the North.[b] One would expect that this would draw whites away from the poorer, unskilled, and service jobs in the cities and so make more room for Negroes at the bottom of the Southern urban occupational structure. But over-population is so serious in the region and the pattern of giving all new industrial jobs to whites only is so firmly established that it does not seem likely that the industrial development will, directly or indirectly, give Negroes anything like the number of jobs required.

In the North, there are fair prospects of a somewhat decreased economic discrimination against Negro workers. If, in a later stage of the present War, Negroes are brought into industry to a greater extent,[c] this might condition white workers in the North to be better prepared to accept Negroes as co-workers. And there are other factors working in the same direction.[d] The great size of the Northern labor market compared with the Negro population there also keeps employment opportunities better. The fact that Northern Negroes are not reproducing their numbers from generation to generation, while there is a positive natural increase among Southern Negroes, tends also to promote a steady shift of Negroes from the South to the North. The existing differentials in public assistance treatment accorded Negroes between the South and the North will probably continue.[e] The importance of this factor for keeping up migration in depressions has been seen during the 'thirties.

With the West opened up, it would seem that it would be no different from the North in attracting Negroes. It is the writer's impression that, on

[a] See Chapter 12.

[b] The faster rate of industrialization in the South than in the North is a development of the last two decades.

[c] See Chapter 19.

[d] See Chapter 45.

[e] See Chapter 16.

the whole, Negroes meet relatively less discrimination in the West than in parts of the Middle West and the East. This, of course, does not apply to much of the Southwest where Southern whites have gone and have brought their attitudes toward the Negro with them. The small number of Negroes already in the West, the relatively small amount of race prejudice there, and the heavy demand for servants in California will perhaps make the West Coast cities more popular as places for Negro immigration than Northern cities in the Eastern half of the country. The relatively great extent of Negro migration to California in the last decade is perhaps indicative of a future trend.[24] Since Negroes get practically their only new economic opportunities in growing cities, we may expect that most of the westward migration will be to the cities of the West Coast and not to inland cities and rural districts.[25]

A great deal will depend upon the future development of employment opportunities in the war boom, the post-war crisis, and the solution found for this crisis. The development through these future emergencies will be shaped, not only by the free play of economic forces in a market, but increasingly by governmental policies called forth by these emergencies. We shall come back to these problems in Chapter 19.

As a concluding note, it should be stressed that there is no doubt that migration to the North and West is a tremendous force in the general amelioration of the Negro's position. It is even more: northward migration is a necessity if the economic status of Southern Negroes is not to deteriorate as cotton growing disappears as a means of getting a living for the masses of rural Negroes. Migration out of the South, further, means not only *economic* improvement to the Negro. It also gives him a social status approaching equality.[a] It increases the Negro vote, which might become of rising importance for national policy.[b] The experience of the migration of 1917-1919 also suggests that emigration of a significant number of Negroes is one of the surest ways of stimulating the Southern whites to give more consideration to the Negroes that remain in the South. At any rate it seems certain that a concentration of unemployed Negroes on relief in the South will only deteriorate race relations in that region.

Many writers have felt that the partial exodus of the Negro population from the South to the North would "solve" the Negro problem. In doing this, some Northern writers have been thinking of the effects on the Southern white people.[26] Some others, mainly among Southern writers, have thought about the effect on Northern whites: They believe that race prejudice will rise with the proportion of Negroes present in Northern communities; and they feel that when Northern attitudes become more like the Southern attitudes, they will lay the basis for a more unified

[a] See Part VII.
[b] See Part V.

national opinion about how to treat Negroes.[27] Still others, and to this group belong most Negro writers, have their attention fixed on the rise in education, general culture, and political power of the Negro people, and believe that the northward migration will improve the Negro's position in both North and South.[28]

We shall not take part in this dispute, except to emphasize three things: first, that there is probably some truth in the first two statements; second, that, independent of this, migration to the North means a tremendous amelioration of the Negro's status in America; but, third, that the "solution" of the Negro problem—even taken in a relativistic sense of developing a gradual but steady improvement of race relations—is much too complicated to be solved by migration. Governmental intervention is rising, and this trend means that the change of race relations is no longer determined by such "natural" developments as migration but by a complex of intentional policies affecting not only migration but all other spheres of the problem.

Part IV

ECONOMICS

CHAPTER 9

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

1. Negro Poverty

The economic situation of the Negroes in America is pathological. Except for a small minority enjoying upper or middle class status, the masses of American Negroes, in the rural South and in the segregated slum quarters in Southern and Northern cities, are destitute. They own little property; even their household goods are mostly inadequate and dilapidated. Their incomes are not only low but irregular. They thus live from day to day and have scant security for the future. Their entire culture and their individual interests and strivings are narrow.

These generalizations will be substantiated and qualified in the following chapters. For this purpose the available information is immense, and we shall, in the main, be restricted to brief summaries. Our interest in this part of our inquiry will be to try to unravel the causal relations underlying the abnormal economic status of the American Negro. We want to understand how it has developed and fastened itself upon the economic fabric of modern American society. It is hoped that out of a study of trends and situations will emerge an insight into social and economic dynamics which will allow inferences as to what the future holds for the economic well-being of the American Negro people. This future development will depend in part upon public policy, and we shall discuss the various alternatives for induced change. Certain value premises will be made explicit both in order to guide our theoretical approach and to form the basis for the practical analysis.

Before we proceed to select our specific value premises, let us ask this question: Why is such an extraordinarily large proportion of the Negro people so poor? The most reasonable way to start answering this question is to note the distribution of the Negro people in various regions and occupations. We then find that the Negroes are concentrated in the South, which is generally a poor and economically retarded region. A disproportionate number of them work in agriculture, which is a depressed industry. Most rural Negroes are in Southern cotton agriculture, which is particularly over-populated; backward in production methods; and hard hit by soil exhaustion, by the boll weevil, and by a long-time fall in international

demand for American cotton. In addition, few Negro farmers own the land they work on, and the little land they do own is much poorer and less well-equipped than average Southern farms. Most Negro farmers are concentrated in the lowest occupations in agriculture as sharecroppers or wage laborers. In the North, there are practically no Negroes in agriculture.

Nonagricultural Negro workers are, for the most part, either in low-paid service occupations or have menial tasks in industry. Few are skilled workers. Most of the handicrafts and industries in the South where they have a traditional foothold are declining. The majority of manufacturing industries do not give jobs to Negroes. Neither in the South nor in the North are Negroes in professional, business, or clerical positions except in rare instances and except when serving exclusively the Negro public—and even in this they are far from having a monopoly.

The unemployment risk of Negroes is extraordinarily high. During the depression, government relief became one of the major Negro "occupations." Indeed, the institution of large-scale public relief by the New Deal is almost the only bright spot in the recent economic history of the Negro people.

Such a survey, however, even when carried out in greater detail, does not, by itself, explain why Negroes are so poor. The question is only carried one step backward and at the same time broken into parts: Why are Negroes in the poorest sections of the country, the regressive industries, the lowest paid jobs? Why are they not skilled workers? Why do they not hold a fair proportion of well-paid middle class positions? Why is their employment situation so precarious?

We can follow another approach and look to the several factors of economic change. In most cases changes in the economic process seem to involve a tendency which works against the Negroes. When modern techniques transform old handicrafts into machine production, Negroes lose jobs in the former but usually do not get into the new factories, at least not at the machines. Mechanization seems generally to displace Negro labor. When mechanized commercial laundries replace home laundries, Negro workers lose jobs. The same process occurs in tobacco manufacture, in the lumber industry and in the turpentine industry. When tractors and motor trucks are introduced, new "white men's jobs" are created out of old "Negro jobs" on the farm and in transportation. Progress itself seems to work against the Negroes. When work becomes less heavy, less dirty, or less risky, Negroes are displaced. Old-fashioned, low-paying, inefficient enterprises, continually being driven out of competition, are often the only ones that employ much Negro labor.

Although there are no good data on employment trends by race, it seems that the business cycles show something of the same tendency to work against Negroes as do technical changes. It is true that Negroes, more

than whites, are concentrated in service industries and in certain maintenance occupations (janitors, floor-sweepers, and so forth) which are relatively well-protected from depressions. On the other hand, the Negro agricultural laborer is more likely to be forced out by depressions than is the white farmer and farm worker. In fact, in almost every given occupation Negroes tend to be "first fired" when depression comes. Even in the service and maintenance occupations, Negroes are fired to give jobs to white workers. When prosperity returns, the lost ground is never quite made up. As cycle succeeds cycle, there is a tendency toward cumulative displacement of Negroes. The general level of unemployment, depression or no depression, is always higher for Negroes than for whites, and the discrepancy is increasing.

Likewise the organization of the labor market by trade unions has, most of the time, increased the difficulties for Negroes to get and to hold jobs. Even social legislation instituted in order to protect the lowest paid and most insecure workers—among whom the Negroes ordinarily belong—is not an undivided blessing to Negro workers. When the employer finds that he has to take measures to protect his workers' health and security and to pay them higher wages, he often substitutes, voluntarily or under pressure, white workers for Negroes. Sometimes sweatshop industries, existing only because of low-paid Negro labor, are actually driven out of business by legislation or union pressure, and the Negro is again the victim instead of the beneficiary of economic and social progress.

Of course, Negroes are pressing hard in all directions to get jobs and earn a living. The number of job-seeking Negroes is constantly increased, as the shrinkage of the international cotton market, the national agricultural policy under the A.A.A. program, and the displacement of Negroes from traditional jobs, all create a growing unemployment. Negroes are willing—if it were allowed them—to decrease their demand for remuneration, and they are prepared to take the jobs at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. But still their unemployment is growing relative to that of the whites.

Again we are brought to ask: Why are the Negroes always the unlucky ones? What is this force which, like gravitation, holds them down in the struggle for survival and economic advance? To these questions—as to the closely related questions stated above—we shall find the detailed answers as diverse as the structure of modern economic life itself. But there will be a common pattern in the answers.

2. OUR MAIN HYPOTHESIS: THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

This common pattern is the vicious circle of cumulative causation outlined in Chapter 3 and Appendix 3.

There is a cultural and institutional tradition that white people exploit

Negroes. In the beginning the Negroes were owned as property. When slavery disappeared, caste remained. Within this framework of adverse tradition the average Negro in every generation has had a most disadvantageous start. Discrimination against Negroes is thus rooted in this tradition of economic exploitation. It is justified by the false racial beliefs we studied in Chapter 4. This depreciation of the Negro's potentialities is given a semblance of proof by the low standards of efficiency, reliability, ambition, and morals actually displayed by the average Negro. This is what the white man "sees," and he opportunistically exaggerates what he sees. He "knows" that the Negro is not "capable" of handling a machine, running a business or learning a profession. As we know that these deficiencies are not inborn in him—or, in any case, in no significant degree—we must conclude that they are caused, directly or indirectly, by the very poverty we are trying to explain, and by other discriminations in legal protection, public health, housing, education and in every other sphere of life.

This scheme of causal interrelation is as important in explaining why Negroes are so poor and in evaluating the wider social effects of Negro poverty, as it is in attempting practical planning to raise the economic level of the Negro people. The dynamics of the problem is this: A primary change, induced or unplanned, affecting any one of three bundles of interdependent causative factors—(1) the economic level; (2) standards of intelligence, ambition, health, education, decency, manners, and morals; and (3) discrimination by whites—will bring changes in the other two and, through mutual interaction, move the whole system along in one direction or the other. No single factor, therefore, is the "final cause" in a theoretical sense. From a practical point of view we may, however, call certain factors "strategic" in the sense that they can be controlled.

The statistics of the system can be illustrated by the following comments on the Negro sharecropper in the rural South:

> Shiftlessness and laziness are reported as reasons for the dependent state, whereas, in fact, in so far as they exist, they are not necessarily inherent, but are caused by the very conditions of the share-cropping system. . . . It is a notorious and shameful fact that the stock arguments employed against any serious efforts to improve the lot of the cotton tenant are based upon the very social and cultural conditions which tenancy itself creates. The mobility of the tenant, his dependence, his lack of ambition, shiftlessness, his ignorance and poverty, the lethargy of his pellagra-ridden body, provide a ready excuse for keeping him under a stern paternalistic control. There is not a single trait alleged which, where true, does not owe its source and continuance to the imposed status itself.[1]

The same type of vicious circle controls the situation for the poverty-stricken Negroes outside of cotton agriculture. Poverty itself breeds the conditions which perpetuate poverty.

The vicious circle operates, of course, also in the case of whites. Few people have enough imagination to visualize clearly what a poor white tenant or common laborer in the South would look like if he had had more opportunities at the start. Upper class people in all countries are accustomed to look down upon people of the laboring class as inherently inferior. But in the case of Negroes the deprecation is fortified by the elaborate system of racial beliefs, and the discriminations are organized in the social institution of rigid caste and not only of flexible social class.

3. THE VALUE PREMISES

The system of social ideals which we have called the American Creed, and which serves as the source of the instrumental value premises in this study, is less specified and articulate in the economic field than, for instance, in regard to civic rights. There is, in regard to economic issues, considerable confusion and contradiction even *within* this higher plane of sanctified national ideals and not only—as elsewhere— *between* those ideals and the more opportunistic valuations on lower planes. In public discussion opposing economic precepts are often inferred from the American Creed. A major part of the ideological battle and of political divisions in the American nation, particularly in the decade of the Great Depression, has concerned this very conflict of ideals in the economic sphere. "Equality of opportunity" has been battling "liberty to run one's business as one pleases."

Meanwhile the battle-front itself has been moving—on the whole definitely in favor of equality of opportunity. American economic liberalism was formerly characterized by "rugged individualism"; it is now gradually assimilating ideals of a more social type. There was always the vague popular ideal of "an American standard of living," but now a more definite and realistic conception is growing out of it. A new kind of "inalienable rights"—economic and social—is gradually taking shape within the great political canon of America and is acquiring the respectability of common adherence even if not of immediate realization. As an exemplification of the new way of thinking, without assuming that it has advanced to the level of a national ideal, we may quote the following statement by the National Resources Planning Board, which is an elaboration of President Roosevelt's pronouncement of "freedom from want" as one of the human liberties:

> We look forward to securing, through planning and cooperative action, a greater freedom for the American people. . . . In spite of all . . . changes, that great manifesto, the Bill of Rights, has stood unshaken 150 years and now to the old freedoms we must add new freedoms and restate our objectives in modern terms. . . .
>
> Any new declaration of personal rights, any translation of freedom into modern

terms applicable to the people of the United States, here and now must include:

1. The right to work, usefully and creatively through the productive years.
2. The right to fair pay, adequate to command the necessities and amenities of life in exchange for work, ideas, thrift, and other socially valuable service.
3. The right to adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.
4. The right to security, with freedom from fear of old age, want, dependency, sickness, unemployment, and accident.
5. The right to live in a system of free enterprise, free from compulsory labor, irresponsible private power, arbitrary public authority, and unregulated monopolies.

. . . . . .

9. The right to rest, recreation, and adventure; the opportunity to enjoy life and take part in an advancing civilization.[2]

The most convenient way of determining our value premises for the economic part of our inquiry is, perhaps, to start from the viewpoint of what the American does *not* want. The ordinary American does not, and probably will not within the surveyable future, raise the demand for full *economic equality* in the meaning of a "classless society" where individual incomes and standards of living would become radically leveled off. Such an ideal would be contrary to the basic individualism of American thinking. It could hardly be realized while upholding the cherished independence of the individual. It would nullify the primary responsibility of the individual for the economic fate of himself and his family. It would rob the individual of his chance to rise to wealth and power. It would thus bury the American Dream. It runs contrary to the common belief that it is the individual's hope for economic advancement which spurs him to do his utmost and at the same time acts as the main driving force behind progress in society. The strength of these individualistic ideals is extraordinary in America even today, in spite of the important changes of basic conditions which we shall presently consider.

Although there is a great deal of inequality of income and wealth in America, the American Creed has always been definitely adverse to class divisions and class inequalities. Americans are, indeed, hostile to the very concept of class.[a] But the observer soon finds that this hostility is generally directed only against a rigid system of privileges and social estates in which the individual inherits his status, and not against differences in wealth as such. The American demand is for *fair opportunity and free scope for individual effort.*

In a new nation with rapid social mobility—which is practically always in an upward direction as new immigrants always fill the lower ranks—this way of reconciling liberty with equality is understandable. Social mobility permitted a relative uniformity of social forms and modes of thinking to

[a] See Chapter 31, Sections 1 and 2.

exist side by side with a great diversity of economic levels of living. Cultural heterogeneity within the nation and huge geographical space also permitted a measure of anonymity and ignorance of distress. On account of the rapid tempo of economic progress and the rapidly growing market, economic adversities never did appear so final and hopeless.[a] Land was abundant and practically free, and there was at least an avowed national ideal of free education for all individuals.

The principle of noninterference on the part of the State in economic life, therefore, did not seem incompatible with the prinicple of equality of opportunity. This ideal has had, of course, more influence in America than in any comparable European country. There have always been qualifications, however, even in this country. In recent times the qualifications have been increasing in relative importance, slowly remolding the entire configuration of this part of the American Creed. Probably most Americans are today prepared to accept a considerable amount of *public control* for the purpose of preserving natural resources. Land and other natural assets are today almost entirely occupied and are no longer free. In the whole nation, a vivid realization has grown up of the waste and damage done to these national assets in reckless exploitation and speculation.

In regard to the personal resources of the nation, Americans are not as willing to have public control. But in the one field of education, they have been the pioneering radical interventionists of the world bent upon improving the human material by means of proper schooling. The spirit of interventionism by education is continually gaining in momentum. It early became a self-evident qualification of American economic liberalism. Within the last decades this spirit has spread to other fields. Social legislation has been instituted to regulate children's and women's work, safety measures, and other working conditions in industry, and—later—wages, hours and labor organizations. A system of social insurance has gradually been taking form.

The mass unemployment during the depression of the 'thirties—mounting higher than ever before and higher over a long period than in any other country—and the realization that whole regions and occupational groups can be brought to destitution through no fault of their own caused the development to full consciousness of a sense of public responsibility for these things. For the first time America saw itself compelled to organize a large-scale system of public relief. For the first time also, America made substantial exertions in the field of public housing. The school lunch program, the food stamp plan, and the direct distribution of surplus commodities represent other activities in the same direction, as do also the attempts to

[a] Another factor which prevented economic adversity from appearing to be so hopeless was the belief in the power of private philanthropy to remedy economic distress and the obligation on everybody to practice philanthropy.

induce Southern farmers and sharecroppers to have year-round gardens Public health programs were expanded, and the nation is even gradually facing the task of organizing the care of the sick in a more socially protective way than hitherto.

Behind this great movement there is an unmistakable trend in social outlook and political vaulations. As articulate opinion is gradually taking form that there is *a minimum standard of living* below which no group of people in the country should be permitted to fall. This idea, of course, is not new in America; it is a development of the spirit of Christian neighborliness which has been present in the American Creed from its beginning.[a] But the emphasis is new. Now it is not only a question of humanitarianism; it is a question of national social and economic welfare. Neither the political conflicts raging around the proper means of providing help by public measures nor the widespread uncertainty and disagreement concerning the actual height of the minimum standard to be protected by those measures should conceal the important fact that *the American Creed is changing to include a decent living standard and a measure of economic security among the liberties and rights which are given this highest moral sanction.*

As usual in America, the ideals are running far ahead of the accomplishments. The new belief that the health, happiness, and efficiency of the people can be raised greatly by improved living conditions is already just as much in the forefront of public attention in America as in most progressive countries in Europe and the British Dominions. Nowhere are so many housing investigations carried out to demonstrate the correlation between bad housing conditions and juvenile delinquency, tuberculosis, and syphilis as in America.

Contrary to *laissez-faire* principles, various industries have long been given government protection in the United States—most often by means of the tariff. The recent development has shifted the motivation from "assistance-to-business" terms to "social welfare" terms. This change in motivation is not always carried out in the measures actually taken. The agricultural policy may be pointed to as an example. If we except the work of the Farm Security Administration, there are only weak attempts to administer the public assistance given the farmers in accordance with their individual needs; those farmers who have the highest incomes most often also get the highest relief benefits from the A.A.A. If the trend does not change its course, however, all economic policy is bound to come under the orbit of social welfare policy.

At the same time, social welfare policy proper—by an increasing stress upon the preventive instead of the merely curative aspects—is becoming integrated with economic policy. *Social welfare policy is bound to become looked upon in terms of the economic criterion of national investment.*[a]

[a] See Chapter 1, Section 5.

Another change is that of an increasing interest in the distribution of income and wealth as such. The rise of taxation to pay for social policy—and now also for the War—is forcing public attention to this problem. The old idea in public finance that taxation should leave the distribution of incomes and wealth between individuals and classes "unchanged" has become impractical. There is a strong tendency to expect some leveling off of the differences through taxation. It is rationalized by giving a new meaning to the old normative formula that taxes should be imposed according to "ability to pay." Similarly, there is a trend away from the attempt to construct social welfare policies in such a manner that they would not have any influence on the labor market.

All these trends are gradually decreasing the sanctity of individual enterprise, which is slowly coming under public control, although not necessarily public ownership. The American public has been critical of the huge "monopoly" and the "holding company" for over fifty years. The general trend for big business and corporate finance to grow at the expense of small business—which will be accentuated by the present War—has made Americans more and more willing to have government restrictions on private business. Even if big business still utilizes the old individualistic formulas for its purposes, the observer feels that its success in this is declining.[4] Private property in business itself seems less holy to the average American when it is no longer connected to individually-run enterprise and when large-scale interferences are necessitated by international crises and when taxation is mounting and its burden must be placed somewhere. In agriculture, the increase in tenancy and migratory labor and the decline of the independent farmer are having a similar effect.

In all these respects the American Creed is still in flux. The change has, however, only strengthened the basic demand for equality of opportunity. But it is becoming apparent to most Americans that conditions have so changed that this demand will require more concerted action and even state intervention to become realized. It is commonly observed that the closing of the frontier and the constriction of immigration tend to stratify the social order into a more rigid class structure. Occupational mobility and social climbing are tending to become possible mainly by means of education, and a significant shift now takes two generations instead of one. The self-made man is a vanishing social phenomenon.

The perfection of the national educational system, while increasingly opening up fairer chances for individuals starting out even from the lowest social stratum, is at the same time restricting opportunities to move and to rise for individuals who have passed youth without having had the benefit of education and special training. If they are in the laboring or farming classes they will, in all probability, have to stay there. As this situation is becoming realized among the masses, and as cultural heterogeneity is

decreasing, a new impetus is given toward mass organizations.[a] Through out America collective interest groups are gradually getting the sanction of public approval.[5] The growth of labor unions is on the verge of becoming looked upon as a realization of the American belief in the independence and integrity of the individual.

When all these trends have reached their maturity, the meaning of economic individualism in the American Creed will have changed considerably. For the time being, however, the American Creed is somewhat disorganized in respect to economic life. For our present purpose of selecting, out of the main stream of national thinking, the relevant value premises for studying the economic aspects of the American Negro problem, a satisfactory minimum of clear-cut economic ideals seems to be available in spite of this state of flux.

We shall, in our inquiry, assume that the following norms are generally and explicitly held on the higher or national plane of the valuation sphere in the hearts of ordinary Americans:

1. *There is nothing wrong with economic inequality by itself.* The mere fact that the Negro people are poorer than other population groups does not *per se* constitute a social problem. It does not challenge the American Creed. This first value premise will not be conspicuous in our inquiry. Its main significance is the negative one of keeping our study within the conservative reformist limits of average American economic discussion.

2. Somewhat less precise is our second value premise: *that no American population group shall be allowed to fall under a certain minimum level of living.* This premise also assumes Negro poverty and all other poverty as a matter of fact. It insists only that poverty shall not go too far without being given public attention and amelioration. It offers a means of evaluating the social effects of poverty and affords a motivation for social welfare policy. Even if the general principle of a minimum level of living must now be considered as established in national thinking, it is still undecided how high or low this minimum level should be.

3. Our third value premise is bound to be the most significant one for our inquiry as it brings out the principal chasm between American ideals and practices: *that Negroes shall be awarded equal opportunities.* In so far as Negro poverty is caused by discrimination, the American Creed is challenged in one of its most specific and longest established precepts. Equality of opportunity, fair play, free competition—"independent of race, creed or color"—is deeply imprinted in the nationally sanctioned social morals of America. This value premise must direct every realistic study of the Negroes' economic status in America.

Discrimination is, for this reason, the key term in such a study. This term is *defined in relation to the norm of equality of opportunity* in the American Creed. In this sense it is, naturally, a "value-loaded" term, and rightly so.

[a] For some further comments upon this development, see Chapter 11.

But it lacks nothing in scientific preciseness and definiteness. An inquiry into the Negro problem in America which shrinks from this valuation is devoid of social perspective and, indeed, interest. Discrimination will be our central concept for our analysis of both the utilization of Negro productivity and the distribution of goods and services for Negro consumption.

4. THE CONFLICT OF VALUATIONS

By formulating these value premises, and particularly the third one, demanding fair play, we again confront the split in American personality and the ambivalence in American social morals. Our central problem is neither the exploitation of the Negro people nor the various effects of this exploitation on American society, but rather the moral conflict in the heart of white Americans.

In passing we might glance at some of the standard rationalizations by which the American white man tries to build a bridge of reason between his equalitarian Creed and his nonequalitarian treatment of the Negroes. It should be understood that the popular theories are based upon what the ordinary white man conceives to be his own observations and upon what he believes to be common knowledge. We shall first refer to the folklore in the South.

Sometimes a mere reference to custom is advanced as a reason for economic discrimination against Negroes. A report on teachers' salaries prepared by a university in one of the Border states reads:

> An additional argument in favor of the salary differential is the general tradition of the South that negroes and whites are not to be paid equivalent salaries for equivalent work. The attitude may be considered wrong from whatever angle it is viewed, but the fact remains that the custom is one that is almost universal and one that the practical school administrator must not ignore.[6]

For not a few, this moral logic that "what was and is, shall be and ought to be" seems sufficient.

Interestingly enough, only rarely will a white man in the South defend economic discrimination in terms of white people's interest to have cheap labor available.[a] Nearest to such a motivation come oblique statements like: "This is a white man's country"; or more expressively: "We don't have money enough to pay our white workers decent wages"; or, in regard to discrimination in the school system: "The appropriations do not suffice even to give the white children good schools."

Such statements are common in the whole South. They are made even by intellectuals. Often there is a further rationalization behind such pronouncements to the effect that "Negroes are the wards of the white people" —an American version of the doctrine of English imperialism about "the

[a] In this, economic discrimination is different from social discrimination. See Chapter 28.

white man's burden." "Negroes couldn't live at all without the aid and guidance of the white people," it is said. "What little they have, they have got from the whites." Their own sacrifices apparently do not count. Their poverty itself becomes, in fact, the basis of the rationalization. "The whites give them all the jobs." "Actually, they live on us white people." "They couldn't sustain themselves a day if we gave them up." "The whites pay all the taxes, or don't they?"

Then, too, economic inequality "has to" be maintained, for it is the barrier against "social equality":[a] "you wouldn't let your sister or daughter marry a nigger." The sister or the daughter comes inevitably even into the economic discussion.

This is the ordinary Southerner explaining the matter in plain words to the inquisitive stranger. He is serious and, in a sense, honest. We must remember that the whole white Southern culture, generation after generation, is laboring to convince itself that there is no conflict between the equalitarianism in the American Creed and the economic discrimination against Negroes. And they can never get enough good reasons for their behavior. They pile arguments one on top of the other.[7]

The most important intellectual bridge between the American Creed and actual practices in the economic sphere is, of course, the complex of racial beliefs discussed above in Chapter 4. Their import in the economic sphere is that the Negro is looked upon as inherently inferior as a worker and as a consumer. God himself has made the Negro to be only a servant or a laborer employed for menial, dirty, heavy and disagreeable work. And, since practically all such work is badly paid, it is God's will that the Negro should have a low income. Also, any attempt to raise Negro incomes goes against "the laws of supply and demand" which are part of the order of nature. The Negro is bad as a consumer too. "If you give him more pay, he will stop working"; he will "drink it up and start a row." "Higher wages will make the nigger lazy and morally degraded." This last belief particularly, but also many of the others, bears a striking similarity to ideas about the laboring class as a whole developed in a systematic form by European mercantilist writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[b]

[a] See Part VII.

[b] See Eli F. Heckscher, *Mercantilism* (translated by Mendel Shapiro, 1935; first published, 1931).

The whole ideology displays a static, precapitalistic tendency. When white Southerners object to a conspicuous rise in Negro levels of living, they act much like the upper classes in most European countries centuries ago when they frowned upon lower class people's rise to higher levels of consumption, and even instituted legal regulations forbidding the humbler estates to have servants, to own certain types of dress, and so on. An American Negro in a luxurious car draws unfavorable comment, and so—in previous times—did a Swedish maid who "dressed like a lady." In the static pre-competitive society, tradition was in itself a value.

On the other hand, it is said that the Negro is accustomed to live on little. "It is a marvel how these niggers can get along on almost nothing." This would actually imply that the Negro is a careful consumer—but the conclusion is never expressed that way.

This touches upon the second main logical bridge between equalitarianism and economic discrimination: the cost-of-living and the standard-of-living arguments. The first of these two popular theories is—again quoting the already mentioned university publication—presented in the following way:

> . . . observation alone would suggest to the unbiased observer that the negro teacher will be able to purchase within her society a relatively higher standard of living than the white teacher will be able to secure with the same amount of money.[8]

Statistical investigations are referred to which seem to indicate the remarkable fact that Negro teachers with smaller salaries spend less money for various items of the cost-of-living budget than better paid white teachers.

Scientifically, this is nonsense, of course. A cost-of-living comparison has no meaning except when comparing costs for equivalent budget items and total budgets. That poor people get along on less has nothing to do with cost of living. They *must* get along on less, even when cost of living, in the proper sense, is higher for them. We have quoted this statement only to illustrate a popular theory which, though it now seldom gets into respectable print, is widespread in the South and constitutes a most important rationalization among even educated people.[a]

Sometimes an attempt is made to give the theory greater logical consistency by inserting the idea that "Negroes don't have the same demands on life as white people." "They are satisfied with less." It should be remembered that equal pay for equal work to women has been objected to by a similar popular theory in all countries. The underlying assumption of a racial differential in psychic wants is, of course, entirely unfounded.

Others are heard expressing the theory of lower demands on life in the following way: "Their cost of living is obviously lower since they have a lower standard of living." Lower wages and lower relief grants are generally motivated in this way. A great number of more or less confused notions are held together in such expressions. Having "a low standard of living," for one thing, means to many to be a "no-account" person, a worthless individual. It also means that, being able to live as they are

[a] In relief work the popular theory of the Negroes' "lower cost of living" as a motivation for discrimination is often given in terms more directly and more honestly related to actual customs and social policy. Some social workers in the Deep South explained to Richard Sterner that the appropriation did not suffice for the full "budgetary deficiency" of the clients, for they had to give each one just the barest minimum they could get along with. Rents usually were lower for Negro clients, since they lived in the Negro sections. It was readily admitted that this was so because housing was poorer in Negro neighborhoods. But even so, money had to be saved on the small appropriations wherever possible.

living, Negroes have a peculiar ability to manage a household. Oblique statements to this effect are often made when discussing this type of popular theory; one social worker in a responsible position came out straight with the argument. It probably also means that people accustomed to suffer from want do not feel poverty so much as if they had seen better days. This, of course, is a much more common popular theory: all over the world the "people who have seen better days" are believed to be worse off than other paupers. In the case of the Negro there is the additional belief that he has a particularly great capacity to be happy in his poverty. He is a child of nature. And he has his religion. He can sing and dance.

The rationalizations amount to this: since Negroes are poor and always have been poor, they are inferior and should be kept inferior. Then they are no trouble but rather a convenience. It is seldom expressed so bluntly. Expressions like "standard of living" and "cost of living" are employed because they have a flavor of scientific objectivity. They avoid hard thinking. They enable one to stand for the *status quo* in economic discrimination without flagrantly exposing oneself even to oneself. For their purpose they represent nearly perfect popular theories of the rationalization type.

These are only a few examples to illustrate the way of thinking utilized in the South of today to justify economic discrimination. In the North there exists practically nothing of these piled-up, criss-crossing, elaborated theories. In matters of discrimination the ordinary Northerner is unsophisticated. Most Northerners, even in those parts of the country where there are Negroes, know only vaguely about the economic discriminations Negroes are meeting in their communities. They are often uninformed of the real import of those discriminations in which they themselves participate.

It is generally held in the North that such discrimination is wrong. When the matter occasionally comes up for public discussion in newspapers and legislatures, it is assumed that discrimination shall be condemned. Some states have, as we shall see, made laws in order to curb discrimination in the labor market. The present writer is inclined to believe that, as far as such discriminations are concerned, a large majority of Northerners would come out for full equality if they had to vote on the issue and did not think of their own occupations. Northern states and municipalities, on the whole, hold to the principle of nondiscrimination in relief, and this is probably not only due to considerations of the Negro vote but also in obedience to the American Creed.

As we shall find, however, there is plenty of economic discrimination in the North. In situations where it is acute and where it becomes conscious, the average Northerner will occasionally refer to the interest of himself and his group in keeping away Negro competition—a thing which seldom or never happens in the South. On this point he might be cruder. His rationalizations will seldom go much further than presenting the beliefs

in the Negroes' racial inferiority and the observation that he "just does not want to have Negroes around" or that he "dislikes Negroes." Southern-born white people in the North usually keep more of the complete defense system and also spread it in their new surroundings. Even in the North it happens occasionally, when economic discrimination is discussed, that the "social equality" issue and the marriage matter are brought up, though with much less emotion.

A main difference between the types of rationalization in the two regions seems to be that the Southerners still think of Negroes as their former slaves, while the association with slavery is notably absent from the minds of Northerners. To Northerners, the Negro is, more abstractly, just an alien, felt to be particularly difficult to assimilate into the life of the community. But in the South, the master-model of economic discrimination—slavery—is still a living force as a memory and a tradition.

CHAPTER 10

THE TRADITION OF SLAVERY[a]

1. Economic Exploitation

To the *ante-bellum* South slavery was, of course, a tremendous moral burden. Human slavery, in spite of all rationalization, was irreconcilably contrary to the American Creed. The South had to stand before all the world as the land which, in modern times, had developed and perfected that ignominious old institution.

But, in a sense, exploitation of Negro labor was, perhaps, a less embarrassing moral conflict to the *ante-bellum* planter than to his peer today. Slavery then was a lawful institution, a part of the legal order, and the exploitation of black labor was sanctioned and regulated. Today the exploitation is, to a considerable degree, dependent upon the availability of extra-legal devices of various kinds.

Moreover, slavery was justified in a political theory which had intellectual respectability,[b] which was expounded in speeches, articles, and learned treatises by the region's famous statesmen, churchmen and scholars. The popular theories defending caste exploitation today, which have been exemplified in the previous chapter, bear, on the contrary, the mark of intellectual poverty. Even a reactionary Southern congressman will abstain from developing the detailed structure of those theories in the national capital. Hardly a conservative newspaper in the South will expound them clearly. The liberal newspapers actually condemn them, at least in general terms. The change in the moral situation, brought about in less than three generations, is tremendous.

If we look to actual practices, however, we find that the tradition of human exploitation—and now not only of Negroes—has remained from slavery as a chief determinant of the entire structure of the South's economic life. The observer is told that a great number of fortunes are achieved by petty exploitation of the poor, a practice sometimes belonging to the type referred to in the region as "mattressing the niggers." As contrasted with the North, there is less investment, less market expansion, less inventiveness and less risk-taking. Sweatshop labor

[a] This chapter is the first of a set of three on Southern agriculture.

[b] See Chapter 20, Section 4.

conditions are more common. Even the middle strata of the Southern white population depend on exploitation of labor.

The white workers, in their turn, often seek to defend themselves against the potential or actual competition from Negro labor by extra-economic devices. They themselves are often held in paternalistic economic and moral dependence by their employers. As is often pointed out, the South as a region is competing against the North by its recourse to low-paid docile white and Negro labor. It has actually advertised this as an opportunity for outside capitalists. ". . . the South remains largely a colonial economy,"[1] complains Vance, one of the region's outstanding social scientists, and explains: "The advance of industry into this region then partakes of the nature, let us say it in all kindliness, of exploiting the natural resources and labor supply . . ."[2]

This pattern of common exploitation—where everyone is the oppressor of the one under him, where the Negroes are at the bottom and where big landlords, merchants, and Northern capital are at the top—is obviously the extension into the present of a modified slavery system. As Vance points out,[3] the "geography and biology" of the region are not to be blamed for its economic position, but it is history that has molded the type of organization.

The South tries to blame its economic backwardness on the differential in freight rates, the national tariff system, and other economic irregularities, but these are, in the final analysis, rather minor matters; they are hardly more than symptoms of poverty and political dependence. The destruction of material and human values during the Civil War and its aftermath was large, but, by itself, it does not explain the present situation. About three generations have lapsed since then, and we know from other parts of the world how rapidly such wounds can be healed. The same is true about the head start in industrialization which the North had: it could have been overcome. To complain about the lack of capital in the region is rather to beg the question. In modern dynamic economics we do not look upon capital so much as a prerequisite for production but rather as a result of production. The investment in the South of Northern capital has not been detrimental but is, on the contrary, a reason why the South is not more backward economically than it is.

The explanation for the economic backwardness of the South must be carried down to the rigid institutional structure of the economic life of the region which, historically, is derived from slavery and, psychologically, is rooted in the minds of the people.

2. SLAVERY AND CASTE

In some respects, the remnants of the outmoded slavery system of the Old South—which we call caste—have been even more important impedi-

ments to progress and economic adjustment than slavery itself could ever have been. It is often argued—and in the main rightly—that the static, noncompetitive slavery institution and the quasi-feudal plantation system did not fit into modern American capitalism. The economic interpretation of the Civil War makes much of this thought. To quote a typical remark: "Slavery stands against our technical trends which demand a mobile, replaceable labor supply and which generate useful energy in individuals by offering them hope of advancement."[4]

But in certain respects the surviving caste system shows even more resistance to change than did slavery. The main economic significance of slavery was that the employer really owned his labor. Because of that he also had a vested interest in its most profitable utilization. This fundamental unity of interest between capital and labor—as labor *was* capital—constituted a main point in the pro-slavery theory.[a]

It is true that the slaves were robbed of their freedom to move on their own initiative. But as factors of production, they were moved by the economic interest of their owners to their "most advantageous uses." Before Emancipation the Negroes took part in the westward movement of production and people. From this point of view the fight of the South to widen the realm of slavery in the United States prior to the Civil War was also a fight to bring Negro labor to those places where it could be put to most advantageous use. After Emancipation the freedmen could move individually in the regions where they were already settled. But they were, as a group, practically blocked from entering new rural territory in the Southwest. Only the cities in the South and the North left them an outlet for migration.[b]

Before Emancipation it was in the interest of the slave owners to use Negro slaves wherever it was profitable in handicraft and manufacture.[c] After Emancipation no such proprietary interest protected Negro laborers from the desire of white workers to squeeze them out of skilled employment. They were gradually driven out and pushed down into the "Negro jobs," a category which has been more and more narrowly defined.

There is no doubt that, compared with the contemporary caste system, slavery showed a superior capacity to effectuate economic adjustment, even if the slave owners and not the slaves reaped the profits. Even to many Negroes themselves slavery, again in certain limited respects, was a more advantageous economic arrangement than the precarious caste status into which they were thrown by Emancipation. To the owners, slaves represented valuable property. The prices of slaves tended to rise until the Civil War.[5] The slave owner had the same rational economic interest in caring for the

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 4.
[b] See Chapter 8.
[c] See Chapter 13.

material welfare of the slaves, their health and productive standards, as any good proprietor engaged in animal husbandry. As the slaves were his own Negroes in a literal sense, he could develop the same pride, attachment, and even affection, which the devoted proprietor-manager is likely to feel toward his own livestock.

The apologetic literature of the South gave much stress to examples of such patenalistic idyls. Stories of the kindly relations between masters and slaves are always particularly touching, both because they stand out against the background of the intrinsic cruelty and arbitrariness implied in a system under which some human beings were owned by others and because they represent this unreserved feeling of kindness which we can hardly feel toward other objects than those which are absolutely under our dominance as are our domestic animals. It is commonly asserted that the slaves fared particularly well in the slave-breeding and slave-exporting states of the Upper South, and that they there also showed themselves to be "happy" in spite of the regularly recurring necessity of leaving near relatives when they were sold into the Deep South.[6]

The rise in sickness and death rates which seems to have occurred following the Civil War[a] bears out the general opinion that the first economic effect of freedom was a decreased level of living for the Negro people. The implication would be that, since the plantation owners lost their property interest in upholding a level of living which preserved the capital value of the Negro, this level dropped below the subsistence standard.

Important for the development of the new labor structure into which the freed Negro slaves were pressed and which has determined their economic fate and, to a considerable extent, the economic history of the South until this day was the fact that Emancipation was not related to any change of mind on the part of white people. The reform was thrust upon the South and never got its sanction. It became rather a matter of sectional pride to resist the change to the utmost. When it became apparent that the North could not, or would not, press its demands with force, the white South found a revenge for the defeat in the War by undoing as far as possible the national legislation to protect the freedman. This negative direction of Southern political will is still, three generations after the Civil War, apparent to the observer. The South did not want—and to a great extent still does not want—the Negro to be successful as a freedman. White Southerners are prepared to abstain from many liberties and to sacrifice many advantages for the purpose of withholding them from the Negroes.[b]

To the whites the temporary Negro vagrancy that followed the Civil War[7] must have appeared as a confirmation of their dominant conviction, that most Negroes are inherently incapable of persistent work, unless kept

[a] See Chapter 6, Section 2.

[b] See Chapter 20.

under severe discipline. To blame it on the inherent racial character of the Negro was the most convenient way out. It did not involve any new and strenuous thinking. It offered an escape from the difficult task of having to introduce a basically new pattern of dealing with labor. A well-entrenched system of slavery has probably nowhere been completely abolished by one stroke. The plantation South was ruined through the War, and the Emancipation forced upon it—ruined, it was felt, because of the Negro. Under such circumstances it was likely that the South would try to build up a labor organization as similar as possible to slavery.

As the years passed, the old plantation system reestablished itself. Negro labor was on hand in spite of much short-distance wandering. A considerable portion of the old plantation owners were killed in the War, went bankrupt or left the land for other reasons. Much land became forfeit to creditors and tax authorities. But, as cotton prices soared, it was profitable for anybody who could lay hands on cash to buy land and hire Negro labor. After some attempts with a wage system, sharecropping became the labor pattern into which the Negroes and, later on, poor whites were pressed.[8]

3. THE LAND PROBLEM

An economic reconstruction of the South which would have succeeded in opening the road to economic independence for the ex-slaves would have had to include, besides emancipation, suffrage and full civil liberties: rapid education of the freedmen, abandonment of discrimination, land reform. Some measures in all these directions were actually taken.

Concerning land reform, there were spurious attempts to break up the plantation system and to distribute the land to the cultivators. There were some few statesmen who grasped the importance of such a basic economic reform for the Reconstruction program. Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner saw it.[9] But their strivings came to practically nothing. A small amount of abandoned and confiscated land was turned over to Negroes by the Union Army, by Union administrators of various kinds and, later, by the Freedmen's Bureau. But the latter institution had to use most of its small appropriations—totaling less than $18,000,000—for general relief or for educational purposes. Besides, it was allowed to operate for only seven years (1865-1872).[10]

To have given each one of the million Negro families a forty-acre freehold would have made a basis of real democracy in the United States that might easily have transformed the modern world,[11] reflects Du Bois. This may be true enough, but it should be kept clear that the historical setting would hardly have allowed it. From an historical point of view it is even more Utopian to think through anew the Reconstruction problem in terms of modern social engineering. It is not entirely useless, however, as such

an intellectual experiment defines our norms and gives perspective to what actually took place.

After the Civil War, the overwhelming majority of Negroes were concentrated in Southern agriculture. Consequently, the greatest problem was what to do with these great masses of Southern Negroes, most of whom were former slaves. Even the Negroes not in Southern agriculture were influenced by the patterns set, since the Northern Negro laborer was recruited, in later decades, from the rural South.

A rational economic reform of Southern plantation economy, which would preserve individual property rights to the maximum (always of greatest importance for a smooth readjustment) but also utilize the revolutionary situation for carrying into effect the aims of Reconstruction, could have included the following points besides freeing the slaves:

1. Remunerating fully the slave owners out of federal funds.
2. Expropriating the slave plantations or a larger part of them and remunerating fully their owners out of federal funds.
3. Distributing this land in small parcels to those cultivators who wished it, against mortgaged claims on their new property, and requiring them to pay for the land in yearly installments over a long period.
4. Creating for a transition period a rather close public supervision over the freedmen and also certain safeguards against their disposition of their property; also instituting an effective vocational education of Negro farmers, somewhat along the lines of the F.S.A. of the 1930's.
5. Instituting a scheme of taxation to pay off the former slave- and land-owners and, perhaps, to allow repayments for the land by the new owners to be kept down under the actual expropriation costs.
6. As a partial alternative, in order to relieve the Negro population pressure in the South and in order to help keep down the scope of the reconstruction program: helping Negroes take part in the westward rural migration.

The cheapness of land in America would have been a factor making a land reform easier to execute than in most other countries where it has been successfully carried out when abolishing serfdom. Even if the burden on the public finances were reckoned as economic costs—which, of course, is a totally wrong way of calculating costs in a national economy, as they are meant to be profitable investments in economic progress—those costs would have been trifling compared with what Reconstruction and Restoration, not to speak of the Civil War, actually cost the nation. What happened, however, was that the slaves were freed without any remuneration being paid their former owners; and that, with few exceptions, the freedmen were not given access to land.

The explanation of why there was no land reform in America to complement the emancipation of the slaves, during the short period when the South did not have much of a say and had not yet deeply fortified its own

mental resistance, is usually given in terms of the reluctance of the North to intrude upon the rights and interests of property ownership. But the North obviously did not hesitate to expropriate the slave property[a] and let it loose on the region without any provision for its economic maintenance. The owners must have felt this to be a grave injustice inflicted upon them, and even Northerners must have reflected that this property was acquired under the law and in a system of rights where it was exchangeable for other property. The dominating North defended its action by asserting that slave property was unjust, which is a pretty revolutionary doctrine from the property point of view. Undoubtedly property in land stood in another category to the Northerners. But the Union authorities occasionally dealt rather harshly also with land property in the South during Reconstruction, even if they did not often give it away to the Negroes.

A more important reason why there was no land reform was, in all probability, consideration of a narrow financial sort. The Civil War had left the Union with a great national debt. The North—which refused to let the federal government assume the war debts of the Confederate states and to pay for the expropriated slave property—did not feel inclined to carry the fiscal costs for a land reform on the national budget.

Under these circumstances, the road to the national compromise of the 1870's was actually well paved from the beginning. Except for a Republican party interest in the Negro vote and the general craving for revenge against the Southern rebels, there seems not to have been much interest among most Northerners in helping the Negroes.[b] This was particularly so since the North now acquired a frame of mind where the puritan social idealism of *ante-bellum* days, of which abolitionism had only been one of the expressions, succumbed for decades to the acceptance of industrialization, expansion, mechanical progress and considerable political corruption.

The white South was, as has been said, for the most part violently against any constructive program framed to raise the Negro freedmen to economic independence.[12] A liberal Southerner of the older generation with great political experience, Josephus Daniels, tells this story:

> When I was eighteen I recall asking an old Confederate, "What was so bad about the promise to give every Negro head of a family forty acres and a mule? Wouldn't that have been better help than to turn the ignorant ex-slave without a dollar over to the mercy of Republican politicians, white and black, who made political slaves

[a] Only the slave owners of the District of Columbia were compensated for the price of their slaves. See William H. Williams, "The Negro in the District of Columbia During Reconstruction." *The Howard Review* (June, 1924), p. 102.

[b] There were many exceptions, however, and the compromise was a gradual development. Not only was there a small remnant of the Abolition movement, but even a man like James G. Blaine made a vigorous plea in 1879 that the Negro be given full rights and opportunities. (Symposium: "Ought the Negro to be Disfranchised," *North American Review* [March, 1879].)

of them? And if each Negro had been given a piece of land, for which Uncle Sam would pay the Southern owner, wouldn't it have been better for the white man and the Negro?"

The old man looked at me as if I were a curious individual to be raising such an unheard-of question. "No," he said emphatically, "for it would have made the Negro 'uppity,' and, besides, they don't know enough to farm without direction, and smart white men and Negroes would have gotten the land away from them, and they'd have been worse off than ever. . . . The real reason," pursued the old man, "why it wouldn't do, is that we are having a hard time now keeping the nigger in his place, and if he were a landowner he'd think he was a bigger man than old Grant, and there would be no living with him in the Black District. . . . Who'd work the land if the niggers had farms of their own . . . ?"[13]

In spite of the lack of a land reform and against heavy odds in practically all respects, there was a slow rise of Negro small-scale landownership in the South until the beginning of this century. But the proportion of Negroes owning their own land has never been large, and it has been declining for the last 30 or 40 years.[a]

4. THE TENANCY PROBLEM

But even if a rational land reform was not carried out, some of the goals could have been reached by a legal regulation of the tenancy system, aimed not only at protecting the tenants as well as the landlords, but also at preserving the soil and raising the economic efficiency of Southern agriculture. There were individuals who saw clearly what was at stake. The Freedmen's Bureau was futilely active in regulating labor and tenant contracts. But it had neither the political backing nor the clear purpose necessary to accomplish much of lasting importance. And it was not given the time or the resources. Hence, a most inequitable type of tenancy fixed itself upon the South.

A survey of the legal organization of landlord-tenant relations in Southern states today reveals a system which has no real parallel in other advanced parts of the Western world. There are a great number of state laws—some of the most extravagant character—to defend the planters' interests. There are few laws which defend the tenants' interests. The tenant does not have any right to permanency of tenure on the land he cultivates. He seldom has any right to reimbursement for permanent improvements which he makes on the land.[14] The tenant is not secured in his contractual rights. Woofter, writing in the 'twenties, makes the rather obvious point that "passage of laws to the effect that no tenant contract is enforceable unless it is written would . . . help," but no such laws have been passed.[15]

On the other hand, there is, as we said, elaborate legislation to protect

[a] See Chapter 11, Section 6.

the planters' interests against the tenants. Reference should here be made to the Black Codes, instituted by eight Southern states immediately after the Civil War (1865-1867) before Congressional Reconstruction. Mangum characterizes these laws as follows:

> These Black Codes gave the Negro population very little freedom. The colored man was free in name only in many cases. The apprentice, vagrancy, and other provisions of these statutes forced the Negro into situations where he would be under the uncontrolled supervision of his former master or other white men who were ready and willing to exploit his labor.[16]

The historical background for these laws was the need for some kind of regulations of the freedmen's labor conditions, the Southerners' disbelief in free labor, and their intention of restoring as far as possible the *ante-bellum* relation between the two races.[17] The Black Codes were among the factors which stimulated Congress to carry out Reconstruction along more drastic lines. These laws were abolished, but after Reconstruction they made their reappearance in various forms.

One type is the various kinds of lien laws.[18] They are sometimes strengthened by laws making a tenant a criminal when he is deemed negligent in his duties.[19] During the 'thirties, federal agencies have been more active in stamping out debt peonage[a] by bringing up test cases in the federal courts. Several laws of this or other kinds have been held unconstitutional by state and federal courts.[20] Nevertheless, debt peonage still exists.[b]

Another present-day vestige of the Black Codes is the vagrancy laws.[c] They make it possible for employers to let the police act as labor agents. Apprehended vagrants are made to choose between accepting the employment offered them and being sentenced by the court to forced labor in chain-gangs. The literature is filled with descriptions of how the police and the courts were utilized to recruit forced labor. Convicts were hired out, sometimes in chain-gangs, to planters, mine owners, road contractors and turpentine farmers. There were plantations and other enterprises that depended almost entirely on convict labor. In recent years this practice has been practically stamped out.[d]

More difficult to stamp out has been the practice of white employers getting Negro tenants or laborers by paying their fines at court. It is parallel

[a] The term "peonage" means a condition of compulsory service based on the indebtedness of the laborer to his employer; see Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 164 ff.

[b] See Chapter 11, Section 8; Appendix 6, Section 4; and Chapter 26, Section 2; also, Mangum, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[c] The very concept "vagrancy" is a dangerous one as it has not the same definiteness as other crimes. In all countries there have at times been attempts to press poor people into peonage by such laws.

[d] See Chapter 26, Section 2.

to the transaction whereby an employer pays a Negro's debt to a former employer or to a merchant and, by taking over the debt, also takes over the worker. The police and the courts have often been active in "creating" the debts by exacting fines for petty offenses or upon flimsy accusations. Sometimes a number of Negroes are "rounded up" and given out for the price of the fines to interested employers who are short of labor. More often the police and the courts only act to enforce an existing situation of debt peonage.[21]

The background of the difficulty of stamping out peonage is the fact that the South has a weak legal tradition. As we shall show in Part VI, the police and the courts have traditionally been active as agents for white employers. Traditionally the planters and other whites have little scruple against taking the law into their own hands. Threats, whippings, and even more serious forms of violence have been customary caste sanctions utilized to maintain a strict discipline over Negro labor which are seldom employed against white labor. The few laws in favor of the Negro tenant have not often been enforced against the white planter.

The legal order of the South is, however, gradually becoming strengthened. But, even if we assume full enforcement—which is far from being reached as yet, particularly in the Black Belt where most of the plantations and the rural Negroes are concentrated—the entire system of laws regulating the relations between employers and employees in Southern agriculture is heavily stacked against the latter.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUTHERN PLANTATION ECONOMY AND THE NEGRO FARMER

1. Southern Agriculture as a Problem

The main facts of rural Southern poverty and the distress of the rural Negro people in the South have been well-known for a long time. The plantation-tenant system is one of America's "public scandals."[a] Even before the Civil War there were many Southern patriots who saw some of the detrimental factors working to undermine the welfare of the region. When Hinton Helper, on the eve of the Civil War, came out with his blunt exposure of the *ante-bellum* myth of how efficient and perfectly balanced the Southern economic system was, he could quote passages in support of his position like the following by C. C. Clay:

> I can show you, with sorrow, in the olden portions of Alabama, and in my native county of Madison, the sad memorials of the artless and exhausting culture of cotton. Our small planters, after taking the cream off their lands, unable to restore them by rest, manures, or otherwise, are going further West and South, in search of other virgin land, which they may and will despoil and impoverish in like manner. Our wealthier planters, with greater means and no more skill, are buying out their poorer neighbors. . . . In traversing that county [Madison County], one will discover numerous farm houses, once the abode of industrious and intelligent freemen, now occupied by slaves, or tenantless. . . . Indeed, a county in its infancy, where fifty years ago scarce a forest tree had been felled by the axe of the pioneer, is already exhibiting the painful signs of senility and decay, apparent in Virginia and the Carolinas.[1]

At least from the 'eighties, when Henry Grady coined the promising phrase "the New South," the propagation of an agricultural reform program has belonged to the established Southern traditions. Like the dedication "the New South," this program has in fundamentally unchanged form been taken over by generation after generation of public-spirited Southern liberals and is today one of their dearest aims. In fact, the same remedies of encouraging independent land ownership, crop diversification, and soil conservation have been recommended through the decades by unanimous

[a] See Appendix 2, Section 1.

expert opinion. In a sense, this is one of the most discouraging things about Southern agriculture, that the faults have been recognized and the remedial plans worked out for such a long time without much being accomplished—at least up to the Great Depression and the New Deal.

The revolutionary changes within the last decade—and particularly the effects of the A.A.A. on rural Negroes—are less well-known. We shall leave those latest developments to be analyzed in the next chapter. In this chapter we want, mainly by way of presenting some illustrative quantitative relations, to give a short survey of the familiar topics: the plight of the rural South and of the Negro farmer.

2. OVER-POPULATION AND SOIL EROSION

Rural farm areas in the United States in 1940 had a population of about 30,000,000. More than half of this population, or over 16,000,000, was in the South; and over one-fourth of the Southern farm population (around 4,500,000) was Negro. But the South had only 35 per cent of all land in farms in the country, and the value of this farm land, as well as of the buildings on the land, the farm implements and machinery, constituted but 28 per cent of the national figure. Only 8 per cent of the Southern farm land was operated by Negro owners, tenants, and croppers, and their share in the value of Southern farms, buildings, implements, and machinery was equally small.[2] For the rest, Negroes participated in the Southern agricultural economy only as wage laborers, at low wages and usually without the assurance of year-round employment.

The import of these broad facts is as simple as it is significant. They are behind all the rural poverty of the South. The agricultural South is over-populated,[a] and this over-population affects Negroes much more than whites. This applies particularly to the Old South, including the Delta district, which contains the main concentration of Negroes. In this Black Belt the over-population has—on the whole—been steadily increasing. "Since 1860 the amount of land in southeastern farms has remained stationary, new lands being cleared about as rapidly as old land was exhausted,"[3] while the number of male agricultural workers in the same area rose from around 1,132,000 in 1860 to 2,102,000 in 1930.[4]

A cultural heritage from times of pioneering, colonization, and slavery makes the conditions even worse than can be visualized by the ratio of population to land alone. The early colonists and the later land speculators did not have to economize in their use of the land. To the *ante-bellum*

[a] It is true that countries like Denmark have a much higher population density in their agricultural areas but, nevertheless, preserve a much higher living level. But both objective market conditions and the rural culture are incomparably more favorable than they can be, in the surveyable future, in Southern agriculture. Our term "over-population" has the pragmatic meaning indicated by this observation.

plantation owners, it was the slaves that represented the main capital—not the land. This set a pattern also for other Southern farmers. To become rich from the land was to become a plantation owner and a slave owner—not to care for the soil. This tradition has continued until the present time. In the fall of 1938 the writer traveled for two days through a beautiful forest in Tennessee. The woods were burning everywhere. The smoke often made driving difficult. Local newspapers told about small organized forces which were out to fight the fires. From the highways they were nowhere to be seen. There were plenty of people around in several places, but few, if any, seemed to care much about the fires.

Experiences like this make it possible, for even the stranger, to understand the psychology of soil erosion, soil mining, and "selling the soil in annual installments."[5] A sample study made in 1933 suggested that one-third of the Southern land was eroded and that at least half of all eroded land in the country was in the South.[6]

It is generally assumed that the soil in the South originally had a relatively high fertility.[7] "The South was potentially a section of varied and rich agriculture," writes Woofter. "It could have become fully as diversified as France. The reasons why it did not are historical and economic rather than physical."[8] The soil is usually light, and there is heavy rainfall in most parts of the region. The traditional concentration upon cash crops such as cotton and other plants, which fail to bind the top soil and rapidly deplete fertility—without a rational scheme of crop rotation or other preventive measures—is a chief causal factor behind soil erosion. The high rate of tenancy, leaving the immediate care of the land to people who are not only utterly dependent and ignorant but also lack an individual economic interest in maintaining the productivity of the land, is another cause. In the final analysis soil erosion is more a consequence than merely an aspect of protracted rural over-population.

Lange summarizes:

> We may therefore conclude as changes in land in farms have been rather insignificant, that the agricultural population and among this population the Negroes in the old South at present have less land resources to support themselves on than they had a generation ago. The trend is continuing in the same direction, indicating that if strong action is not taken to prevent further erosion the farm population will have in the future even less land resources at its disposal than at present.[9]

3. TENANCY, CREDIT AND COTTON

The literature, today as earlier, contains excellent descriptions of how the plantation system, tenancy, and the one-sided cultivation of cotton and corn—and, in some areas, tobacco, rice, or sugar—have contributed to soil erosion; how the credit system, by favoring cash crops, has made it difficult to break away from the vicious circle; how this credit-cotton-tenancy-erosion

circle has become loaded downward through some of its own major effects: poverty for most, economic insecurity for all, widespread ignorance, low health standards, relative lack of an enterprising spirit, high birth rates and large families.

The extent to which Southern cash-crop production is based on tenancy is indicated by the following figures. Almost three-fourths of all Southern cotton farms and more than half of the crop-specialty farms (tobacco, potatoes, peanuts, and so on)[a] were, in 1929, operated by tenants. About two-thirds of all tenants in the South, and almost three-fourths of the croppers, worked on cotton farms. Of the full owners, on the other hand, less than one-third had farms where cotton accounted for 40 per cent or more of the gross income. Most of the other two-thirds owned farms which were characterized as crop-specialty, general or self-sufficing.[10]

Negro farmers have always been dependent on the cotton economy to a much greater extent than have been the white farmers in the South. By 1929 three out of four Negro farm operators, as against two out of five white farmers, received at least 40 per cent of their gross income from cotton. Although not more than about one-tenth of the Southern farm land was cultivated by Negro owners, tenants and croppers, almost one-third of the total output in cotton was produced on this Negro-operated land.[11] In addition, an unknown, but probably considerable, quantity of cotton was produced by Negro wage labor on holdings operated by white farmers. The importance of cotton growing for the Negro farmer can thus hardly be over-estimated.

In the main, cotton is cultivated by means of a primitive and labor-consuming agricultural technique which has not changed much since slavery. Cotton is largely responsible for the fact that the Southeast alone had to pay more than half of the national bill for commercial fertilizers.[12] One-third of the national total for all kinds of fertilizer was expended on cotton farms.[13] Cotton growing, as any one-sided agriculture—if it is not lifted up by high techniques to a level where intelligence is constantly used and prosperity secured—has also psychological effects: it "limits interests . . . limits spiritual growth, makes people narrow, single-grooved, helpless."[14] It invites child labor and causes retardation in schools. It favors large families.

The wide fluctuations of the price of cotton[15]—which seem to have

[a] The type of farm classification in the 1930 Census of Agriculture is based on gross income. Farms for which 40 per cent or more of the gross income was derived from cotton were characterized as cotton farms. By the same token, farms for which 40 per cent or more of the income came from one or several of certain specified crops (tobacco, peanuts, potatoes, soybeans, cowpeas, and so on) were classified as crop-specialty farms. When no product accounted for as much as 40 per cent of the gross income, the farm was "general." Self-sufficing farms were defined as those for which 50 per cent or more of the value production was consumed by the farm family.

become more frequent after 1914, due to wars, inflation, deflation, as well as intensified competition from other countries—make cotton a most hazardous crop, and the farmers who specialize in cotton run extraordinarily heavy risks which are outside their intelligent control.[16] The gambling tradition has been hard to overcome, although almost everybody seems to know that no solid material culture can ever be built on the poor man's speculation. But more fundamentally, the continued cultivation of cotton is called forth—as highly labor-consuming, simple in technique, and easily supervised—by the plantation and tenancy system; or, from another point of view, by over-population and tenancy, and—as a cash crop—by the dependence of Southern agriculture on short-term credit.

The peculiar credit system of the rural South has often been analyzed.[17] It has its historical roots in the slavery economy and, later, in the emergence of the plantation system in the impoverished South after the Civil War. Since then the rural South has been greatly dependent on outside credit both because of the low standards of income and saving in the region and because of the comparatively high requirements on operating capital for cotton growing. The wide fluctuation of cotton prices and farm incomes have added their influence to make lending abnormally risky and, consequently, to make loans expensive. Also, from the point of view of business administration, the organization of banking and credit was most inadequate, and it remained so because of the low plane of political life in the South[a] and the lack of active desire and ability to create large-scale cooperative organizations.

As part of the federal agricultural policy, great improvements have lately been made by the organization of new credit agencies.[b] But still credit is expensive and difficult to get in the rural South, and this is undoubtedly part of the explanation for the insufficient investment in land and buildings and for the slowness of mechanization. To the tenants, credit pressures mean usurious interest rates charged by planters and merchants for advances on food and farming necessities. For the agricultural structure as a whole, credit pressures—themselves partly caused by the dependence on cotton growing—mean a constant stimulus to keep the land in cotton.

4. The Boll Weevil

In this vicious system of economic poverty and exploitation of land and human resources, where every adverse factor is a partial cause of all the others, the boll weevil caused catastrophe. It is often described how it advanced eastward, passing the Mississippi River about 1910.[18] One state after another in the Old South was hit. The destruction was terrible. In many places, particularly in Georgia and South Carolina, farms and planta-

[a] See Part V.

[b] See Chapter 12, Section 11.

tions were permanently abandoned. In Georgia a survey of 59 Lower Piedmont counties showed that the cotton production in 1922 was only one-third of the average for the period 1905-1914, and by 1928 it still did not amount to much more than half of the same average.[19]

But as one state was suffering, those west of it were recovering. Thus, the boll weevil helped the four Southwestern states—Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma—to increase their share in the national output from a little more than one-third in 1909 to almost one-half in 1929; and at the latter time they had about three-fifths of the total acreage in cotton.[20] In these Southwestern states cotton cultivation is less dependent on Negro labor and is also more mechanized. For both reasons this geographical dislocation tended, to an extent, to push Negro tenants off the land. The ravages of the boll weevil in the old Cotton Belt had the same effect. The total effects on employment opportunities for Negroes in Southern agriculture have never been calculated, but they must have been considerable.

The boll weevil, in conjunction with the post-war deflation and depression, brought about a temporary decline even in the total national output of cotton around 1921, and it was one of the reasons why the relatively consistent upward production trend—which had been noticeable until the outbreak of the First World War—was broken for a time.[21]

In spite of all misfortunes, cotton was still king when the last agricultural census was taken before the general upheaval of the 'thirties.[22] More than half of the total acreage harvested in the South in 1929 was in farms for which 40 per cent or more of the gross income came from cotton. Also crop-specialty farms (tobacco, potatoes, peanuts, and so on) appeared much more important than in the nation as a whole. Self-sufficing farms, too, were more prevalent in the Southeast than elsewhere, which, however, simply reflects the relatively cashless agricultural economy prevalent among certain groups of poor whites. Dairy farming, on the other hand, has been lagging in the South: in 1929 Southern agriculture did not account for more than one-fifth of the national value production of milk and dairy products.[23]

5. MAIN AGRICULTURAL CLASSES

These are only a few hints about the scene of the rural Negro's struggle for existence. The plantation system and the tenure system, in addition, are institutional factors to be counted heavily when explaining why the agricultural South is even much poorer than can be grasped simply by stating the ratio of population to land and by noting the soil erosion.

The economic chances for small- and middle-sized ownership, in the better part of the South, have been more restricted than in most other American regions. Owner-operated land in 1940 had a lower acreage value in the South ($27.11, including buildings) than in the nation as a whole

($31.37); the fact that Southern land operated by croppers had a per unit value ($33.28) even higher than the latter figure indicates that only in part is this caused by any general inferiority of the Southern soil.[24] In large measure this is due to the fact that so much of the best land in the South originally was taken by the politically, socially, and economically dominant plantation owners. The rest of the Southern farmers had to fight against heavy odds. They had to compete with slave labor at the same time as they had to cultivate soil of lower average quality. The Civil War failed to bring about any fundamental change in this condition. The owners of the plantations soon regained much of their political power. Their land was still superior on the average, in spite of the fact that it was mistreated. And to compete with the plantations was still to compete with sweatshop labor.

In 1930 the total labor force in Southern agriculture—if we except the large but somewhat vaguely defined group of unpaid family workers—was constituted as in Table 1.

Two-thirds of the Negro, as against one-third of the white, "primary" agricultural workers were either croppers or wage laborers. Only one in eight of the Negro, but more than two out of five white workers were owners or part-owners. (Managers constitute an insignificant group.) The white owners outnumbered the Negro owners seven to one. There were more than two white tenants (higher than cropper) for every Negro tenant. The total labor force in the two lowest tenure groups, on the other hand, was almost as large in the Negro as in the white group.

There are great differences in economic status and degree of dependency between the several types of tenants. Highest on the ladder are the renters

TABLE 1

NEGRO AND WHITE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN THE SOUTH, BY TENURE: 1930

Tenure	Number		Per Cent	
	Negro	White	Negro	White
Total[a]	1,393,000	2,945,000	100.0	100.0
Owners and managers	183,000	1,250,000	13.1	42.4
Cash tenants	98,000	140,000	7.0	4.8
Other tenants, except croppers	208,000	569,000	15.0	19.3
Croppers	393,000	383,000	28.2	13.0
Wage laborers	511,000	603,000	36.7	20.5

Source: Data on owners, tenants, and croppers are from the *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Agriculture.* Vol. II, Part 2, County Table I. They include a small number of nonwhites other than Negroes. The data on wage laborers in agriculture are from the *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population.* Vol. IV, State Table 11.

[a]Exclusive of unpaid family workers.

and the cash tenants, who rent their farms for a fixed sum of money.[a] Cash tenants usually can be regarded as independent entrepreneurs—or at least they are not in most cases far removed from such a position. All other kinds of arrangements entitle the landlord to a certain share of the main cash crop, for instance, one-fourth, one-third, one-half, sometimes even as much as three-fourths. Those tenants who receive one-half (or less) of the crop are the sharecroppers. The cash tenants usually furnish all the work, stock, feed, fertilizer, and tools themselves. The other groups generally furnish less and less of these things the lower their tenure status. Those lowest down on the scale have little or nothing but their labor to offer.[25] They are really nothing but laborers—or rather their position often tends to be even less independent than that of ordinary wage earners. Before we elaborate on this subject, however, it seems appropriate that we inquire into the reasons why so few of the Negro agricultural workers in the South have been able to reach a position of ownership.

6. THE NEGRO LANDOWNER

The story of the Negro in agriculture would have been a rather different one if the Negro farmer had had greater opportunity to establish himself as an independent owner. In that case he would have become more firmly attached to the soil. He would have known that he worked for his own benefit, that he had a real chance to improve his level of living by his own efforts. "All that is now wanted to make the negro a fixed and conservative element in American society is to give him encouragement to, and facilities for, making himself, by his own exertions, a small landowner," wrote Sir George Campbell in his survey of the South and the Negro problem in the late 'seventies.[26]

There was a time when it really looked as if the rural Negro had some chance of eventually getting established on an ownership basis. True, the development was generally slow, but it seemed to go in the right direction. The number of Negro farm homes in the United States that were owned by their occupants had by 1900 reached a figure of 193,000—constituting about 25 per cent of all Negro farm homes.[27] This percentage marks the peak of the proportion of landowners in the Negro farm population.

The absolute increase continued for some time, but at a slower rate. The absolute number of colored farm owners in the South reached, in 1910, a maximum of about 220,000.[28] After 1920 it gradually declined, and it dropped to 174,000 by 1940.[29] Of all Southern states with any appreciable Negro farm population, only Virginia and Florida showed a majority of owners among the Negro farm operators in 1940. But even in the Virginian stronghold, Negro ownership was weakening, in that the number of

[a] Sometimes the farm is rented for a fixed quantity of a certain crop, usually lint cotton ("lint-rental"). We shall include them under the term "cash tenants."

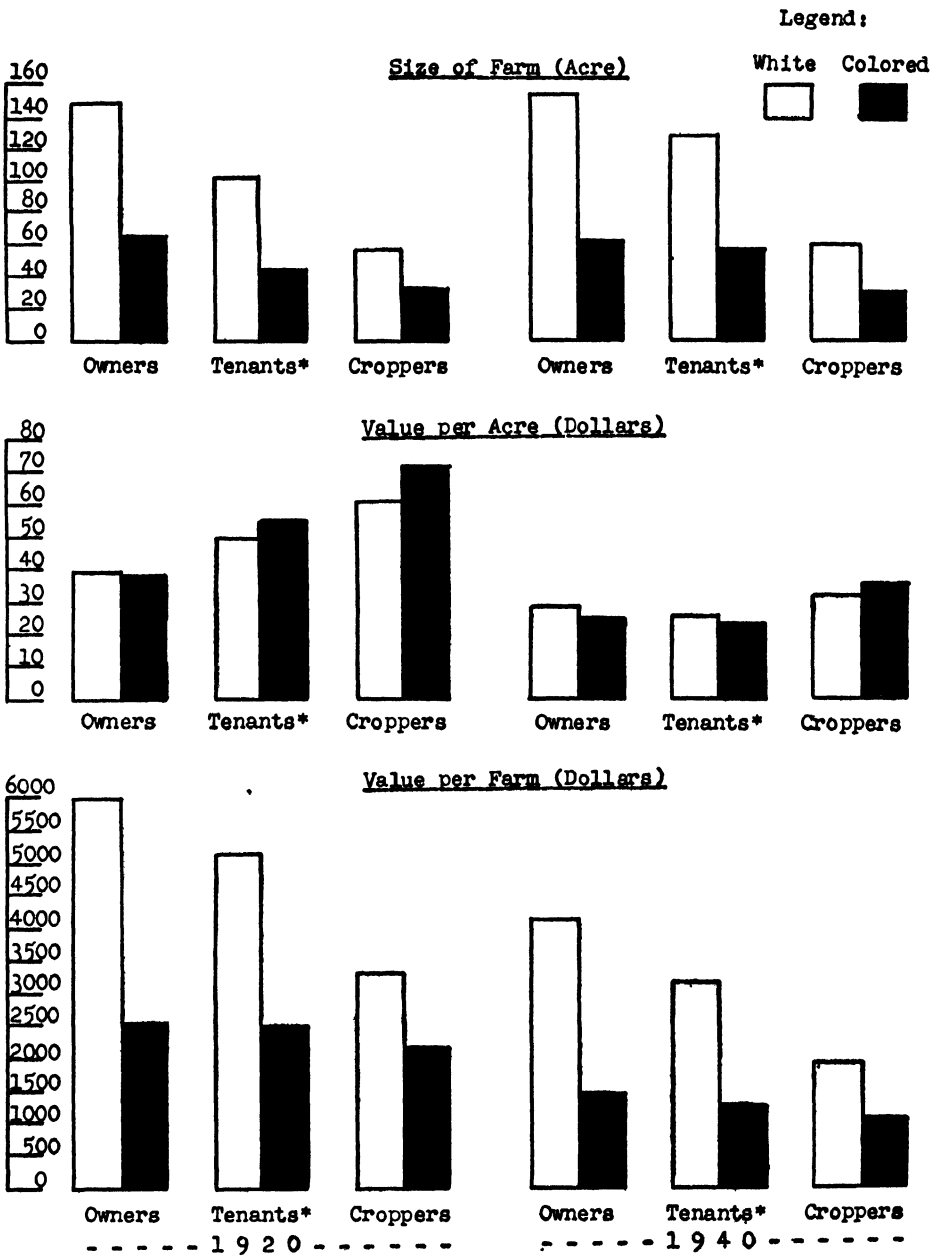
colored farm owners had declined by not less than one-third since 1910. And Florida depends relatively less on tenants and relatively more on wage labor than do other states in the South,[30] so that even there but a minority of the Negro farm population resided on their own places.

There are some general factors to be accounted for in this context. On the one hand, the low land values in the South and the low investment in land improvements, houses, and machines should make landownership easier to attain. On the other hand, the inadequate organization of banking and credit,[31] referred to above, works against both the acquiring and the holding of land. Another general factor making landownership, when it is attained, more precarious than it needs to be, is the old-fashioned system of local real estate taxation, which the South shares with the rest of the nation. This means that a landowner does not get a corresponding decrease in his taxation in a year when his crop has failed or his income drops because of a price fall. The dependence on hazardous cotton growing, of course, makes this institutional deficiency more detrimental to the Southern landowners.[32]

More specifically, in interpreting the reversal in the trend of Negro ownership, Southeastern agriculture after 1910, and particularly during the first years of the 'twenties, was hit by the boll weevil and by the general upheaval caused by the War and the post-war depression. The owner group, of course, should have been less affected than the tenant group, as far as living standards are concerned, but the latter had no ownership to lose. The fact that even the number of white owners in the South declined by more than one-tenth between 1920 and 1930 (from almost 1,400,000 to 1,250,000) suggests that conditions in general were unfavorable for the small farm owner. Between 1930 and 1940 (when the number of white owners was 1,384,000), on the other hand, there was a corresponding large increase in the number of white owners, whereas colored ownership continued to decline. This, however, scarcely means that the prospects for economic success in small ownership had become any brighter. As will be shown in the next chapter, it indicates rather that white owners, or those who were able to get into that class, were the ones who had most opportunity to stay on the land, "if, in view of the paucity of migratory outlets, they preferred to do that."[33]

Data on size of farm, acreage values, and farm values (Figure 5) give a rather good idea of how marginal the existence of the small owner-operators in the South tends to be. They show, further, that this is particularly true about Negro owners. It seems, finally, that their relative position has become even more unfavorable than it was a couple of decades ago. Land operated by croppers, particularly Negro croppers, has the highest average value per acre. This, as we have said, is due to the fact that plantations, by and large, are located on much of the best land of the

FIGURE 5. AVERAGE SIZE OF FARM, AND AVERAGE VALUE OF LAND AND BUILDINGS PER ACRE AND PER FARM, BY COLOR AND TENURE, IN THE SOUTH: 1920 AND 1940



Source: United States Census.
Note: *Tenants include only tenants who are not sharecroppers.

South, leaving less of first choice than of second and third choice land to the middle-sized and small owner-operators. Cash tenants and share renters used to take an intermediate position, but are now pretty close to the owner-operators in this respect. White owners showed a higher average acreage value in 1940 ($27.27) than colored owners ($23.89). The decline in acreage value since 1920 was in every tenure group less pronounced for whites than for Negro operators.

Size of farm increases with tenure status. In every case, however, Negroes have much smaller farms than whites. The consequence is that the average size of Negro owner-operated farms (60.4 acres) is about the same as for white sharecroppers (58.9 acres). The mean value of land and buildings of the farm operated by colored owners ($1,443) is lower even than that of the white sharecropper's plot ($1,908). The value of implements and machinery that the colored owner has ($90) is only a fraction of that which the white owner has at his disposal ($322).[34]

7. Historical Reasons for the Relative Lack of Negro Farm Owners

Even apart from the general economic trends in Southern agriculture, there are several reasons why the Negro has been unable to make a better showing as an independent farm owner.

There is his background in slavery, and the fact that he scarcely ever has been encouraged to show much initiative or been taught that it pays to look after oneself rather than to be dependent. More often he has been given to understand that his racial status provides an excuse for not being able to shift for himself, and that modest acceptance of a low position would rate a reward bigger than that offered for courageous attempts to reach a higher position.[35] In the rural South he has certainly not enjoyed much of that kind of legal security which is a necessary condition for successful entrepreneurship; at any rate, he has had far less of it than the whites with whom he has had to compete.[a] His best security has been to become associated with a white person of some status in the community; and that, in most cases, has presupposed an employer-employee or landlord-tenant relationship.[b] Since his earnings as a farmhand or tenant have always tended to be lower than those of white workers, he has had less chance to save enough money for the purpose of buying land. The belief that he is racially inferior and the social isolation between the two castes have also affected the credit rating even of those individual Negroes who otherwise would have been excellent risks. His educational opportunities in the rural South have been extremely poor.

Although the influence of such general conditions cannot be measured,

[a] See Part VI.

[b] See Chapter 26, Section 2.

there is scarcely any doubt about their being highly significant. In addition, however, a number of specific factors have been operative. Some of them have already been touched upon in the preceding chapters. There is, in the first place, the fact that rural Negroes, to a great extent, are concentrated on plantation areas, where comparatively few small holdings are for sale. There was no general land reform, and the Negro did not participate in the development of the West. But even in Kansas, where one of the few noteworthy attempts to organize new *post-bellum* Negro settlements was made, there were not more than a few hundred Negro owner-operators in 1940; and some of these owners probably were the descendants of persons who had been brought to Kansas as slaves. Undoubtedly the attitudes of the white settlers constituted the main cause for this lack of success. In the largely over-populated, white-dominated districts of the South, these attitudes, if anything, were still more pronounced.

There have, however, always been some small holdings for sale in the areas of Negro concentration, and more have been added to this supply as plantations tended to disintegrate.[36] During the years immediately following the Civil War, land values were low, and that was one of the reasons why a few Negroes, along with many poor whites, managed to get into the landowning class. Some ex-slaves bought land from their former masters, and there are places where such Negro properties still constitute a large proportion of all Negro-owned farms.[37]

The Negro has, however, usually been at a disadvantage when competing with white buyers even in the Black Belt. Apart from economic and other factors already mentioned, he has had to overcome segregational and discriminatory attitudes of the rural white population.

> . . . Negro landownership—even now—can be achieved only by means of a most exacting and highly selective procedure; the would-be owner must be acceptable to the white community, have a white sponsor, be content with the purchase of acreage least desired by the whites, and pay for it in a very few years.
>
> The Negro buys land only when some white man will sell to *him*. Just because a white man has land for sale does not mean that a Negro, even the one most liked and respected by him, can buy it even if he has the money. Whether a particular Negro can buy a particular tract of land depends upon its location, its economic and emotional value to the white owner and other white people, the Negro's cash and credit resources, and, doubtless most important of all, his personal qualities in the light of the local attitudes: He must be acceptable.[38]
>
> Negro ownership emerges in areas where land is rented, rather than where it is worked by croppers or wage hands. Renters do not cultivate the "proud acres" of the plantations. They are common only where the tracts of land are too small, too unproductive, or too distant to warrant supervision; or where the owners, because of other remunerative business, make little effort to secure maximum revenue from their lands. On the out-of-the-way, or neglected tracts, in the nooks and corners between creeks and between white communities, and in areas where white community organi-

zation is disintegrating—these are the places where renters are most prevalent, where they move least often, where they are most independent and self-directed, where they accumulate most cash and credit. These are the tracts which are most often for sale to the Negro.[39]

There has always been an active solidarity among white people to prevent Negroes from acquiring land in white neighborhoods. The visitor finds, therefore, that most often he has to get off the main road and into the backwoods if he wants to see a Negro landowner. The intensity of those attitudes on the side of the whites—which closely correspond to the attitudes behind residential segregation in the cities[a]—seems to have been increasing toward the turn of the century. This was the time when the Jim Crow legislation was built up in the South.[b] There actually were even sporadic attempts in the beginning of the century to institute laws in order to block Negro ownership in white rural districts.[40] It is noteworthy that the trend toward increase of Negro landownership was halted at about the same time.[41]

The last decade, finally, has brought a new competitive advantage to the white owner. Government regulations, which have become of great importance, no doubt have helped the Negro owner along with the white owner. The fact, however, that the local administration of the new agricultural policies is entirely, or almost entirely, in the hands of white people cannot fail to make the Negroes a relatively disfavored group. This problem will be touched upon in the next chapter.

8. TENANTS AND WAGE LABORERS

In 1880, 64 per cent of the Southern farms were operated by owners. The corresponding figure for 1900 had fallen to 53 per cent. By 1930 it was down to 44 per cent. A majority of the Southern farm operators were tenants and sharecroppers. There was a similar development in other parts of the country as well. But nowhere else did it go so far.[42] And nowhere else did this trend have quite as serious social implications.

Behind this change are the lagging industrialization, the high rural fertility rates, and the relatively small opportunities for successful ownership in the South. Not only Negroes, but whites also, were affected by these factors. Already by 1900[c] there were more white than Negro tenants in Southern agriculture, and during the following three decades the number of white tenants increased by more than 400,000, or roughly 60 per cent, where as the corresponding figures for nonwhite tenants were 147,000 and 27 per cent, respectively.[43]

There seems to have been a parallel trend in the case of wage laborers,

[a] See Chapter 29, Section 3.

[b] See Chapter 28, Section 4.

[c] There was no breakdown by color in earlier census reports.

although much less pronounced. In 1910 more than half of these workers were Negro—in 1930 less than half of them.[44] It should be kept in mind that their status, by and large, is more insecure even than that of the sharecroppers, who, at least, are assured of year-round employment—although not always of a year-round income. This, however, does not reflect on the wage labor institution as such. If all Southern farm labor had been remunerated on a straight wage basis, the conditions would have been entirely different. A greater proportion of the wage laborers would have had year-round jobs, and these year-round employees would have known in advance for what wages they were working—something which is not true about tenants and croppers. At present most Southern agricultural wage laborers are literally "marginal." It is only at seasonal peaks that most of them can count on full employment. This circumstance, more than anything else, accounts for their inferior position.

The fact that nowadays almost two-thirds of the tenants are white has been emphasized time and again in the discussion. It does not follow, however, that white tenancy is more serious than Negro tenancy. Rather it is the other way around. We have seen that Negroes, more than whites, are concentrated in the lower tenure groups, and that in each tenure group Negroes are economically much weaker than whites. In addition, there are certain other significant differences.

It would be a mistake to believe that the plantation system and the tenant system are synonymous concepts. *The majority of all tenants do not work on plantations, but on small holdings.* In 1910, the last time an enumeration of plantations was made,[45] it was found that 39,000 plantations, located in 325 plantation counties, had about 400,000 tenants;[46] whereas, the total number of tenants in the South was over 1,500,000.[47] The ratio of plantation tenants to all tenants must be still lower now, for the number of tenants has increased much more in non-plantation counties than in plantation counties.[48] During the last decade there has even been a decrease in tenancy on the plantations.[a] It may be, therefore, that three out of four tenants in the South today work on small holdings.

While plantation tenancy belongs to the classical subjects in the rural sociology of the South, much less scientific attention has been given to the Southern nonplantation tenant. It is certain, however, that the great majority of these small-holding tenants are white.[49] A large number of them are related to their landlords.[50] For all we know, their conditions, in many cases, may be similar to those of white tenants in other parts of the country, except that, more likely than not, they have to work and live under poorer circumstances, and their general status, to some extent, may have been influenced by the plantation patterns.

The majority of the plantation tenants, on the other hand, are Negro.[51]

[a] See Chapter 12.

There has been a "white infiltration" even on this mainstay of Negro tenancy, however.[52] It even happens quite frequently that white and Negro tenants work on the same plantations, although usually not in the same capacity. White workers tend to be relatively more concentrated in the outlying districts, or on the least valuable parts of the plantations where the tenants work more independently and have a higher tenure status; whereas, Negroes more often make up the bulk of the labor force on the main part of the plantations, where they can be closely controlled and supervised by the owners or managers.

Thus, some of the main factors which account for the more rapid rise in white over Negro tenancy, until about 1930, are:

1. Negro tenants, more than white tenants, are dependent on the unstable cotton plantation economy.
2. Tenancy has increased more in nonplantation counties than in plantation counties.
3. Cotton culture has been moving toward the Southwest.
4. There has been white "infiltration" into plantation areas. This, however, is not so much an explanation as a description of the change. It still remains a problem why the intensity of rural population pressure increased more for white than for Negro agricultural workers.[a]

Also of relevance in this context is the fact that Negroes are "attached to the soil" much less than whites—that is, they more frequently move from one farm to another.[53] But this does not, in any way, constitute a racial or cultural characteristic. In reality, it is nothing but a consequence of the fact that Negroes, more than whites, are concentrated in the lower tenure groups; the lower the tenure status, the more frequent are the farm-to-farm movements.[54] In every given tenure group, Negroes tend to stay somewhat longer on the same place than do white farmers. In 1935, 38 per cent of the colored, as against 49 per cent of the white, croppers in the South had stayed less than one year on the farms which they were operating. The same proportion for other tenants were 27 and 40 per cent, respectively.

It goes without saying that movements as frequent as those must have an adverse influence on the living conditions of the tenants. No tenant who expects to farm on another place the next year can have much interest in doing any work on his house or in developing a year-round garden; neither can he be interested in maintaining the soil. Negligence in these and other respects naturally tends to become particularly serious in cases of absentee ownership; 15 per cent of the 646 plantations studied by Woofter in 1934 did not have a resident owner or even a special hired overseer.[55]

[a] See Chapter 8.

9. THE PLANTATION TENANT

The plight of the plantation tenant[56] has been described so often and so well[57] that there is no need to give more than a short summary here. But a summary we must present. For, despite all scientific and reformistic publicity, these conditions are still news to a great part of the American people; as we see it, they could not otherwise have prevailed in their present form for such a long time. The subject, in a way, is a fascinating one. It is the problem of an antiquated paternalistic labor institution in the midst of modern American capitalistic society.

If we except cash tenants—who usually, but not always, can be regarded as rather independent entrepreneurs, and who make up only about one-tenth of all Negro tenants—plantation tenants are just ordinary laborers, although they are designated as farmers in the census. Their work is usually supervised, more or less regularly, by the landlord or his representative. In some cases they even work by the clock and in gangs.[58] Their wages, however, are not determined according to supply and demand in a free labor market.

Wages are not fixed per week, per month, or per annum. Nor is the sharecropping agreement modeled after the ordinary piece-wage system. The cropper, rather, gets a share of the product. The quantity of the product depends not only on the efforts of the workers but on the conditions of the soil and on the hazards of wind and weather; and it is not the quantity of the output alone but also its price that determines the final reward for the toils of labor.[a] The wages of the sharecroppers and share tenants, in other words, vary in such a way that there is no reason whatever to assume that they, except accidentally and occasionally, would satisfy the supply-and-demand equations of an ordinary free labor market.[b]

While in other parts of our economic system it has been the accepted ideal that risk of investment should be directly correlated with the size of investment, the sharecropper and the share tenant—although nothing but laborers from economic and social viewpoints—have to carry a considerable share of the entrepreneur's risk. It is possible that it is this practice of

[a] Ordinary piece-rate wages also may vary with the change in general market conditions; but only through the process of price formation in the commodity and labor markets and with a certain time-lag, and seldom, if ever, to the same extent as the price of the product.

[b] As a labor or tenant contract, the share tenant agreement reveals its pre-capitalistic character by the fact that the wage or the land rent is not fixed in a sum of money or product but in a *proportion which remains fixed as a matter of tradition independent of how prices and price relations change.* The products and cost factors in the production other than labor are, however, priced in the market and so is land. Only labor costs (and incomes) are fixed in an arbitrary and traditional proportion. This indicates the dependent status of labor in this economic system. Labor has not even had the protection of being directly related to the objective conditions of price formation in an economic market.

hedging by spreading the risk over the whole tenant working force which has enabled the planters to carry on the cotton crop gamble much more persistently than otherwise would have been possible. It is true that the share tenant shares in the benefit of a good crop and favorable market conditions with the landowner. It is also true that he does not have much capital of his own. If losses run so high that at the end of the year he finds himself indebted to the landlord, he may often be able—at least nowadays—to get rid of this debt simply by moving to another plantation. But many a time he may find himself having invested a full season's work without having received anything near the wages he would have earned had he been a wage laborer with full employment. On such occasions, at least, he has to face long months of semi-starvation for himself and his family. That certainly is a business risk just as much as any. And should he have any livestock or other assets, the landlord is always free to take them to cover possible debts. In nine cotton states "the landlord has the legal right to sell any and all property the tenant may have to secure payment of rent and furnishings."[59]

Indeed, any study of the concrete details of the system will reveal that the sharecropper or share tenant usually has most of the disadvantages of being an independent entrepreneur without having hardly any of the rights that ordinarily go with such a position. Only in relatively few cases are his rights and obligations set down in a written contract.[60] In most cases he does not sell even his own share in the cotton crop himself.[61] According to the crop lien laws in most states, he has no right to dispose of it until he has paid to the landlord all the rent due and the advances he has received during the season. And since he cannot well do that until the crop has been sold and paid for, the landlord is legally entitled to handle all the marketing as he sees fit.[62] Seldom is the tenant even consulted about how to sell and when.

Worse than that, however, is the general pattern of making all kinds of account-keeping a unilateral affair. The tenant usually has to take the landlord's word for what price has been obtained for the cotton, for what is the total amount of advances received from the landlord, and for what the interest on these advances is, and so on. An attempt on the part of the Negro tenant to check the accounts against his own itemized annotations—if he should have kept any (which is rarely done)—will not accomplish much, in most cases, except possibly to infuriate the landlord.[63] The temptation to cheat the tenants at the final settlement for the year, under such circumstances, must be great. Indeed, Southern plantation owners would be unlike other human beings if they did not sometimes misuse the considerable arbitrary power they have over their tenants.[64]

In several conversations with white planters—as also with employers of Negro labor in cities, particularly of domestics—the writer has noticed the

display of a sort of moral double standard. White people of the landowning class who give the impression of being upright and honest in all their other dealings take it for granted and sometimes brag about the fact that they cheat their Negroes. On the other hand, it is equally apparent that there is a strong recognition in the South of the difficulty for a landlord to get and keep good workers if he does not have the reputation of dealing with them on a straight basis. Still, there are too many "settlement jokes" in the Southern folklore[65] and too many statements about the matter in the literature to make a student inclined to dismiss the possibility of outright cheating. There is social significance even in the fact—which every observer will be able to confirm—that "the system leaves the Negro tenant with the *feeling* that he has not been treated justly."[66]

The "advancing" of food, clothing, and other necessities of life is a significant part of the system. Since the tenant is ordinarily without resources—otherwise he would not be a tenant—he cannot usually wait for his wages until the crop has been harvested and sold. He has, therefore, to live on a credit basis at least during a large part of the year. For an average period of seven months, according to Woofter's sample study for 1934, the tenant receives credit from the landlord, often in a special store or commissary, where he can buy household supplies up to a certain amount a month. This amount varies according to the size of the family, the prospects for the crop, the market conditions, and so on. The average in Woofter's sample was $12.80 per month and $88 per year.[67] A study of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta in 1936 showed an average subsistence advance per year of about $94 for sharecroppers and $138 for share tenants. If operating credit is included, the amounts were $162 and $283, respectively.[68]

The interest rates charged for these advances are extremely high. A flat rate of 10 per cent is usual but, since the duration of the credit is only a few months, the annual rate is several times higher. According to Woofter's sample study in 1934, it was no less than 37 per cent.[69] A plantation study for 1937 on a somewhat smaller sample gave almost the same average. "These rates were two to three times as high as those paid by the operators (landlords) for short-term credit."[70]

In addition, prices in commissaries are often "marked up" to a considerable extent.[71] Some people in the South, however, will tell the visitor that the breaking up of rural isolation and the increased opportunities for tenants to spend week-ends in towns and cities and see the stores has made this latter practice less prevalent than it used to be. When the advances are paid in cash, which sometimes happens, the tenant naturally has greater freedom to buy at ordinary market prices.

According to Woofter's plantation study for the depression period 1930-1934, no less than 13-15 per cent of the tenants ended each crop year in debt to their landlords. This means that, in addition to their having to

start the next crop year with a deficit, they have nothing to live on during the winter. The average debt for these tenants varied between $89 and $143.[72] As hinted at before, it is probable that indebted and propertyless tenants are often able nowadays to get rid of their debts simply by moving to another place. This, at least, is likely to be the case when the tenant is an inefficient worker, and the landlord, for this reason, is not interested in keeping him and considers the expense for collecting the debt higher than it is worth. The extremely high number of tenants who have stayed less than one year on their present farms is enough to indicate the relatively unhampered movements of most tenant operators. The practice of forcing an indebted tenant to stay on the plantation in order to work off his debt certainly became less prevalent during the period of relatively abundant agricultural labor which lasted from the beginning of the depression until the present war boom.[73] We do not know whether the present shortage of farm labor has brought about any new increase in such debt-peonage. What we do know is that the whole legal system previously gave the tenants but little protection against such abuses and that, so far, there has been no fundamental change in this legal system. In addition, the planter has at his disposal all the extra-legal caste sanctions. It is certain, anyway, that there is some debt-peonage left.[74]

Apart from the legal and extra-legal pressures, the terms established in the landlord-tenant agreements and settlements will be heavily loaded against the plantation tenants, because of that monopolistic element which was analyzed even in the time of Adam Smith: the purchasers of labor will be bound as neighbors, friends, and gentlemen not to bid against each other for tenants. This monopolistic tendency will be particularly effective in the plantation South where the tenants are usually absolutely unorganized, where, further, there is a racial split and usually extreme prejudice among them, and where—particularly in the case of Negro tenants—the social distance between employers and employees is enormous.

That such a monopolistic tendency is strong has been seen by many observers.[75] To begin with, no planter feels that he can afford to lose a tenant who has started a crop. The claims on solidarity go further, however. To be a "tenant-stealer" is traditionally considered a bad thing.[76] According to the prevailing custom, no landlord is supposed to accept a tenant whom the previous employer does not agree to release.[77]

The basis of this custom is a feeling, on the part of the planters, of a sort of collective ownership of the workers in the community. The resentment against any outsiders coming in for the purpose of hiring labor is even stronger, if possible.[78] The hostility against outside labor agents grew particularly strong during the period of the First World War, when Northern industry made its strongest bid for the Negro agricultural worker. Several states enacted laws against such practices.

The last state law against the enticement of labor was passed in Louisiana early in June, 1935, making it "unlawful for any person to go on the premises or plantation of any citizen between sunset and sunrise and assist in moving any laborers or tenants therefrom without the consent of the owner of said premises or plantation."[79]

This should be the place for "balancing the picture" by looking for positive aspects of the paternalistic labor relations on the Southern plantations. The system doubtless has some positive sides. Even the outsider will occasionally find some evidence of them. There are good landlords, who really try to take care of their tenants to some extent. They are the ones who get and hold the good tenants. They are rightly proud of this fact and tell the interviewer about it. Most studies contain some statement from such a plantation owner who has made the discovery that he can get the best out of his Negro tenant just by treating him decently and by appealing to his ambition to get ahead—in other words, by regarding the Negro like any other human being. Since the general standard is so low, it is not expensive to be an exceptionally good planter and have the best tenants.

Yet the fact that planters, too, are ordinary human beings, and that many of them actually are better than the system which they represent, is not high praise of the plantation system as an economic institution. Every social institution, in this way, presents a whole range of cases—low extremes, normal cases and high extremes. Nevertheless, we can talk about the whole range as being low or high in relation to the corresponding range for alternative institutions. The benevolence of certain landlords certainly is a great help for many individual tenants. But it is, in the final analysis, nothing else than an aspect of the arbitrariness of the whole system.

It is our impression that the predominant feeling among most Negro tenants is that they can get more or less out of the landlord depending upon what kind of landlord he is, and how he is approached. But not often have they been taught to feel that they have definite rights and definite obligations, and that it is up to them to make good. Several local Farm Security officials in the South have informed us of how the inherited paternalistic attitude on the part of the planters and the corresponding attitudes of dependence, carelessness, and lack of ambition on the part of the tenants constitute the toughest problems in their work. The plantation system, in summary, fails flagrantly to meet the standards of social and economic efficiency and justice.[80]

There is no lack of statements in the literature on the plantation system of the South to the effect that its survival through generations is a "proof" that it—compared with other organizations of land, capital, and labor for agricultural production—is superior and best adapted to the circumstances of the region. This is, of course, nothing but the application of the liberalistic (do-nothing) doctrine that "what is, must be"—which from a scientific

viewpoint is most doubtful in itself under *any* circumstances[a]—to a tradition-bound, nonliberalistic, economic arrangement. The logical fault is too obvious to need further comment. This particular economic arrangement, as all others, has to be explained in historical terms and to be evaluated in terms of its effects *compared with alternate, possible arrangements.*

In this context the changes actually occurring in the plantation system become important. As we have indicated, the system of slightly modernized Black Codes seems finally to be withering under the assaults of the Supreme Court and other federal agencies as well as of various pro-democratic organizations in both the South and the North. The relative abundance of agricultural labor during the 'thirties has contributed, probably more than anything else, toward the gradual wiping out of the practice of debt-peonage. Attempts to organize plantation tenants have occurred. Efforts of the federal government to rationalize the credit structure and other crucial elements of the plantation system have been started. There are some concerted efforts to begin reforming even the tenure conditions. The cotton acreage has been drastically curtailed. We shall find, however, that new problems have risen—problems which, again, have affected the Negroes much more seriously than the whites.

[a] See Appendix 2.

CHAPTER 12

NEW BLOWS TO SOUTHERN AGRICULTURE DURING THE THIRTIES: TRENDS AND POLICIES

1. Agricultural Trends During the 'Thirties

Of all the calamities that have struck the rural Negro people in the South in recent decades—soil erosion, the infiltration of white tenants into plantation areas, the ravages of the boll weevil, the southwestern shift in cotton cultivation—none has had such grave consequences, or threatens to have such lasting effect, as the combination of world agricultural trends and federal agricultural policy initiated during the 'thirties. These changes are revolutionizing the whole structure of Southern agricultural economy. They have already rooted out a considerable portion of the Negro farmers and made the future of the remaining group extremely problematic.

For more than a century America has been the leading cotton-producing country in the world. But cotton growing in other countries was slowly increasing, and the increase became substantial in the decade following the First World War. American cotton production, except for annual fluctuations, remained fairly constant during this period. Still during the 'twenties American-grown cotton represented more than half of the total world production. Meanwhile domestic consumption had ceased to increase. The trend of cotton prices was downward during most of the 'twenties.[1] Lange remarks:

> Looking back to this period, it is now rather obvious that cotton production in the United States had already reached its limits of practical expansion. American cotton had to face a keen competition on most markets abroad, as the production in certain foreign countries, primarily China and Egypt, was increasing and new raw material for textiles began to appear at the same time.[2]

But it was during the 'thirties that the over-production problem really became serious. It was then that the demand was declining drastically abroad and at home due to the depression and to the growing competition from other countries and to the increased use of substitutes. The cotton economy suffered much more from the depression and recovered much less afterward than did American agriculture in general.[3]

Southern tobacco also is losing out on the international market, and the

slow rise in domestic consumption has failed—at least up to the present war boom—to compensate for the loss.[4] Southern sugar cane is in a similar position.[5] Only in one main commercial crop in the South did a rising demand keep pace with production—namely, the fruit and vegetable production in Florida and the coastal plains. But even for these crops prices have declined, and their cultivation offers workers still worse living conditions than does the cotton plantation.[6]

Under this onslaught on the old cash crops of the South, and also induced by an agricultural policy which we shall comment upon later, dairy farming has made some headway in the South.[7] There does not seem to be much hope, however, that dairy farming ever will become a major Southern industry. In the Lower South there are certain climatic obstacles which so far have been difficult to overcome; and milk and cream require a local market. Beef cattle and hogs, on the other hand, have shown a big increase.[8] Yet the Southeast had, in 1940, still less than one-tenth of all the beef cattle in the country.[9]

These are some of the significant changes which have occurred in Southern agriculture during the decade before the present war boom. The terrific blow to the cotton economy was the most significant, particularly from the viewpoint of the Negro. Some of the other changes indicated a beginning reorientation along new lines. But none of them was large enough to compensate for the shattering disaster in cotton, for cotton is one of the most labor-consuming crops in the South.

> It has been estimated that on the average 30 million acres of land devoted to the production of cotton will furnish about 255 million days of work per year in growing, harvesting, and hauling the crop to the gin. If the same acreage were put in corn it would require only 110 million days of labor, or less than one-half the time required by cotton, and if seeded to oats or hay the total days of labor required to produce and harvest these crops would amount to from 45 to 50 million days, or an equivalent of one-sixth to one-fifth as much labor as if the land were devoted to cotton production.[10]

Thus, even under favorable circumstances it would not have been possible to avoid widespread unemployment of agricultural labor. But circumstances were not favorable. For although extensive and commendable attempts were made to deal with the social aspects of the problem of structural change, the major New Deal efforts, as we shall find, did not fit into constructive long-range program for a reorganization of Southern agriculture.

The present war boom, of course, has brought temporary relief. There has been an increased demand and an increased production of several crops. The growing of peanuts has been stepped up considerably. There is a greater production of tobacco, sugar cane and rice; soybeans, too, have increased,

although much more so in the North than in the South. The market for all meats is booming.[11] There is a pronounced scarcity of agricultural labor in the South as well as everywhere else. This new situation may, in a measure, have some positive effects also on the long-range development. The War probably has been a stimulus to greater crop diversification in the South. The encouragement of out-migration from rural areas may make agricultural over-population somewhat less severe even after the War than would have been the case under other circumstances. But there are also great risks in this development. When the results of the destruction in Europe and elsewhere have been overcome, American agriculture will again appear as over-expanded. The long-range employment prospects in Southern agriculture, on the whole, are rather dark.

2. THE DISAPPEARING SHARECROPPER

Up to the time when the data from the 1940 Census were released, the main emphasis in the discussion was placed upon the increase in tenancy—a trend which had been noticeable ever since the Civil War—and upon the decline in number of farm owners—which became apparent during the 'twenties. The 1940 Census, however, showed that the trends had become reversed. Tenancy was on the decline, for there were 192,000 fewer Negro and 150,000 fewer white tenants in 1940 than in 1930. Ownership, on the other hand, was on the increase in Southern agriculture, except for the Negroes (Table 1).

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF FARM OPERATORS IN THE SOUTH, BY TENURE AND COLOR: 1930, 1935, AND 1940
(in thousands)

	Owners and Managers		Tenants Other than Croppers		Croppers	
Year	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White
1930	183	1,250	306	709	393	383
1935	186	1,404	261	854	368	348
1940	174	1,384	208	700	299	242

Sources: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture: 1935*, Vol. III, pp. 106, 107, and 126–133. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture.* United States Summary, First Series, Table VI: Supplemental for the Southern States.

The rise in ownership and decline in tenancy did not balance each other, however. The increase in number of owners occurred altogether between 1930 and 1935 and was restricted to the white group. The decrease in the total number of tenants occurred between 1935 and 1940 and was then divided between the two racial groups. Before 1935, however, white cash

and share tenants seem to have become much more numerous, whereas all other tenant groups—Negro cash and share tenants as well as Negro and white croppers—had started to decline. The decrease in number of tenants during the following five years became much more pronounced and affected all four color-tenure groups.

The final results, by 1940, of all these changes were that there was a somewhat larger number of white owners than in 1930; a slightly lower number of Negro owners; a much lower number of Negro cash and share tenants, and of Negro and white croppers. The total number of croppers had declined by almost one-third (somewhat more for whites and somewhat less for Negroes), and the decrease in number of Negro cash and share tenants was at least of the same relative size.

These rather spectacular changes do not mean, observes Sterner,

> . . . that the situation has been ameliorated. By and large it is rather the other way around. While the limitations in the opportunities in Southern agriculture formerly caused an increase in tenancy, they now seem to have been aggravated to such an extent that *the Negro and white sharecropping class as well as the Negro cash and share tenants are in the process of being forced out.*[12]

Yet, many of the ex-tenants and ex-croppers may have stayed in agriculture. They have simply been reduced to wage laborers on the farms. This, of course, means only that their position, in most of the cases, has become still more marginal.[13]

The main reason why the Negro lost out, probably, was the fact that he, much more than the white operator and worker, was dependent on the cotton economy which was hit most severely by the depression and by the falling off of foreign markets. Practically all the increase in number of farm operators as well as the total increase in farm population during the period 1930-1935 occurred outside of the cotton regions;[14] and after that period there were no further increases of that kind. Yet, the depression by itself seems to have had much more immediate effects on income conditions than on employment, for the decline in Negro tenancy before 1935 was relatively limited compared with what was to come after that year. It seems, therefore, that *the agricultural policies, and particularly the Agricultural Adjustment program (A.A.A.), which was instituted in May, 1933, was the factor directly responsible for the drastic curtailment in number of Negro and white sharecroppers and Negro cash and share tenants.*

It is true that behind the A.A.A. was the depression and over-production. If no such thing as the A.A.A. had ever been instituted, the cotton price would have remained low for so long a time that production and employment eventually would have been severely curtailed. And A.A.A. certainly raised the income not only for planters and other owners, but—to an extent—also for those tenants and croppers who were allowed to stay in employ-

ment. But hundreds of thousands of them did not get any protection at all. They were pushed off the land, and, if anything, the A.A.A. hastened their elimination.

3. THE ROLE OF THE A.A.A. IN REGARD TO COTTON

In order to understand this, it is necessary to recall what the A.A.A. program is all about and how it works.[a] Its fundamental objective is to raise and stabilize farm income. This objective is sought along four principal lines: (1) limitation of cash crop acreages; (2) removal of price-depressing surpluses from regular markets; (3) payment of direct subsidies to farmers; (4) and encouragement of conservation practices. There is an intimate relationship between all four main aspects of the program. The first two are aimed at restricting the supply brought on the ordinary market. The cash crop limitations make greater emphasis on soil-building crops and practices possible. Subsidies are paid as a remuneration for carrying out acreage restrictions and conservation work; their function is not only to let the farmers have a direct bounty, but also to encourage them to participate in the program, which is not compulsory but voluntary. The voluntary character of the participation, however, seems to be something of a fiction. There is, for instance, a ginning tax on cotton and a marketing tax on tobacco, whereby the nonparticipant is penalized if he markets in excess of what he normally produces on what should be his acreage allotment. The fact that those taxes have to be approved by referendum does not make the participation much more voluntary for the individual operators who would be against it.

The cut in cotton acreage has been drastic.[15] Owing to a tendency to intensify the cultivation and to retain the best land in cotton and, perhaps, to make some improvements in cultivating technique, the production has not decreased to the same extent.[16] Since the acreage cuts were not made large enough to offset the effect of the increased acreage yields, the overproduction problem obviously has not been solved in this way.[17]

The A.A.A. policy of keeping up the level of cotton prices by crop reduction and removal of price-depressing surpluses from the market, of course, helped the United States to lose its foreign market to competing countries. The volume of American cotton export hit a low during the crop year 1938-1939.[18] On the whole, it seems that "of all our crops, cotton has given the

[a] The following short description of how the A.A.A. program has affected the Negro is based largely on an unpublished manuscript prepared for this study by Gunnar Lange ("Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro" [January, 1942]). Several significant details and qualifications, as well as certain characteristics of the program during the first years of its operation, are intentionally overlooked in the summary given in the text. Main emphasis is put on those points which facilitate the understanding of how the program has affected the Negro.

New Deal most trouble."[19] In 1939, however, a substantial export bounty on cotton was instituted. This, and perhaps still more the increased consumption during the present war, has brought temporary relief. The carry-over has declined, but it is still significant.

Indeed, the whole program would have failed to bring about any increase in cotton prices had it not been for the removal of surpluses from the ordinary market. Very commendable were the efforts—now discontinued—to increase the cotton consumption of the needy by direct distribution of mattresses and by the Cotton Stamp Plan. Those measures, however, were expensive in relation to their results in reducing the cotton surplus. The fact that the cotton producer receives but 15 cents of the consumer's dollar spent on cotton products[20] makes it much more difficult to make a cotton distribution program effective than it is to take similar measures in regard to most other agricultural products. Therefore, this part of the removal program was only experimental.

Of real importance, on the other hand, have been the commodity loans to individual farmers and associations of farmers for the purpose of encouraging storing (The Ever-Normal Granary Plan). These loans explain the large carry-overs. The existence of such huge and fluctuating surpluses means, however, that the whole system has had complete lack of stability, which was contrary to the official purpose of the Granary Plan to keep the supply in balance. Had it not been for the present War, there could ultimately have been but two alternatives: either further drastic cuts in the cotton acreage, or collapse of the whole program.[a] In either case, the Negro would have been hurt severely.

4. A.A.A. AND THE NEGRO

It is something of a problem, however, that most of the reduction in cotton acreage was carried out before 1935, whereas the decrease in number of Negro and white croppers and of Negro cash and share tenants did not start to become really significant until after that year. Of course, there is nothing unnatural in a certain time-lag between acreage curtailment and effects on employment. The intensification of cultivation of the cotton land not eliminated by the A.A.A., the increase in certain other crops, and the uncertainty about the permanence in the change may have contributed to a certain delay in the reorganization of the labor force. The Supreme Court decision of 1936, invalidating the first A.A.A. program, and the actual occurrence of an all-time peak in cotton production in 1937 justifies, to a degree, the hypothesis that the change may have had the appearance to many planters of being only temporary. By letting the employees share

[a] A third alternative would have been to rely consistently on export subsidies; but such a policy, more likely than not, would have been neutralized in the long run through retaliatory measures of foreign competitors.

in the reduction of income which had occurred since 1929, and by letting newly instituted rural relief agencies[a] provide supplementary income for part of the labor force during off-seasons, it was possible for the planters to retain most of the tenants for some time.

Furthermore, it was probably not only by the acreage reduction that the A.A.A. later gave inducement to the reduction in number of tenants.[21] Another factor, perhaps equally important, was the A.A.A. benefit payments. During the first years of the A.A.A. system there was a general complaint that landlords simply grabbed the benefit checks which they were supposed to forward to the tenants.[22] Many of these complaints turned out to be justified—even when investigated by county committees which were almost entirely white, and on which landowners were over-represented.

These practices were, in the main, later abolished. In the last few years, benefits are paid direct to the tenants. Although the credit relations between landlord and tenant, the system of unilateral account-keeping, as well as the legal impotence of the Negro tenants, still may enable the landlord to receive a larger share of the benefits than he is supposed to get, the situation certainly has changed. As early as 1935-1936, the Consumer Purchases Study, for instance, showed that even sharecroppers were receiving some A.A.A. payments.[23] The basis for the division of the payments between landlord and tenant, moreover, has been changed, so that the tenant today is to receive a larger share—about equal to his share in the crop—than according to former stipulations. The average benefit per plantation tenant, according to a sample study for some 3,000 plantation tenant families, had increased from $11 per year in 1934 to $27 in 1937. The latter figure constituted almost 10 per cent of the total net cash income of the average tenant family ($300).[24] In all probability there has been a further increase since 1937.

These changes in favor of the tenants, however, must have had the character of a two-edged sword. They gave the landlord a considerable economic interest in decreasing the number of tenants or lowering their status to wage laborers. And it is particularly during the latter part of the 'thirties that this temptation became significant. This may well be the main explanation of why most of the decline in number of sharecroppers and tenants occurred after 1935. Landlords have always tended to change the tenure status of their workers whenever that has been compatible with their own economic interests.[25] There is no reason why they should have behaved otherwise when carrying out the A.A.A. regulations.

It is true that the A.A.A. contracts have included stipulations according to which the landlords were obliged to maintain the normal number of tenants and laborers.[26] Yet such a regulation, even under the best conditions, must be difficult to enforce. Landlords cannot well be asked to keep the

[a] See Chapter 15.

same individual tenants and workers as before. When some move away—and they do move often—it can always be claimed that there just are no others good enough to take their jobs and farms. There is another stipulation, however, which should be easier to enforce. It is prescribed that a reduction in the number of tenants and croppers on a farm shall not operate to increase the payment to the landlord. Yet even this safeguard seems to have been insufficient. For Negroes, and tenants generally, have practically no real influence on the local administration of the program. And if a reduction in the number of tenants "is considered justified from the viewpoint of 'sound management,' the stipulation preventing an increase in the amount of payments to the landlords shall not apply."[27] Several observers have noted that landlords actually have substituted wage labor for tenants in order to secure larger A.A.A. payments for themselves.[28]

In summary: Landlords have been made to reduce drastically the acreage for their main labor-requiring crops. They have been given a large part of the power over the local administration of this program. They have a strong economic incentive to reduce their tenant labor force, a large part of which consists of politically and legally impotent Negroes. Yet they have been asked not to make any such reduction. It would certainly not be compatible with usual human behavior, if this request generally had been fulfilled. Under the circumstances, there is no reason at all to be surprised about the wholesale decline in tenancy. Indeed, it would be surprising if it had not happened.

5. THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE A.A.A.

A few remarks on the local administration of the A.A.A. are pertinent here, as a further explanation of the last point. This administration is in the hands of the Extension Service—that is, the County Farm Demonstration Agents—and the County Agricultural Conservation Committees representing local farmers. It is our impression, based upon a large number of interviews, that the county agents in the plantation South, to a great extent, have an attitude on economic, social, and racial questions which is similar to that of the large landowners. Some of them actually are planters themselves. The committees, at least in plantation counties, are characterized by an over-representation of big estate owners.[29] Committee members have often been appointed by the federal administration upon the recommendation of the county agent, which meant that the Extension Service continued to control the local committees. The federal administration has continued attempting to democratize and to decentralize the administration of the A.A.A. An important development is the recent organization of land-use planning committees for the purpose of achieving coordination and local adjustment of the various action programs. The Negro, however, has scarcely profited by these reforms.[30]

It is true that the Negroes commonly vote in A.A.A. referenda for certain decisions, such as the establishment of marketing quotas.[a] Their votes are needed, since a majority of all farmers, including tenants and croppers, must be in favor of the program for it to be adopted. But Negroes are seldom allowed to vote for committeemen. Even when Negroes do exercise some privileges, it seldom means that they have any real influence on the decisions.

Not only Negro tenants and croppers, but Negro farm owners as well, are jeopardized by their relative lack of influence on the decisions of the local A.A.A. administration. The allotment of cotton acreage and benefit payments is a rather complicated affair. There are certain statistical computations involved, and these computations, in part, are based on records concerning previous farm practices on every individual holding. The accuracy of the records and calculations depends on the good-will, conscientiousness, and competence of those in charge of the local control. If they do not adequately represent all local farm groups, it can scarcely be avoided that the rights and interests of under-represented or entirely unrepresented farmers and tenants are overlooked in many individual cases. This is more likely to be the case since such groups, particularly Negroes, include a large proportion of more or less illiterate people who are unable to understand the intricate regulations well enough even to find out whether or not they have been wronged.[31] Indeed even highly educated persons may have to make a special effort in order to check up on their share.

6. MECHANIZATION

Before we proceed to an evaluation of the A.A.A. program, we must discuss a factor which seems bound to add its influence in displacing Negro labor on Southern plantations: mechanization. We also want to look for tendencies toward concerted defense action on the part of the plantation laborers.

Up to now mechanization has not been important. Cotton cultivation, in the main, is carried on by a technique which has not changed much since slavery. The low degree of mechanization is the reason why cotton growing requires so much labor and keeps this labor down to such low levels of living. At the same time, the cheap labor makes mechanization unprofitable. Otherwise it might be expected that the commercial farming of cotton on the Southern plantations would be more inviting to more efficient production methods than the subsistence production on family farms. But mechanization has actually been slow.[32]

In the last decade, however, there has been a tendency toward a narrowing of the still wide gap between the national and the Southeastern rates of mechanization.[33] That cotton planters in the Southeast would like to

[a] See Chapter 22, Section 3.

buy more machines is evident from a sample inquiry about factors retarding mechanization; half of the informants stressed the difficulty of financing purchases.[34]

It should be noted that the two Southwestern states, Texas and Oklahoma, show a different picture.[35] But what has happened in the Southwest has only a slight direct importance for Negro employment, as Negroes there are so relatively scarce in the rural districts. If mechanization for a long time should fail to become as intensive in the Southeast as in the Southwest, there is no doubt that the Negro, nevertheless, will suffer indirectly.

Great hindrances to mechanization have been both the difficulty of getting credit and the high rate of interest. The recent reforms in the organization of agricultural credit have reduced this obstacle considerably. The A.A.A. benefit payments add to the supply of cash that planters can use for mechanization, though it is true that even with these payments their incomes have not come to the pre-depression level. *The A.A.A. program has, however, another and most important influence toward increasing mechanization because of the premium it offers for reducing the number of tenants.*

Formerly, agricultural machines were not well-adjusted to the rolling terrain in some parts of the South. This is being overcome by newer types of machines constructed to satisfy Southern requirements.[36] As the Southern market for machines increases and, perhaps, other markets contract, the machine manufacturers, no doubt, will direct more of their attention toward the specific needs of the South. The mechanical cotton picker eventually may be perfected to such an extent that it can be used extensively on an economical basis;[37] a mechanical cotton chopper, perhaps, is a nearer possibility.[38] But even without such innovations, there will be more motors running in the agricultural South. The great number of large holdings, in some measure, should facilitate the use of more machine equipment, and Negroes are concentrated in those regions where holdings are large.

The threat against employment opportunities in the rural South is potentially greater, for the very reason that so far there have been but few machines on Southern farms. The displacement of labor which can be brought about by further mechanization is so much greater than anywhere else. Negroes, for several reasons, will feel the effects of this trend more than white workers, in the same way as they have suffered more from the decline in cotton economy. They are more dependent on the cash crop culture. They are more concentrated on plantations. They are objects of prejudice, especially when it comes to handling machinery. To operate an expensive machine is to have a position of responsibility, which, even in the rural South, must draw "white man's pay." Although Negroes have shown that they can acquire the necessary skill for the purpose,[39] there is scarcely any doubt that employers, more often than not, will prefer white labor if farm operations are mechanized. The records show that but a small part of the

machine equipment in the South is on farms where there are colored operators.[40] It will always be easier for employers to find workers who know how to run machinery in the white group. More and more the Negro will be reduced to a seasonal worker, and even this opportunity will dwindle if chopping and picking, too, should become mechanized.[41]

7. LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

In view of the quantitative significance of the labor displacement during the 'thirties, one would have expected to find widespread evidence of unrest among the sharecroppers. One would have expected, further, to find a great number of publicized expressions of a popular concern about what was happening, as well as a widespread discussion of ameliorative programs. Finally, one would have expected concrete action to follow these discussions.

There was unrest among the sharecroppers. There was publicity about it. And the federal government did make highly commendable and rather sizable attempts to improve the conditions by its various Farm Security programs.[a] But the organized attempts of the tenants and sharecroppers to fight for their needs were rather weak and scattered. And the publicity, largely a result of certain incidents during the organizational work,[42] was not extensive enough to reach far outside the ranks of such reformers, administrators, social workers, scientists, journalists, and others who more or less professionally had to follow the development. The federal government itself called attention to some of the problems involved by publishing several outstanding reports, including the *Report on Farm Tenancy* by the President's Committee, Woofter's study on *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*, and the Holley, Winston, and Woofter volume on *The Plantation South, 1934-1937*. But even in these otherwise enlightening studies there was little, if any, attention given to the wholesale decline in number of tenants.[b] The general public was rather unaware of the deeper social significance of such incidents as occasionally made the front page of the press. What the federal government did for the Southern tenants, therefore, appeared to the average citizen more or less like a goodhearted and, perhaps, extravagant benevolence on the part of the New Deal. He usually had no idea at all that part of the distress was due to government policy. Popular backing for the protest movement was by no means as strong as it could have been had the general public been better informed.

[a] See Section 12 of this chapter.

[b] The explanation is largely that the statistics had not yet furnished any conclusive evidence on the significance of the change. One cannot help feeling, though, that the political necessity to defend all kinds of farm relief measures against attacks from the nonagrarian groups caused a certain unwillingness to admit that the A.A.A. program could have contributed to the decline in employment opportunities.

It should not surprise us that organizational efforts among Southern tenants and farmhands were practically absent before the New Deal and remained weak even during the latter part of the 'thirties. Even in countries where the labor movement and collective bargaining have proceeded far in advance of American accomplishments in this field, the organization of agricultural labor has always been a hard task. The spatial dispersion of production and of the labor force and, still more, certain elements of rural culture tend to increase inertia against concerted action. In the South these difficulties are enhanced by the low educational level and the poverty of the agricultural workers; by their complete lack of cooperative habits; by the tradition of paternalism and dependence inherent in the plantation system; by the frequent moving from one locality to another; by the weak legal order which, in this field, has taken the form of ruthlessly beating down all labor organizations; and by the split between Negroes and whites. The last factor is of special importance because in this particular labor market there is intense competition between Negroes and whites. The whites could not possibly attain anything by organizing unions excluding Negroes. Whites and Negroes are exchangeable from the employers' point of view, and there exists a pressing labor surplus, particularly of Negro labor.

This is the general background against which the first labor movement among Southern farm workers should be viewed. The attempt to unionize has been concentrated mainly in the Southwest and in the Western border regions of the Cotton Belt, but the movement is spreading eastward. Arthur Raper, writing in 1940, summarizes the situation thus:

> At present the only three labor unions of farm tenants which are strong enough to be of any consequence have interracial membership. They are: The Farmers' Union, with headquarters at New Orleans and with activities limited largely to Louisiana; the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (C.I.O.) with comparatively few members in the cotton area; and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, with headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee.[43]

Most of the states in the Southeast are untouched by these activities. Raper explains this limitation in the following way:

> The reasons are varied. In this newest cotton country a considerable proportion of the tenants have a background of small ownership or independent labor at sawmills. They have not been so long schooled in the plantation dependency as have the landless families in the Southeast, where the present plantation roots back into slavery. In the newer plantation region, holdings are larger and absentee ownership prevalent; relationships between management and workers are less personal, and the presence of labor organizers is less noticeable.[44]

Another reason for the regional differential is that the legal order is somewhat stronger in the Southwest. A handbill distributed in 1940 by a group

called Missouri Agricultural Workers Council, contained a reference to a previous demonstration, which read:

> We staged the protest in Missouri,—not because cotton labor is treated more unfairly in Missouri than elsewhere. We know that is not true. We staged it in Missouri because we had less fear of bloody violence in Missouri.[45]

It seems that these organizations grow up largely because of the special problems brought about through the A.A.A. and the decline in employment opportunities. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which is still the main organization in the field, started around an organized attempt of sharecroppers, in the neighborhood of Tyronza, Arkansas, to get their share of the A.A.A. payments and to stand up for their rights not to be displaced as a consequence of the A.A.A. program.[46] Indirectly, the results of these activities have been significant, in that the limited publicity around them probably has contributed a great deal to induce the federal government to take certain actions. The direct results, on the other hand, seem not to have been important, except in individual cases. The S.T.F.U. at the beginning of 1942 claimed a membership of 15,000 of which, however, only 2,000 were members who paid dues regularly.[47] Besides the general handicaps of organizing Southern farm workers, mentioned a few pages back, these organizations have been hampered by certain internal differences, particularly between the leadership of the S.T.F.U. and the U.C.A.P.A.W.A. The fact that whites and Negroes have been organized together, has, of course, been a main difficulty, but the pioneers have, on the whole, met it with success. It would seem that the most important single difficulty in the way of these movements is the lack of a legal tradition in the plantation South.[a]

It is difficult to judge about the future chances of trade unionism in the plantation South. On the one hand, the economic pressure is likely to continue and might become aggravated. Reasons for unrest and dissatisfaction are going to mount in the future as they did during the 'thirties. And there are indications of a development toward greater respect for law in the South.[b] In the political sphere there are reasons to expect an increase in participation and power for the working masses.[c] The South is becoming increasingly industrialized, and in its industries unionism is pushing ahead. All these trends favor unionization even in the rural South. On the other hand, the difficulties to be overcome, particularly in the Old Cotton Belt where the Negroes are concentrated, are tremendous.

[a] A more complete story of these attempts, interesting and significant though it might be, would deal more with such problems of law enforcement, or lack of it, that have to be considered elsewhere in our inquiry rather than with questions more immediately related to the social and economic conditions of the Negro in agriculture. See Part VI.

[b] See Part VI.

[c] See Chapters 23 and 33

It is difficult to see how the federal government would be able to cope more successfully with the displacement problem and with other problems developing as a consequence of economic trends, agricultural policy, and the War, without having the farm workers organized and their interests and opinions articulated. When after the present War the government is faced with the problem of reformulating its agricultural program for the South, we should expect that it will find it necessary at least to protect the Southern tenants in their legal right to organize strong unions.

8. THE DILEMMA OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY

If the farm workers become organized in the South, whether by their own efforts or by government encouragement, and if their organizations are able to enter into successful collective bargaining with the planters, *any success in raising the earnings and living levels for farm labor on Southern plantations will accentuate, or rather make explicit in form of unemployment, the basic over-population of Southern agriculture.* Any policy which will improve levels of living, thereby increasing costs to plantation owners, will stimulate mechanization and will displace cotton by other crops which do not require so much labor. In the long-range view this might be desirable, in terms both of economic rationality and of human welfare. But the immediate effect, if vigorous countermeasures to remove the surplus population from the cotton land are not taken, would be accentuated unemployment, and the Negroes would be hurt the most. This is the dilemma of agricultural policy in the South.

The dilemma is, of course, much more general. It is at the bottom of all agricultural policy in America and elsewhere. The ultimate objective in attempting to raise the living levels for farmers and to protect their economic security must be to make agricultural production more efficient—be it through the lowering of the credit rates, through the use of more mechanical equipment, through improvement of livestock and plants, through teaching the farmers how to use better techniques and how to plan their operations in a more economical manner. But all this must make the tendency toward over-production even more pronounced. It must lower the number of acres and workers required for satisfying a given demand. Some experts, like the agro-biologist, O. W. Wilcox, even go so far as to believe ". . . that if the most productive methods now known were generally applied, then it would be possible for 1,600,000 farmers on 40,000,000 acres to produce as much of our eight principal crops as are now produced by six or seven million farmers on about 240,000,000."[48]

This may be an exaggeration. But it seems obvious that the increase in production which, within a not-too-distant future, would be technologically possible to achieve, is large compared even with the largest conceivable needs of the American people. According to certain estimates, if all families

with a poor diet could be given what the Department of Agriculture characterizes as a "moderate-cost good diet," this would, *with present techniques*, require a crop acreage only about 20 per cent larger than was harvested in 1939.[49] The attempts to increase the demands of low-income families by means of direct distribution of agricultural products, by the Food Stamp Plan and by school lunches, are highly commendable from the viewpoint of national health. But they cannot remove the over-production indefinitely; at best they can merely cushion the effects of it temporarily.

By the same token, the attempts to make farmers go in for a system of almost complete self-sufficiency can scarcely do more than mitigate the effects of the rural over-population.[50] It is true, theoretically, that if a large enough number of farmers went in for self-sufficient agriculture, all over-production would be checked. But this would mean permanently dividing the farming population into two parts, of which only one would be allowed to go in for modern cost-saving specialization and efficient techniques. The other part would have to diversify its efforts and use inefficient techniques to an extent where they would be working hard and getting little in return, including practically nothing in the way of modern conveniences. This plan would never provide the hope of approaching what is understood to be "the American standard of living." Too, it would require the permanent stifling of ambition and an economic dictatorship to separate those retained in commercial agriculture from those forced into self-sufficient agriculture. Such a solution, if it were applied consistently and on a large scale, would not be acceptable to the American people.

This basic dilemma in agricultural policy is now much greater in the South, where over-population is so much more pressing than in the North. The burden of over-population, in the form of both unemployment and extreme poverty among those retained in agricultural employment, falls much more heavily on the Negro population than on the whites.

9. ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF THE A.A.A.

We are now ready to proceed to an evaluation of the A.A.A. program in its relation to cotton cultivation and the Negro farmer.

From the restricted point of view of production efficiency, the reduction of cotton acreage, and the dismissal of tenants consequent to this and to the special inducement contained in the benefit payments, is all to the good. The Southern plantation has altogether too many workers and tenants; cotton cultivation, as it has been carried on in the South, involves an exploitation of labor that is not compatible with American standards and American economic possibilities. From the same point of view, mechanization also is desirable. Any rise in farm labor standards, through collective bargaining or social legislation, would also, for the same reason, be com-

mendable. In fact, economic progress means that we become able to produce our foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials with less of our available labor.

But there is one important consequence of such a policy which must be taken into account if it is to be deemed rational: *Employment must be found for the agricultural labor dismissed as a consequence of trends or of policy.* Theoretically, there is plenty of place for labor in American industry: the masses of people are in need of many more industrial products. Houses need to be rebuilt; people need more and better furniture and other household gadgets; large sectors of the American population do not enjoy health and educational facilities to an optimal degree. An obvious complement to an agricultural policy of the A.A.A. type would be, therefore, *a large-scale effort to move a part of the agricultural population to industry.* It is an equally obvious inference that this effort should be concentrated upon the younger generation, in which should be invested a vocational training making them fit for industrial work. In regard to Negro education in the South, this policy will require a complete reform of the educational system and, particularly, a reformulation of the aims of vocational education.[a]

Unfortunately it happened that this agricultural policy had to be carried out during an unprecedentedly deep and protracted depression. Unfortunately, too, the New Deal was a conspicuous failure in its attempt to turn the depression into economic prosperity.[b] A general defeatism became widespread in regard to the continuation of the trend toward more and more industrialization. Even among experts there was defeatism. This explains both why this rational complement to the policy of agricultural contraction was never undertaken in any wholehearted fashion and why it was not more generally pointed out to the public by informed persons. In the 'thirties, apparently, Americans doubted if there would ever be any place for more workers in American industry. This was, of course, a delusion. The present shortage of labor, and particularly skilled labor, for war production throws light on this mistake in American depression policy; but any improvement of business conditions would have done it, though not so dramatically.

From the point of view of economic rationality a second main shortcoming of the American agricultural policy is closely bound up with the one mentioned. The tremendous scope of the A.A.A. intervention in regard to cotton and other Southern cash crops alone makes it clear from the outset

[a] See Chapter 17, Section 5.

[b] It is the author's considered opinion that this failure was not necessary but was due to specific faults in the economic theory and the coordination of practical policies of the American expansion program. As a discussion of this point would carry us too far and as it is not implied as a premise in our argument, we leave it with this note.

that it was bound to have important effects, not only on acreage in various crops, on labor demand, and on the direction of labor demand, but also on the relative economic advantage of different types of landholdings and of forms of agricultural enterprises. This is a problem of the size of holdings; the relation between ownership, management, and labor; and so on. In the South and to the Negro, it is primarily a problem of whether or not the plantation system shall be protected and conserved. Johnson, Embree, and Alexander rightly emphasized that the "organization of the farm system is basic to reform in other matters."[51] The pretension of "neutrality" in this question is logically untenable when such big measures are taken.

In the planning stage of the program and in the continuous modification, this matter should have been made explicit, a purposeful aim decided upon, and adequate means selected toward this aim. This was not done, except for some efforts to favor agricultural cooperation and except for a tendency—as the defeatism deepened in regard to turning the depression into continued industrialization—to favor self-sufficient farming. These and other efforts were not clearly conceived of in the framework of the entire economic process and of national economic policy as a whole, and they were never attempted on a scale corresponding to the import of the agricultural trends and the scope of the A.A.A. interference in these trends. Arthur Raper, writing in 1936 and not having available the evidence of the 1940 Census, nevertheless saw in his field studies the main facts and formulated this fundamental criticism:

> The New Deal with its cotton restriction program, its relief expenditures, and its loan services, has temporarily revitalized the Black Belt, has rejuvenated the decaying plantation economy. Those who control the plantations are now experiencing relative prosperity. On the other hand *the landless farmers, though able for the most part because of the New Deal to pay their rents and settle their accounts, are not only failing to escape their chronic dependence but are actually losing status.* Many tenants are being pushed off the land while many others are being pushed down the tenure ladder, especially from cropper to wage hand status.[52]

The stipulations against the displacement of labor contained in the law may in some measure have been effective in slowing up the process (at the same time diminishing the gains of economic efficiency to be reached in this way). But they also comforted the policy makers and the general public, and contributed toward keeping off their minds the big unsolved task of moving labor from over-populated cotton-tenancy districts.[53]

10. SOCIAL EVALUATION OF THE A.A.A.

This brings us to a discussion of certain other social aspects of the A.A.A. A primary aim of the program was to bring relief to the rural population which had experienced a serious economic set-back. This aim was first

expressed in the price-parity and later in the income-parity formula. From this point of view the A.A.A. was parallel to other relief policies during the depression. Huge amounts have been spent for this purpose. The total appropriations for direct payments to farmers during the period 1934-1941 has been estimated to be over $5,300,000,000, or more than three-fourths of the total costs for all farm policies (including special appropriations for land utilization, soil erosion, rural electrification, farm security, and so on).[54]

In view of these high financial sacrifices, one could have expected much more positive results for those within the agricultural population who were in particularly great need. Yet, for reasons that we have stated, large numbers among those most in need of assistance lost rather than gained because of the A.A.A. More generally, as we shall now point out, the benefits were not distributed in relation to needs.

The total agricultural cash income for nine Southeastern states, according to certain estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, was twice as high in 1940 as in 1932. Nevertheless, it was still more than 20 per cent below the 1929 level.[55] There is no way of telling how large a share in the income gains the Negroes have received. More Negroes than whites have been made to leave the land, and those who left, of course, got nothing of the increase of farm income or of A.A.A. benefits. In regard to wage workers it can be argued that the higher cotton prices and the A.A.A benefits indirectly allowed higher wages, and that this force on the labor market was stronger than any adverse force due to the increase of labor supply on account of dismissal of tenants. Independent Negro farmers have probably come to share in the benefits rather equally with white farmers of the same economic status, even if the set-up of local administration has not given them much of a voice. Negro tenants have increasingly received their share.

The A.A.A. payments in these nine Southeastern states amounted to about $170,000,000 in 1940, or 13 per cent of the total cash income of agriculture for that year, and more than one-fourth of the cash income gain in agriculture since 1932.[56] The Negroes' share in this agricultural relief was by no means proportionate to their numbers and still less with their greater needs. For every tenant and sharecropper had to let his landlord get part of the benefit payments for the plot of land he was operating, and the wage laborer received no part of it at all. And there are more white landlords and fewer white wage laborers.

But this question of the Negroes' sharing in the A.A.A. benefits is only part of a bigger problem: the distribution of the A.A.A. benefits among various income groups in agriculture. As we mentioned, the distributional objective of the policy was defined in terms of some "parity" *for the agricultural population as a whole,* compared with other population groups and with an eye on conditions prior to the First World War. Specifically,

the aim in this respect was "reestablishment, at as rapid a rate as the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be practicable and in the general public interest, of the ratio between the purchasing power of the net income per person on farms and that of the income per person not on farms that prevailed during the five year period August 1909-July 1914."[57]

Such an objective is understandable in view of the fact that the relation between the farm and the nonfarm per capita income in the United States was 39 per cent less satisfactory, from the viewpoint of the agricultural population, in 1932 than during the period 1910-1914.[58] Yet this development, serious though it may be, has never been the only agricultural income problem. Even before the First World War, there certainly were farm families, particularly among the Southern Negroes, who in spite of hard work seldom, if ever, managed to make their living conditions approach a real health standard. Conversely, even in 1932 many farm families had incomes high enough to enjoy more than such a standard would indicate. Nevertheless, in the A.A.A. program no reference is

> . . . made to the fact that there are striking differences as to economic conditions between different groups of the farm population, or that the need for aid is greater for some groups than for others. The A.A.A. programs are concerned with total or average income only. . . . A.A.A. contains important elements of long-time planning already. It is, therefore, difficult to see why so little has been done to secure by legal provisions certain advantages of the policy for the working classes affiliated with commercial agriculture.[59]

One can explain this on several counts. To limit the programs in this way was necessary politically in order to organize a united farm bloc. Public assistance for the needy was to be kept in a separate compartment of federal activities. In the agricultural economics compartment there was to be "social neutrality" as far as the income distribution within agriculture was concerned. In an "economic" policy there was to be nothing that tasted of "relief."

Logically, however, there is a flaw in the argument. As in the case of other relief appropriations, the idea is that the A.A.A. benefits shall be paid by the taxpayers of the nation. To give more out of the public budget to those who have more is not exactly to maintain a position of "social neutrality." A sample study for 246 Southern plantations shows that the planter's average net cash income per plantation was $2,528 in 1934 and $3,590 in 1937. Out of these amounts not less than $979 and $833, respectively, came from A.A.A. payments. The tenants on the same plantations, on the other hand, had a net cash income for these two years of $263 and $300, respectively, out of which but $11 and $27 were A.A.A. payments.[60] Thus, even in proportion to their higher "basic" income, the planters received much more of this assistance than did their plantation tenants.[61] A few

large landlords, in the South and elsewhere, may receive as much as $10,000 per year in A.A.A. payments.[62]

It has been observed by many authors that America has to decide whether or not it wants to compete for the cotton world market on a low-wage basis with China, India, Africa and South America. If it does not want to enter any such low-wage competition, it must face the necessity of displacing farm labor on a large scale in the South. Under all conditions America has to face not only the existence of income differentials between the several classes in Southern agriculture, but the effects of its agricultural policy in maintaining or changing these income differentials. Woofter observes:

> There is no clear indication that the choice between various objectives has been made by those in control of policy. The A.A.A. is looked on as a temporary expedient which it is hoped may be gradually relaxed as the underlying economic situation of cotton and tobacco improves.[63]

We know now that the economic policy of the A.A.A. only aggravated the problem of the inability of Southern agriculture to support its population.

The agricultural policy of the period between the two World Wars now belongs to history. The makeshift policy during the present War is of less general interest. When the War is over we shall again, in all countries, face the same problems of agricultural policy as we did prior to this War. Some of the problems will have been aggravated in the meantime. Some may, temporarily at least, look somewhat less pressing. Practically none will have been solved. There is, however, a possibility that they can be taken up more constructively with an international point of view and looking toward an international agreement. We need, in any case, to learn from experience and to analyze unreservedly the shortcomings of agricultural policy. The one-third of the American Negro people in Southern agriculture, who will still at the end of the War be in the bottom layer of the American economic system, has tremendous interests at stake in the new agricultural policy of America. It is necessary for them that agricultural policy be planned with recognition of the serious over-population, of the necessity of large-scale movement of labor, and of the big income differences within the agricultural population.

11. CONSTRUCTIVE MEASURES

Any account of American agricultural policy, even restricted to those aspects of it which relate to cotton and the Negro, would be incomplete if only crop limitations under the A.A.A. program were observed. Besides the A.A.A. there are a number of more or less independent agricultural policies with more constructive long-range aims. Much less has been spent on those policies than on the symptom-treating policy of the A.A.A.

Some of these other policies have begun only recently. Some—the extension work, for instance—are carried on, more intensively than ever, along avenues opened up long before the New Deal. Few, if any, of these efforts are made primarily for the purpose of removing the basic trouble: the excess population on the Southern farm land. But there is an emphasis on new sources of income—both agricultural and nonagricultural. Certain measures, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Rural Electrification program, may facilitate to an extent the growth of nonagricultural rural industries. And even regardless of the over-population, there are, of course, plenty of agricultural problems which need constant attention if any substantial part of the rural people is to have an economically sound future on the Southern farm.

We cannot give an exhaustive description of other agricultural programs now in effect. The array of measures is too wide for even a short summary. No one can fail to become duly impressed by the diversification of efforts when he tries to get some idea of what is going on, either by studying the literature, by running round in the huge buildings of the Department of Agriculture in Washington, by contacting those working in the field in a rural county, or just by looking at the periodical farm supplement of one of the better Southern newspapers. There are soil conservation projects; there is farm demonstration and home demonstration work; there are 4-H Clubs; rural electrification; substantial reforms in the farm credit system; county planning; encouragement of agricultural cooperation; technical research and experimentation; and many similar things. And last but not least, there is adult education, both as a separate program and as an aspect of almost every single part of the entire system of agricultural policies.

Even if the success cannot well be the same all along the line, it is certain that huge gains eventually will be reaped from all these varied activities. An outsider may in the beginning have some doubt about what substantial reforms can be brought about by cooperative planning work in a Southern plantation county, where there is little democracy and social participation, and where issues of any deeper social significance are taboo at public discussions—not to speak of the fact that Negroes are not allowed to participate on an equal footing with whites. Yet exactly in such communities there is a particular need for courageous attempts to democratize agricultural policies, however futile these attempts may seem to be at the start. The very fact that farmers of different social strata get into the habit of coming together for organized discussions cannot fail to bring about some increase in the mutual insight into the problems of the other man; and some real cooperative efforts eventually may come out of it.

The farm and home demonstration work, which has been gradually developed since 1904, is highly significant, and the more so the lower down it reaches on the social ladder. The work with tenants, however, is largely

dependent on the good-will of their landlords. The latter have often objected to Negro farm and home demonstration agents approaching families on their holdings—sometimes even to any direct contact between the Extension Service and the tenants. "The Negro tenant farmers and croppers might best receive aid on the agricultural side principally through the white agents working with the landlords and managers," says the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture,[64] and this admission confirms statements that we have received when interviewing Negro agents in the South about actual conditions in many localities. We have also been told, on the other hand, that nowadays an increasing number of plantation owners do want their tenants to have the benefits of this educational work. The cuts in cotton acreage and the decline in income during the depression made many landlords see the need of more home-use production on the tenants' plots.

Still, it does not seem as if the particularly urgent need for extension work among Negroes has been met to the same extent as has the corresponding need of the white farm population. Even though white agents may give some part of their time to work among the Negro farmers and croppers, they cannot be expected, as a rule, to be as intensively interested in the welfare of the colored people, as are the Negro agents; nor are they as likely to gain the confidence of the Negro farmers. By January 1, 1942, there were altogether 558 Negro extension workers in the South, or about 1.2 per 10,000 Negro persons on the rural farms.[65] The corresponding figure for the total rural farm population in the South by mid-1939 was more than twice as high or 2.7.[66]

Our previous discussion of the practice of "advancing" credit for necessities to croppers and tenants has suggested an unsatisfactory organization of credit. But planters and other landowners, as well as croppers and tenants, have suffered in the same respect. They still have to pay exorbitant interest when borrowing money. But a reform of the credit market is under way. The financial collapse during the depression, which hit both landowners and financial institutions, finally made the federal government intensify its efforts to reform the credit market.[67]

The accomplishments have been particularly noteworthy in the field of mortgage credit. Of the total amount of farm mortgage loans held on January 1, 1939, not less than 39 per cent were Federal Land Bank or Land Bank Commissioner loans; the corresponding proportion for the South was even higher (45 per cent).[68] In the much more difficult sphere of production credit, on the other hand, there has been less success.[69] The average interest rates for all short-term loans, as a consequence of this development, have decreased substantially. Yet it is still very high. The real expense even for government loans, in Woofter's sample study of 1937, was no less than 11.9 per cent. This is not a satisfactory situation.[70] Conditions may

have improved since 1937, however, and the gradual development of the government credit system will give some advantages even to the Negroes, at least in an indirect way. The direct gains, on the other hand, have been very slight so far. Sharecroppers and share tenants can seldom use these sources of government credit, for the lien laws, in most cases, make them unable to present any security.[71] The Negro owners and cash renters, however, should have some theoretical chances of getting assistance through the government credit agencies. As usual in cases when government credit activities are based on "ordinary business principles," there are no data by race which would allow us to present any direct evidence. But there is this simple fact, that Negro owners and cash tenants have much smaller and less valuable farms than have their white colleagues and cannot present as much of any kind of security. Therefore, their share in this new government credit must be far smaller than is the proportion of Negroes even among the more independent Southern farmers, who are predominantly white.

Indeed, in all probability it is even smaller than can be explained solely on the ground of the limited resources of the Negro farmers. For the local administration of some of the most significant credit agencies is in the hands of credit cooperatives such as the farm loan associations for Federal Home Loan Bank loans, and the production credit associations for production credit loans. These associations naturally are dominated by white farmers. We have found already[a] so much evidence on how white farmers have misused administrative power given to them under other new economic programs that we cannot believe that this case should constitute an exception. It can almost be taken for granted that the temptation to discriminate against the Negro in many cases has been too strong to resist.

12. FARM SECURITY PROGRAMS

So far we have examined, briefly, only those farm policies which are intended to help agriculture in general. There is, however, a special series of programs for the little man in the farm business—the Farm Security programs. Having observed that the major part of agricultural subsidies and relief has not been administered according to need but has often favored the classes in agriculture which are relatively best off, we must add that this minor part, represented by the Farm Security Administration, has had the function of bringing help to the neediest.

Hundreds of thousands of Southern farm families have received assistance under these programs. As we shall presently show, *Negroes have received a substantial share in the F.S.A. benefits—almost as much, as a matter of fact, as would correspond to their population ratio in Southern*

[a] See also the data on the Negro's share in the benefits under the Farm Security program in Section 12 of this chapter.

farm areas. Even so, it must be said from the beginning that, however well-directed and otherwise commendable these efforts are, they do not quite measure up to the size of the problems involved. We have found that $5,300,000,000 was appropriated for A.A.A. policies during the period 1934-1941.[a] Most of this was A.A.A. benefit payments, a disproportionately large share of which went to the big landlords. The outlays for Farm Security programs during the same period amounted to about one-fifth of this amount ($1,121,000,000), and a considerable part of this sum consisted of loans on which repayment could be expected.[72] And, as for the Negro's share, it must be strongly emphasized that it does not compare with his relative needs. It is, as we shall indicate, much more difficult for a Negro than for a white farmer *in similar circumstances* to receive assistance in this form.

The explanation of this is simple. The disadvantaged groups in Southern agriculture, and particularly the Negroes, are politically impotent.[b] The consequence is not only that the program that has been instituted in their behalf is more limited than is other farm aid, but also there is less assurance about its being continued. At the end of 1941 a congressional committee, headed by Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia, one of the leading Southern politicians, while wanting to maintain the A.A.A. payments, in all seriousness proposed that all Farm Security activities be abolished in the interest of wartime economy. There are several reports about the Farm Bureau, under the chairmanship of an Alabama planter, having pushed similar demands.[73] The result was a serious curtailment in the budget of the F.S.A. in 1942; otherwise it has so far been saved. But the incident is an indication of the usually rather noncooperative, and sometimes outright hostile, attitude toward the Farm Security work among those who have command of the power in Southern politics—an attitude which those who attempt to find out about the situation in the South cannot avoid observing time and again. There actually seems to be a notion that since this kind of assistance is given to poor people it is "relief" and, consequently, bad, whereas the fact that A.A.A. payments are distributed to all farmers, so that those in higher income brackets receive a much larger share than others, makes them "business" and not "relief." Farm Security benefits are like manna coming from heaven and there are those in the South who welcome it even outside the beneficiaries themselves. But those who favor the F.S.A. do not have political power.

The differential treatment of the Negro can be explained on similar grounds. The local administration is not entirely in the hand of the officials of the Farm Security Administration. Clients, to be accepted, usually have

[a] The increase in prices brought about by the A.A.A. can be counted as an additional subsidy.

[b] See Chapter 22.

to be passed on by committees of local farmers, over which Negroes have practically no influence.[74] Under such circumstances, it is surprising that Negroes have received a share which almost corresponds to their proportion in the population. The Farm Security Administration has, from the beginning, been fighting courageously and persistently against differential treatment; the agency openly refers to it as "discriminatory" in several of the surveys which it has made.

In a just appraisal of the program all such difficulties must be taken into account. But there are still others. The laws and the system of law enforcement give the tenant little protection against the landlord—in fact, they are largely used for the purpose of making it easier for the landlord to exploit the tenant.[a] This situation must be considered in any evaluation of the Farm Security Administration. It is obvious that it would have been more efficient under a strong and impartial legal system. Further, to rehabilitate tenants or other impoverished farmers, it is not enough merely to give them loans, and then to sit back and expect them to pay it all back while improving their economic status. It is a major educational job, and the great thing is that the F.S.A. has faced it.

It is a question of teaching farmers, who have known about little but specialized cash- and feed-crop production, to diversify their efforts, to grow at home much of what they need for their own consumption. Farmers who have been nothing but dependent tenants have to become independent entrepreneurs. Former croppers, who have been exploited by the planters and have known few other ways of improving their status than to induce their landlords to give them as high advances as possible—and to move away if they fail to get as much as they think they can get some other place —have to learn quite a new kind of game. They have to learn that they, from now on, have definite rights and definite obligations, and that it usually pays to stay at the same place. Detailed farm and household plans are made up for them—if they do not know how to do it themselves; and it is seen to that they stick to those plans as far as possible. They are taught how to keep accounts. Some are illiterate; their children sometimes must be made to help them out. Many clients are without any resources whatever when they start out. Their meager cash income, while they are on the program, may dwindle to almost nothing because of unemployment, occasional crop failure or other circumstances. For such reasons they need not only loans, but also straight subsidies. Clients who retain their status as tenants have to fulfill their obligations to the landlords as well as to the Farm Security Administration; in such cases, there is often a rather complicated three-cornered problem where much depends on the cooperation of all parties concerned. Many clients have difficulties because they are sick; a cooperative health program is organized for them.[75]

[a] See Chapter 11 and Part VI.

Many critics of the program have failed to recognize all of these difficulties. Their criticism should not be directed so much against the Farm Security Administration as against the traditional social and economic patterns in Southern agriculture—against the fact that the small entrepreneur has had so little encouragement, and that the typical tenant has not been accustomed to much independent action and independent planning. This is not to say that no mistakes have been committed. There is no doubt that, particularly during the earlier stages of the development when there had to be much improvisation and experimentation, several projects were unnecessarily expensive. Too, there seems to have been some uncertainty about the objectives. The existence of a considerable rural overpopulation, the apparent over-production, and the growing belief that industrial stagnation could never be broken, brought about a wide-spread feeling that the only solution would be to let the excess population on the rural farms establish themselves on a basis of almost complete self-sufficiency. The feeling that small owners have difficulties in surviving without an elaborate system of agricultural cooperation was behind the organization of resettlements, where clients were given the chance of becoming owners while engaged in certain cooperative activities. Certain doubts as to whether ownership is really the best form of tenure for the small farmer explain the organization of settlements of rental cooperatives which are particularly favored by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.[76] These settlements of various kinds, however, since they are expensive to organize and since many of them have both Negro and white clients working together on the same footing, have caused much resentment in the South. Therefore, this particular part of the program, except for the rental cooperatives, is not being pushed any more.

Already before 1935, during the period of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (F.E.R.A.), it occurred to some interested persons that it would be far better to help needy rural families, who were competent and willing to work, to grow their own food and earn a little cash income on farms, rather than to give them cash doles. A program to this end was inaugurated in 1934.[77] The activity was soon taken over by the Resettlement Administration and, later, together with certain related programs started by other agencies, by the Farm Security Administration, which was instituted in 1937.

The so-called rehabilitation program, which includes assistance of various kinds on an individual basis, takes up the major part of the work and the appropriations of the F.S.A. The total amount of loans made under this program until the middle of 1941 was $574,000,000; the grants amounted to $132,000,000. The South, although containing more than half of the rural farm population—and an even greater part of those in need of this assistance—has received less than half (43 per cent) of the loans and

grants.[78] By December, 1939, there were in the South 154,000 white and 45,000 Negro "standard rehabilitation borrowers." Thus, while more than one-fourth of the Southern rural farm population is Negro, the number of Negroes on the program constituted a somewhat smaller proportion (23 per cent) of the total number of clients. Compared with the total estimated number of white and colored farm families which either were on relief or had an income of less than $500, the participation in the program amounted to 22 per cent of the whites and 11 per cent of the Negroes. This suggests that a low-income white family has had about twice the chance of a Negro family in the same circumstances of being accepted on the program. Too, the average amount of loan advances was somewhat higher for white ($659) than for colored ($606) clients.[79]

It is true that not all of these discrepancies are due to "direct discrimination." The selection of clients and the size of the loans do not depend on need alone. Even in the Farm Security work great attention is given to the credit rating of the individual client, and since Negroes start out with much smaller average resources than do whites, they are more likely to be excluded from the program and less likely to receive large loans.[80] Such an application of "business principles" in relief work, however, can well be called "indirect discrimination," for it must have been obvious from the beginning that it would limit the opportunity to give the Negro a share of the benefits which would correspond to his relative needs. Moreover, there is definite evidence that Negro clients have been selected in a much more cautious manner than have white clients. Although their gross cash income during 1939 was 40 per cent lower than that of white clients in the South, their repayment record was a slightly better one. The absolute amount repaid on the loans actually was almost the same in both cases (about $250). The net income of the Negro clients was rather low—less than $100 in cash and about $240 in home-use production—whereas the corresponding figures for white clients were about $200 and $275, respectively. Both groups of clients bettered their conditions to a considerable extent during the time they were on the program—Negroes relatively more than whites.[81]

The other F.S.A. programs are rather insignificant, as far as Negroes are concerned. By mid-1940 there were less than 2,000 Negro families on various types of F.S.A. settlements and rental cooperatives. They constituted roughly one-fourth of all such families in the South. About 1,900 Negro families were on the so-called tenant-purchase program; there were four times as many white families in the South on the same program.[82] Thus, there was about the same amount of discrimination in these cases as in the rehabilitation work. In the last year (1941-1942), however, the F.S.A. has provided camps for migrant agricultural workers in various parts of the North, and Negroes get a considerable share of these facilities.

Nobody who has had any contact with those doing field work for the Farm Security Administration can escape becoming impressed by these attempts to rehabilitate farm families by making up plans for almost every aspect of the farm-and-household economy and by "helping the clients to help themselves." Attempts are made to introduce written contracts of more than one year's duration for the clients who are tenants—the so-called flexible farm lease. Most tenants on the rehabilitation program have such leases with their landlords.[83] States are urged to adopt legislation for this purpose—so far, however, without any success as far as the South is concerned.[84] The Farm Security work, after this period of rather diversified experimentation, has provided the kind of practical administrative experience which would be needed for a major reform of land and tenure conditions. But it is not likely that there will be enough popular backing for such a system in the South—until the Southern farm population has been hit by at least one more major economic crisis. The coming post-war crisis might furnish this needed impetus.

CHAPTER 13

SEEKING JOBS OUTSIDE AGRICULTURE

1. Perspective on the Urbanization of the Negro People

Only a part of the present farm population in the South has any future on the land. This is particularly true of the Negro farm population, as has been amply demonstrated in the preceding chapter. It is necessary to remind the reader of this important fact. For outside a limited group of experts, few white people realize that, already, almost two-thirds of the Negroes live in nonfarm areas, and that eventually all Negroes, except for a small minority, will have to become integrated into the nonagricultural economy of America. Even the experts, including Negro college teachers in agriculture, seem to have an exaggerated belief in the Negro's possibilities in Southern agriculture. More generally, there is a widespread attitude in the cities that the Negro ought to stay where he belongs—on the Southern farm land. The nonfarm parts of the country simply do not want to accept the responsibility for Negroes who previously have made their living in agriculture. This protectionist attitude is not typical of Americans only. Nor is it confined to the Negro problem alone. In America, as well as in many other countries, there are strong tendencies to build walls around one's own community in order to keep out all sorts of low income people who would press down wage levels, add to the housing shortage and possibly become liabilities in public relief. The recent tendency to make residence requirements for relief more severe is only one of the devices used in this policy of social protectionism.

There is no doubt, however, that this attitude is especially pronounced in regard to rural Negroes from the South. Because of the decadence of agriculture and the constitutional impossibility of raising barriers against internal migration, this attitude will not be able to stop the gradual urbanization of the Negro people. As we saw in Chapter 8, this has been going on all the time, and since the First World War the Negro farm population has actually been declining because of migration. But the popular attitude that the Negroes had better stay where they are has given, and will probably continue to give, a basis for segregation and discrimination both in housing and in employment. It even tends to perpetuate the ignorance about Negroes by making everyone want to look the other way. The belief that the agri-

cultural South can still accept the main responsibility for the Negroes is a most important ingredient in the "pass-the-buck" mentality which we touched upon in Chapter 2.

In this chapter we shall sketch in broadest outlines the history of the Negro breadwinner outside agriculture and attempt to ascertain where, in more recent times, he has entered industry or has remained unemployed. The sketch is largely based on the facts presented in Appendix 6. The reader who has a special interest in these things will find all the material of this chapter set forth in greater detail in Appendix 6.[a] In Chapter 17 we shall discuss in more general terms the several adverse factors which a Negro encounters when he tries to gain entrance into industry.

2. IN THE SOUTH

Slavery, and the concomitant suppression of free Negroes, gave to Southern Negroes a degree of monopoly on labor for a few years after the Civil War. This was the situation not only on the rural plantations but—excepting areas where Negroes constituted but a minority of the population—in most other types of unskilled work as well. Unskilled work was tainted with inferiority. Negroes were the domestics and the laborers. Negroes were also, to a large extent, the craftsmen and the mechanics. They were carpenters, bricklayers, painters, blacksmiths, harness makers, tailors and shoemakers. For even skilled labor was degraded, and whites had often been denied the opportunity of acquiring training since so many masters had preferred to work with slaves. The high price paid for skilled slaves had encouraged their training in the crafts.[1] Thomas Nelson Page says:

> In 1865, when the Negro was set free, he held without a rival the entire field of industrial labor throughout the South. Ninety-five per cent of all the industrial

[a] Appendix 6 is based mainly on a research memorandum, "Negro Labor and Its Problems," prepared for this study (1940) by Paul H. Norgren. Collaborating with Dr. Norgren were Lloyd H. Bailer, James Healy, Herbert R. Northrup, Gladys L. Palmer, and Arnold M. Rose.

No references will be given when statements in the text are based on Appendix 6.

The literature on the Negro wage earner, although it contains much material that we have not used in this brief summary, is characterized by a certain lack of balance. While great attention has been given to many small industries, particularly when, during recent decades, they have given an increased share of the jobs to Negroes (e.g., the meat-packing and slaughtering industry), other occupations where a much larger number of Negro workers are employed seem to have been largely overlooked. This is true, for instance, about truck, transfer, and cab companies which had 41,000 Negro workers in 1930. It is true also of the menial occupations in wholesale and retail establishments (laborers, porters, and helpers in stores, janitors, chauffeurs, truck drivers, delivery men, elevator tenders, charwomen, and so on) which, in 1930, included over 110,000 Negro w(rkers. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 354-357.) Perhaps even more significant would be an intensive study of Negro exclusion in those lines of work where few, if any, Negroes are employed.

> work of the Southern States was in his hand. And he was fully competent to do it. Every adult was either a skilled laborer or a trained mechanic.[2]

This is a considerable exaggeration. There was, outside agriculture, a fairly large white laboring class, too. And the great majority of Negroes, even in the cities, were domestics and unskilled laborers. But, skilled or unskilled, their protection was that their work was characterized as "Negro jobs" and was usually badly paid.

Right from the beginning the Negroes' position in the Southern nonagricultural labor market has been influenced by two forces or trends of change working in opposite directions. One force is the general expansion of the Southern nonagricultural economy. This tends constantly to increase the employment opportunities for Negroes as well as for whites. The other force is the competition from white job-seekers. This tends to exclude Negroes from employment and to press them downward in the occupational hierarchy. Regarding the second trend, it should be observed that there had been plenty of racial competition before the Civil War. White artisans had often vociferously protested against the use of Negroes for skilled work in the crafts. But as long as the politically most powerful group of whites had a vested interest in Negro mechanics, the protesting was of little avail. Even many of the free Negroes had their white protectors. After Emancipation the Negro artisan was on his own. His former master did not have the same interest in protecting him against white competitors. White men usually had little economic interest in having the young Negro trained for skilled work.

In some cases there were still personal ties between the former slave owners and their ex-slaves. The Black Codes and the dependent status of the Negro still made him amenable to exploitation. But all this could only cushion the effects of Emancipation. It was unthinkable that the white class of ex-masters would protect the Negroes against their white competitors in the same manner as they had done earlier. Many of them were impoverished because of the War. Their places were taken by other whites who had not been brought up in the tradition of "caring for their Negroes." Many of them actually shared the competitive viewpoints of the white working class. This was true for the most part of those contractors, for instance, who rose from the class of white building workers. Generally, the Civil War, the Emancipation, the Reconstruction, and the Restoration were all characterized by a trend toward a consolidation of white interests. And the poorer classes of whites got more of a say, at least as far as the "place" of the Negro was concerned.

The result of this pressure is well known and often discussed by both whites and Negroes in the South. Examples of how Negroes have been driven out from one kind of a job after another are constantly being pointed out. There seems to be a definite pattern in this process. It starts

from the top and goes downward. It proceeds more rapidly in the newer cities where there is less regard for tradition. In many of the older Southern cities there are still a considerable number of Negro carpenters, masons, and painters, though usually not so many as earlier, at least not proportionally. In other cities there are only Negro helpers. In still others Negroes are not always allowed to be helpers. In only a few old cities on the Atlantic Coast the observer meets an old Negro barber, catering to a passing generation of Southern gentlemen. Negro waiters are still common, but not so common as even ten years ago. White waitresses are gradually being substituted for them. Whites are entering into hotels even as bell boys and elevator operators. By 1930 whites were in the majority among all workers in hotels, restaurants, and boarding houses in the South. In railroad service there were once a few Negro engineers, and Negroes long held a practical monopoly as firemen. But during the last generation they have been gradually displaced even from those "Negro jobs." A local Negro historian, Charles B. Roussève, summarizes the trend thus:

> In urban centers like New Orleans, the Negro, who in ante-bellum days, performed all types of labor, skilled and unskilled, found himself gradually almost eliminated from the various trades. In recent years, even from the meanest forms of servile occupations he is being excluded by his fairer-skinned fellow-citizens.[8]

In some Southern cities whites have not disdained to take over the street cleaning and the collecting and carting away of the garbage.

The competition from the white workers, and the gradual loss of protection from the side of the former master class, meant not only that the Negroes' share in the jobs became smaller in many traditional "Negro occupations"; but, perhaps, even more important in the long run was the fact that Negroes, in most cases, failed to get any appreciable share in the jobs whenever new lines of production were opened up. Negro workers, therefore, are likely to be found in stagnating or retrogressing industries and occupations, as the expanding ones are usually the new ones, at least in technique. When there were technical innovations, making work less strenuous, less dirty, and generally more attractive, this often implied a redefinition of the occupations from "Negro jobs" to "white man's work." The decline of handicrafts and the progressive mechanization of industry generally has meant exclusion of Negroes from job opportunities. The rise of commercial laundries, for instance, has brought about a most spectacular decline in the number of Negro home laundresses between 1910 and 1930.

> In the building trades the structure of buildings is changing from lumber to steel. There have been many Negro carpenters but few structural steel workers and few chances for apprenticeship in this new field. . . . Wheelwrights and coopers are gone, probably forever. This work is done in factories by machinery. Moreover, steel drums, pails, sacks, and other containers have replaced the wooden barrel. Machinists

have increased sevenfold, but the machinists' unions bar Negroes. Trucks are replacing drays and also competing with railway transportation; and trucking, increasingly, is becoming a chain proposition instead of an individual venturing.[4]

The increased use of white women in industry meant not only a new source of competition. It also, in a prohibitory way, raised the "social equality" issue. White women and Negroes cannot work together under the Southern code. White workers came more and more to resent working with Negroes, according to what all older Negroes and whites tell the observer. The only way of definitely lifting a certain type of work from the category of "Negro jobs" was to get the Negroes out of it. The Jim Crow legislation, which was enacted just before the turn of the century,[a] drew the color line even sharper, and thus had great importance in the economic sphere.

During this development—which, to an extent, is parallel to the "infiltration" of white tenants in cotton farming and has a similar basic cause in the over-population of Southern agriculture—defensive beliefs were constantly growing among the whites in the South that the Negro was inefficient, unreliable, and incompetent to work with machines. Conditions varied in different localities, and these beliefs were not consistent, as Embree points out:

To justify their exclusion from the textile mills, it is said that of course Negroes are unable to do skilled tasks. Yet in the next town one hears that they have greater manual dexterity than whites, and therefore hold many of the skilled jobs in the handling of tobacco. Oddly enough, in the textile villages, their lack of competence is given as a proof of their inferiority, while in the tobacco communities the fact that they have manual skill is equally regarded as evidence of low mentality, since it is well known that superior races are not clever with their hands! In the iron and steel mills, since Negroes have been given work about the furnaces, there has grown up a tradition that they are best adapted to work in the presence of great heat. Yet formerly it was held to be foolhardy to try colored laborers in such jobs, because they would not stand up under the trying conditions of blast furnaces.[5]

Thoughtful Southerners, who could not forget that the Negro had earlier been a skilled worker, were compelled to believe that he was deteriorating:

Meantime, the Negro has retrograded as a workman until he has not only lost the field in which he once had no rival, but is in danger of losing even the ability to compete for its recovery. The superiority of the older farmhands to the younger generation is so universally asserted throughout the South that it must be given some of the validity of general reputation. And whereas, as has been shown a generation ago all the mechanical work of the South was in the hand of the Negroes, only a small proportion of it is done by them to-day.[6]

Another Southerner says:

[a] See Chapter 28, Section 4.

> As a laborer, the Negro is not so satisfactory as formerly. The old-time Negro, trained in slavery to work, has about passed away and his successor is far less efficient and faithful to duty. Lately, large numbers of Negro laborers have shown a tendency to leave the farms for work on railroads, in sawmills, and in the cities, large numbers migrating to the cities of the North. They like to work in crowds and this often results in making more work for the police.[7]

In a relative sense there was an element of truth in those statements, at least in so far as fewer and fewer young Negroes could keep up skills when they were not allowed to compete under the better working conditions and the improved techniques, and when they had difficulty in getting training. This was what Booker T. Washington saw when he started out with his endeavor to give Negroes vocational training for crafts and trades.[a]

All these things are, as we said, much in the foreground of public discussion in the South. We must ask: How have the rising numbers of urban Negroes earned their living when they have had all these factors working against them? The explanation is the contrary force or trend, which we mentioned earlier: that there has been a great expansion going on in nonagricultural industries in the South during most of the time since the Civil War. The urbanization of the South has meant, for one thing, that there is a growing number of upper and middle class white families in the cities who can employ domestic servants. This is especially important since it is traditional in the South that every family which can afford it, even down to the lower middle class, should have domestic help. The growing industries, furthermore, created a considerable number of laboring jobs for Negroes, even when they were excluded from the machines. And they did get into some industries.

The employment losses to the Negroes, therefore, have often been more relative than absolute. Even if the Negroes were pressed down in relative status in the occupational hierarchy, and even if they did not get their full share in the number of new jobs so that the proportion of Negroes declined, the absolute number of Negroes for the most part increased, except in stagnating crafts and industries. At least during parts of the period up to the First World War the absolute gains in job opportunities for Negroes in the South, in spite of the relative losses, were considerable. Since then, however, even those absolute gains have declined drastically.

3. A Closer View

From 1890 to 1910, the total number of white male workers in nonagricultural industries in the South more than doubled. The number of Negro male workers in nonagricultural pursuits increased by two-thirds, or by more than 400,000 (Table 1).[b] The latter increase was due mainly

[a] See Chapter 41.

[b] There are no occupational census data by race prior to 1890.

to expansion in certain typical "Negro job" industries, such as saw and planing mills, coal mining, and maintenance-of-way work on railroads.[8] From 1910 to 1930, on the other hand, the number of Negro males engaged in nonagricultural pursuits in the South increased by less than one-third and, in absolute numbers, by less than 300,000. This slowing up of the increase of the Negro nonagricultural labor force in the South occurred in spite of the general expansion of industry—which was about as large as during the previous two decades—and in spite of the fact that the

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF ALL MALE WORKERS AND OF NEGRO MALE WORKERS IN NONAGRICULTURAL PURSUITS, BY SECTION: 1890–1930[a]

Section	Number of All Male Workers (in thousands)			Number of Negro Male Workers (in thousands)			Negro Workers as Percentage of All Workers		
	1890	1910	1930	1890	1910	1930	1890	1910	1930
United States	11,053	19,508	28,516	824	1,396	2,170	7.5	7.2	7.6
The North and West	9,028	15,595	22,179	190[b]	350	831	2.1	2.2	3.8
The South	2,025	3,913	6,337	634	1,046	1,339	31.3	26.7	21.1

Sources: Eleventh Census of the United States: 1890, Population, Vol. 2, Tables 78, 79, 82 and 116; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, Tables 2, 5, 6 and 7; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1938*, Tables 51, 52 and 53; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920–1932*, pp. 303–309.

[a] Turpentine farm workers have been consistently included among workers in nonagricultural pursuits, in accordance with the procedure adopted in the 1930 Census. In the 1890 Census, however, they were not separated in a special group, but were included in the category "other agricultural pursuits" (Table 79). For Southern states, this group contained mainly turpentine workers, but for the Northern states certain other occupations predominated. Therefore, the workers included under this heading were considered as nonagricultural for the Southern states, and as agricultural for other areas.

[b] This figure includes a few nonwhite workers other than Negro.

previous growth in the Negro farm population had been superseded by a decline. Also during the 'thirties, as we shall show presently, the Negro lost in relative position. This was the more serious because industrial expansion in the South was now much slower, because there were great losses in agricultural employment, and because there were no new openings in the North.

It was of major importance that Negroes were partially excluded as ordinary production workers in the textile industry since it developed into the South's leading industry. The unimportant textile manufacturing which had existed in the South before the Civil War had been based largely on Negro labor, partly slave labor. But the new textile industry broke with this tradition. It arose as a civic welfare movement to create work for poor white people. The Negroes were not needed, as the labor supply of poor whites from the agricultural areas and from the mountains was plentiful.

If those white workers were paid low wages and held in great dependence, they could at least be offered the consolation of being protected from Negro competition. Another factor strengthening the exclusion of Negroes from the textile industry was the employment of white women.

The tobacco industry in Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky, up to the Civil War, had had but a small minority of white workers. After the War, however, there were two important innovations which precipitated an increase in the proportion of white labor. One was the taking up of a new line of manufacturing: that of cigarettes. The other change was the introduction of machinery. Both these changes gave an excuse for breaking the traditional Negro labor monopoly. Much of the work became neat and clean, requiring little physical strength, and was adapted to the employment of white women. Negroes were retained, however, as stemmers and in other laboring jobs. The ratio of Negro to white workers around the turn of the century became stabilized at a two-to-one level in these three tobacco-producing states. This ratio seems to have been kept almost constant until about 1930, allowing Negroes to share in the general expansion.[a]

In the skilled building trades, the development had proceeded so far by 1890 that white workers were in the majority although they were not yet represented by any strong unions in the South. The development has continued ever since and the appearance of trade unions in the South helped to give the white building workers even greater power in keeping the Negro out. They have been particularly successful in the new building trades where Negroes had no traditional position. The fact that the proportion of Negroes in these trades already by 1890 had been reduced to 25 per cent or less in the Upper and Lower South made it comparatively easy for the organized white workers to disregard the interests of the Negro workers.

In the trowel trades (bricklayers, masons, plasterers, and cement finishers), on the other hand, the situation is somewhat different. Negroes had managed to retain a large proportion of the jobs when unionization began in the South, and it is probable that it was this circumstance which forced the organizations in these trades to take a more friendly attitude toward Negroes. Discrimination may occur locally, but the national leadership occasionally takes action against such practices. The proportion of Negroes in these trades—roughly one-half in the Upper and Lower South—has remained relatively unchanged during the whole period between 1900 and 1930. The situation is similar in unskilled building work. Negroes and

[a] This and the subsequent discussion concerning occupational trends from 1890 to 1930 is based on the following sources: *Eleventh Census of the United States: 1890. Population*, Vol. 2, Table 116; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, Tables 2, 6 and 7; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 23, and State Table 10, Parts 1 and 2; Vol. IV, State Table 11. See, also, various sources cited in Appendix 6.

whites are usually organized in the same locals even in the South, and race relations in these unions are often comparatively amicable. Nevertheless, there has been a decline in the proportion of Negro workers in Southern states. But Negroes are probably still in the majority in the Upper and Lower South. Taking the building industry in the entire country as a whole, there was a decrease even in the absolute number of Negro workers between 1910 and 1930, in spite of the fact that the total man-power remained unchanged, and although the migration of Negroes to the North broadened the market for their services.[9]

Comparing 1910 and 1930, one finds that, except for a temporary boom during the First World War, the expansion had ceased in some of the most significant "Negro job" industries, such as saw and planing mills, turpentine farms and maintenance-of-way work on railroads. This was one of the main reasons why the general expansion in job opportunities for Southern Negroes was less pronounced during this period than during the previous two decades. In the railroad services the number of Negro engineers, which had never been large, was reduced to virtually nothing. There was, as we mentioned, a decline also in the number of Negro firemen and brakemen. The railroad brotherhoods, most of which exclude Negroes more consistently than almost any other American trade union, eventually became sufficiently powerful to keep the Negroes out of any job which was—or which, through technical development, became—attractive enough to be desirable to the white man.

Again Negroes failed to get into most of the new and expanding industries in the South. Only one per cent of the workers employed at Southern oil and gas wells in 1930 were Negroes. Only as wood cutters and in certain other laboring capacities did Negroes get into the paper and pulp industry. Gas and electric companies have never used Negroes to any appreciable degree. Negroes do not operate streetcars and buses. Telegraph and telephone companies exclude them almost altogether. Furniture factories depend in the main on white labor. The vast expansion in wholesale and retail trade, banking, insurance, and brokerage benefited the Negroes only in so far as they could be used as delivery men, porters, janitors, charwomen and so on. The policy of excluding them from production jobs in the textile factories continued.

There were not many lines of work in which Negroes made any appreciable gains during this period. Coal mines and steel mills continued to expand in the South, and the Negroes had employment gains from their expansion. The same was true of longshore work where Negroes traditionally had such a dominant position in the South that the trade unions never could exclude them to any significant degree, even though there was some local discrimination. Fertilizer factories, which constitute one of the most typical "Negro job" industries, showed a particularly rapid expansion between

1910 and 1930, but this industry is too small and too seasonal to provide much steady employment. There were some cases where Negroes shared in the expansion brought about by motorization: The number of Negro teamsters, truck drivers and chauffeurs increased. So did the number of Negro maintenance and construction workers on streets, highways, sewers and so on. Yet the white labor force in those occupations increased even

TABLE 2

CHANGES IN POPULATION AND IN MALE LABOR FORCE IN SELECTED NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN CITIES: 1930–1940[a]

Group of Cities	Percentage of Negroes in				Percentage Increase or Decrease (–) 1930–1940			
	Total Population		Male Labor Force 14 years and Over		Negroes		Whites	
	1930	1940	1930	1940	Total Population	Male Labor Force	Total Population	Male Labor Force
11 Northern Cities	7.2	8.6	7.6	7.8	22.8	1.9	1.6	–0.1
15 Southern Cities	25.7	26.9	27.7	25.4	20.7	12.1	13.1	13.3

Source: Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Second Series, State Table 43.

[a] The labor force figures for 1930 refer to the number of gainful workers. The concept of gainful worker in the 1930 Census was approximately the same as that of labor force in the 1940 Census; both include unemployed workers. The cities included in the table are:

In the *North:* New York, Newark, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis and Kansas City (Missouri).

In the *South:* Louisville, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Richmond, Norfolk, Atlanta, Jacksonville, Miami Memphis, Chattanooga, Nashville, Birmingham, New Orleans, Houston and Dallas.

more. Soon the white workers were in the majority in these traditional Negro jobs. Rather limited, also, were the employment gains Negroes derived from the appearance of filling and greasing stations, garages, automobile agencies and automobile factories in the South. In 1930 only about one-tenth of all workers at such establishments were Negroes.

4. SOUTHERN TRENDS DURING THE 'THIRTIES

So far we have discussed, mainly, the development in the South up to about 1930. The depression during the 'thirties hit the industrial economy in the South much less severely than in the North, the reason being that the South had fewer heavy industries and that the secular trend of industrialization moves more definitely upward in the South than in the rest of the nation. The number of wage earners employed in manufacturing industries was 1.6 per cent higher in the South in 1939 than in 1929, whereas the nation as a whole showed a decrease of 10.6 per cent.[10] Even

so the industrial depression was a serious matter in the South, particularly for Negroes.[a]

Since Negroes, during the 'thirties, were driven out of agriculture at a more rapid rate than were the white farm workers in the South,[b] there is nothing surprising in the fact that the large and middle-sized cities in the South showed a greater increase of the Negro than of the white population (Table 2). Negro farm workers, who had been forced out of employment in rural areas, sooner or later had to go to the cities, which offered varied, even if scarce, employment opportunities. A large labor market always seems to offer a chance; in a plantation area where farm workers are dismissed there is no hope left. Also there were more liberal relief standards in the cities than in rural areas.

The more rapid increase of the Negro than the white urban population in the South during the 'thirties meant that an earlier trend had been broken. During previous decades, when migratory outlets for Negroes in the North had been more ample, there had been a definite decline in the proportion of Negroes in the urban South.[11] In spite of this changing population trend, however, Negroes continued to lose in importance as an element in Southern urban labor. While the white male "labor force"—including unemployed as well as employed workers—increased at about the same rate as the white population, the Negro labor force did not expand even as much as the number of employed white workers. Thus, although the proportion of Negroes in the population showed an increase in the urban South, there was a decline in the percentage of Negro workers in the total male labor force. Undoubtedly the proportion of unemployed among Negro workers in the South increased more than that among white workers during the Great Depression, even if there are no reliable statistics available to prove it.[12]

The general increase in unemployment during the 'thirties made white workers try even more to "drive the Negroes out." That this is one of the main factors behind the continued decline in the proportion of Negro workers in nonagricultural pursuits seems even more probable when we study the data for specific industries in Table 3. To be sure, we have to be cautious in interpreting these figures, for certain technical improvements introduced in the 1940 Census make it difficult to trace the development during the previous decade.[c] Yet we can scarcely be mistaken in the observation that the relative position of the Negro in Southern industry has deteriorated further during the 'thirties.

The textile industry continued to grow tremendously,[13] but only 26,000 out of its 635,000 Southern workers in 1940 were Negroes. Food manu-

[a] See the unemployment rates by race presented in Table 6 of this chapter.

[b] See Chapter 12.

[c] See the footnotes to Table 3.

TABLE 3

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF NONWHITE WORKERS IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES, 1940; AND NEGROES AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE GAINFUL WORKERS, 1930—IN THE SOUTH

1	2	3	4
Industry	Nonwhite Employed Workers in 1940		Percentage of Negroes Among Gainful Workers in 1930[b]
	Number	Percentage of All Races[b]	
1. Coal mining	34,949	15.9	19.4
2. Crude petroleum and natural gas production	1,026	0.9	1.2
3. Construction	108,685	17.8	22.2
4. Food and kindred products	37,390	15.8	19.1
5. Textile-mill products; apparel and other fabricated textile products	26,134	4.1	6.6
6. Chemicals and allied products	33,101	23.5	19.2
7. Logging, sawmills and planing mills; furniture, store fixtures and miscellaneous wooden goods	156,468	36.8	37.6
8. Paper and allied products	9,802	19.1	17.8
9. Printing, publishing and allied industries	5,239	5.0	4.5
10. Iron and steel and their products; machinery; transportation equipment, except automobiles	40,169	14.9	18.5
11. Automobiles and automobile equipment; motor vehicles and accessories, retailing, and filling stations; automobile storage, rental, and repair services	45,855	12.4	11.7
12. Railroads (including railroad repair shops and railway express service)	62,997	21.0	25.0
13. Trucking service	15,856	15.6	(c)
14. Utilities	14,678	12.5	(c)
15. Wholesale trade; food and dairy products stores and milk retailing; other retail trade	146,402	10.6	10.4
16. Finance, insurance and real estate	31,982	11.5	5.2
17. Professional and related services	136,500	16.8	15.0
18. Government	29,884	5.4	(c)
19. Hotels and lodging places; eating and drinking places	129,862	32.1	39.8
20. Laundering, cleaning and dyeing services	43,973	34.6	40.1
21. Domestic service; miscellaneous personal services	837,687	70.9	76.7

Sources: Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. 3, Part 1, p. 23; *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, State Table 18a and 18b.

[a] The comparability between the data for 1930 and 1940, in some cases, is affected by changes in the industrial classification. In order to overcome this difficulty, as far as possible, we have added together certain of the original groups. The iron, steel, machinery, and transportation equipment groups in the 1940 Census have been compared with the total for the following 1930 groups: "blast furnaces and steel rolling mills"; "electrical machinery and supply factories," "other iron and steel industries." (This means, however, that workers in car and railroad shops have been included in the 1930 figures for the steel group, whereas in 1940 most of them were counted as railroad workers.) Construction is compared with the total for "building industry" and "construction and maintenance of streets, roads, and sewers" in the 1930 Census. In regard to

facturing expanded, but Negroes did not get their full share in the employment gains. The same was true about hotels, lodging places, restaurants, and of laundering, cleaning, and dyeing establishments, where the proportion of Negro workers declined to about one-third. The contraction of railroad employment during the 'thirties made Negroes lose heavily, probably even more than did the white workers. In the iron and steel group they also declined, absolutely as well as in relation to the whites. There is no indication of any gain for the Negroes in coal mining, construction, sawmills or other woodworking industries. It seems that they did share, however, in the expansion in paper, pulp, printing, publishing, and allied industries, but the total number of Negro workers in these groups was not higher than 15,000 in 1940. Domestic service, which is the most important of all "Negro job" industries, seems to have had but a limited expansion during the 'thirties, and it is doubtful whether the Negro gained anything at all, although he still holds a practical monopoly in the South.

5. IN THE NORTH

At the close of the Civil War the Negro wage earner in the North had a quite different position than in the South.[a] The mere fact that there were few Negroes in the North implied that no occupations could take on the character of "Negro jobs." There had not been slavery in the Northern states for some two generations. The Negroes, therefore, had not been protected in their jobs by the vested interests of a white master class. The competition from white workers had always been intense.[14] In most industrial and commercial centers of the North where there were any appreciable number of Negroes, the three decades prior to the Civil War saw recurrent race riots, growing out of this competition for jobs. In the few localities in the North where Negroes actually had come to monopolize certain types of work, their exclusion had thus started much earlier. In 1853 Frederick Douglass complained:

> Every hour sees the black man [in the North] elbowed out of employment by some newly arrived immigrant whose hunger and whose color are thought to give

lumber and lumber products, the total for the groups "logging," "sawmills and planing mills," and "furniture store fixtures, and miscellaneous wooden goods" was compared with the 1930 total for "forestry," "saw and planing mills," and "other woodworking and furniture industries." This procedure was recommended by Dr. Philip M. Hauser, Acting Chief Statistician for Population, Bureau of the Census (letter of May 8, 1942). Certain other minor rearrangements are self-explanatory, since the descriptions in the stub consist of the category titles which comprise the given industry groups in the 1940 Census classification, and from this the comparable 1930 categories may be determined by inspection.

Although the table probably gives a fairly correct general impression—at least if one considers the further qualifications presented in footnote (b)—the comparison is not quite exact in every detail. The increase in the proportion of Negroes in banks, insurance, and real estate companies, for instance, may depend, at least in part, on changes in the classification.

[b] Gainful workers in 1930 included unemployed workers. Since Negroes are usually unemployed to a greater extent than whites, the proportion of Negro workers may not necessarily have changed if the figure in column 3 is slightly below that in column 4. A difference of several percentage points, however, probably indicates a real change.

[c] Comparable data not available.

[a] The paucity of statistical or other reliable sources for earlier decades makes it necessary for us to be somewhat vague in several of the following statements.

> him a better title to the place; and so we believe it will continue to be until the last prop is leveled beneath us—white men are becoming house servants, cooks, and stewards on vessels; at hotels, they are becoming porters . . . and barbers—a few years ago a white barber would have been a curiosity. Now their poles stand on every street . . .[15]

The constant stream of European immigrants to the North continuously provided new supplies of cheap labor which competed with Negro labor for even the lower jobs such as domestics and common laborers. The trade unions were early stronger in the North than in the South and they were concentrated in the crafts. Most of the time they effectively kept Negroes out of skilled work.[16] They could do it the more successfully as the Northern Negroes did not have the head start which the handicraft training under slavery gave the Southern Negroes.

Having all these things in mind, it is easy to explain why it early became a stereotyped opinion that, as far as the chance to earn a living was concerned, the Negro was actually better off in the South than in the North. This opinion, for natural reasons, became particularly cherished by Southern whites. Henry W. Grady emphasized that the Negro "has ten avenues of employment in this section [the South] where he has one in the North."[17] And Edgar G. Murphy declared:

> The race prejudice is . . . as intense at the North as it is anywhere in the world. . . . The negro at the North can be a waiter in hotel and restaurant (in some); he can be a butler or footman in club or household (in some); or the haircutter or bootblack in the barber shop (in some); and I say "in some" because even the more menial offices of industry are being slowly but gradually denied to him.[18]

Booker T. Washington regularly endorsed this view, and it had a strategic importance in his whole philosophy, particularly in his educational program:

> . . . whatever other sins the South may be called upon to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world . . .[19]

Much the same thing is often told the observer in the South today, when it most certainly is an exaggeration. But even for earlier times the proposition sounds questionable. We do not have the comprehensive statistics which would be necessary to ascertain how the two regions actually compared in the opportunities they offered Negroes during various periods. Much scattered information, however, gives an impression quite different from the Southern stereotype. In a general way, the tremendous industrial development in the North and the small number of Negroes compared to the total labor demand were factors which worked to the Negroes' advantage. If we look over the whole period from the Civil War up to 1940,

the general picture is that, while the Negroes in the South have been gradually losing out in most lines of work where they had been firmly entrenched at the time of slavery and have been allowed to get a favorable position in but a few of the new industries, Negroes in the North have made some fairly significant gains in some occupations which are new or where few if any Negroes were allowed to work before. Still Negroes are completely, or almost completely, kept out of many manufacturing lines in the North.

The employment gains of Northern Negroes are not a result of a regular trend. It would be much nearer the truth to characterize them as a series of unique happenings. Some of the Northern employers started hiring Negroes on a large scale, as previously explained,[a] mainly because of the temporary scarcity of labor, due to the booms during the First World War and the 'twenties, and to the decline in immigration. The Negro, along with the Southern white worker, actually was the "last immigrant" to the North. At that time there was a much greater need for unskilled labor than is the case nowadays. Then, too, white workers, in so far as they did not come from the South, had little race prejudice. Later many of them developed a deep race prejudice.

Thus, it was a combination of factors which explains the Negroes' gains in the North—but a combination that could not last. The same was true about some of the secondary motives which induced employers to use Negro labor. Many of them wanted to keep their labor force heterogeneous so as to prevent unionization. Some of them even used Negroes as strike-breakers. This had happened several times before the First World War. In many of these cases Negro workers were dismissed when the labor conflict was ended. But, sometimes—particularly between 1910 and 1930—they actually managed to gain a foothold in this way. The motives of these employers, however, could be significant only as long as they believed that there was a possibility of keeping the unions away from their plants. Now they are gradually getting away from this belief and have no reasons to engage Negro labor for this purpose.

6. A Closer View on Northern Trends

Between 1890 and 1910 the increase in number of male Negro workers in the North was only about 160,000 (Table 1). Apart from the service occupations (domestics, laundresses, cooks, waiters, janitors, barbers, and so on) there were in 1910 no particular occupations where Negroes were concentrated. The largest proportion of Negroes in any of the nonservice groups was in the category "general and not specified laborers," many of whom were construction workers; others may have been merely "jacks-of-all-trades." Other groups including a few thousand Negro workers were:

[a] See Chapter 8.

farm laborers; helpers in building and hand trades; road and street laborers; draymen and teamsters; delivery men and helpers in stores; dressmakers and seamstresses. There were some Negro longshoremen in New York and Pennsylvania; coal miners in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois; iron and steel workers in Pennsylvania. By and large, however, the Negro had scarcely any place at all in ordinary manufacturing industries in the North.[20]

Between 1910 and 1930, on the other hand, the number of male Negro workers in nonagricultural pursuits in the North increased by no less than 480,000 (Table 1). This means that the Negro male labor force in the North more than doubled. Even the absolute increase was much larger than that in the South (about 295,000).

Most of the increase occurred in the nonmanufacturing groups: domestic and nondomestic service workers, helpers and delivery men in stores, draymen, teamsters, truck drivers, and so on. The building industry gave the Negro many additional jobs despite the fact that many craft unions were almost as hostile to the Negro in the North as they were in the South. Indeed, by 1930 almost half of the Negro building workers were in the North. Some gains were made in street and road construction work, as in the maintenance-of-way departments of the railroads. The proportion of Negro longshoremen increased in New York and Philadelphia. Garages, greasing stations, and automobile laundries in the North gave more new jobs to Negroes than did corresponding establishments in the South. The number of Negro coal miners in Pennsylvania quadrupled, even causing some displacement of white workers; still the Negroes did not constitute even 3 per cent of the total labor force in Pennsylvania coal mines by 1930. The bulk of the Negro mine workers remained in the South.[21]

In addition, Negroes managed, almost for the first time, to get a real place in certain purely manufacturing lines in the North. The gains were particularly noteworthy in the iron, steel, machinery and vehicle industries. In 1930, over 100,000, or about 60 per cent of all Negro workers in this group, were in the North. The majority of them were working in blast furnaces, steel rolling mills and automobile factories. Much less significant, but nevertheless noteworthy, were the gains in clothing industries and certain food industries, particularly slaughter and meat-packing houses.

But most other Northern manufacturing industries failed to hire Negro workers in any appreciable numbers. The Negro wage earner in the North has little or no chance in textile factories, sawmills, electrical machinery and supply factories, shoe factories, bakeries, or furniture factories—to mention just a few examples of the numerous Northern manufacturing lines where the Negro has been unable to get in. Only in exceptional cases did Northern railroads use him for other than unskilled jobs. He was not hired by the utility companies. Thus, even in the North, the Negro

remained confined to certain jobs—either those where he had earlier acquired something of a traditional position or where he managed to gain a foothold during the extraordinary labor market crisis of the First World War.[a]

This should be emphasized: *large employment gains for Negroes in the North—except for the present war boom—occurred only during the short period from the First World War until the end of the 'twenties.* During the 'thirties (Table 2), the upward trend in number of Negro workers was broken even more definitely than was the case in the urban South—and this in spite of the fact that the Negro population in the large Northern centers of Negro concentration increased by as much as 23 per cent between 1930 and 1940. The white population in the urban North, on the other hand, was almost stationary, as was the white labor force. Thus, while the proportion of Negroes in the total population continued to increase, there was scarcely any change at all in the relative number of Negro male workers. Further, as we shall point out later in this chapter, the unemployment among these Negro workers was much greater in the North than in the South.

All this is explainable on several grounds. The depression hit the North worse than the South. Nevertheless, Negroes continued to go North to such an extent that the relative increase in the Negro urban population was even greater in the North than in the South. As pointed out in Chapter 8, this cannot mean anything but that, once the isolation had been broken and the northward migration had become a pattern, Negroes continued to go North whether or not there were any employment openings for them there. In addition to the general difference in social conditions—less segregation, greater legal security, superior educational and hospital facilities, higher earnings if any jobs are to be had, and so on—the North offers much more public relief to Negroes in economic distress than does the South.[b] This fact has undoubtedly been behind much of the Negro migration to the North during the 'thirties.[c] Also, as in the South, public relief has contributed to the decline in the proportion of Negro youth and Negro aged persons who offer their services on the Northern labor market.[d]

Thus, it was not all due to any greater negligence about the Negro in the North that—as far as employment was concerned—he fared even worse

[a] This fact, of course, is one of the main reasons why most of the outstanding Negro leaders are not inclined, during the present War, to postpone the fight for Negro rights until after the War is over. (For a representative expression of their attitude, see "Press Service of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People." [July 17, 1942].)

[b] See Chapter 15.

[c] See Chapter 8.

[d] See Section 8 of this chapter.

there, during the 'thirties, than he did in the urban South. In part it was just because the North, in other respects, treated him better than the South did that the Northern Negro population tended to outgrow the employment opportunities for Negroes. Still, the record of the North certainly is not a good one either. Many labor unions discriminated against the Negro worker. So did many employers, especially when it came to skilled work.

7. The Employment Hazards of Unskilled Work

We have found that the Negro's participation in the Southern nonagricultural economy has steadily become relatively less significant. In the North there was no further improvement in the Negro's share of the jobs during the 'thirties; the Negro, if anything, lost even more than did the white worker because of the depression.

There is one factor behind this development to which we have not yet given enough emphasis: the fact that the Negro is concentrated in unskilled occupations (Table 4). This circumstance must be considered in any evalua-

TABLE 4

NEGRO AND WHITE MALE WORKERS IN NONAGRICULTURAL PURSUITS BY SOCIAL-ECONOMIC STATUS, IN THE NORTH AND IN THE SOUTH: 1930
(Cumulative Percentages)

Occupational Status	All Male Workers		Negro Male Workers		White Male Workers	
	The North and the West	The South	The North and the West	The South	The North and the West	The South
All workers	100	100	100	100	100	100
Clerical or lower	83	83	95	95	82	79
Skilled or lower	65	67	91	93	64	60
Semi-skilled or lower	43	48	83	86	41	38
Unskilled	23	32	66	71	21	20

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States, 1930* (1938), pp. 36–59.

tion of future prospects. Indeed, the Negro's low occupational status contains a greater danger for future employment than is usually realized. It means generally that his chances not only of getting ahead but of keeping any employment at all are more restricted. The expansion in unskilled occupations has been limited during recent decades compared with that in occupations above the unskilled class.[22] It is necessary to emphasize this point. For, just as many persons believe that Negroes would be able to get along if they only had sense enough to stay in agriculture, there are those who think that Negroes are over-ambitious when they try to get out

of their position as common laborers. Negroes *must* become skilled workers, since the demand for unskilled workers is declining.

The proportion of unskilled workers in the nonagricultural labor force is much greater in the South than in the North (Table 4). One of the reasons is that the iron, steel, and machinery industries, with their great need of skilled labor, are less well represented below the Mason-Dixon line than they are in certain other parts of the country. Then, too, there has been comparatively little incentive to mechanization in the low wage regions of the South. But this means, on the other hand, that *there are in the South many more laborers who can be displaced by mechanization.* The Wages and Hours Law tends to spur mechanization by raising wages. It goes without saying that *the Negroes are, and will continue to be, the main sufferers in such a development.* Over 70 per cent of the Negro males in nonagricultural pursuits in the South were in unskilled occupations; the corresponding figure for Southern whites was 20 per cent. The Southern Negroes were, in this respect, somewhat worse off than the Northern Negroes. Southern industry was more "saturated" with unskilled Negro labor than Northern industry. Almost half of all unskilled male workers outside agriculture in the South were Negroes.[23] The occupational status of the Southern whites, on the other hand, was somewhat higher, in certain respects, than was that of the Northern whites. The reason is obvious: white workers in the South had a near monopoly on the higher jobs but were less well represented in the lower occupations.[a]

If the Negro's occupational status was particularly low in the South, it does not mean that it was high in the North. Actually there was little difference: about two-thirds of the male Negro workers in the North were in unskilled occupations. But since these Negro workers constituted only about one-tenth of all laborers in the North,[24] there should be more room for the Negro in the North, even if he remains confined to the bottom of the occupational ladder.

8. The Size of the Negro Labor Force and Negro Employment

Considering all the limitation that Negroes face in every occupation, even those where they are not completely excluded, it is pertinent to ask: What proportion of Negroes have any jobs at all? Is the Negro merely exchanging his position as a dependent and exploited sharecropper for that of an urban unemployed person and a relief client?

In nonfarm areas of the United States in 1940, 47 per cent of all non-

[a] This observation about the occupational status of Southern and Northern whites agrees fairly well with the finding about urban incomes in the South and the North. See Chapter 16. Median incomes for white families, contrary to common belief, are not lower in the urban South than in the urban North, the reason being that the Southern white population—due to the presence of the Negro—has an "incomplete lower class."

white persons, 14 years of age and over, were registered as having employment (exclusive of work relief employment). The corresponding figure for the white population was slightly lower, or 45 per cent.[25] This, however, does not mean that employment conditions were any more favorable for Negroes than for whites. It is only because Negro women to such a great extent take on gainful work outside their homes that this general employment rate was somewhat higher for nonwhites than for whites. Of all nonwhite women, 36 per cent were employed; for white women the figure was 24 per cent (Table 5).[26] For men it was the other way around: *nonwhite*

TABLE 5

TOTAL PERSONS AND LABOR FORCE IN NONFARM AREAS OF THE UNITED STATES BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX, AND RACE: 1940

(Percentages)

Sex and Race	Total Population 14 years of Age and Over, by Employment Status		Labor Force by Employment Status						
			Labor Force				Unemployed		
	Total persons	Non-workers	All Workers	Employed	Unemployed (emergency workers included)	Total Workers	Employed	Total (including emergency workers)	Seeking Work
Male									
Nonwhite	100.0	21.7	78.3	58.9	19.4	100.0	75.2	24.8	15.2
White	100.0	21.5	78.5	66.1	12.4	100.0	84.2	15.8	10.9
Female									
Nonwhite	100.0	56.8	43.2	35.9	7.3	100.0	83.1	16.9	13.1
White	100.0	72.7	27.3	23.8	3.5	100.0	87.0	13.0	9.7

Source: Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 4

men had employment less often (59 per cent) than had white men (66 per cent). This difference was particularly pronounced in the North. *In many Northern centers only about one-half of the Negro men had any employment.*

These race differentials in employment rates are the result of two opposing factors. One is that the extreme poverty of most Negro families forces Negro women as well as Negro boys and aged Negro men out on the labor market to a much greater extent than corresponding categories of whites.[28] On the other hand, among both men and women who "are in the labor market," the proportion of those who fail to get any jobs is much higher for Negroes than for whites. There is often, of course, a causal relation between these two factors. A Negro woman may take a job because

her husband is without one. On the other hand, if the employment situation is discouraging, some of the workers, particularly if they have secured public assistance, and quite especially if they are getting old, will tend to withdraw permanently from the labor market. Nevertheless, let us consider each of the two factors separately. It is certainly pertinent to our problem to compare the extent to which Negroes and whites offer their services on the labor market. It allows us to comprehend better the data on Negro unemployment[a] which we shall discuss presently. We shall also find that it takes away some of the basis for the popular belief in "Negro laziness."

The total number of both employed and unemployed workers (the so-called "labor force"[b]) has traditionally been much larger, in proportion, among Negroes than among whites. This has been particularly true in the case of women. But such a difference, although smaller, was formerly clearly noticeable in regard to males as well. In part it has been due to the fact that there has been a pronounced time-lag in the elimination of child labor among Negroes. Too, Negroes have retired at a much later age than have white workers. In 1930 over half of the Negro men 75 years of age and over—as against less than one-third of the white men of the same age—were still "in the labor market." While white women used to leave the labor market in great numbers after the age of about 25, there was no very significant drop in the proportion of workers and job-seekers among Negroes until they reached the age of about 65.[29]

Gradually, however, an equalization has taken place in regard to most of these differences. Yet child labor, at least until 1930, dropped more sharply in the white than in the colored group.[30] The proportion of workers among old people, on the other hand, seems to have declined somewhat faster among Negroes than among whites. There has been, for a long time, an upward trend in the proportion of white women gainfully employed; whereas the proportion for Negro women was stationary or declining.[31] This equalization seems to have become particularly pronounced during the decade 1930-1940,[32] which probably was due to the introduction of large-scale public relief, particularly old age assistance, assistance to dependent children, and so on, which, in spite of all discrimination,[c] meant more to the Negro than to the white group. In addition, it is probable that the great unemployment among Negroes during the 'thirties was a contributory factor, in that Negroes who had lost their jobs, more often than whites, were

[a] See Section 9 of this chapter.

[b] This designation was used in the 1940 Census; it includes workers on work relief projects (W.P.A., N.Y.A., C.C.C., and so on). The concept "gainful worker" used in earlier census reports was about the same, except in some minor details (see footnote 12 in this chapter).

[c] See Chapter 15.

discouraged from offering their services and, thus, ceased to belong to either the actual or the potential labor force.[33]

This development had gone so far by 1940 that, in urban and other non-farm areas, the proportion of the male population 14 years old and over that belonged to the labor force (those who were either actual workers or job-seekers) was exactly the same in both racial groups (78 per cent; see Table 5). The relative number of female workers and job-seekers, on

TABLE 6

LABOR FORCE AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL PERSONS, 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, AND UNEMPLOYED WORKERS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LABOR FORCE, IN SELECTED LARGE CITIES, BY SEX AND RACE: 1940

City	Labor Force as a Percentage of All Persons, 14 Years of Age and Over				Unemployed (exclusive of emergency workers) as a Percentage of Total Labor Force			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	White
New York	80.8	81.1	50.7	32.5	20.1	15.2	18.1	14.8
Philadelphia	78.5	80.8	43.6	31.9	33.1	15.4	23.7	14.6
Cleveland	79.5	81.4	33.0	30.3	16.7	12.4	22.4	11.3
Detroit	84.7	84.7	30.0	28.1	16.1	9.7	19.4	11.3
Chicago	77.9	82.4	35.7	33.3	17.2	11.1	23.2	9.5
St Louis	81.6	82.9	37.4	32.8	19.6	10.5	20.4	9.2
Louisville	79.7	81.8	45.7	29.9	17.6	10.4	18.6	9.8
Baltimore	79.6	80.8	46.8	29.8	13.2	7.3	10.8	7.9
Washington, D.C.	81.0	80.7	51.7	43.0	10.6	5.4	11.3	5.1
Richmond	79.5	81.7	56.1	36.1	15.5	6.6	13.1	6.8
Atlanta	82.0	83.0	54.4	35.5	13.9	6.7	11.6	7.6
Birmingham	82.0	81.9	39.9	26.7	15.9	7.0	14.9	9.1
Memphis	85.4	82.5	44.8	30.9	14.5	6.8	15.5	7.4
New Orleans	80.7	81.1	43.4	28.9	15.3	10.2	15.2	9.6
Houston	84.0	83.8	53.7	28.7	11.9	7.2	9.7	7.0

Source: Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population, Second Series, State Reports, Tables 41 and 43 (for Washington, D.C., Tables 13 and 21).

the other hand, continued in most places to be much higher in the non-white than in the white population, even if the difference was smaller than before. White women still left the labor market at a much faster rate after having reached the age of 25 than did Negro women.[34]

The equalization in the proportion of white and Negro men and women who are workers or job-seekers has proceeded further in the urban North than in the urban South. It has also proceeded further in the cities than in the farm areas of the South. Even in the male agricultural population of the South in 1940 there was still a higher proportion of actual and potential workers in the Negro than in the white group.[35] This may be due, in part,

to the fact that unemployment among Negroes is greater in the North than in the South, and much greater in urban than in rural areas. Also, it is an index of the differences in economic standards. Both relief grants and nonrelief earnings are much more adequate in Northern than in Southern cities; both are particularly inadequate in farm areas of the South.[a]

We should not, however, be hasty in jumping to the conclusion that "relief has demoralized the Negro." Of course, something of the sort may have happened in many individual cases, both in the white and in the Negro group. But, by and large, the moral indignation against the Negro that is implied in this stereotype is entirely misplaced. We must keep in mind that so far no appeal has been made to the ambition of the Negro to better himself economically. On the contrary, white people, by means of the severe job restrictions they have imposed upon the Negro—and by denying him sufficient public health facilities—have forced him to accept public relief as one of his "major occupations." Therefore, if the Negro, in a sense, has become "demoralized," it is rather because *white people have given him a smaller share of the steady and worth-while jobs than of the public assistance benefits.*

It should be emphasized, further, that, in spite of the more liberal relief policies of the last decades, there are still, proportionately, a greater number of workers and job-seekers in the Negro than in the white population. The decline has occurred mainly among aged persons who should be allowed to retire,[36] among youth who can use some additional school education, and among women who have their own homes and families to attend to.

In the future, however, this problem may become of increasing significance. There is still, as we shall show,[b] much discrimination against the Negro in the relief system. If these discriminatory practices are removed—and the federal government is working toward that end—but if present job restrictions are maintained, then, of course, *there is a real danger that the Negro will become a burden on the national economy.* This is the basic dilemma in the problem of the Negroe's integration into American economic life. It must be faced squarely.

9. NEGRO AND WHITE UNEMPLOYMENT

We have seen that there are more Negroes than whites, in proportion, who offer their services on the labor market. More Negroes need employment than do whites, for the simple reason that the pay for each job that a Negro can get usually is so much lower than are the earnings that a white person can get. Yet the unemployment is much higher for Negroes than for whites. About 25 per cent of the nonwhite male labor force in nonfarm areas was without any employment on the labor market in 1940; and 15

[a] See Chapters 15 and 16.

[b] See Chapter 15.

per cent did not even have any work relief assignments (Table 5). The corresponding figures for white males (16 and 11 per cent, respectively) were significantly lower. There was a similar difference, although on a somewhat lower level, between white and nonwhite females. When the number of jobless female workers is related, not to the "labor force," but to all women, 14 years of age and over, one finds that the unemployment rate was more than twice as high (7 per cent) for Negro as for white women (3 per cent).[37]

Conditions, however, are different in different areas. In the rural farm areas of the South, where only few persons are registered as unemployed, the rates were actually lower for Negroes than for whites. The nonfarm areas of the South show conditions only slightly worse for Negroes than for whites. It is mainly in the cities that unemployment is so much more widespread among Negroes than among whites (Table 6). The difference was usually quite large both in Northern and in Southern cities, but since the North had a higher general level of unemployment, Northern Negroes, of course, were even more adversely affected than were the Negroes in the urban South. In Philadelphia, about one-third of the Negro males, not counting those on work relief projects, were registered as unemployed; in New York and St. Louis the proportion was one-fifth. Negro female workers, as well, showed high unemployment rates in several of the large Northern cities.

Perhaps Negro migration is the cause of this situation. The Negro migrant, as we have seen, prefers the large city. Whenever possible, he wants to go North. It is possible that he could have had a better chance in Southern villages and small cities. But, as explained before,[a] it is natural that the Negro prefers to go where he can escape injustice and restrictions, which are usually particularly great in the small Southern community.

Young workers are suffering from unemployment much more than others. In urban areas roughly one-third of the total labor force in the age group 14 to 19 was without jobs. Nonwhite males (36 per cent) were somewhat above, and white females (29 per cent) were a little below the average; but there was no substantial race differential except in certain individual cities. The situation was better for middle-aged people, but more so for white than for Negro workers. This finding from the 1940 Census is corroborated by other studies.

> The Health Survey data for urban male and female workers in 1935-36 . . . and the information from the 1937 Unemployment Census . . . substantiate the conclusion *that the Negro-white difference in unemployment risk is mainly a problem of the Negro's inability to improve his chances on the labor market with increased age and experience to the same extent as the white worker.* If age and

[a] See Chapter 8.

> experience help the Negro worker less than the white worker, how about education? Data from the National Health Survey . . . indicate that *the unemployment risk for white urban workers, 16-24 years old, declines progressively with the increased scholastic achievements.* About 56 per cent of the male white workers with less than a sixth-grade education were unemployed in 1935-36, whereas only eighteen per cent of those with a college education were jobless. *Among urban Negro youth, on the other hand, there was no consistent trend of this kind at all* except that persons with college training were somewhat better off than those with less education. Colored urban youth, whose education extended no higher than the sixth grade were somewhat better off than white youth with a similar lack of formal training. The colored and white youth who had completed the seventh grade had the same amount of unemployment (50 per cent for males and 38-39 per cent for females). It was only because such a large proportion of white youth had gone farther than the seventh grade that their general position was better than that of colored youth.[38]

These findings are certainly extremely significant—in fact, so important that one would like to see them confirmed by other similar studies. It seems, however, that they are plausible enough. If white boys and girls do not care for openings that may be available immediately, they can, more often than colored youth, afford to postpone their entry into the labor market. This may explain why those among them who have little education may be even less successful in getting employment than are young colored workers. *Since Negroes are seldom in demand for jobs for which education is necessary, there certainly is nothing surprising in the conclusion that they, unlike whites, usually fail to improve their opportunities by staying in school longer.* Somewhat more astonishing is the finding that those with college education constitute an exception in this regard. But they are not dependent entirely on the white economy, as are most of the less-educated Negroes. The segregated Negro community offers a small but increasing number of jobs to Negro professionals.[a]

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 1. The lower unemployment risk found for youths with college education may be partly fictitious, however, in that many of those who fail to get employment simply continue their studies and, thus, are listed as students rather than as unemployed.

CHAPTER 14

THE NEGRO IN BUSINESS, THE PROFESSIONS, PUBLIC SERVICE AND OTHER WHITE COLLAR OCCUPATIONS

1. Overview

The position of the Negro in business, professions, public service, and white collar jobs is far different from that of the Negro wage earner. As a wage earner the Negro is excluded from many trades. Where he works he is commonly held down to the status of laborer and is excluded from skilled work. But there are always possibilities for him to enter these jobs, and he is always struggling to do so. In the occupations traditionally associated with upper or middle class status, the exclusion policy is usually much more complete and "settled." This is because it is fortified by "social" considerations, as well as by economic ones.[a]

The overwhelming majority of all other Negro workers serve the general white-dominated economy, but most Negro businessmen, professionals, and Negro white collar workers are either dependent on the segregated Negro community for their market or they serve in public institutions—like schools and hospitals—set up exclusively for the use of Negroes. (Some civil service employees are the only significant exceptions.)

This has important consequences. The exclusion from the larger white economy means a severe restriction of the opportunities for Negroes to reach an upper or middle class status. It represents one of the main social mechanisms by which the Negro upper and middle classes are kept small. It also makes the occupational distribution in those classes skewed: While the Negro community gives places for a fair number of Negro preachers, teachers, and neighborhood storekeepers, it does not offer much chance for civil engineers and architects. The latter have to work in the white economy which does not want Negroes in such positions. The Negroes' representation among managers of industry, if anything, is still smaller.

The poverty of the Negro people represents a general limitation of opportunity for Negro businessmen and professionals. Since they are excluded from the white market, it becomes important for them to hold

[a] The term "social" is here used in the sense of the man in the street, especially the Southerner, and thus has the connotation of "intimate" and "personal." (See Chapter 28.)

the Negro market as a monopoly. The monopoly over the Negro market of teachers, preachers, undertakers, beauticians and others is generally respected. The Negro storekeeper, on the other hand, is in severe competition with the white storekeeper, and only a small fraction of the purchasing power of Negro patrons passes his counter. To a lesser extent this is true also of the Negro doctor. The Negro lawyer has an even worse competitive position. The Negro journalist does not have to compete with whites in the Negro press but, to an extent, the Negro press has to compete with the white press. All Negro businessmen and professionals have to try to make as much use as possible of racial solidarity as a selling point. This means that the entire Negro middle and upper class becomes caught in an ideological dilemma.[a] On the one hand, they find that the caste wall blocks their economic and social opportunities. On the other hand, they have, at the same time, a vested interest in racial segregation since it gives them what opportunity they have.

In the rest of this chapter we shall describe the economic position of upper and middle class Negroes. We shall first present a summary of the situation and then go on to examine each of the occupations separately.

In 1930 there were only 254,000 Negro workers in white collar and higher occupations (Table 1). This means that only one out of fifteen Negro workers in nonagricultural pursuits had a status higher than that of wage earner. In the white nonfarm population as many as two out of every five workers were in business, managerial, professional, and white collar jobs.[1] The number of Negro workers in such occupations had increased by more than three-fourths between 1910 and 1930. But the corresponding increase of white workers had been somewhat greater, so the relative position of the Negro had not improved. In 1910, 1.8 per cent of all these professional, managerial and clerical workers were Negroes. In 1930, 1.7 per cent of them were Negroes. Thus, in spite of the fact that the Negro's share in these jobs was so extremely low, there was no tendency toward equalization. There was not even any great increase in the proportion that professionals, businessmen, and white collar workers constituted of the total Negro labor force in nonagricultural pursuits. In 1910 this proportion was 6 per cent. In 1930 it was 7 per cent.

Conditions differed, however, for different categories. The Negro has had slightly better chances in the professions than in other occupations in this group. Indeed, in 1930 the number of Negro professional workers was larger (116,000) than that of clerical workers (83,000), whereas in the white population there were almost three clerks and kindred workers for every professional person. That the Negroes have as much as a 4 per cent representation among the professional workers is due to two main factors: the segregated Southern school system, and the segregated Negro church

[a] See Chapter 38.

TABLE 1

NEGRO WORKERS IN BUSINESS, PROFESSIONAL, AND WHITE COLLAR OCCUPATIONS, BY SEX: 1910, 1920, AND 1930

Sex and Occupation	Number of Negro Workers			Negroes as a percentage of all Workers		
	1910	1920	1930	1910	1920	1930
Both Sexes						
Professional persons	64,648	77,118	115,765	4.0	3.8	3.9
Wholesale and retail dealers	20,894	23,593	28,343	1.7	1.7	1.6
Other proprietors, managers, and officials	19,102	17,610	27,648	1.6	1.3	1.5
Clerks and kindred workers	38,698	63,095	82,669	1.0	1.1	1.0
Males						
Professional persons	35,815	39,434	55,610	3.9	3.7	3.7
Wholesale and retail dealers	17,888	20,455	24,493	1.5	1.5	1.5
Other proprietors, managers, and officials	15,487	13,309	21,196	1.4	1.0	1.2
Clerks and kindred workers	31,926	48,046	62,138	1.2	1.4	1.3
Females						
Professional persons	28,833	37,684	60,155	4.0	3.8	4.2
Wholesale and retail dealers	3,006	3,138	3,850	4.4	3.9	3.4
Other proprietors, managers, and officials	3,615	4,301	6,452	6.6	5.5	4.9
Clerks and kindred workers	6,772	15,048	20,531	0.6	0.7	0.7

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States*, 1930 (1938), pp. 7 and 13.

with its numerous small congregations. Teachers and ministers account for almost two-thirds of all Negro professional workers. The small number of Negro clerical workers—only two-thirds of one per cent of all female clerks and kindred workers were Negro—is the result of the fact that few white establishments use any Negro workers in such capacities while most Negro-owned establishments are too small to give employment to others than the entrepreneur and members of his family. Negro storekeepers, other business entrepreneurs, and business officials had an intermediate position between these two groups. They numbered 56,000 and constituted about 1.5 per cent of all American businessmen.

The North is almost as strict as the South in excluding Negroes from middle class jobs in the white-dominated economy. The very lack of segregation in most Northern schools makes it more difficult for a Negro to get a teaching position. Since the educational ladder is made completely available for Negro youths, this subsequent barrier against employment, except as laborers, is more deeply discouraging.[2]

The subsequent detailed account of the various groups of occupations will show that, by and large, the prospects for Negro workers of higher than wage earner status are even more limited than can be learned from the summary data we have just examined.[a]

2. THE NEGRO IN BUSINESS

In 1939 there were not quite 30,000 Negro retail stores, including eating and drinking places, giving employment to an almost equal number of proprietors, and less than 14,000 hired employees, or—apart from 1,000 unpaid family members—a total of 43,000 persons. Thus, Negro retail trade, in terms of employment, is not totally insignificant. Compared with the size of white retail trade, however, it is negligible. The total sales in 1939 were a little more than $71,000,000, which was less than two-tenths of one per cent of the national total. The annual payroll amounted to a little over $400 for each full-time employee.[3] There were no signs of improvement in the relative position of Negro retail trade. The proportion of Negroes among all retail dealers was, if anything, smaller in 1930 than in 1910 (Table 1). The same trend downward is visible during the period of 1929-1939. Total sales declined by 28 per cent in Negro-owned stores and restaurants from 1929 to 1939, whereas the corresponding figure for retail trade in the entire United States was 13 per cent.[4]

The Negro population has much less than one-tenth of the total consumer income in the United States. Certain estimates made of Negro and white family income allow us to guess that the Negro's share in the national income does not exceed 4 per cent, and is probably around 3 per cent.[b] As savings constitute generally a larger part of higher incomes, the Negro's share in total consumption is probably somewhat greater than his share of the national income, though not much. But even when the relatively low level of Negro purchasing power is taken into account, Negro-owned stores and restaurants probably do not have more than 5 or 10 per cent of the total Negro trade. The rest goes to white businesses.

It goes without saying that the small size of the average Negro store increases costs, and thereby causes a competitive disadvantage. Prices tend to be higher than in the white-operated stores, or the margin of profit smaller. It is difficult for the Negro dealer to have a large variety of goods. Reid cites an inquiry made by the Negro Business League in New York's Harlem in 1932, according to which a sample of Negro housewives blamed

[a] The facts for the subsequent analysis will be taken, in large part, from an unpublished research memorandum prepared for this study (1940), "The Negro in the American Economic System," by Ira DeA. Reid in conjunction with Norgren's investigations cited in the previous chapter. It deals with the Negro in business, banking, retail trade, professions and white collar occupations.

[b] See Chapter 16

the insufficient variety of stock and the higher prices as the main reasons for their failure to patronize Negro-owned stores to any large extent. The extreme poverty of most customers puts another difficulty in the way of the Negro dealer: since he must depend on immediate cash turnover, he must avoid giving credit; at the same time he knows that he will lose many of his patrons by not granting them credit.[5] Housing segregation is a factor which generally helps Negro business. When a city, however, contains several small Negro neighborhoods, as often happens in the South, scarcely any one of them can support a prosperous Negro store.[6] Negro sections never contain any primary shopping centers; indeed there are few places, except in the North, where there are even secondary shopping centers in Negro areas. Negroes often reside close to principal business districts where no Negro entrepreneur can ever hope to rent a store.[7]

These things go a long way to explain how narrow the prospects of the Negro retail dealers are. Still, it is not only because Negro consumers buy in white business districts that the Negro dealer gets so little of their patronage. Negro areas, at least in large cities, have a great number of stores and restaurants catering exclusively, or almost exclusively, to Negroes but operated by Jews, Greeks, Italians and other whites. Sometimes this may be a matter of tradition, since it was only a few decades ago that many of the principal Negro neighborhoods in the North had entirely or predominantly white residents. Or it may be that real estate owners—most of whom are white even in Negro areas—do not believe that the Negro dealer is a dependable rent payer. Such an attitude, of course, must jeopardize the Negro's chances of getting a good location. Reid claims, in addition, that the Negro businessman himself has not always seen the advantage of locating his store in a competitive area:

> Besides the fact that the Negro grocery retailer is barred from the main shopping districts by social and economic factors, he believes that his business experiences greater success in a non-competitive area where there are no other stores selling similar merchandise. The general economic truth that competition increases the volume of business does not apply to him, he feels. Such an attitude gives rise to isolation of Negro grocery stores even within the Negro community. The complaint of Negro householders that Negro establishments are inconveniently located is well founded.[8]

The Negro businessman, furthermore, encounters greater difficulties in securing credit. This is partly due to the marginal position of Negro business. It is also partly due to prejudiced opinions among the whites concerning the business ability and personal reliability of Negroes. In either case a vicious circle is in operation keeping Negro business down. Part of this circle is the fact that Negro business generally is not of the size and efficiency necessary to offer many positions which would give good

training to Negro youths who want to prepare themselves for a business career.

Whether or not such factors as those mentioned above are sufficient to excuse the Negro's poor showing in business is, of course, a question of judgment. Particularly striking is the fact that only seldom, and then mainly because segregation has provided a monopoly, have Negro businessmen succeeded in getting all or most of the Negro trade. In addition to the 10,500 Negro restaurant owners in 1930, there were some 14,000 owners of Negro hotels, boarding and lodging houses (Table 2), constituting 7 per cent of all such entrepreneurs in the country. They probably owned

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF NEGRO ENTREPRENEURS AND WHITE COLLAR WORKERS IN SELECTED TRADE AND SERVICE INDUSTRIES: 1910[a]

Industry and Occupation	1910	1930
Banking and brokerage: officials, clerks, accountants, etc.	634	994
Insurance: officials, managers, agents, clerks, etc.	2,450	9,325
Real Estate: officials, agents, clerks, etc.	950	4,695
Wholesale and retail trade:		
Retail dealers (except automobiles)	20,644[b]	27,743[b]
Undertakers	953	2,946
Clerks, salesmen, saleswomen, and other white collar workers	10,989	21,017
Hotels, restaurants, boarding houses, etc.		
Hotel, boarding and lodging housekeepers and managers	11,574	14,173
Restaurant, cafe, and lunchroom keepers	6,369	10,543
Clerks, bookkeepers, and other white collar workers	838	1,248
Cleaning, dyeing, and pressing shops:		
Owners and managers	c	1,734
Clerical workers	c	156

Sour e: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the U.S.: 1920–1932*, pp. 355–358. *Thirteenth Census of the U.S.: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 418–433. It should be noted that these figures differ somewhat from the classification used by Edwards, *op. cit.*, in that, for instance, Edwards includes messengers among white collar workers, which has not been done in this table. It is evident that every classification of this type has to be arbitrary.

[a] Only such trade and service groups as have any appreciable number of Negro entrepreneurs and white collar workers have been included. Regarding barbers and hairdressers, see text in this section.

[b] Figures do not quite agree with those in Table 1 because they are based on different classifications.

[c] Data not available.

most lodging and boarding houses located in Negro sections; few white entrepreneurs would consider competing for this trade. Most of these Negro entrepreneurs were women, usually widowed.[9] The majority of their places probably differed little, if at all, from ordinary private homes with lodgers.

A real "business group," on the other hand, were the 3,000 Negro undertakers, constituting nearly one-tenth of all undertakers in America. In the South they have an almost complete monopoly on Negro funerals, as whites would not want to touch the corpses. In the North their competi-

tive position is almost as strong. They never handle white funerals. Since, in addition, Negroes are likely to spend relatively much on funerals, the funeral homes represent one of the most solid and flourishing Negro businesses. Barbers, beauticians, and hairdressers also have a complete monopoly for similar reasons. In 1930 there were 34,000 Negro entrepreneurs and employees occupied in this line of work, and they constituted almost one-tenth of all such workers in the country.[10] But these are the only Negro businesses in which Negroes are protected from white competition. In all other businesses of any consequence Negro businessmen are able to keep only a small portion of the Negro market. Seldom have Negroes succeeded in keeping a substantial white market.

The Negro's showing in business appears particularly poor when compared with that of certain other "alien" groups. The immigrants offer a case in point. The foreign-born are "under-represented" among industrial entrepreneurs, business managers, officials, and white collar workers, but they constitute a larger proportion of the retail dealers than corresponds to their proportion in the population. In fact, one out of every three wholesale and retail dealers in the United States in 1930 was a foreign-born person.[11] This high proportion may be caused, of course, by their having greater difficulties than native Americans in getting employment in many other occupations. At the same time, it indicates a certain resourcefulness in the struggle against unemployment.

Particularly interesting is the great number of stores and restaurants operated by Chinese and Japanese. In 1929 they owned one-and-a-half times as many stores, restaurants, and eating places per 1,000 population as other residents of the United States. Negroes, on the other hand, operated but one-sixth of the number of such establishments as would correspond to their proportion in the population. Nor is this all. The stores and restaurants operated by the Orientals were larger and gave employment to an average of four persons per store (proprietors and employees), whereas the corresponding ratio for Negro establishments was but 1.6. The net sales of the Oriental-operated stores ($89,000,000) were not much lower than those of the Negro-owned stores ($101,000,000), in spite of the fact that the Negro population was about fifty times larger than the Oriental population of the country.[12]

It is a problem to explain why the Chinese have been able to build up a prosperous restaurant business with white patronage, whereas Negro-owned eating places nowadays have but few white customers, except in a couple of "tourist spots" in the amusement area of Harlem and one or two other publicized Negro sections in other Northern cities; and even those are not always owned by Negroes.[13] It is true that the Chinese restaurant profits from the special appeal that a foreign culture always seems to have to the American. But Southern cooking, in a measure, has a similar reputation

outside the South. Since the servants of the Southern aristocracy have usually been Negroes, well-trained Negro cooks and waiters have not been lacking, and one would have expected that the Negro-owned restaurant would have had a particularly good chance, once the Negro had actually made some headway in this business.[14] There are many reports about Negro restaurants having been popular among the white upper class in earlier times.

But already in the 1890's Du Bois described how the Negro caterer was losing out.[15] Part of the explanation is probably the change in the character of the upper class restaurant business. In earlier times, the main requirement was good cooking and service; the caterer may have appeared more as a favored "collective" servant to an upper class circle than as a businessman. But soon requirements were increased. It became necessary to invest large capital in restaurants intended for the wealthy. Or, as Du Bois puts it:

> . . . it is the old development from the small to the large industry, from the house-industry to the concentrated industry, from the private dining room to the palatial hotel. If the Negro caterers of Philadelphia had been white, some of them would have been put in charge of a large hotel, or would have become co-partners in some large restaurant business, for which capitalists furnished funds. . . . As it was, the change in fashion and mode of business changed the methods of the Negro caterers, and their clientele. They began to serve the middle class instead of the rich and exclusive, their prices had to become more reasonable, and their efforts to excel had consequently fewer incentives. Moreover, they now came into sharp competition with a class of small white caterers, who, if they were worse cooks, were better trained in the tricks of trade . . .[16]

Not only has the Negro caterer lost out because he has not had capital, but also because he has often failed to modernize his business and be efficient generally. There have been, of course, social and political pressures, as well as economic ones, against Negro caterers. The few remaining Negro caterers and restaurant owners serve whites mainly, and their business has the character of a novelty rather than of a regularly accepted business.

The famous old Negro barbershops went the same way as the Negro restaurants. Laundry work represents a somewhat similar example. There are more Negro workers in this field than in any other occupation outside of agriculture and domestic service. But it was the whites and the Chinese who started the commercial laundries, which have taken hundreds of thousands of job opportunities away from the Negro home laundresses. There were only a few hundred Negro owners of commercial laundries in 1930, representing about 2 per cent of the total. Not only his experience as a worker but also his self-interest should have provided an inducement for the Negro to go into this kind of business as an independent entrepreneur. Yet he failed to do so.

The building trade offers another example of how the Negro has failed

as an entrepreneur, even when he—viewed superficially at least—would seem to have had a comparatively good chance. There are more skilled Negro workers in this industry than in any other line of work. Contractors, at least formerly, were recruited from the ranks of the skilled workers. At the time when, in view of the small size of most construction jobs, most contractors were not much more than master workmen, many Negroes had a certain position in this field in the South, but soon after the Civil War the South started to become industrialized. Many factory buildings and large apartment houses had to be erected, and they required huge amounts of capital. Whites formed an increasing proportion of the skilled workers, and they attempted to monopolize the work on the large projects where the latest technical methods were used. Only in exceptional cases did they accept work under Negro contractors. Under such circumstances it was impossible for Negroes to make any headway. By 1910 there were but 2,900 Negro contractors constituting 1.8 per cent of the total. In 1930 the number was down to 2,400, or 1.6 per cent.

The fact that the Negro has never been able to establish himself as an entrepreneur in ordinary manufacturing industries[a] is less surprising. The public, of course, is not always aware of the racial identity of those who produce. For this reason, the Negro, perhaps, would have been able to sell on the white market had he been allowed to become a manufacturer. But the obstacles have been too great to overcome. In most manufacturing lines he has not even been able to become a skilled worker, much less a foreman, engineer or office worker. The chances of acquiring managerial skills, under such circumstances, were scant. Lack of adequate training made him inferior. His background in slavery enhanced his feeling of inferiority. The general belief that his inferiority was due to his race meant that even those individual Negroes who would have been able to overcome all other difficulties were stopped short. For one thing, it put the would-be Negro entrepreneur at a tremendous disadvantage in respect to the all-important problem of credit. One can almost count on the fingers of one hand the number of types of production where the Negro, as an ordinary workingman, has been allowed to enter when he was not well entrenched already during the time of slavery. If whites put up great restrictions against his activity as a wage earner, how could they be expected to risk their money on his attempts to become an independent producer? In the South it would have been against the doctrine of the inequality of the races. In the North

[a] Outside the building industry there were only a little over 1,300 Negro manufacturers in 1930. The main groups were the owners of suit, coat, and overall factories, automobile repair shops, and saw and planing mills. Most of these Negro establishments were probably small and marginal. Some of the largest individual Negro-owned establishments are those producing hair and facial preparations. In most other manufacturing lines there were less than five Negro entrepreneurs. (Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-113.)

there were few persons of the moneyed class who had any close contact with individual Negroes so that they might judge a Negro on the basis of his personal qualifications.

A comparatively recent development which may have some influence on the Negro's position in business is the "don't buy where you can't work" campaign which started over a decade ago.[a] On its face, this movement is an attempt to get Negro workers into white-owned stores, but it may be considered here because, in part, it is stimulated by Negro businessmen who hope to attract Negro customers away from white-owned business. The right of the Negro to boycott and picket establishments which discriminate against him was long contested from a legal standpoint. It was not until 1938 that this right was finally established through a decision by the Supreme Court.[17] This made it possible for the movement to develop.

The direct purpose of the movement is to increase the number of Negroes employed in white-owned stores, movie theaters and other establishments in Negro districts. Since usually the aim is not to remove white workers already employed but only to make the establishments hire some proportion of Negroes when new workers are taken on, the results cannot immediately be of great quantitative significance for Negro employment. The comparatively small number of white collar workers in most stores with large Negro patronage indicates that even the complete success of the movement must be rather limited. There may be some secondary results, however, in that a number of Negroes receive practical training in efficiently managed businesses—a training which is badly needed but for which there has been little opportunity so far. It may eventually broaden the basis for the recruiting of Negro entrepreneurs. Reid points out that this boycott movement has been used mainly in the urban North where the Negro has greater political and citizenship rights than in the South.[18] Too, it is probably principally in the North that there are a great number of white-owned stores in Negro areas which are large enough to have any employees of white collar status.[19]

Since the boycott movement has had but a few years of full freedom from legal restraint—and in the South, of course, is still met with severe intimidation—one can, perhaps, expect more from it in the future, particularly if the organizations behind it become stronger and more permanent. But we should not forget the limitations of this strategy. Even if all jobs in white stores in Negro sections were given to Negroes, it would be just a drop in the bucket compared with the number of jobs Negroes need to have. The Negro's main concern must be to break down job segregation and job discrimination in the white economy. He might even—as some Negro writers point out[20]—jeopardize this greater objective by asking for

[a] From an ideological and organizational point of view this movement will be treated in Chapters 38 and 39.

all-Negro personnel in Negro neighborhood stores. For this reason he has to content himself with removing practices of complete exclusion of Negroes in such establishments. Not even the ultimate gains can be large under these circumstances.

The very fact, however, that one of the Negro's most spectacular fights for economic improvement has been directed on such rather limited objectives is an indication of how desperate his situation really is. One can well understand his excitement about it. The all-white establishment in the Negro neighborhood has been an offense that he could not possibly be expected to stomach. Even allowing for a possible greater success in the future of the "don't buy where you can't work" campaign, one finds no trend toward any real decisive improvement in the Negro's position in business. He may get a slightly better representation among the white collar workers, and there may be more Negroes who would become competent entrepreneurs. But the days have passed when there was much of a future for the small entrepreneur generally, whether Negro or white.

3. NEGRO FINANCE

Since the credit situation certainly has been one of the major obstacles barring the way for the Negro businessman, it is possible that the chances for the Negro in trade might have been somewhat better had he been able to gain a position in the field of finance. But the Negro has been, and still is, almost completely insignificant as a banker. There were not even 1,000 Negro bankers, brokers, cashiers, and other white collar workers in banks in 1930 (Table 2), or less than one for every 600 white workers in such occupations.

The story of the Negro in banking is a story about a handful of fairly successful small institutions—and a somewhat larger number of failures. The Negro has made more progress in the field of insurance. In 1930 there were 9,000 Negro officials and white collar workers in this business, but they constituted scarcely 2 per cent of the national total.[21] It is a well-known fact that one white company has more Negro business than have all Negro-owned establishments together.

Already before the Civil War there were numerous Negro attempts in the field of banking, but the Freedmen's Savings Bank and Trust Company —backed by the Freedmen's Bureau—represented the first noteworthy attempt in the field. It had branches in 36 cities and had an almost phenomenal success; its total deposits at one time reached $57,000,000. Although most of the deposits were covered by United States securities, there was some unwise use of reserve funds, and this contributed to the failure of the bank in the depression of 1874. This event cooled the enthusiasm of the Negroes for ventures of this kind for a long time. Sir George Campbell, traveling in the South during the late 'seventies, had this to report:

> I hear much of the Freedman's Savings Bank, which failed with a loss of 4,000,000, which has never been replaced; and the loss causes much distrust among Negroes inclined to save.[22]

The Capital Savings Bank in Washington started in 1888 and failed in 1904, partly because of unwise and speculative investments and partly because of misappropriation of funds. During the early 1900's a great number of Negro banks were founded, but most of them disappeared after a short time. The bankruptcy rate of small white banks also was high during this period. Conditions became somewhat better, however, after the organization of a state bank inspection system in 1910. In 1940 there were 14 members of the National Negro Bankers Association (organized in 1924).

Today many Negro banks, like almost all white-managed banks, have their deposits insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Although Negro banks certainly are much safer than they used to be, they suffer from several shortcomings. For one thing, they are small, which tends to make operating costs high. This is claimed to be one of the reasons why they invest relatively less in low-yielding government securities than do most other banks. Investments are made in Negro real estate, but they are not easily negotiable, because of the restricted market for Negro property. Financial interests in Negro business are often quite unsafe. A comparatively large part of the borrowers use the loans for consumption rather than for production purposes. Because of the poverty of the Negroes and the relative weakness of most Negro banks, only a small minority of all Negro families residing in localities where Negro banks exist have any savings or checking accounts with them. Some writers believe, however, that Negro banks have brought about certain secondary beneficial effects; white banks are said to treat Negro customers with greater respect whenever there is a competing Negro bank in the locality. It may happen, on the other hand, that the presence of a Negro bank gives the white banks an excuse for advising Negro customers to use their own bank.[23]

The difficulties of the Negroes who wanted to build their own homes and were almost entirely unable to get any assistance from white financial institutions was one of the main driving forces behind the foundation of Negro-managed building and loan associations. The first one started in Virginia in 1883. These associations have shown great progress, but also there have been a great number of failures. By 1930 there were some 70-odd Negro associations with assets totaling $6,600,000, or less than 1 per cent of the total assets of all American building and loan associations. The depression hit the whole group of institutions severely. The Negro institutions were hurt somewhat more than were the white associations, and, by 1938, there were about 50 Negro building and loan associations—22 of which were in Pennsylvania—with combined assets of $3,600,000. It is

significant that some of the most successful Negro-managed institutions had a partly white clientele, which means that they had a larger business and a greater diversification of risks than they otherwise could have had, if all the activities were concentrated in one or a few Negro neighborhoods.

Most Negro associations, however, are small, which tends to make costs rather high. The actual average interest rate charged on building loans in 1935-1938 was between 7 and 8 per cent, which was somewhat higher than that charged by white-managed institutions. Obviously, it is practically only upper and upper middle class Negro families who can afford to use them for the purpose of financing their homes. It seems that, at least until 1938, few of the Negro establishments had started to use federal insurance in order to safeguard the depositors and the shareholders, and but a handful of them were affiliated with the Federal Home Loan Bank system. Some of the associations may have done some Federal Housing Administration business, but in all probability it was less than for white-operated institutions. These various federal-sponsored services, by which deposits are made secure, loans inexpensive, operations more rational, and building programs better planned, have more or less revolutionized the whole system of credit, particularly in the housing field. It is a safe bet that Negro-managed institutions will have increased difficulties in competing, unless they are willing and able to qualify for such services, and the various federal credit and housing agencies are prepared to put in some special efforts in order to do something about the Negro's desperate need for better housing.[24]

The fact that Negroes have made much better headway in the life insurance business is due to several factors. For one thing, ever since the 1880's, Negroes have been subject to differential treatment by white insurance companies in that some of them, at that time, started to apply higher premium schedules for Negro than for white customers, whereas others decided not to take on any Negro business at all.[25] The underlying reason, of course, is the fact that mortality rates are much higher for Negroes than for whites.[a] This, however, is a social and economic, rather than a racial, phenomenon, and most Negroes in the upper and middle classes must consider the practice as highly discriminatory. And even when this differential treatment is economically justifiable from the point of view of the life insurance companies, it is only natural that it must be resented by all Negroes, and that they will be inclined to get around it by founding their own insurance institutions.

Discriminatory practices have been followed by other white financial institutions as well. But there is this difference: insurance is used even among the poorest families, Negro as well as white, in America. Sometimes the majority of all families with an income of but $500-$1,000 have some form of insurance, and even among those with less than $500, usually a

[a] See Chapter 7.

quite substantial percentage pays insurance premiums.[26] This type of low-income insurance is, at best, mainly burial insurance. At worst, it gives little, if any, protection, in that persons who are not likely to keep up their payments for more than a few years are induced to take life insurance.[27]

But even when payments are kept up and small life insurance policies reach maturity, they usually fail to give real protection for anybody except the mortician. The burial business in most countries tends to be more or less of a racket, capitalizing on the reluctance of the relatives of a deceased person to economize the last time they can make any sacrifices for him. The American mortician business is no exception. The prices quoted in this country often appear high, at least to an outsider.[28] One cannot avoid the impression that great ingenuity is used to induce even poor patrons to buy unnecessary luxuries. This happens in the Negro communities as well.

We have found that the Negro undertakers numbered around 3,000 in 1930, and that they constituted not far from one-tenth of the total number of such professionals in the country. In other words, one of the few groups of entrepreneurs which has almost the same proportion of Negroes as has the general population happens to be one of those most likely to exploit the consumer. This, incidentally, does not reflect so much on the Negro as on the general pattern of this business. The Negro has had a chance as an undertaker because of the character of his work; corpses usually are segregated even more meticulously than live people. Then, too, there is a close relation between this business and the churches and lodges which are almost completely segregated, both South and North. And Negro insurance men often work hand in hand with the morticians.[29]

Like other Negro financial institutions, the Negro insurance business was originally based in a large measure on Negro church congregations and lodges. This is not to be wondered at, for white-managed insurance has developed similarly. The most direct origin of the insurance company, of course, is the benevolent society, of which there are a great number among the Negroes. New Orleans alone, in the middle of the 'thirties, had several hundred Negro benevolent societies. One of these was founded in the 1780's. It is obvious that most of these societies are extremely small and that they cannot be organized on particularly rational principles or be made to work efficiently. It is not unusual that as much as one-third, or even more, of the expenditures is for administrative purposes, particularly officers' salaries, which means that the sick and burial benefits have to be reduced in proportion.[30]

In 1939 there were 67 Negro insurance companies with 1,677,000 policies and a total income of $13,000,000. They gave employment to about 8,000 workers. Those were the Negro companies which had weathered the depression during the 'thirties. Some of them, nevertheless, have serious shortcomings.[31]

When evaluating the Negro's performance in the world of finance, one should not overlook the fact that similar white institutions have once passed through a period when inefficient and even irregular practices prevailed. In the case of banks and of building and loan associations, that time was not so long ago. The early 'thirties, when thousands of banks failed, revealed some appalling weaknesses in American banking organization. Thus, the difference in performance between Negro- and white-managed institutions may, in part, be a difference in the stage of development. This is not to say, however, that there is much prospect that there will be a second stage in the development when Negro institutions will grow strong enough to be comparable in quality with white financial establishments. The Negro-managed bank and insurance company will not get away from the fact that the Negroes are poor and that the segregated Negro community cannot offer any range of investment opportunities such that investment risk can be minimized.

Indeed, it is difficult to see a real future for a segregated Negro financial system. Basically, it is nothing but a poor substitute for what the Negroes really need: employment of Negroes in white-dominated financial institutions and more consideration for them as insurance or credit seekers.

4. THE NEGRO TEACHER

In 1930 over 5 per cent of all male workers in nonagricultural pursuits and almost 15 per cent of the female nonfarm workers were professionals, that is, teachers, clergymen, physicians, dentists, trained nurses, musicians, artists. The corresponding figures for Negro workers were much lower: 2.6 and 4.5 per cent, respectively.[32] Thus the Negro's chance of getting a job as a professional was only one-third or one-half that of the white worker. Still, compared with the Negro's chances in other "higher" occupations, this is a relatively good record.

For the total American population, the professional occupations had about the same relative importance in the nonagricultural economy in the South as in the North. For Negroes, however, it was different, particularly for women. In the South, more than 5 per cent of the Negro female workers were in professional occupations. The corresponding figure for the North was less than 3 per cent.[33] The main reason, of course, is that the Negro's chances in the teaching profession are much smaller in the North than in the South.

School teaching, of course, is the principal Negro profession. Yet Negroes did not have more than about half the representation in the teaching profession as in the total population. There has been a spectacular increase in the number of Negro teachers, but the white school system, too, has been growing rapidly, so that since 1910 the relative gain for Negroes was limited, except on the college level.[34] By and large, the limitations in the

Negro teaching profession are those of Negro education in general—a subject dealt with elsewhere in this book.[a] Where there are segregated schools the Negro teacher has usually a complete monopoly on the jobs in Negro schools.[b] Where schools are mixed, Negroes have difficulty in getting in.

The Negro teacher in the segregated school has a heavier teaching load than has the white teacher. In Southern elementary schools for Negroes

TABLE 3

PRINCIPAL GROUPS OF NEGRO PROFESSIONAL WORKERS: 1910 AND 1930

Groups	Number of Negro Workers		Negro Workers as a Percentage of all Workers	
	1910	1930	1910	1930
Teachers (school)	29,432	54,439	4.9	5.2
Clergymen	17,495	25,034	14.8	16.8
Musicians and teachers of music	5,606	10,583	4.0	6.4
Trained nurses	2,433	5,587	3.0	1.9
Actors and showmen	2,345	4,130	4.8	5.5
Physicians, surgeons, veterinaries	3,199	3,939	2.0	2.4
College presidents and professors	242	2,146	1.5	3.5
Dentists	478	1,773	1.2	2.5
Lawyers	779	1,175	0.7	0.8

Source: Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population, Vol. 4, pp. 428–431; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population,* Vol. 5, pp. 574–576.

there were 43 pupils for every teacher in 1933-1934, as against a ratio of 34 in schools for white children.[35] This means that 26 per cent more Negro teachers would be needed in Southern elementary and secondary schools if the pupil load in Negro schools were to be brought down to the white level. And the need would be even greater if differences in school attendance were to be eliminated. While Negro teachers had less education than white teachers, on the average, the discrepancy in educational attainment was much smaller than that in salary.[c] The average salary in Southern Negro elementary schools in 1935-1936 was only $510; in Southern white schools it was $833. The corresponding figures for Mississippi alone were

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 3; Chapter 41; and Chapter 43, Section 4.

[b] The only important exceptions are some private colleges.

[c] Almost 25 per cent of the Negro teachers in Southern elementary schools had received no formal education beyond high school, compared to 6 per cent of the white teachers. The difference was less marked, however, in respect to the proportions of those having at least three years of college; they were 22 and 28 per cent, respectively.

$247 and $783, respectively, but in the District of Columbia Negro and white teachers earned an identical high-average salary of $2,376. Apart from the District of Columbia, Delaware, and Missouri, every Southern state paid lower salaries to Negroes than to whites.[36] When the school term is over, the Negro teacher, more often than the white teacher, has to take up some other gainful work—often in domestic service or in agriculture.

Indeed, there are few major cases of racial wage discrimination so clear-cut and so pronounced as that found in the teaching profession in the South. In most other cases there is not so much direct wage discrimination as there is a tendency to let whites monopolize jobs in skilled occupations or in high-paying and expanding industries. Those having the political power in the South have shown a firm determination to maintain these salary differentials in the Negro schools. The writer has heard several rationalizations for it.[a] The only one which has any logical validity is that Negro teachers are not so well trained as whites. But even this argument is not strong. The trouble with it is not only that salary differentials certainly are larger than the differences in competence—and that they exist even when the excuse does not apply—but also that the argument has the character of a vicious circle. By keeping down all appropriations for all kinds of Negro schools,[b] including teachers' colleges, one can, of course, perpetuate the inferiority of training. Frequently Southern school authorities have even gone so far as to hire Negro teachers without teaching certificates only because they could have them at sub-standard salaries.[37]

These facts of discrimination in Negro teachers' salaries have been well known and openly discussed for a long time. Recently, under the general direction of the N.A.A.C.P., the inequality in teachers' salaries has been taken before the courts. Teachers' salary differentials based on race alone were declared unconstitutional in 1940.[38] This court decision and the continued fight in many Southern states have not persuaded Southern school authorities to retreat from their illegal practice. Only the state of Maryland and a few other localities have abided by the decision. Otherwise those states and communities that have shown any readiness to comply have usually contented themselves with plans for a gradual equalization over a period of years. When Negro teachers considered these periods too long, or when the authorities were absolutely unwilling to comply, new court cases were introduced.[39] In spite of this delay, equalization of teachers' salaries is under way in the South. The coming rise in the economic status of the largest Negro professional group will represent a change of no small importance. It is quite likely that it will have certain beneficial secondary effects on Negro education and on Negro leadership.

[a] See Chapter 9, Section 4. See also Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934), pp. 270-271.

[b] See Chapter 15, Section 3.

5. THE NEGRO MINISTER

Clergymen constitute the second largest group among Negro "professional" workers. They also enjoy a complete monopoly behind the caste wall. The ministry is the only profession in which Negroes have more representatives than they have in the general population (Table 3). There are several possible reasons for the large number of Negro ministers: that Negroes are more divided in their religious interest than whites; that restricted opportunities in other desirable fields make a larger number of Negroes become preachers; that more Negroes attend church than do whites.[a]

The educational level of Negro ministers shows great variations; the average is extremely low.[b] The same is true of salaries. A few large Negro churches may pay as much as from $5,000 to $7,500 a year, and salaries of $3,000 or more are not infrequent in the larger city churches. At the other extreme are those ministers, particularly in rural areas, who have to be content with a salary of a few hundred dollars a year or with a fluctuating collection.[40] It goes without saying that a great number of Negro clergymen have to have other employment on the side; it may even be that the ministry is a sideline which gives them their opportunities in other occupations. Some ministers are teachers. Others may be farmers or laborers. Sometimes ministers are offered free shares in business enterprises in return for using their influence in behalf of such economic ventures.[41] Some Negro ministers are associated with morticians. Small gifts from benevolent whites also play a role in many Negro ministers' budgets. Their outside economic connections give some Negro ministers an extra influence over their congregations.[c] The income of many a minister of a small congregation "depends solely upon his ability to demand it from the members for religious purposes."[42] In the Holiness and the Church of God congregations it has been usual that pastors demand a tithe. Even plain misappropriation of money has occurred: once three bishops of the Methodist Church were suspended for this reason.[43]

Although many Negro ministers have been guilty, at one time or another, of these malpractices, it does not follow that they are characteristic of the entire Negro clergy. Part of the explanation is that the position of most

[a] See Chapter 40. While over 16 per cent of all clergymen in 1930 were Negroes, the value of the Negro church edifices in 1926 did not constitute more than about 5 per cent of that of all church buildings in the United States. Even this, however, is a pretty good record compared with the Negro's share in the entire property valuation of the United States which amounted to about 2 per cent (See Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Professional Man and the Community* [1934], p. 66.)

[b] See Chapter 40.

[c] See Chapter 40.

Negro ministers is marginal and insecure, that their educational level is low, and that they have to sell out to the whites in the South where the latter demand it.

In Chapter 40 we shall deal with the future prospects of the Negro church. It is losing out among the young people, mostly because the Negro preacher has lagged behind the rest of the Negro community and, particularly, behind other professionals, in acquiring a better education. Still the Negro church retains its hold over the Negro community and will continue to give livelihood to a large proportion of Negro professionals.

6. THE NEGRO IN MEDICAL PROFESSIONS

The total number of physicians, surgeons, and veterinaries in the United States was almost stationary between 1910 and 1930. The number of Negro doctors, on the other hand, increased by almost one-fourth (Table 3). The main reason for this is that Negroes have migrated to the North and to cities, where they are more inclined to patronize doctors, and especially Negro doctors. The overwhelming majority of Negro physicians reside in cities, and particularly in large cities.[44] Since the Negro urban population almost doubled during this same period, there was actually a decline in the Negro physician-to-population ratio if we count only communities which are served at all by Negro doctors. In 1930 the Negro's representation in the medical professions, for the whole country, was less than one-fourth that of the whites. There has been no appreciable change since then. In 1940 there were about 4,000 Negro physicians and surgeons,[45] and, if we add the veterinaries, the number was only slightly higher.

There are several reasons for the limitations in the opportunities for the Negro doctor. Most whites would not ordinarily turn to a physician of Negro extraction—partly because of race prejudice, partly because they would not trust his ability. There are some significant exceptions, however, particularly in certain Northern, Eastern, and West Coast centers, where over half the Negro physicians in Woodson's sample said that they had some white patients, mainly among the immigrants. Even in the South it occasionally happens that white patients go to a Negro doctor. But this practice is largely—though not always—of a questionable character, in that some white patients want to conceal venereal diseases and pregnancy from their white friends.[46] In the upland areas of the South—for instance in West Virginia, western Virginia, North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, and so on—where race prejudice is less intense, there are a few Negro doctors who have quite a sizeable white practice. Some of it, of course, consists of cases of abortion and venereal disease, but there are also others, partly because low income whites often have difficulty in getting service from other than inefficient white doctors.[47]

This white clientele has never been large. It is possible that it is shrinking

with the assimilation of immigrants and with the gradual institution of public health services for low income families. The Negro doctor, in the main, must depend on Negro patronage. And the overwhelming majority of both the white and the Negro patients of the Negro doctor are poor. Expenditures of private families for medical care increase with income at least proportionately, and sometimes more than proportionately.[48]

Only some of the dollars expended by Negro families on doctor's fees are paid to Negro physicians. Carter G. Woodson, on the basis of certain inquiries he has made, tentatively estimates the proportion of the Negro trade that goes to the Negro doctor to be about 60 per cent. He complains about

> . . . the large number of Negro leaders who after preaching race patronage and even boasting of our competent physicians and surgeons as proof of race progress, nevertheless have employed white surgeons in undergoing operations.[49]

He goes on to explain how the trade the Negro doctor gets is not always indicative of any original appreciation of his competence among the Negro people. It has happened that white physicians have had to talk to Negro patients in order to make them believe that doctors of their own race are any good. Often it is only because white physicians want to restrict their practice to white patients that Negroes turn to Negro doctors.[50]

Another reason for the limitation of opportunities for Negro doctors is the fact that most public health services in the South are poorer, in relation to the need, for Negroes than for whites.[a] Even when there are facilities for Negro patients, it does not always mean that they offer any work opportunities for the Negro doctor. White professionals take care of the patients both in the white section and in the "colored wing" of a typical Southern hospital. Dorn observes:

> Until the Flint-Goodridge Hospital was built in New Orleans with the assistance of the Rosenwald Fund and the General Education Board, there was not a single modern hospital in Louisiana where a Negro physician could practice. In Mississippi . . . there are no modern hospitals where a Negro physician may take his patients. A corresponding situation prevails in most of the other southern states. North and South Carolina are an exception due mainly to the assistance of the Duke Endowment Fund.[51]

There are only a few hospitals in the United States, such as Harlem Hospital in New York City, where Negro and white doctors work together under a system of absolute equality. Concerning the situation in the South, Reid says:

> Even in cities like Atlanta and Richmond where white medical colleges have control over large public wards of local hospitals, Negro physicians are not permitted

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 4.

> to participate in their programs. When the Negro physician receives his degree in medicine and is licensed to practice there is little distinction between his training and that of any other American physician—but the equality ends there, for race proscription then begins. Opportunities for internships and residences are circumscribed, hospital and clinical facilities are denied, membership in county medical and other professional and scientific societies is refused (in the South). Hence the Negro physician becomes the general practitioner par excellence—isolated and serving a low income group.[52]

The prospects of the Negro physician are becoming increasingly uncertain because of the present growth of all kinds of public health facilities. This trend cannot fail to take the low income clientele away from the private practitioner, and this, of course, means that the Negro doctor may lose almost all his patients unless he is given a place in the new public health system. Many Negro doctors, particularly in the South, are quite pessimistic about their chances of getting such a place, and, for this reason, one sometimes finds the most ardent opponents of any program of "socialized medicine" among Negro doctors.[53] They are undoubtedly right in assuming that an extension of the public health services to low income families would constitute a tremendous risk from their point of view. At the same time, however, there are definite possibilities for them in such a development; if they do succeed in getting a fair representation on the public health programs, there will be more employment for them, since these programs must cause a tremendous increase in the use of medical services among low income groups.

The fact that the Negro doctor has such small opportunities for hospital training and specialized work is the reason why there is some justification for the belief that the Negro is less well trained than the white man as a physician or surgeon. The basic training is generally considered adequate. Only a small minority of Negro doctors are trained at white schools. About four-fifths of them get their education at two Negro medical schools: Meharry in Nashville, Tennessee, and Howard in Washington, D.C. The percentage of failures at state board examinations is about the same for graduates of Negro schools as for graduates of white schools.[54] It is obvious, however, that these institutions cannot offer any wide range of opportunities for specialized work.[55]

According to a sample study by Johnson—which contained 510 cases—the median income of the Negro doctors was $2,726.41 in 1936.[56] Nevertheless, some Negro physicians were comparatively wealthy men. Woodson found a few having fortunes of over $50,000. A large proportion of the Negro physicians, however, get a considerable part of their income from sources other than their practice. Several of them work for Negro insurance companies and benevolent societies. Some have made fortunes in real estate. There are those who own drug stores. Others have their own private

hospitals, benefiting from a monopoly arising from segregation in public health service.[a] There are observers who characterize some of these business practices as exploitative. In addition, they help to keep down the professional record of the Negro doctor.[57]

Having dealt at such great length with the conditions of the Negro physician, we can content ourselves by touching on the rather similar problems of the Negro in other medical professions. There were only 5,600 Negro nurses in 1930, constituting less than 2 per cent of the total number of nurses in the United States (Table 3). The reason why the proportion of Negroes is even smaller among the nurses than among the physicians is obvious: nurses cannot count on much private practice; usually they have to depend on the public health system, which offers few opportunities for Negro professionals. One would expect, however, that these limitations would be somewhat less rigorous in respect to nurses, since it would seem to be inconsistent with Southern ideas to let white women care for Negro male patients. But a solution to this delicate problem has been found other than that of letting the Negro nurse monopolize the work in the colored hospital wings. White nurses may treat Negro patients, but they are assisted by Negro maids who do most of the dirty work.[58]

The Negro dentist has a position much like that of the Negro physician.[59] He may have some white trade, particularly among foreigners in the North, but also in some Southern communities. On the other hand, large numbers of Negro patients turn to white dentists, in spite of the fact that, in the South at least, they are treated on a segregated basis, with separate instruments, in a separate chair. The fact that Negro dentists, like other Negro professionals, have little representation in rural areas, forces many Negroes to use white dentists even if they want to go to a Negro. The average income of the Negro dentist is somewhat lower than that of the Negro doctor. Like the physician, he is often a businessman on the side. In his practice he may, sometimes, be unethical. It is often alleged that there is a group of Negro dentists—the so-called "glorified blacksmiths"—who satisfy the vanity of patients by decorating sound teeth with gold or by substituting more beautiful artificial teeth for healthy natural teeth. The writer has been told by some observers, however, that this pattern is gradually declining, owing to the rising educational level of the patients.

7. OTHER NEGRO PROFESSIONALS

Potentially, there should be great opportunities for Negro lawyers. So often is the Negro wronged—in the South at least—and so little do most white people understand his plight, that there should be a tremendous need for Negro attorneys to assist Negro clients. Actually, however, the

[a] It has even happened, in Detroit for instance, that municipalities which do not want to accept Negro patients in city hospitals subsidize second-rate Negro-owned institutions.

legal insecurity of the Negro is such that the Negro attorney often has but little chance before a Southern court.[a] Protection by a "respectable" white person usually counts more in the South for a Negro client than would even the best representation on the part of a Negro lawyer.

In 1930 less than 1 per cent of all lawyers were Negroes (Table 3). Almost two-thirds of the 1,200 Negro lawyers resided outside the South. Most Negro lawyers are the products of white law schools in the North. In Mississippi there were but 6 Negro lawyers, as against more than 1,200 white lawyers. The corresponding figures for Alabama were 4 and 1,600, respectively. Of all those in the South only a minority are believed to devote themselves to their law practice, and rarely do they appear in court to defend Negro clients against white parties. Their main legal work concerns internal Negro affairs, such as those connected with churches, fraternal associations, domestic relations and criminal matters.[60]

In 1930 there were less than 1,000 Negroes registered as social workers. The New Deal, however, has brought about a tremendous change in this respect. According to a recent estimate made by Forrester B. Washington, there were over 4,000 Negro social workers in 1940. It is significant that more than half of these were in the North.[61] The South certainly has a smaller representation of Negroes on social work staffs than corresponds to the relative relief needs of the Negro population. This is so for two reasons. One is that, particularly in rural areas of the South, it is usually more difficult for Negroes than for whites in similar economic circumstances to get on the relief rolls.[b] A second reason is that most Negro public assistance clients in the South are handled by white workers. This is quite understandable. The new institution of large-scale public relief for both whites and Negroes in the South has been received with rather mixed feelings by those in power. The appointment of numerous Negro relief officials would have increased the resentment tremendously.[62]

Under such circumstances, it seems like something of an achievement that the Negro, even in a state like Mississippi, is at all represented in the social work profession. There are now Negro case-workers all over the South. Some N.Y.A. officials are Negroes. Negro housing projects usually have Negro management, at least in part. There are Negro officials in the Farm Security Administration and in farm and home extension work.[c] This progress is due, largely, to the influence of the federal government. Then, too, Negroes have had the benefit of two rather good schools of social work, one at Howard University and the other at Atlanta University.

[a] See Chapter 26.

[b] See Chapter 15.

[c] Concerning the under-representation of Negroes among farm and home demonstration agents, see Chapter 12, Section 11.

8. NEGRO OFFICIALS AND WHITE COLLAR WORKERS IN PUBLIC SERVICE

In previous sections we have touched upon certain groups of Negro officials and white collar workers, all or some of whom are employed in public service: teachers, physicians and surgeons, nurses, social workers, extension service workers and so on. These categories include the majority of all Negro workers of higher than wage earner status employed by federal, state or county agencies.

The largest of the remaining occupations is postal service, which had 18,000 Negro workers in 1930, of whom 7,000 were clerks, 6,000 were mail carriers and the rest were in various minor categories. This meant a trebling in Negro postal employment since 1910, whereas the number of white workers had increased to a far lesser extent. The gain was due, mainly, to the development outside the South. In Northern states Negroes generally had many more representatives, in proportion, among the postal employees than in the total population, but in the South—and particularly in the Deep South—they were grossly under-represented in the postal service.[63]

In other public services[a] there were scarcely 6,000 Negro officials and white collar workers in 1930, constituting only about 1 per cent of the total. Of these, less than 2,000 were policemen, sheriffs, and detectives; and more than 3,000 were clerks and kindred workers; the remaining 1,000 were in a large variety of other categories.[64] There had been some increase since 1910, but this seems to have been due largely to the development in some Northern state and municipal administrations.[65]

Negroes were driven out of Southern state and local government service after Reconstruction. The decline of Negroes in federal jobs was more gradual. During the Wilson administration, the Negro's position in the federal government became even more critical than previously. The number of Negro postmasters declined from 153 in 1910 to 78 in 1930, and several other Negro officials of the federal government were removed. Segregation was introduced into Washington offices where it had scarcely occurred before. The rule was devised that federal agencies, when employing civil servants, were allowed to choose among the three applicants with the highest rating. Later exclusion of Negroes was made even easier by the requirement that every applicant was to supply his photograph.[66] Moton observed that ". . . an almost perfect system had been devised for eliminating Negroes without violating any specific regulation or officially sanctioning discrimination on account of race."[67] Its effects on the employment of Negroes in federal service was counteracted, to some extent, because of the expansion in the federal administration during the First

[a] The armed forces are discussed in Chapter 19, Section 4.

World War and—at least in the case of postal service—the rapid increase in number of Negro voters in the North.[68]

The New Deal had a more friendly attitude toward employment of Negroes in the federal administration, and this trend has become even more apparent during the present war emergency when the federal government, as well as certain state and municipal governments, have become increasingly concerned about racial discrimination.[a] There are no statistical data available at this time that would enable us to get any idea about how great the improvement has been. We know that the Negroes have made appreciable gains in the number of white collar and higher jobs in public service. But as the general expansion has been extremely rapid ever since the inauguration of the New Deal, it is not even certain that the proportion of Negroes in such positions has increased.

The stipulation about appending photographs to job applications has recently been abolished. This does not mean that discrimination cannot go on. It is almost always possible to ascertain the race of the person certified.[b] Professional workers are almost never employed without having had an interview with the official under whom they are to work. For this reason there are—outside of the special divisions for Negro affairs—only a few Negro federal workers having professional status. When a newly appointed person turns out to be a Negro, it is possible to find his work unsatisfactory and to have him dismissed after a while. Also there is always the possibility of barring Negroes from advancement. In most offices, Negroes—either voluntarily or involuntarily—sit together. Negro stenographers seldom get assignments as private secretaries; most of them work in "pools."[69] In some places there is a more or less rigid segregation in cafeterias, but there are other places where such segregational patterns have been broken up.[70]

The future prospects, of course, are uncertain, but there is more hope for the Negro in public service than in most other work. Government work, for one thing, is steadily expanding; after the War there will, perhaps, be a temporary reduction, particularly of the federal payrolls, but the general trend, more likely than not, will continue upward. Then, too, employment in public service is susceptible to political pressure. It will take a long time, of course, before any efficient pro-Negro pressure can be brought on Southern administrations. On the other hand, it seems that Negroes have not yet exhausted their present possibilities of forcing the federal government and the Northern state governments to employ an increased number of Negro workers. The principle of nondiscrimination is there established and undisputed. The present war emergency, the realization of the low morale among Negroes, and the new consciousness of the American Creed are

[a] See Chapter 19.
[b] See Chapter 19.

forcing the authorities to take action against racial discrimination in civil service.[a]

9. NEGRO PROFESSIONALS OF THE STAGE, SCREEN AND ORCHESTRA

The Negro is often praised for his artistic talents—frequently in a rather derogatory way, for the implication is that this is the only domain where he is capable of noteworthy achievements. Many white persons know the names of some outstanding Negro singers and jazz-band leaders, and believe that this is the one professional field where the Negro has been able to make good. He has succeeded in this field to a certain extent, but even here his representation is not as great as in the total population. In the 1930 Census there were about 15,000 Negroes registered as musicians, teachers of music, actors, showmen, and showgirls, and this figure constituted only about 6 per cent of the national total.[71] It is probable that it includes a great number of persons who were not competent, and that many made most of their income in other occupations, including illegal work, such as prostitution.[b] This is true, of course, in respect to many white workers as well.

It is obvious that the competition must be much keener among Negro than among white artists, and this probably for two reasons. The market is smaller, and a number of ambitious Negroes, who, had they been white, would have had a range of good careers to choose from, are likely to try the artistic profession as almost the only one which seems to hold any promise. The relative limitations of the market formerly were even greater than they are now. Before about 1915, Negroes could not make up much of an audience, partly because few of them lived in cities, and it took some time before white people got into the habit of seeing performances of Negro showmen. Even when Negro characters were presented to white audiences, the parts were originally played by whites. This was true of one of the earlier classical caricatures of Negro life, the "Jump Jim Crow," given from 1830 on. After that came a series of so-called minstrels, who were white showmen with blackened faces.[c] Soon, however, Negroes were allowed to help as assistants, and eventually they started out on their own.[72]

The northward migration has helped the Negro artist tremendously. The number of artists doubled between 1910 and 1930, whereas the increase for white artists was far smaller. The majority of Negro workers in this profession are in the North.[73] They are particularly concentrated in New York, which has one permanent Negro stage, the Apollo Theater. In addition, there are intermittent opportunities for Negro actors at down-

[a] See Chapter 19.

[b] However, less than one-third of these 15,000 Negro artists were women.

[c] See Chapter 44, Section 5.

town theaters. Nightclubs, dancing halls, and other places, both in white and in Negro sections, provide additional employment. Most of these places are owned by whites, even though the entertainers are entirely Negro.[74] There are a few hundred Negro artists in Hollywood, but the pattern of using Negroes almost exclusively as extras or in minor parts—which, with a few exceptions, caricature the Negro—makes the economic opportunities for the Negro screen actor extremely limited. In 1935, for example, the total salaries paid to Negro actors by the film industry did not amount to more than $57,000.[75] Negro musicians usually belong to the powerful American Federation of Musicians (A. F. of L.). In the South they are generally organized in separate locals, and the same segregational practice prevails in many Northern cities as well. New York is one of the few centers where Negro musicians are treated as equals by the union. White locals often have jurisdiction over radio stations, theaters, and other large places of employment, and Negro musicians, in such cases, cannot work there without special permission from their white competitors.[76]

10. NOTE ON SHADY OCCUPATIONS

In the cities, particularly in the big cities, there is a Negro "underworld."[77] To it belong not only petty thieves and racketeers, prostitutes and pimps, bootleggers, dope addicts, and so on,[a] but also a number of "big shots" organizing and controlling crime, vice, and racketeering, as well as other more innocent forms of illegal activity such as gambling—particularly the "policy," or the "numbers," game. The underworld has, therefore, an upper class and a middle class as well as a lower class.

The shady upper class is composed mainly of the "policy" kings. They are the most important members of the underworld from the point of view of their numbers, their wealth and their power. The policy game started in the Negro community[78] and has a long history.[79] This game caught on quickly among Negroes because one may bet as little as a penny, and the rewards are high if one wins (as much as 600 to 1). In a community where most of the people are either on relief or in the lowest income brackets such rewards must appear exceptionally alluring. The average amounts bet each year, however, often amount to a staggering sum in relation to the average incomes in the Negro community,[80] and the financial return is, of course, nothing for most people. From the entrepreneur's point of view, the game is a sure thing. During most of its history the policy racket in the Negro community has been monopolized by Negroes.[81] Otherwise respectable businessmen have had a controlling interest in the numbers racket[82] (perhaps because large returns in other enterprises were rare), and many *bona fide* gangsters often own real estate and

[a] Crime statistics, as further explained in Chapter 44, Section 2, give a grossly exaggerated idea of how Negro crime and vice compare with white crime.

other Negro businesses, partly as a "front" to give respectability to their gambling enterprise and partly as normal and sound investments for their profits.

While the members of the shady upper class are not accepted by the respectable Negro upper and middle classes, the observer finds that they have a great deal of status in the eyes of lower class Negroes and are not greatly condemned by agencies for Negro concerted action or by the Negro press. There are several reasons for this. Most important is the fact that the policy "kings" are wealthy, and that they are generous in a poor community.[83] Also significant is the fact that when the organized white gangs became interested in the numbers racket, many of the original Negro entrepreneurs, having grown wealthy and not liking violent criminal activities, retired; they thus acquired a sort of second-hand and late respectability. Negroes have not usually been organized into gangs involved in all kinds of criminal activities as have the white gangs; they tend to be individual entrepreneurs usually in the gambling rackets and in machine politics—businesses which are illegal but tacitly accepted by public opinion.

The power of these big racket kings is derived not only from their wealth and their political tie-ups, but from the fact that they provide a large number of jobs in a poor and unemployed community. The numbers racket requires a great number of middlemen who are small fry from the point of view of those at the top but who are not only rich in relation to most members of the community but also lead a free and easy, rather romantic and exciting life.[84] The young Negro fresh from the rural South is even more impressed than is the Northern Negro youth, but even the Northern youth is restricted by caste from the satisfying and economically advantageous jobs and must admire a person who has plenty of money, adventure and status.

The high popularity and prestige of large-scale gamblers and racketeers is a general American pattern and not restricted to the Negro community. This American pattern is exaggerated not only in the Negro ghettos but in all isolated and economically disadvantaged metropolitan groups. Fundamental to its explanation is the odd American tradition of keeping a large number of human activities illegal—for instance, the sale of liquor during prohibition and now gambling—in spite of the fact that they are commonly indulged in by the citizens without serious restrictions by law-enforcement agencies.[a] The American tradition of entangling normal and permitted activities by a great number of impractical, expensive or unenforceable proscriptions has similar effects.

There are several reasons why it is to be expected that the Negro community should be extreme in sheltering a big underworld. One reason is the very great restriction of economic and social opportunities for young

[a] See Chapter 1, Sections 8, 9 and 10.

Negroes in ordinary lines of work, and the consequent experience of frustration. This is particularly strong in the North where educational facilities are flung open to Negroes, and public policy and public discussion are permeated with the equalitarian principles of the American Creed. The low expectation on the part of white people generally and the quite common belief, particularly in the lower classes of whites, that Negroes are "born criminals" must also have demoralizing effects. The Negroes' respect for law and order is constantly undermined by the frequent encroachments upon Negro rights and personal integrity, permitted in the South and sometimes in the North,[a] which are widely publicized throughout the Negro world by the Negro press. This, and the general experience of exclusion and isolation, makes for a fatalistic sense of not belonging. Quite ordinarily the Negro is deprived of the feeling that he is a full-fledged participant in society and that the laws, in this significant sense, are "his" laws.[85] The crowdedness in the Negro ghettos—often bordering white "red light districts"—the poverty and the economic insecurity, the lack of wholesome recreation, are the other factors which all work in the direction of fostering anti-social tendencies. The great unemployment during the 'thirties must have strengthened these tendencies.[b]

In addition, we must remember that much of the vice seen in the Negro community is there, not for Negroes, but for whites; it is carried on in the Negro sections because they are disorganized, without adequate police protection, but with police and politicians looking for graft. This is especially true of vices other than gambling. Elaborate and expensive brothels cater to whites[86] (who have the money to pay for these pleasures) and are largely owned by whites.[87] The ordinary Negro streetwalker is in an unprotected,[88] economically disadvantaged[89] and overcrowded occupation. The peddling of dope, obscene pictures, and other appurtenances of vice, like prostitution, is part of organized vice rings owned by whites.

There are no investigations which allow us to gauge what the Negro underworld means in terms of employment and business opportunities.[90] As to employment, the chances are, as we have pointed out, that, except for the numbers racket, relatively little employment is given, and that what there is is accompanied by a low money return and vicious exploitation. But the numbers racket probably does give a considerable amount of employment at decent pay. As to the extent and size of the business, we cannot even have a reasonably substantiated opinion whether "protected" businesses mean more in the Negro community than in other socially and economically disadvantaged American groups. The observer can testify that he sees much of it in the Negro communities of the bigger cities, both South and North. In the smaller cities and in rural districts, it shades off into petty poolroom and dance hall businesses.

[a] See Part VI.

[b] Negro crime will be dealt with in Chapter 44, Section 2.

CHAPTER 15

THE NEGRO IN THE PUBLIC ECONOMY

1. The Public Budget

In the preceding four chapters we have been studying the Negro as a factor of production and as an income earner. We have seen how he tries to sell his labor and other productive services in the economic market and what difficulties he meets in competition for jobs with the whites. Further study of the Negro's economic status must now proceed to an analysis of the income he actually earns and the consumption he procures for himself and his family on the basis of his income.

Such a study becomes framed in the general terms of the family budget, which we conceive of as an account over a period of time, usually a year, of the individual household's income and expenditure. But the analysis would be incomplete if we forgot that everyone in our society is a partner in the public budgets, ranging all the way from the budget of the local municipalities to the budget of the federal government. To these public budgets everyone contributes by paying various indirect and direct taxes. And everyone partakes in the consumption of goods and services financed by the public budgets. In modern society the economic status of any individual is to a large and increasing extent determined by how much he puts into the public budgets and how much he gets out of them.

In fact, one of the significant social trends, in America as elsewhere, is the relative growth of the public budgets. The range of "collective consumption" has been steadily increasing. The public budgets are also coming more and more to supplement private budgets, as, for instance, in relief and "social security" payments. Governments have always provided public services in kind, such as police protection; the use of highways, parks, and playgrounds; and free public schools. These public services are continuously improved. Whole items of consumption expenditures are transferred from private budgets to public budgets and at the same time minimum standards are secured, as when to the free schools are added school meals, free school materials and health services for the children. At the same time a gradual centralization and equalization of the public household is going on, so that the higher budgets—the federal budget as compared to the state budgets and the state budget as compared to the municipal budgets—take

over more and more items of expenditure from the lower budgets, or provide funds for the lower budgets in order to pay for certain expenditures. Control follows financial responsibility, and minimum standards are raised.

This trend works toward equalization between regions and individuals. It is, indeed, an important part of the general process toward economic democratization in our society. There is a corresponding trend in the structure of taxation. Taxation as a whole is becoming more "progressive," that is, the rate of taxation increases more than proportionately as we go up the income scale. The trend in public services is that they are being made available to all citizens who care to make use of them, or otherwise are being distributed equally according to "needs" as defined in laws and relations. We shall take these two ideals, "ability to pay" for taxation and "equal distribution according to need" for public services, as our value premises for this chapter.

In both respects the principles are still somewhat fluid. The predominance of indirect taxation makes it highly probable that the total burden of taxation, at the outbreak of the Second World War, was "regressive," that is, proportionately higher for the poorer people.[1] In the higher income brackets, however, taxation was steeply progressive. The principle of "need" also is in flux as there is no definite and fixed dividing line between social welfare provisions—as, for instance, unemployment relief—and general benefits for all citizens. Free schools were once for the poor only. Today they are for everybody. Free or subsidized hospitalization can, in this country, usually be used only by low income families. There are other countries where such services are enjoyed by everybody. There is a trend visible in America, as in the rest of the world, not only to increase public benefits for the needy but to make them available to everybody.

Deciding upon the rules to determine the actual distribution of the tax burden among the citizens, and the availability of the public services to them, constitutes a major part of the activity of legislative bodies in a democracy. One principle has been settled for a long time, however, and constitutes a main basis for the legal structure of any democracy: the principle that the individual citizens have equal duties and rights in relation to the public household. In America this principle has constitutional sanction. Our *value premise* in this chapter is this principle: that *the Negro should partake of the burdens and the benefits of the public economy like other citizens in similar circumstances.*[a]

2. Discrimination in Public Service

There is no evidence that there is any direct racial discrimination in regard to taxation, and it has never played much of a role in discussion,

[a] This is only a corollary of the premise of nondiscrimination stated in Chapter 9, Section 3.

although the whites in the South certainly have the power to assess Negro-owned property differently than they assess white-owned property. In regard to public benefits, on the other hand, there is little doubt about the factual situation. Widespread discrimination exists in the entire South. In the North there is little, if any, direct discrimination. In the North the commonly accepted doctrine is that there should be no difference on account of "race, creed or color," and this doctrine is fairly well upheld in all public activity. What inequality there is in the Negro's consumption of public services in the North is due mostly to poverty, lack of education, and other disabilities which he shares with other lower class persons in the region.

In the South, too, all the laws are written upon the principle of full equality. Even the Jim Crow regulations, which in many respects facilitate discrimination in public services and, in fact, have discrimination for their purpose, follow the formula "separate but equal."[a] The actual practice, however, is quite different. It is more difficult for Negroes than for whites in similar economic circumstances to get on the relief rolls, and relief grants are often lower for Negroes than for whites. There is an amazing discrimination against Negroes in the segregated school system of the South. Virtually the whole range of other publicly administered facilities—such as hospitals, libraries, parks, and similar recreational facilities—are much poorer for Negroes than they are for whites. This is true in spite of the fact that the higher sickness rates and the inferior housing conditions in Negro sections make the need for all sorts of health and recreational facilities so much greater in Negro neighborhoods. Every visitor to the South who has given the matter any attention at all knows that streets are not kept up in Negro sections of Southern cities the way they are in white sections. Public utility equipment is often less complete in Negro than in white neighborhoods. Police and judicial protection in the South is not so much organized for Negroes as against them.[b] The Negro's representation on public payrolls is almost everywhere—and particularly in regard to high-paid jobs—much smaller than that of whites. As we have seen, there is discrimination against Negroes in agricultural policy. It can be generally ascertained that, as a result of the relative growth of the federal budget and the increased responsibility for and control of public services by federal agencies, discrimination has been decreasing during the New Deal. The fight between Washington and the Southern state and county administrations goes on continually, yet much discrimination remains.

The popular motivation for discrimination in public service in the South contains, in addition to the elaborated popular theories referred to in Chapter 9, one specific argument which relates to the fiscal sphere. The observer is frequently told by white Southerners that, since Negroes are so

[a] See Chapter 28.
[b] See Part VI.

poor and pay virtually no taxes, they are actually not entitled to get more public services than the whites care to give them. Whatever they get is a charitable gift for which they should be grateful. There can be no sense in talking about discrimination, it is held, as Negroes have no right to anything, but get something out of the whites' benevolence. Negroes are here considered as an "out-group" not on a par with white citizens. Otherwise the same argument would hold true even in regard to poor whites, which is usually not intended.

This popular theory is, of course, contrary to the American Creed and to the Constitution,[2] and also to the democratic individualistic legal structure of the Southern states themselves. The discrimination that exists, therefore, has to be carried out against the laws. Rights, in our Western legal order, are not given to a group or to a race but to individuals. An individual's right to receive public services is not related to the actual amount he has paid in taxes. The poor man should share equally in public consumption with the rich, though his taxes are lower.

Furthermore, there are some Negroes who pay quite high taxes, but they, nevertheless, meet discrimination in getting public service. There are examples of whole Negro communities which actually pay more in taxes than is expended upon the particular public services supported by the taxes.[3] Too, there is plain stealing in giving Negroes public services: when, for example, counties receive state or federal grants on the basis of school population and misappropriate the funds in favor of the white schools.

We shall analyze the basic conflict in the Southern whites' concept of law and order in later parts of this inquiry.[a] It should be observed that the argument of "low taxes, little service," which apparently means so much to the average white Southerner, is no longer publicly expressed by any person who is in a responsible position or who cares for his intellectual reputation. It is openly repudiated by Southern liberals.[4] The factual assertion that Negroes pay practically no taxes because they are so poor is, of course, mistaken or grossly exaggerated. The false belief is explainable only by the fact that most people are inclined to disregard indirect taxes.[5] We have already observed that American taxation, in part, is "regressive" (except for high income groups).[6]

Federal agencies or other groups who want to favor the Negro sometimes have to content themselves by working for the realization of a compromise formula: that Negroes and whites share in the benefits from the public economy in proportion to their numbers.[b] This norm is in conflict with the Constitution, since it refers to the Negro *group* and does not

[a] See Part VI.

[b] We have already met this in the activity of the Farm Security Administration; see Chapter 12, Section 12.

guarantee *individuals* their right.[a] It has its utility only as a practical yardstick in the fight against discrimination. Its very presence in the public debate, and sometimes in public regulations, is an indication of the existing discrimination.[b]

Quite apart from the inappropriateness of distributing public services to any group in relation either to its contributions to the public budgets or to its numbers, it would be highly interesting to be able to analyze in some detail what the Negroes, as a group, do contribute, directly and indirectly, to the public budget and what they do get in return. No such studies have been made. Our analysis in this chapter has to be far from complete. To begin with, we shall have to leave out altogether, for lack of data, the problem of how much Negroes pay in taxes. In regard to benefits, we shall not be able to give anything like a full account.

3. EDUCATION

A great proportion of the total budgets of local municipalities and an increasing part of the state and federal budgets are earmarked for public education. From the individual citizen's point of view this form of collective consumption ranks high in importance among public services. The general facts about Negro education are well known, as they have been in the center of public discussion for a long time. In this section we shall restrict our treatment to a presentation of some summary figures on the fiscal costs of education for Negroes as compared to whites, leaving it to other chapters to analyze what these figures mean in terms of what amount and what type of education the Negroes receive.[c]

There are no financial statistics for the North which separate the amount

[a] See footnote 2 of this chapter. The population norm lies somewhere between the constitutional norm and the actual discrimination practiced in the South. In several respects, the Negroes as a poor group do not receive a share in public services as large as their proportion in the population, though there is no discrimination in the constitutional sense. Since Negroes have fewer automobiles than do whites, for instance, they make less use of public highways. Also Negroes cannot afford to keep their children in school for as long a time as whites can, on the average, but this fact alone does not involve any legal discrimination. Only in one main item of the public budgets do Negroes, in the South as well as in the North, seem to get somewhat more than their share in proportion to their numbers: this is in social welfare. The explanation is that their need for economic assistance is so much greater than is that of the whites that the total sum paid out for relief to Negroes is relatively higher, in spite of discrimination. The causes of their higher needs are, as we have seen: job restrictions everywhere, lack of ambition, poorer educational facilities, higher sickness and disability rates, greater family disorganization and other direct and indirect effects of discrimination.

[b] Theoretically, the population norm could occasionally work to the unusual advantage of the Negroes. For example, to give them a 10 per cent share of desirable jobs would actually wipe out almost the entire problem of economic discrimination. The norm is, of course, never brought up when it refers to such a situation.

[c] See Chapter 41, and Chapter 43, Section 4.

spent on the education of Negroes from the amount spent on the education of whites. In the North, the principle is not questioned that schools should have equal standards, independent of whether a school is all white, all Negro or mixed. It is mainly the Negroes' poverty which keeps them from utilizing existing educational facilities as much as do whites. In fact, were it not for this reason, the Northern Negroes would on the average be better off than the Northern whites, since Negroes are more concentrated in the big cities where school facilities are superior to large parts of the rural North where only white people live. In actual practice, however, schools in needy districts tend to be somewhat older, less well equipped and often more over-crowded. A main cause of this is the migration of Negroes from the South to the slum areas of Northern cities. European immigrants who come to these slum areas also have inferior schools. School facilities have not been adjusted to the rapidly growing need. The city authorities who know about the much more inadequate school facilities for Negroes in the South, and who are usually somewhat reluctant to increase the incentive for Negro migration to their localities, have often not been so active in widening school facilities in Negro districts as they would have been had the districts been white. But the differentials are seldom large and would probably disappear altogether if migration should cease.

In the South, school facilities are generally much poorer. In the year 1935-1936 the average current expenditures per pupil in daily attendance in all public elementary and secondary schools in the country was $74. The range between the different states was extremely wide. In three Northern states, New York, Nevada, and California, the amount was over $115. On the other hand, all the states in the Upper and Lower South, as well as some of the Border states, were far below the national average. At the bottom of the scale were Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas, where the average expenditure was less than $30 per pupil.[7]

Obviously, these conditions are related to two factors: the South has the lowest income level and, at the same time, the highest number of children in the whole nation.[8] For these two reasons the South actually sacrifices more for education, in relation to its economic ability, than does the rest of the country, on the average. It has been calculated, for instance, that Mississippi expends about twice as much on schools, compared with its taxable income, as does New York State.[9] Undoubtedly, this goes a long way to explain the lower level of educational facilities in the South. There are two qualifications, however, which we should keep in mind. One is the fact that certain states outside the South, such as Utah, Arizona, and the two Dakotas, where the calculated taxability per child was about as low as in some of the most prosperous Southern states, for example, Virginia and Texas, nevertheless showed much greater expenditures per pupil in 1935-1936.[10] Thus, although public education is burdensome for the Southern economy,

there are regions in this country where, relatively, still heavier financial loads for education have been accepted. The other qualification concerns the unequal treatment of Negro and white schools, which makes the claims regarding Southern financial sacrifices for education sound less genuine than they may appear at first sight.

Racial discrimination in the apportionment of school facilities in the South is as spectacular as it is well known.[a] The current expense per pupil in daily attendance per year in elementary and secondary schools in 10 Southern states in 1935-1936 was $17.04 for Negroes and almost three times as much, or $49.30, for white children. In Mississippi and Georgia, only about $9 was spent on every Negro school child, but five times more on the average white pupil. There were two Border states, however (Delaware and Missouri), and one state farther South (Oklahoma) which did not, in this way, discriminate against Negroes.[11] The District of Columbia Negro schools received only slightly smaller appropriations per pupil than did the white schools. They received more than the white schools in any of the Southern states.[12]

The great difference in expenditures per pupil in Negro and white schools in most of the Southern states was due to several factors. The most important one was the great differential in regard to teachers' salaries.[b] Second, there was a difference in number of pupils per teacher.[13] Third, less transportation was provided for Negro children: in 10 Southern states, where Negro children constituted 28 per cent of the total enrollment, only 3 per cent of the public expenditures for school transportation in 1935-1936 was for their benefit.[14] Certain savings on most expenditure items were made

[a] It is not well known to the general public, though. In spite of the fact that few aspects of racial discrimination have been discussed as intensively as this one, the visitor to the South frequently meets white persons even in the educated class who seriously believe that educational facilities for Negroes and whites are quite equal. The very fact that there are Negro schools on different levels is to them enough evidence that Negroes are as well served as are whites. Several times it has happened, for instance, that whites have referred to a nearby Negro college, which they have heard about and passed on the road, to tell me that there Negroes get graduate training to the top. "They graduate lawyers, doctors and all sorts of bigs shots," a white collar girl in Mississippi told me about a poor denominational Negro college in the same city. Such experiences are interesting in several respects: first, they exemplify the growing isolation between the two groups and the ignorance among whites about their Negro neighbors; second, they indicate that the legal fiction which is necessary for constitutional reasons ("separate but equal") actually comes to be believed as true; third, they make it probable that even in this respect ordinary white people in the South would be prepared to give Negroes more justice if they knew the facts.

Another observation is that among ordinary white people in the South it is not well known that Northern philanthropic organizations have much of the credit for the fact that Negro education is not lower than it is, and still less that Negro communities often contribute to building their schools. This distortion in the popular beliefs is, of course, opportunistic.

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 4.

by keeping the average school term in Negro schools about 13 per cent shorter than in white schools.[15]

The same discrimination may be noted in whatever item in the school budget is considered. Every traveler in the South becomes easily aware of the difference in general appearance between Negro and white schools. In rural areas there is still a great number of Negro one-teacher and two-teacher schools,[16] whereas the consolidation movement has proceeded far in respect to white schools. The value of Negro school property per child in 10 Southern states was scarcely one-fifth of the corresponding figure for whites. This was so in spite of the fact that as much as one-third of the total value of Negro school property was in buildings partly financed by the Rosenwald Fund.[17]

Additional savings are made on Negro education because only few Negroes go to high school, and still fewer attend public colleges. In 18 Southern states, where Negroes constituted 23 per cent of the population in 1930, their representation among the high school students in 1933-1934 was but 9 per cent. They had only 6 per cent of the enrollment in publicly controlled institutions of higher learning in 17 Southern states.[18] Savings are also made on Negro education by forcing the Negro community to contribute money or work for its school.[a]

Particularly remarkable is the fact that the differential in school expenditures is often greatest in states which have the highest proportion of Negroes. There is a similar tendency among the counties within each state. A tabulation of the conditions in 7 Southern states in 1929-1930 indicated that the school expenditure per Negro child showed a pronounced tendency to be lower, the higher the proportion of Negro children in the total population of the county. The expenditures for white children, on the other hand, showed a somewhat less marked, but nevertheless unmistakable, tendency to increase with the proportion of Negroes in the counties in spite of the fact that the counties with many Negroes tended to be the poorer counties.[19] In counties with comparatively few (less than 12.5 per cent) Negro children, the expenditure level in white schools was less than twice as high as that in Negro schools; but in counties where the overwhelming

[a] "The situation differs, of course, town by town. In a neighboring town the Negroes were given a shell of a building for a school and in one way or another the salaries of the teachers were eked out. The rest of the work was done by Negroes, and an unexpected lot it was. Negro carpenters and masons contributed the work on remodeling the building. Negroes collected the funds to furnish the school with desks, blackboards, and other accessories. No money is provided annually for supplies or fuel by the town; so Negroes contribute for the school supplies and cut and haul their own fuel. This is done in a community where Negro working habits are generally reported to be bad; it is done of course, by zealous individuals with the bright American goal of social advancement before their eyes." (John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* [1937], p. 194.)

majority (at least 75 per cent) of the children were Negro, the standard was more than 13 times higher for white than for Negro pupils.

The explanation of this phenomenon is simple. State appropriations for educational purposes are usually apportioned on a per capita basis. Counties with a high proportion of Negro children, consequently, have a bigger opportunity than have other counties to deprive Negro schools of money intended for them and to use it for white schools.[20] For, in such counties there is more money to "rob" from the Negroes, and the temptation to do it, therefore, must be particularly great. The same principle works even when schools, in the main, depend on local support. If, for instance, there are twice as many Negroes as white children, every dollar per pupil taken from the Negro group means two dollars per pupil added to the appropriation for the white group. This, in conjunction with the low general level of school expenditures in states with a heavy Negro population, explains why it is that expenditures per Negro pupil are so much smaller, the higher the proportion of Negroes among the school children.[21]

It is generally said that school segregation increases the cost of the educational system. This, of course, is quite true. A given average standard can be achieved at a lower expense if the overhead costs can be minimized. This is particularly apparent in respect to higher educational institutions. To maintain two sets of state universities must involve a greatly increased cost. Also, the cost of providing transportation for the children in a consolidated rural school system must be higher when Negro and white children are segregated. And whenever either of the two population groups is small, or distances are large, a segregated system must have a pronounced effect on costs. It seems that only in cities, with a large population of both Negroes and whites, and with a rather clear-cut housing segregation, can it be possible to maintain two separate elementary—and possibly even secondary—school systems without any significant increase in cost.

Yet these conclusions are applicable only when we assume that the problem is to achieve an equal standard at minimum cost. If the objective, however, is not to have equal standards, but rather to use a given appropriation intended for two population groups so as to maximize the benefits for one of them—then, of course, segregation becomes a means of economizing. Whenever the proportion of Negroes in the population is high, and the standard of Negro schools is kept well below that of white schools, the white educational system can derive substantial gains from segregation. Segregation makes discrimination possible; discrimination means lower expenditures for Negro schools, and the white population thus gets a vested interest in separation. If the principle "separate, but equal" were to be realized in practice, and Negro schools were to be just as well provided for as white schools, there would still be a social motive for segregation.[a] White people would,

[a] See Chapter 28.

however, lose their economic interest in segregation. In fact they—and the Negroes—would have to pay for it in higher taxes, in so far as a segregated set-up would then be more expensive than a mixed school system. It is open for speculation to what extent this would change popular attitudes in respect to segregation.

The whole system of discrimination in education in the South is not only tremendously harmful to the Negroes but it is flagrantly illegal,[22] and can easily be so proven in the courts. The main organization for guarding civil liberties for Negroes, the N.A.A.C.P., has not waged, up to now, an extensive legal campaign against school discrimination. Recently it has selected a few strategic frontiers for an attack: equalization of teachers' salaries[a] and the admittance of graduate students to Southern universities.[b] In these fields, it is exerting a considerable pressure upon Southern authorities. Not only educators but politicians, even in the Deep South, are heard to say that they must "do something" to raise Negro education so as to avoid too great legal embarrassment. Northern philanthropic institutions have, for a long time, been active in raising Negro education in the South. Many white Southerners are trying to bring about reforms.

There is no doubt that under all these influences a gradual improvement of school facilities for Negroes, as for whites, in the South has been going on and is still in progress. It is less certain, but probable, that Negro schools have lately been improving faster than white schools in the South—that is, in the sense that the *percentage* increase in expenditures may have been greater for Negro than for white schools.[c] But measured in absolute amounts the difference is even larger than it used to be.[23] If we consider the whole Negro group, there is no doubt that the most important factor working to raise the educational level is the continuous migration out of the South to the Northern cities with their good schools.

In the South, the discrimination is still so tremendously great; it is so ingrained; and it is so profitable for the whites, that it is difficult to see how any more rapid reform will be possible unless the federal government enters the field and starts giving financial assistance to the Southern school system. This will mean two things. First, there will be a regional equalization in educational standards over the whole country, from which the South, especially, cannot fail to gain. Such an equalization, as has often been pointed out, is well justified in view of the high birth rate in the South and the migration, which forces the South, as well as other low income, high fertility, "out-migration" areas, to make heavy investments in the education of children who afterwards spend the productive period

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 4.

[b] See Chapter 29, Section 5.

[c] For the nation as a whole there is, undoubtedly, an equalization in educational opportunities, as the proportion of Negroes living in the North is increasing.

of their lives in other states. Second, the federal government is likely to attempt to mitigate discrimination against Negroes. It will acquire an influence over Southern school policies and might eventually stamp out racial discrimination in the school system. This is why, incidentally, many Southern politicians—invoking the doctrine of "states' rights"—are against federal aid in the school system in spite of the fact that their states will gain financially from it.

Federal aid to the educational system would not be an entirely new venture. Indeed, the federal government laid the financial basis for public education in several states by making substantial land grants to them. Considerable discrimination against Negroes has been the rule, however, in these federal educational activities, or, rather, in the way they were carried out by state authorities in the South. In 1935-1936, Negro colleges received only 5.2 per cent of the federal funds given to land-grant colleges in 17 Southern states.[24] Still, land-grant institutions enrolled nearly three-fourths of the students in all public institutions of higher education for Negroes and about one-third of the total in public and private institutions combined.[25] Howard University—in many respects the best Negro university in the country—is supported almost entirely by the federal government.

The New Deal has greatly increased educational benefits to Negroes: The Public Works Administration paid 55 per cent of the costs of building new schools, when the states and the communities paid the rest. But the South saw to it that its whites were provided for much better than its Negroes—despite the much greater needs of the latter. Of some 91 million dollars of federal funds spent for new schools in 16 Southern states, only a little over 7 millions went for Negro schools.[26] Northern communities were much fairer, and—although there are no statistics which distinguish between white and Negro schools in the North—there is reason to believe that Negroes received a share of the P.W.A. funds larger than their proportion in the population, since they lived in older neighborhoods where the schools were more dilapidated. The Works Progress Administration put on its gigantic adult education program employing large numbers of unemployed teachers and educating millions of people;[27] 400,000 Negroes were taught reading and writing.[28] There is also the student aid program of the National Youth Administration and the energetic educational efforts of the Agricultural Extension Service and the Farm Security Administration.

Two national commissions, appointed by administrations of each of the major political parties, have concluded that provisions for adequate educational opportunity for all American children can be made only if the federal government assumes responsibility.[29] When the federal government does give money for education, it usually allows the states to spend it. This grant-in-aid system permits discrimination against Negroes to arise. If the federal authorities take positive action, however, they can reduce

discrimination. The trend seems to be in the direction of decreasing discrimination in the distribution of federal aid, and the increasing weight of the Negro vote in the North is strengthening this trend.[30] In spite of all, therefore, we believe that the Negro cannot fail to gain if the federal government should start giving aid on a permanent basis even to the main body of American educational institutions. Some further observations on the problem of federal aid to education will be made in the last section of Chapter 41.

4. PUBLIC HEALTH

Mortality in all age groups is much higher among Negroes than among whites.[a] Negroes suffer more from nearly all sorts of illnesses. We have shown that at least the major part of these differentials is not due to greater susceptibility on the part of Negroes[b] but to the impact of economic, educational, and cultural handicaps, directly or indirectly imposed upon Negroes by discrimination.[c] The fact that Negroes are in greater need of health facilities than are whites, and that discrimination in providing them health facilities hurts the whites themselves, is gradually becoming realized.

The Negroes' need for public health services is higher also because poverty, in conjunction with segregation, prevents them from utilizing private health facilities to the same extent as do whites. Negro families (not on relief) spend only one-third or one-half as much for medical services as do white families (not on relief).[31] Although federal, state, and local governments nowadays carry about half the financial burden for all hospitalization,[32] private hospitals and clinics continue to play a larger role in this country, proportionately, than in most European countries. Even in the North there are many private hospitals which do not accept Negro patients. True, there are several private all-Negro hospitals, both North and South,[33] but they are usually small and qualitatively inferior.

In spite of the greater need for public health services and the interest of the whole society that this need be filled, the pattern of public hospitalization is about the same as that for public instruction. The general level is comparatively high in the North, and there Negroes are seldom discriminated against.[d] The general standard of public hospitalization is much lower in the South.[34] Although no comprehensive data seem to be available on the total number of beds (private as well as public) available to

[a] See Chapter 7.

[b] See Chapter 6.

[c] For example, Negro sections of Southern cities have less adequate street cleaning and garbage removal services than white sections. These things are related to disease.

[d] We have already cited one case of discrimination in the North, that of Detroit, where public subsidies have been given to a second-rate Negro hospital so as to exclude Negroes from the ordinary public hospitals.

Negroes in Southern hospitals, there is enough scattered information to establish the fact that discrimination exists.[a]

Since the inauguration of the New Deal, appreciable progress had been made, part of which consisted of the building of hospitals under the P.W.A.[35] The federal government, like most of the philanthropic foundations, usually sees to it that Negroes get their share of the new hospital facilities. Standards have been raised—but, so far, only in a few areas. One Southern city may have a large, completely modern hospital where a great number of indigent people may get treatment free or for low fees. In the next city the main hospital for low income people may be dilapidated and so small that it cannot possibly accommodate more than an insignificant fraction of those in need of hospitalization. Rural hospital facilities are totally inadequate almost everywhere in the South, especially for Negroes.

In this field, as in public education, it seems that no uniformly satisfactory standard can ever be achieved except through a program of permanent federal aid and control. The President's Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities published in 1938 a national health program which included a plan for continued federal assistance to public hospitals. On the basis of this program the so-called National Health Bill was introduced in Congress in 1939, and the Hospital Construction Bill in 1940.[36] Although these proposals have not yet been acted upon, they have helped to focus public attention on the problem, and they seem to indicate the general line of future action.

There seems to be less discrimination against Negroes—and in many

[a] Substantiation of this point may be found in Chapter 7, Section 5. Concerning public hospitals alone, the following evidence may be added:

Only 40 of the 450 beds in the State Sanatorium in Mississippi were available to Negroes; almost half of all the beds for the tuberculosis patients were idle because of insufficient funds. (Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [first draft, 1940], p. 113. Data based on Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, "Hospitals and Medical Care in Mississippi," *Journal of the American Medical Association* [1939], pp. 2317-2332.)

Sterner visited two of the five state charity hospitals in Mississippi in January, 1940. Both were in bad repair with leaking roofs. Water was dropping down on the floor in one place. In these hospitals half the beds were for Negroes. The doctor in charge of one of the hospitals complained of the inadequate appropriations; about one-sixth of the beds were not in use because of shortage of funds. The reason, he explained, was that money was apportioned by a state board composed of county physicians, who retained as much as possible of state aid for their privately-run county hospitals. He explained, further, that the hospital was unable to receive any normal delivery cases; only emergency cases could be taken care of. Others have to be treated in their homes by midwives. Patients who have any means are asked to make voluntary payments. Others are treated free.

An entirely different impression was given by a new State Charity Hospital in New Orleans, which was visited in January, 1940. As far as the layman could ascertain, it was quite adequate. It had been built as a P.W.A. project. Half the beds were for Negroes. None of the physicians or surgeons was Negro, however, and there were only a few Negro nurses.

cases no discrimination at all—in respect to the so-called "out-patient" services of public health institutions. For this there are several reasons. These services usually cannot be apportioned beforehand between Negroes and whites in the strict manner in which hospital wards are segregated. The federal government has given considerable assistance on a permanent basis to certain important aspects of this medical work. Much of the work concerns venereal diseases, and white people everywhere seem to have become aware of what the high rates of venereal diseases among Negroes mean to themselves.[37]

The building up of a system of general public health clinics, as well as of maternal and child health clinics, is far from completed in America,[38] but there is no doubt that tremendous improvements have been achieved in recent years, and that Negroes have shared in the benefits. One criticism, however, is that too much of the work has been organized on a "categorical" basis. Drives are started against one disease after another,[a] and the objective of rendering assistance to those most in need, regardless of the type of disease they have, has often been almost forgotten. This has sometimes been unfortunate from the point of view of the Negro.[39]

5. Recreational Facilities

America is probably more conscious than any other country of the great importance of recreation. The need for public measures to promote wholesome recreation has been shown to be particularly great for youth in cities and especially in such groups where housing conditions are crowded and unsanitary, where incomes are low and consequently opportunities for enjoying sound commercial entertainment restricted, where many mothers have to leave their homes for gainful work during the day, where the proportion of disorganized families is great, and where juvenile delinquency is high. This all means that, on the average, Negroes have greater need for public recreational facilities than have whites.

In the North there is, occasionally, segregation and discrimination not only in commercial enterprises for entertainment but also in public facilities, as, for instance, in swimming pools.[b] In the South segregation and discrimination are the general rule for all recreational facilities. The visitor finds everywhere in the South that not only beaches and playgrounds, but also public parks, are often entirely closed to Negroes, except for Negro

[a] During his field trip in Mississippi (December, 1939-January, 1940), Sterner heard public health officers and nurses talk about the syphilis campaign which had started about a year earlier (before then little, if anything, had been done about it by public health agencies). But he heard nothing about gonorrhea until one public health officer explained that available appropriations were insufficient for treatment of gonorrhea on a large scale in his county.

[b] See Chapter 29. We shall include among public recreational facilities those organized by civic groups and by philanthropists.

nurses watching white children. Public funds are used everywhere in the region for these facilities available to whites only. Often no substitutes at all, or very inferior ones, are offered the Negroes. Like white people, Negroes can use their schools as community centers but they are unsatisfactory for many recreational purposes. More than half of all cities having special Negro community centers listed in the *Negro Year Book* for 1937-1938[40] were in the North and West.[41]

Damaging from both cultural and recreational viewpoints are the restrictions of public library facilities for Negroes. In 1939 it was found that of 774 public libraries in 13 Southern states only 99, or less than one-seventh, served Negroes. Of the 99 libraries, 59 were concentrated in four states.[42]

For a full appraisal of the Negro's share in public recreational facilities, it would be necessary to have access to more material on the quantitative and qualitative adequacy of such facilities for both Negroes and whites. There is no doubt about the fact, however, that provisions for Negroes are much inferior to those for whites. For reasons already suggested, this is a question of no small importance. The visitor finds Negroes everywhere aware of the great damage done Negro youth by the lack of recreational outlets and of the urgency of providing playgrounds for the children. In almost every community visited during the course of this inquiry, these were among the first demands on the program of local Negro organizations.[a]

The Southern whites are unconcerned about how Negroes use their leisure time, as long as they are kept out of the whites' parks and beaches. Recreation involves "social" relationships, and, therefore, Southern whites are strongly opposed to mixed recreation. Nevertheless, considerable improvements have been made even in the South in recent years. Again the federal agencies have been instrumental in giving the Negroes slightly more of their rights. There have been many P.W.A. and W.P.A. projects for new playgrounds, community centers, and other facilities,[43] and Negroes have received some share of them. There are community rooms, playgrounds, nursery schools, and other similar provisions in or around new housing projects for low income families.[44] The National Youth Administration, the Agricultural Extension Service, the Farm Security Administration, and other new agencies, have assisted both Negroes and whites. Yet, there is still a long way to go. So far, only a small part of the distance between "nothing at all" and "full adequacy" has been covered. And, par-

[a] When visiting Birmingham, Alabama, in the fall of 1938, we were taken around the town by one of the leaders of the Negro community. "See those tennis courts," said our guide, "they are not much good, as you see. The whites don't care to use them any more. But in spite of that, we had to beg and beg before we got the privilege to play on them. They are the only public courts in town that we are allowed to use. It's just one of those things that make one see red."

ticularly, it has yet to be recognized that quite special provisions are required for the Negroes in order to offset some of the economic, cultural and moral disadvantages from which they suffer.

6. PUBLIC HOUSING POLICIES[a]

Before the depression of the 'thirties, there were few attempts made by public bodies in this country to improve the housing conditions for low income people. Moreover, housing credit was rather unorganized: financial institutions were extremely numerous, there was little integration among them, and the whole system lacked stability and efficiency to such an extent that interest costs on mortgage loans were usually much higher than necessary. High property taxes, then as well as now, also had a damaging effect.[45] These and a number of similar circumstances made decent housing economically unobtainable for millions of families who would have been able to pay the full price if housing had been more efficiently organized.

The Great Depression, however, brought a change. The breakdown of private building construction and the widespread unemployment made the glaring housing needs appear even more irrational than ordinarily. Why let people go unemployed when there is so much work to be done? On top of that, there was the near-collapse in housing credit. These circumstances weakened the resistance against public interference in housing to such an extent that it was possible to launch some rather significant government programs.

Recent housing policies, apart from city planning, building control, and similar activities, have in the main two aspects: making credit available for private housing and providing public housing for low income groups. Quantitatively most important are the credit reforms, carried out by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (H.O.L.C.), the Federal Home Loan Banks, and the Federal Housing Administration (F.H.A.). The H.O.L.C. was set up primarily for the purpose of rescuing home owners who were threatened with losing their homes during the depression. It is now liquidating. In terms of long-range policies, the F.H.A. is the most important of these housing credit agencies. Its many important contributions are so well known that they scarcely need to be emphasized here.[46] The loans are made by private institutions, but since the insurance eliminates the risk for the lenders, interest rates are kept down to such an extent that F.H.A. houses are well within the reach of middle class and more secure working class families. Particularly significant is the fact that, year by year, it has been possible to reach deeper down into lower economic strata. In spite of that, less than 30 per cent of the main category of new borrowers on one-

[a] For a fuller treatment of the important problems dealt with in this section, see Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), Chapters 9, 10 and 18.

family homes in 1940 had incomes under $2,000 and but 5 per cent had less than $1,500.[47]

Under such circumstances, it is apparent that Negroes cannot have had any great benefit from the F.H.A., nor, for that matter, from any other of the federal credit agencies which are organized on the basis of so-called "ordinary business principles."[a] The failure of the F.H.A. to help the Negroes goes even further than can be explained on the basis of their low income. This federal agency has taken over the policy of segregation used by private institutions, like banks, mortgage companies, building and loan associations, real estate companies. When it comes to developing new subdivisions, the F.H.A. is obviously interested in getting such a layout that property values can be maintained. Private operators, in order to secure F.H.A. backing, usually follow the advice of the agency.[48] One of the points which property valuators of the F.H.A. are specifically urged to consider is whether the area or property to be insured is protected from "adverse influences." This, in the official language of the agency, "includes prevention of the infiltration of business and industrial uses, lower class occupancy, and inharmonious racial groups."[49] In the case of undeveloped and sparsely developed areas, the agency lets its valuators consider whether

> . . . effective restrictive covenants are recorded against the entire tract, since these provide the surest protection against undesirable encroachment and inharmonious use. To be most effective, deed restrictions should be imposed upon all land in the immediate environment of the subject location.[50]

The restrictions, among other things, should include "prohibition of the occupancy of properties except by the race for which they are intended."[51]

This matter is a serious one for the Negro. It is one thing when private tenants, property owners, and financial institutions maintain and extend patterns of racial segregation in housing. It is quite another matter when a federal agency chooses to side with the segregationists. This fact is particularly harmful since the F.H.A. has become the outstanding leader in the planning of new housing. It seems probable that the F.H.A. has brought about a greatly increased use of all sorts of restrictive covenants and deed restrictions, which are the most reliable legal means of keeping Negroes confined to their ghettos. It may even be that those income groups of the white population which are particularly served by the F.H.A. formerly lived in areas which were much less covered by such restrictions.[b] The damage done to the Negroes is not only that the F.H.A. encourages segregation. There is also the fact *that this segregation is predominantly*

[a] We state this in an *a priori* manner since none of the federal housing credit agencies presents any information on the racial composition of their clientele.

[b] There is little definite knowledge, however, on these matters. A study testing the hypothesis mentioned in the text would be extremely valuable.

negative. It would work much less hardship on the Negro people if it were merely a question of keeping Negroes and whites apart, and not, predominantly, of keeping the Negro out. In other words, if the policy of segregation were coupled with large-scale positive efforts to give the Negro additional new living space, it would be much less harmful. Also such a two-sided policy of segregation, in the end, would have a much greater chance of being successful. The urban Negro population is bound to increase. The present Negro ghettos will not suffice. The Negro will invade new urban territories. Unless these changes are properly planned, they will occur in the same haphazard and friction-causing manner with which we have been only too well acquainted in the past. This, for one thing, will jeopardize the objective of keeping the character of white neighborhoods intact.

The general credit reforms, however, constitute just one part of the present housing policies. The subsidized housing projects for low income families are an entirely different matter. About 7,500, or one-third, of the dwelling units in projects built during 1933-1937 by the Housing Division of the Public Works Administration are for Negro occupancy. The building of subsidized housing projects has since been carried on by local housing authorities with the financial assistance of the United States Housing Authority (U.S.H.A.).[a] By July 31, 1942, there were 122,000 dwelling units built by or under loan contract with the U.S.H.A. and intended for low income families. About 41,000, or 33 per cent, of those were intended for Negro occupancy.[52]

Thus, the Negro has certainly received a large share of the benefits under this program. Indeed, the U.S.H.A. has given him a better deal than has any other major federal public welfare agency. This may be due, in part, to the fact that, so far, subsidized housing projects have been built mainly in urban areas, where, even in the South, there is less reluctance to consider the Negro's needs. The main explanation, however, is just the fact that the U.S.H.A. has had the definite policy of giving the Negro his share. It has a special division for nonwhite races, headed by a Negro who can serve as spokesman for his people. Many of the leading white officials of the agency, as well, are known to have been convinced in principle that discrimination should be actively fought.

So far, however, only about 3 per cent of Negro urban families live in subsidized housing projects. This is a good beginning, but unless these efforts continue, the results are a drop in the bucket compared with the total need.[b]

[a] All housing activities of the federal government were in 1942 brought together into one unit, the National Housing Agency. The F.H.A. and the U.S.H.A. are maintained as departments within this agency. The name of the U.S.H.A. was changed to Federal Public Housing Authority.

[b] For a discussion of actual housing conditions for Negroes, see Chapter 16, Section 6.

It seems that the U.S.H.A. program is well planned in many respects. Yet there are some obvious shortcomings. One is its connection with the slum clearance program. By law, slum dwellings eventually have to be eliminated at the same rate as new units are constructed. It seems that the purpose of this clause is mainly to appease the real estate owners who are afraid of an abundance of housing.[a] It is unfortunate when housing projects are built on old slum sites, and the slum houses have first to be torn down. Such practices work particular hardship on the Negroes since there is usually no place where they can go while the new projects are being built.

Several housing projects, however, among them Negro projects, have been located on vacant land. The experiences, in many cases, have been rather encouraging. Sites for projects have been found where utility services are complete and where streets are well kept up. When there is additional vacant land adjacent to the area, there is the opportunity for the development of some new private housing for Negroes. It seems that such procedures should be followed generally for Negro housing projects. They could and should always be utilized for the purpose of giving the Negro additional "living space" in urban areas—never for binding him with new ties to the over-crowded sections where he is being kept.

Generally, this connection between slum clearance and new construction has made it difficult to make new housing projects fit into constructive and all-inclusive city plans.[b] In too many cases it has been a question of substituting good houses for bad ones without enough consideration of how such piecemeal work can be integrated into a rational city plan. This, of course, is all right for those individual families who happen to get a new dwelling, but it scarcely prepares the ground for an ultimate solution of the housing problem of the entire city. Particularly is this true about Negro housing; Negro sections are almost invariably among the least well-planned areas in a city.

In city planning, which will be necessary for the continuation of the subsidized housing program on a larger scale, the issue of housing segregation will have to be faced squarely. This is the one feature which makes the problem of housing for Negroes different from that of housing for other low income families. The chances are that, in the South at least, segregation will have to be accepted in the surveyable future, for the simple reason that local opposition against subsidized housing projects will otherwise be so strong that no projects can be built. In such cases, the only thing that can be insisted upon is that Negroes get, not only new houses,

[a] From a social viewpoint, the only rational thing to do would be to eliminate slum houses whenever there is a sufficient supply of adequate houses—regardless of whether the supply is due to the building of subsidized housing projects or to other causes.

[b] This is a criticism often heard among American planners.

but also additional space, and that both old and new Negro areas become better planned.

In the North, on the other hand, there is some chance that the evils of segregation can be removed by means of the gradual abolition of housing segregation itself. In some Northern places, such as New York City and Albany, there are already projects where white and Negro tenants live scattered within a single project.[58]

Another major problem concerns the financial feasibility of building subsidized housing projects for all families who, for economic reasons, are suffering from bad housing conditions. The American public needs to know whether or not this program will ever solve the entire housing problem for all low income households, or whether it is just going to assist a more or less arbitrarily selected small part of the ill-housed families. This problem has not been adequately faced.[a] Yet a complete financial plan is essential for a rational continuation of the program, as well as for the purpose of convincing the American public that continuation is worth while.

Connected with this matter is the problem of tenant selection. The U.S.H.A. rehouses only families between an upper and a—somewhat unofficial—lower income limit. A great number of relief families are

[a] The average federal net subsidy (gross subsidy minus government profit on loans), according to the U.S.H.A., amounts to $77 per family per year. (Federal Works Agency, *Second Annual Report, 1941.*) In addition, there are municipal subsidies, usually in the form of tax exemptions, averaging $60 (*ibid.*, pp. 145 and 160; United States Housing Authority, "What Does the Housing Program Cost?" [1940], pp. 14-15), which makes a total subsidy of about $137. This means that over 7,000,000 families, or one-fifth of the total in the United States, can be rehoused for an annual cost of $1,000,000,000. It would be necessary, in addition, to make all relief benefits high enough to enable all recipients of public assistance to pay the rents in public housing projects. Such a large program, however, would involve rural families, for which the cost certainly would be considerably smaller. Also, its completion would require several decades. The general income level may be so much higher at the end of this period that the assistance could be restricted to a much smaller number of families. Possible cuts in building and other costs may have the same effect. Even under present conditions, it is doubtful whether the number of households which, for economic reasons, suffer from intolerably bad housing conditions, is really so large; it should be kept in mind that some slum families have incomes which would enable them to purchase adequate housing if they only cared for it. Since the building of the projects ought to be concentrated in periods of unemployment, a substantial part of the cost should be charged to the unemployment relief budget, and not to the housing budget. In other words, as unemployed construction workers must be given jobs on public works programs during depressions, the cost for rehousing slum families is reduced by the utilization of these "free services."

A real cost estimate should include quite a number of such considerations: the future trend in number and size of rural and urban families; the extent to which bad housing conditions are caused by factors other than low income; the intensity of the need of various groups living in substandard houses; the extent to which existing houses can be utilized for subsidized families. Our unpretentious experiment with figures has been made in order to bring home one point: that it is not economically impossible to give the whole people a certain minimum standard of housing.

ineligible because they are unable to pay the rents, which in 1941 averaged $18 per month, including utilities. The average income of the families in the projects was $832.[54] Several projects, particularly those occupied by Negroes, showed much lower rent and income levels. Even so, however, it certainly is true that the U.S.H.A. helps an economic group somewhat above those most in need of assistance. This, of course, is particularly unfortunate in the case of Negroes. To meet this problem a much closer integration between the work of the housing authorities and that of other welfare agencies is needed.

There is one group of economically disadvantaged families to which too little consideration has been given: the large families, partly because they are poorer and cannot pay the rents, and partly because very large dwellings are not provided in public housing projects. The average family size in public housing projects in 1941 was 3.9 which is about the same as for all urban families, exclusive of unattached individuals. This is remarkable in view of the fact that large families suffer much more from bad housing conditions than do small households, at the same time as they are less often economically able to purchase good housing.[55]

It is possible to add other similar criticisms. Still we should not overlook the fact that the problems are extremely complicated, particularly during the initial period of the program. The U.S.H.A. has given two valuable experiences. It has demonstrated that rehousing of slum families can be done in America. And it has shown that a federal agency, with only financial and no administrative power in the local communities, can give the Negro a square deal even in the South.

The lack of integration between the various federal housing programs, however, has been great, especially as the programs have affected Negroes. It is only recently, under the pressure of the war emergency, that the various federal housing offices have been combined into one agency, the National Housing Agency. It remains to be seen to what extent this move will bring about greater consistency.

7. Social Security and Public Assistance

We have already discussed some of the major social welfare programs, the farm security work, the public health activities and the low cost housing projects. Also, we shall touch upon certain government interferences with the labor market. We want to consider here other principal welfare provisions, such as social security, work relief, youth programs, categorical assistance, home relief, school lunches and other direct distribution of means of subsistence. Under the pressure of shrinking employment opportunities in agriculture and of industrial depression and job restriction in the cities, public relief *has become one of the major Negro occupations; all through the 'thirties it was surpassed only by agriculture and possibly by*

domestic service. We must go into some detail in describing how the Negro fares in this substitute form of breadwinning.[a]

Prior to the New Deal period public relief was entirely insignificant in this country. Until the First World War even a state like New York expended less money for relief through public agencies than it did through private charities. In the South such a situation prevailed until the beginning of the 'thirties.[56] Participation on the part of the federal government was restricted to aid to veterans and similar special groups. Most of the states, prior to 1929, enacted programs for aid to dependent children and for workmen's compensation; and some states made special provisions for the blind and for the aged. Otherwise most of the social welfare work was carried on by counties and cities, or by private charity organizations; the poor farm or the almshouse was the main local institution of public welfare.[57] The practice was based on the theory: ". . . making relief deterrent by sending all destitute people to a local almshouse would be a means of preventing pauperism."[58] It was the time of "rugged individualism."

We have previously characterized the institution of large-scale public relief during the 'thirties as the one bright spot in the recent economic history of the Negro. Negroes, for obvious reasons, have gained even more from it than have whites. This is not to say, however, that their needs have everywhere been as much considered as have those of white families in economic distress. On the contrary, in many instances there has been pronounced discrimination against the Negro. Negroes have often found it more difficult to receive any relief at all than have whites in similar

[a] We cannot give anything like an exhaustive treatment of the subject. We shall omit, for instance, any discussion of the institutionalized welfare programs—asylums, reform schools, institutions for crippled children, child nurseries. We shall fail to deal with the implications to the Negro of certain major gaps in the social welfare system. Had we discussed all these things, our picture would scarcely be any brighter. Indeed, it would be darker. It is a well-known fact that all institutions for handicapped groups tend to be less adequate for Negroes than they are for whites in the South. The result is that the proportion of feeble-minded and insane persons who are not taken care of in institutions is higher for Negroes than it is for whites—something which, of course, affects the Negro crime rate; a whole Negro community may have to pay for what one subnormal Negro does to a white woman. Negro reform schools in the South usually have a lower standard and are more crowded than are white reform schools. The consequence is that a greater proportion of Negro than of white juvenile delinquents has to be cared for in homes; in the Negro communities there are fewer homes which fit the purpose than there are in white communities. Other juvenile delinquents are simply sent to ordinary penitentiaries when they cannot be taken care of in reform schools. Negroes need more child nurseries than do white people, since their homes are less adequate for the purpose of rearing children, and Negro homemakers more often have to take up gainful work. Yet, at least in the South, they have fewer of them than have whites. There is no public health insurance in America. This is more serious for Negroes than it is for whites, since Negroes have higher rates of sickness. The absence of any adequate form of aid to migrants, likewise, hampers Negroes more than it does whites.

economic circumstances. Moreover, average relief grants per client have often been smaller for Negroes than they have been for whites—and this particularly in communities where Negro relief recipients, to an even greater extent than white recipients, were selected from the poorest people. In such cases Negro clients would have needed even greater assistance than would have been needed by white clients, but relief agencies could not see it that way. The difference, in many cases, may not be more than a few dollars a month, but, still, it counts; for the general level of relief grants in such communities always tends to be low.

The situation, however, is different in various regions. By and large, there are three types of areas that need to be distinguished: urban North, urban South, and rural South.

The urban North has the highest standards in all sorts of social welfare. It shows much more of a consistent pattern than does the South, in respect both to the general level of relief expenditures and to the apportionment of public funds between Negroes and whites. There is no evidence of any direct discrimination against Negroes in respect to any major relief programs. The proportion of Negroes on relief is everywhere higher than is the corresponding proportion of whites, and the difference is so large that it seems that Negroes have about the same chances of receiving public assistance as do whites of equal economic status. Both the Consumer Purchases Study and the National Health Survey indicate that, in the middle of the 'thirties, roughly one-half of the Negro families in the urban North were on relief. This usually was three to four times more than the corresponding proportion of whites. The small residual of nonrelief families with an income of less than $500 was not significantly higher for Negroes than it was for whites.[59]

In the urban South as well, there is usually a higher percentage of relief recipients among Negroes than there is among whites. The difference, in most cases, is quite marked, but it is, nevertheless, much smaller than in the North. Taking a simple average of the relief rates, according to the National Health Survey, for 9 large and middle-sized cities in the South, one finds that in 1935, 25 per cent of the Negro and 11 per cent of the white families were receiving public assistance. The corresponding figures for 9 small cities were 15 and 10 per cent, respectively—indicating a much smaller difference. The Consumer Purchases Study gives about the same impression; it was particularly in the small cities and villages that the difference between the proportions of Negroes and whites on relief was small. This study shows, moreover, that the residual of families who were not on relief but who had incomes of less than $500 was small in the white group in Southern cities and villages, but in the Negro group it was high, often making up as much as one-third or more of all the families. There was even a significant number of Negro families with less than $250

who failed to receive any relief.[60] This, of course, means that, in spite of the higher total relief rates for Negroes, it was usually more difficult for them to get relief than it was for whites with similar needs.

In Southern rural farm areas, the pattern was different. Relief rates were, in the first place, generally lower than they were in the cities and villages. Moreover, in all counties in four Southern states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi), where both Negro and white farm families were included in the sample investigated by the Study of Consumer Purchases, there were relatively fewer Negroes than whites on the public relief rolls. Thus, not even on a straight population basis did the Negroes get their proportionate share in the relief appropriations. Also, there was a pronounced divergence in the relief rates between various groups of counties. Of the white farmers and croppers, from less than 1 per cent to 15 per cent were on relief; the corresponding rates for Negroes varied between a fraction of one per cent to 11 per cent.[61]

We have chosen to establish these patterns on the basis of the Consumer Purchases Study and the National Health Survey, because they are the only major materials in which data on relief are combined with information on the income distribution of the nonrelief families. Owing to this circumstance, we have been able to prove that discrimination against Negroes may exist even when, as in the urban South, Negro relief rates are two or three times higher than the white rates. Otherwise, however, we can pick almost any material for those years and arrive at substantially the same conclusions concerning the general relations between relief rates for Negroes and whites.[62]

8. Specialized Social Welfare Programs During the Period After 1935

For the years after 1935 there is little information available on the Negro's share in all benefits from the social welfare programs. Generally there are few data by race in the current reports of federal, state, and local governments—and even less for those states in the Deep South where the Negro population is most dense and discrimination against the Negro is most strongly entrenched.[63]

For most of the specialized programs, however, there are one or several special investigations concerning the representation of Negroes in the clientele and—at least in some cases—their share in the benefits. The main impression from these studies is that there has been no significant change in the Negro's relative position in the public welfare system. He continues to be best off in the North, where the general level of relief expenditures is highest, and where there is little or no direct discrimination against him. In the urban South he usually receives a larger share of the total relief benefits than corresponds to his population ratio, but this difference is much

less pronounced than in the North. He is worst off in the rural South, where the most apparent racial discrimination is shown, at the same time as the general relief standards are very low. The South continues to be inconsistent in its treatment of Negroes.

There seems to have been a change for the worse, however, in the position of the Negro women. Those among them who cannot receive old age benefits, old age assistance, or aid for their dependent children seem to have greater difficulties in getting public assistance—other than surplus commodities—than they experienced prior to 1936. On the whole, there is, at least in the South, and particularly in the rural South, little adequate provision for such needy people who happen not to be provided for in any of the specialized programs administered, financed or sponsored by the federal government. There is no public assistance for many unemployed able-bodied workers, for instance, who are not covered by unemployment compensation or when W.P.A. grants do not suffice for more than a part of them. On the other hand, there are certain categories of Negro and white clients who may receive larger grants than were usual under the previous program.

9. THE SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAM

Conditions are different, however, in different parts of the social welfare system. "Social security" has a position quite apart from the ordinary relief programs. Whether or not there is much direct discrimination against Negroes in the administration of the Social Security Law is difficult to say, since there is comparatively little direct information available on how Negroes are actually treated. Conditions may vary from one part of the system to another. There is little likelihood of any direct discrimination in the old age benefit system which is administered entirely by the federal government.[a] Unemployment compensation is technically administered by the states, but there is a certain federal collaboration, and the basic provisions are comparatively uniform since they were more or less sponsored by the federal government, and all are geared to the federal Social Security Act of 1935. Workmen's compensation for injuries in the course of employment, on the other hand, is entirely a matter of state initiative and state administration.

What we do know, however, is that all these social insurance systems are so constructed that Negroes, along with certain groups of white work-

[a] The Old Age and Survivors' Benefit System should be distinguished from Old Age Assistance. The latter is a form of tax-financed relief supported by both federal and state (and often local) governments. The Old Age Benefit System is financed by means of payroll taxes paid by both employers and employees. (See alphabetically listed articles on the various subjects in Russell Sage Foundation, Russell H. Kurtz [Editor], *Social Work Yearbook, 1941* [1941;] and Richard A. Lester, *Economics of Labor* [1941], p. 438.)

ers, are in a disadvantaged position.[a] In other words, there is what might be called "indirect discrimination." Particularly, coverage is limited. In the case of the old age pension system there is really no reason at all why it should be related to the labor market, covering only wage earners and salaried workers in specific occupations.

> Here some short circuit in thinking must be at work which involves the position that industrialism is to blame for modern economic problems, so that they have to be remedied by special measures for those connected with industry. . . . It is fallacious, however, to believe that the problem of dependency for maintenance operates only in the sphere of wage earning. . . . Just as old age, death, and illness are not limited to industrial workers, so the risk coverage should not be so limited.[64]

What especially works hardships on the Negro is, of course, the fact that agricultural and domestic workers are excluded. In respect to old age insurance there is some information available which enables us to judge the quantitative significance of these exclusions.[65]

The development of workmen's compensation has depended entirely on state initiative, and there is a great variation in standards.[66] Mississippi does not even have a law requiring compulsory insurance of industrial accident risks.[67] Agriculture and domestic service usually belong to the "uncovered occupations." It has been estimated that only 40 per cent of all gainful workers are within the insurance system.[68] Laws enforcing accident preventive measures are often inadequate in the South.[69]

Thus the Negro's position in the social security programs to some extent differs from that in most other systems of social welfare. By and large, Negroes receive a much smaller share of the social security benefits compared to what they get under most other social welfare programs. They are always "under-represented" among the recipients of benefits, not only from the viewpoint of need, but also in comparison with the proportion of Negroes in the population.

10. ASSISTANCE TO SPECIAL GROUPS[b]

Among the recipients accepted for old age assistance during the period 1937-1940 about 12 per cent were Negroes, whereas of all persons 65 years

[a] The following criticisms are directed solely against social insurance systems in the United States, not against workmen's compensation systems. The latter, of course, have other faults.

[b] The Social Security Act of 1935, as amended, entitles the federal government to lend financial assistance to states, on a matching basis (50 per cent of total cost), for public assistance to three distinct categories of needy persons: aged, blind, and children under 16 (sometimes 18) years of age in broken families, provided that state plans adopted for the purpose meet certain specified federal standards. These three programs are called Old Age Assistance (O.A.A), Aid to the Blind (A.B.), and Aid to Dependent Children (A.D.C.). Many states share their parts of the cost with the local communities. The assistance is distributed by local Departments of Welfare.

of age or older, according to the 1940 Census, only 7 per cent were Negroes.[70] Thus, the proportion of Negroes among recipients of old age assistance is much higher than among aged people in general. The difference is particularly pronounced in the North. In the South it is less marked. Mississippi and Oklahoma differed from the other states in the South; in these states Negroes, in spite of their greater poverty, were actually less represented among the old age assistance recipients than among all aged people.[71] It is quite possible that similar flagrant cases of discrimination occurred in the rural areas of some of the other states; but no data exist which would allow us to test this assumption.

The average benefits are much lower in the South than elsewhere.[72] All the Southern states paid lower benefits to Negroes than to whites. The largest race differential appeared in Mississippi, where the average was $7 for Negroes and $11 for whites.

The two other categorical relief programs, aid to the blind and aid to dependent children, are quantitatively much less important than is old age assistance. The need of such relief, however, is particularly urgent among Negroes. It has been estimated, for instance, that the incidence of blindness is twice as high for Negroes as for whites. This means that about one-fifth of all blind persons in the United States are Negroes. It is obvious that Negroes constitute an even higher proportion of those blind persons who are in need of cash assistance. From this viewpoint, Negroes were certainly discriminated against, even though they constituted 20 to 23 per cent of all recipients accepted for aid to the blind during the years 1937-1940. The average benefit in 1939-1940 was $12 for Negroes and $22 for whites. This difference was due, mainly, to the fact that grants tended to be much lower in the South than they were elsewhere. In addition, many of the Southern states paid lower benefits to Negroes than they did to whites.[73]

Aid to dependent children is intended, primarily, for broken families with children. In view of the great number of widows and widowers in the Negro population, and its high divorce, separation, and illegitimacy rates, it is quite apparent that Negroes need this assistance much more than do whites. In 1937-1940 from 14 to 17 per cent of all recipients accepted for such aid were Negroes. In 7 of the Southern states, however, the proportion of Negroes among those accepted for aid to dependent children was smaller even than the proportion of Negroes among all children under 16 years of age. The discrimination was particularly pronounced in Georgia where, in 1940, 38 per cent of all children under 15 were Negroes, where as the proportion of Negroes among those accepted for aid to dependent children during 1937-1940 was but 11 to 12 per cent.[74]

Why is it that, in some Southern states, discrimination can go to such extremes in the case of aid to dependent children? It is quite possible that

the special eligibility requirements contained in most state laws concerning the "suitability" of the home may have something to do with it. A few state laws even specify that the parent or guardian be a "proper" person.[75] Such regulations, of course, may easily lend themselves to rather arbitrary interpretations whereby, in particular, many Negro families can be cut off from any chance of receiving this kind of assistance. According to popular belief in the South, few Negro low income families have homes which could be called "suitable" for any purpose; and, of course, it is literally true that the poorer the home the less acceptable it tends to be as a place for rearing children. If standards of conduct have to be considered, unmarried mothers may easily be at a disadvantage; and since often practically all Negroes are believed to be "immoral," almost any discrimination against Negroes can be motivated on such grounds. Even though it is unlikely that professional welfare workers in the South would be taken in by such exaggerated notions, many of them, particularly in rural areas, may have to follow a compromise policy, the actual meaning of which is that Negro children are punished for the real or imaginary faults of their parents.

Average benefits are comparatively high. In 1939-1940 they amounted to $30 to $31 per family, or $13 per child for Negroes and whites alike. Some Northern states even paid higher benefits to Negro than they did to white clients. In the South, of course, it was most often the other way around.[76]

11. Work Relief

Except for unemployment compensation which, as we have seen, is inadequate for Negroes, work relief is the only special form of public assistance to able-bodied unemployed workers in so far as they cannot be placed under any of the youth programs.[a] This situation is unfortunate, for, as we shall find, general relief is virtually nonexistent in many Southern areas, and it is not possible to give work relief to all unemployed persons who fail to get any unemployment compensation benefits. Work projects, for one thing, cannot easily be enlarged and contracted with the fluctuations in total employment and, therefore, they must be kept well below the average level of unemployment. Actually the American work relief system is kept at an even lower level in relation to total unemployment than is necessary.[77] Under such circumstances, an unemployed worker is fortunate if he manages to get on W.P.A.—and the more so since the earnings on work relief are usually much higher than the benefits from the unemployment compensation system or from direct relief.

In April, 1941, there were 237,000 certified Negro workers assigned to work under the Work Projects Administration. They constituted 16 per

[a] See Section 12 of this chapter.

cent of the total labor forces on W.P.A. This means that Negroes had a somewhat larger share in the work relief jobs than corresponded to their representation among the unemployed workers; for, according to the Census of 1940, there were about 13 per cent nonwhites among all persons who were without jobs and who were seeking work, or who were on emergency work.[78]

As usual, however, the situation was different in the North from what it was in the South. Many Northern states had at least twice as high a proportion of Negroes on the W.P.A. rolls as there was among the job seekers, but in most of the Southern states Negroes were less well represented on the work relief rolls than they were among the unemployed workers.[79]

It was particularly in the rural areas of the Southern states that there were relatively few Negroes among the W.P.A. workers. Virginia, exclusive of Richmond and Norfolk, for example, had a lower proportion of Negroes on the work relief rolls than there was in the total population. The same was true about Louisiana, outside of New Orleans. A state like Mississippi, of course, showed even worse conditions in this respect: in counties where there was no city with as much as 10,000 population, only 18 per cent of the W.P.A. workers were Negroes, although they had about as many Negroes as whites in the total population and, no doubt, had a preponderance of Negroes among all persons in need of unemployment relief.[80]

Since wage differentials on W.P.A. are extremely pronounced, the question of what job rating a person gets is important. The lowest wage that is paid the lowest group of unskilled workers in Southern counties with no city or town having as much as 5,000 population was—prior to a recent insignificant raise—$31.20. The highest wage received by professional and technical workers in Northern and Midwestern cities of 100,000 and over was $94.90. Thus, there is social discrimination on the W.P.A., and the consequence is, of course, that average wages for Negroes must be much lower than those paid to white workers. Even the lowest wage rate, however, is higher than that which many Negro workers can receive in private employment.

12. ASSISTANCE TO YOUTH

The New Deal has instituted some significant programs for youth. On the one hand, there are the various activities administered by the National Youth Administration. On the other hand, there was the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was abolished in June, 1942.[81]

In the early days of the C.C.C. programs there were but 5 or 6 per cent Negroes among the boys in the camps. From 1936 until 1941 the proportion varied between 9 and 11 per cent. This means that, after 1936, Negroes shared in the benefits of the program in proportion to their numbers in the population, but that no allowance was made for the much greater needs in

the Negro population. As usual, however, this general average conceals the differences between the South and the North. In the Fourth Corps Area, comprising 8 Southern states, 21 per cent of the C.C.C. boys, in May, 1939, were Negroes. Since no less than one-third of all males 14 to 24 years of age in these states in 1940 were nonwhite, this means that Negroes were grossly under-represented in the program. In the rest of the country, on the other hand, Negroes had more representatives proportionately in the C.C.C. camps than they had in the general population.[82]

The N.Y.A. programs show similar conditions. In January, 1940, 13 per cent of the workers on the N.Y.A. out-of-school program were Negroes. The corresponding proportion for the school program was 10 per cent. Excepting college and graduate aid, Northern states gave Negroes a much larger share of this assistance than corresponded to their proportion in the population; but in the South they did not receive as much of it as their relative numbers would warrant. In some cases this depended on the difficulties in the South of getting local sponsors for Negro projects. In respect to the school aid, of course, one could explain it simply by the fact that there are much fewer Negroes, in proportion, in secondary and higher schools than there are whites. This explanation has, however, the character of a vicious circle. The purpose of the school aid, of course, is to help low income boys and girls get an education. The fact that so few of them get it is an indication of the need for additional assistance rather than a reason for limiting the aid.[83]

13. General Relief and Assistance in Kind

For categories of people in need of aid, other than those mentioned, there are no chances of receiving any federally subsidized cash relief. In the South this means that their chances of receiving any cash relief at all are extremely small. Ordinary direct relief is insignificant in most of the Southern states. In February, 1941, the proportion of households receiving general relief varied in the South from 2.7 per cent (West Virginia) down to 0.3 per cent (Mississippi). The average benefits per month ranged, in January, 1941, from $25 (District of Columbia) to less than $3 (Mississippi).[84]

There are few data on the subject by race, owing to the fact that general relief is entirely a responsibility of the states and localities. This lack of information, however, does not matter much. The existence or nonexistence of discrimination against Negroes is in this case much less significant than is the fact that both racial groups are inadequately provided for in the South.

Of great quantitative importance, on the other hand, is the direct distribution of federal surplus commodities through local relief agencies. In June, 1940, over 10,000,000 persons, or 8 per cent of the total population, were receiving this kind of assistance, either in combination with other relief

or independently. There was great unevenness in the apportionment of this aid among various states. Some states in the South used but little of it. Mississippi, on the other hand, gave this aid to almost one-fifth of its population. There, as well as in certain other Southern states, federal surplus commodities were actually the mainstay of the whole relief system.[85]

This surplus commodity program may fulfill a real function when used for the purpose of supplementing other relief. In the South, however, surplus commodities are often used as the only form of assistance to families in great need. In such cases, of course, they are totally inadequate. The program may even be harmful, then, in that it provides an excuse for not organizing more efficient aid.

The food stamp plan and the school lunch program constitute more rational and better organized attempts to supplement ordinary relief, improve the dietary standards among low income people, and increase the market for agricultural commodities. Just as there is no reporting about how many Negroes and whites are receiving surplus commodities, there is little or no information on how many Negroes there are among the millions of children who eat their school lunches at federal expense every day or on the extent to which food stamps are given and sold to Negroes. Yet these activities include some of the most significant attempts that have ever been made to raise the health standard of the people; and we ought to know whether or not the Negro has received his just share of these benefits, of which he is in such great need.

CHAPTER 16

INCOME, CONSUMPTION AND HOUSING[a]

1. Family Income

In a general way we know why the Negro is poor. As a farmer, he has been kept in a dependent position and has been exploited. He was tied to cotton agriculture where the risks were such that at one time it brought sudden riches to white people but now forces surplus workers, particularly Negroes, to leave the Southern land. As a city worker, he has been kept out of jobs, especially the good ones. He has seldom been allowed to prepare himself adequately for jobs requiring high skill or professional training. Because of residential segregation, he is confined to slums to an even greater extent than his low purchasing power makes necessary. He does not share equally with his white fellow citizen in the free services given by the government.

Now, let us ask: What is the result of all this? Just how poor is the Negro? What is his annual income? Does he get a sufficient diet? In what kind of house does he live? How does his level of living, in terms of actual consumption, compare with that of the whites?

The typical Southern Negro farm family has an income of but a few hundred dollars a year. It is considerably lower than that of the average white farm family. This is due, in part, to the fact that Negroes are more concentrated at the bottom of the "agricultural ladder" than are whites. This is not the whole explanation, however, for *the income of the average Negro family at any given tenure status, is always much lower than is the income of the average white family.* Negro farm families of higher than sharecropper status are not any better off, on the average, than are white sharecroppers.[1]

Extremely low, also, are the incomes of most Negro families in the villages of the South. The Consumer Purchases Study indicates that half the "normal"[b] Negro families in 34 Southern villages—located in Georgia, Mississippi, and the Carolinas—had incomes under $330 in 1935-1936.

[a] This chapter is based principally on Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share* (1943). This book was prepared for our study.

[b] A "normal" family consists of at least husband and wife, living together, with or without children.

The corresponding median income for "normal" white families was $1,220. About 17 per cent of all the "normal" Negro families in villages had incomes under $250, but were, nevertheless, not on relief. Only 4 per cent of the Negro households had incomes of $1,000 or more.[2] It goes without saying that the income level would have appeared still lower if broken families had been included in the estimates.[3]

Small *cities* in the South showed similar conditions, except that the income level for Negro families was somewhat higher.[4] It was still higher in the middle-sized and large cities of the South (Table 1). Nevertheless, half the "normal" Negro families in Atlanta had less than $632, and half the broken Negro families had less than $332. White families had more

TABLE 1

MEDIAN INCOMES OF NEGRO AND NATIVE WHITE FAMILIES IN SELECTED CITIES: 1935–1936

	Normal Families						Broken Families		
Race	New York N. Y.	Chicago Ill.	Columbus Ohio	Atlanta Ga.	Columbia S. C.	Mobile Ala.	Atlanta Ga.	Columbia S. C.	Mobile Ala.
Negro families	$980 [a]	$726	$831	$632	$576	$481	$332	$254	$301
White families	1930	1687	1622	1876	1876	1419	940	1403	784

Sources: U S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Series, Family Income in Chicago, 1935–36*, Bulletin No. 642, Vol. 1, *Family Income* (1939), p. 162; *Family Income and Expenditure in New York City, 1935–36*, Bulletin No. 643, Vol. 1, *Family Income* (1941), p. 19; *Family Income in Nine Cities of the East Central Region, 1935–36*, Bulletin No. 644, Vol. 1, *Family Income* (1939), pp. 33 and 443; *Family Income in the Southeastern Region, 1935–36*, Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 1, *Family Income* (1939), pp. 46–48.

[a] New York City, so-called "native area" only.

than twice and, in some cities, more than three times as much. Northern cities showed a substantially higher income level for Negroes. In New York City the median income for normal Negro families was $980 and in Chicago it was $726. Moreover, the differential between whites and Negroes was less pronounced than in the South. The reason for this is that—contrary to common belief—*the white urban population in the North does not have any significantly higher median incomes than has the white urban population in the South.*

These conclusions are based not only on the small group of cities sampled in the Study of Consumer Purchases. The National Health Survey for 1935-1936, containing information on income of Negro and white families in 16 Northern and 18 Southern cities, confirms both that race differences in income are much more marked in the urban South than in the urban North, and that median incomes for white urban families are about the same in the South as in the North.[5] The explanation is simple. The urban white population in the South has an "incomplete lower class,"

due to the presence of the Negro. Domestic service as well as certain other low wage jobs are more or less completely filled by the Negroes. Since, on the other hand, almost all well-paid work is monopolized by the whites, the average income of white workers is fairly high. This more or less balances the consequences of the fact that, in almost any given job, earnings tend to be lower than in the North. In other words, because the Negro is kept down, and because such a large part of the total urban income is retained by the whites, the white population in the urban South is not appreciably worse off than the urban population in the North—in spite of the greater general poverty in the South.

It goes without saying that *the majority of the Negro families are economically unable to live in a way compatible with any modern concepts of a "minimum health standard."* The Works Progress Administration has made up, for 59 cities, as of March, 1935, an "emergency budget" which averaged around $900 per year, estimated on the basis of the needs of a family of four persons.[6] This standard can scarcely be characterized as a real health standard.[7] Yet more than three-fourths of the "normal" Negro families in Columbia, South Carolina; Mobile, Alabama; and Atlanta, Georgia, had incomes below this limit. The conditions were much better in Columbus, Ohio, and in Chicago, Illinois, but even there the majority of the Negro families had sub-standard incomes. In the white urban population of these five cities, on the other hand, almost four out of five "normal" families had incomes high enough to buy at least an "emergency standard." Other income studies confirm that these differences are rather typical.[8]

2. Income and Family Size

The large majority of Negro families have to live on a standard which represents a constant threat to their health. Conditions are difficult for the large families: *Family income did not show any consistent tendency to be higher when the number of children under 16 in the family was greater.* Sometimes it was even lower when there were more children in the family.[9] There is, of course, nothing surprising in this absence of any significant positive correlation between income and number of children. In the main, it can be explained rather easily; and one finds the same phenomenon in other countries.[10] But the phenomenon is a serious one, and it does not seem as though the full implications of it were generally understood.[11] True, large families nowadays are not numerous. But, still, they rear the main part of the coming generation.[12] The condition of these large families, therefore, is much more significant than is suggested by their numbers. This is particularly true about Negroes, who have a greater proportion of large families than has the white population. Then, too, it must be considered that Negro incomes are usually so low to begin with that there is absolutely no leeway in the budget for children. Therefore, it happens more frequently in Negro

than in white families that the arrival of children forces the level of living below any minimum health standard—that is, when it was not already below such a standard even before the children arrived.

If family income fails to increase with the number of minors in the family, it does increase somewhat, on the other hand, with the number of adult family members. This is so for two reasons. First, families in which one or more of the children have reached mature age are likely to have a family head who is in his more "productive" age. This factor, however, is much less significant for Negro than for white families. The average earnings of the husbands varied more with age in white than they did in Negro families[13] which is quite understandable in view of the fact that Negroes have slim chances of being promoted, or even of getting "steadier" jobs, as they become more experienced.[a]

The second reason why income tends to increase with the number of adult members in the family is, of course, that, on the average, there are more supplementary earners in the family when it is large. This is particularly true about Negro families. Their greater poverty forces family members out on the labor market much more often than happens in white families.[14]

3. THE FAMILY BUDGET

The Negro is generally believed to be an inefficient consumer. The truth of the matter is that, with few exceptions, we are all more or less bad consumers, regardless of our income and the color of our skin. However, when poor people use their income in a reckless manner, it is, of course, particularly harmful. We have a strong reason, then, to plan educational measures in order to ameliorate the situation, and such educational measures may well become a significant complement to other social welfare efforts. But the need for them should never be used as a moral excuse for not doing anything about poverty itself.

Most Negroes have little education. We cannot expect them to know more about a balanced diet than do the rest of us. Their incomes are not only low but also insecure, which, of course, tends to make budgeting and planning very discouraging. Many of them work in hotels and restaurants where white people do not always display habits of thrift. In the urban areas there are many children of Negro migrants from the rural South who do not believe that their parents can teach them how to organize one's life in a city. In the slums to which they are confined they do not see much prosperity based on thoughtful economic planning, but they may listen to poolroom tales about somebody's making easy money in the numbers

[a] See Chapter 13, Section 9, where it is pointed out that unemployment risks of Negro workers show a much less pronounced tendency to decrease with age and experience than do the unemployment risks of white workers.

racket. They, just like white youth in similar circumstances, may too easily be taken in by shallow values. Conspicuous consumption is one of them. The answer to such conditions, of course, is more education, better housing, increased economic security—not moral indignation.

Every observer knows that there is some conspicuous consumption and reckless spending even among poor Negroes. It is not possible to say, however, whether there is more or less of it than there is among whites of equal economic and social status. There are studies made on the subject, of course. By far the best one is the Consumer Purchases Study for 1935-1936. The information on expenditures, however, is limited to nonrelief families, which means that it is less representative for Negroes than for whites.[15] It is limited, furthermore, to such households from which it was possible to obtain information concerning their expenditures for an entire year. In spite of all commendable efforts to contact different sorts of families, and the extensive use of field-workers, we cannot assume that anything near the right proportion of the bad consumers were included in the study; for they generally are much less likely to give reliable information about their expenditures during a whole year than are others. Despite such limitations of the Consumer Purchases Study, it is the best of its kind in the world and can be used to understand all sorts of problems connected with income and consumption.

One result of the study seems especially surprising. Negroes consistently balance their budgets better than do whites in the same income groups. In the low income groups where expenditures usually exceed the income, the average deficits are smaller for Negroes than they are for whites. In the middle income groups (there are too few Negroes in the higher brackets to be considered) the average surpluses are higher for Negroes than they are for whites. It goes without saying, of course, that when all income groups are combined, Negroes have much smaller surpluses—or higher deficits—than have whites, but that is just an effect of the greater Negro poverty. In comparable cases *Negroes almost always seem to be the more careful budgeters.*[16]

These findings are, perhaps, not as unreasonable as they may appear at first sight. There may be several explanations of the phenomenon. Negroes may have greater difficulties in obtaining credit. The lower and lower-middle income groups may include a greater number of whites than of Negroes who have "seen better days" and have not yet become adjusted to their present condition; or who anticipate improved conditions and, for that reason, spend more than they happen to earn at the moment. Negroes, to a greater extent, can be expected to be "adjusted" to their low incomes and, of course, they usually have no economic raises to look forward to. Finally, because of the general limitations in the opportunities for Negroes,

it is possible that these income groups include a great number of Negro families whose general economic ability surpasses their actual earnings.[17]

Of course, there is always a possibility of a bias in the sample. Yet it is hard to see how such a bias could so consistently affect the Negro group differently from the white group. At any rate, it seems to have been ascertained that *the general notions about Negro improvidence are greatly exaggerated.* The Negro population includes a substantial number of families who know how to balance their family budgets better than the average white family of corresponding means.

TABLE 2

PER CENT DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL FAMILY CONSUMPTION ITEMS, FOR NORMAL NONRELIEF FAMILIES IN SELECTED COMMUNITY AND INCOME GROUPS,[a] BY RACE: 1935–1936

Community and Income	Race	Total	Food	Housing	Household Operation and Furnishings	Clothing and Personal Care	Other
New York							
$1,000–1,499	Negro	100.0	35.3	28.2	11.4	10.3	14.8
	White	100.0	39.4	25.7	11.4	8.4	15.1
Atlanta							
$500–999	Negro	100.0	36.7	17.8	14.2	12.1	19.2
	White	100.0	39.9	16.5	17.2	10.5	15.8
$1,000–1,499	Negro	100.0	31.0	16.6	14.6	14.3	23.5
	White	100.0	33.0	16.8	17.0	12.0	21.1
34 Southern Villages							
$500–999	Negro	100.0	41.2	12.4	13.0	14.2	19.2
	White	100.0	38.0	13.3	16.6	13.7	18.3
Georgia and Mississippi farm owners and tenants, except croppers							
Under $500	Negro	100.0	63.0	5.4	10.5	9.8	11.3
	White	100.0	59.7	7.3	10.3	10.5	12.2

Sources: Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Series, Family Expenditure in New York City, 1935–36,* Bulletin No. 643, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1939), Tabular Summary, Tables 2, 3, and 4; *Family Income and Expenditure in Selected Southeastern Cities, 1935–36,* Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1940), Tabular Summary, Tables 2, 3, and 4; and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban and Village Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Five Regions,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 396, Part 2, *Family Expenditure* (1940), particularly Table 40; *Farm Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Five Regions,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 465, Part 2, *Family Expenditure* (1941), particularly Table 35.

[a] Where there were too few white families in the sample for income groups most typical for Negro families, it was necessary to select higher income groups. Most other income groups in these communities show about the same race differentials. Data for Columbia, South Carolina, and Mobile, Alabama, indicate about the same race differentials as those for Atlanta, Georgia.

There are many details in the data on family budgets which indicate how Negroes have been taught by their tradition of poverty to economize even more than do white families of similar economic status. To a greater extent than these comparable white families they do their laundry at home rather than send it to a commercial laundry; rarely do they hire any household

help; more often do they bake their own bread rather than buy it; less often do they purchase processed foods. They have fewer cars, washing machines, and vacuum cleaners than have white families in similar economic circumstances—partly, perhaps, because it is more difficult for them to obtain installment credit. Most of these things mean that there is more work for Negro women to do in their own homes. Yet they take on gainful work, outside their homes, to a much greater extent than do white women.[18]

It should be mentioned, too, in this context, that expenditures for support of relatives and friends are higher among Negroes than they are among whites even at given income levels.[19] The explanation of this is simple enough. A Negro with an income of, say, $800 is much more likely than a white person with the same earning power to have relatives who are still worse off.

Also it seems that *urban Negroes allocate a somewhat smaller part of their total expenditure to basic necessities, such as food and sometimes housing,*[20] *and a greater part of it for clothing, personal care, and certain miscellaneous items,* such as tobacco, recreation, reading, medical care, than do white families with similar incomes (Table 2). This may possibly be due, to some extent, to poor spending habits.[21] There does not seem to be any significant difference of this kind in rural areas, however. It must be emphasized, further, that the absolute amounts that most Negro families can spend on things other than basic necessities are extremely small.[22] Most Negro families are much too poor to develop into real spendthrifts.

4. Budget Items

This becomes even more apparent when the detailed data for various consumption items are inspected. Let us consider clothing. The absolute amount spent by nonrelief Negro families in Atlanta with an income of less than $500 was only $24. Those in the income group $500-$999 spent $72, which was exactly the same amount as that expended by white families of equal economic status. These two income groups, together with the relief families, included more than four-fifths of all "normal" Negro families in Atlanta, whereas almost three-fourths of the white families had incomes above this limit. At successive income levels, Negro outlays for clothing showed a somewhat more rapid increase than did corresponding expenditures in white families.[23] Much more important is the fact that clothing expenditures are so restricted in these income groups in which most Negroes are concentrated.[24]

Expenses for medical care for Atlanta Negro families with incomes under $500 averaged $19. For the group $500-$999 the amount was $42. When we know that white families having incomes of $3,000 and more, although afflicted by sickness to a much lesser extent,[a] spent an average amount of

[a] See Chapter 7, Section 5, and Chapter 15, Section 4.

$253 for the same purpose, we get some idea about the tremendous health needs in the low-income Negro population. It has been estimated that adequate medical and dental care, when purchased on a group basis, can be had for about $25 per person per year and for about $100 for a family of four.[25] The corresponding minimum cost for Negroes, usually buying such services on an individual basis and suffering from much more illness than the white population is, of course, much higher; it may well run into several hundreds of dollars per family per year. The effect of poverty, in the absence of cooperative organizations and of adequate public health provisions, means that most Negro and white low income families fail to get nearly as much medical care as they need. In addition, some families may have their finances completely upset when hit by severe disease or physical accidents requiring extensive medical care. There were some Negro and white families in Atlanta with incomes under $1,000, who had to spend $100 to $200, or even more, for medical care during the year 1935-1936.[26]

Expenses for recreation and tobacco were quite small for Negro families in the average Negro income brackets.[27] The difference in standard was even greater than the figures indicate, since Negroes had much less access than did whites to free public recreational facilities, like parks, libraries and so on.[a]

One gets the same impression whatever part of the family budget one takes up for closer inspection. The effects of Negro poverty are apparent everywhere. In order to avoid too much detail we must concentrate our attention on the two main items: food and housing. Those are the items for which one would expect the racial differences in standard to be least pronounced. For low income people generally spend a larger part of their budgets on these basic necessities than do more well-to-do families; and for this reason, the percentage of the total Negro income used for buying food and housing is higher than is the corresponding percentage of the white income. Yet we shall find enormous racial differentials in standards even in respect to these items.

5. FOOD CONSUMPTION

Dietary conditions are crucial. The progress of the science of nutrition during the last few decades has made us understand that there is a large difference between barely avoiding starvation and enjoying a real "health diet." We have in this case a more objective basis for formulating the requirements for a minimum standard of living than we can find in regard to any other major item of consumption.

It goes without saying that there are huge differences between the diets of Negro and of white families. In the main, they depend on the obvious fact that Negroes are so much poorer than whites. In addition, however,

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 5.

there seem to be certain interesting differences even when income is kept constant. One may call these latter differences "cultural," but that does not mean that they have nothing to do with economics. In part they may depend on traditions from a time when the Negro's economic conditions were different. In part they may depend on circumstances inherent in the Negro's present economic status. We cannot go into this question and can only state the factual situation.

For one thing, as we have already pointed out, *the average food expenditure per family often tends to be somewhat lower for Negroes than it is for whites even in the same income group.* This condition, of course, helps to make the food consumption of Negroes different from that of whites even at given income levels.[28] The general differences for all income groups combined, of course, are much larger.[29]

If a group has a low average consumption of milk and vegetables, it does

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF NORMAL NONRELIEF FAMILIES WHO DURING A SURVEY PERIOD OF ONE WEEK IN 1936 FAILED TO CONSUME SPECIFIED FOODS

	Southern Farm Counties			Southern Villages		Atlanta, Columbia and Mobile	
Family Type and Kind of Food	Negro Owners, Tenants and Croppers	White Croppers	White Owners and Other Tenants	Negro Families	White Families	Negro Families	White Families
All Normal Families							
Fluid Milk	33.7	25.9	11.2	31.2	11.3	29.0	9.3
Eggs	33.6	17.2	11.4	48.6	10.2	20.2	3.8
Fresh Fruits	66.2	47.2	33.7	51.6	10.6	27.6	5.1
Fresh vegetables	13.6	9.0	8.3	17.7	3.8	5.0	1.7
Potatoes and sweet potatoes	48.0	29.8	26.2	43.6	13.3	29.2	8.9
Large Families [a]							
Fluid milk	37.8	30.0	8.9	34.7	10.7	16.5	(b)
Eggs	37.2	19.4	11.4	54.2	16.8	23.3	(b)
Fresh fruit	68.7	52.4	32.3	56.9	16.8	25.1	(b)
Fresh vegetables	15.0	8.8	5.7	13.9	2.3	4.2	(b)
Potatoes and sweet potatoes	48.1	31.8	27.3	45.8	15.3	25.4	(b)

Source: Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Technical Series, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 2, *Food* (1940), Tabular Summary, Table 4; and U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 (1941), Tables 30, 33, and 34, and *Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 (1941) Tables 48, 51 and 52.

[a] Families of husband and wife and three to four children under 16; and families consisting of husband, wife, one child under 16, as well as four to five others, regardless of age.

[b] Data not available.

not mean that every family in the group consumes the same small quantities of these foodstuffs. Some use more than the average. Others have no regular consumption of them at all. Roughly 30 per cent of the "normal" Negro nonrelief families in the South did not consume any milk during a whole survey week in 1936 (Table 3). There was a similar proportion of Negro families reporting no consumption of eggs. Almost half the Negro farm and village families consumed no potatoes or sweet potatoes. Two-thirds of the farm Negroes, one-half of the village Negroes and over one-fourth of the city Negroes failed to eat any fresh fruit during the week. In rural areas there was a significant number of Negro families who did not get any fresh vegetables. These proportions were in many instances rather high for white families as well, particularly for white croppers. Yet in every single case Negroes were worse off. It should be recalled that all these percentages would be much higher and that the race differential would appear still more pronounced if all the low income groups had been adequately represented in the study.

Such deficiencies in diet, of course, are highly dependent upon income. In Atlanta, Columbia, and Mobile the proportion of nonrelief Negro families who failed to drink any milk during the week was 43 per cent when the income was below $500, but 18 per cent when the income was $2,000-$2,999. The corresponding figures for white families were 26 and 6 per cent, respectively.[30] These differences seem to be rather typical; similar observations can be made for other foodstuffs, and other community groups.[31] They show, however, not only that income means much, but also that it does not mean everything. The fact that even some families in the economic middle class fail to consume milk and other important protective foods is often due just to bad consumption habits or to ignorance. It seems that this particular kind of unwise consumption is especially prevalent among Negroes, since they tend, in every income group, to expend less for food than do whites.

It is startling to find that even among large families, many of whom have three or more children under 16, there are many who do not have any regular consumption of milk, eggs, fresh fruits or potatoes. The proportion of such cases, at least among farm and village Negroes, is often higher among large than among small families. The explanation, of course, is simply that income does not tend to increase with the number of children. This more than offsets the fact that large families always tend to spend a greater proportion of their income on food than do small families.[32] Therefore, the value per meal per food-expenditure-unit (or "average-adult")[a] tends to decline drastically with increased family size (Table 4).

[a] The food-expenditure unit, for which we use the phrase "average-adult," is a measure of the need of an average adult person. The needs of children are expressed in terms of this unit need for purposes of comparison. See footnote (a) to Table 4.

TABLE 4

AVERAGE VALUE (IN CENTS) PER MEAL PER FOOD-EXPENDITURE-UNIT[a] IN SMALL AND LARGE NORMAL NONRELIEF FAMILIES, BY RACE

	Southern Farm Areas			Southern Villages	
Family Type[b]	Negro Owners Tenants and Croppers	White Croppers	White Owners and Other Tenants	Negro Families	White Families
Small families	8.6	10.8	12.6	9.7	14.1
Large families	4.9	6.8	8.8	3.8	8.0

Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 (1941), pp. 176–178, and *Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 (1941), p. 96.

[a] Persons 20 years or older are counted as 1.0 food-expenditure-unit; persons 13 to 19 years as 1.1 food-expenditure-unit; persons 6 to 12 years as 0.9 unit, and children under 6 years as 0.6 unit.

[b] Small families are those consisting of husband and wife without children. Concerning large families, see Table 3, footnote (a).

This is particularly true in the case of Negroes, since they usually have no room whatever in their family budget for the increased needs brought about by a large number of children. Large Negro families in Southern villages expended less than 4 cents per meal per "average-adult." This was not even half of what corresponding white families expended, and it was about 60 per cent less than the figure for Negro two-person families. The plight of the large Negro families is only too evident.

In the economic groups most typical for Southern Negroes,[33] the majority of the families had diets which failed by far to meet modern "optimal" requirements regarding content of proteins, minerals and vitamins.[34] Half the Negroes studied in farm areas and villages, having a food expenditure of $0.69—$1.37 per week per "average-adult," even failed to get the energy value standard of 3,000 calories a day, and between one-fourth and one-fifth of them got less than 2,400 calories—this in spite of the fact that Negroes are concentrated in heavy work for which the requirements are often much higher than is the usual standard. Conditions were decidedly better when food expenditures were from $1.38 to $2.07 per unit per week, but even in this group there were a large number of Negro and white families who failed to get real "health diets."

On the lower levels—that is, in income groups and food-expenditure groups most typical for the Negro population—the majority of the families had diets which failed to meet certain even more restricted requirements and which, for this reason, were characterized as "poor" by the Bureau of Home Economics (Table 5).[35]

It seems, therefore, that we are entitled to draw this rather general but,

TABLE 5

DIETS OF NORMAL NONRELIEF NEGRO AND WHITE FAMILIES IN THE SOUTHEAST CLASSIFIED BY GRADE: 1936–1937[a]

Food Expenditure Group, Income Class, Community Group, and Race[b]	Number of Families in Sample	Percentage of Diets Graded Good	Fair	Poor
1. Families classified by weekly food value per food-expenditure-unit[c]				
$0.69–$1.37				
Negro city and village families	143	0	4	96
Negro farm owners, tenants, and croppers	109	3	17	80
$1.38–$2.07				
Negro city and village families	124	7	30	63
White city and village families	114	4	30	66
Negro farm owners, tenants, croppers	89	19	39	42
White farm owners and tenants, except croppers	133	26	41	33
2. Families classified by income				
$250–$499				
Negro city and village families	126	14	19	67
$500–$999				
Negro city and village families	145	12	22	66
White city and village families	83	12	37	51
White farm owners and tenants, except croppers	124	45	25	30

Sources: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 (1941), pp. 55–60 and 71; *Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 (1941), pp. 83–89, 101 and 106.

[a] Diets were classified as *poor* if they failed to meet any one of the following requirements in regard to the food content per nutrition unit per day: protein 50 grams, calcium 0.45 gram, phosphorus 0.88 gram, iron 10 milligrams, vitamin A 3,000 International Units, thiamin 1.0 milligram or 333 International Units, ascorbic acid 30 milligrams or 600 International Units, riboflavin 0.9 milligram. They were classed as *fair* if they met all these requirements by less than a 50 per cent margin with respect to one or more nutrients; as *good* if the diets contained at least 50 per cent more of each nutrient. Not even the last standard is as high, in every respect, as the "dietary yardstick" recommended by the National Research Council (New York *Times* [May 26, 1941]). The Bureau of Home Economics, however, used a somewhat comparable standard (the so-called *excellent* diet) which was 100 per cent higher in respect to vitamins and 50 per cent higher in respect to other nutrients than was the *fair* diet. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.) There were too few Negro families with such diets to warrant special consideration.

[b] Groups with less than 75 representatives in the sample are excluded. No income grouping has been published for Negro farm families. Income and food-expenditure groups are included only in so far as the sample for them contained at least 75 Negro families.

[c] Food-expenditure-unit is roughly equal to one person. See footnote (a) of Table 4.

nevertheless, significant conclusion: *the majority of the Negro population suffers from severe malnutrition.* This is true at least about the South. Conditions may be somewhat better in the North, for which we do not have any adequate information.

6. HOUSING CONDITIONS

Housing is much more than just shelter. It provides the setting for the whole life of the family. Indeed, whether or not any organized family life will be at all possible depends very much on the character of the house or dwelling unit. Children cannot be reared in a satisfactory manner if there is no place for them at home where they can play without con-

stantly irritating the adults or being irritated by them. Over-crowding may keep them out of their homes more than is good for them—in fact so much that family controls become weak. The result is that some of the children become juvenile delinquents. This danger may become even more pronounced if there are insufficient recreational facilities in the neighborhood, something which is often characteristic of Negro areas.[a] Children in crowded homes usually have great difficulties in doing their home work; their achievements in school may suffer in consequence. The presence of boarders in the homes, or the "doubling up" of families in a single residence unit, which is much more frequent in Negro than in white families, usually means that there cannot be much privacy; often it means a constant threat to family morals. Crowding, in general, has similar effects. In addition to the moral and mental health risks, there are all the obvious physical health hazards.

In fact, the correlation between poor housing, on the one hand, and tuberculosis, venereal diseases, prostitution, juvenile delinquency, and crime, on the other hand, has been demonstrated so often by American experts that we do not have to add anything to the evidence.[36] This point should be kept in mind in any evaluation of Negro family life, of Negro crime and of Negro sickness.

Nothing is so obvious about the Negroes' level of living as the fact that most of them suffer from poor housing conditions. It is a matter of such common knowledge that it does not need much emphasis. We shall, therefore, only sample the great amount of available data.

Let us consider, first, the conditions in rural areas. The South, generally, has the poorest housing conditions in the country.[37] The Negro in every respect is worse off than is the white farmer. Half the white, and four out of five of the Negro farm homes, were made of unpainted wood. The proportion of houses having foundations, floors, roofs, in poor condition, although high for white farmers, was still higher for Negro farm families. One-half of the Negro farm homes in 11 Southern states had foundations in poor condition, and about an equal number had roofs and interior walls and ceilings in poor condition. More than three-fourths of the Negro farm houses were unscreened, and only 3 per cent of all Negro homes—as against 24 per cent of the white homes—had screens which were in good condition. The Consumer Purchases Study, although low income families are under-represented in its sample, shows that 10 per cent of the Negro farm families and over 2 per cent of the white farm families were without any toilet or privy of any kind. It is probable, however, that the situation has improved in this respect, since federal agencies have, during recent years, built a great number of farm privies in the South.[38]

The rural South has the largest number of persons per residential house-

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 5.

hold in the country. Yet the farm houses are smaller on the average than in any other farm region except in the Mountain states where they are just as small.[39] This means, of course, that there is more over-crowding in the farm regions of the South than in any other farm region. Such over-crowding particularly hits the large families of which, in the Negro group, the majority seems to be more or less suffering from cramped housing conditions.[40]

Concerning housing conditions in Southern villages there are comparatively few studies; yet we know that the race differentials are enormous. Just to take an example: more than three-fourths of the Negro village families in the sample for the Consumer Purchases Study were without any indoor water supply; the proportion of such families in the white group was 15 per cent. Two-thirds of the large Negro village families—as against 28 per cent of the white families—were living in homes with more than 1.5 persons per room.[41]

Southern cities, just like Southern rural areas, have, in general, much worse housing conditions than other sections of the country.[42] Negroes are much worse off than are whites both in Northern and in Southern cities. It even happens that *nonrelief* Negro families may suffer from certain specific deficiencies to a greater extent than do white *relief* families. According to the National Health Survey, this was true, for instance, in respect to the frequency of cases where there is no private toilet for each dwelling unit so that two or more residential households have to share one toilet. In one group of Northern cities (Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and St. Louis) 27 per cent of the Negro relief households and 21 per cent of the Negro nonrelief families were living under such conditions. The corresponding figures for white relief families and for white nonrelief families with an income of less than $1,000 were 13 and 11 per cent, respectively. There were similar race differentials in other groups of Northern and Southern cities. The proportion of families with private inside flush toilets, likewise, was higher among white relief families than among Negro nonrelief households.[43] The sample for urban nonrelief families in the Consumer Purchases Study indicates similar conditions for different income classes.[44]

These findings are certainly significant. Urban Negro housing is poorer than even the low income status of the Negroes would enable them to buy. This may be due to the fact that, at least in Southern cities and villages, Negroes, even at a given income level, spend less money on housing than do whites. It seems, however, that there is another and even more fundamental cause: the artificial limitation in the choice of housing for Negroes brought about by residential segregation.[a]

[a] A discussion of residential segregation is given in Chapter 29, Section 3. See, also, the section on housing policies (Chapter 15, Section 6).

The racial differential in housing accommodations for all income groups combined is enormous. Let us take just a few examples, picked at random, from recent Real Property Inventories. In Detroit 34 per cent of the Negro-occupied dwelling units were considered to be either unfit for use or in need of major repairs; the same proportion for white-occupied dwelling units was 6 per cent. The corresponding figures for Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, were 73 and 14 per cent, respectively. For Norfolk, Virginia, they were 25 and 5 per cent; for Savannah, Georgia, 55 and 11 per cent. We do not have to add to this list; the differential is quite considerable in almost every place where there is any appreciable Negro population.[45] It even goes so far that the general slum problem in many cities is largely a Negro problem. Wherever there are Negroes in the cities, it will be impossible to eliminate poor housing unless Negro areas are given a significant share of the attention.[a]

Data from the National Health Survey (Table 6) indicate that there is a great race differential also in regard to crowding in urban areas. The situation is particularly serious in the South where the dwelling units are smaller on the average, than elsewhere, at the same time as families tend

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF URBAN FAMILIES SHOWING VARIOUS DEGREES OF CROWDING, BY REGION[a] AND RACE: 1935–1936

	East		Central		South	
Degree of Crowding	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White
Percentage of Families in dwelling units with more than						
1.5 person per room	8.0	3.7	12.9	5.0	21.2	8.3
2.0 or more persons per room	4.7	1.7	9.0	3.3	16.0	5.8

Source: U.S. Public Health Service, *The National Health Survey, 1935–1936*, Bulletin No. 5, Sickness and Medical Care Series (1939), p. 10.

[a] The Eastern sample includes cities in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey; the Central sample includes Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, and Missouri; the Southern sample includes Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas.

to be large. Sixteen per cent of the Negro and 6 per cent of the white households in the urban South were living in dwelling units where there were two or more persons per room. These results are confirmed by the Real Property Inventories, many of which have been made in more recent years. They show, furthermore, to what extent crowding is correlated with family size: in many cities the majority of the large Negro families is overcrowded. The fact that large families and children are the main sufferers

[a] This fact has been considered in the federal slum clearance and low cost housing program under the auspices of the United States Housing Authority. See Chapter 15, Section 6.

means that the proportion of the total population that lives under cramped conditions is even higher than is the percentage of crowded dwelling units—a circumstance which is often overlooked.[46]

We have found that Negro families in Southern cities and villages use a somewhat smaller part of their total expenditure for housing than do white families in the same income class. This appears also when rent-paying families are studied separately. The situation seems to be different in New York, however, where Negro families in most income groups pay higher rentals than do whites.[47] When all income groups are combined, urban Negroes are usually found to use a greater proportion of their total expenditures for housing than is usual in the white population. The reason, of course, is the fact that poor families generally have to use a larger part of their income for housing than do the more well-to-do families. The housing item in the budget seems to be particularly cumbersome in New York, where, according to the Consumer Purchases Study, nonrelief Negro families used as much as 27 per cent of their total expenditure for this purpose, whereas the corresponding figure for white families was 22 per cent.[48]

There is a general complaint among Negroes that they have to pay higher rents than do whites for equal housing accommodations. It is difficult to get any unequivocal statistical evidence on this problem, and it seems that this is one of the main aspects of Negro housing on which additional research work is needed.[49] Nevertheless, we feel inclined to believe that rents are higher, on the average, in Negro- than in white-occupied dwelling units even when size and quality are equal. Most housing experts and real estate people who have had experience with Negro housing have made statements to this effect. Not only does there seem to be consensus on the matter among those who have studied the Negro housing problem, but there is also a good logical reason for it: housing segregation.[a] Particularly when the Negro population is increasing in a city, it is hard to see how this factor can fail to make Negro rents increase to an even greater extent than would have been the case if the Negroes had been free to seek accommodations wherever in the city they could afford to pay the rent. The fact that they are not wanted where they have not already been accepted must put them in an extremely disadvantaged position in any question of renting or of buying a house.

[a] Some white real estate dealers attribute the higher rent for Negroes to their carelessness and destructiveness. From our point of view, the important thing is that they observe the fact of higher rents.

CHAPTER 17

THE MECHANICS OF ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION AS A PRACTICAL PROBLEM

1. The Practical Problem

The picture of the economic situation of the Negro people is dark.[a] The prospects for the future—as far as we have analyzed the trends until now—are discouraging. The main practical problem must be how to open up new possibilities for Negroes to earn a living by their labor.

Southern agriculture offers no such new opportunities. It is, on the contrary, likely that Southern rural Negroes will continue to be pushed off the land and thus increase the number of job-seekers in nonagricultural pursuits. In Northern agriculture the main trend will also be a contraction in the demand for labor. The segregated Negro economy will never provide any great number of jobs. It is on the ordinary nonfarm labor market that Negroes have to look for new opportunities. In the nonagricultural pursuits, Negro job limitations, as we have found, are of four different types:

(1) Negroes are kept out of certain industries, North as well as South.

(2) In industries where Negroes are working, they are often confined to certain establishments, whereas other establishments are kept entirely white.

(3) In practically all industries where Negroes are accepted, they are confined to unskilled occupations and to such semi-skilled and skilled occupations as are unattractive to white workers. The main exceptions to this rule are in the building industry where the Negro had acquired a position during slavery but has been losing ground since then.

(4) Finally, there is a geographical segregation. Negroes in the North are concentrated in a few large cities. In the Western centers there is still only a small number of Negro workers. Negroes are even scarcer in the small Northern and Western cities.

[a] Studies on Negro labor deal almost exclusively with such industries and occupations where Negroes have an appreciable share of the jobs. The reader, for this reason, gets an exaggerated impression of the numerical significance of jobs open to Negroes. Therefore, although all such studies present a rather dark picture of actual conditions, the picture is seldom as dark as the facts.

Race prejudice on the part of the whites is the usual explanation given for these various types of job limitations. But to relate discrimination to prejudice means little more than to substitute one word for another.[a] Leaving this problem aside for the moment, we may observe that race prejudice and discrimination, in the economic sphere, operate principally in three different ways:

(1) Many white workers, even if they think that Negroes generally should have a fair share in the job opportunities in this country, tend to be opposed to Negro competition in the particular localities, industries, occupations, and establishments where they themselves work.

(2) Some customers object to being served by Negroes unless the Negro has an apparently menial position.

(3) Many employers believe that Negroes are inferior as workers, except for dirty, heavy, hot or otherwise unattractive work. Perhaps even more important is the fact that they pay much attention to the attitudes of both customers and white workers.

All these conditions, in many different ways, are self-perpetuating. Let us, in this context, just point to one element in this circular process.[b] Suppose that an individual employer would entirely ignore the race of those applying for work at his shop and would consider just the individual capacities of the job-seekers, white or black. The fact that most other employers exclude Negroes means that the individual employer would have a disproportionate number of Negroes applying for his jobs. The rumor about his unusual behavior would draw Negro workers from other localities, and he might soon find a majority of Negroes on his labor force. The consequence might be that his establishment would be shunned by white labor, and it is not impossible that the result would be an almost all-Negro shop. The best he can do if he wants to favor the Negro, without having to face such consequences, is to fix the percentage of Negro workers; but that means giving up the principle of selecting Negro and white workers on an individual basis.

White workers, of course, are up against the same problem, and they have even more reason to be concerned about it than have the employers. Every individual municipality, and even every state, is in a similar situation. Let us imagine that a certain state, by means of strongly enforced legislation, would succeed in abolishing most racial discrimination in the economic sphere. If similar strong measures were not taken simultaneously by other states as well, the result would be a tremendous increase in in-migration of Negroes to that state. *Thus, the very fact that there is economic discrimination constitutes an added motive for every individual white group to maintain such discriminatory practices. Discrimination breeds discrimination.*

[a] See Chapter 3, text footnote in Section 1, and Section 5.

[b] For certain other elements in this vicious circle, see Section 6 of this chapter.

Another major general condition behind the Negro's economic plight, which should be mentioned in this context, is the fact that most white people are ignorant about the total impact of what they have done to the Negro in the economic field. This, of course, is not a "primary cause," either. It only explains how white people have been able to do what they have done without having more of a bad conscience about it. Yet the practical significance of it is tremendous. We frankly do not believe that the Negro's economic status would have been nearly as hopeless as it now appears to be if white people more generally realized how all specific economic discriminations add up, and how effectively they bar the way for the Negro when he attempts to better himself.

In addition, of course, there are any number of secondary factors bolstering discrimination: inadequate vocational and other educational facilities for Negroes particularly in the South; the lack of appeal to the ambition of the Negro worker, who often feels that his fate depends less on his individual efforts than on what white people believe about Negroes in general; the political impotency of the Southern Negro; high sickness rates among Negroes; and so on. In the circular process of cumulative causation many of these handicaps are themselves partly caused by the job limitations which keep the Negro's economic status low.

No interests are served by attempting to brighten this sinister economic situation by undue optimism. The adequate response is instead to turn the problem around and ask the practical question: *How would it be possible by a planned economic policy to increase Negro opportunities for employment?* The possibilities seem to be greatest, of course, on the Northern nonfarm labor market which—whether we study it by geographical regions, industries, or occupations—contains the largest areas where Negroes have yet to gain a position. Still the possibilities in the South, too, must be kept in mind. The South's relative "saturation" with Negro labor is largely artificial. It depends, in the main, on the fact that Negroes are confined to such industries and occupations as are expanding only slightly or are regressing. Production of textiles, the largest manufacturing industry in the South, excludes Negroes entirely, except for certain types of secondary service work. Moreover, the South, up to the present war boom, showed a more rapid increase in industrial employment than did the rest of the country, but the Negro has been unable to get his proportionate share in this expansion. Thus, there are reasons both for defensive and for offensive action in the South as well as in the North.

In this chapter we shall attempt to analyze, in more general terms and from this practical viewpoint,[a] some of the main factors which determine the position of the Negroes in the urban labor market. For reasons already

[a] The value premises for the practical analysis in this chapter have been presented in Chapter 9, Section 3.

expressed, we shall give our first attention to the North. Some of the statements we shall make are substantiated, or, at least, illustrated, by the data recorded in Chapter 13 and Appendix 6. But on many points data are lacking, and inferences will have to be conjectural, as they are built, to some extent, on impressionistic observations.

2. THE IGNORANCE AND LACK OF CONCERN OF NORTHERN WHITES

Even in the North the Negro is generally believed to be inferior as a worker. White employees often are strongly against having any Negro co-workers. Yet these attitudes are less general and less well entrenched in the North than they are in the South. Many, perhaps even most, Northerners tend to be rather uncertain and vacillating on such matters. There is nothing in their general ideologies which would support economic discrimination against Negroes. There is no racial etiquette, little emotion about the "social equality" issue, no white solidarity for the purpose of "keeping the Negro in his place."[a] On the contrary, the equalitarian principles of the American Creed dominate people's opinions in the North. Northern states and municipalities, as we saw in Chapter 15, usually uphold nondiscrimination in public relief as well as in politics, justice, and all other relations between public authorities and the citizens.[b] *People in the North are "against" economic discrimination as a general proposition.* If the white Northerners had to vote on the issue, a large majority would probably come out for full equality of opportunities on the labor market: they would be in favor of making employment opportunities "independent of race, creed or color." The actual discrimination is, however, as we have seen, the rule and not the exception.

To understand this apparent contradiction, we shall have to remember, first, that *slight causes, when they cumulate, may have big effects; and second, that the whole issue is enveloped in opportune ignorance and unconcernedness on the part of the whites.*[1] Comparatively few white Northerners are actually engaged in discriminatory behavior which they recognize as such. The practical inference is that *the social engineering required should have its basis in a deliberate and well-planned campaign of popular education.* The education of whites is an important general need in the whole sphere of race relations, but the chances of success are much greater in the economic field than in any other.[c]

There have always been efforts to improve race relations by educational propaganda in American churches, schools, and in the press. But compared to the scope of the problem, these efforts have been quantitatively insignificant. The Negro is usually forgotten. Moreover, the efforts on behalf

[a] See Part VII.

[b] See Parts V and VI.

[c] This is related to the theory of the rank order in Chapter 3, Section 4.

of the Negro have largely been ineffective because they have been of a general type and have evaded practical issues. Except for the well-planned and efficiently carried out campaign against lynching in the South,[a] there has been, prior to the present war emergency, no example in recent times of a large-scale endeavor to educate the American white public in the Negro problem and to force it to face the practical consequences of the cherished general principles contained in the American Creed.

The importance of the inculcation of the general principles of democracy in the American people which has been going on for so many generations, should not be under-rated. It is true that practical and specific issues are often avoided in a rather opportunistic way, so as not to disturb the conscience of the white people. The fact that ignorance and unconcernedness are so opportune means, of course, that additional popular education along more concrete lines will meet tremendous emotional resistance. But this resistance is not insurmountable. People are also bent upon rationality. Their allegiance to the ideals of the American Creed is strong and is held consciously. The ideals of Christianity also command their allegiance. One implication of their belief in the principles of democracy and Christianity is that they are susceptible to the more specific and practical consequences of these principles. There are, as we shall find, other important trends that will make ignorance and unconcernedness more difficult to uphold, and that will press for public education in this field. Through unionization and social legislation the labor market is increasingly coming under the control of a formal regulation that will demand equality of opportunity.

There is an observation which we shall find substantiated in every aspect of the Negro problem, that the ordinary white American is the more prejudiced, the more closely individual and personal the matter is. When he becomes formal and, particularly, when he acts as a citizen, he is very much more under the control of the equalitarian national Creed than when he is just an individual worker, neighbor or customer. There is often a similar difference between the leaders and the masses in the North. Leaders are confronted with the wider issues. Therefore, it is more difficult for them to repudiate, openly, the American ideals of equality. The private individual, on the other hand, seeks to pretend that his individual behavior is an exception which is especially motivated and which creates no long-run harm to Negroes. If he fails to hire Negroes in his shop, or to welcome them as fellow workmen, he does not mean that Negroes should not have any jobs, but only that they should not have jobs where his own interests are involved.

Prejudice and discrimination show up devastating social effects only when viewed from a broader perspective. The individual, but not society,

[a] See Chapter 27, Section 4; and Chapter 39, sections on the N.A.A.C.P. and The Interracial Commission.

can raise the question: "Shall I take care of my neighbor?" A citizen of one single community can say, as a manufacturer did recently:

> Negroes here should be in the South. They should never have come to Milwaukee, for by so doing they have created a social problem for the city.[2]

The white Northerner can feel that the Negroes ought to be in the South. The white urban worker can likewise feel that the Negroes should be in the country, and the white farmer that they should not compete for the land. An individual employer or a local trade union may bar Negroes from a particular shop and claim that the Negroes should be somewhere else. But *on a national scale there is no "somewhere else"—unless it be in Africa.* Getting employment for Negroes becomes a concern not only for themselves but for the nation. The alternative is to let them become public charges. A definite policy becomes a necessity.

When, thus, labor market conditions become the concern of the federal and state governments and of a gradually consolidated national labor union movement, the "pass the buck" mentality becomes undermined. Causes and effects will have to be studied, responsibilities will have to be distributed and shouldered. And in this whole process, of which we are just seeing the beginning, a most significant thing is that the ordinary American follows higher ideals and is more of a responsible democrat when he votes as a citizen or elects workers' or employers' representatives to formal assemblies than when he just lives his own life as an anonymous individual.

Also of great importance is the fact that, on the national scene, there is no possibility that Negroes will take over all industrial jobs. The individual employer or the individual group of white workers can always cite the excuse that they have to discriminate since everybody else does; for otherwise, as we have pointed out already, they would have to accept all competent Negro workers excluded by other employers and by other groups of white workers. But there is no such excuse in national employment policies. There are 10 per cent Negroes in the population, and a little more in the total labor force; white workers will never be overwhelmed. By attacking the color bars everywhere, it is possible to minimize the change needed in any individual establishment if the Negro is to be completely integrated into the economic system. The breakdown of discrimination in one part of the labor market facilitates a similar change in all other parts of it. The vicious circle can be reversed.

The trend toward public control of the labor market is the great hope for the Negro at the present time. For the Negro, it is of paramount importance to make the most of it. Public authority is compelled to side with him, in one way or another. The objective of an educational campaign is to minimize prejudice—or, at least, to bring the conflict between prejudice and ideals out into the open and to force the white citizen to take his

choice. The practical objective, in the economic sphere, is to break down the barriers against employment of Negroes, to open up new areas for the Negro worker: industrial, occupational and geographical.

3. MIGRATION POLICY

White Northerners do not always have the Negroes with them as do the Southerners. Negroes are almost absent, not only from the large rural areas in the North, but also from most of the smaller cities. Many of the small cities in the North and West have an expanding economy. Together they constitute the most important of all community groups to which Negroes yet have to gain entrance.[a] Their potential importance, in this respect, is the greater, since other barriers to Negro employment will give way only gradually, even in the best case. Because of such barriers the large cities in the North may soon become—or have become already—artificially "saturated" with Negro labor.

But the labor market in these small cities is at present practically closed to the Negro. This does not mean that race prejudice is particularly strong in these communities. But people there have few experiences with Negroes, and Negroes, therefore, appear strange to them.[b] And enough of the ordinary American derogatory stereotypes about the Negroes have spread to them to make the Negroes slightly suspect, both as workers and as citizens. Ordinary conservatism and community solidarity—which are more developed in the smaller cities—prevent employers from attempting to import Negro laborers. The local workers usually keep up a protectionist attitude and are against new competition. All feel vaguely that Negroes would be likely to cause problems—in the jobs, in the community and in other ways. It is always easy to check an influx of Negroes to a small all-white town. There is little of the anonymity that a large city provides. But since usually no employer ever takes the initiative in introducing Negro labor into such a community, and since Negroes themselves practically never try to get in, the white people are not forced to face the issue. They can preserve a clear conscience on the matter and support legislators who follow the American Creed in the state capital and legislate against economic discrimination.

It should not be forgotten, however, that there are many such cities, particularly in New England, which have a few Negroes. Usually the

[a] It is true that intra-regional migration—both white and Negro—is directed, mainly, to large cities; most migrations to small cities probably come from the surrounding country, or from other small cities in the vicinity. Such are the characteristics of the *unplanned* migration which we have experienced in the past. The discussion in the text concerns a migration which is *planned* for the purpose of securing additional job opportunities for Negroes. The degree of "saturation" with Negro labor, under such conditions, is a more important consideration than the maintenance of traditional patterns.

[b] See Chapter 8.

Negroes seem to get along fairly well and are not much discriminated against, at least as far as employment on the working class level is concerned. It is true that these scattered Negro populations have usually been settled there for a long time. Their presence has become part of what is traditional and they have enjoyed for generations the excellent educational facilities which are ordinarily offered in such cities. They are "good Negroes"—in the Northern but not in the Southern sense—educated, conservative, ambitious.

It is open to speculation why Negroes have been so reluctant to move to the smaller Northern cities.[a] In any case, *part of a rational planning to find new employment opportunities for Negroes must be an investigation of the possibilities for some portion of the Negro labor reserve to be settled in the smaller Northern cities where there are now few or no Negroes.* Certain general principles for such a policy—which preferably should be the responsibility of a public employment service qualified for and interested in positive job-finding[b]—seem rather obvious.

For one thing, the attempt should be made at such times and in localities where there is a labor shortage, so that employers would be interested and white workers would be less hurt by the new competition. It should under no circumstances be staged as an "invasion." It should be recognized that Southern Negro migrants are usually less well suited for such a transplantation to small Northern cities than are Northern Negroes.[c] Only individually picked, well-educated, and, preferably, vocationally trained, young Northern Negroes could ordinarily hope to get a permanent foothold in such smaller communities where there is little of the protective anonymity of the big city. The attempt should be prepared and supported by an educational campaign, and local leaders in church, school, business, and labor should be won over to the idea. The most should be made of the American Creed and of the common national responsibility for the economic catastrophe threatening the Negro people.

The task is a most difficult one. Even if fairly successful, such a policy of planned and organized migration to the smaller Northern cities can only have the indirect importance of easing the unemployment situation in the big cities by drawing away part of its existing Negro labor reserve. It will not directly touch the main problem of getting the Negro out of the stagnating rural South.

The small Northern cities, however, cannot accommodate more than a moderate proportion of unemployed and marginally employed Negroes—at least in a short time. Meanwhile, Southern Negroes will continue to go to the larger Northern cities and increase their supply of Negro labor of

[a] Some observations on this problem were made in Chapter 8.

[b] See Chapter 18, Section 2.

[c] See Chapter 28, Section 9.

a comparatively low educational level trained into attitudes and customs which are not favorable for easy adjustment to Northern city life. Even this migration could be steered by rational planning. There may perhaps be some Northern and Western centers which do not have many Negroes but which would be tolerant of a migration of Southern Negroes. Planned migration could be adjusted to employment trends in various localities. Positive measures should be planned for directing this new labor into suitable employment. A program of adult education for the crude Southern Negro laborers coming North should be instituted to familiarize them with the general culture and ways of life of the North and to give them the rudiments of vocational training.[a]

These are practical tasks for a federal employment service working in close collaboration with other private and public institutions for education and social welfare. They are of paramount importance, but until now have been almost entirely neglected. Even under such auspices the Negroes will have to watch the activity carefully through their organizations. The problem is not, let it be stated clearly, whether or not Negroes should migrate. Southern Negroes will continue to migrate under any circumstances, and they are compelled to move out of the South in considerable numbers. But without direction they will migrate to localities which are not best suited to receive them. The problem is rather whether Negro migration should continue to be determined by an irrational tradition, which brings the Negroes haphazardly to a restricted number of places where the Negro population quickly outgrows the existing employment opportunities; or whether it should be expertly planned to cause a minimum of friction and human wastage and a maximum of labor utilization and human efficiency.

4. The Regular Industrial Labor Market in the North

The situation in the large Northern cities where there are many Negroes is not altogether different from that in the small Northern cities where there are practically no Negroes. Even in those cities in the North where there is a substantial Negro population, Negroes do not work and have never worked in most industrial plants. Taking on a Negro worker sets a precedent and will ordinarily be avoided if possible.

Workers are usually conservative. An attempt by an employer to introduce Negro workers into a hitherto all-white plant will usually be met by more or less active resistance on the part of the workers. This resistance is likely to become more intense if Negroes are to get a share of the skilled jobs. Even a change in the Negroes' position in such plants where they have already been accepted may cause trouble—as, for instance, if Negroes are promoted to higher jobs than they previously have been allowed to

[a] See Chapter 41, Section 5.

have, or if an attempt is made to break up other segregational patterns in workrooms and cafeterias. Yet it is not impossible to overcome such difficulties. Much depends upon the firmness of the decision of the employers and upon the manner of introducing Negro workers. To spring such changes as a surprise on the white workers would not be advisable. But if Negro workers are introduced a few at a time, if they are carefully picked, if the leaders of the white workers are taken into confidence, and if the reasons for the action are explained, then the trouble can be minimized, and the new policy may eventually become successful—provided that the workers do not belong to an especially job-protectionistic and anti-Negro union, and that there is no general scarcity of employment.[3]

Under ordinary circumstances, however, there are few employers who would take so much trouble voluntarily, just for the purpose of contributing to the solution of the race problem. After all, the employer's main interest is to run a business. To continue using white labor only is always the easier way out. When Negroes have managed in the past to get into Northern industries and plants where they had not been allowed to work before, it has been due, almost always, to one of two factors: extreme scarcity of labor or the employers' desire to beat white unions. For the latter purpose employers have often used Negroes as strike-breakers, or they have taken them in just to keep the labor force heterogeneous and divided, thereby preventing unionization. In other words, they have used Negroes in the same way as they were accustomed to use fresh immigrants from Europe.

We shall discuss, subsequently, to what extent the present labor shortage is helping the Negro.[a] We shall find that, until mid-1942, the Negro had gained much less than could have been expected. In respect to the other factor favoring Negro employment—strike-breaking and dividing the workers—it is obvious that its significance has been decreasing rapidly during recent years. Labor unions are, more and more, coming into control of the labor market. The employers' practice of giving jobs to Negroes to keep the workers disunited is, therefore, vanishing. At the same time the American trade union movement is becoming more friendly toward Negroes.[b] Yet exclusionistic unions are still powerful; and even in that part of the labor market which is dominated by unions officially friendly to Negroes, organized labor—at least the local organizations—often resists introduction of Negro workers into all-white plants.

The fact, however, is not always publicized, for often the Negro can be kept out without much trouble. If an establishment is a "white shop," Negroes generally know this. Few of them ever try to get in—and those few who make the attempt can tell the rest of the Negro job-seekers about how futile it has been. In such cases Negroes are excluded with a minimum

[a] See Chapter 19.

[b] See Chapter 18, Section 3.

of effort on the part of both employers and white workers. Most white people never think of the fact that there is a definite policy to keep the Negro out. The "white shop" is part of the tradition and just seems "natural." The issue is not faced. The color bar, although as real as it can be, is almost invisible.

For these reasons it frequently occurs that Negroes are denied entrance to entire industries without anybody feeling much of a bad conscience about it. On the contrary, it may even happen that employers and union leaders exclude the Negro just because they have a conscience. It is an established custom in the South to take Negroes in and let them work under a system of more or less complete segregation; confining them to special jobs and special departments; denying them promotion; giving them separate eating rooms, toilets and water fountains. But such a system of consistent segregation and discrimination is not considered to be right in the North, even though some parts of it may be accepted. In plants where there is a system of fixed rules governing dismissals, rehirings, and promotions based on age, competence, and experience, one would have to face the problem of either excluding the Negro from some of these advantages—thereby breaking the consistency in the system—or of letting some Negroes work themselves up to the position of foremen over white workers. Although several compromises and modifications are possible and are in actual use in most Northern plants, none is satisfactory to the Northern conscience. Even the use of the same toilets or eating places by both races may bring trouble, particularly if there are a few Southerners in the labor force. Again, the employer solves his problem by excluding the Negro altogether.

5. The Problem of Vocational Training

The very fact that an exclusionist policy is established will, furthermore, result in a lack of properly trained Negro workers. This mechanism starts at the bottom of the system of training Negro youths. In the North, where the vocational branches of the public school system are freely open without discrimination, the teachers and the vocational guidance agencies connected with the schools often advise Negro youths not to take courses in those fields where they will later encounter difficulties in getting apprenticeship and employment. This problem is of rapidly increasing significance since formal vocational training is more and more becoming a prerequisite for entering skilled occupations.

The advisors are, like the Negro youths themselves, placed in a difficult dilemma. It must seem unrealistic and even dangerous to the future of young Negroes to encourage them to take vocational training in fields where they will be barred later. On the other hand, to avoid such training means to accept and fortify the exclusionist system, since then no Negroes

will ever be equipped to challenge it. If the white persons responsible for vocational guidance are themselves just a little bit prejudiced, this will strengthen their inclination to discourage Negro youths from entering these vocations. At the same time, they can have good consciences and tell themselves and others that they are absolutely unprejudiced and are acting solely in the best interests of Negro youths. It is not their task to reform American society but to give individual guidance. I have seen this particular vicious circle in operation everywhere north of the Mason-Dixon line.[a]

6. THE SELF-PERPETUATING COLOR BAR

The vicious circle of job restrictions, poverty, and all that follows with it tends to fix the tradition that Negroes should be kept out of good jobs and held down in unskilled, dirty, hot or otherwise undesirable work. Residential segregation and segregation at places of work hinder whites from having personal acquaintance with Negroes and recognizing that Negroes are much like themselves. In the eyes of white workers the Negroes easily come to appear "different," as a "low grade people," and it becomes a matter of social prestige not to work under conditions of equality with them. The fact that Negroes actually work almost only in menial tasks makes it more natural to look upon them in this way. The occupations they work in tend to become déclassé.

When once the white workers' desires for social prestige become mobilized against the Negroes in this way, when they have come to look upon Negroes as different from themselves and consequently do not feel a common labor solidarity with them, "economic interests" also will back up discrimination. By excluding Negroes from the competition for jobs, the white workers can decrease the supply of labor in the market, hold up wages and secure employment for themselves. To give white workers a monopoly on all promotions is, of course, to give them a vested interest in job segregation.

Negroes, on their side, have to try to utilize every opening, even if it means working for lower wages or under inferior working conditions. The abundance of Negro labor, kept idle because of exclusionist policies, must always be feared by white workers. If given the chance, Negroes will accept positions as "sweatshop" competitors—something which cannot fail to increase the resentment of the white wage earners. Sometimes they may even work as "scabs" and so white workers get extra justification for the feeling that Negroes represent a danger of "unfair competition." The Negroes react by being suspicious of the white workers and their unions. For this reason, they are sometimes "poor union material" even if white

[a] For information on vocational training under the present war production program, see Chapter 19, Section 3.

workers choose to let them in on a basis of equality. White union members then resent the "ingratitude" of the Negroes.

The racial beliefs are conveniently at hand to rationalize prejudice and discriminatory practices. The whole complex of stereotypes, maintained by limited contacts, is an element in the vicious circle that perpetuates economic discrimination.[a] With some difficulty, white people might be taught that there are all kinds of Negroes as there are all kinds of whites, some good and some bad, and that many—not just a few—individual Negroes are better than many whites. But here the separation between the two groups works strongly against the Negroes. Anyone having to fill a position or a job, having to select a fellow worker at his bench, or a neighbor in the district where he lives, by just drawing a white or a Negro man without knowing anything in particular about him personally, will feel that, in all prudence, he has a better chance to get the more congenial and more capable man if he selects the white. Here the stereotyped concept of the average Negro as it exists in the Northern white man's mind works as an economic bias against the Negro.

7. A Position of "Indifferent Equilibrium"

There is a tremendous initial resistance to overcome when attempting to place even superior Negro labor in a plant where Negroes did not work formerly. Negro labor is often superior to the white man's expectation, partly because the thinking in averages and stereotypes makes him underestimate the individual Negro. Moreover, the fact that Negroes have greater difficulties than do whites in securing any kind of employment renders it probable that there is a greater proportion of capable workers in the Negro than there is in the white unemployed labor reserve. Employers who do employ Negroes, therefore, often get a higher appreciation of them as workers than employers who do not.[b] The same seems to be true of white workers. If they actually come to work together with Negro workers, they come to like them better, or to dislike them less, than they expected to.[4]

Under these circumstances, the extent to which Negroes work in Northern industrial plants is determined not as a stable equilibrium, of the type usually thought of in economic and sociological theory, but as an "indifferent equilibrium," like the one when a cylinder rolls on a horizontal surface and can come to rest in one position as well as in another.[c] *There are tremendous elements of inertia which resist the introduction of Negro labor where there has previously been none. If they get in, however, they*

[a] See Chapters 4 and 9.

[b] In addition, of course, the fact that some employers hire Negroes may indicate by itself that they have had a higher appreciation of them to start with.

[c] For a theoretical discussion of these types of equilibria, see Appendix 3.

will have better chances of staying. It is upon this theory that the Urban League works when trying to sell Negro labor to employers and unions, although with insufficient resources and community support.[a]

Our hypothesis gains plausibility when we look at the history of the Negro in Northern industry. The one period when—mainly due to acute labor shortage—he gained entrance to new fields of employment in the North was during the First World War. During the 'twenties he fortified his position in these new fields. During the Great Depression, of course, he could not make any further gains. But the more remarkable thing is that he kept as well as he did the new positions he had won. Another observation which also supports our hypothesis is the great inconsistency in the pattern of Negro employment in the North. In most industries and most plants Negroes are not hired. But in some they are, mostly for no other particular reason than that they once got entrance because of labor shortage or because the employer wanted to keep out unionism. Charles S. Johnson summarizes a survey of the industrial status of Negroes in Los Angeles, California, in 1926, as follows:

> . . . 456 plants of widely varying character were reached. . . . The most frequently encountered policy was one based upon the belief that "Negro and white workers will not mix." They did "mix," however, in over 50 of the plants studied. In certain plants where Mexicans were regarded as white, Negroes were not allowed to "mix" with them; where Mexicans were classed as colored, Negroes not only worked with them but were given positions over them. In certain plants Mexicans and whites worked together; in some others white workers accepted Negroes and objected to Mexicans; still in others white workers accepted Mexicans and objected to Japanese. White women worked with Mexican and Italian women, but refused to work with Negroes. Mexicans and Negroes worked under a white foreman; Italians and Mexicans under a Negro foreman. . . . Because white elevator men and attendants in a department store disturbed the morale of the organization by constant chattering and flirtations with the salesgirls, Negro men were brought into their places and morale was restored, in spite of the fears that the races would not "mix."[5]

Except for the presence of the Mexicans in Los Angeles, much the same picture of inconsistency can be reproduced from any big Northern city.

Another element of instability—and consequently of changeability—in the situation is the visible *interrelation between the attitudes of the employers and those of the white workers. These attitudes seem to be interdependent in such a manner that either one of the two parties is potentially able to influence the other one for the better or for the worse.* Employers who do not like Negroes almost regularly give as one of their main reasons for their exclusion policy that their white labor would object.[6] There are reasons to believe that they often over-estimate the difficulties of making white employees accept Negroes as fellow workers. As the employers them-

[a] See Chapter 39, Section 10.

selves by this policy are unable to get any practical experience with Negro workers, they often come to believe that Negroes are inferior for all but the most menial tasks. So long as the white labor supply is sufficient they see no reason to check their opinions.

White workers, most of the time, have to adjust themselves to the policy of the employers. There have been few, if any, serious incidents in the Ford factories in Detroit, where for many years the Negroes have had a comparatively good position, whereas most other automobile manufacturers have been reluctant to give Negroes a real break because they expect that the white workers would resent it. The main difference in the two situations seems to be that Henry Ford is known to have the definite policy of letting the Negroes have a fair share of the jobs. The white workers just have to accept this if they want to keep their jobs. Even Southern-born workers, although they usually tend to display much more race prejudice than others, have had to become accustomed to working with Negroes. Northern white workers are often said to start out with a feeling of strangeness and suspicion against Negroes. If they meet a firm policy from the employer, they change, usually quickly.[7]

The large margins of indifference toward the policy of hiring Negro workers, and the instability within these margins, are of tremendous importance for the practical problem we are analyzing in this chapter. In the discussion of the Negro problem there is, as we shall find in many of its various aspects, a constant temptation to over-stress the factors of resistance to change, and the literature is visibly tainted by this bias in the service of the "do nothing" attitude. In the economic field, the depression of the 'thirties has given greater plausibility to this bias. Large-scale unemployment has a tendency to check the trend toward improved race relations in the labor market. One of the main reasons why even in the present war boom Negroes so far have gained little ground[a]—and much less than during the First World War—is that the boom started with much white unemployment. In latter phases of the war boom, the instability discussed in this section might come to be of greatest importance, particularly if it be utilized by a well-planned policy directed toward mitigating economic discrimination. Generally speaking, it is safe to predict that any policy to secure and defend a place for the Negroes in the Northern industrial labor market will depend for its success on the possibility of keeping the general unemployment level low.

8. IN THE SOUTH

These observations have all referred to the North. The situation in the South is not entirely different, but there are certain significant dissimilarities, some advantageous and some disadvantageous. The factor of ignorance

[a] See Chapter 19.

and unconcernedness is important in the South, too. Many white Southerners would undoubtedly give their backing to positive measure to preserve a place for the Negro if they knew more accurately about his plight and about the unfavorable trends. But there is in the South an entrenched and widespread popular theory that the Negro should be held down in his "place." Discrimination in justice, politics, education, and public service creates an atmosphere in which economic discrimination becomes natural or even necessary in order to prevent "social equality."

On the other hand, there are, in the South, many people in the white upper class who feel, as a matter of tradition, that the whites should "look out for" and "take care of" their Negroes. As there are fewer and fewer personal ties between upper class whites and Negroes and the isolation between the two groups is growing,[a] this factor is becoming less and less important as a protection of Negro employment opportunities.

The mere fact that there are many more Negroes in the South makes them less strange to white people. The white Southerner does not react so much, and for such flimsy reasons, as many Northerners do, to having Negroes around. The employers have more experience with Negro labor and are often not so prejudiced against using it. The fact that they are seldom prepared to treat Negro and white workers on a basis of equality often makes it easy for them to employ Negro workers without having any "trouble." The workers are more accustomed in many trades to work with Negroes.

The Negroes have also had a sort of protection in the traditional "Negro jobs." These job monopolies, however, have been largely in stagnating occupations and trades. As we have seen, white workers have always been pressing against these job monopolies. Job exclusion in all desirable and most undesirable jobs has, on the whole, been steadily progressing. The Negro's prospects in Southern industry are not promising. The very fact that there are so many more Negroes working there already means that the possibilities for expansion of Negro employment are slighter than they are in the North. The high natural increase of the white population in the South, and the likelihood that many white farmers will be pushed out of Southern agriculture, means that the white pressure to exclude Negroes from jobs will be strong even if there should be considerable industrial expansion.

Particularly in the South the concentration of Negro workers in the unskilled jobs is dangerous for their future employment, as mechanization means a constantly decreased demand for unskilled labor.[b] Unskilled labor itself is changing character. Modern technical development means that formerly unpleasant jobs are becoming "suitable" for white workers. The

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

[b] See Chapter 13, Section 8.

entrance of women into industry not only means that Negro labor has a new competitor but also intensifies the issue of "social equality." All these trends have been going on for a long time in the South. They are bound to continue. Since there is so much Negro labor in the Southern labor market, and since the resistance against keeping Negro labor in skilled work and "nice" unskilled work is so strong, it is difficult to see much hope for the Negro in Southern industry.

CHAPTER 18

PRE-WAR LABOR MARKET CONTROLS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES FOR THE NEGRO

1. The Wages and Hours Law and the Dilemma of the Marginal Worker

During the 'thirties the danger of being a marginal worker became increased by social legislation intended to improve conditions on the labor market. The dilemma, as viewed from the Negro angle, is this: on the one hand, Negroes constitute a disproportionately large number of the workers in the nation who work under imperfect safety rules, in unclean and unhealthy shops, for long hours, and for sweatshop wages; on the other hand, it has largely been the availability of such jobs which has given Negroes any employment at all. As exploitative working conditions are gradually being abolished, this, of course, must benefit Negro workers most, as they have been exploited most—but only if they are allowed to keep their employment. But it has mainly been their willingness to accept low labor standards which has been their protection. When government steps in to regulate labor conditions and to enforce minimum standards, it takes away nearly all that is left of the old labor monopoly in the "Negro jobs."

As low wages and sub-standard labor conditions are most prevalent in the South, this danger is mainly restricted to Negro labor in that region. When the jobs are made better, the employer becomes less eager to hire Negroes, and white workers become more eager to take the jobs from the Negroes. There is, in addition, the possibility that the policy of setting minimum standards might cause some jobs to disappear altogether or to become greatly decreased. What has earlier hindered mechanization has often been cheap labor. If labor gets more expensive, it is more likely to be economized and substituted for by machines. Also inefficient industries, which have hitherto existed solely by exploitation of labor, may be put out of business when the government sets minimum standards. These effects will not show up all at once.[a]

The most important of these laws is the Fair Labor Standards Act of

[a] The fact that these effects do not show up all at once is one of the reasons why it is impossible to give statistical evidence of the effects of social legislation upon marginal labor.

1938, usually called the Wages and Hours Law.[1] It provides for a minimum wage, which was 25 cents an hour in 1938, was automatically increased to 30 cents in 1941 and will be 40 cents in 1945.[a] Industrial committees can institute higher wage minima for particular industries. Work over 40 hours a week is overtime and is to be paid at time-and-a-half the usual wage rate. Children under 16 may not be employed.

The law covers only persons employed in interstate commerce or in production of goods for interstate commerce. Since workers in agriculture and domestic service are excluded from the benefits of the law, it is certain that the coverage is much smaller for Negroes than for whites. On the other hand, wherever Negroes are covered, the law must affect their wages more often and more substantially than in the case of white workers. The proportion of workers with wages below the new minima has been much higher among Negroes than among whites.

For the same reason, the law affects the South much more than the rest of the country, since it does not provide for any regional differentials regarding wage minima—not even such differentials as could be motivated by the differences in cost of living between the predominantly urban North and the largely rural South. The law will probably, in some measure, slow up the migration of industries to the South, which certain Southern states, particularly Mississippi, have encouraged by offering manufacturers special tax exemptions, free or low-priced factory lots, or even ready-built plants, as well as other advantages. The main selling point, however, has always been the cheap labor supply—incidentally, with particular emphasis on the fact that white workers are available—and the relative absence of trade union interference. Now, however, it seems that Southern industry will lose one of its main competitive advantages. This effect will increase the competition for jobs in the South and make the Negroes' chances for employment in Southern industry slimmer.

The fact that enforcement seems to have been slower in the South than elsewhere, probably also slower for Negroes than for whites, may have cushioned these effects. Moreover, there is a differential between North and South in respect to supplementary state legislation and enforcement by state agencies. Only three Southern states limit women's work to 48 hours per week, and state legislation restricting child labor is less extensive in the South than elsewhere.[2] Still, it seems safe to conclude that Negroes have been affected already—positively as well as negatively. An estimate quoted by Dabney, to the effect that the wage regulations brought about already under the N.I.R.A. had thrown half a million Negroes on relief by 1934,[3] seems more definite than the complicated character of the problem would permit, and is in all likelihood much exaggerated. It is not possible

[a] Similar minimum wages were instituted under the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, which was declared unconstitutional in 1935.

to single out what part of Negro unemployment is due to the new wage minima. But there are some data which at least give us a notion of what happened and provide some support to the hypothesis that the change has been considerable.[4]

It would appear as if the danger to the Negro's employment opportunities which is implied in the Wages and Hours Law would become particularly marked by 1945 when the minimum wage rate is to be increased to 40 cents an hour. This danger, however, seems to be passing because the current inflationary trends will probably become intensified to such an extent that it is doubtful whether 40 cents, by 1945, will constitute a higher real minimum than 30 cents now (July, 1942). In fact, it is most probable that it will mean less in terms of actual purchasing power. This would imply that the law, unless amended, soon will become insignificant as "a floor for wages," and also that the negative effects of it will become less serious.

Competing in importance with the Wages and Hours Law is the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 which forbids employers to interfere with unions, to foster company unions, to discriminate against union members, and to refuse to bargain with unions representing the majority of the workers. It superseded similar provisions under the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933. It was widely ignored by the employers until the Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality in a series of decisions of 1937. This law is the main way in which the government supports trade unionism. The growth of the labor union movement will be discussed in later sections of this chapter. In this context we observe only that, in so far as labor unions succeed in raising wages and labor standards, this law has the same effect on Negro workers as does the Wages and Hours Law.

These various policies to stamp out exploitative labor practices are both in line with economic progress. They all tend to speed up mechanization. Therefore, they are likely to create serious unemployment among Negro labor because it is marginal, unless strong countermeasures are taken to improve employment opportunities for Negroes. Such measures should have been part of a rationally coordinated economic policy.[a]

2. OTHER ECONOMIC POLICIES

During the period of the New Deal a system of public relief and social security—work relief, direct relief, categorical assistance, old age and survivors' benefits, unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation and similar programs—has been introduced or further developed for the support of citizens in distress. The system is far from complete and by no means does it guarantee that all citizens in great distress will receive public assistance. As shown in Chapter 15, Negroes get fewer benefits, in relation

[a] Concerning federal government policies during the war boom, see Chapter 19, Section 3.

to their needs, than do whites. Nevertheless, since they are so much poorer than whites, their representation on the relief rolls usually exceeds their proportion in the population.

These programs must also have had important effects on supply and demand in the labor market. They must have made it easier for old people and women to stay off the labor market and thus decrease a labor supply which was already much too heavy for the market.[a] Thus they must have tended to make the competition for jobs less desperate in times of unemployment. They also lighten the labor supply because sometimes benefits are higher than ordinary wages. This cannot be helped, for, owing to the extremely wide variation in wage rates and frequent under-employment, the only alternative would be to keep all benefits below adequate standards. It is certain, anyway, that it happens much more frequently to the Negro than to the white clientele.

Public relief and social security have had other purposes, and their effects in keeping away marginal white and Negro labor from the labor market have been more or less incidental, even if not unimportant. On the other hand, those programs must also have had a cumulative effect in strengthening the bargaining power of labor. This, in its turn, must tend to push up wages and improve other labor conditions, which again tend to make the employment prospects for the marginal Negro labor less favorable.

Prior to the present war boom few attempts were made by public agencies to take positive measures in order to secure job opportunities for Negroes. The Public Works Administration and the United States Housing Authority did try to reserve jobs for Negroes in their construction work. Otherwise, no employment policy for Negroes and other similar groups was even discussed much. The Employment Service, which experienced a rapid development under the New Deal, is potentially a powerful instrument for dealing with problems of this kind. But, almost until the time when this country became involved in the War, little, if any, such use was made of it. The usual procedure in this country, as in most other lands, has just been to meet the requirements of the employers. If they want white labor, they get it. If they want Negro labor, they get that. Few employment offices have made any substantial attempts to do more than this one-sided type of employers' agency work—that is, they had not actually tried to "sell" unemployed labor.[5] And it is probable that even less has been done for Negroes than for whites until the present war emergency changed the situation to a limited extent.[b]

Nevertheless, it seems that a long-range development in this direction is to be expected. The Employment Service is the natural starting point

[a] See Chapter 13, Sections 9 and 10.

[b] See Chapter 19.

in any vocational rehabilitation work. It is equally natural that it should go in for educational work among employers who show a tendency to reject certain kinds of potentially useful labor—and if need be, also among white workers who are against letting Negro labor get an adequate share of the jobs. Because of the institution of large-scale public assistance in this country, the government nowadays has even a fiscal interest in the welfare of the Negro. It seems unlikely that the alternative of letting most Negroes become habitual relief recipients will be permanently accepted.

3. LABOR UNIONS AND THE NEGRO

The increasing power of the labor unions, and particularly their rising importance for unskilled and semi-skilled workers, is to the Negroes one of the most significant of all recent changes in the institutional framework of the American economy. Their past experiences with trade unions have been none too good in most cases. The recent development, however, seems to offer some hope. There is now an increased number of strong unions in which Negroes are included on a basis of equality or near-equality. The principal gains, of course, are just that Negroes have more protection in so far as they have been admitted into these industries. In addition, it is of great significance that these more liberal unions usually can be expected to cooperate, or at least to refrain from energetic resistance, when some other party—the employers or the government—wants to break certain occupational barriers against Negroes. Some of them have actually rendered positive assistance in making room for the Negro in plants and occupations where formerly they had not been allowed to work. Such attempts, however, have occurred, for the most part, during the present war boom, when the abundance of employment opportunities made Negro competition less objectionable to the white worker. Even so, they do not seem to have been significant from a quantitative viewpoint, but they may inaugurate an important change in union policy.[a]

There are grave risks, as well, in the increased union power. A greatly strengthened union movement holding the power over employment might, if dominated by monopolistic and prejudiced white workers, finally define the Negro's "place" as outside industrial employment. The post-war unemployment crisis will probably intensify job monopolistic tendencies on the part of white workers. Union leaders who want to protect the Negro's rights may have to face serious rebellions. Weighing the various factors, however, we are inclined to believe that the growth of unionism will in the long run favor the Negro. We have two main reasons for this belief. One is the observation that to exclude one group from full participation in the union movement—and from an equitable share in its positive results—is to put a weapon into the hands of the enemies of trade unionism which

[a] See Chapter 19.

they will know how to use. The American union movement, if it wants to become strong, must be based on a still largely absent, but gradually developing, labor class solidarity, which must be all-inclusive. The declining relative significance of the craft union spirit can be regarded as a first stage of such a development. The other reason is that the labor market and its organization will in all probability be subject to more government control, and the national administration will be forced to attempt to defend a place for the Negro in the labor market against exclusionistic and segregational practices by unions.

When pondering this whole problem, it should be made clear that this is not the first time it has looked as if organized labor definitely were on the move away from discriminatory practices. Time and again, in the history of American trade unions, there have been attempts to build a labor movement on the basis of workers' equality and solidarity, but so far these attempts, except in a few instances, have proved futile.[6]

The fact that the American Federation of Labor as such is officially against racial discrimination does not mean much. The Federation has never done anything to check racial discrimination exercised by its member organizations.[7]

There is no doubt that the rise in industrial unionism has increased the number of unions which do not discriminate against Negroes. The old unions of this group, like the United Mine Workers' Union and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, have grown stronger, and new ones, like the United Steel Workers' Union and the United Automobile, Aircraft, and Agricultural Implement Workers' Union, have been added to the list. When the C.I.O. organized the mass production industries, it followed the principle that Negroes should be organized together with whites, wherever Negroes were working before unionization. Some of the new unions, as previously stated, have recently taken positive measures to give Negroes opportunities to work in occupations where they have not been working before and to defend more equality for them in job advancement.

It is understandable, for several reasons, that these attempts so far have not been significant from a quantitative viewpoint. The rank-and-file members, the majority of whom have only recently become organized, are often biased against Negro fellow workers. Many employers have been rather noncooperative in increasing the range of employment opportunities for Negroes. The Negro workers themselves often have difficulties in overcoming their old suspicions. And the leaders have had to put their main efforts into the work of building up the new unions. The time has been too short to bring about fundamental changes in industrial race relations. The observer finds that the leaders of the new unions are usually much more broad-minded and less prejudiced than the average run of

white union workers. Many of the new unions have made a courageous start in workers' education and an important element of this education is to spread the principle of universal labor solidarity and to combat race prejudice.

Still there is much uncertainty in the present situation. The Negro workers have made a gain from the unionization of the mass production industries by becoming included in more unions. They have probably also profited from the very split of the American labor movement into the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L., whereby most of the progressive forces have been concentrated in one group, and both groups have been forced to compete for membership. This split cannot exist forever. Unity, when it comes, may be gained at the expense of the Negro.[8] This may be a pessimistic view, but it is worth considering.

The uncertainty in the situation is further enhanced by the fact that the Negro is really a precarious issue for the American trade unions. He can be used against them in a number of ways. If the unions do take the Negroes in and treat them as equals, employers often find it advantageous to appeal to the race prejudice of the general public and of the white workers themselves. This has happened many times, particularly in the South. Racial equality is one of the standing charges against the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. On the other hand, if unions exclude Negroes or otherwise discriminate against them, it may be hard to convince the American public, especially in the North, of their consistent democratic ideology. One can gain much support from the general public by fighting persistently for the underdog. But a fight for all underdog groups, save the one most in need of being fought for, can hardly bring the same response. It is not that Americans, even outside the South, are so much concerned about the welfare of the Negro. But they are concerned about the integrity and honesty of those who present themselves as advocates of social and economic equality. As we have pointed out, the Northern whites are "against" economic discrimination as a general proposition, that is, when it does not concern themselves. And even if the general public would fail to react in this way on its own account, it is always open to enemies of unionism to publicize the racial discrimination in trade unions. Such a possibility, of course, is all to the good from the Negro's viewpoint. Still, it adds to the embarrassment of the union movement.

4. A Weak Movement Getting Strong Powers

All these difficulties must be seen against the background of the fact that American trade unionism, in spite of its age and recent progress, is still a comparatively weak movement. Basically, it is this weakness that endangers the Negro's position. At the same time, the weakness depends partly on the presence of the Negro worker.

In 1939, labor unions had only around 8,500,000 members—and this in spite of the fact that they had trebled their membership since 1933.[9] The total labor force of nonagricultural wage earners and salaried workers outside the unions must have amounted to some 36 millions. The membership figures have gone up and down with the business cycle in a manner which reveals an inherent lack of vigor. The main exception was the 'twenties, when the business boom failed to bring about any increase in unionization but was rather accompanied by a regress.

A common explanation of why the American labor movement did not develop more strength is that there has been strong resistance from the employers. American business has undoubtedly kept not only unusual political and social power, but also a militantly individualistic determination not to share its control over labor conditions with anyone. The company town, still to be found in some coal mine and textile areas of the South and in certain other regions as well, is the extreme case of employers' paternalism in the nonagricultural economy. It is characterized by an integration of property rights, municipal administration, and police power that, in some measure, approaches the condition of medieval European feudalism. But even outside the company towns proper, important employers or groups of employers have often had a power over police and court systems which has enabled them to check, in a rather efficient way, any tendencies toward unionization. And many of them have been known to supplement political influence by the use of private, armed police forces and strong-arm squads, often working even outside the premises of their plants. Big corporations, until a few years ago, hired labor spies by the hundreds. Many an attempt at unionization has been stopped by plain murder.[10] Engaging in extreme practices of this kind is not typical of the overwhelming majority of American employers, yet so many of them, particularly in the South, have used some sort of intimidation that there has been a rather effective barrier against the progress of unionism on this account.[11]

The resistance from the side of employers, however, is not only a cause of the weakness in the American trade union movement. To an extent it is an effect of it also. Employers in all countries have initially been hostile to labor unions, and everywhere the police and the courts have to an extent been utilized to strangle a developing union movement at the outset. But as the movement developed strength in the face of all difficulties, both the public authorities and the employers had soon to accept the new order in the labor market. The singularity in the American case is only that the relative laxity of the administration of laws in this country made the police and courts more obedient to the employers' interests and allowed the employers to take the law into their own hands much more than in comparable countries. Further, the labor movement actually had less momen-

tum and for decades did not get strong enough to command respect from the public authorities and the employers. This view becomes strengthened when we witness how the employers' resistance is vanishing as the unions are becoming stronger.

The readiness shown by many American unions to use violence and other extra-legal measures themselves is also a sign of weakness. In discussing labor tactics with American union members, the observer often becomes shocked to find how natural it appears to them to take the law into their own hands when they get into a labor conflict. This characteristic can, of course, be partly explained as a sort of retaliation. The whole atmosphere around labor strife and collective bargaining in America is tainted by a tradition of illegality, and the employers must be blamed for a good part of this. But again, more fundamentally, this trait is an indication of weakness on the part of trade unionism. Strong and well-established unions do not need to fear illegal methods and still less to resort to such methods themselves. The insistence on the part of some American unions on the rule of the "union shop"[a] according to which the worker must become a member in good standing of a union in order to keep his job, is also more understandable as an indication of organizational weakness. A strong union movement does not need to be provided with such pressures.[b]

All those other excellent reasons with which some American unions, particularly among those organized along craft lines, provide the labor-baiters—job monopolism and nepotism, exploitative entrance fees, "closed unions," petty jurisdictional fights, boss rule, even corruption and racketeering—also are nothing more than signs of organizational weakness. They imply that the common worker has been hindered from coming into his

[a] The "union shop," technically defined, is one in which the worker, after he is hired by the employer, must join the union to retain the job. The "union shop" is fairly widespread and is the goal of most American unions. The "closed shop," technically defined, is one in which the worker is selected by the union, and not by the employer, from its own membership. The closed shop has now practically disappeared, and is the goal of only a few reactionary unions. The "closed union" is a union which tries to limit its membership so as to keep a monopoly of the jobs for its members. The closed union usually occurs in conjunction with the closed shop. The closed union is characteristic of a large number of A.F. of L. unions, but it is not the goal of many other unions. The union shop, the closed shop, and the closed union are all signs of the weakness of the American labor movement. For the early stages of organization, however, the union shop has much to commend it.

[b] One important corollary of this, incidentally, is that employers no less than workers have an interest in getting the trade union movement securely established in America. This is true far outside the field of the problems discussed in the text. Neither building contractors nor government agencies will, for instance, ever be able to stamp out the monopolistic wage policies and the practices hampering prefabricated building materials and other labor saving techniques in the building industry. But a hundred per cent strong labor movement, where the majority of workers are suffering economically from the monopolistic practices of building workers, might accomplish it.

own as a worker, as a union member and as a citizen—and maybe has not cared to come into his own. Again it must be emphasized that even the most mature trade union movements once passed through a period when, at least in some degree, there were irregularities of a similar nature. Every trade union movement has, for instance, had to go through the transition from craft unionism to industrial unionism, and the former type always retains some part of the labor market. Jurisdictional fights and job monopolism exist everywhere, although the degree varies. So, when putting the American trade unions beside those of any comparable democratic country, it is possible to state that the glaring shortcomings of the American unions are mainly a matter of degree and stage of development. This thought is often expressed in America and elsewhere, that American trade unionism is suffering from ordinary child diseases.

But there is an important qualification to be made to this statement. The American trade union movement is, as we have said, one of the oldest in the world. The lag in its growth may be thought of as a child disease become chronic. Undesirable union practices have become habitual and established. And, looked at from another point of view, the American trade union movement does not appear at all youthful with the usual faults of youth, but, on the contrary, has shown certain signs of senility. For one thing, the A.F. of L. has lacked, and is still lacking, the militant reformist spirit, the feeling that it is building a new world. It has not been convinced that it was serving economic democracy or, in any case, it has never convinced its membership of it. It has been fighting for petty interests. American business has, in this sense, always had more spirit, more of a feeling that it was carrying the destiny of the nation. The better unions in the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. have decidedly more spirit and courage, and, therefore, more strictly observed principles.

The basic weakness of many labor unions in America has been their lack of democracy. The rank and file have been allowed too little influence; they have also cared too little about retaining influence. Many of the undesirable practices mentioned are merely symptoms of an underlying lack of democracy in the labor unions. It is significant both that there has been so relatively little workers' education in the American labor movement and that there is more of it in the better unions. The weakness of the American labor movement is only one example of a general trait in America: the weakness, until now, of organized and protracted mass movements—the political passivity of the common people in America. We shall discuss this American cultural trait in Chapter 33 and relate it to the several unique and closely interrelated factors in the social history of the nation: the heterogeneity of the lower classes during the long century of mass immigration, the open frontier up to the turn of the century, the rapid social mobility until the Great Depression, the individ-

ualistic middle class ideology, and so on. We shall there also find that important economic changes during the last generation have laid the basis for a fundamental shift to greater participation and solidarity among the masses of people in America. As the trade unions increasingly come to serve workers of all kinds, including those in the mass production industries, the more necessary will it be for the labor movement to embrace a common working class ideology rather than to remain the instrument for job-grabbing and group competition.

But there are other and more specific reasons for our belief that the Negroes will get more consideration from the unions in the future. The labor union movement has recently been growing in strength —due largely to government support. This is, of course, itself a sign of weakness. A strong labor movement is usually just as much against state interference on the labor market as the employers are, and it can afford to take such an attitude because of its independent strength. The American labor movement could not afford to reject government support; it had rather use its political influence to press for it. In the course of time it will become evident that *government support is followed by government influence.*

By its own policy the American labor movement is actually provoking government control. Quite aside from all sorts of irregular practices—which, as long as they exist even as exceptions, are crying for public control over the unions—the labor movement is forced to press for union shops. It is likely that the war emergency will help it to get union shop agreements in an increasing part of the labor market. But such power can be tolerated in a democratic country only if the doors to the unions are kept open and if democratic procedures within the unions are amply protected. As the labor unions are getting stronger, the demand will become ever more vigorous for governmental control protecting democracy in the unions. The important thing, from our point of view, is that the only way by which the unions in the long run would be likely to protect their present independence would be to reform themselves quickly. Either government control or independent democratic control would benefit the Negroes.

As the second alternative is less likely to become realized fast enough, it seems probable that not only the enemies of the labor movement but also its friends and, indeed, many of the organized workers themselves will raise the demand for government control over the unions. It is interesting in this context to refer to a recent article by Norman Thomas, who cannot be accused of being anti-labor or anti-union.[12] Thomas exemplifies the statement that "there are grave evils in the organizational setup and attitude of many American labor unions and their dominant bureaucracies" and sees the fundamental cause in their lack of democracy. He comes out with the following proposal:

> Briefly, I propose that every union, to be entitled to recognition as the agency of the workers in collective bargaining (and without that recognition most unions would be doomed), must conform to certain minimum standards of democracy. Its doors must be open to all qualified workers, regardless of race, creed, or color, under reasonable standards of initiation fees and dues. Next, its constitution, by-laws, and practices must provide for orderly elections at reasonable intervals. And finally, a disciplinary procedure must be set up which will protect members of the union from arbitrary punishment more serious than most judges and juries can impose. Possibly some other requirements might be laid down, for instance, with regard to votes on strikes, but those which I have mentioned seem to me essential.[13]

If reform does not come from within the labor movement, it is likely that the government will take a hand, at least with respect to discriminatory practices. At least four states—Pennsylvania, New York, Kansas, and Nebraska—have in recent years been experimenting with legislation against racial discrimination in labor unions.[14] The number of such legislative attempts is increasing during the present war emergency; the federal government, as well, has taken certain action.[a] It is probable that such laws will be much more effective when they become integrated into a government program to preserve democracy and orderly procedures in the labor unions.

This problem should, however, be viewed from a still wider perspective. It is almost certain that the economic problems facing the government after the War will be centered around unemployment. Economic interferences on a huge scale are being planned to meet the post-war crisis. During the War the unions will probably become strengthened. Under these circumstances *it is simply incredible that the government will undertake tremendous financial efforts to create employment and leave to the strengthened trade unions the power of partly sabotaging this policy.* If unemployment becomes concentrated upon Negro laborers and other unpopular groups, which is quite probable, the government, which also carries the financial responsibilities for relief, can hardly abstain from taking efforts to hinder the unions from excluding Negroes from employment.

The Negroes themselves will demand, more strongly than ever, their share in all sorts of jobs, including those in skilled, clerical and professional occupations. And they will demand jobs where the economy is expanding and where there are prospects for the future. Much depends upon what gains they will make—or fail to make—during the present War. This War presents their first big chance since the First World War to gain any new footholds in industries and occupations where they have never worked before. Much will depend, also, on how the post-war liquidation crisis will be handled. These are the main problems that we have yet to consider.

[a] See Chapter 19, Section 3.

CHAPTER 19

THE WAR BOOM—AND THEREAFTER

1. The Negro Wage Earner and the War Boom

The present War is of tremendous importance to the Negro in all respects. He has seen his strategic position strengthened not only because of the desperate scarcity of labor but also because of a revitalization of the democratic Creed.[a] As he finds himself discriminated against in the war effort, he fights with new determination. He cannot allow his grievances to be postponed until after the War, for he knows that the War is his chance. If he fails now to get into new lines of work when labor is scarce, it means that he has missed the best opportunity he is going to have for years. Demobilization and liquidation of the war industries are bound to result in a post-war unemployment crisis. This implies, not only that there will be fewer jobs for everybody, but more likely than not that white workers are going to become even more bent on driving the Negro out of industry. If the Negro does not then have a recognized position, he will certainly not easily gain one as long as there is general unemployment.

We shall not give an exhaustive account of Negro employment during the war boom. Available information on the subject is spotty, or at least not well organized. Moreover, the picture is changing. On the whole, there is a slow improvement. There is a possibility that the situation when this book leaves the press may be more favorable than it was during the first half of 1942, which is as far as our data go.

It can be stated definitely that, until mid-1942, Negroes had not profited from the war boom to the same extent as had white workers. Indeed, until that time the record of the Second World War was, in this respect, much less impressive than was that of the First World War. *There has been no northward migration of Negroes, comparable in size and significance to that which occurred at the beginning of the First World War. Indeed, Negro participation in the migration to war production centers, in both the North and the South, was for a long time extremely restricted.*[1] *There is no new industry or previously all-white industry where Negroes have made any gains of the same importance as those they made during the First World War in Northern iron and steel plants, shipyards,*[2] *automobile factories, slaughtering and meat-packing houses.*

[a] See Chapter 45.

Since the war boom has brought about a tremendous scarcity of labor, and since the available labor reserve before the boom was much greater, in proportion, in the Negro than in the white population, one could have expected that unemployment rates would fall more for Negro than for white workers. That, however, has not happened. On the contrary, *the proportion of Negroes among the unemployed workers was considerably higher in the spring of 1942 than it had been two years earlier.*[3]

There are several reasons why the Negro has had much less of a chance during this War than he had during the last War. Let us enumerate the principal ones:[4]

(1) When the present war boom started, there was still widespread unemployment. In the initial stages of war production, therefore, there were large numbers of white workers available.[5]

(2) There is now in the North a much more well-organized resistance to accepting Negroes than was the case during the First World War. This, in part, is due to the fact that there had been much unemployment for about ten years, making white workers more watchful against letting jobs get away from them. Also, the Negro is no longer a new phenomenon in Northern industries; Northern white workers in so far as they are not under the effective influence of certain C.I.O. unions have had a chance to set their minds more definitely against him. Southern-born workers in Northern industries have helped to bring about this change in attitude; the Ku Klux Klan has been active in several Northern places. This is especially true in Detroit, which has an unusually large number of Southern-born workers.[6]

(3) Since employers nowadays to a great extent have accepted trade unions as bargaining agents, their need of the Negro as an ally in the fight against unions is much smaller than it was formerly.

(4) The need for unskilled labor, as previously mentioned, is relatively much smaller than it was during the First World War. This factor is highly significant. For, although the Negro has made several noteworthy "strategic gains" in skilled occupations, those gains, so far, have been rather unimportant from a quantitative point of view. It is not certain that he has improved, or even maintained, his relative position in the skilled labor force.[7] *We know that the Negro has been grossly underrepresented in the vocational training program for war workers that has been organized by the government.*[a]

It must be considered, further, that the South, as was the case during the First World War, has received much less than a proportionate share of the war contracts. Although the South has almost one-third of the total population of the country, less than one-fifth of the total value of all war supply and facility contracts and allocations assigned within the United

[a] See Section 3 of this chapter

States during the period from June, 1940, through May, 1942, were placed in the South.[8] The reason, of course, is that heavy industries are less well represented below the Mason-Dixon line than they are in certain other parts of the country. The result for the Negro is that, even if he were not discriminated against, he could not get his full share in the war jobs, except by moving North.

In spite of all these limitations, it is obvious that the War has brought about a considerable increase in Negro employment, reckoned in absolute figures. Also, it seems that the situation has improved somewhat as the war boom has gone on. Still further improvements can be expected since there will be additional increases in the demand for labor at the same time as more men of working age will leave the labor market for the armed forces. Women and Negroes now constitute almost all of the available labor reserve. This, together with the increased pressure from the government, may cause a certain change in the situation.

The subsequent analysis of certain specific aspects of the war boom will substantiate further the conclusions already drawn.

2. A CLOSER VIEW

The war boom is not a result of armament production alone. In addition, there has been tremendous construction work in camps and war production centers. Then, too, there have been substantial secondary booms in consumption and service industries, transportation and production of raw materials.

It is probable that, so far, the main Negro gains have been in those industries in the last category, where they were already well entrenched before the War. It is not only the expansion by itself which has given them increased employment opportunities in such lines of work; there is also the fact that these industries, generally, are characterized by low wages and other "disutility factors" which cause an outflow of white labor to armament plants. There is an increased demand for Negro labor in Southern agriculture. The Negro domestic has more of a chance when white girls go to factories. There is more work for Negroes in other service occupations (janitors, elevator operators). Many garages, automobile repair shops, and truck owners, in so far as they have not been forced to cut down their business because of gasoline and rubber shortage, have had to substitute Negro workers for white mechanics and drivers. The readiness to hire Negroes as porters and helpers in stores must have increased. There are more jobs for Negroes in production of lumber, coal, and turpentine, in tobacco manufacturing, in longshore work and in railroad transportation. These gains, however, are of little strategic significance. In none of these industries has the Negro been able to gain any substantial foothold in occupations higher than those in which he worked before. In

New York City, and possibly in other places, there are some commercial establishments, even outside of the Negro neighborhoods, which have started to use some Negro clerical assistance; but such cases are quite exceptional.[9]

In the construction industry, as well, there have been substantial gains in Negro employment, particularly in unskilled occupations, in the trowel trades and in carpentry. The Negro skilled worker in building construction was almost on his way out during the Great Depression but now he seems to have gotten a new opportunity. Yet Negroes have not shared equitably with the white workers in this construction boom. Particularly during the early stages of the war expansion, Negroes, as we have found, were grossly under-represented among the in-migrants to defense centers where much of the new construction work has been concentrated. Although some of the skilled crafts have relaxed their exclusionistic practices somewhat—partly due to government pressure, and in many cases only by granting temporary work permits without taking the Negroes into the unions—there are others which still try to keep the Negroes out.[10]

Let us turn now to production of war goods. Certain employment service data suggest that *during the early stages of the war boom the Negro was virtually excluded from most armament industries.* In October, 1940, only 5.4 per cent of all Employment Service placements in 20 selected defense industries (airplanes, automobiles, ships, machinery, iron, steel, chemicals, and so on) were nonwhite, and this proportion had, by April, 1941, *declined* to 2.5 per cent.[11] In September, 1941, it was ascertained that the great bulk of the war plants did not have any Negroes at all among their workers. About one-half of the anticipated further expansion was to occur in plants where the managements said that they would not hire any Negroes in the future either. This is the more astounding in view of the fact that such a declaration meant an open defiance of the President's Order of June 25, 1941, about abolishment of discriminatory practices in all defense work.[12]

The quantitative improvement which has occurred since the autumn of 1941 may concern only the absolute numbers of Negro workers in war production. At least, there is no indication that there has been an increase in the proportion of Negroes in armament plants; there may have been a decline.[13] This must be strongly emphasized, for in the current discussion there has often been a tendency to enumerate Negro employment gains without giving due consideration to the fact that white employment, in many instances, has increased to an even greater extent.

Conditions are different in different lines of war production. Moreover, they change from one region to another and from one plant to another within any given industry. There are cases when even the relative position of the Negro worker has been improved. Shipyards constitute the

leading Negro-employing war industry. Many of them are hiring an increased proportion of Negro workers and have widened the occupational range for Negro employees. Some yards use Negroes in all occupations except professional and clerical. Nevertheless, as late as May, 1942, most shipyards still used Negroes almost solely in unskilled jobs. By and large, private yards are more restrictive than are Navy yards and Southern yards are less willing to hire Negro workers at higher occupational levels than are Northern yards, but there were several exceptions to this rule. In Miami, Florida, it has been impossible to use Negroes in skilled and semi-skilled work, since there is a city ordinance forbidding their employment in such occupations outside of the Negro section.[14]

There is an increase in Negro employment in the ordnance industry as well, although it is not proportionate to the general expansion. A few plants are using Negroes in all kinds of skilled occupations, but the general pattern is to keep the Negro down at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. Again Southern establishments are more bent on keeping the Negroes down than are Northern plants; Army-owned factories tend to be more liberal than private factories.[15]

It is reported that the Negro has recently gained in the automobile industry—or rather in those plants which used to constitute the American automobile industry—although it is not known whether the proportion of Negro workers, as well as the absolute number, has increased. The conversion to war production brought about certain problems. Employment dropped off temporarily when production of passenger cars for civilian consumption was restricted, during the winter of 1941-1942. The Negro skilled workers, most of whom used to work in foundries faced a rather critical situation, since little foundry work is needed in air craft production. Some can still be used in tank and truck plants, however. The rest have enjoyed much protection from the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers' Union and from the government.[16]

Owing to this protection, the Negro automobile worker has been able to enter skilled occupations where he previously has had little or no representation; it is not certain, however, that this protection in actual practice has been as complete for Negro as it has been for white workers. Newly organized rank-and-file members of the union have shown some opposition to the introduction of Negro workers in plants and occupations where they had not worked earlier. During the winter of 1941-1942 and until the summer of 1942 a few "spontaneous" sit-down strikes occurred in certain plants (Hudson, Packard, Dodge and others). In every case the union leadership immediately went into action, and these "wild-cat strikes" were called off within a day or two—sometimes even within a few hours.[17]

The "original" aircraft plants, on the other hand, present a much less encouraging picture. To be sure, several of them have opened their doors to the Negro worker largely because of the activities of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice.[a] Yet shortly before mid-1942 only about 5,000 Negroes, constituting between 1 or 2 per cent of the total, were employed in airplane production.[18] Since this figure includes those employed by automobile factories which had gone into airplane manufacturing, the net gain for the Negro seems to be rather insignificant.

3. Government Policy in Regard to the Negro in War Production

The failure to let the Negro participate fully in war production has not gone unnoticed. Obviously it has embittered the Negroes, and being better organized than ever before, they have known how to protest. Both Negro and white groups have been giving great publicity to the matter. There have been a large number of reports on the subject in the daily press, in both the South and the North, as well as articles in national magazines, and pamphlets.[19] Leading personalities like Wendell Willkie, Pearl Buck, and Eleanor Roosevelt have dealt with the problem repeatedly. This publicity, of course, never reached such proportions that the man in the street came to know about what the barring of Negroes from defense jobs really meant; but the better informed part of the public has some notion about it.

Ever since the defense boom got under way, during the summer of 1940, various attempts to straighten out the problem have been made by the government.[20] Most of these measures, as we have seen, were rather ineffectual. Some of them were just gestures. Under the circumstances, they could not possibly appease the Negro leadership. In January, 1941, A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, started organizing his famous "March-on-Washington Movement."[b] The President, for reasons of internal and external policy, did not want any such protest march and talked to Randolph in June, 1941, in order to prevent it. Randolph, however, failed to come around until the President agreed to sign an Executive Order "with teeth in it" abolishing discrimination in defense industries as well as in the federal government itself. An agreement to this effect was finally reached, but only a few days before the date of the march. Randolph, thus, got what he wanted, and the march was called off.[21]

The Executive Order 8802 of June 25, 1941, starts with a general statement to the effect that there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or in government because of "race, creed, color, or national origin." There is a clause to this effect in all

[a] See Section 3 of this chapter.

[b] See Chapter 39, Section 12.

defense contracts. The order contains, further, a confirmation of previous orders about nondiscrimination in defense training programs. Finally, a President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice was to be set up for the purpose of receiving and investigating complaints of discrimination in violation of the order.[22]

The Committee can scarcely institute any punishment for noncompliance. Theoretically, it could recommend the cancellation of war contracts, but, in view of the present emergency, such a measure would hardly ever be considered. Its main weapons are publicity and moral pressure, and those weapons have been used with some success.[23] No employer or trade union likes to appear as the defendant at one of the public hearings, a record of which is published by the Committee together with "findings" and "directives." It is obvious that only a small portion of all offending employers and unions can be reached, since the staff of the Committee, so far, has been small.[24] Yet the Committee has shown that it means business, and that it is not willing to accept a token employment of a few Negroes in custodial and other menial jobs as evidence of nondiscrimination.

There are numerous reports about airplane plants and other previously exclusionistic establishments which have opened their doors to the Negro worker. Some of these gains have a highly strategic value, in that Negro workers have been placed in occupations where they have never worked before. It is hard to say, however, to what extent the gains are due to the activities of the Committee or to the increased scarcity of labor. There is no evidence that the Committee, as yet, has brought about any results which are significant from a quantitative point of view. It is not impossible, however, that the Committee may help to change even the "statistical" picture in the future. In the first place, it was only during the winter 1941-1942 that the Committee established itself in the general consciousness of the employers and the unions. Prestige and publicity have their effectiveness over a period of time, and not all at once.[a] Second, Negroes and women constitute an increasingly important part of the remaining labor reserve, so that any further expansion in war production must mean an increased utilization of Negro and female labor. It is obvious, however, that large-scale results, if they are attained at all, will have to come before the peak in war production has been reached.

The Executive Order and the President's Committee, directly or indirectly, have had a healthy effect on some of the federal government services as well as on private industry.[25] We previously touched upon the fact

[a] While this book is in press, the F.E.P.C. has been moribund, largely because of political pressure from Southern politicians, and partly because the war boom has sharply reduced the number of unemployed Negroes. Whether the F.E.P.C. will ever be revived, it is impossible to say. It officially remains in existence although it has no activity.

that Navy yards and Army ordnance plants tend to be less exclusionistic than are most private establishments in the same lines of work. We also mentioned the abolishment of photographs from job applications in the federal civil service, and the increase in Negro clerical and secretarial employment in certain federal agencies.[a] The improvement, however, is by no means general. Brown and Leighton make the following criticism:

> The committee had not, as late as July 1, 1942, certified to the President any case of job discrimination in the government itself, although, according to one member of the staff, they had found almost as many cases of discrimination in federal departments as in war industries.[26]

Even if, at the end of the war boom, the Negro should find that he had gained only some "strategic" footholds in certain previously all-white occupations, the significance of this progress should not be minimized. "Strategic gains" means that there are so many more practical demonstrations of Negro performance in lines of work where no employer previously tried to give the Negro worker a chance. Further, *the Executive Order and the President's Committee represent the most definite break in the tradition of federal unconcernedness about racial discrimination on the nonfarm labor market that has so far occurred.* They represent something of a promise for the future. Even if the government should temporarily relax its control of the labor market after the War, it is quite possible that there will be some kind of continuation of these efforts.

The President's Committee cooperates with the special branches for Negroes and for other minority groups within the War Manpower Commission. Some of the other federal agencies, as well, have been cooperating to eliminate economic discrimination. In many instances, however, the cooperation has left much to be desired. Two such cases need particular emphasis: the vocational training program and the Employment Service.

In spite of the President's Order there is still widespread discrimination against the Negro in most war production training programs, even though some improvement has been brought about. In December, 1940, only 1,900, or 1.6 per cent, of the trainees were Negroes in the so-called pre-employment and "refresher" courses organized under the auspices of the United States Office of Education and the Employment Service. Taking the whole period July 1, 1941, to April 30, 1942, Negroes still constituted only 4.4 per cent of all trainees enrolled in corresponding educational programs.[27] Thus, the Negro, as yet, is still far from having a 10 per cent representation—in spite of the fact that the need for additional training is much greater among Negroes than it is among whites. This discrimination has been particularly pronounced in the South. In January, 1942, for instance, there were some Southern states, like Florida and

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 8.

Arkansas, where not a single Negro was referred to any public preemployment or refresher defense course, nor to any youth work defense project.[28]

Apart from the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, there is no federal agency which has been as frank in its criticism of discriminatory practices in war production as has the United States Employment Service. We have, above, made frequent use of this official criticism. At the same time, the Employment Service itself has undoubtedly been guilty of such practices. This is the more deplorable as it has an extremely strategic position.

It has happened; for instance, as late as February, 1942, that the local Employment Service office in Portsmouth, Virginia, published an advertisement in which available jobs were listed by race; only unskilled and domestic jobs were declared to be open to Negroes, whereas all clerical, skilled, semi-skilled, and even some service jobs (e.g., waitresses) were reserved for whites.[29] The Employment Service offices in the South, of course, are usually segregated. This, obviously, must facilitate discriminatory practices, in that the Negro branches tend to become almost exclusively occupied with "Negro jobs." Under such circumstances Negro officials of the Employment Service may become the more unable to remove discrimination.[30]

One reason for this state of affairs is that the Employment Service did not become completely federalized until January 1, 1942. The consequence is that the bulk of the personnel has been appointed by state governments. In other words, there seems to be a certain difference between, on the one hand, the policy of the headquarters in Washington and certain Northern offices and, on the other hand, that of other state and local offices, especially those in the South.

So far, however, the reorganized United States Employment Service has not made sufficiently energetic attempts to require all the local offices to comply with the government policies. Some of the instructions sent out to state and local offices are such that, to a certain extent, they actually protect Employment Service officials who discriminate against Negroes when making referrals. The main clause in the most recent (July, 1942) instructions has the following formulation:

> . . . it is the policy of the United States Employment Service (1) to make all referrals without regard to race, color, creed or national origin *except when an employer's order includes these specifications which the employer is not willing to eliminate.* [Italics ours.]

And further:

> Employment Service personnel will receive and record all *specifications stated by an employer, including specifications based on race, color, creed, or national origin. If the employer does not include any discriminatory specification in his order, but*

community custom or past hiring practices of the employer indicate that he may refuse to hire individuals of a particular race, color, creed, or national origin, the employment office interviewer shall ascertain whether or not he has any restrictive specifications. . . . [Italics ours.][31]

In addition, of course, there are certain other, more positive recommendations.[32] They cannot mean much, however. Indeed, it is hard to see how field representatives specializing in race relations, who are sent out by the United States Employment Service, can have much to go on when discriminatory referrals are endorsed in official instructions to this extent.

Certain Northern states have taken special measures against racial discrimination, supplementing those of the federal government; often they go much further than the federal agencies. They deal not only with the position of Negroes and other minority groups in war industries, but also with the policies of the public employment service, with private employment agencies, and with advertisements for workers in newspapers.[a] It is possible that these state policies will lead to substantial results sooner than will the rather uncoordinated work of federal agencies which, to a large extent, is hampered by pressure from Southern congressmen.

There is one important social problem in war production which we have not yet touched upon: housing. The effort to provide shelter for the workers in war production areas had some difficulties to start with,[33] and, for this reason, there is an extreme shortage of housing for Negro as well as for white workers adding to all other community problems brought about by war migration.[34] Nevertheless, much work has been done, even though it is not yet sufficient. The total number of units provided, or to be

[a] New York State can be cited as an example. Various amendments to the Civil Rights Law concerning economic discrimination against Negroes and other minority groups have been adopted. One such amendment, of February 14, 1940, makes union discrimination a misdemeanor subject to fine. The so-called Mahoney Amendment of April 16, 1941, prohibits discrimination in defense industries. The Schwartzwald Amendment of May 6, 1942, gives the State Industrial Commissioner the power to enforce anti-discrimination legislation and to require submission, at regular intervals, of information, records, and reports pertinent to discriminatory practices in industries. The Washburn Amendment makes discrimination in war industries a misdemeanor punishable by fine. A Committee on Discrimination in Employment has been functioning since March, 1941. It has sponsored much of the anti-discrimination legislation, has organized publicity on economic race problems and has put pressure on employers and trade unions. In September, 1941, the New York State Employment Service adopted the rule not to handle any requests from employers containing specifications as to race and creed. A New York City ordinance of May 9, 1942, prohibits, with some exceptions, advertisements by employment agencies which restrict offers of jobs to persons of particular race, color or creed, and forces the agencies to keep their records open for public inspection at all times. (Sources: copies of the various anti-discrimination acts furnished by the Committee on Discrimination in Employment; "History of the Committee on Discrimination in Employment" [mimeographed, August 14, 1942]; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *N.A.A.C.P. Annual Report for 1941*, p. 6; New York *Herald Tribune* [May 10, 1942]; *PM* [May 7, 1942].)

provided, according to allotment records available as of July 31, 1942, was over 400,000, including trailers and accommodations for single persons in dormitories. Some 30,000, or less than 8 per cent of this total, will be used by Negro workers.[35] The share for Negroes may seem high, in view of the limited participation of Negroes in war production.[a] Negro sections were, however, much more crowded to begin with than were the white neighborhoods. Also, private builders seldom pay any attention at all to the Negro's housing needs, which makes the Negro population much more dependent on public efforts.

4. THE NEGRO IN THE ARMED FORCES

The armed forces, today, constitute an important source of employment for Negro as well as for white men. In terms of economic value they offer some of the best opportunities open to many young Negro men. Food and clothing are excellent; the pay is higher than that in many occupations available to Negroes. And these conditions of employment are equal for Negroes and whites. A great number of poor Negroes must have raised their level of living considerably by entering the armed forces. It may be, also, that service in the Army and in the Navy, in many instances, will have a certain educational value[36] that will make many Negroes better prepared for post-war employment.

This is the bright side of the picture. But there is a dark side. There has been a definite reluctance to utilize Negroes in all branches of the armed forces. Like white soldiers, they have been concentrated largely in the South, where they have met hostile community attitudes. This policy, at the same time, has increased the resentment of white Southerners against Negroes. Several unpleasant incidents have occurred, particularly in or around Southern camps. Except for certain officers' training schools, there is complete segregation in the armed forces. There has not even been an attempt made to organize experimental unsegregated outfits, including such whites who would volunteer for unsegregated service. All this has helped to embitter the Negro. He feels that he is not wholeheartedly wanted by white America even when he offers to fight for it.

When given adequate training—and often even without it—the Negro has proven to be a good soldier. He has fought in all the wars in which this country has been engaged.[37] From every war there are numerous records of Negroes who have distinguished themselves for bravery and gallantry. Negroes cherish these memories. An outsider occasionally gets the impression that they sometimes exaggerate their significance; but this is very likely just a natural human reaction in view of all the contempt Negroes have experienced from most whites. White people, generally, know little or

[a] It will be recalled, on the other hand, that the Negro's share in the building program for low income families was as high as one-third. See Chapter 15, Section 6.

nothing about the Negro's performance as a soldier. Deliberate attempts have been made to minimize the Negro's military record. For instance, on August 7, 1918, a secret document was issued from General Pershing's headquarters, in which French officers were urged not to treat Negroes with familiarity and indulgence, since this would affront Americans, and "not to commend too highly the black American troops in the presence of white Americans."[38]

After the First World War the Negro became quite an insignificant element in the armed forces. The peacetime strength of Negro troops in the regular Army had been fixed by Congress in 1866 at two infantry and two cavalry regiments, which means that Negroes were much less well represented in the Army than in the general population. Their participation in the National Guard was about equally small. The Navy stopped using Negroes entirely some twenty years ago, except as messmen or in similar menial tasks. There were no Negroes in the Marines. In 1940 there were only two Negro combat officers in the regular Army and none in the Navy. Out of over 100,000 officers in the Army Reserve, only 500 were Negro.[39]

In October, 1940, the War Department announced that the Negro personnel should be increased in such a way that Negroes would constitute the same proportion in the Army as in the general population of the country; and, further, that Negroes would be represented in all major branches of the Army.[40] It seems, however, that at least during the early stages of the expansion, Negro units were not organized as quickly as were white units. There were several complaints about Negro volunteers being turned down with the excuse that there were no vacancies for them.[41] The situation has changed since then, however; it is expected that Negroes will soon have a 10 per cent representation in the Army. The Navy, to a certain extent, has relaxed its policy of excluding Negroes. According to an announcement of April 7, 1942, it has started accepting Negroes for combat and certain other service, but only in the Naval Reserve—which means that, after the War, Negroes will again be allowed to serve only as messmen. Also, Negroes may become promoted to petty officers within segregated Negro reserve outfits, but that is as far as they will be allowed to go.[42] Negro women are completely excluded from the women's branch of the Navy (the "WAVES").

The promise that Negroes would be represented in all major branches of the Army has been fulfilled. But there is no uniform proportional representation. Engineering outfits, quartermaster corps, and other service groups have a larger part of the Negro troops than do other branches of the Army. It seems, however, that the difference is much smaller than was the case during the First World War. What has particularly hurt the feelings of the Negroes has been the unwillingness to give them propor-

tional representation among the Army Air Force pilots. At first they were not accepted at all.[43] In view of the relatively small proportion of Negroes with some college education, and the low number of Negro officers and reserve officers before the War, it is obvious that Negroes cannot get anything near the number of Army officers' positions which would correspond with their proportion in the total population. It is expected, however, that, at least by the end of 1943, the majority of the officers in Negro outfits, except for those in higher ranks, will be Negro. This means that there will be an improvement compared with the conditions during the First World War. There is also an under-representation of Negroes among Army doctors and nurses. Negro women are allowed into the women's branch of the Army (the "WACS") in numbers commensurate with their proportion in the population, but they are segregated.

During his entire military history in this country, the Negro has experienced numerous humiliations of various kinds. He has been abused because of his race by many white officers, by white soldiers and by white civilians. There have been race riots in or around camps. The Negro soldier has usually been punished most severely when he was only one offender among many, and sometimes even when he was the victim.[44]

The present War has already seen a number of such incidents. For example, on August 14, 1941, a group of unarmed Negro soldiers, marching on a highway in Arkansas, under the command of a white officer, were pushed off the road by Arkansas state troopers; the protesting white officer was abused as a "nigger lover" and slapped. In Alexandria, Louisiana, where a small, congested Negro section was the only amusement area for a large number of Negro soldiers, white military police went into this Negro area to arrest a drunken Negro soldier. Negroes resisted, and an hour-long battle followed during which thirty Negroes were wounded. After this, Negro military police were stationed in the Negro area. In the spring of 1941, the body of a Negro soldier was found hanging from a tree in a wood at Fort Benning, Georgia. A white lieutenant of a Coast Artillery Regiment stationed in Pennsylvania (December, 1941) overstepped his authority by issuing an order—soon afterwards withdrawn—in which he threatened with the death penalty "relations between white and colored males and females whether voluntary or not."[45]

To be sure, not all incidents were caused by whites. Some have just been drunken brawls in which the racial element was secondary. In others it may have been the unwillingness of Negro soldiers—particularly Northern soldiers stationed in the South—to comply with Southern segregational patterns which incited the fights. Also, we know more about incidents which have occurred than we do about incidents that have been prevented. In all probability, there are several commanders who know how to minimize

racial friction.[a] Definite attempts have been made to improve conditions. Negro military police are used more and more to patrol Negro sections. They do not always have the same status as white military police; in many cases they are allowed to carry only clubs while white military police have side arms as well. It may be, nevertheless, that the use of Negro military police has helped to prevent many clashes. As during the First World War, there is a special Negro assistant in the War Department who takes care of the interests of the Negro soldier.[b]

There is no point, however, in trying to divide the responsibility equally between both racial groups or to characterize the incidents as exceptional. The white group has the power, and, hence, the responsibility. Minor incidents are certainly frequent; only the most spectacular ones get any publicity in the white press. If Negroes sometimes appear as the ones who start the trouble, this must be seen against the background of their increasing impatience with all humiliations. The constant feeling of not being really wanted must make them sullen and resentful.

There is probably no country where most military leaders have distinguished themselves for any constructive views on delicate social problems —not even when their own services are affected. American white officers cannot be expected to be much better than others; the over-representation of Southerners among officers with peacetime training tends to make those in the higher ranks particularly conservative, on the average, in respect to race relations. Also, they have a huge job on their hands. However wrong they may be in believing a change in race relations to be a matter of secondary or no importance, it is understandable why they believe it. Yet, this attitude is certainly unfortunate. To advertise bad American race relations by maintaining them in armed forces sent overseas is, under present circumstances, highly detrimental to American interests.[c] Had the improvements come, not mainly as a result of outside pressure from

[a] The following story from the First World War is rather illuminating:

"At Camp Upton, New York, General F. Franklin Bell met a similar situation without hesitation:

" 'Now, gentlemen,' said he, 'I am not what you would call "a Negro lover," I have seen service in Texas, and elsewhere in the South. Your men have started the trouble. I don't want any explanations. These colored men did not start it. It doesn't matter how your men feel about these colored men. They are United States soldiers. They must and shall be treated as such. If you can't take care of your men, I can take care of you . . . if there is any more trouble from your men, you will be tried, not by a Texas jury but by General Bell . . .'

"General Bell was talking to white officers of a Southern regiment that came to Camp Upton . . ." (Emmett J. Scott, *The American Negro in the World War* [1919], p. 95).

[b] This assistant was William H. Hastie, who was formerly a federal judge in the Virgin Islands. In January, 1943, Mr. Hastie resigned in protest against certain War Department practices. His assistant, Mr. Truman Gibson, remained as an advisor to the War Department.

[c] See Chapter 45.

Negroes and others, but because of the action of military leaders who grasped the deeper implications of this War, they would have been much greater and much more significant, not only for the Negro, but for the nation as a whole.

5. . . . AND AFTERWARDS?

What will be the Negro's economic lot in post-war America? There is no definite answer to the question, of course, since it will depend on happenings yet to occur and policies yet to be decided upon. But we can list some of the main factors entering into the problem. When sketching such an analysis of future possibilities and probabilities, it must be kept in mind that now, even less than ordinarily, we have little right to predict from a mere extrapolation of trends. There are no trends independent of fluctuations; the fluctuations create the trend, and the trend is nothing but the cumulative effect of fluctuations.[a]

Thus, the more the Negroes gain during the present war boom, the more will they have advanced themselves permanently; and even if, during a later development, they will have to give up some ground, they are not likely to be driven back as far as they would have been had their previous gains been smaller. Conversely, the more they lose during the next unemployment crisis, the smaller chance will they have of reaching anything near full employment during a subsequent period of labor shortage. Quite especially in regard to the Negro's economic status, we have to emphasize the significance of what happens during the short-term development. The Negro's position in the American economic system depends in a large measure on traditions which have actually become settled because of rather accidental happenings. Whether he does or does not work in a particular occupation depends upon whether a small group among many employers who experienced a labor shortage happened to get the idea of trying him out; or whether his white fellow workers, during a period

[a] It is usual, in the analysis of economic changes, to distinguish between cyclical fluctuations and long-time trends. For example, if industrial production increases by 3 per cent per annum, on the average, over a certain long period, but for one particular year the increase is 6 per cent, the difference between these two figures (or some other statistical expression, based on a similar principle) is supposed to measure the cyclical variation for this particular year; the average rate (which can be computed in different ways) is believed to "indicate the long-run trend." Such calculations may be useful for several practical purposes, but they are always arbitrary. There is no "pure" trend and no "pure" cyclical change. Both types of change are closely interwoven. The trend depends largely on the character of the business cycles, and *vice versa*. This fact is often overlooked. The writer, for instance, has heard social scientists express the idea that the employment losses that Negroes have experienced during the 'thirties would not matter "in the long run," since they only constituted "temporary" and "cyclical" fluctuations. In reality, however, there is no guarantee that any of the temporary changes are reversible; if Negroes are driven out of a certain occupation, they may never get in there again.

when job opportunities were scarce, happened to be successful in driving him out. In all probability, there would have been rather few Negroes in the automobile industry if it had not been for Henry Ford. It is even possible that the Negro would not have a foothold at all in Northern manufacturing industries at the present time had it not been for the labor shortage during the First World War.

Assuming for the purpose of our discussion that the War ends with a real peace—not a state of armed truce—and that this peace seems likely to last for a while, this will mean a reduction in the production of arms and ships. There are certain factors in this situation which, to some extent, may tend to minimize the employment losses for the Negro. The very fact that he has not gotten so much of a place in armament production, but rather has made his most significant gains in certain consumption and service industries, may possibly help him then and make the immediate employment losses smaller for him than for the white workers. Also, the over-population in agriculture may for a time make itself less severely felt, since so much labor has been drawn to urban industries during the present emergency. It is probable, as well, that many of the demobilized soldiers from agricultural areas will never return to the farms.

These temporary advantages, however, will be counteracted by other forces. The one armament industry which has the best chances of being maintained, in some measure, after the War is airplane production, where the Negro, so far, has not been allowed to get more than a toehold. The shipyards, which have treated the Negro much better, are more likely to decline.[46] The War has brought about many revolutionary changes in production techniques. These new experiences will probably help to bring about a new mechanization trend as soon as production managers get the time to think of reorganization of production other than that necessitated by the exigencies of the War. Now they are doing everything possible to produce quickly. After the War they will again emphasize economy of production. A speed-up of the mechanization trend will involve new threats to the unskilled worker. Again, the Negro will be one of the principal sufferers.

Of paramount importance will be the general level of employment. The Negroes' hope of becoming integrated into American industry is much greater if the American economy is geared to a full utilization of its productive forces. Should there be widespread unemployment for a protracted period, it will tend to be concentrated on the Negro. Widespread idleness will tend to increase the interest of the white workers in keeping the Negro out. Long-time unemployment always makes for all kinds of socio-psychological tensions. The Negro, as usual, will be a convenient object for those who have been kept brooding long enough to feel the need for some spectacular action. White workers in service industries who

have been employed in armament factories during the War will most certainly resent finding Negroes in their old jobs. In the long run, it is rather unfortunate that the present efforts to integrate the Negro into war production have been based, in part, on the motivation that these are unusual times when all kinds of hardships have to be accepted. It is quite probable that this particular kind of motivation will backfire. The same may be true, to an extent, about the argument that Negroes should be given some attention since this country cannot afford to feed the German and the Japanese propaganda machines.

It is not even certain that the leaders of the C.I.O. unions who are friendly to the Negroes will be able to maintain discipline respecting non-discrimination among their rank-and-file membership. During the War the union leaders have alienated themselves from the mass of the members, to a certain extent, by siding with the Administration's anti-strike policy. Although their present difficulties may be due, in part, to the large number of new members, many of whom will perhaps drop out after the War, it is quite possible that they may have to face the alternative of either following the rank-and-filers' anti-Negro attitude or being exchanged for new leaders.

For the period immediately following the War, however, the risk of widespread unemployment may not be great. Those first years will probably be characterized by a large demand for durable consumers' goods, like automobiles, refrigerators, stoves and possibly airplanes. The reconstruction work overseas may constitute another significant source of demand for American products. Sometime, however, a really large post-war unemployment will threaten the entire economic system. It will be largely counteracted, however, by government policies. It is true that unemployment policies during the last depression were not entirely successful; but that was largely because they started too late, and because they constituted the first large-scale attempt of this type in the United States. This time there will be much more rational and experienced planning behind these efforts. The post-war planning work carried on by governmental and other agencies at the present time is extensive.[47] In part it may be somewhat uncoordinated, but certainly many useful things are being done.[a]

[a] It seems, however, that there is reason to warn against over-optimism regarding the success of the policies during the next depression. One often hears the argument that post-war unemployment will not be dangerous at all "since it will be prevented by planning"—just as if this were a perfectly simple thing, or even that the word "planning" would have a magical effect. Yet planning, of course, is never of much use just because it is planning; it is of use only in so far as it is well adapted to the specific problems.

It is quite probable, for instance, that the next depression, to an even greater extent than the last one, will be characterized by structural changes requiring something more than just depression fighting, pump priming, temporary public works. There is always the danger that our planning will fit the last depression more perfectly than the one ahead. Moreover, it is

The Negro will have to be considered in this post-war planning work. As always, he will be unemployed much more often than the white worker. As time goes on, it will become more and more apparent that either the Negro will have to be cared for as a more or less permanent relief client or positive measures must be taken for his integration into the regular economy. The tradition of governmental noninterference on the labor market has been broken during the New Deal, and still more during the War. Trade unions, in so far as they have not themselves abolished monopolistic practices, will increasingly be forced to do so. Employment policies will become less individualistic—more based upon concern about utilization of the total national labor force.

There will be factors, in addition to governmental pressure, which will tend to strengthen the forces friendly to Negroes in the labor movement, at least in the long run. Whenever the unions attempt to leave the Negro out, there may, again, be some risk that employers will tend to use the Negro worker against them. Probably even more important is the fact that some of the most potent anti-Negro forces in the American community are, at the same time, anti-labor. Labor will have to side with the Negro for political reasons. Since labor relations, more and more, are becoming public relations and thus will depend on political action, this will tend to protect the Negro's employment opportunities.

Much more generally, the Negroes' economic fate after the War will depend upon the general development of attitudes toward race in America. There looms a "Negro aspect" over all post-war problems. There may be radical changes ahead—both in the Negro's actual status and in ideologies affecting him. America has lost the protection of the oceans, and there will be many more international implications to national policies. It may well be that the transition, foreboded by the Great Depression and continued by the Second World War and the Peace to come, will change the conditions of life in America to such an extent that the period after the War will stand out as apart from the pre-war time, as does the long period after the Revolutionary War from the colonial era. To this broader perspective we shall return in the last chapter of this book.

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always somewhat uncertain whether those in political power at the time will select the best plans or whether they will know how to coordinate various plans. It must be considered, finally, that not even the best blueprints are of much use unless there are administrative agencies which are competent to handle them. At present there is a certain tendency to wreck many of the agencies which will be needed for post-war problems. The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Work Projects Administration have already been abolished. The Farm Security Administration has experienced violent attacks, but, so far, it has been saved. If this trend should go further than is warranted by the present decline in relief needs, so that many of the rehabilitation and welfare agencies will not even be allowed to maintain skeleton staffs, it would mean that a great amount of practical experience would be thrown away.

Part V

POLITICS

CHAPTER 20

UNDERLYING FACTORS[a]

1. The Negro *in* American Politics and *as* a Political Issue

Politics and political equality are intrinsically a part of our entire discussion of the many-faceted Negro problem. This chapter, however, is confined to politics in the narrower sense—that is, it will deal with the franchise, political parties and political rewards. We concentrate on the South, not only because this region contains the great majority of the Negro people, but because the South is the only region where Negro suffrage is a problem.

The value premise in this chapter will be *the doctrine of political equality among all citizens of the United States.* Political discrimination, and, more specifically, disfranchisement, is defined in relation to this value premise as the withholding of the vote from citizens merely because they are Negroes. This value premise, as a principle, is prominent in the American Creed and has been given constitutional sanction.

In early colonial times free Negroes apparently often enjoyed the same civic rights and duties as poor white people relieved from indenture servitude.[1] Chief Justice Taney's dictum in the Dred Scott decision of 1857, to the effect that the Negro had nowhere been accorded the status of citizenship in this country, was an overstatement as applied to the contemporary situation and even more so as an historical generalization. With regard to voting in particular, it is well established that there has never, in modern American history, been a period when Negro voters have been totally absent from the polls. At the time of the making of the Constitution, free Negroes had the right of suffrage in all the original states, except South Carolina and Georgia.[2] The greater part of the Negro people was, however, then held in slavery. As a political power the free Negroes were, of course, inconsequential, both in the South and in the North. In the following period up to the Civil War, free Negroes grew in numbers, but all Southern[b] and all the new Western states and territories dis-

[a] If we were to adhere strictly to our general plan of presenting the aspects of the Negro problem according to the rank order of interests, hypothesized in Chapter 3, this part on politics should succeed rather than precede the part on justice. We follow the order we do in order to present certain basic facts in a more convenient context.

[b] A partial exception was that free Negroes could vote in North Carolina before 1835. (Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians* [1935], p. 3, footnote.)

franchised them, as did also some of the older Northern states. At the outbreak of the War, Negroes had votes in only five of the New England States—Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. In addition, New York allowed Negroes suffrage under certain property limitations which did not apply to whites.[3]

As a result of the Civil War and the Reconstruction Amendments, Negro men were enfranchised in the whole Union. In the North this change became permanent. In the South, where most Negroes lived and still live, it was rapidly undone. After Reconstruction, a condition gradually fixed itself upon the nation which has remained fairly unchanged in the twentieth century: that the Negroes in the North enjoy, uninfringed, the right to vote as other American citizens, while, with quantitatively unimportant exceptions, the Negroes in the South are kept disfranchised against the intention and spirit of the amended Constitution. Suffrage for Negroes is one of the patterns in which the two historic regions of America are most dissimilar, and in this respect, the greatest factor of change during the last generation has actually been the migration of one and three-quarter million Negroes from the South to the North. As we shall find in the course of our analysis, the situation is highly unstable, and great changes are impending.

While the Negro people have been kept out of politics in the sense that they have been kept from voting, in another sense, namely, as a political issue, they have been an important factor in the very region where they have been disfranchised, the South. A recent well-qualified student of the Southern political scene has gone so far as to say that "The elementary determinant in Southern politics is an intense Negro phobia which has scarcely abated since Reconstruction."[4] The issue of "white supremacy vs. Negro domination," as it is called in the South, has for more than a hundred years stifled freedom of thought and speech and affected all other civic rights and liberties of both Negroes and whites in the South. It has retarded its economic, social and cultural advance. On this point there is virtual agreement among all competent observers.[5]

In the North, on the contrary, the Negro has nowhere and never been a political issue of primary and lasting importance [a]—except in so far as he

[a] There are secondary reasons for this, other than the main one that the North had never been obsessed with the Negro and the desire to keep him in a low place that characterizes the slavery tradition of the South. Before the great mass migration, the Northern Negro population was numerically small; even after the migration it still remained small in proportion to the total electorates in the cities where they live; Negro voters have usually been tractable and easily managed by the political machines; their voting strength has often been held down by gerrymandering and by the failure to redistrict. Negroes could never by any stretch of the imagination be looked upon as a political danger. They have been a poor, segregated group showing many signs of social pathology, but—except for the classical issues of tariff, money and banking, corporate finance, agriculture, and prohibition—socio-economic problems have, until the New Deal, not played a great role in American politics.

has constituted an issue in national politics. The issue has, then, always been the Negro's status in the South or, earlier, the South's struggle to widen the area over which its concept of the Negro would prevail.

Once, and once only, did the Negro problem become the focus of national attention: in the prolonged conflict with the South over slavery in the Civil War and during Reconstruction. After the national compromise of the 1870's American historians have, by and large, adjusted to the changed political situation and have satisfied the national demand for historical rationalization and justification of the treatment of the Negro. They have stressed that the North did not fight the Civil War to free the Negro slaves. This is apparently correct as far as the immediate political origin of the conflict is concerned. The Emancipation Proclamation was later issued, but only after one hundred days' warning to the rebellious states to lay down their arms, and in it Lincoln declared that the measure was adopted "upon military necessity." But the deeper reality is, nevertheless, that there would have been no Civil War had there been no Negroes in the South, and had not Negro slavery stamped its entire social fabric. The economic, ideological, and political rivalries between the two regions all mainly derived from, or were greatly determined by, the fact of slavery, as were also the peculiar agricultural structure and the social stratification of the *ante-bellum* South.

As the War went on, this deeper cause, the Negro problem, simply had to be brought to the surface in order to uphold Northern morale—in much the same fashion as the notion of democracy and human liberty has had similar functions in the present World War and in the earlier one. The cause of liberating the Negroes and awarding them the status of manhood and citizenship became, during the trials and tribulations of the long and extremely perturbing War, a much-needed strengthening moral justification to the North. It was almost as important as the aim of preserving the Union.

For a decade after the War, the aim of protecting Negro freedom retained its importance in Northern ideology. It gained strength by its capacity to furnish a rationalization for Republican party interests. After the national compromise of the 1870's, the Negro problem dropped out as a national issue. The great majority of Southerners have an interest in keeping it out as long as possible. On the surface, there seem to be no signs that the dominant North will break the compromise and start again trying to reform the South. But it is well to defer judgment on this crucial point until we

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The presence of European immigrant groups, displaying similar problems, has, in any case, hindered a focusing of such interests upon the Negroes. Negroes have only been one of several problem groups. In regard to the Negroes, the Northerners could always console their social conscience by reminding themselves that Negroes fared still worse in the South. (See Chapter 2, Section 8.)

have considered a number of dynamic factors which are bound to influence the future development both in the South and in the nation at large.

2. THE WAVE OF DEMOCRACY AND THE NEED FOR BUREAUCRACY

In order to understand why the vote, or the lack of it, has such a paramount importance for the daily welfare of the Negro people in America, we have to view the problem in broad perspective. The vote would be of less importance to a group of citizens in this country if America had what it does not have, namely, *the tradition of an independent and law-abiding administration of local and national public affairs.* By this we mean a body of public officials who are independent in two directions: *personally,* as they are holding office under permanent tenure, being appointed and promoted strictly according to merit, and, consequently, vested with economic security and high social prestige; and *officially,* as they are trusted with authority to put the laws into effect without political interference in individual cases. In such an order the political branches of government, legislative as well as executive, would, in the main, be restricted to two functions: (1) to supervise and control the administration as to its efficiency and adherence to the laws and (2) to change the laws and other general instructions when they wished to redirect the course of administration. Such a governmental system is foreign to American traditions. Americans are conditioned by their history to look upon administration as itself a branch of political government: as within "politics." Not only their constitutions—federal and state—but their political philosophies, and what the citizen in various states of sophistication takes for granted, are dominated by this idea.

The struggle of the American colonies against the English Crown and its often corrupt bureaucracy first set this pattern. The rights upheld in this struggle were those of the people and their elected representatives, the colonial legislatures, *against* the administration. Incidentally, the tradition of sending lawyer-advocates as representatives to the legislatures instead of average persons from the midst of the electorate—farmers, workers, preachers, teachers, and businessmen—began in this same period when the legislatures were not sovereign but merely the pleaders against the English Crown, the London Parliament, and the colonial bureaucracy. The lawyer-politicians got such a strong foothold in public affairs in America that they have kept it into the present time.

Out of this struggle emerged not only the fierce American insistence upon the rights and liberties of the individual citizen, but also the American dislike and distrust of state authority. Both were carried forward into the new independent Republic, the latter tendency strengthened by the very disruption of authority during the *interregnum* of the Revolution, during which the old administration and a great portion of the ruling

classes (Tories) in America were liquidated.[6] There was thus no inherited bureaucracy to start out with. The results were very different from those in comparable countries—particularly the Scandinavian countries and Great Britain—where the bureaucracy was already in existence when the legislatures developed. In those countries, democracy arose as the legislatures fought to widen their electoral basis and to make the bureaucracy into an effective means of carrying out the popular will. In the United States, on the other hand, bureaucracy developed in a haphazard manner. Protected by the Atlantic Ocean, America was also less exposed to international dangers. Efficient administration of the country was, therefore, not so much of an immediate necessity. The history of American wars for more than a century after the Revolutionary War brings out this point beautifully. The protecting oceans were as important as the frontiers for American domestic development and, particularly, its system of government, a fact not adequately developed by historians.[a]

The attempts of the Hamiltonians to create a stable and independent administration in America were, as is understandable in this historical setting, unfortunately associated with the anti-democratic movement. This, in turn, served to strengthen the anti-bureaucratic tendencies of those men who felt themselves fighting for the liberal ideas of the American Revolution. Thomas Jefferson's election to the Presidency in 1800 was a victory for the latter forces. Even if he was careful to fill the vacancies as they occurred with trusted partisans, he did not, however, start out with a wholesale removal of federal officeholders appointed by the earlier regime. For the next few decades there were, perhaps, rather favorable conditions for the growth of an independent federal administration. But when Andrew Jackson inaugurated the "spoils system," he broke down this hope completely. At the same time he furnished a pattern for the state and local governments, where they were not already ahead of the national government. Underlying this familiar American pattern were, among others, the idea that there should be "rotation in office" and the idea that public service did not require much special training.

Thereafter, through American history until recent decades, there has been a dominant force constantly pressing to increase the *direct* control of the electorate over public affairs. The movement has been self-generating, since in the great American tradition the cure for the inefficiency and cor-

[a] The frontier was actually first given its true significance in American history by Frederick Jackson Turner in his epochal essay, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (1893), at a time when the frontier was already disappearing from the national scene. The ocean, on the other hand, has not yet been made the theme of a comprehensive American history. A technical development of communications and warfare, becoming apparent in the present War, has substantially decreased the protection of the oceans. It would not be surprising if there would soon appear, as a consequence, a review of American history in this new light just as revolutionizing as the one stressing the frontier as a main viewpoint.

ruption of the politically closely-controlled administrations has been seen to be "more democracy and not less." In this movement the indirect election of legislative bodies was changed to direct election, appointive public officers were changed to elected ones, and the terms for officials and legislatures were shortened. In some states measures have been instituted enabling the voters, by the use of the petition and special election (the recall), to oust public officials at any time during their term. In some states this applies even to justices, sheriffs and other peace officers. The popular initiative and the referendum, found in many states of the Union, are part of the same pattern.

This movement has always been supported by those in America who defended the rights of the common people and who considered themselves the upholders of the Jeffersonian ideal of democracy. Perhaps in no other respect did the American variant of early nineteenth century political liberalism become so different from the same movement in those European countries mentioned as most comparable. In those countries, liberalism also demanded the ultimate power for the people themselves, and it also wanted to restrict narrowly the sphere of government activity. But, within its proper realm, liberalism in Europe advocated a government in which laws are enforced, while American liberalism since Jefferson and until recent decades has been tinged with philosophical anarchism. By the middle of the nineteenth century, liberals in those other countries largely succeeded in freeing politics from corruption and in perfecting administration as an effective instrument in the hand of governments which were becoming democratized. American liberalism was more suspicious of state authority and suspicious even toward the security and prestige of officeholders. It was more interested in checking bureaucracy than in reforming and utilizing it.

The politically dependent American administrations have, particularly in the states and in the local communities, continuously turned out to be rather inefficient organs for carrying on public affairs and have often been corrupt. This situation has long been recognized in America. The fact that the British rule in colonial times was also inefficient and corrupt has contributed toward the common American belief that politics and administration are always this way and that they must always be so. Gradually "politics" and "politicians" became derogatory words in America. Bureaucracy, even at best, became synonymous with "red tape." The relatively low social prestige of public servants, which is a natural concomitant of their lack of independence and their insecurity of tenure; their subservience to the political game; and the various practices they have to resort to as office-seekers, became accentuated. Public administration thus failed to attract its fair share of the intelligence and ambition of the youth in the nation.

The fact that land speculators, big business, and, generally, the wealthy

classes were in a position to utilize the corrupted administration for their interests reinforced the idea, already strong in American liberalism, that only a closer direct control by the electorate would secure a more honest and efficient administration of public affairs. Since this closer control in most cases did not increase, but rather decreased, the independence, security, and prestige of officeholders, the results were, on the whole, negative. When explaining the relatively low professional standards in American administration, there are many other factors to take into account. But an important place should be given to the vicious circle set in motion by the historically rooted American mistrust of bureaucracy and the trust in direct electoral control.[a]

While they are mistrusted and have low standards, public officials have, nevertheless, been invested with much more power for the time they are in office than in comparable countries. Being elected and thus carrying the mandate of the people themselves, they are less dependent on laws and fixed administrative rules. For the same reason, they can even stand more strongly against the representative bodies. They have more discretionary power than the public officials in a more strictly legal system. By long tradition and by their uncertainty of tenure (since their continuation in office depends on the outcome of the next election) they are, on the other hand, conditioned always to try to please their constituents. The individual voters, on their side, are conditioned in America to look to the directly and indirectly elected officials, not only for an honest and firm execution of their duties according to the laws, the established administration procedures, and the officials' best conscience, but, what is dangerous, for special favors.

The relative lack of an independent civil service and of a firm legal pattern in public administration thus means a mutually greater dependence of public officials on the voters and of the voters upon the officials. In this system it has become customary to distribute jobs, protection, and public service in some relation to the voting strength of the various regional, national and religious groups in the community. A disfranchised group like the Southern Negro people will, therefore, be disadvantaged. The effect will be accentuated if, in addition to disfranchisement, the group is segregated. The unpaved streets in the Negro sections of Southern cities, the lack of facilities for sewage disposal, the lack of street lighting, the dilapidated school houses, the scarcity of hospital facilities, and, indeed, all other discrimination in education, health, housing, breadwinning, and justice, give evidence of this important relation in America between the vote and a share in the public services. Since Negroes do not participate in

[a] The general problem discussed in this section will be taken up for analysis, from the viewpoints of centralization and decentralization, leadership, and popular participation and responsibility, in Chapter 33.

the election of the representative bodies either, these bodies cannot be expected to give them redress against the officials. No representative will see any immediate reason to please a disfranchised group, and laws and regulations will be drawn up without their interests being represented. If the system becomes corrupted, the odds are placed even more definitely against a poor group without political voice.

Not until very late did forces appear on the American scene trying to reverse the trend. They capitalized on the general mistrust against "politics" in America and on the value attached to keeping things "out of politics," which, paradoxically enough, have been as prevalent as the tendency referred to of increasing the direct electoral controls. The civil service reformers obtained their first success when Congress in 1883 enacted a federal civil service law.[a] States and municipalities have been following the federal government, but the reform is far from consummated. Nevertheless, a professional and fairly independent administration is taking shape in America, and the explanation is primarily the increase in volume and scope of public activity, as public control and social reform proceed. The intricacies and complexities of administration have been increasing, steadily raising the demands on the executors of the public will for professional training and impartiality. The continuation of the old practices is simply impossible, since they threaten a complete breakdown in the management of public affairs.

There have been two other trends which, while apparently opposing each other, actually do not because they both make the administration more independent and less arbitrary. On the one hand, there has been a tendency to write the laws in such a way that the mutual obligations of government and citizen are more specifically defined. For example, the trend of social security legislation has been from the vague promise of government to do something for "paupers" to the legal provision for definite compensation to every specified person when he becomes a certain age or subject to certain disabilities, such as unemployment. It is not left to biased officials to decide what shall be done. On the other hand, as public interest increasingly comes to embrace new fields of social life—for instance, the labor market—the type of detailed laws of the past are giving way to more abstract laws which give the administration greater leeway in making rules to meet new situations but which also force it to lay down such rules rather than to let individual officials use their arbitrary judgments.[b] Both these trends are helping to build up an independent,

[a] This success was partly an accident: support for a civil service system did not become widespread until President Garfield was assassinated by a disappointed office-seeker in 1881.

[b] Some have argued that this has also made it more possible for discrimination to enter. The fact is, however, that it is under the old type of law—detailed and complicated—that discrimination can best flourish. Under the older type of law, there could be few administra-

strong and impartial administration. A fourth trend, having the same effect, is centralization. Public control is gradually moving from municipalities and counties to the states and from the states to the federal government. It is hardly necessary to point out that the New Deal during the 'thirties has speeded up all these trends.

America is thus, finally, well on the way to building up an independent administration. Its rising importance is reflected in higher social prestige of public officials as their tenure and economic security are becoming protected. Public service is beginning to become a professional career which can attract intelligent, well-trained and ambitious youths. A visitor to America who compares attitudes of the late 'twenties with those of the early 'forties notices a great change within this short space of time. It is possible to envisage a very different system of government within a couple of decades: the common people in America are coming to realize that a capable and uncorrupted bureaucracy, independent in its work except for the laws and regulations passed by the legislatures and the continuous control by legislators and executives, is as important for the efficient working of a modern democracy as is the voter's final word on the general direction of this administration.

Although this is the trend in government, America is still far from the goal. This is particularly true in local administration. It is more true in rural than in urban regions, and more true in the South than in the North. Tremendous changes are under way, but they have not yet meant much for the masses of Negroes, since most of them live in regions where the protection of an independent administration and of objectified administrative rules are much less developed than in the country at large. And as we shall find, *Negroes are disfranchised more completely in the very localities where the vote is important because administration is lax.*

3. THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH

In the North Negroes have the vote like other people, and there is nowhere a significant attempt to deprive them of the franchise.[a] To the foreign observer the fact that practically nobody in the North thinks of

tive rules since they would illegally modify the law. As a result, the individual official had to use his own personal judgment when the law did not apply to new or odd types of cases. This obviously allows for discrimination. When administrative rules can adjust abstract laws to new situations, there is much less opportunity for individual officials to insert their own biases, and so there is much less discrimination in the individual case. It is not the rules emanating from Washington that are discriminatory in the meaning important to the individual citizen, but rather the arbitrary practices of individual officials who apply the laws to concrete cases.

[a] The only major exceptions—and even these are not restricted to Negroes—are the cases of gerrymandering and the failure to redistrict in some Northern cities. (See Chapter 22, Section 4.)

taking away the Negroes' vote is, in itself, a most important, and even startling, element in the political situation which seems difficult to explain satisfactorily. Negroes are discriminated against in many other respects in the North. Most Northerners seem also to be convinced of the mental and moral inferiority of Negroes, even if their racial beliefs are not so certain, so extreme and so intense as the Southerners'. But the Negroes' right to political participation as voters is actually seldom questioned.

This problem is, indeed, wider, as it can be raised also with respect to many of the immigrant minority groups. They may be despised by the older Americans and discriminated against in various ways. The "Americans" may—often with considerable right—accuse them of being unassimilated and clannish, of not identifying themselves with the community and the nation, and of lacking both the interest in and knowledge of American society prerequisite for a judicious opinion on public matters. It is commonly held—also with much right—that these groups, and the Negroes, form an important part of the basis for the corrupt machine politics which is the disgrace of most big cities and many states. The average Northerner is usually outspoken on these points. But he will generally not draw the conclusion that hence the franchise should be restricted in any measure. The North is apparently sold and settled on the principle of unqualified franchise.

The problem is not even much discussed. A Northern author may incidentally give vent to the remark that "the vote should be a privilege to be earned by evidence of ability and willingness to use it with discretion" and even point to the Southern legislation restricting suffrage as a model also for the North.[7] But such a remark will be made in passing and apparently without hope of public attention. Occasionally the present author has also heard Northerners in various walks of life, when discussing the cultural isolation of Negroes and "foreigners" in the cities, make the observation that "rightly, they shouldn't have the vote." But nobody seems to expect this opinion to be taken as a serious practical proposal.[8]

It is the observation of the author that unrestricted suffrage has become so unquestioned in the North that the ordinary Northerner believes that it has always existed and that, in particular, the free Negroes in the North have always, or at least even prior to the Civil War, enjoyed the privilege of the franchise. The truth is, as we have already pointed out, that the Negroes were disfranchised in almost the whole North and West at the time of the Civil War. During and immediately after the War, attempts were made in some of these states to introduce amendments to the state constitutions for striking out the word "white" in order to enfranchise the Negroes. But, although the Republicans were in absolute control everywhere, these proposals were defeated in one state after another.[9] The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the federal Constitution later

compelled even these Northern states to change their franchise rules. The amendments were accepted and ratified in the Northern states as part of the Reconstruction program and in order to fortify the Republican party in the South. If the North had not been so bent upon reforming the South, it is doubtful whether and when some of the Northern states would have reformed themselves.[10]

Thus the Negroes' right to vote in the North is not supported by an uninterrupted historical tradition. But when once the great step was taken, it seems almost immediately to have been solidified into the traditionally rooted order of things. The present-day unreserved allegiance to the principle of political nondiscrimination in the North, which has so successfully withstood the increased racial tension due to the huge influx of Southern Negroes in recent decades, is fundamentally, we believe, a direct outflow of the American Creed as it has gradually strengthened its hold upon the American mind. This national *ethos* undoubtedly has a greater force in the North than in the South, as may be observed in other spheres of social life as well. But in most of these other respects, even the Northerner has a split personality. His attitudes toward suffrage and equality in justice[a] seem, in fact, to be the main exceptions where he acts absolutely according to the national Creed.

In explaining these exceptions, we have first to take into account the fact that voting is a rather abstract human relationship between a citizen and the officials representing society. The Northerner tends to adhere to the American Creed in abstract, impersonal things and slips away from it when it involves personal relations. A substantial part of all discrimination is closely connected with snobbishness and petty considerations of status in daily human contacts. When the Northerner gets formal, when he acts in an assembly or reacts as a citizen on grounds of principles, and, particularly, when the question concerns the relations between the state and the individual, he will be more likely to follow the American Creed closely.

Another relevant fact in the explanation is that the Negroes in the North—as well as unpopular immigrant groups—are clustered mostly in the big cities where life is anonymous and where people are conditioned not to be concerned much about one another. These cities have often been dominated by political machines. The machines find the Negroes and the immigrant groups tractable. The politicians themselves have, therefore, no reason to try to eliminate Negro franchise; their difficulty is, rather, the intelligent and independent individual voter. From a conservative point of view, machine politics has favorable effects, at least in so far as it keeps those lower status groups in line and protects them from radicalism. The exploitation of these voters by the machines will, therefore, not be strongly criticized by conservatives. Liberals, for reasons of principle, are not

[a] See Part VI.

inclined to favor any restrictions on suffrage. So there is apparently nobody in the North engaged in the political game who has any particular reasons to object to the Negroes' enjoying their franchise in peace.

Whether or not these explanations are adequate, it seems to be a fact that *Negroes can feel sure that, unless this country undergoes a veritable revolution, their right to vote will remain unquestioned in the North, independent of any increase due to continued migration from the South. Without any doubt, this is one of the strategic protections of the Negro people in American society.* The Negro vote in the North is already of some importance. It could become of much greater importance were it more wisely used. As the educational level of the Negro people is being raised and as the northward migration is continuing, it might become powerful enough within the next couple of decades to demand some real reward not only in local Northern politics but also in national politics. The Northern vote might become the instrument by which the Negroes can increasingly use the machinery of federal legislation and administration to tear down the walls of discrimination.

The white people's attitude in regard to Negro suffrage in the South, and, specifically, in the eleven states which seceded from the Union and formed the Confederacy, is a much more complicated matter. Even a summary interpretation requires sketching the main elements of the historical heritage of the region. Negro disfranchisement is evidently part and parcel of a much more general tendency toward *political conservatism* which stamps the entire life of the region. The Negro is, as we shall find, a main cause of this general conservatism. Southern conservatism is a unique phenomenon in Western civilization in being married to an established pattern of *illegality*.[a] In the South, it is the weak liberal reformers who have had, and have now, to stand up for the majesty of the law. Correspondingly, a person may be ranked as liberal in this region merely by insisting that the law shall be adhered to in practice.

This is a most extraordinary situation. Everywhere else in the world it is the strategy and—from one point of view—the "function" of conservatism in the democratic state to stand for "law and order," while the liberals and, still more, the radicals want to change this order. When the latter succeed in bringing about changes, it is the conservatives' "function" to see to it that due procedure and all legal formalities are observed. Thereby they usually succeed in slowing down the tempo of the induced changes. To function as the guardians of the law, and all it stands for in the way of individual security in an established order, becomes thus a natural strategy for the conservatives who want to check change and preserve the *status quo*.

In the South we have, however, the unmatched political spectacle that

[a] This pattern of illegality will be studied in some detail in Part VI.

the liberals are the party of law and order, while the conservatives are the habitual transgressors. *The party which works for change has the established law on its side, or rather, wants to enforce it, but has not the political power; the party which stands for the* status quo *has the power but not the law.*

To try to understand how this extraordinary situation has come about must be our next task. As a background we shall have to remember the weak development of political legality generally in America, so visible in its relative lack of an independent administration. Even in the North the conservative forces have occasionally faltered in performing their "function" in democracy, to stand for the law. But the difference between the two regions is immense. In the South a veritable reversal of the usual order of democracy has established itself.

4. THE SOUTHERN DEFENSE IDEOLOGY

Part of the explanation is that Southern conservatism is "reactionary" in the literal sense of the word. It has preserved an ideological allegiance not only to *status quo*, but to *status quo ante*. The region is still carrying the heritage of slavery.

In the last part of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century, the moral righteousness and the socio-economic advantages of slavery came to be doubted very much in the Old Upper South,[11] and even in the Deep South dissenting opinions were heard. But from about the 1830's—under the double influence of the rising profitableness of the slavery and plantation economy and the onslaught from the Northern Abolitionist movement—the apologetic ideology became stabilized and elaborated into a complicated theory of state which every Southerner had to stand for as a matter of regional pride and patriotism.[12]

This ingenious theory was based on the dogma of Negro racial inferiority[a] and also on unique interpretations of the Bible and on general principles for a rational social order. In fact, it is seldom duly recognized that the pro-slavery thought in the South in the decades before the Civil War was the most uncompromising conservative political philosophy which ever developed in Western civilization after the Enlightenment.[13] From a logical point of view, it is the only brand of modern conservatism consistent and courageous enough openly to make human inequality basic to political philosophy, to accept the static state as ideal and to denounce progress. Conservative thinking elsewhere after the Enlightenment was seldom in a position to develop a closed system of principles like liberalism or the various schools of socialism, anarchism and syndicalism. Lack of rigid principles, acceptance of logical compromises, and the view that the growth of society is an arational, organic process was often even pronounced as a

[a] See Chapter 4.

characteristic of conservative thinking.[14] But the pro-slavery philosophy of the Old South, incorporating all ideas dear to conservatism in all countries and in all ages, went the full length and laid down a logical static system just as tight as the competing philosophies to the left.

According to this political philosophy, slavery was not, as earlier Southern writers had been disposed to admit, an inevitable evil. It was instead a positive good, and a good to all parties concerned, including the Negro slaves. Indeed, slavery was only part of a greater social order which established an ideal division of labor and of responsibility in society between the sexes, the age groups, the social classes and the two races. This division should not be left to be worked out by haphazard and ruinous competition. In the South it was intentionally and wisely organized by the state in accordance with the needs, the abilities, and the worth of the individuals in the various groups concerned.

The principle of rational cooperation was, therefore, realized; some authors even talked about "socialism" in a purified and dignified meaning of the term.[15] "By making the labor itself capital, the conflict of interest, so evident in other labor systems, lost its foundation."[16] Radicalism, or rather the reason for radical opposition, was extinguished in this perfect social order. A system of social estates, with the plantation owners as a paternalistic nobility at the top and the toiling Negro slaves at the bottom, was envisaged. "Equality begets universal envy, meanness and uncharitableness—slavery elevates and purifies the sentiments of master and slave."[17] The static nature of this system was accentuated and even exalted by the persistent assertion that the South had actually realized the most happy political, social, and economic conditions ever seen on earth and which were, particularly, much superior to the deplorable conditions in the North. "We are better husbands, better fathers, better friends, and better neighbors than our Northern brethren."[18] The expounders of the pro-slavery doctrine had to go back to Athenian democracy to find a true parallel to the happy South and, indeed, the parallel they used was a highly idealized Athens.

In this static social system all whites, independent of their rank in society, were significantly superior to the slaves. Politically they were all equals, since they were free citizens. Free competition and personal freedom were assured them. The Southern statesmen and writers hammered on this thesis, that slavery, and slavery alone, produced the most perfect equality and the most substantial liberty for the free citizens in society. By relegating—in theory—all menial and domestic labor to the slaves, all the whites became gentlemen. "One of the reconciling features of the existence [of Negro slavery]," argued Jefferson Davis just before the outbreak of the great conflict, "is the fact that it raises white men to the same general level, that it dignifies and exalts every white man by the

presence of a lower race."[19] The very basis of white men's equality was the drudgery of the black slaves. In the words of Governor J. H. Hammond of South Carolina:

> In all social systems there must be a class to do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life. That is, a class requiring but a low order of intellect and but little skill. Its requisites are vigor, docility, fidelity. Such a class you must have or you would not have that other class which leads progress, civilization, and refinement. It constitutes the very mud-sill of society and of political government; and you might as well attempt to build a house in the air, as to build either the one or the other, except on this mud-sill. Fortunately for the South, she found a race adapted to the purpose of her hand. . . . We use them for our purpose and call them slaves.[20]

The slaves were politically the wards of the whites and had no rights against white society. Upon the basis of their labor, civilization could flourish. A high civilization presumed a leisure class and its exploitation of slaves. In the final reckoning, however, even the humble slaves were getting their share of the fruits of that civilization. They were fed, clothed, housed, guarded, and secured in all their needs by their paternalistic owners who, in this wise social order, could have no other interests than to care to the utmost for their welfare. Above this interest solidarity between slaves and slave owners was the solidarity among white men only:

> We have among us but one great class, and all who belong to it have a necessary sympathy with one another; we have but one great interest and all who possess it are equally ready to maintain and protect it.[21]

As political ideologies go, this doctrine should not be denied high qualities of structural logic and consistency. It is, of course, an upper class philosophy. It is a rationalization of the interests of the one-fifth of the Southern white population who owned slaves. In its higher spheres the philosophy was hardly understandable to those without a high degree of education. But its basic ideas could be grasped by all. As the conflict with the North drew nearer, it became a regional creed which was pressed upon everybody by all available social controls. It served the South during the Civil War in the same manner as the concept and theory of "democracy" or "the democratic way of life" served all America during the two World Wars. "The parties in this conflict," says the Presbyterian Dr. J. H. Thornwell, who ejected his predecessor, Dr. Cooper, from the presidency of the College of South Carolina for his "infidel" views, "are not merely abolitionists and slaveholders—they are atheists, socialists, communists, red republicans, jacobins on the one side, and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. In one word, the world is the battleground—Christianity and atheism the combatants—and the progress of humanity the stake."[22]

Long before the Civil War started, the dissenters from the Southern

defense ideology had to keep their opinions to themselves or they risked their social status, their economic advance, their freedom, and, in extreme cases, their bodily security and life, if they did not take refuge in the North. Hinton Rowan Helper's book, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857),[23] showed how the South lagged behind the North economically, how the growth of industries was hampered, how the yields were lower in all comparable crops, and how, particularly, the slavery-plantation system was an inefficient and disastrous organization of agricultural production. The author violently accused "the Lords of the Lash" for perpetuating the white majority in unparalleled illiteracy, poverty and dependence. This book became a best seller in the North and exerted a tremendous influence on Northern thinking. It was blacklisted in the South, and the author could not come back to his homeland.

That the book does *not* express the opinions of the lower white strata in the Southern social pyramid, Helper readily admits and regrets. In their poverty, ignorance, and dependence, they knew generally little about the world outside the Southern region which was gradually becoming culturally isolated. And they were offered one great and glittering solace: "white supremacy." They were not at the bottom, they were protected from the status of Negroes by a clear dividing line, and they were told that they could compete freely up to the very top. Few Southerners, even among the nonslaveholding classes, were inclined to dissent from this dogma. Agreeing on the point of "white supremacy," the rest of the elaborated pro-slavery theory offered the most convenient and most efficient rationalization. When they heard that the North wanted to free the Negro slaves, and when they sensed the danger of being thrown into actual competition with the black masses, the great majority of whites even outside the slaveholders felt their solidarity with the latter.

The defeat in the War which followed did not break the general direction of Southern political thinking or the allegiance to it among Southern whites. The harsh measures taken by the victorious North to reform the South quickly favored a consolidation of reactionary forces. This consolidation became particularly effective in disfranchising the Negroes when the North no longer wished to bear the costs and the inconveniences of upholding its military regime indefinitely. Slavery as an institution was, of course, out, as was also the possibility of pretending that the South was God's richest and best social creation. Large sectors of the elaborate philosophy of the *ante-bellum* South therefore had to be consigned to oblivion. But the doctrine of white supremacy became, under these conditions, the more paramount. On this point practically all whites agreed: the impoverished and embittered aristocrats; the *parvenus*, struggling for status; and the masses of poor white people, afraid of competition from the hated and despised black freedmen.

The former Negro slaves, therefore, started their new life as free citizens with a solid mistrust against them, which was crystallized into an elaborate political philosophy, powerful even in its partial disorganization. The very idea of awarding Negroes suffrage was, to the average Southerner, preposterous. The white South *wanted the Negroes to fail as freedmen* and saw in their failure a confirmation of their own wisdom and the Northerners' folly.

5. THE RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

But the North was in power and Negro suffrage received constitutional sanction. Thus Southern conservatism started out with the law against it. After having lost out as rebels against the Union, the Southern conservatives had now to be rebels in their own land. And as they did not have the power to overthrow the fundamental laws of the Union, they had through generations, and have today, to persist as transgressors of law and order.

The white Southerners' attitudes toward the Reconstruction Amendments deserve some comments. It seems probable, from the literature on the Negro problem after the Civil War, that the abolition of slavery was soon widely accepted as irrevocable. Even if, up to this day, the average Southerner is inclined to paint the institution in somewhat brighter colors than is a Northerner, the opinion early established itself that slavery was incompatible with social and economic progress and, indeed, had been the curse of the Old South. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which granted the Negroes civil rights and suffrage, were not so readily accepted by Southern opinion. They were looked upon as the supreme foolishness of the North, and, worse still, as an expression of ill-will of the Yankees toward the defeated South. The Negro franchise became the symbol of the humiliation of the South.

Later, during the movement to legalize disfranchisement in the decades around the turn of the century, proposals to have the federal Amendments abolished popped up here and there.[24] Such proposals, however, were never part of serious discussion. The obvious impossibility of getting the Northern states to agree was reason enough for that. Corporate business had developed a vested interest in the Fourteenth Amendment. Its proviso guaranteeing all "persons" due process of law turned out to be much more useful in defending corporate business against public interferences and control than in securing political and other civic rights for the Negro.[25] Apart from this particular interest, Northern sentiment could hardly be expected to tolerate such a retreat in principle, even if it was prepared to wink at flagrant circumvention in Southern practice. But it is probable that soon after their passage the two Amendments, and the principle of civic equality they expressed, had acquired a certain amount of idealistic attachment even in the South.[26]

In the South of today the writer has observed that many white persons above the least educated strata are inclined to agree in principle that even the Negro has a sort of "right" to vote. With the majority of Southerners, this idea is, of course, only one element in an inconsistent system of thoughts wherein also the very opposite principle is contained and is, indeed, given greater emphasis. This conflict might be important as a symptom of change toward national ideals sanctioned by the American Creed. It shows itself in the fact that the principle as such is seldom denied, except by persons with exceptionally anti-legal leanings.[27]

The statutory requirements of property and poll tax payment, literacy, understanding of the Constitution, good character, and so forth[28]—which at the time of their enactment were openly declared to aim only at circumvention of the constitutional Amendments[29]—are more and more being thought of as within the Constitution. Probably a majority of Southerners, and not only liberal Southerners, are prepared to state that in time to come, when Negroes become educated, the South will have to give them the vote. Attempting to reconcile their electoral practices with constitutional requirements, the Southerners have become accustomed to insist that they are not discriminating against "race, color or previous condition of servitude" but only against ignorance and irresponsibility. Repeating these statements throughout the years, reading them, and hearing them has the effect of conditioning the Southerners to believe them. It is a difficult task for even the most sophisticated person to keep on saying something for a purpose without eventually coming to believe in it—with at least half his soul.

But keeping the Negroes disfranchised in the face of the clear-cut constitutional Amendments allows Southern conservatism nothing more than a pretense of respect for the law. On this most crucial point it is doomed to insincerity.

6. MEMORIES OF RECONSTRUCTION

A review of the various devices by which the Negroes are disfranchised in the South today cannot avoid exposing a rather odious panorama of legal trickery, unfair administration, intimidation and forthright violence.[a] In explanation of this the Southerner will regularly bring forward the horrors of the Reconstruction governments and "black domination." These memories are in a sense cherished. They serve a vital defensive function to the white South. Even the liberal Southerner—and quite particularly when he ventures to criticize these very practices, which he often does with courage and vision—has to express his abhorrence of the Reconstruction atrocities. They are, in fact, symbols of regional allegiance.

The North needs them, also, though to a lesser degree, in order to

[a] See Chapter 22.

rationalize the national compromise of the 1870's and the condoning, since then, of the South's open break with the spirit of the Constitution. Playing up the venality, extravagance, and incompetence of the Reconstruction governments and touching lightly the pride and prejudices of the revolting South is, in addition, a means of reconciling the two regions. It has thus a "patriotic function" in healing the wounds of the Civil War. For all these reasons, it is to be expected that the horrors have been considerably exaggerated. The writing of the history of this epoch has, until recently, responded in a considerable degree to this popular demand of the American whites for rationalization and national comfort.[30]

The dominant history of the period is incompatible with a number of facts that force themselves to our attention. The "carpetbaggers" were not simply Northerners who came down to prey on the devastated South. The great majority of them were either agents sent out by the federal government, to try to help the South to its feet under the principles of the Constitution and its Amendments, or they were New England Abolitionists, often spinsters, who saw their mission in the education of the Negroes.[a] The federal government did not send its agents to the South until 1867, after the South had demonstrated for over two years—by such devices as the Black Codes—that it was determined to retain slavery in fact if not in name. It is true that these carpetbaggers did some stupid things, that their plans were unformulated and inconsistent and that the federal government failed to give them adequate backing. The "scalawags" were mainly poor and ignorant native Southerners who saw a chance—in the South's defeat —to effect something of a revolution against the relatively few wealthy aristocrats. But many of them had honestly and consistently wanted the abolition of slavery, and not a few of them were the Southern inheritors of the great Jeffersonian and, especially, Jacksonian traditions. Some of them had been prominent Whigs before the Civil War.[31] Some of them had consistently favored the Union cause throughout the Civil War when it was extremely unpopular to do so. The masses of Negroes were, of course, uneducated, and a number of them were resentful of their former masters. But they never engaged in organized violence against the whites. They were led by the educated carpetbaggers and by the free Southern and Northern Negroes who had quite often attained a high level of education. Actually, there were only 22 Negro members of Congress[b] from 1870 to 1901; 10 of these had gone to college. The Northern Republicans also came in for their share of vilification. For example, few names in Amer-

[a] Some of the carpetbaggers were businessmen, but these were not always interested in politics.

[b] Twenty of these were in the House of Representatives; the other two were in the Senate (at different times). (Samuel Denny Smith, *The Negro in Congress 1870-1901* [1940], pp. 4-7.)

ican history have come down with such an evil reputation as that of Thaddeus Stevens, the leader of the Republican party in the House of Representatives until his early death in 1868. There are glimmerings of evidence that Stevens had an enlightened plan of social reform far in advance of his time, and that he was not at all violent in inciting Negroes to put their former masters under heel. These few facts, and a consideration of the conditions under which the history of the Reconstruction period has been written, suggest that more efforts ought to be made by American historians to write a complete and dispassionate history of that period, a history which would have to rely on primary rather than on secondary sources.[32]

The school book histories, as well as the more scholarly histories, perpetuate the myths about the Reconstruction period. They still give, for the most part, undue emphasis to the sordid details of the Reconstruction governments but avoid mentioning their accomplishments. They exaggerate the extent of "black domination" and deprecate the Negro politicians even more than they deserve, while they give subtle excuses for the cruelty and fraud employed in the restoration of white supremacy. They usually make all the errors found in the scholarly histories and omit all the complicating qualifications that make the scholarly histories have a semblance of objectivity. Particularly is this true of the history textbooks prepared for Southern schools.[33] The present generation of Southerners, on the whole, is given a more objective picture of the Civil War and Reconstruction than the previous generation received. But their knowledge is still distorted, and their attitudes toward the Negro and the North are correspondingly unfriendly.

It is apparent that, quite independent of what he thinks happened during Reconstruction, the average white Southerner resents the thought of Negroes voting on a par with white men.[34] Yet the Constitution is very clear in specifying that no one is to be kept from voting for reasons of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Thus the Southerner is forced to circumvent the Constitution if he is to keep the Negroes from voting. But the Constitution and its principles have a grip on the Southerner's own soul. He therefore needs to believe that when the Negro voted, life was unbearable. The myth of the horrors of Reconstruction thus permits the Southerner to reconcile the two conflicting desires within himself. They are, in our terminology, false beliefs with a purpose.

7. THE TRADITION OF ILLEGALITY

While, as we said, the Northerner generally is likely to be less inclined to discriminate against the Negro, the more formal and impersonal a relation is and, specifically, when the relation is between public authority and the individual Negro citizen,[a] the white Southerner is inclined to react

[a] See Section 3 of this chapter.

in nearly the opposite way. Already in the *ante-bellum* elections, political campaigning and voting had acquired a ceremonial significance as marking off a distinct sphere of power and responsibility for the free citizen. From Reconstruction on, voting remained to the white Southerner more than a mere action: it was, and still is, a symbol of superiority. Partly because it is a public activity and does not lend itself to privacy or segregation, it becomes so hard for the white Southerner to admit the Negro to full participation in it.[a] This is one side of the general difference between the two regions so often noticed: that the white Northerners may dislike and ignore the Negro but are prepared to give him his formal rights, while in the South even individual whites who like and care for Negroes cannot afford to give them their rights because this would imply equality.

In order to understand fully Southern conservative illegality, we have also to remember that the actual trickery, cheating and intimidation necessary for the smooth operation of disfranchisement need be indulged in by only a small number of persons. Most people can almost avoid it. Their collaboration is necessary only to the extent of preserving a public sentiment upholding and supporting the system. In most cases, a resolute registrar can himself take care of the matter. And even he does not need to act openly when it has once become generally known among the Negroes in a community that they had better keep away from all politics.

The illegal practices have also the sanction of tradition behind them. The present situation is conceived of as the outcome of the successful revolutionary movement against the Reconstruction governments. The chronicle of the Restoration—symbolized by the Ku Klux Klan and a great number of "protective" leagues and secret terror organizations such as the Pale Faces of Tennessee; the Constitutional Guards and the White Brotherhood of North Carolina; the Knights of the White Camellia in Louisiana and Arkansas; the Council of Safety in South Carolina; the Men of Justice in Alabama; the Society of the White Rose, the Seventy-Six Association, and the Robinson Family in Mississippi; the Knights of the Rising Sun and the Sons of Washington in Texas—offers a most amazing, sometimes ludicrous, but more often pathetic and tragic, reading.

Guy B. Johnson characterizes Reconstruction as, in a sense, "a prolonged race riot":

> The Ku Klux Klan and a dozen similar organizations which sprang up over the South were as inevitable as a chemical reaction. Their purpose was punitive and regulatory, the restoration of absolute white supremacy. They flogged, intimidated, maimed, hanged, murdered, not only for actual attacks and crimes against whites, but for all sorts of trivial and imagined offenses. Every Negro was assumed to be "bad"

[a] We do not mean, of course, that the Southerner's purpose in disfranchising the Negro is not to prevent him from having power. We are merely pointing out that the "no social equality" theory applies to politics. (See Chapter 28, Section 6.)

> unless he proved by his actions that he was "good.". . . Every Negro militia drill, every meeting or convention for the political or social advancement of the Negro took on the aspect of a "conspiracy" or an "insurrection." The number of Negroes killed during Reconstruction will never be known. Five thousand would probably be a conservative estimate.[35]

After the overthrow of the Reconstruction government in all Southern states, which was consummated by 1877, a tendency to abstain from violence and threats of violence as a means of keeping the Negroes away from the polls gradually developed. With the state governments safely in their hands, the dominant white Southerners found it easier to buy, steal, or fail to count the Negro vote or to block the Negroes' voting by intricate election laws and manipulation of the election machinery.

> Polling places were set up at points remote from colored communities. Ferries between the black districts and voting booths went "out of repair" on election day. Grim-visaged white men carrying arms sauntered through the streets or stood near the polling booths. In districts where the blacks greatly outnumbered the whites, election officials permitted members of the superior race to "stuff the ballot box," and manipulated the count without fear of censure. Fantastic gerrymanders were devised to nullify Negro strength. The payment of poll taxes, striking at the Negro's poverty and carelessness in preserving receipts, was made a requirement for voting. Some states confused the ignorant by enacting multiple ballot box laws which required the voter to place correctly his votes for various candidates in eight or more separate boxes. The bolder members of the colored race met threats of violence, and, in a diminishing number of instances, physical punishment. When the black man succeeded in passing through this maze of restrictions and cast his vote there was no assurance that it would be counted. Highly centralized election codes vested arbitrary powers in the election boards, and these powers were used to complete the elimination of the Negro vote.[36]

The pattern of illegality was thus firmly entrenched in Southern politics and public morals. "A strong man struggling upward under the consciousness of submergence and suffocation strikes right and left with little thought of either principle or policy,"[37] explains an upright Southerner. So, undoubtedly, did the white South feel when justifying the means to the end. But the means became a permanent pattern in the region.

This fatal tradition of illegality has even deeper historical roots. The vigilante conservatives of the 'seventies did not create the patterns anew but simply took over and perfected the methods utilized by the Reconstruction governments themselves in their efforts to remain in power. These governments had often gerrymandered districts in order to gain the full weight of the Negro vote. They had created highly centralized election machinery, which later became so handy to the conservatives, and they had utilized unscrupulously this machinery and the Negro militia for controlling elections. Often these elections were tainted with fraud, intimi-

dation and violence. The post-Reconstruction governments merely went to much greater extremes in illegal practices than already existed.

But even the Reconstruction governments were not entirely original. Already before the Civil War the white South had gradually been conditioned for at least thirty years to sustain increasing suppression of freedom of speech and all other civil liberties in the service of upholding its solidarity.[38]

The methods used and the rationalizations defending them must also be understood against the background of the region's peculiar rural structure. About the South today, Rupert B. Vance points out that:

> . . . it can safely be said that no flavor is stronger than that imparted by the frontier. No traits of the frontier can safely be neglected by the social historian as an antiquarian's item. . . . The South still possesses the largest number of practically self-sufficing farms to be found in any comparable area in the nation. Its rural life is characterized by isolated farmsteads in the open country. If southern conditions of living have often appeared crude to the critics, it is for the reason that they have retained not only the usages but often the conditions of the frontier. More than any other section except the sparsely settled western range it has remained a pioneer belt, and the common man living in the open country faces much the same situation with the cultural heritage left by the frontier. While they were formative the folkways of the South got the stamp of the frontier. From the frontier, part of the area passed to the plantation, but the plantation area retained many of the frontier traits. Institutions and customs are still tinged with the shades of the forest, whether as survivals or as adjustments to ruralism.[39]

If this is true today, it was still more so in the *ante-bellum* South. W. F. Cash, following up this line of thought, comments:

> . . . in this world of ineffective social control, the tradition of vigilante action, which normally lives and dies with the frontier, not only survived but grew so steadily that already long before the Civil War and long before hatred for the black man had begun to play any direct part in the pattern (of more than three hundred persons said to have been hanged or burned by mobs between 1840 and 1860, less than ten per cent were Negroes) the South had become peculiarly the home of lynching.[40]

Thus the opportunistic disrespect for law, order and public morals has a complicated causation and a deep-rooted history in the South. The tradition is today still part of the way of life and as such is often patriotically cherished as distinctively Southern. It is certainly one of the most sinister historical heritages of the region. It spells danger for a democratic society and involves serious maladjustments.

CHAPTER 21

SOUTHERN CONSERVATISM AND LIBERALISM

1. The "Solid South"

Except for the Reconstruction period and for the period after Restoration culminating in the Populist movement (1890's), the South has consistently disfranchised the Negroes and has had to cling to the Democratic party to do so. This suppression of normal bi-partisan politics has given the region the appellation "Solid South." The South had a two-party system before 1830, and it was lost in the consolidation of forces against the North just before and during the Civil War. As we noted in the previous chapter, it was lost again at the close of Reconstruction.[1] But already by the end of the 'seventies and increasingly up to the first half of the 'nineties, the Populist movement divided the agrarian middle and lower class from the Democratic party, which was led by the plantation owners, industrialists, merchants and bankers. The rise to political importance of the agrarian radicals resulted in the fulfillment of the prediction that all precautions taken to keep the Negroes disfranchised would crumble if a split occurred in the ranks of the whites. Both factions appealed to the Negro voters. The regular Democrats, who were most familiar with the administrative machinery and who included most of the owners of plantations where Negroes were employed in large numbers, are said to have been most successful. But the agrarians were just as eager to get help where they could find it. In 1896 in North Carolina they joined the Republicans, and as a consequence more Negroes were appointed to offices in that state than ever before.[2] For more than half a decade, the Democratic party was virtually disrupted in most states of the South.

But the reaction soon got under way. A new movement to disfranchise the Negroes by more effective legal means—starting with the Mississippi Constitutional Convention of 1890 and continuing with the adoption of new constitutions in seven other states between 1895 and 1910—drew its main arguments from the danger of a break in white solidarity, demonstrated by the agrarian revolt. When Populism declined, and it did so rapidly after 1896, and the unity between the Populists and the Democrats became restored, the main dish at the love feasts was the disfranchisement of the Negro.[3]

After this crisis, the Democratic one-party rule has persisted practically unbroken until now, with the minor exception of the 1928 presidential campaign. In spite of a formidable armor of constitutional and statutory provisions for disfranchising the Negro and an extra-legal social pressure to complement the statutes, the main regions of the white South still do not dare to have any political division, lest the white factions be tempted to seek Negro support.[a] The irony of the situation is that the disfranchisement of the Negro had been argued as the only means of preventing corruption at the polls and of allowing the whites to divide along natural political lines. The second goal is obviously not reached, as the one-party system is still retained; since it is the only guarantee against Negro franchise, the elimination of the one-party system would be the basis for freedom of the whites to split. And to prevent corruption under a one-party system in a region with the unfortunate traditions of the South—when it is so difficult everywhere in America even when an opposition party is present—is practically impossible. In this vicious circle Southern politics is caught.

The one-party system in the South; its supporting election machine with its restrictions, intricacies, and manipulations; its vast allowances for arbitrary administration; and the low political participation of even the white people favor a *de facto* oligarchic regime, broken here and there, now and then, by demagogues from Tom Watson to Huey Long, who appeal to the lower classes among whites. The oligarchy consists of the big landowners, the industrialists, the bankers and the merchants.[4] Northern corporate business with big investments in the region has been sharing in the political control by this oligarchy.

There is an amazing avoidance of issues in Southern politics. "The South votes for men—Democratic men—but rarely ever for issues, unless the issue is defined in black and white."[5] We have to remember that in a measure this is a characteristic of all American politics.[b] But in the South, it is driven to its extreme. The chief direct reason for this is, of course, the one-party system which normally keeps politics within a single political machine and restricts the scope of political struggle to personalities and offices. The great Southern orator of the post-Restoration period, Henry W. Grady, gave the best rationalization of this situation as it is even today argued by the majority of the ruling class of the region. The reason is the Negro.

> The whites understand that the slightest division on their part will revive those desperate days [of Reconstruction]. . . . So that the whites have agreed everywhere to sink their differences on moral and economic issues, and present solid and

[a] There is a rump Republican party in the South, and in a few isolated areas it is actually dominant. For a discussion of this, see Chapter 22, Section 1.

[b] See Chapter 33.

> unbroken ranks to this alien and dangerous element. This once done, the rest is easy. Banded intelligence and responsibility will win everywhere and all the time. Against it numbers cannot prevail.[6]

It is not the Negro himself who is feared but "the baseness of white politicians" who might be tempted to use the Negro vote for "nefarious purposes":

> It may be asked, then: "Why do the Southern whites fear the political domination of the blacks?" They do not fear that directly. But the blacks are ignorant, and therefore easily deluded; strong of race instinct, and therefore clannish; without information, and therefore without strong political convictions; passionate, and therefore easily excited; poor, irresponsible, and with no idea of the integrity of the suffrage, and therefore easily bought. The fear is that this vast swarm of ignorant, purchasable and credulous voters will be compacted and controlled by desperate and unscrupulous white men, and made to hold the balance of power wherever the whites are divided. This fear has kept, and will keep, the whites "solid." It would keep the intelligence and responsibility of any community, North or South, solid.[7]

But there is a higher principle invoked to explain why "the whites shall have clear and unmistakable control of public affairs" and why a solid front must be preserved:

> They own the property. They have the intelligence. Theirs is the responsibility. For these reasons they are entitled to control. Beyond these reasons is a racial one. They are the superior race, and will not and can not submit to the domination of an inferior race.[8]

Against these arguments the Southern liberals hammer away. They point out that the one-party system fosters mediocrity, demagoguery, political apathy and irrationality. They point out that fear of the Negro shadows every political discussion and prevents the whites from doing anything to improve themselves. The conservative whites counter that the Southern system does allow for political division—in the primaries, though not in the general elections. This, however, is a myth which Southerners have carefully fostered: in 1940 only 36 of the 78 Democratic primaries—less than half—were contested in the eight poll tax states.[9] Thus, even in the primaries there is little opportunity for political division.

But undoubtedly there are sometimes real divisions even in the South on interests and issues: poor people against rich, the hill country against the plantation lands, the coast against the inland. But the fact that the issues have to be fought out under cover of personalities and within a one-party machine must, particularly in a region of inadequate political education, confuse those issues. It has, indeed, been the tradition and the spirit of the "Solid South" to have such confusion, as the party machine is always sensing, and capitalizing upon, the danger of a serious political division. The newspapers usually respect this tradition. They publish the

generalities contained in the various candidates' platforms and speeches but usually abstain from giving information on the real issues which might sometimes be involved.

Even admitting, therefore, that the one-party system allows for a certain number of issues and divisions, it must be maintained that, in a considerable degree, the one-party rule of the South obliterates healthy democratic politics, both in national and in local affairs. There is a considerable amount of truth in W. E. Du Bois' bitter characterization:

> The white primary system in the South is simply a system which compels the white man to disenfranchise himself in order to take the vote away from the Negro. . . . The mass of people in the South today have no knowledge as to how they are governed or by whom. Elections have nothing to do with broad policies and social development, but are matters of selection of friends to lucrative offices and punishment of personal enemies. Local administration is a purposely disguised system of intrigue which not even an expert could unravel.[10]

2. SOUTHERN CONSERVATISM

Democratically organized people's movements, giving voice to the needs of the simple citizen and a power basis for his full participation in the control of society, do not thrive in this political atmosphere. To an extent the lack of organized mass participation in government is a general American characteristic.[a] The South shows even less popular political interest than the rest of the country. Except for the Ku Klux Klan, which lacked positive political goals, the Prohibition movement, which was based more on emotion than on reason, and the Populist movement, which, in the South as all over the country, was loose in organization and confused in aims and which achieved little, the South has never experienced organized mass movements of a political character.

There have been few spontaneous movements to improve the well-being of the masses of people, such as trade unions or adult education. Even the farmers' cooperative movement has been lagging in the South,[11] and what has come in has been due mainly to the efforts of the federal government. The Southern masses do not generally organize either for advancing their ideals or for protecting their group interests. The immediate reason most often given by Southern liberals is the resistance from the political oligarchy which wants to keep the masses inarticulate. This has also been the initial situation in most other regions and countries, but in these others eventually the organized and self-disciplined mass movements have come to form the very basis for a revitalized democracy. The deeper reasons are again the low level of political culture in the South, which has become solidified partly in the region's steadfast struggle to keep the Negro from participation.

[a] See Chapter 33.

All modern reform movements which have penetrated the rest of the country and gradually changed American society—woman suffrage and economic equality, collective bargaining, labor legislation, progressive education, child welfare, civil service reform, police and court reform, prison reform—have, until recently, hardly touched the greater part of the South except in so far as the federal government has imposed them from the outside. In particular, there has been no active participation of the masses. Recently they have become the interest of the upper class liberals around the universities and other cultural centers. Southern liberalism—which will be discussed in further detail below—is beautiful and dignified. It preserves much of the philosophical grace of the mythical old aristocratic South. But until the New Deal came, it had no source of power. Even yet it does not have contact with, or support by, the masses. Social reform is now coming rapidly to the South, but it is coming mainly from Washington. For a hundred years this region, which played such an important and distinguished role in the American Revolution and in the early history of the Republic, has not contributed to the nation anything approaching its fair share of fresh political thinking and forward-looking political initiative in national issues. It has, on the whole, served as a reactionary drag against the forces of change and progress.

This political conservatism is directly tied up with the Negro problem in several ways. The devices inaugurated to disfranchise Negroes, the one-party system, the low political participation on the part of the white masses, and other peculiarities of Southern politics, all tend to give a disproportionate power to classes, groups and individuals who feel their interests tied up with conservatism in social issues. But there is also a more direct connection between Southern conservatism and the Negro problem. For constitutional and other reasons, social reform measures will have to include Negroes, and this is resented. The conservative opponents of reform proposals can usually discredit them by pointing out that they will improve the status of the Negroes, and that they prepare for "social equality." This argument has been raised in the South against labor unions, child labor legislation and practically every other proposal for reform.

It has been argued to the white workers that the Wages and Hours Law was an attempt to legislate equality between the races by raising the wage level of Negro workers to that of the whites. The South has never been seriously interested in instituting tenancy legislation to protect the tenants' rights and at the same time to improve agriculture, and the argument has again been that the Negro sharecropper should not be helped against the white man.[a] I have met this same argument everywhere in the South when discussing economic and social reforms: "We don't want our Negroes

[a] See Chapter 10, Section 4.

to..." The poor white Southerners are apparently still prepared to pay the price of their own distress in order to keep the Negro still lower.

Liberals commonly describe this argument as a "red herring," intentionally used by the reactionaries to distract and deceive the ignorant public and to discredit reforms. But this argument is not merely deceptive. It most certainly has a kernel of truth in it. Of necessity, social reforms involve changes which are general, and social cooperation, to be effective, cannot remain confined exclusively to whites. All social reforms involve an element of economic and social equalization which, by the very logic of things, cannot wholly set the Negroes apart. In addition to technical factors and the constitutional barriers against making social legislation openly discriminatory, there is also the sense of rationality and fairness in the minds of the white Southerners themselves. "Social equality," in a sense, *will* be promoted in a society remade by social reforms; the caste order *was* more easily upheld in a conservative *laissez-faire* society. In spite of much discrimination, this has been the experience of the South during the New Deal. There is, therefore—and this should not be concealed—a measure of logic in the political correlation between the anti-Negro attitude and the traditional conservatism of the South generally. As the South is now gradually accepting social reform, it will also have to give up a considerable part of discrimination against the Negroes both in principle and in practice.

If social reforms have been lacking in the South, certain other changes have been going strong. The Prohibition movement, for example, has had widespread political support. William Archer, when he toured the South in the first decade of the twentieth century, could report that "the most remarkable phenomenon in the recent history of the South is the 'wave of prohibition' which has passed, and is passing, over the country. There are 20,000,000 people in the fourteen Southern States, 17,000,000 of whom are under prohibitory law in some form."[12] Even today, nearly a decade after the abolition of the Eighteenth Amendment, two Southern states—Mississippi and Oklahoma (and one Northern state—Kansas)—have laws prohibiting the sale of hard liquor. Even those states which do not have prohibition laws have strong prohibitionist sentiments. For example: in 1938 the Virginia legislature ordered the burning of a study of the physiological effects of liquor after they had paid to have this study made, simply because it observed that liquor in small quantities was not harmful.[13] These demonstrations against liquor are apparently not meant to affect white people; in most Southern states they are directed solely against the Negro.[a] Archer remarked that: "The presence of the negro in the South is a tower of strength to the prohibitionist."[14]

[a] In Mississippi, which is an absolutely dry state, the author saw more hard drinking

The South is also strongly religious. Not only is the nonchurch member comparatively rare, but the denominations tend to be more fundamentalist and evangelical than in the North. Although it would have to be checked by carefully collected quantitative data, my impression is that the sermons stress the Other World more often than this one and rely for a text more often on the Old Testament than on the New Testament. It would seem that the Southern white man, especially in the lower classes, goes to church more to get an emotional thrill than to get an intellectual framework into which to put his daily problems. These things are true in the North, too, but to a much smaller extent. In spite of his other-worldliness in church, the Southern preacher is often interested in power. Until recently he was often quite important in local politics: during the 1920's clergymen may almost be said to have dominated the South. They were a potent force behind the resuscitation of the Ku Klux Klan. They backed the "Blue Laws." They dominated many universities. The Dayton trial, which was fought over the question of teaching evolution in Tennessee, was only the most spectacular manifestation of the general power of the fundamentalist clergy.[15]

3. Is the South Fascist?

On account of the one-party system and the precarious state of civil liberties, the South is sometimes referred to as fascist. This is, however, wrong and just as wrong of the present as of the earlier South. The South entirely lacks the centralized organization of a fascist state. Southern politics is, on the contrary, decentralized and often even chaotic. The Democratic party is the very opposite of a "state party" in a modern fascist sense. It has no conscious political ideology, no tight regional or state organization and no centralized and efficient bureaucracy. The "regimentation" which keeps the South politically solid is not an organization *for* anything—least of all for a general policy—it is a regimentation *against* the Negro. The South is static and defensive, not dynamic and aggressive.

Fundamentally the white Southerner is—like the Negro, who is molded in the same civilization—even more of an individualist and more of a romantic than the Northerner. This is attested to by recent Southern analysts of "the mind of the South." The point has been particularly well established and explained by W. J. Cash in his recent book of this title.[16] These characteristics are a survival of the frontier civilization of the South. A ruling element of this tradition is "an intense distrust of, and, indeed, downright aversion to, any actual exercise of authority beyond the barest minimum essential to the existence of the social organism."[17] The Southerner wants and expects a personal touch, a measure of arbitrariness, and,

than he has ever before witnessed. Will Rogers is said to have remarked that "Mississippi will hold faithful and steadfast to prohibition as long as the voters can stagger to the polls."

indeed, of adventure in all his relations with public authorities. He wants them to be informal, considerate and personalized.

The South has not yet reached the objectivity and legality of the mature democracy. But still less does it resemble the tight, totalitarian regimentation of the fascist state. It might, perhaps, be said to contain elements of both. But, more fundamentally, the South is a stubbornly lagging American frontier society with a strong paternalistic tinge inherited from the old plantation and slavery system. Paternalism is cherished particularly as the ideal relation between whites and Negroes. The Southerner is proud of his benevolence toward Negro dependents but would resent vigorously their demanding this aid as a right. It must never be forgotten that the caste system has a petty positive angle and not only a gross negative one. Paternalism—as a social pattern which is personal, informal, determined by whimsy and the impulses of the moment, touched by humor and sentimentality, flattering the ego, but, nevertheless, not too expensive—fits ideally into the individualistic and romantic temper of the region.

Registrars and other county officials in the South show surprising indifference to, and sometimes brazen ignorance of, the laws and formal procedures. They are systematically careless, and they are proud of it. Even political discrimination against the Negro is haphazard and accidental in this romantic and individualistic region. Most of the time the Negro is not allowed to register or to vote, and he might risk anything up to his life in attempting to do it. But sometimes he is allowed: because he is a "good nigger," because "he has the right," because his voting "proves" that there is no discrimination, or for no particular reason at all, or just for the fun of doing the opposite of what is expected.

In most districts, most of the time, the Negro has also to be careful about what he indulges in as far as organizational activity and concerted political propaganda is concerned. In many communities leading white citizens make no secret of the fact that they are carefully following—with the assistance of Negro stool-pigeons—all signs of "subversive propaganda" and unrest among the Negroes in the community, and that they interfere to stop even innocent beginnings of Negro group activity. But more often, and again for no visible reason, the Negroes are let alone to organize and plead their causes as they please. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is often spoken of by conservative white Southerners as a serious danger, organized from the North to stir up Negroes in the South against the whites and to disrupt the social order there. One is told that anybody from that organization sneaking into the community will have to run fast in order not to be lynched. Incidents are related to show that this is not an empty threat. But the N.A.A.C.P. has local branches in over 100 cities in the South; and Garner, it is said, wanted to have the 1940 N.A.A.C.P. convention in Houston, Texas, and

had promised to have the Democratic state committee abolish the white primary rule in return for boosting the Garner candidacy for President among Northern Negroes.

Related to the South's individualism and frontier heritage is its strong democratic temper. Even the old harshly conservative slavery philosophy of the *ante-bellum* South stressed the fundamental equality of all white men.[a] "White supremacy" and, to a lesser degree, the defensive ideology of the alleged superiority of the pure Southern white stock to the mixed Northerners, tended to promote a feeling of fellowship and fundamental equality among Southern white men. In spite of economic class differences, accentuated by the slavery and plantation system, there was also much real democracy in the outer forms of social relations. The planters usually preferred to keep their aristocratic pretensions to themselves and to encourage the high-brow writers in their philosophizing about equality. The literature did not reach the masses anyway. The origin of most of the planter class from the same stock of people as the poor whites was a tie, particularly in the Deep South.[18] Democracy in daily human relations had, thus, much the same origin in the South as in other parts of America. The Civil War and the social convulsions during the succeeding decades certainly did not strengthen the feeling of rigid class differences. Even if in reality the South until this day remains much of a political oligarchy—where, however, the individual oligarchs are often changing—this oligarchy always has to appeal to the common white man as an equal and as the ultimate arbiter of political affairs.

Religion also tends to create a feeling of equality among human beings in the South—not even excluding the Negroes. An even stronger influence has been created by the American Creed. Southerners have been denouncing the North and its leveling theories on every convenient occasion for a hundred years, but they cannot help being gradually drawn into its orbit. In the middle of the 'eighties, Walter Hines Page and George Washington Cable—Page as editor of a weekly magazine, the *State Chronicle* (1883), in North Carolina and Cable with the publication of his book, *The Silent South* (1885)—started Southern self-criticism, and since then the South has had a growing school of nonscalawag liberals, all working in line with the national democratic ideals. They have been violently denounced. Some have abandoned work in the South and moved to the North. Even today they are denounced by perhaps the majority of Southerners. But most of the people who denounce them, nevertheless, take a regional pride in them. Their status in the South is definitely higher than is that of intellectual liberals in the North. And what is more, the Southern liberals have

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 4.

actually influenced considerably the thinking of the South far outside the circle of their direct followers.[a]

Despite all professions to the contrary, the acceptance in principle even by the conservative white Southerners of the American Creed explains why so many exceptions are made to the rule of excluding Negroes from voting. It opens many possibilities for a persistent strategy on the part of the Negro people to increase their political participation. It makes it possible that the barrier against them might, in the future, fall altogether. In fields other than politics, it is equally important to remember that the white conservative Southerner harbors the American Creed. Otherwise it would, for example, be difficult or impossible to explain why the Negroes in the South are getting so much, and are gradually getting even more, education. It would be just as impossible to explain why, in the local application of New Deal measures, Southern discrimination against the Negroes stops where it does. It would generally be inexplicable why the South, with all its traditions of inequality and illegality, is so definitely on the way toward social democracy and law observance, and why it is not headed the other way. The conservative Southerner is not so certain as he

[a] When discussing Southern politics with reactionary intellectuals and semi-intellectuals in the South—among them a high officer of the Ku Klux Klan—the present author had the following type of conversation, after my informant had expounded his social and political theory—a somewhat modified version of the aristocratic, patriarchal, solidarity philosophy discussed above—I tempted him with the following response: I accepted his ideal of political society, but I criticized the methods used to achieve it. We are living in a modern civilization, with vastly improved methods for political domination. In this era the old-fashioned methods of the South—election treachery, intimidation, occasional mob-justice—are outmoded; they are inefficient and socially wasteful. If modern techniques—which I described without going into detail—were to be applied to the Southern situation, a much greater security for the upper strata could be realized with much less cost and effort. It would indeed be beneficial even to poor rural whites and to the Negroes who could rapidly be brought to paint their shacks, screen their windows, keep up gardens, wash their babies, and take better care of their land and their crops. Industry could perhaps afford to pay somewhat higher wages if it were insured against outside interference with its workers, and if the workers were brought to feel a fundamental identity of interest with Capital.

Having thus been shown the ideal fascist state, the Southern reactionary's immediate and emphatic response would invariably be a version of the following: "No, sir! This is a country of liberty and equality of opportunity. Everyone in this American nation, high and low, white and black, rich and poor, values his freedom higher than anything else. Not for any promises of order and material well-being are we Americans willing to give up the fundamental tenets of our democracy."

In these or similar terms I have, time and again, been rewarded for projecting constructively the basic principles sometimes so freely pronounced by conservative white Southerners. The secret, I have been gradually convinced, is that the Southerner, too, and even the reactionary Southerner, harbors the whole American Creed in his bosom. It certainly does not dominate his political behavior: he is inconsistent and ambivalent. But it would be equally wrong to try to analyze the situation in the South without taking his allegiance to the American Creed into account.

sometimes sounds. He is a split personality. Part of his heart belongs to the American Creed. And if one argues that this is mere hypocrisy, he is entirely missing the point. The Southern conservative white man's faith in American democracy, which he is certainly not living up to, and the Constitution, which he is circumventing, are living forces of decisive dynamic significance.

4. THE CHANGING SOUTH

The South is changing rapidly. During the 'thirties the changes went into high speed. Those changes cover the whole field of social relations and are being analyzed in other chapters of this inquiry. At this point only a few summary hints are needed to stress their paramount importance for Southern politics.

It is easy to give the false impression that the South is static. The preceding pages of this chapter—taken by themselves—might also have fallen into this error. There are two main causes of this illusion. One is the extremely low starting points, in all respects—general education, political culture, economic standards—of the South at the end of the Civil War. The outside observer, today, who does not himself share in the breath-taking drama of the Southern people, will easily observe that the South is far behind the rest of the nation but might overlook the great changes that have occurred since the Civil War. To guard against this we have tried to be explicit about the humble beginnings.

The second cause is a curious tendency of most Southerners, a tendency related to their conservatism, to stress in conversation and literature that customs are strong and that there is much resistance to change. Reality is actually dynamic in the South, but people's ideas about reality are usually astonishingly static. The average Southerner does not seem to believe in the changes which are going on right before his own eyes. The pessimistic and conservative idea about the "mores" and the "folkways"—which supposedly cannot be changed by the "stateways"—is not only a particularly cherished notion among Southern social scientists, but is something of a regional religion for a large proportion of the literate people. The South is intensely conscious of its history, and there is a high level of historical knowledge among the educated classes. But history is not used, as in the North, to show how society is continuously changing, but rather, on the contrary, to justify the *status quo* and to emphasize society's inertia.

It is true that the presence of this bent of mind itself hampers social change. But the material and spiritual changes under way are so momentous that they cut through these barriers. Southerners are apt to say that "the poll tax will not be abolished in the South, for the courthouse gangs will not allow it," or that "Negroes will never vote in the South, for white people will not stand for it," or that "there are never going to be any

labor unions down here, for public opinion is against it." The truth is, of course, that the poll tax *is* abolished in three states (North Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida) already, and that it is likely to be abolished in the others as time passes.[a] The trend is clear and uni-directional: when the poll tax is once abolished in a state it is unlikely that it will be reintroduced there, while in the other states the discussion will continue about its abolition. The courthouse gangs and the local politicians might be against the reform, but there is a general upheaval of social and economic conditions in the South which is changing their basis of power. Likewise, Negroes *are* voting in some places in the South, and white people are tolerating it. In the new annual A.A.A. elections for the crop restriction program they are even voting right in the cotton counties of the Black Belt in perhaps even greater proportion than whites.[b]

Industrialization and urbanization are proceeding at a greater speed in the South than in other parts of the country. Agriculture in the South is facing a more thoroughgoing adjustment to world market conditions than elsewhere, and this structural change means more to the South because its economy is based on agriculture to a greater extent. Because of the coming economic changes and because of the high birth rate, migration may be expected to become more important than it now is, and migration always has far-reaching social effects. Unionization has proceeded in spite of all impediments. The national labor movement in America cannot indefinitely be expected to overlook the fact that the present conservative power constellation in the South is antagonistic to its interests. Indeed, it is something of a riddle that organized labor throughout the country has, for such a long time, acquiesced in the Southern situation.

The economic depression and the following prolonged stagnation during the 'thirties meant distress everywhere and particularly in the poor, backward, harassed South. The liberal New Deal which followed in the wake of the economic pressure was sponsored by the same national party which locally has meant the "Solid South," cultural traditionalism and political reaction. But apart from the fact of party allegiance, the South was actually too poor to scorn systematically the gifts of national charity, even if the price to be paid was the acceptance of social legislation and organized social reform. Not overlooking the considerable discrimination against Negroes in the local administration of New Deal measures in the South,[c] we must see that the New Deal has made a lasting break in Southern racial practices. It has been said that the South was once bought by the Northern capitalists, who did not care much for the Negroes and allowed the Southerners almost complete freedom in the pursuit of any kind of racial discrimination.

[a] While this book is in press, Tennessee has also abolished its poll tax.

[b] See Chapter 12, Section 5, and Chapter 22, Section 3.

[c] See Chapters 12 and 15.

Now Washington is the main "buyer" of the South. And Washington usually seeks to extend its assistance regardless of race.

Washington is not consistent in its racial policy, it is true. The New Deal, whatever its leadership and its aspirations, is bridled by shrewd politicians who must be just as reluctant to break openly with Southern conservatism as with the corrupt city machines in the North. But at the same time these politicians have to look out for the labor vote and for the Negro vote in the North, which again strengthens the forces working for nondiscrimination in the New Deal. There is, in the game, plenty of room for skillful log-rolling; the Southern conservatives in Congress and at home will often succeed in blocking rules and policies drawn up by the New Dealers to protect the Negroes' right to their equal share. The fight goes on under cover. But sometimes it flares into the open, as when Southern reactionary congressmen utilize their strategic committee positions to defeat or restrict some proposal of the New Deal. This blocking of social reform by Southern congressmen and the more general condition—which existed long before the New Deal—for Southern congressmen to exert a disproportionate influence on legislation because of their longer tenure and the consequent importance of their committee assignments and prestige, *is one of the main reasons why the Negro problem is a national one and not merely a sectional one.* Northern politicians are becoming aware of this fact before the Northern public.

If, in the main, the New Deal has to deal tactfully with Southern congressmen, the latter cannot afford to break off entirely from the New Deal either. The Democratic party is their means of reaching out into national politics. And, besides, they have to watch their home front, where the New Deal is getting popular with the masses. The race issue, in these New Deal measures, is never an isolated element which can be cut off; it is always involved in the bigger issue of whether poor people shall be helped or not. The fundamental fact is that the South is poor and in clear need of social assistance and economic reform. To this must be added a personal factor of considerable weight. Roosevelt is not just another Democratic President. He has succeeded in becoming truly popular among the common people in the South, and he has taught them to demand more out of life in terms of security and freedom from want. He has acquired such prestige that the epithet "nigger lover" simply cannot be applied to him. Even the most conservative Southerner will scarcely dare to come out against him personally in the same way as do Republican conservatives in the North.

In this way Southern political conservatism as a whole, and even on the race point, has to retreat and compromise. Meanwhile, the entire South is experiencing the benefits of the various federal policies. A general trend of centralization of governmental functions—from local governments to

state governments, and from state governments to federal governments—is helping to give the South a new kind of administration. Even more in the South than in the rest of the country the New Deal takes on the form of a popular movement. Partly under the stimulation of the New Deal, the people of the South are coming to organize themselves for a wide variety of purposes: in county planning and other agricultural groups, in 4-H clubs, in credit associations and cooperatives, in religious reform groups, discussion forums, fact-finding committees, parent-teacher associations, interracial commissions, professional organizations and civic betterment leagues. Some of these organizations are much older than the New Deal, but the whole trend has certainly gained momentum during recent years. The relation to the political New Deal of these variegated civic activities is apparent. The people behind it are the same as those working for the New Deal. Often those organizations are initiated and financed by the N.Y.A., the W.P.A., and the F.S.A. or some of the other government agencies.

Small numbers of Southerners, even in the lower classes, are thus gradually becoming accustomed to meeting together for orderly discussion of their problems. We have already observed the lack, in the South even more than in the North, of self-generating peoples' movements. The activity which we are now considering is certainly not a spontaneous outflow from the intelligent demands of problem-conscious masses. It is spoon-fed from above. But we must be careful not to under-estimate its potentialities. The building up of a social democracy does not, perhaps, follow exactly the same pattern everywhere. It may be that as small groups from the masses are in this way reached by modern political thought, they will, in their turn, act as catalysts bringing political intelligence and organizational solidarity to the vast dormant masses of white and black people in the South.

The New Deal—particularly in the South—does not rate highly when judged by norms of administrative efficiency. There has been lack of careful planning, coordination, and persistency, and there has also been waste of personnel and money. But the New Deal has spirit—particularly in the South. And it has done what many of the more efficient national welfare policies in other countries have rather neglected: it has strongly emphasized the education of the people. Such agencies as, for instance, the Farm Security Administration, have perhaps their most outstanding accomplishment in the education of the masses for a fuller and more efficient life. By actually changing the people, and not only assisting them economically, the New Deal becomes the more potent as a dynamic factor undermining the *status quo* in the South.

The docility of the people on the plantations and in the textile mills—so different from the common stereotype of the independent, upright

American—is, of course, the very thing to be educated away. But in the initial effort at change, this docility gives the public agencies the opportunity to use an element of patriarchal compulsion in the right direction, which speeds up the educational process. The poorest farmer in the Scandinavian countries or in England—or in the Middle West, for that matter—would not take benevolent orders so meekly as Negro and white sharecroppers do in the South. But if use is made of dependence and paternalism, the aim is independence and self-reliance. It has to be remembered that these people have lived in still greater dependence before, and that their close supervision by federal agencies is to be regarded as a weaning process.

If we note further that the long-run trend in the South toward a higher level of general education and cultural participation of both Negroes and whites is steadily proceeding, we have accounted for the main dynamic factors in the Southern political situation. They all accumulate to bring Southern conservatism into a process of gradual disintegration. In this period of accelerated change, the Second World War has come to America. Some of the specific New Deal policies are being discontinued. Undoubtedly this War will have some of the usual effects of all wars in the direction of cultural and political reaction.[19] It is reported that the Ku Klux Klan is preparing for a new and glorious comeback after this War is over. But, more fundamentally, the War will probably work toward a still greater speeding up of most of the changes under way. And the War is fought for democracy, for the "American way of life"—which is certainly not Southern traditionalism.

In these changes, the various areas of the South are proceeding at different levels. The Deep South lags somewhat behind the Upper South, the Southwest, and the Border states, just as these are not as advanced as the Northern and Western regions of the country. These regional differences give us a sort of observational check in our analysis of the changes in time; they are especially useful in foreseeing the future of the Deep South.

No Yankee will be tactless enough to mention it, in so many words, and no Southerner can afford to admit it, but *the main thing happening to the South is that it is gradually becoming Americanized.*

5. SOUTHERN LIBERALISM

Southern liberalism is not liberalism as it is found elsewhere in America or in the world. It is a unique species. It is molded by the forces of the region where it carries out its fight. As an intellectual and ideological phenomenon it is, as we shall find, highly interesting. But in spite of its local, not to say provincial, character, it has always had its chief strategic function as a liaison agent with the North. *It gets its power from outside the South.* For decades Southern liberals have been acting as the trusted

advisors and executors of the Northern philanthropists who wanted to do something for the region. During the 'thirties they received a much more potent trusteeship; namely, to bring the New Deal into effect in the South. The power and prestige of this function, and, even more, the entire series of recent changes in the Southern social scene, have given them a high political importance in the South.

As social change gains momentum in the South, the future of Southern liberalism might become great. But it must be recognized that, outside the sphere dominated by Washington, its actual influence today on Southern politics is still minor. It has as yet little organized support among the broad masses of workers, farmers and lower middle class. It is mostly a fraternity of individuals with independent minds, usually living in, and adjusting to, an uncongenial social surrounding. Many of them are tolerated and even respected because of their high standing in their professions, their family background or their general culture. They are the intellectuals of the region and are responsible for a large part of the entire high-grade literary, journalistic and scientific output of the region. They are so relatively few that the student of the South and its problems can hardly avoid coming to know first-hand and personally a representative sample of the group. They are, indeed, the cultural façade of the South.

Here and there they have influenced state and local affairs to a limited extent. During the 'thirties the backing from Washington increased this type of local political influence. But nowhere in the South are they in power. The one exception to prove the rule is former Mayor Maury Maverick of San Antonio, Texas. A few have, however, reached out into national politics. Only two senators in the Upper and Lower South—Claude Pepper of Florida and Lister Hill of Alabama (successor to Justice Hugo Black)—and two or three Southern representatives (notably, Robert Ramspeck of Georgia) could be considered as liberals. It seems to be easier for a Southern liberal to win a seat in Congress than to be really influential at home. One of the most prominent of them, Justice Hugo Black, has entered the Supreme Court after serving as senator. Quite a number of Southern liberals have held important positions in the central New Deal administration and thus, through Washington, moved things quite a bit in their own South. They have been the distinguished "scalawags" of the 'thirties. A representative and prominent man in this group is W. W. Alexander, the former chief of the Farm Security Administration.

But for the rest, Southern liberalism has its main stronghold in a few universities and among newspaper editors, both found most often in the Upper South. President Frank P. Graham of the University of North Carolina is a national figure—which means much in the South—and is thus strong enough even to maintain a thoroughly liberal and, in some respects, unorthodox faculty. North Carolina is, in addition, a fairly liberal

state, as Southern states go, and proud of the national reputation of its University. But even in the Deep Southern state of Georgia, the college has a slight liberal influence. When recently Governor Eugene Talmadge, one of the most vicious demagogues of the South, tried to dismiss ten educators in the state's highest institutions, he met the condemnation of the regional educational association, the vociferous protest of the students and even the mild protests of the remaining teachers. Even though the issue was a racial one, the opposition was quite vigorous—much more vigorous than Talmadge had bargained for and much more vigorous than he would have received a generation ago. Mainly as a consequence of his attacks on academic freedom, Talmadge was defeated at the following election.

Some of the liberal editors in the Upper South, such as Jonathan Daniels, Virginius Dabney, and Mark Ethridge, also enjoy a certain amount of protection in their liberal views through the fact that they have achieved positions of national eminence. But many others do not. And all of them have to sell their papers in the local market to make a living.

In this situation it is evident that the result must be a rigorous selection of the liberal professors and editors in the South. For men of humble origin and modest gifts and vision it is actually too dangerous to be liberal in the region. It is an obvious fact—usually never denied in the South even by conservatives—that the liberal professors and editors reach professional standards far superior to the average in the region. This gives to liberalism in the South a flavor of intellectual superiority, which is likely to attract the most ambitious youths. And because it makes such high demands upon a person in the way of talent and courage, mediocre youth avoid it. As some Southern liberals under the New Deal have been awarded important functions in national administration and politics, this adds more appeal but, again, only to the select. To a degree this is the situation everywhere in the world. It is always safest to be a conformer, but there are "glittering prizes for the one who has a brave heart and a cutting blade," as the late British statesman Lord Birkenhead once told an English student assembly.[20] In the South the selective process seems to work with much more sharpness than elsewhere in America.

To the group of outstanding liberals in the South belong also such writers of fiction as Erskine Caldwell, Paul Green, William Faulkner, Ellen Glasgow, Julia Peterkin, Du Bose Heyward, and Thomas S. Stribling. Their direct influence in the South is probably much smaller than could be assumed, as in all likelihood the majority of their readers are Northerners. Book reading is restricted in the South. The North has always been, and still is, the main public for Southern authors.

There are also labor union officials among the Southern liberals. The growing group of social workers and people employed locally in the various federal agencies contain also a significant portion of liberals. In addition,

there are solitary idealists living all over the huge region—teachers, some doctors, a few lawyers, occasionally a queer businessman or planter, a number of ministers, and many educated married women of the upper and middle class who enjoy the culture of leisure. Many women's organizations, for instance, the American Association of University Women or the League of Women Voters, are locally strong forces for liberalism. There are other liberal organizations; for example, the interracial commissions[a] or the Fact Finding Committee of Georgia—a Southern state where such a group and such work would be least expected, judging by the office-holders and the policies pursued.

But Southern liberalism has generally not reached even this preliminary stage of organization. The nearest approach to an organized political front was the Southern Conference on Human Welfare, which met in 1938 in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1940 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and in 1942 in Nashville, Tennessee. The author, who was present at the first occasion, had a feeling that the real importance of this meeting was that here for the first time in the history of the region, since the era of the American Revolution, the lonely Southern liberals met in great numbers—actually more than twelve hundred—coming from all states and joined by their colleagues in Washington; and that they, in this new and unique adventure, experienced a foretaste of the freedom and power which large-scale political organization and concerted action give.

At these conferences Southern Negroes were present and played an important role. It is a fact of more potential than actual political importance that practically all Southern Negro intellectuals and probably a majority of the Negro professionals and business people are, at heart, liberals. It is natural both that their interests are concentrated upon the Negro problem and that their attitudes toward other issues, where they are practically without a voice, are less well considered and articulated.[b]

When attempting to map the political opinions of white Southern liberalism, it must first be recalled that the region is exceptional in Western nonfascist civilization since the Enlightenment in that *it lacks nearly every trace of radical thought.*[c] In the South all progressive thinking going further than mild liberalism has been practically nonexistent for a century.

[a] See Chapter 39, Section 11.

[b] See Part IX.

[c] This *is* unique. Even in a most conservative country like Germany during the nineteenth century, all grades of opinions, from extreme conservatism to extreme radicalism, were represented in the public discussion. The German radicals of that period—various types of intellectual socialists, syndicalists, communists, and anarchists—sometimes met difficulties in getting their stuff into print; sometimes they had to live in exile for a while, as did Karl Marx. But they kept their allegiance and usually they came back and continued their participation in the public debate of their home country.

The full spectrum of opinion is thus never quite completely represented in public discussion in the South.

This is undoubtedly a handicap from the viewpoint of general political culture conceived of as a balanced ensemble of voices, where the richness of the harmony is attained out of the dispute between disparate tones and timbres. The Southern harmony of opinions is based on a narrow range. The explanation of this extraordinary situation is again ultimately the Negro, the slavery institution, the conflict with the North and the strain since then to keep the South solid. The margin of tolerance for political opposition is still narrow. Too, since the region is only a part of the larger America, the few radicals have been able to move freely to the North; and they have stayed there because, not having the difficulties of immigrants, they can easily fit into the new surroundings and find rich outlets for their interests and ideals.

The second main consideration when judging Southern liberalism is that *the liberals are so definitely a political minority*. Liberalism—as well as conservatism—takes on a quite different character depending upon whether it is in opposition or in power. Southern liberalism has not only been in opposition but has also been far from realizing even an expectation to be in political power within the short-range view. This accounts for the rather academic nature of liberal thinking in the South. Until recently Southern liberals planned their programs without thinking in terms of the actual power constellation and without taking account of the detailed demands of practical social engineering. The situation, however, is rapidly changing. The Southern liberals working for the New Deal *have* power and *are* thinking realistically in terms of power and practical plans. In the local issues, not touched by the New Deal, however, liberalism is still largely academic.

For the same reason—lack of expectation to be in power—the Southern liberal, in an extraordinary way, has become inclined to stress the need for patience and to exalt the cautious approach, the slow change, the organic nature of social growth. Southern liberalism is, in these respects, still often expressed in terms which remind one much more of Edmund Burke, the great conservative thinker of a hundred and fifty years ago, than of modern liberalism in the North or in other democratic countries. In their activities Southern liberals have developed the tactics of evading principles; of being very indirect in attacking problems; of cajoling, coaxing and luring the public into giving in on minor issues.

The general public of the South is often spoken of by Southern liberals as hopelessly backward, but at the same time it is flattered in the most extravagant terms of regional mythology. It is made a main point that the Southern public must not be enraged into resistance. It becomes the fine art of politics to get the public to tolerate or accept changes which it does

not quite understand, as they are never raised as issues and not talked about straightforwardly. Petty changes are hailed as great victories. Southern liberals are thus conditioned to being opportunistic. They often lack a clear understanding of the common observation from all spheres of politics in all countries and all times: that political actions, which for the moment amount to little more than mere demonstrations and which may actually cause a reaction in the individual case, in the long view may have been tremendously important as powerful stimuli to progressive thinking.

It is apparent that this political approach—which is well understandable in the social context of the present South and against the background of the last hundred years' history of the region—is now much less prevalent than earlier. The New Deal has made liberals accustomed to rather rapid reforms and, what is more important, reforms which have often challenged local prejudices considerably. But as a general attitude, the indirect and cautious Southern approach is still adhered to, especially among liberals of an older generation. In sectors other than those in which they happen to be interested at the moment, many Southern liberals lean over backward to be conservative and so to avoid suspicion. The individual Southern liberal of an older school who is working to defend collective bargaining in his locality, for example, may surprise the interviewer by starting out, without any provocation, to explain why he thinks that birth control is wrong. A stress on church and religion is generally such a front all over the South, by which is meant that these values have a function to the Southern liberal even besides their original one.

The Southern liberal, having to be critical of the South, has to emphasize strongly his *local and regional patriotism.*[21] He has also, if he wants to keep respectability and the possibility of accomplishing something, to tread most cautiously around the Negro problem. Southern liberals time and again explain that they have to respect established rules of racial etiquette in order to be able to do some real good for the South and, incidentally, for the Negro people. It is, for instance, explained by many that it is most important to keep the Negro out of sight in the fight for the abolition of the poll tax, in order not to stir up the anti-Negro complex. The Southern liberal, because he is suspected, has to be more afraid of the deadly blow of being called a "nigger lover" than the conservative, who can more easily shake it off as an absurdity.

Nevertheless—and in spite of the real need for conservatism in some issues, which should not be questioned—the modern Southern liberal will most often actually be liberal not only in the sector where he is active but in other sectors as well. Again we must remember that the recruitment to liberalism in the South is strongly selective in regard to courage. Southern liberals are all fully aware of the function of the Negro issue in the conservatism of the region and how every reform proposal becomes so much

more difficult to carry out politically if the Negro angle of it cannot be concealed. But in spite of these formidable drawbacks, Southern liberals have originated and carried out the interracial movement, about which more will be said in a later chapter. Generally the liberals will be found to stand for the most advanced policies in the Negro problem which are possible to advance in the Southern community where they are active. Southern liberals have been standing up for equal justice to the Negroes and have fought the lynching practice. They have often declared themselves against the disfranchisement of the Negroes. They have been active in helping the Negroes get a fairer share of education, housing, employment and relief. They do not, however, go so far as to demand "social" equality for Negroes, and they declare against "intermarriage." They usually direct their main activity on broader problems of economic, social, and educational reforms of the South as a whole, and maintain that, as a result of such a general improvement of the region, the conditions will be eased even for the Negro people.

As the South has the greatest problems of any section of the country, it has been natural for Southern liberals to concentrate their political speculation and action on their own region. Relatively speaking, national and international issues have not loomed so large in the South as in the North. In this sense, the typical Southern liberal has been provincial. On the other hand, he has been more likely than his compeer in the North to think concretely and constructively in terms of the entire Southern region rather than in terms of a state. This is a heritage from the great national split. Against provincialism, however, works the clear understanding among Southern liberals that they derive much of their power from outside their area, and that the future of their cause in the South is vitally interwoven with political developments in the North and in the whole world. This latter tendency has, of course, been strengthened during the New Deal when federal legislation has been the strongest liberalizing force in the South. The editorial pages in liberal newspapers will thus be found to discuss, with increasing courage and insight, national and world issues and events. It should be understood that this is also a practical way of propagating liberalism in the South. In the Southern *milieu*, it is easier to get away with advanced thinking about Germany, India, or New York and even about national legislation if it does not concern concrete Southern problems. The outspoken liberalism in broader issues which can be observed in liberal Southern newspapers is thus often a compensation and an escape for forced conservatism at home.[22] It is also apparent that the "heavier" literature in books and magazine articles, which is written for a less popular and less dangerous public, is more concentrated on Southern problems.

The central concern of the Southern liberal is always the South. The Southern liberals, more than similar groups in other parts of the country,

feel themselves as belonging together in a fighting unity. They probably know each other better than liberals elsewhere and have a closer union with one another. Their cause is the improvement of the South. The acute awareness of the pressing problems of the region is likely to make the Southern liberals more definitely practical in their interests even if this has not until recently carried them to think constructively along power lines and in terms of social engineering. Social science in the South has similarly never, as in the North, lost the tradition of reasoning in terms of means and ends; the few leading scientists have not become "purely scientific" to the same extent as in the North.[a] The significance for human happiness of the problems under study is always a present thought in the South, and statesmanship enters more naturally into the writings of its distinguished social scientists.

As suggested previously, Southern liberalism has aristocratic traditions. As a movement it is as yet almost entirely within the upper classes. *Its main weakness lies in its lack of mass support.* If it wants to see its ideals progressively realized, it simply must get its message out from the conference rooms and college lecture halls to the people on the farms and in the shops. Under the pressure of the accumulating structural changes, the "Solid South" might sometime, and perhaps soon, be broken and a two-party system develop. Southern liberalism will then face a political task for which it must be prepared. The leaders for a truly progressive political movement in the South are there; the staff work for the battle is largely done. If Southern liberalism can recruit an army to lead, it will itself, as an ideological force, become one of the major factors of change in the South and in the nation.

[a] See Appendix 2, Section 2.

CHAPTER 22

POLITICAL PRACTICES TODAY

1. The Southern Political Scene

The future might belong to liberalism, but the South of today is mainly ruled by its conservatives. Though the South, as part of the United States, has, in the main, the same political forms as the North, the activity which goes on within these forms is strikingly different. The difference not only makes internal politics in the South distinctive, but it influences the activities of the federal government. Although there are local and occasional variations which will be considered presently, the South exhibits the following major political divergences from the rest of the nation:[a]

1. For all practical purposes, the South[b] has only one political party. In the 1940 election, for example, 76 per cent of all votes were cast for the Democratic candidate for President. In the extreme cases of Mississippi and South Carolina, 98 per cent of the votes went to the Democratic candidate.[1] This causes the primary to be far more important than the general election. In fact, the general election—most important in the North and West—is usually a formal ritual to satisfy the demand of the federal Constitution. While there is often a real contest in the primaries, on the whole the struggle is one between personalities rather than issues. Although the Democratic party holds unchallenged power over most of the South, this party is not a highly organized political unity. Politics is decentralized.[2]

[a] The data on Southern politics presented in this chapter are for the most part taken from Ralph Bunche's seven-volume study, "The Political Status of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940). Bunche's investigations, carried out with the help of several field-workers, are particularly rich in material on the South. A significant proportion of the counties in all Southern states was actually visited, and local correspondents from a few areas were used. The present author also made three trips throughout the South and gave special attention to the political scene.

[b] In this chapter we are including in the South only the Upper and Lower South (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia). The Border states (Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia) have two-party systems (Oklahoma does also, but we shall consider it as in the South because it disfranchises Negroes). The people living in the District of Columbia have no vote.

2. A much smaller proportion of the population participates in the elections in the South than in the North. In 1940, only 28 per cent of the adult population voted in 12 Southern states, as compared to 53 per cent in the North and West. In the extreme case of South Carolina, only 10 per cent voted.[3] Most of this voting is carried on with a corruption and disrespect for law that is found in only a few areas of the North and West.[4]

3. For all practical purposes, Negroes are disfranchised in the South. Out of a total Negro adult population of 3,651,256 in the 8 Deep Southern states (excluding Oklahoma) of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, Texas, South Carolina, and Arkansas, Bunche estimates that only 80,000 to 90,000 Negroes voted in the general election of 1940.[a] Practically none voted in the primary.

These three major political facts about the South are really part of one single problem, and—as we shall find—this problem is the Negro problem.[b] Because a Republican administration was at the helm in Washington during the Civil War and Reconstruction, the white South affiliated itself with the Democratic party. It has remained Democratic and has kept the Democratic party in the South a white man's party to prevent Negroes from having any voice in government. A white Republican is generally considered a "nigger lover" but at the same time he is allowed to vote in the Democratic "white primary" in many sections of the South. Every attempt to build up a two-party system is still regarded as a threat of "black domination." As a result, the political issues in the South cannot be fought at the general elections (and not often in the primaries either). No political organization can be built around an issue (except for prohibition). The candidates at a Democratic primary may represent, as we have pointed out,[c] different interests and different points of view, but once the primary has selected the Democratic candidate, usually all opposition to him must cease until he is up for renomination several years later (the "gentleman's agreement"). The necessity of the one-party system as a means of excluding Negroes from suffrage and the danger of "black domination" are kept to the fore of people's attention. In most regions of the South an appeal to white solidar-

[a] Except for Louisiana, no record is kept of the color of registered voters. This estimate was made by Ralph Bunche on the basis of extensive interviewing with registrars and Negro and white political leaders throughout the South. Of the 80,000 or 90,000 Negro votes credited to the 8 states, 50,000 are attributed to Texas alone. See Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4, pp. 771 and 897. For more complete figures, see Section 3 of this chapter. Paul Lewinson (*Race, Class and Party* [1932], pp. 218-220) has some estimates of Negro voting for scattered places in the South around 1930. Lewinson's estimates agree fairly well with Bunche's more recent and more complete estimates.

[b] It is not meant that all these backward conditions are directly traceable to the Negro problem: many are caused by other consequences of the Civil War and by the South's economic structure. But all these things are part of an interconnected whole, of which the Negro problem is certainly a basic element.

[c] See Chapter 20, Section 1.

ity is a great campaign asset for a candidate; in some regions in the Deep South "nigger baiting" still gets votes. All over the South it is dangerous for a candidate to be accused of friendliness to the Negro. As we have observed earlier, political campaigning and election have in the South ceremonial and symbolic significance, and oratorical ability is a first necessity for a Southern politician.

In keeping Negroes from the polls by such devices as the poll tax, white men have been disfranchised. In preventing a two-party system from arising—which might let in the Negro vote—white men have been kept politically apathetic. White Southerners stay away from the polls for the most part.[5] Another large proportion comes to the polls solely because they are given a dollar or two apiece for their vote by the local political machine. As participation in elections is kept low, relatively little money can often control elections in the South. And investigations show that corruption and illegal practices at the polls are the rule—not the exception.[6] The election machinery is in most parts of the region far behind that in the North and in the other democratic countries of the world. For example, the secret, printed, uniform ballot (the so-called "Australian ballot") is not used over large areas of the South, and election officials and hangers-on at the polls know how everyone votes.[7]

At the same time there is a myth in the South that politics is clean, that it became clean when the new state constitutions—inaugurated between 1890 and 1910—completed the process of disfranchising the Negro. Many a story is passed around describing the terrible times before 1890 when Negroes were fed liquor and herded to the polls, first by the Republicans and later by the Democrats and Populists when they split and appealed to the Negro vote.

As a prerequisite for understanding the Negro's role in Southern politics, it is necessary to consider two further aspects of the political scene: the influence of the South in national politics and the position there of the Republican party.

The difference between politics in the South and in the rest of the nation is so great that it visibly affects the personality of Southern members of Congress: they act and think differently in Washington from what they do in their home states. So do Northerners, of course; but the shift undergone by the Southerners is much more drastic. The typical Southern members of Congress are, however, basically so far away from national norms that, in spite of all accommodations, they remain a distinctive force in Washington. This fact becomes all the more important as, for a variety of reasons, they have a disproportionate influence in national politics.

Seats in the House of Representatives are apportioned according to population, and the nine million Negroes in the South give the South a

good share of its seats, although so few Negroes are permitted to vote.[a] The large amount of nonvoting among Southern whites similarly makes each vote count more. The small electorate, the one-party system, well-organized local machines, as well as other factors already referred to, create a near permanency of tenure for the average Southern member of Congress which is seldom paralleled in the North. With seniority as a basis for holding important committee posts in Congress, and with acquaintance as an almost necessary means for participating effectively in congressional activities, the Southerner's permanency of tenure gives him a decided advantage in Washington. This is especially true when—as now—the Democratic party is in power: it controls the most important positions in Congress, and it relies heavily on its disproportionate representation from the South.

There are two important limitations, though, to the South's influence on the Democratic party and thereby on the nation. First, it can practically never hope to control the Presidency, since the Democratic candidate for President is almost sure of the South but must be especially attractive to the North.[b] Second, the Democratic party is solicitous of the Northern Negro and has been successfully weaning his vote away from the Republican party.[c]

To the national Republican party, the South has for a long time been a place from which practically no support could be expected, and Southern Republicans were for the most part persons whose votes for nomination had to be bought up at the national conventions.[8] To the Southern Republicans, the national Republican party has been a source of federal patronage. To Negro Republicans it has also been a traditional but failing hope. A major exception to total weakness of the Republican party in the South, of course, was the 1928 presidential election when Texas, Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia bolted the Democratic candidate, Smith, because he was a Catholic and anti-Prohibitionist. Several Republican areas may be found in

[a] In one sense, the South was helped politically by the abolition of slavery and the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. Before then, the presence of a Negro gave the South only three-fifths of a vote in terms of representation in Congress. After then, the presence of a Negro—who, in most cases, was still not allowed to vote—gave the South a full vote.

[b] The abolition of the two-thirds rule for nominating candidates for President and Vice-President by the 1936 Democratic Convention removed even the South's veto power on the choice of candidate.

The South's inability to capture the Presidency, coupled with the former weakness of the national Democratic party, has given rise to the myth that the South has little influence in national politics. As the national Democratic party has taken on new importance in recent years, the error in this myth is being seen.

[c] See Section 4 of this chapter.

the Border states of Kentucky, Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, and West Virginia, and also in Tennessee and Oklahoma. The Deep South, too, has its few Republicans: cities always harbor nonconformists, and even a rural area—such as Winston County, Alabama—may be overwhelmingly Republican. In recent years, the small proportion of migrants from the North has occasionally brought its Republican affiliation along and a few native businessmen have considered that their sentiments were with the national Republican party. But these are all exceptions: in most places and at most times in the South, white persons consider it a disgrace to vote Republican. White Republicans have traditionally been labeled "scalawags" and "nigger lovers"—epithets which express the most extreme form of disfavor and which reveal the heart of the political situation in the South.

When the federal government withdrew the army of occupation in the 1870's, and the Klan was left free to terrorize Negro and white Republicans at the polls, the Republican party in the South was broken. With a few Negro and poor white votes—and sometimes in coalition with the Populists—the Republican party retained some representation throughout the South until the new state constitutions of 1890-1910 disfranchised Negroes even more completely. By 1920, in recognition of its lack of significance in the South, the Republican party practically abandoned primaries and often did not even put up candidates in the general election. In 1940, the last remaining strength of Southern Republicans was removed: at future national conventions congressional districts with fewer than 1,000 Republican votes in the previous election will be denied delegates. It is estimated that this will affect 75 congressional districts in the South.[9]

At the same time that the Republican party was declining in the South, the whites within it were splitting off from the Negroes to form what has been commonly called "the lily-white movement." The term seems to date back to 1888 when the Negro Republican leader, N. W. Cuney, applied it to white Republicans who tried to drive Negroes out of the state convention of Texas by fomenting riots.[10] The movement was given impetus by Presidents Taft and Hoover.[11] The aim of the lily-white leaders and of these Republican Presidents was to build up a Republican party in the South by dissociating the party from Negroes, and from the epithets "nigger lover" and "scalawag." They sought to do this by purging the party of Negro influence and a Negro share in the spoils of victory and by attracting the new South's businessmen.

In one sense, the movement has been successful in all but a few Border states: There is now but one "regular" Negro national Republican committeeman—Perry Howard of Mississippi, who resides in Washington, D.C. In recent elections it is probable that a majority of the few Negroes who voted in Southern states voted Democratic, although there is no proof of

this.[a] Because there has been no Republican President since Hoover, it cannot be determined whether a national Republican victory would give Southern Negroes a share of the spoils. It should be observed that the lily-white movement is not completely anti-Negro: lily-white leaders want Negro votes but do not want to recognize Negro influence or claims. In some states, as in Louisiana, Negro Republican registrants are needed in order to continue the party's legal recognition and keep its place on the ballot. The rule adopted at the 1940 Convention requiring a congressional district to have 1,000 votes to secure representation may also lead to a courting of Negro Republican votes in the South.

In another sense, the lily-white movement has been a failure: it has led to no mass defection of whites from the Democratic party.[b] The movement is up against the potent myth that, if the whites split, the Negroes will hold the "balance of power" and dominate Southern politics. With the declining proportion of Negroes in the South, and with the recent split in the Negro vote, this myth has even less foundation than formerly. It was a matter of honor for Southern Negroes to be Republican before 1930.[12] Many Negroes in the South feel that the old rump Republican party never did any good for the Negroes but merely gave jobs to a few of their political leaders. They felt hurt by the Republican party's defection when it went lily-white. It cannot, of course, be proven, but it seems likely that there has been a landslide away from the Republican party in the South as well as in the North.[13] Still, many Negroes are shrewd enough to calculate that if the lily-white movement should be successful, there could develop a two-party system in the South, which would give the Negro a chance to become a voter again.

2. SOUTHERN TECHNIQUES FOR DISFRANCHISING THE NEGROES

In discussing techniques for restricting the franchise, the usual procedure has been to list the relevant laws and to describe their administration. While there is nothing incorrect about this procedure, it tends to give a disjointed picture of the situation. Actually, each voting qualification has been made or is enforced according to the basic principles underlying people's conceptions as to who should be allowed to vote. Three principles seem to govern the extension of the franchise to Negroes in the South. In the first place, there is the Constitution of the United States which stipulates:

> The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

[a] It is not only the lily-white movement, of course, which has brought the Negro to the Democratic party. More important were the New Deal reforms and local conditions. (See Section 4 of this chapter.)

[b] Except in the unusual 1928 election.

In perfect opposition to this is the Southern caste principle that no Negro should be allowed to vote. The history of legal voting qualifications in the South since Restoration is the history of the attempt to find some formula which will reconcile these two opposing principles. A third principle may be discerned: this holds that Negroes may be allowed to vote according to the discretion or need of those whites who exercise influence over the conduct of the election. This third principle is the cause of the variation in Negro voting in different parts of the South. Some Negroes may be permitted to vote because they are "good" (a reward for obedience to the caste rules), because an influential white group needs their votes, because so few Negroes vote that it is not worth the effort to hamper them beyond a certain point (lack of "clear and present danger" to the caste principle), or because a few Negro votes are handy to refute the accusation of unconstitutionality.[a]

State laws setting the qualifications for voting have usually been the result of an attempt to get the caste principle around the Constitution. Clearly, the Constitution prohibited any law which explicitly restricted the vote to whites, since this would involve a reference to "race or color." The next best thing was to determine some attribute which was had by whites, but not by Negroes—other than race or color. Perhaps the safest and most ingenious of these discoveries was that of ancestry: the so-called "*grandfather clauses*" restricted registration for voting[14] to those persons who had voted prior to 1861 and to their descendants, or to persons who had served in the federal or Confederate armies or state militias and to their descendants. The United States Supreme Court, however, found these clauses unconstitutional under the Fifteenth Amendment.[15]

Certainly the most efficient device in use today to keep Negroes from voting where the vote would count most in the South is the "*white primary.*" The Democratic party prohibited Negroes from participating in its primary[b] by means of state-wide rule (in 1940) in nine Southern states: Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Louisiana, Arkansas, Virginia and Texas. Only in central Texas and some counties of Virginia was the rule relaxed to any significant degree. In North Carolina and Tennessee, the determination of who may vote in the primary is left to the Democratic party committees of the separate counties: Negroes are permitted in the primaries in several counties in these states. Kentucky no longer has even county organizations restricting the primaries.[16]

[a] There are also a few small all-Negro communities in the South—such as Mound Bayou, Mississippi—where Negroes vote unhampered in the local elections. But their votes are not always accepted in county, state and federal elections.

[b] This inability to participate in the primary also involved an exclusion from other party activities, such as conventions, caucuses of voters, mass meetings, party offices and candidacies.

The legal fight with reference to the white primary did not begin in the federal courts until 1927. At that time the law passed by the State Legislature of Texas in 1923 was declared unconstitutional.[17] The Supreme Court held that a state government could not legally declare a white primary. Another decision in 1932[18] simply declared that a state government could not vest the right to restrict the suffrage in the party's State Executive Committee, and so nothing significant was really decided: the restriction was simply declared by the party's State Convention instead of by the Executive Committee. A 1935 decision by the Supreme Court[19] was far more significant—it apparently upheld the white primary by declaring that the primary is an affair of the party alone, and, as a voluntary institution, a political party could restrict its adherents as it pleased. This decision may be limited to the Texas situation where an attempt has been made to divorce the Party from the State. In other states—such as Virginia, Florida, and Louisiana—the expenses of the primary are paid by the state, and the state has formally declared the public character of the primary. In these states, the white primary would seem to be clearly unconstitutional.

The legal issue today hinges around the question as to whether the primary is a public affair: advocates of a white primary claim that the party is a voluntary association and as such it can restrict its participants. Those opposed to the party restrictions against Negroes in the primary claim that the general election is profoundly changed by the existence of the primary, which is the most important election in the South, and that, therefore, voting in the primaries should be subject to the Constitution. One fact which disturbs the legal case of those who would restrict the Negro from voting in the primaries is that in many areas white *Republicans* are permitted to vote in the Democratic primaries, but Negro *Democrats* are not.[a] In a recent decision by the Supreme Court—in a case concerning fraudulent practices and not Negro participation—the position was taken that "the primary in Louisiana is an integral part of the procedure for the popular choice of Congressmen" and that, therefore, no person qualified to vote in the general election can be disqualified in the primary.[20] The legality of the white primary is, therefore, still not settled,[21] and it is under vigorous attack.

Probably the most notorious—although certainly not the most efficient—device to keep the Negro from voting in the South is the *poll tax*. The poll tax is one of the oldest forms of direct taxation, but it was usually compulsory and, therefore, had little effect in restricting the vote. In modern times the compulsory poll tax is being generally abandoned as it is a regressive tax.[22] Eight Southern states have a voluntary poll tax and

[a] In the last two decades, few areas in the South have had Republican primaries—partly because the law does not provide for a primary where there are few eligible voters and partly because Southern Republicans are not interested in having a primary.

have it for the express purpose of restricting the vote.[a] They have different kinds of poll taxes, but in general the requirement is the voluntary payment of a small sum (one to three dollars) before registration for voting is permitted; it is thus not actually a "tax" in the strict meaning of the term but a "fee" or "dues" paid for voting.[23]

In many states the poll tax is cumulative, and the payment of more than one year's poll tax is required for the right to vote (in some states back to the time the individual became 21 years of age). Again it may be noted that the states of the Deep South are more restrictive than the states of the Upper South or the Border states.[24] North Carolina, Louisiana and Florida have repealed their poll tax requirements. The latter two states form the only exception to the rule that the more "Southern" the state, the more restrictive its poll tax requirement. While the poll tax is low, except where and when it is applied cumulatively, it means quite a bit to those Negroes and whites who work for a dollar or two a day. It means more for Negroes because they are poorer. But its greatest restrictiveness against Negroes probably results from discrimination in its application: election officials practically always demand to see the poll tax receipts of Negroes and seldom those of whites. Too, it is common in many areas for politicians to pay the poll tax of whites in return for an understanding that those receiving the benefit will vote in accordance with the wishes of the benefactor. But in only a handful of Southern cities is the Negro vote so bought.[25]

Because the poll tax operates to disfranchise the poorer whites as well as Negroes and to bolster political machines, there is a growing movement in the South to abolish it.[26] Some liberals even claim that the primary purpose of the tax was to disfranchise poor whites, since Negroes can be kept from the polls in so many other ways. The case of Louisiana is pointed out: the poll tax was repealed there in 1934, and still only some 2,000 Negroes registered in 1936.[27] The chief popular argument for the poll tax is still, however, that it keeps Negroes from the polls. This argument is buttressed by the case of Miami, where Negroes went to the polls in large numbers in 1939 following the repeal of the poll tax in 1937. Some proponents of the poll tax admit that one of its aims is to disfranchise poor whites, but this—they hold—keeps the primary "manageable" so that the Democratic party does not split and thus open the way for Negroes to vote and get the balance of power.[b] This last argument points to a perhaps

[a] While this book is in press, Tennessee has abolished its poll tax. There are now only 7 states with the poll tax.

[b] There have been a few arguments for the poll tax which have no special reference to Negroes. Some of the aristocratic proponents of the tax frankly believe that only those who pay taxes should have the vote. It was also argued that the poll tax is a source of revenue, but it is usually realized that the income from this tax is very small, and that it is not necessary to prohibit voting in order to collect taxes.

fundamental significance of the poll tax: if poor whites are encouraged to vote by the removal of the poll tax, they will not be any friendlier to Negroes, but they may stir up issues and put through legislation that will have the ultimate effect of helping all poor people, including Negroes.

There is no way of measuring to what extent nonvoting in the South is caused by the poll tax. But there is hardly any doubt that it does have such an effect as even a small sum means much to poor people. Many, of course, abstain from paying the poll tax and from voting because of political apathy, which is widespread in the South. But there is a circular causal relationship here of a cumulative and potentially dynamic character. When poor people abstain from voting because of the poll tax or political apathy, this tends to keep issues which interest poor people out of politics. Thereby political apathy and nonpayment of poll tax is enhanced. But if the masses were encouraged to vote by the abolition of the poll tax and other changes, the vicious circle could be set working the other way. The poll tax would then be viewed as one strategic factor in an interrelated causal system, tied up to political apathy and the one-party system.

The poll tax disfranchises and is subject to political manipulation not only because it costs the voter a dollar or two, but because it must be paid by a certain date (which is often long before anyone knows who the candidates will be),[a] because officials often mis-date the receipts to violate the date provision and pay the tax themselves and because employers force their employees to pay the tax.[28] The significance of the poll tax in keeping even whites from voting is suggested by the fact that the states without the tax have a larger proportion of their adult citizens voting than comparable states with the tax.

In 1940, Oklahoma, for example, had 60 per cent of its adult citizenry voting compared to 18 per cent in Arkansas; North Carolina had 43 per cent compared to 22 per cent in Virginia; and Louisiana, which has been without the poll tax only since 1934, had 27 per cent compared to 14 per cent in Mississippi.[29]

Similar to the poll tax, in that they restrict Negroes because they are poor, are *property, educational,* and *"character" requirements* for voting. These, too, are seldom applied to whites but almost always to Negroes, and the requirements are more rigid in the states of the Deep South than in the Border states. Also, like the poll tax, these requirements for voting have been reduced somewhat in recent years, especially in the Upper South. Property requirements for voting are found in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina and are applicable only if the prospective voter cannot meet the educational requirements. As such they would seem to serve as a

[a] "Payment of the tax must be made from six to ten months in advance of the election in Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, and Virginia." (Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* [1942] p. 120.)

loophole to white persons who could not read and write. They require the ownership of 40 acres of land or other property worth $300 to $500.

Educational requirements for voting are found in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. In most states they consist of demonstration of ability to read and write a section of the federal or state constitution to the "satisfaction" of the registrar; in Virginia they consist of writing an application for registration. Relatively seldom is a white man "insulted" by being given the test; yet many cases have been recorded[80] where a Negro "failed" the test when he mispronounced a single word. Even professors at Tuskegee and other Negro universities have been disfranchised by failing to pass these tests. In a few Deep Southern states, not only must a section of the Constitution be read and written, but it must also be interpreted to the "satisfaction" of the registrar. Needless to say, the educational attainments of election registrars are seldom such that they can be fair judges of the meaning of the state and federal constitutions. This "interpretation" requirement is now found only in Mississippi and Louisiana.

The legal "character" requirement for voting registration also has declined in recent years so that it is now found only in Louisiana and Georgia. Actually it is applied illegally to Negroes in many other places in the South: Negroes must be vouched for by whites or they must be known to the registrars in their communities as "good niggers." In some cases, a leading "good nigger" may serve as character witness for other Negroes. In Georgia the character requirement is used not only to disfranchise Negroes but also to permit the registration of whites who cannot meet the property or educational requirements, since it is an alternative to these other requirements.[81]

In addition to these better known legal requirements for voting, there are several others which are, or have been, employed in one or more Southern states to disfranchise Negroes. A tricky registration blank must be filled out: whites will be given assistance, and their errors adjusted or overlooked; Negroes will not be allowed even the most trivial incompleteness or error, and are given no assistance. Certain of the previously discussed requirements (poll tax payment, education, or property) are waived for the war veterans, or for the aged in certain states: in practice whites are informed of such privileges but Negroes who qualify are not expected to ask for them. Some Southern states withhold the vote from anyone convicted of a crime: this is overlooked for most of the whites but applied as rigorously as can be to the Negro.[82]

More important than the legal requirements in disfranchising Negroes in the South are *extra-legal practices*. Laws passed by state or local governments must not conflict with the constitutional provision that there be no discrimination because of race, color or creed. Activities carried on outside

the law are seldom subjected to this constitutional test. Laws can disfranchise Negroes only by making a criterion for voting some characteristic which is found more frequently in the Negro population than in the white and by creating opportunities for local administrative discretion. Extra-legal activities can disfranchise Negroes to any degree desired.*

Violence, terror, and intimidation have been, and still are, effectively used to disfranchise Negroes in the South. Physical coercion is not so often practiced against the Negro, but the mere fact that it can be used with impunity and that it is devastating in its consequences creates a psychic coercion that exists nearly everywhere in the South. A Negro can seldom claim the protection of the police and the courts if a white man knocks him down, or if a mob burns his house or inflicts bodily injuries on him or on members of his family. If he defends himself against a minor violence, he may expect a major violence. If he once "gets in wrong" he may expect the loss of his job or other economic injury, and constant insult and loss of whatever legal rights he may have had.[33] In such circumstances it is no wonder that the great majority of Negroes in the South make no attempt to vote and—if they make attempts which are rebuffed—seldom demand their full rights under the federal Constitution.

Usually a Negro never goes so far as to attempt to cast his vote. In the majority of Southern localities Negroes are prevented from registering, or only a few Negroes are allowed to register. This means that the rebuffs occur in the administration of the legal requirements for registration.[34]

Educational "tests" to disfranchise Negroes are widely used in a bluntly illegal way. One intelligent Negro woman in North Carolina was denied registration when she mispronounced the words "contingency" and "constitutionality" in reading the state constitution.[35] Other rebuffs come as a still more unmistakable extension of the law. A Negro school teacher in the same state was denied registration after the following incident:

> . . . the registrar asked me to read a section of the Constitution, which I did, and then asked me to define terms which I knew was not part of the North Carolina law. I said to him, "That is not a part of the law, to define terms." He said, "You must satisfy me, and don't argue with me."[36]

Many cases are reported where Negroes do not get even this far: "What do you want here, nigger?" has been enough to send them away from the registration or polling place.[37] Other favorite devices are to evade the prospective Negro registrant or voter by ignoring him, by telling him that registration cards have "run out," or that all members of the registration board are not present, that he should go somewhere else, or that he will be notified when he can register, by "losing" his registration card or by "forgetting" to put his name on the list of voters.[38]

* For a general discussion of extra-legal devices to coerce Negroes, see Part VI.

The illegal activities of persons not connected with the administration of the election also take many forms. The hangers-on at the polling places insult and stare at Negroes, especially Negro women. Negroes have received threats, such as, "If you vote, you will never return home alive," and "You have always been looked on as a good character. But from now on you shall be looked on as a dangerous character."[39] White newspapers have openly warned Negroes not to vote and intimated violence if they did vote. In the 1939 election in Miami, the Ku Klux Klan rode the streets in full regalia and passed out handbills threatening Negroes if they voted. In the same year, riots and other forms of violence occurred because of Negroes voting in Greenville and Spartanburg, South Carolina.[40] Keeping in mind this review of the techniques for keeping Negroes from voting in the South, we may turn to the question of how many Negroes do vote in spite of this pressure.

3. THE NEGRO VOTE IN THE SOUTH

As has been observed, the general pattern in the South since the "new" constitutions of 1890-1910 has been to deny the vote to Negroes. Still a small proportion of Negroes do vote, and the local variations in the number of their votes are significant.[41] Since no statistics are compiled which separate the Negro votes from the white votes, there is no exact record of these variations. Further, it is practically impossible to compile exact statistics on *registration* of Negroes, as many election officials do not make accurate designations of voters according to color in the registration books. Knowledge of local variations must come, therefore, from a mass of newspaper articles, interviews, registration reports and local studies.[a]

As we have noticed, the most important voting in the South is in the Democratic primaries, and these are restricted to whites. Here and there a community will let one or two "good" Negroes vote in the primary. In some of the cities, especially where political machines can control the Negro vote—such as in San Antonio and Memphis—Negroes vote in the primaries in restricted numbers. With these negligible exceptions, no Negroes are permitted to vote, under a state-wide party rule,[b] in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. Texas and Virginia also have state-wide rules prohibiting Negroes from voting in the primary, but, nevertheless, Negroes are permitted to vote in a few counties. North Carolina and Tennessee leave the primary rule to county party organizations, and several of these do not prohibit

[a] Such a collection was made by Ralph J. Bunche and his assistants for this study (*op. cit.*, Vol. 4, Chapter 7; Vol. 5, Chapters 9, 10 and 11; Vol. 8, Appendix 2.) A few of Bunche's most general findings will be summarized here.

[b] See Section 2 of this chapter for a description of the type of rules restricting Negro voting in primaries.

Negroes. Kentucky and the other Border states do not have a white primary at all, but even in such cases it should not be forgotten that Negro voting may be restricted by means other than a formal rule. From the above description of Negro voting in the primary, the greater liberality of the states nearest the North is patent.

While the Democratic primary is the most important election in the South, there are other elections. First, there is the general election, conducted under the Constitution and laws of the United States and administered by the state governments. With the assumed success of the Democratic candidate in most areas, this is not important, except perhaps to keep the Southerner aware that he is politically a member of the United States as well as of the Democratic party. Very rarely, and usually as a matter of "accident," the general election takes on political significance. The defeated Democratic candidate in the primaries may feel that he was defeated only because of corruption, or that he could win the general election with the aid of Republicans and Negroes. He may then break his "gentleman's agreement" and run in the general election as an independent candidate.[42] The general election then takes on the partisan character of a general election in the North. Occasionally, too, death or resignation may create a political vacancy which is fought over in the general election, without a primary.

Besides the primary and the general election, there are two types of so-called "nonpartisan" elections. Both of these are, in large measure, restricted to cities. They are nonpartisan only in the sense that no party label can be put on the ballot, but there may be heated division over the candidates or issues in the election. One type of nonpartisan election occurs in those cities which operate under a city manager or commission form of government. According to Lewinson,[43] there were 115 cities south of the Border states operating under a city manager charter in 1930 in addition to 32 cities of over 30,000 population (1927) operating under the commission plan. Several of these cities retained the primary, but most of them hold only a nonpartisan general election to choose the commissioners.[44] The second type of nonpartisan election is that involving initiative and referendum. Referenda concerning bond issues, tax rates, amendments, city extensions, and so on, are not at all uncommon in Southern cities. For some of these, a certain proportion of registered persons must vote or the referendum does not pass. In such cases, whites who favor the issue may seek to get out the Negro vote.

In general and nonpartisan elections, Negroes vote to a significantly greater extent than in primary elections, since there is no uniform rule barring them. All the other devices outside of the formal no-Negro rule may be applied to keep them from voting, however, and in the 11 states south of the Border states there are probably less than 250,000 Negroes

who have voted in the last five or six years.[45] There are the usual variations within the South: there are more Negroes voting in cities than in rural areas. This is not only because there is slightly greater liberality toward Negroes in the cities, but also because the nonpartisan election is a phenomenon almost restricted to cities. There are also more votes permitted to Negroes as we approach the Northern states. The recent increases in Negro voting are registered mainly in the Border states, in the Upper South and in Oklahoma.[a]

There is one other type of election that is important to the Negro in the South. The Agricultural Adjustment Act requires that cotton owner-operators, tenants, and sharecroppers vote to indicate whether they want the application of the crop restriction program. Negroes have participated in unrestricted numbers in these annual elections (since 1938) and have voted in perhaps even greater proportion than whites. They vote at the same polling places as whites and at the same time. There is little physical opposition from the whites because the majority favor crop control, and they know that Negroes will vote in favor of it; they are told that if Negroes are prevented from voting, the election will be illegal. They also know that any irregularity would be observed by federal administra-

[a] Bunche's specific estimates are as follows: Mississippi probably has fewest Negroes voting—only a few hundred "good" Negro aristocrats and school teachers. Louisiana had 2,007 "colored persons" registered in 1936, and these were practically all in or around Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Only about half these Negroes actually voted. Next in order came Alabama and South Carolina with about 1,500 Negro votes apiece; South Carolina had so few Negroes voting although there was a spontaneous (that is, not solicited by a white machine) movement to get out the Negro vote in Greenville in 1939. There were 7,000 or 8,000 Negroes voting in recent years in Arkansas, and as many as 10,000 apiece in Georgia (mainly in Atlanta) and Florida (including Miami, where there was an upsurge of Negroes in 1939 against the Klan). Virginia has recently permitted more Negroes to vote so that now there may be as many as 20,000 Negro votes in that state. Texas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Oklahoma have a Negro vote of about 50,000 apiece. San Antonio is an important center of Negro voting in Texas: Bellinger (formerly the father and now the son) marshals the Negro vote there for the machine. City machines in Raleigh and Durham are mainly responsible for the Negro votes in North Carolina. In Memphis, Tennessee, too, a large number of Negroes are brought out to vote for "Boss" Crump and other members of his machine. Other Negro votes are solicited in Nashville and Chattanooga, partly to challenge the influence of Crump in Tennessee state politics. East Tennessee has some traditionally Republican counties in which a sparse Negro population votes. Kentucky (with 80,000 to 100,000 Negro votes) and Missouri (with about 100,000 to 130,000 Negro votes) have a smaller Negro population than most of the states mentioned thus far; their large Negro vote results from an almost unhampered Negro vote in the cities. Some of the Negro voting in the South comes from towns which are populated and governed almost completely by Negroes. There are probably less than a hundred towns and villages of this sort, and they are small. While Negro voting is unrestricted for local office in these towns, county and state officials usually see to it that they have no voice in county, state or federal elections.

tors and vigorously prosecuted in federal courts.[46] Although the unrestricted voting by Negroes in the A.A.A. referenda does not give them any political power, it, nevertheless, may be of great significance. It accustoms whites to the presence of Negroes at polling places and perhaps makes them think beyond the myth of black domination and consider the real issues involved in Negro voting. It provides the South with an example of elections based on significant issues and with less corruption than usual. It also gives the Negro a chance to vote and perhaps to discover the nature of the political process.

Southerners will often explain that Negroes can vote in the South but that they just do not care to.[47] This is, of course, a rationalization justifying white policy. It is hard to conceive that any Southern politician, well acquainted with the facts, believes it. A few considerations, most of which have already been made, may clarify the situation. A Negro in the South expecting to vote knows that he is up to something extraordinary. In order to register and to appear at the polls, he will have to leave the protective anonymity of being just another Negro. He will become a specific Negro who is "out of his place," trying to attack the caste barriers.[48] He knows further that the primary—which is the main election in the South—is closed to Negroes by formal and express rule in the major part of the South. There is a whole barrage of *formal* devices to keep him from voting in other elections—ranging all the way from the poll tax, which in some states is cumulative from the time the prospective voter is 21 years of age, and a receipt for which must be produced at every election, to the explanation of a statement in the state constitution to the "satisfaction" of the registrar. There is another barrage of *informal* devices to keep Negroes from voting—ranging all the way from the insults and threats presented to the prospective Negro voter as he enters the polling place to the violence administered to his person and property by the Klan. If he should succeed in voting it is likely to be in an election which has been decided long before and, formerly, for a lily-white Republican candidate who openly snubs him.

Another most potent force in keeping the Negro from the polls is his own fear of what *might* happen to him, his job, his family, or his property, in the present or in the future, if he should vote. The Southern Negro often does not know how far he can go, and in such a situation he may take the path of discretion. Some Negroes invoke the law to gain the vote; others stop when it is simply denied them and thereby lose their vote. It is no test of the franchise that some Negroes are permitted to vote in a given community, for what is permitted to a few would never be permitted to the many. The much greater participation of Negroes in the elections in the Northern and Border states and in some cities in the South

shows that the Negro votes to the extent that the repressions are relaxed.

In one sense it is true that the Negro is politically apathetic. Like many a white man, he is uneducated and ignorant of the significance of the vote. Because, on the average, the Southern Negro is somewhat less urban, less educated, and poorer than the average Southern white man, and because these traits are universally a cause of low average voting participation, the Negro should be expected to vote less than the white man in the South if there were no special barriers to Negro voting.[49] Even this is not certain, however, if the experience of the A.A.A. referenda be taken as a test, for —if anything—Negroes participate more than whites in these, though perhaps because they are more herded to the polls by the plantation owners. Since Reconstruction days the vote is to many Negroes—as to the whites—a symbol of civic equality.

But it should not be denied that a large proportion of poor Southern Negroes feel that "politics is white folks' business." This attitude is even spread by some "accommodating" Southern Negro leaders. Some of the political apathy is peculiar to the Negroes because the means of disfranchising them have been extraordinary: a tradition of nonvoting is built up that is difficult to break down even in the free elections in the North. Too, there is a psychopathological form of apathy found in some Negroes: they have been so frightened by some experiences when attempting to vote that they swear never to try again.

Another charge levied against the political activity of the Negro is that he is frequently the mere pawn of the political machine. This is true, especially in the South, but it must be seen in the light of other facts. In the first place, it is often a political machine that makes it possible for Negroes to vote at all. If no organized white group backed the Negroes, they would not be allowed to vote in most cases. Too, the machine gives them something for their vote: not only do they often get dollars as individual voters, but they get paved streets and schools as a group. The Negro is accorded better treatment by the city administration, police, and courts in those cities where the machine "votes" him than where he is not permitted to vote at all. In the third place, Southern Negroes can vote only in cities, for all practical purposes, and cities are the places where political machines are most potent. Whites of similar economic status and education are perhaps machine-dominated to the same extent in Southern cities, although there are no statistics to prove this.[50] Finally, it should be remembered that there are places—even Southern cities—where Negroes have voted in significant numbers without machine backing and control: Negroes defied the Klan in 1939 to vote in Miami, and an all-Negro political movement developed in the same year in Greenville, South Carolina.

4. THE NEGRO IN NORTHERN POLITICS

The Negro coming from the South to the North was as politically innocent and ignorant as the immigrant from a country like Italy where democratic politics was not well developed and was very different from politics in the Northern United States. It was quite natural, therefore, for Negro politics in the North to take forms similar to Italo-American politics. Ignorance and poverty caused a disproportionate amount of nonvoting among Negroes, although not nearly as much as among Italian immigrants who had to become citizens before they could exercise the franchise. Nonvoting was perhaps accentuated among some Negroes by a timidity caused by violence in the South. Other Negroes, perhaps, felt a stronger urge to vote in the North because they had been disfranchised in the South. Like other immigrants, since young adults migrate to a greater extent than any other age group, Negroes formed a larger proportion of the adult population than of the total population. Therefore they had a potential voting strength greater than their total numbers would indicate.[51] Like other immigrants, they continually got into minor legal difficulties and sought the friendly services of petty politicians. Like other immigrants, they often traded their votes for these material favors, although they were perhaps not as wise or successful as some of the other immigrants in getting a *quid pro quo*. Like other ignorant immigrants, they tended to follow the narrow political leadership of those of their own group who sought political plums for themselves. Still they were not unified, partly because of the rivalry between the recent migrants from the South and those longer established in the North. Du Bois gives an apt summary of the voting behavior of Negroes in one Northern city, Philadelphia, in 1896, and this characterization remained largely valid right up to 1930.

> The experiment of Negro suffrage in Philadelphia has developed three classes of Negro voters: a large majority of voters who vote blindly at the dictates of the party and, while not open to direct bribery, accept the indirect emoluments of office or influence in return for party loyalty; a considerable group, centering in the slum districts, which casts a corrupt purchasable vote for the highest bidder; lastly, a very small group of independent voters who seek to use their vote to better present conditions of municipal life.[52]

There were some peculiarities about the political behavior of Negroes in the North that differentiated it from that of the foreign-born whites as well as from that of the native whites. In the first place, it was strongly attached to the Republican party; gratitude to the symbol of Lincoln, the example of early leaders like Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, and the continuous spectacle of what the name "Democratic party" meant in the South, all tied the bulk of Northern Negro voters to the

Republican party long after it became apparent that a more flexible Negro vote would bring more advantages.[a] In the last decade, however, the Negro vote has shifted radically under the pull of the New Deal and the push of the lily-white movement. Another trait of the Negro vote was that it was, on the whole, passionately aware of the relation of a candidate or issue to the Negro problem. Unlike other native Americans, Negroes, when they thought politically, thought first in terms of their ethnic group and only secondly in terms of the nation as a whole. Foreign-born citizens have this trait also, but it tends to disappear in the second and third generations. With Negroes it is tending to increase as Negroes become more organized and politically conscious. No Negro leader can expect to remain popular if he supports a white man who is reputed to be anti-Negro. A "friend of the Negro people" need not always have the backing of the local Negro leaders to get the Negro vote.

Although individual Negroes are not restricted from voting in the North, there may be one condition which limits the influence of the Negro's vote once it is cast. We refer to the practice of gerrymandering—that is, of so setting the boundaries of election districts that the vote of a minority group is cut up and overwhelmed by the vote of the majority group.[53] Although a comprehensive study of the gerrymandering of the Negro vote in Northern cities is yet to be made, there is evidence that it exists in at least some cities.[54]

Besides gerrymandering, there is another way in which the Negro vote is kept from having its proper weight in the election of candidates. This is by neglecting to redistrict as population grows or declines at different rates in different districts. The practice is especially important with respect to voting for national congressmen and state legislators, and it has some significance for the election of city aldermen. Negroes will flow into a district and still have only the same representation as a declining rural area with perhaps one-tenth the population. This is, of course, a problem far more general than a Negro one: it is the problem of cities to get their fair share of representation in relation to rural areas, and the problem of densely populated city districts to get their fair share in relation to rotten boroughs. While there is probably no special anti-Negro prejudice in the practice, Negroes are hurt far more by it than most other groups since they

[a] Negroes have not been more attached to the Republican party, however, than the Irish, for example, have been to the Democratic party. The Northern Negro vote was not completely inflexible. In New York, it frequently went Democratic. In Chicago, the friendliness of the Democratic candidate for mayor in 1885—Carter Harrison I—secured him about 50 per cent of the Negro vote, and his son, who ran for mayor in 1899, received about 65 per cent of the Negro vote. (See Claudius O. Johnson, *Carter Henry Harrison I* [1928], p. 196, cited in Elmer W. Henderson, "A Study of the Basic Factors Involved in the Change in Party Alignment of Negroes in Chicago, 1932-1938," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago [1939], pp. 6-7.)

have been moving to Northern cities at a more rapid rate than have others. While the practice is clearly unconstitutional, and the state legislatures are guilty as they are the only ones empowered to make the adjustments, the courts have been loath to interfere. The Constitution, however, gives the United States Congress power to override the state legislatures.[55] The neglect to redistrict also creates a form of "natural" gerrymandering that hurts the Negroes. When migrants come to a city they usually do not happen to distribute themselves according to the boundaries of certain voting districts. As a result their vote becomes split even though they form a single community. In New York, for example, the Harlem Negro vote is split mainly into two congressional districts and Negroes cannot elect a congressman by themselves in either one. If there were redistricting, and if there were no deliberate attempt to perpetuate this gerrymander, Harlem should probably be in one voting district, since it is a natural community area.

No comprehensive study has yet been made on the extent of nonvoting among Negroes in the North. The general impression is that Negroes—like whites with the same average educational and economic status—are somewhat apathetic. The statistical evidence, however, does not present a consistent picture and suggests that Negro apathy is partly a function of local conditions.[56] Litchfield found that Negroes voted one-third less than whites, both native and foreign-born, in Detroit.[57] In Chicago, however, 77 per cent of the adults of a Negro ward registered as compared to 68 per cent for the entire city (1930).[58] Negro apathy in Detroit seems to be due to the city-wide type of election, the nonpartisan character of the election with a concomitant weak party organization and the lack of organization and leadership among Negroes.[59] Negro activity in Chicago seems to be related to the partisan and close character of the election, the solicitation of the Negro vote by white politicians, the support of Negro racketeers and the strength of the Negro organizations.

The fact that Negroes vote to a greater extent than whites in Chicago is startling. All existing studies—made for a few cities in the United States and for many democratic countries in Europe—show a striking relationship between nonvoting and poverty.[60] The correlation may even be stronger for whites in the United States, since there is no labor party to bring out the labor vote, and the political machines bring out only a relatively small selected vote. Since the bulk of the Negroes are very poor, we should expect them to be much more politically apathetic than the whites. The fact that they vote almost as much, or more, in most Northern cities than whites do, indicates that they are relatively more conscious of the vote. The data do not support—so far as voting is concerned—the common stereotype that Negroes are politically apathetic.

Before 1933, Negroes voted the Republican ticket in overwhelming

proportion. While there were Negro Democratic organizations in every city, they made little headway except in New York.[61] In Chicago only 23 per cent of the Negro vote went to the Democratic party in the presidential election of 1932, despite Hoover's lily-white tendencies, and perhaps an even smaller proportion went against Republican Mayor Thompson in 1931.[62] Similarly, only 19.5 per cent of Detroit's Negro vote was Democratic in 1930.[63] This attachment to the Republican party both hurt and helped the Negroes politically. It helped them because the Republicans were in power in most of the Northern cities before 1930, and Negroes gave the Republican party a disproportionate number of their votes. In Chicago, for example, Negroes constituted only 6.9 per cent of the total population in 1930, and 8.7 per cent of the population of voting age, but 11.0 per cent of the Republican voters.[64] The strong attachment to the Republican party hurt them because the party felt sure of the Negro vote and hardly made an attempt to solicit it or favor it. When, after 1933, the Negro vote became more fluid, it was more actively solicited by both parties and was rewarded to a greater extent by the Democratic party, which was in office in most Northern cities.[65]

Many Negroes were dissatisfied with the Republican party by 1932. Like other poor people, they were disgusted with the Hoover administration's methods of meeting the depression. They had also become aware of the snubs given them as Negroes by both national and local Republican party organizations. Of course, some Negroes felt a sentimental attachment to the party of Lincoln that could stand almost any amount of snubbing. Some upper class Negroes, too, were quite satisfied with the conservative performance of the Hoover administration or felt that the "best people" voted Republican. In 1932, Roosevelt was relatively unknown outside of New York, and there was some anxiety about the role that Southern Democrats might play in his administration. The whispering campaign, that Roosevelt was in ill health and that his running mate—the Southerner, Garner—would soon take over the Presidency if they were elected, was perhaps influential in keeping the Negro vote Republican in 1932.

But when the New Deal relieved the economic plight of the Negroes during the depression, and—in the North—treated them almost without discrimination,[a] and appointed Negro advisors for many phases of the government's activities, Negroes began to shift to the Democratic party in large numbers. The movement was accelerated when the local Democratic machines proved more grateful for the Negro's vote than had their Republican predecessors.[66] The estimated proportion of Negroes voting for Roosevelt in Chicago was 23 per cent in 1932, 49 per cent in 1936, and

[a] See Chapter 15.

52 per cent in 1940.[67] In Detroit the estimated proportion voting for Roosevelt was 36.7 per cent in 1932, 63.5 per cent in 1936, and 69.3 per cent in 1940.[68]

Table 1 shows the same startling trends toward the Democratic party for these and other cities, using a slightly less adequate technical procedure.

It is not certain whether the Northern Negro vote will remain Democratic, but it is certain that it has become more flexible and will respond more readily to the policies of the two parties toward the Negro.[69] This will probably bring more political advantages to Negroes, since their vote will take on more strategic significance in the close elections often occurring in the North. It is also a sign that politically Negroes are becoming more like other Americans.

There has been a widespread belief that Northern Negroes became radical in large numbers during the depression. All the available data reveal that this is a fallacy. In Detroit about 3.2 per cent of the Negroes voted for a party other than Democratic or Republican in 1930. This was larger than the third-party vote of native whites, but not of foreign-born groups in that city. In 1932, the Negro percentage for third parties fell to 1.5—equal to that of native whites and lower than that of foreign-born groups. It remained low during the depression and by 1940 was only 0.5 per cent.[70] In Chicago, Gosnell estimated that only 500 Negroes joined the Communist party during the depression, although many more participated in parades and other activities.[71] In Cleveland, Davis estimated that the height of the depression saw only 200 Negroes in the Communist party.[72]

Before 1933, when Negroes were attached to the Republican party, there was little, if any, difference between the lower class and middle class Negroes in party affiliation. It is true that Tammany Hall succeeded in attracting more lower class than middle class Negroes in New York, but New York Negroes had already gone quite a way toward the Democratic party before 1930. Since 1933, Negroes have split just as whites have, though probably not so much: Negroes with lower incomes have gone over to the Democratic party in somewhat greater proportion than Negroes with middle incomes. In Detroit, for example, the 1940 election found about 72 per cent of the lower economic group of Negroes for Roosevelt as compared to about 63 per cent of the middle economic group, whereas in 1930 the corresponding percentages were 19 and 22, respectively.[73] Whether this differential between Negroes of different classes will continue or not is problematical. The Negro middle and upper classes are different from white middle and upper classes in that they are more directly dependent on the lower class and in that they are more interested in social reform.

On the whole, *Negroes have come to be rather like whites in their political behavior in the North.* They vote in about the same proportion

TABLE 1

PER CENT OF MAJOR PARTY VOTE FOR ROOSEVELT, 1932, 1936, 1940, IN EACH WARD HAVING MORE THAN HALF ITS POPULATION NEGRO, SELECTED CITIES.[a]

	Baltimore			Chicago		Columbus		Detroit			Kansas City, Kans.	Kansas City, Mo.	New Haven	Pitts-burgh	Wilming-ton
Ward	5	14	17	2	3	6	7	3	5	7	2	4	19	5	6
1932	46.4	49.2	43.0	25.4	20.7	27.9	23.2	46.0	50.2	53.9	41.5	70.8	38.9	53.3	28.3
1936	64.2	54.6	46.9	47.9	50.1	47.7	46.6	71.4	75.0	79.0	61.3	79.4	61.0	76.6	40.1
1940	72.1	60.7	59.6	51.2	54.2	50.7	57.1	75.3	79.2	80.0	59.6	66.5	58.7	77.1	41.5

[a] The cities selected are all those with over 100,000 population, containing wards having 50 per cent or more of their population Negro, where Negroes were allowed to vote unhampered or almost unhampered, and where ward lines were not changed over the period 1932–1940. The only exception is Philadelphia, which refused to supply information. The data in this table were collected for this study by Shirley Star.

as whites; they are no longer tied to the Republican party; they eschew third parties; they have manifested a class differential in their adherence to the Democratic party. On the other hand, *most Negro voters are more keenly aware of a candidate's attitude toward their group than are most other Americans*—perhaps only because they are one of the few ethnic groups against whom politicians ever discriminate. Even though Negroes are seeking only their rights as citizens and a proportionate share of the political spoils, they find they have to be choosy about parties and candidates to get these.

5. WHAT THE NEGRO GETS OUT OF POLITICS

With the great northward migration, Negroes came to vote in large numbers. In spite of the virtual disfranchisement of Negroes in the South, there are about as many Negroes voting today in the United States as there are whites voting in the seven Southern states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, South Carolina, Arkansas, Georgia, and Florida—that is, in the entire Deep South except Texas and Oklahoma.[74] Yet Southern whites get incomparably more benefits from politics than do Negroes. Negroes are grossly discriminated against in what they get from politics just as they are in their exercise of the right to vote. A striking measure of this fact is that the seven Deep Southern states have 52 members of the House of Representatives and 14 members of the Senate, whereas the Negroes, with the same number of actual votes, have only 1 member of the House of Representatives and no senators. There are many other ways in which Negroes are deprived of the benefits of politics. Unquestionably the most important thing that Negroes get out of politics where they vote is legal justice—justice in the courts; police protection and protection against the persecution of the police; ability to get administrative jobs through civil service; and a fair share in such public facilities as schools, hospitals, public housing, playgrounds, libraries, sewers and street lights. It is hard to demonstrate that a given number of Negro votes will procure a given amount of legal justice for Negroes, because it can be claimed, and correctly so, that these communities which allow Negroes to vote to a given extent will also usually be willing to give them other legal rights to a comparable extent. Yet case after case can be cited to show where white politicians have given community services, justice in the courts, and "civil service" jobs to Negroes just because they have received a certain number of votes from them. These cases may be cited to indicate the nature of the power of the vote and not to measure this power. The Negroes' votes in some parts of the country buy them their rights as citizens to a large extent, while their lack of votes in others cause them to be discriminated against all around.[a]

[a] In Chapter 20, Section 2, we have pointed out specific reasons why the vote is of such paramount importance to the individual citizen in America.

Political spoils, favors and "protection" also are given to Negroes for their votes. Any Negro who can control a given number of Negro votes may aspire to an appointive political position for himself or for persons designated by himself. Petty favors to the mass of Negro voters are the stock-in-trade of the local politicians: they can save their supporters from fines and short jail sentences; they can "fix" personal property taxes and traffic violations; they can help poor Negroes to get relief or to get on W.P.A. without the usual red tape. Many a Negro church has been able to avoid closing its doors or to buy a new altar when its minister has made his pulpit available to political candidates, Negro or white. Nearly every Negro newspaper is supported, to some degree, by funds supplied by political parties or candidates. Negro criminals, racketeers, vice "kings," and gamblers get protection from the law and from each other to the extent that they can influence or buy votes. In getting all these illegal and extra-legal returns for their votes, Negroes are quite like whites, except that they probably do not get so much on the average. As Gosnell and Bunche point out, Negroes seldom get the really big graft.[75] While this may be looked on as another form of discrimination, it also allows us to infer that Negroes have not so much to lose if city politics are cleaned up. City reform movements not only tend to be fairer in granting Negroes their civic rights, but in reducing corruption they take away less from the few Negroes than from the few whites who benefit by corruption.[a]

Just as they are practically voteless in the South, Negroes there have a minimum of what we have called "legal justice," as we shall describe in the following part. Where they have a few votes, as in the cities and in the Upper South, they have a roughly corresponding measure of legal justice. While this is the general rule, there are minor exceptions: Lewinson tells the story of the president of a Southern State Normal School for Negroes who was rewarded with new buildings for "minding his business" when it came to politics.[76] But this is—to repeat—an exception. It is not—as the average white Southerner often is heard saying—that Negroes are given a fair share of their legal rights if they do not disturb the smooth course of white men's politics.

Even where Negroes have only a few votes in the South they have at least some opportunity to bargain for police and court protection. The lack of a vote is especially dangerous in many Southern communities where even the police are elected or dependent for their tenure on elected office-holding friends.[77] Even Southerners come to recognize this. After three Negroes were killed in one month by policemen in one Alabama city, a

[a] In some cases, this is not true. The corrupt political machine of Mayor Thompson in Chicago was very friendly to Negroes, and one of the aims of the reformers was to clean out the "Negro influence." Negro racketeers, like other racketeers, also stand to lose if a reform movement is successful.

white newspaper blamed the police and traced the condition to the fact that Negroes had no vote.[78] In Memphis, where Negro votes are an important support of the Crump machine, there are relatively few Negroes killed by the police.[79] In many other ways, too, it is demonstrated that this city, which is cited as the outstanding example of the danger of herding Negroes to the polls, is much fairer to Negroes in granting them elementary civic rights. Similarly it is alleged that Negroes of New Orleans were solidly behind Huey Long because he did not discriminate against Negroes in giving free school books, and because he put Negro nurses in the hospitals, Negro servants in the state capitol and refrained from referring to "niggers" in his campaign speeches.[80] In San Antonio, too, Negroes have received almost a fair share of public facilities and minor political jobs from the Democratic machine. On the other hand, there is a good deal of truth in the assertion that the main return for the Negro vote in the machine-dominated cities is protection for the Negro underworld and minor administrative jobs for the petty Negro politicians who marshal the Negro vote.[81]

In the rural South, a Negro tenant or cropper who seeks to leave his cotton farm will often be apprehended and brought back by the elected sheriffs. Sheriffs seldom, if ever, do this to white croppers and tenants, for the latter may vote just as does the white farm owner, whereas the Negro tenant or cropper cannot vote. In Southern cities, Negro workers are allowed to attend union mass meetings where they can vote.[82] Despite repeated decisions by the federal courts that Negroes must be placed on jury lists, practically no Negroes serve on juries in the South except where they vote in significant numbers.[a] The connection has been directly established in Alabama, for example, where after the Scottsboro decision, Negroes were placed on jury lists only if they had voted—even though no Negroes were ever selected from these lists.

The few hundred Negro votes which were cast in 1939 in Greenville, South Carolina, in the face of Ku Klux Klan violence, has already netted Negroes there two fully equipped playgrounds.[83] Similarly, the first large Negro vote in Miami in 1939—also in the face of Klan violence—has changed the attitude of white politicians greatly; streets in Negro sections have been improved, a low cost housing project has been built and another is under way, and the leader of the Negro movement was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1940.[84] In Louisville, Negro votes, shifted to the victorious Democrats in 1933, were rewarded by a Negro fire company in their part of the city and by a score of minor administrative and clerical jobs in the city government.[85]

[a] See Chapter 26. Negroes are found on juries in the South practically only in large cities in the Border states and in Oklahoma and Texas.

In referenda and other nonpartisan elections, Negro votes have often been able to achieve advantages for Negroes in Southern cities. In 1921, Negroes defeated a bond issue for schools in Atlanta until it was agreed that they would receive a share of the funds for new schools; the Booker T. Washington High School and four elementary schools were the outcome. In 1926, a similar deal was made, but the promises made to the Negro leaders were not kept in full.[86] In 1939, Negroes in Dallas received a high school and a grade school for supporting a bond issue.[87] Negro participation in the nonpartisan municipal elections in Austin, Texas, is always rewarded: at present there are four Negro policemen, several garbage collectors, a few janitors in the city buildings, and a well-equipped recreation center for Negroes.[88]

Wherever Negroes vote in the South, white politicians who gain from their votes "repay" them with a few minor administrative or menial jobs, a few streets paved or lighted, and occasionally a school building or community center. If Negro votes are necessary to the success of a referendum and if Negroes are organized enough to make a deal with white leaders, they can get a share of the advantages provided by the success of the referendum. Southern Negro voters are never expected to consider issues broader than the interests of their own group, and they seldom do. On the whole, Southern Negroes have been content to vote *against* discriminatory measures rather than *for* progressive measures.[89] The vote of the average Negro has to be directed toward getting those elementary civic rights which are the unquestioned prerogative of every white citizen. The aims of the Negro political hack can usually be directed no higher than to get the merest left-overs of the political spoils.[a] The rare Negro who has broader political interests has to concentrate on getting out the Negro vote rather than directing a vote that already exists. Partly as a result of this situation, the Negro voter in the South, not unlike the poor white voter, tends to be easily "bought" and not very intelligent on issues. With few exceptions,[b] the only occasions when there is no effort to buy up the Negro vote on the part of white politicians are those when there are so few Negro voters that they can have no influence on the outcome of an election.

In the North, where Negroes are not restricted from voting, they get full police protection and justice in the courts to about the same extent as whites of comparable economic and educational status. They get community services, such as schools, libraries, street paving, and sanitation facilities, in rough proportion to the size of their vote, which is in rough proportion

[a] There are exceptions to this: the Bellingers—father and son—have gotten a great deal for themselves by marshaling the Negro vote of San Antonio.

[b] Such as occurred in the spontaneous Negro political movements in Miami and Greenville in 1939.

to their numbers in the population. Gosnell's summary for Chicago applies, with slight variation, throughout the North.

> Under the existing political system, the Negroes secured about as many concrete benefits from the government as most other minority groups. However, because their needs were greater, these benefits were not sufficient. Inadequate as they were, these services came nearer to meeting the needs than in areas where the Negroes have not developed some political power.[90]

Like whites, Negro racketeers and criminals received protection from politicians to the extent that they could influence votes. Ordinary Negroes received petty favors from politicians almost to the same extent as whites.

Negroes have been elected to office in the North, but not nearly in proportion to their numbers. Even in the Border states of Kentucky, West Virginia, and Missouri, there have been a few Negroes in the state legislatures. Negroes find it hard to attain an elective office: because most whites do not like to be represented by Negroes, because Negroes sometimes do not constitute a large enough proportion in a city to control even small sections like wards, because they have been gerrymandered by Democratic politicians for being Republican, and because they have sometimes not shown political interest or acumen. Except for a few judgeships and memberships on such public bodies as Tax Boards and Boards of Education, no Negro has attained a city-wide elective position. There is only one Negro national congressman[a] and about a dozen Negro state legislators.[b] Most of the large cities in the North containing a significant proportion of Negroes have one or two Negro aldermen or councilmen each. These are all the Negroes who have been elected to public office in the North.[c]

There are more Negroes appointed to public office than elected, relative to the total number of offices available, but even these are nowhere near the proportion of the Negro vote. The main reason cited for not appointing Negroes is that some white citizens have strong objections to dealing with them. It is also noteworthy that when a white politician appoints a Negro to some general office, political motives are always inferred, where as white

[a] William Dawson of Chicago (Democrat). From 1928 to 1934 this seat was held by the Republican De Priest, who became heir to it when Madden, "the white friend of the Negro people," died.

[b] According to Charles S. Johnson, in 1942 there were Negroes in the state legislatures of Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, Kansas, Indiana and Kentucky. ("The Negro," *American Journal of Sociology* [May, 1942], p. 863.) The November, 1942, election brought Negroes into the legislature of Ohio also.

[c] In Chicago, for example, Negroes held the following elective positions in 1939: 1 United States Congressman, 1 State Senator, 4 State Representatives, 1 County Commissioner, 2 City Aldermen. Negroes in Chicago were more favored than Negroes in any other city. (Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 79.)

men may be appointed without this inference. Both whites and Negroes usually look upon the Negro appointees as representatives only of the Negro population. Negro appointments are usually to minor offices. Since much is made of appointments even to clerical and janitorial positions, while major appointments are regarded as news throughout the country, a white politician is usually well repaid for appointing a Negro to any position he may control. It is astonishingly easy to build up a reputation among Negroes as a "white friend of the Negro people."[91] Mayor La Guardia has appointed Negroes to the Special Sessions Court, Domestic Relations Courts, and Civil Service Commission in New York, and has seen to it that Negroes are allowed to compete freely for positions in the city civil service and relief administration. In Chicago Negroes have been appointed to the posts of Assistant State's Attorney; Assistant Attorney General; Assistant City Prosecutor; Deputy Coroner; Assistant Traction Attorney; Assistant Corporation Counsel; Civil Service Commissioner; member of the Housing Authority, of the Library Board and of the Recreation Board.[92] Mayor Kelly of Chicago has also followed the policy of his Republican predecessor—Thompson—in allowing Negroes a significant number of "civil service" positions—especially in the city school system, the Public Library, the Health Department and the Water Bureau.[93] Other Northern cities have similarly given Negroes minor positions in the local government, although perhaps in a lesser degree than in New York and Chicago where the Negro vote is unusually well organized and flexible.

Because voting Negroes are concentrated in a half dozen Northern cities, they can exert little influence on the federal government.[94] This is more than balanced, however, by the federal government's greater conformity to the principles of the American Creed. The federal courts, especially the United States Supreme Court, have been traditional guardians of the Negro's rights. Congress and the Presidents—even, to a certain extent, the Southern Democrat Wilson and the lily-white Hoover—have usually sought to be fair to Negroes. Negro claims have usually received a sympathetic hearing in Washington: Judge Parker was not confirmed as a Justice of the Supreme Court mainly because of his anti-Negro attitude; the anti-lynching bill has more than once been on the verge of passage—hindered only by a filibuster by Southern senators.

As we had occasion to mention earlier, the only elected Negro representative in Washington is a congressman from Chicago. Few Negroes hold top rank appointive positions, and these few are usually in positions that have "traditionally" been held by Negroes since Reconstruction days (such as Recorder of Deeds for the District of Columbia). These traditional appointments are not so stable as is sometimes thought. There was a steady decline in their number from the Taft administration to the

Franklin D. Roosevelt administration. Once in a while, a new "traditional" Negro position is created: when William Hastie, the Roosevelt-appointed Federal Judge in the Virgin Islands, resigned, another Negro was appointed in his place. There are only about a dozen of these traditional top-rank Negro positions in the federal government.

More important since the beginning of the Roosevelt administration are the positions created in various governmental bureaus to advise or direct the application of federal policies to Negroes. The Negroes selected to fill these positions usually have a superior educational background and only one or two have participated in party politics. The powers of these persons have depended mainly on the liberality of their chiefs, although their own activity has been important. When their function has been to direct the application of their respective bureau's policy toward Negroes—as is the case in the National Youth Administration and the United States Housing Authority—they have been able to exert a good deal of influence and have sometimes succeeded in getting a "fair share" of the government's benefits for Negroes. Where they merely advise their chiefs or are regarded as "trouble shooters" to soothe Negro protests of discrimination—as in the Civilian Conservation Corps—their influence is limited. Some of the New Deal agencies have not had Negro advisors—such as the Federal Housing Administration—and several of these agencies have notoriously discriminated against Negroes.

Between 1933 and 1940 there were 103 Negroes appointed by President Roosevelt to positions in the federal government, including 23 who had resigned by 1940 and 3 who had lost their positions because their functions were abolished. Under the leadership of Mary McLeod Bethune—Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the N.Y.A. and nationally known educator and leader of Negro women—the most important of these have organized an informal group, the Federal Council, popularly known as "the Black Cabinet." The purpose of this group is to discuss common problems and to encourage coordinated activity, although it never takes public action as a group.[95] The great weaknesses of the holders of these positions are that many of them are in agencies which are not considered to be permanent, and that they are completely subordinated to the white heads of the respective bureaus. Although many Negroes have condemned the appointments to these positions as representing an effort to keep Negroes satisfied, there are important achievements to their credit, and they are the first significant step, in recent years, toward the participation of Negroes in federal government activity.

In addition to the full-time Negro advisors and section chiefs, there are several official part-time advisors who do not live in Washington but only visit there occasionally and upon request. For example, in March, 1942, F. D. Patterson, President of Tuskegee Institute, and Claude A. Barnett,

Director of the Associated Negro Press, were named special assistants to the Secretary of Agriculture to "insure the integration and full participation of Negro farmers in the food-for-freedom campaign." Also there are unofficial Negro advisors—such as Booker T. Washington when he was alive and A. Philip Randolph (President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters) today—but their activities are an aspect of Negro leadership more than of federal policy and will be discussed in another context.[a]

According to the Chief of the Statistical Division of the Civil Service Commission, there were about 82,000 Negroes holding federal Civil Service jobs on June 30, 1938, representing about 9.8 per cent of the total federal employment.[96] About 88 per cent of these were stationed outside Washington and were practically all either postal clerks, mail carriers, unskilled laborers or janitors. Most of the 12 per cent stationed in Washington had similar low positions. They were strikingly negligible in the lower salaried white collar jobs which furnish the bulk of employment for white government employees. There was a small proportion of Negroes in the higher paid technical, professional and administrative positions.[b]

During Reconstruction, Negroes succeeded in getting a large share of the lower federal government jobs in the South (mainly in the postal service). After the Southern conservatives regained power, and as the North gradually entered the compromise by which it became blind to actual conditions in the South, Negroes gradually lost these jobs. The fact that the Republican party was in power most of the time after the Civil War, and the fact that Negroes soon came under civil service, prevented them from being thrown out of these jobs completely. By the time of the Hoover administration, Negroes held practically none of the middle or higher federal positions in the South and only a relatively small proportion of the lower ones. The New Deal has reversed the trend slightly, not by opening positions to Negroes in the South, but by being less discriminatory in the lower jobs in Washington.

[a] See Part IX.

[b] For a discussion of discrimination against Negroes in the federal Civil Service, see Chapter 14, Section 8.

CHAPTER 23

TRENDS AND POSSIBILITIES

1. The Negro's Political Bargaining Power

To make political forecasts is hazardous. But forecasts are the aim of factual analysis. Indeed, its sole purpose, aside from scientific curiosity, is to furnish the basis for a practical discussion of future trends and possibilities. In the Negro problem there are certain dominating factors making a forecast considerably simpler than for the American nation at large.

If we focus our attention only on Negro voting in those parts of the country where Negroes have, or will have, the unhampered right to the ballot, it can, with reasonable security, be foretold that *there is not going to be a "Negro party" in American politics.* It is true that there are strong ties of common interests in the Negro group. But Negroes know from bitter experience that there is nothing which can so frustrate their hope of having a voice in public affairs as the arousing of a fear of "Negro domination." Negroes in America are, further, bent on cultural assimilation to the fullest degree allowed by the white majority and are careful to abstain from every move in the political sphere which might be interpreted as group exclusiveness. In addition, Negroes are in a minority in all but a few parts of the country. Where they are a majority, suffrage is a relatively distant hope and will in all probability materialize only gradually. The essential stimulus for party formation—namely, the hope of eventually coming into power—is everywhere entirely lacking. Finally, the peculiar American political system strongly disfavors small parties even when this hope is present.

The Negro voter will, therefore, have to try to exert his influence through one of the two dominant political parties. Since the Negroes broke their traditional allegiance to the Republican party, the Negro vote is fluid. *It is likely to remain fluid.* Neither the Republican party nor the Democratic party will be certain of the Negro vote for any length of time without real exertions. Negro voters will increasingly judge political parties from the viewpoint of their friendliness to the Negro group.

The Democratic and Republican parties will increasingly compete for the Negro vote. The question arises *whether, in this haggling and bargaining, the Negroes will be able to extract the maximum advantage by acting*

as a political unit, nationally and locally. One prerequisite for such a tactic is present to a greater degree than in any other large American group of voters. Negroes, as a consequence of the bonds of caste in which they are enclosed, feel a larger degree of interest solidarity in relation to society. It is true that the Negro community is stratified into social classes and that, in general, Negroes are much at variance in political issues, interests and ideals. But the lower classes are, because of the caste situation, a great majority, and the upper classes have strong interests in the economic welfare of the lower classes who constitute the basis of their economic sustenance. As regards Negro issues, therefore, the internal differences have little significance, and those issues are likely to remain primary. There are certain concrete demands—all centering around the insistence that Negroes should be treated like other citizens—about which there is almost universal agreement among Negroes.

In the sphere of national politics, however, the attempt to take up real collective bargaining with the two political parties on behalf of the Negro voters has not been effective.[1] Since the Negro vote became fluid in the 1930's and both parties now recognize this fact, it would be rather natural for a national Negro political leadership to form itself and start negotiations with the two parties in advance of each national election. This has not happened. The "bidding for the Negro vote" has been left almost entirely to the care of the two parties themselves and has principally become directed to the individual Negro voter, through party-appointed Negro leaders, as no bargaining agency for the Negroes has interceded. In local politics collective bargaining has, as we have shown, not been entirely lacking. But taking a broad view, the main observation is again that the situation has not been utilized to any extent approaching the political possibilities. Negro communities everywhere display in the most glaring manner clear-cut problems of housing, employment, education, health, and so on, calling not only for expert planning but for formulation of Negro political programs. It is, indeed, a matter to be explained why Negro pressure in these communities, at least in the North, is so diffuse and inarticulate, and, relatively speaking, so politically ineffective.

Part of the explanation is, undoubtedly, the poverty and the inherited psychology of dependence and apathy among the Negro masses, their low educational and cultural level, and the lack of political tradition and experience both in the masses and in the upper strata of the Negro community. All this is bound to change in time. But there are, in addition, certain intrinsic difficulties inherent in the strategy of not being able to form an independent party with hope of gaining political power but, nevertheless, of wanting to act as a political unit in order to raise the price paid for the Negro votes by the existing parties. The very facts that a Negro is prevented by his caste status from regarding himself as an ordinary Ameri-

can citizen and as a wholehearted supporter of a party, and that—when acting as a representative for his group—he is out to get favors for them, are conducive to a psychology where broad political ideas are put in the background and petty haggling becomes natural. The tendency to cynicism, which the author has observed everywhere in American Negro communities, becomes strengthened by the American party system, which does not correlate closely with broad divisions of real interests and social ideals. If, in addition, the party machines are corrupt, which they are in most places where Negroes live in any numbers, the presence of such moral strength on the part of the Negro leadership as would be prerequisite for efficient bargaining would be a wonder.

But even apart from all this, the Negro leader is in a dilemma. If he pleads allegiance to a political party, he will lose in bargaining power. If, on the other hand, he keeps outside the parties, he loses some of the influence he could exert by being in the inner circle of one of them.[a] Out of the dilemma there is only one possible and rational escape: *a division of labor and responsibility among Negro leaders,* so that the Negro politicians proper and the party workers identify themselves with political parties and work with them and for them, while other Negro representatives, invested with superior prestige among their people, remain independent of close party ties and do the important collective bargaining. The former group represents the Negro people's necessary allegiance to the American party system, the latter group their separate interests as an independent unit. For optimal functioning such a system of minority politics requires a high degree of political sophistication among both leaders and followers and much good-will and cohesion. It is not surprising that it has not materialized in any high degree in this subdued and politically inexperienced group. But it might become more of a reality in the future. The great community of interest in a caste set apart in society, but fighting for fuller assimilation, offers a firm basis for such an organization of the Negro people's political bargaining power.

The political strength of such a dual system of political organization will depend primarily upon the cohesion of the local Negro political blocs in the several communities forming its basis. There are, however, a great number of specific impediments to a further development of the local organization of Negro political power. One is the internal rivalry among leaders in a deeply frustrated group.[b] Power becomes so dear when there is so little of it. Cynicism becomes so widespread among ambitious individuals whose way upward is blocked. There is also the tendency among many Negroes who aspire to prominence, or who have arrived but want to make themselves secure, to take orders from the influential whites and to "sell out"

[a] The problem of Negro leadership will be discussed in Part IX.

[b] See Chapter 36, Section 2, and Chapter 37, Section 8.

their own group. Such persons seem everywhere to be available for utilization in splitting the unity of the Negroes. A third relevant fact is that an even greater group of potential Negro leaders, even if they are not "white men's niggers," nevertheless are so dependent that they cannot afford the integrity required to make them effective bargainers for the Negro group. At bottom is the ease with which the Negro masses can be duped—because they are distressed, poorly educated, politically inexperienced, tractable, and have old traditions of dependence and carelessness.

All this is, however, relative. Even though the Negro voters are weakly organized today, the two parties have to compete for them. The N.A.A.C.P. and all other national and local Negro organizations and the Negro press are constantly doing a service by creating publicity—favorable or unfavorable—in the Negro community for the political parties and the individual officeholders. To some extent the latter become compelled to adjust according to the reactions of Negro voters.

2. THE NEGRO'S PARTY ALLEGIANCE

Our assumption has until now been that the Negro vote will remain fluid but will keep conservatively to the two big parties. One thing seems certain: namely, that the Negroes will not go fascist. All their interests are against right-wing radicalism.[2] More problematic, of course, are Negro attitudes toward Communism. To many white people in America, apparently, it seems natural that they should turn Communist. This is, however, largely only a testimony of their own bad social conscience and of their ignorance of the Negro community. It is true that a majority of the Negro people are in economic distress. It is also true that they are increasingly becoming conscious of being severely maltreated in America and that they sense social exclusion, which must decrease their feeling of full solidarity with the dominant groups in society. All this should make them open to revolutionary propaganda. It is further true that the Communists have seen their chance and have been devoting much zealous work to cultivating the Negroes. They have run a Negro as candidate for Vice-President of the United States. They are the only American group which has in practice offered Negroes full "social equality," and this is highly valued not only among Negro intellectuals but much deeper down in the Negro community, particularly in the North.

Still *the Communists have not succeeded in getting any appreciable following among Negroes in America*[a] and it does not seem likely that they will. No intensive study has been made on this problem. The following observations are presented as impressionistic, even if they are believed to contain the main facts. To begin with, it is a mistake to assume *a priori* that poor, uneducated, and socially disadvantaged groups are particularly

[a] See Chapter 22, Section 4.

susceptible to radical propaganda. It is different in a revolutionary situation when those groups might not only come to follow but actually constitute the vanguard of an onslaught on society. But in peaceful, orderly development they are apt to be conservative. Even for liberal reform movements the poorest people have been the most difficult to organize. The trade union movement, for instance, all over the world has had its first and most faithful adherents in the higher strata of the working class. It has had to push downward with difficulty and usually has not succeeded in organizing the lower brackets before they were raised economically and culturally.[3]

The strong impact of church and religion in the Negro community should not be forgotten.[4] This is, however, only one trait of Negro conservatism. Negroes who care so much for society as to have any general political opinions at all are intent upon "respectability" in a middle class sense. Communism is definitely not respectable in America generally or among Negroes specifically. The unpopularity of Communism in America—often reaching the pitch of actual persecution of the Communist party and its adherents—must, furthermore, be uninviting to a group like the American Negroes who know so well that they are unpopular already. As one Negro explained, "It is bad enough being black without being black and red." James Weldon Johnson makes this point:

> In the situation as it now exists, it would be positively foolhardy for us, as a group, to take up the cause of Communistic revolution and thereby bring upon ourselves all of the antagonisms that are directed against it in addition to those we already have to bear. It seems to me that the wholesale allegiance of the Negro to Communistic revolution would be second in futility only to his individual resort to physical force.[5]

and again:

> . . . there is no apparent possibility that a sufficient number of Negro Americans can be won over to give the party the desired strength; and if the entire mass were won over, the increased proscriptions against Negroes would outweigh any advantages that might be gained. Every Negro's dark face would be his party badge, and would leave him an open and often solitary prey to the pack whenever the hunt might be on. And the sign of the times is that the hunt is not yet to be abandoned.[6]

The strong "horse sense" of this argument does not need logical demonstration. It is a foregone conclusion to even the most politically ill-equipped American Negro. Deep in the Negro mind is also a suspicion against the social evangelism of his white Communist friends. "Even after a revolution the country will be full of crackers" is a reflection I have often met when discussing Communism in the Negro community.

> If the United States goes Communistic, where will the Communists come from? They certainly will not be imported from Russia. They will be made from the Americans here on hand. We might well pause and consider what variations Communism in the United States might undergo.[7]

But there is, I have become convinced, a still deeper reason why Negroes are so immune against Communism. Negroes are discriminated against in practically all spheres of life, but in their fight for equal opportunity *they have on their side the law of the land and the religion of the nation.* And they know it, all the way down to the poorest stratum. They know that this is their strategic hold. *No social Utopia can compete with the promises of the American Constitution and with the American Creed which it embodies.* Democracy and lawful government mean so much more to a Negro, just because he enjoys so comparatively little of it in this country. Merely by giving him the solemn promise of equality and liberty, American society has tied the Negroes' faith to itself.

It should be observed, however, that several of the factors mentioned are transitory to a degree. The prospect of stimulating Negro support would also be different if a revolutionary movement once became really important in America and in a position to exert a serious threat of assuming political power. In such a situation a maltreated caste like the Negro people might suddenly become uncertain in its political allegiance. The Negroes' experiences during the present War until the time when this is being written (April, 1942) have undoubtedly had the general effect of loosening their sentimental ties to American society.[a] But such a drift away from national allegiance is the price eventually to be paid by a democratic society which, in the fulfillment of the promises of democracy, makes an exception of one group. It should also be observed that Communism, outside of party membership, has actually had a considerable influence upon the mode of thinking of the small group of Negro intellectuals who are, of course, easiest to move. There has been a growth of general radicalism in this group, and the present investigator has been surprised to find how it has spread also to Negro professionals and, occasionally, even to the Negro press.

If we thus conclude that—for the near future at least—Communism or any similar movement will not be able to muster any numerical support from the Negro voters, we must, on the other hand, be aware that *Negroes as a group will from now on be in strong favor of a political party which stands for social reform and civic equality.* In this respect, the New Deal promises to have permanent effects.[8] It has made this political alignment apparent to the whole Negro people. When once the sentimental allegiance to the Republican party was broken and a modern liberal movement in American politics was inaugurated, this attitude became natural for a group which includes so many who are perennially interested in public assistance in one form or another. Negroes, in both the higher and the lower strata, seem to understand pretty well that a liberal attitude in questions of economic relief and social reform is generally connected with a more equalitarian attitude in racial matters.

[a] See Chapters 19 and 45.

With the vanishing of the frontier, the bar against new immigration, the proceeding Americanization, the growth of labor organizations, and other factors of structural change, the American party system has for a considerable time been headed for a rather fundamental change. During the Roosevelt administration, cleavage seemed to develop within both parties which made for a closer correspondence of party alignment to real interests and ideals. The present War might, of course, inaugurate unforeseen new trends. But extrapolating the trends during the 'thirties and assuming no successful new third party movement, the present author has been inclined to envisage such a reorganization of the two-party system that one of the two parties carrying on the tradition of the New Deal becomes a liberal reform party, while the other remains a conservative party.[a]

If we assume that such a new system will materialize, it seems fairly certain that the great majority of Negroes are going to adhere to the liberal party, provided it be consistently liberal with respect to the Negro problem and manifests its liberalism not only in words but also in deeds. By becoming less fluid politically, the Negro voters would undoubtedly lose some of their bargaining power. But as the cause for their greater party loyalty would be that the party of their choice actually was more liberal, this would not be a real loss. Also, Negro fluidity would not be completely lost, since there will probably never be a return to that type of sentimentality which characterized the Negro's adherence to the Republican party from the Civil War until the New Deal, and since the Conservative party will not ignore the Negro's vote completely, and the Liberal party will realize that it *can* lose the Negro vote. If this realignment of the American party system should emerge, many Negro politicans would be released from the dilemma of double loyalty to the party and to the Negro group. This would remove to a certain extent one of the fundamental causes of political cynicism and corruption among Negro politicians.

Generally speaking, a development of the type here envisaged would, in the present writer's opinion, enhance efficiency and honesty in American politics. The causes of incompetency and corruption are many and varied.[9] But I believe that they have much more to do, than is generally understood, with the system of political parties entirely disconnected from the broad

[a] The impediments in the way of such a development are not overlooked. (1) The Democratic party is not likely to develop into a consistently liberal party without endangering its monopoly over the South. We should not deceive ourselves that the South has suddenly become progressive because the Southerners are Democrats, and the Democratic party is progressive under the leadership of Roosevelt. There is no doubt that the fact that the Democratic party is so largely Southern has served as a kind of brake on its progressivism in national politics. The rapid run of change in the South (see Chapter 21, Section 4) might bring a split of the party in the South. (2) Just as there are conservative Democrats, there are progressive Republicans. But even conservative Republicans are not willing to allow their party to play the role of a conservative party.

divisions of interests and ideals in American society. American politics has been comparatively empty of real issues. Often the issue, particularly in local elections, has been simply the demand for efficiency and honesty—the very things which have been generally lacking to such a degree that the ordinary American has come to believe that inefficiency and dishonesty are inexorably connected with politics as such. Honest and efficient politics requires political opinions and, indeed, splits in opinion. It also requires an independent, though democratically controlled, bureaucracy, and a firm tradition of legality. In these latter respects, too, the American government is on the move toward acquiring a structure less conducive to incompetence and graft.[a]

The Negroes as a subordinated group will be among the chief beneficiaries of these changes if they occur. The changes will not come overnight. They are contingent upon the building up of traditions, and that will take time. And there is always the danger that intervening happenings will break the process of orderly growth. Even assuming no such unforeseen causes of deviation, the task before America in reforming its system of government is incomparably grave: it has to cleanse its politics, not—as other nations have done—in an era of noninterference characterized by rigidly restricted state activity, but in an historic stage when state intervention is mounting, when state services are multiplying and when billions of dollars are passing through public budgets.

3. Negro Suffrage in the South as an Issue

The concern of the Southern Negroes is not how they shall use their votes but how to get their constitutional right to vote respected at all. Negro political power in the North is, as we shall see, not inconsequential for this problem in the South. But there are many other forces of change involved in the matter.

That suffrage should be a major interest for Southern Negroes is demonstrated in several chapters of this book. There is, indeed, no single one of the several categories of Southern Negroes' deprivations and sufferings which is unconnected with their disfranchisement. In America, with its tradition of loose and politically dependent administration, there is more than elsewhere a considerable substance of realism in W. E. B. Du Bois' blunt statement:

> I hold this truth to be self-evident, that a disfranchised working class in modern industrial civilization is worse than helpless. It is a menace, not simply to itself, but to every other group in the community . . . it will be ignorant; it will be the plaything of mobs; and it will be insulted by caste restrictions.[10]

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 2.

And Du Bois is also right when, without falling into the fallacy of believing that the voting right would by itself work wonders, he insists on the vote as a key point in all efforts to raise Negro standards. There is, indeed, a strange atmosphere of unreality around much of the discussion of the practical aspects of the Negro problem in America: it is commonly and more or less explicitly assumed that it is possible to raise materially and permanently the condition of living in various respects for the Southern Negro people through Southern white good-will and Northern philanthropy while ". . . Negroes were to have no voice in the selection of local officials, no control of their own taxation, no vote on expenditure. . . ."[11] The Negroes' interests in politics are primarily concerned with the handling of local matters. Negroes need, in order to protect themselves, a voice in deciding who will be the judges of the courts, the public attorneys, the sheriffs and the chiefs of police, the members of the school board and other agencies deciding upon their share of public services. As national politics is increasingly important for all questions of social and economic welfare, they are also interested in who represents their districts in Congress.

On the point of suffrage, as in so many other respects, there has, *in principle*, never really been any great difference of opinion among Negro leaders. It is true that Booker T. Washington found it advisable as a more practical tactic to proceed carefully and to stress that there were many things more important for the Negro's welfare than the vote.[a] But he never gave up the demand for the Negro's right to the vote, nor his expectation that ultimately the South would reach a stage where Negroes were allowed to vote.[12] The Negro leaders have pointed to the moral danger to all society of the resort to extra-legal measures for keeping the Negroes out of politics.[13] The Negro leaders are also at one in not demanding an absolutely unqualified right to suffrage. They only insist that the restrictions of suffrage should be applied impartially to whites and Negroes alike.[14] White liberals in the South are increasingly taking the same position.[15] But the great majority of conservative Southern white people try to appear unconcerned.

While, with a few local and regional exceptions, the Southern Negroes remain disfranchised, we have noted the beginnings of a tendency to increased political participation. In many Southern cities, the present writer has observed how small organizations and civic groups among the Negroes are starting and are attempting to get more Negroes on the registration lists. But first, this is not an entirely new phenomenon and, second, the immediate success is in most cases insignificant. Most Southern Negroes seem to keep their minds turned away from the whole matter. As we have shown, they have, indeed, good reasons for lack of political interest. But

[a] See Chapter 34.

this does not prove that they would not vote if they were allowed to, and if the vote was given due importance.[a]

4. AN UNSTABLE SITUATION

Superficially viewed, the situation looks static and stable. This is, I believe, an illusion. Great changes are working underneath the visible surface, and a dynamic situation full of possibilities is maturing. Let us begin with some of the smaller changes: the declining value of the dollar has, since the inauguration of the disfranchising constitutions and election laws, actually diminished considerably the effectiveness both of the poll tax requirement and of the property clauses. A substantial inflation will probably be the result of the present War. The political pressure from the poorer classes will prevent attempts to raise the money figures in proportion to the rise in price level. The trend actually is in the other direction, to decrease the size of the poll tax and property requirements. A factor similar in its effect to inflation is the trend toward direct taxation and away from indirect taxation. It is possible that when the poll tax becomes only one direct tax among many, it will not appear to be so large. The present War is accentuating this trend.

More important is that the improved education of Negroes is rendering ineffective the literacy and understanding clauses. Every year there is a smaller proportion of the potential Negro electorate—as of the white one—which would be disfranchised by these clauses if they were impartially applied. They are not, as we have seen, applied honestly. This means that *at least the legal foundations for Negro disfranchisement is gradually withering away.* Keeping the Negroes away from the polls will thus increasingly have to be accomplished by intimidation, subterfuge or violence. In a sense, *the entire work around 1900 to legalize political discrimination is being rapidly undone by various social trends.*

For two reasons this work cannot well be made over to meet the changes: first, because the possible means for legal disfranchisement within the loopholes of the federal Constitution have been pretty well exhausted, and, second, because the general political atmosphere of the nation and the attitude of the Supreme Court are not so acquiescent as half a century ago when, in the great reaction after Reconstruction, they condoned the national compromise. Respect for law is being enhanced in the South. It is true that meanwhile a social pattern has been established that politics is white men's business, and that Negroes should not stick their noses into it. This is the main explanation of the calm before the storm. But as far as laws and individual rights mean anything at all in the South—and, as we shall see in the next part, there are reasons to believe that they will

[a] See Chapter 22, Sections 3 and 4.

mean increasingly much—this situation is highly unstable and is becoming more so every year.

It comes to this, that the poll tax probably will be abolished in one state after another (the present author would guess within the next decade). The reform elements in the South will become stronger as industrialization is proceeding and as labor is becoming unionized. It is quite possible that abolition of the poll tax might not immediately change the suffrage situation much for the Negroes. The white primary and the extra-legal measures to keep Negroes from the polls might for a time make this reform rather inconsequential as far as the Negroes are concerned.[a] The experiences from the three Southern States which have taken the step make this appear probable. But *by abolishing the poll tax the legal foundation for Negro disfranchisement will be made still weaker;* the South will thus, if it seeks to continue to preserve the *status quo,* have to rely still more exclusively on extra-legal measures. This, and the broadened basis of the white electorate—under the influence of the whole system of social changes which we have reviewed earlier[b]—is bound to rearrange the structure of politics in the South so much that even the white primary might crash. The conservative opponents of any reform in the poll tax, who claim that this will open the road to Negro enfranchisement, are probably right. But the forces that back this reform are getting to be so strong that in all probability they cannot be stopped.

5. THE STAKE OF THE NORTH

This is perhaps the point at which to take up for consideration the stake of the North in the Southern suffrage problem. It is apparent, and rather surprising, that the liberal forces in the North have not until recently given this problem more attention.

There is actually a provision in the Fourteenth Amendment requiring a reduction in representation in Congress as a punishment for disfranchisement.[16] But this provision has never been applied. The conservatives had, of course, no interest in doing it, and it could not be attractive to liberals either, as it would imply a formal sanction of disfranchisement. Further, the Southern conservatives' strategic position became the stronger when it gradually became clear that they were assisted by the Supreme Court decisions which gave a twisted construction to the Reconstruction Amendments and read into them a meaning never intended by their authors. Suits brought by Negroes were dismissed often on formalistic and technical

[a] It will also be some time after the legal abolition of the poll tax before the traditions connected with it disappear. Real issues which will stimulate the poorer whites to vote will not appear publicly overnight.

[b] See Chapter 21, Section 4.

grounds.[17] One Southerner—who was not arguing for enfranchising the Negroes but for their deportation—wrote early in the century:

> In the matter of the franchise, the South first desperately intimidated the negro; then systematically cheated him without semblance of law: then cheated him legally; and now defrauds him of his political rights in a duly constitutional fashion with the consent, if not the aid of the United States Supreme Court.[18]

It is generally held that the Supreme Court acted in agreement with and actually expressed what was then the general sentiment even in the North. The North had gotten tired of the Negro problem and, anyhow, saw no immediate alternative other than to let the white Southerners have their own way with their Negroes. But it must not be forgotten that the decisions of the Court had themselves a substantial share in the responsibility for the solidification of the Northern apathy. This was also before the great Negro migration: the Negro vote in the North was still small and safely belonged to the Republican party without any particular political compensation.

The Supreme Court is, however, seemingly changing its attitude and is again looking more to the spirit of the Reconstruction Amendments and not only to their possible loopholes. Since at the same time the legal foundation for Negro discrimination in the South is dissolving, it will be easier to win cases for disfranchised Negroes if they begin again to demand their constitutional right in the state courts. It would be no great surprise if the Supreme Court reversed its earlier stand and, by declaring the primary to be an election, rendered the white primary unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, the forces for social reform in Congress are feeling the opposition from Southern conservative members more and more cumbersome. They are increasingly irritated when they remember that, owing to the peculiar electoral system and the restricted political participation in the Southern states, congressmen from the South are not truly representative of the region. "In the 1940 election about 10% of the voting population of the United States . . . was able to elect . . . one-fourth of the members of Congress,"[19] writes a Southern liberal, and this truth is dawning upon many Northerners too. The stage is being set for attempts to free at least the national elections from poll tax requirements.[a] Both the labor vote and

[a] The current effort to abolish the poll tax by federal legislation is again bringing up the much-debated question of the constitutionality of federal laws to regulate federal elections. The opponents of such laws quote the first part of Article 1, Section 4 of the Constitution: "The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof . . ." The advocates of federal action call attention to the continuation of this Section of the Constitution: "but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators." In view of the latter statement, it seems to be a myth, carefully fostered by reactionaries, that Congress cannot take a hand in controlling the election of its members. In maintaining this myth, these reactionaries have referred to irrelevant sections of the

the Negro vote in the North will in all probability exert a considerable pressure in this same direction. The labor vote might be primarily interested in freeing the poor whites from the poll tax in the South and, generally, in defeating the conservative hold over Southern politics. But Negro disfranchisement is so thoroughly interwoven with these two other goals that a separation is not possible technically. It is not desirable from a tactical standpoint, either, that labor tolerate discrimination against the Negro, at least as far as legislation and national policy are concerned. This is so because labor must seek support in the industrial South from the Negro, where the Negro constitutes an important element in the industrial population, and it is true also because labor, from the standpoint of national strategy, cannot afford to fall in with the *status quo*.

Northerners far to the right of labor also have cause to feel increasingly uneasy about Southern disfranchisement of Negroes as well as about judicial and economic discrimination. There is a disturbing racial angle to the Second World War, and to the planning for a world order after the War, for which the United States is bound to assume a great responsibility. The issue of democracy is fatefully involved in the War and the coming peace. The Northern press reflects abundantly this growing anxiety around the Negro problem. A recent editorial concludes:

> This is a national, not a sectional problem. . . . It has to be solved if the white-skinned majority is to avoid the sinister hypocrisy of fighting abroad for what it is not willing to accept at home.[20]

Southern conservatives dislike nothing more than the threat of federal interference in their "states' rights." The anti-lynching legislation was fought on this ground. Several conservative Southerners have explained to me that they did not have so much against the measure *per se*, but that they dreaded it as a first step in the regulation of civic rights in the South by federal legislation. Even many liberal white Southerners want to confine the Negro problem, and particularly the Negro suffrage, to a local issue.[21] But the South's strategic position is weakening every day. Southern conservatism is, on this point, defending an indefensible position. There are reasons to anticipate both that the Negro and the labor bloc will exert increasing political power, and that liberalism generally will become stronger both in the South and in the North. The Supreme Court is likely to continue in its new trend. The only means of escaping federal inter-

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Constitution, such as the Fifteenth Amendment (which says that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude" but says nothing about poll tax, or similar economic or geographical barriers).

ference might be for the South to start to carry out the reforms on its own initiative.[a]

6. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

In the South itself, the whole unique political system, particularly the poll tax, is becoming increasingly shaky. And this is realized by Southerners with any insight into politics, even if they do not admit it publicly. More specifically, the disfranchisement of Negroes is losing its entire legal foundation and now depends mainly on illegal measures. From a conservative point of view, this is the more dangerous as respect for law is undoubtedly gaining ground in the South. Not only the legal, but also the political, security of the white primary will crumble, and this is well known to conservative whites. They always stress in discussion that its only basis, and, therefore, the only basis of the one-party system and the "Solid South," is the strict adherence to the "gentleman's agreement" between the defeated and the victorious candidates in the primary. If there are going to be more serious splits on real political issues in the South—and all the changes mentioned earlier tend to build up liberal counterforces in the South—it is not only possible but, as I have often heard Southerners stress, probable that such agreements will not be upheld. As during the period of Populism in the 1890's, the Negroes are then going to be allowed to register and vote. And more Negroes will then have lawful rights to suffrage.

Our conclusion is, thus, that the Southern franchise situation, which on the surface looks so quiet, is highly unstable and that, indeed, *the Southern conservative position on Negro franchise is politically untenable for any length of time.* If this analysis is accepted, and if the value premise is agreed upon, that *changes should, if possible, not be made by sudden upheavals but in gradual steps,* we reach the further practical conclusion that it is an urgent interest and, actually, a truly conservative one, for the South *to start enfranchising its Negro citizens as soon as possible.* This is seen by a small group of Southern liberals.[22]

It is true, as Woofter reminds us in discussing this point, that the situation is complicated. In many areas of the South where the Negro population is most densely concentrated, "this group is less intelligent, less familiar with American institutions, farther down in the economic scale, and most likely to constitute the corrupt mass-voting element."[23] So are also large sectors of the poor white masses in the South. As we have seen, Southern conservative politics is not without guilt in this situation. But for this very reason—the foreseeable changes being what they are—the more urgent is

[a] Contrary to a general opinion that the South is conditioned to react only negatively to Northern criticism and pressure, I am convinced that, on the balance, the effect is almost always positive. In all fields—education, civic rights, and suffrage—I have everywhere met this argument in Southern discussion, that a step is necessary in order to forestall this or that move from the North.

it from a conservative point of view *to begin allowing the higher strata of the Negro population to participate in the political process as soon as possible, and to push the movement down to the lowest groups gradually.* The more urgent is it also *to speed up the civic education of these masses who are bound to have votes in the future.* It would, in this late stage of the development, be wise also to go the full way and gradually open the white primary to Negroes. This, actually, would be a means of decreasing the temptation for defeated primary candidates to break the "gentleman's agreement" and, consequently, to preserve the one-party system for a longer time than otherwise would be possible.[a]

In their own history of the past century, the Southern conservatives can see abundantly the negative proofs, and from the history of democratic politics all over the world the positive proofs, for this thesis, that political conservatives, who have been successful for any length of time, have always foreseen impending changes and have put through the needed reforms themselves in time. By following this tactic they have been able to guard fundamental conservative interests even in the framing of the reforms. They have thereby also succeeded in slowing them up; changes have not overwhelmed them as avalanches. They have kept the control and preserved a basis for the retention of their political power. Southern conservatism should further learn from history that, over a period of time, the conservative forces in a society cannot afford to abstain from the tremendous strategic advantage of forming the party of "law and order." This is such an immense interest for conservatism that if—for constitutional and other reasons—the law does not come to the conservatives even when they are in power, the conservatives had better come to the law.

But the great majority of Southern conservative white people do not see the handwriting on the wall. They do not study the impending changes; they live again in the pathetic illusion that the matter is settled. They do not care to have any constructive policies to meet the trends. They think no adjustments are called for. The chances that the future development will be *planned* and *led* intelligently—and that, consequently, it will take the form of cautious, foresighted reforms instead of unexpected, tumultuous,

[a] I am here, looking on the problem from a conservative point of view and assuming that to preserve the one-party system would be desirable. The liberals want, on the contrary, to get away from the white primary and from the one-party system altogether, but they do not anticipate radical changes in the future. They further want to do away with political discrimination and, therefore, come to the same conclusion:

"For the white South, what is needed above all is fairness, a determination to enforce suffrage tests equitably on white and black alike, and resolve to break away from the one-party system and to regain preëminence in the national forums of political action by building a political system around the live national issues and forgetting the more or less dead issue of Negro domination." (T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* [1925], p. 167.)

haphazard breaks, with mounting discords and anxieties in its wake—are indeed small. But we want to keep this last question open. Man is a free agent, and there are no inevitabilities. All will depend upon the thinking done and the action taken in the region during the next decade or so. History can be made. It is not necessary to receive it as mere destiny.

Part VI

JUSTICE

CHAPTER 24

INEQUALITY OF JUSTICE

1. Democracy and Justice

The American tradition of electing, rather than appointing, minor public officials[a] has its most serious features in regard to the judiciary branch of the government. Judges, prosecuting attorneys, minor court officials, sheriffs, the chiefs of police, and, in smaller communities, sometimes the entire police force,[1] are either elected for limited terms or are dependent for their offices upon political representatives of this uncertain tenure. In some places they can even be "recalled" during their terms of office, though this is comparatively rare.

The immediate dependence of court and police officials upon popular election—that is, upon local public opinion and political machines—instead of upon appointment strictly according to merit, and the uncertainty of tenure implied in this system naturally decreases the attractiveness of these important positions to many of the best persons who would otherwise be available. Professional standards are thus kept lower than those which could be attained under another system. The courts do not get the cream of the legal profession. The social prestige of judges in local courts is not as supreme as could be wished. Corruption and undue political influences are not absent even from the courtrooms. These facts themselves have the circular effect of keeping the best men from judicial positions.

But, apart from such general effects, the fact that the administration of justice is dependent upon the local voters is likely to imply discrimination against an unpopular minority group, particularly when this group is disfranchised as Negroes are in the South. The elected judge knows that sooner or later he must come back to the polls, and that a decision running counter to local opinion may cost him his position. He may be conscious of it or not, but this control of his future career must tend to increase his difficulties in keeping aloof from local prejudices and emotions. Of course, the judge's attitudes are also formed by conditions prevalent in his local community, but he has a degree of acquaintance with the law, and with public and legal opinion outside his community. This would tend to

[a] This tradition was referred to in Chapter 20, Section 2, as a main reason why the vote, or the lack of the vote, is of such paramount importance for the Negro people.

emancipate him from local opinion were it not for his direct dependence on it.[a]

The dependence of the judge on local prejudices strikes at the very root of orderly government. It results in the danger of breaking down the law in its primary function of protecting the minority against the majority, the individual against society, indeed, of democracy itself against the danger of its nullifying, in practice, the settled principles of law and impartiality of justice. This danger is higher in the problem regions where there is acute race friction and in rural areas where the population is small and provincial, and where personal contacts are direct. Under the same influences as the judges are the public prosecutors, the sheriffs, the chiefs of police and their subordinates. The American jury system, while it has many merits, is likely to strengthen this dependence of justice upon local popular opinion. If, as in the South, Negroes are kept out of jury service, the democratic safeguard of the jury system is easily turned into a means of minority subjugation.

The popular election of the officers of law and the jury system are expressions of the extreme democracy in the American handling of justice. It might, in spite of the dangers suggested, work excellently in a reasonably homogeneous, highly educated and public spirited community. It might also work fairly well anywhere for cases involving only parties belonging to a homogeneous majority group which controls the court. It causes, however, the gravest peril of injustice in all cases where the rights of persons belonging to a disfranchised group are involved, particularly if this group is discriminated against all around and by tradition held as a lower caste upon whose rights it has become customary to infringe. *The extreme democracy in the American system of justice turns out, thus, to be the greatest menace to legal democracy when it is based on restricted political participation and an ingrained tradition of caste suppression.* Such conditions occur in the South with respect to Negroes.

If there is a deficiency of legal protection for Negroes, white people will be tempted to deal unfairly with them in everyday affairs. They will be tempted to use irregular methods to safeguard what they feel to be their interests against Negroes. They will be inclined to use intimidation and even violence against Negroes if they can count on going unpunished. When such patterns become established, the law itself and its processes are brought into contempt, and a general feeling of uncertainty, arbitrariness and inequality will spread. Not only Negroes but other persons of weak social status will be the object of discrimination. "When an exception to the rule

[a] A shift from election to appointment of court and police officials would also be expected to increase efficiency, reduce corruption and raise the level of the persons appointed. This would tend to occur if appointments were made under the civil service system and generally even if the higher appointments were made directly by the governor of the state.

of justice is allowed the structure of the legal machinery is damaged, and may and does permit exceptions in cases which do not involve Negroes," observes Charles Johnson.[2] In the South there have been frequent occasions when the legal rights of poor white persons have been disregarded, and even when general lawlessness prevailed. When the frequency of law-breaking thus increases, it becomes necessary to apply stronger penalties than is necessary in an equitable system of justice. In all spheres of public life it will, of course, be found that legislation is relatively ineffective, and so the sociologists will be inclined to formulate a general societal law of "the futility of trying to suppress folkways by stateways." Lawlessness has then received the badge of scientific normalcy.

The Negroes, on their side, are hurt in their trust that the law is impartial, that the court and the police are their protection, and, indeed, that they belong to an orderly society which has set up this machinery for common security and welfare. They will not feel confidence in, and loyalty toward, a legal order which is entirely out of their control and which they sense to be inequitable and merely part of the system of caste suppression. Solidarity then develops easily in the Negro group, a solidarity against the law and the police. The arrested Negro often acquires the prestige of a victim, a martyr, or a hero, even when he is simply a criminal. It becomes part of race pride in the protective Negro community not to give up a fellow Negro who is hunted by the police. Negroes who collaborate with the police become looked upon as stool pigeons.

No one visiting Negro communities in the South can avoid observing the prevalence of these views. The situation is dynamic for several reasons. One is the growing urbanization and the increasing segregation of the Negro people. The old-time paternalistic and personal relationship between individuals of the two groups is on the decrease. Another factor is the improvement of Negro education which is continually making Negroes more aware of their anomalous status in the American legal order. A third factor, the importance of which is increasing in pace with the literacy of the Negro people, is the persistent hammering of the Negro press which, to a large extent, is devoted to giving publicity to the injustices and injuries suffered by Negroes. A fourth factor is unemployment, especially of young Negroes, with resulting insecurity and dissatisfaction.

Because of these changes, as Du Bois tells us, ". . . the Negro is coming *more and more* to look upon law and justice, not as protecting safeguards, but as sources of humiliation and oppression."[3] He expresses a common attitude among Southern Negroes when he continues: "The laws are made by men who have absolutely no motive for treating the black people with courtesy or consideration: . . . the accused law-breaker is tried, not by his peers, but too often by men who would rather punish ten innocent

Negroes than let one guilty one escape." To the present observer the situation looks far from peaceful and quiet, as white people in the South have tried to convince him. It has rather the appearance of a fateful race between, on the one hand, the above-mentioned tendencies which increase Negro mistrust, unrest, and asociality, and, on the other, the equally apparent tendency for the white group increasingly to be prepared to give the Negro personal security and equality before the law.

The literature is replete with statements that point to the Negro's restlessness and the need of giving him legal justice.[4] The representatives of the tradition of lawlessness do not write books even if they still, in many places, dominate practice.[a] We shall have to try to understand them in their historical setting from their actual behavior.

Having accepted the American Creed as our value premise in this study, we must also accept a corollary of this Creed for the purposes of this part, namely, that *Negroes are entitled to justice equally with all other people.* This principle has constitutional sanction and is held supreme in the legislation of all states in the Union. In this part we do not discuss inequalities *in law* or the results of the inequitable administration of the laws: all these material inequalities in legal status of the American Negro are dealt with in other parts of our inquiry. The subject of the discussion here is only the actual handling of justice, the manner in which inequalities in the enforcement of the laws against whites and Negroes are entering into the judicial procedures, and also such lacks in personal security of Negroes concomitant with those inequalities.

2. Relative Equality in the North

There are deficiencies in the working of the machinery of the law in the North too. American justice is everywhere expensive and depends too much upon the skill of the attorney. The poor man has difficulty in securing his rights. Judges and police officers are not free from prejudices against people of lower economic and cultural levels. Experienced white and Negro lawyers have told the author that in criminal cases where only Negroes are involved there is sometimes a disposition on the part of the prosecutors, judges and juries to treat offenses with relative lightness. In matters involving offenses by Negroes against whites, Negroes will often find the presumptions of the courts against them, and there is a tendency to sentence them to a higher penalty than if they had committed the same offense against Negroes. Instances have been related to me in which Negro witnesses have been made the butt of jests and horseplay. I have, however, received

[a] One reason for this is that these persons are usually aware that their practice is inconsistent with their best ideals. Another reason is that such a disproportionately large part of the intellectuals of the region are liberals. (See Chapter 21, Section 5.)

the general impression that such differential treatment of witnesses is rather the exception than the rule, and that it will practically never happen to a Negro plaintiff or defendant who is assisted by good counsel.[5]

A more serious matter is the treatment of Negroes by the police. In most Northern communities Negroes are more likely than whites to be arrested under any suspicious circumstances. They are more likely to be accorded discourteous or brutal treatment at the hands of the police than are whites. The rate of killing of Negroes by the police is high in many Northern cities, particularly in Detroit.[a] Negroes have a seriously high criminality record,[b] and the average white policeman is inclined to increase it even more in his imagination. The Negroes are, however, not the only sufferers, even if they, as usual, reap more than their fair share. Complaints about indiscriminate arrests and police brutality are raised also by other economically disadvantaged and culturally submerged groups in the Northern cities. The attitudes of the police will sometimes be found among the most important items considered in local Negro politics in the North. Usually there is much less complaint about not getting a fair trial before the courts.

Another form of discrimination in the North against Negroes is in the market for houses and apartments; whites try to keep Negroes out of white neighborhoods by restrictive covenants. The legality of these covenants is open to dispute, but in so far as the local courts uphold them, the discrimination is in the legal principle, not in the individual cases brought to court.[c] In some Northern cities—as, for instance, Detroit—I have heard complaints that the police will sometimes try to restrict Negroes to the Negro districts, particularly at night. There have been bombings against Negroes who tried to invade white territory and even race riots, particularly in the wake of the sudden migration of great masses of rural Negroes from the South during and immediately after the First World War.[6] The police have not always been strictly impartial during such incidents.[7] But the courts have usually not shielded the white transgressors afterwards in the way which has become a pattern in the South.

Vigilantism occasionally occurs in the North. The Western frontier formerly saw much of it, but manifestations of it are rare now. During the 1920's the Ku Klux Klan operated in Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and other Northern states almost as much as it did in the South. Immigrant sections of a few Northern cities occasionally witness such activities (e.g., the "Black Hand" society in Italian areas and the Tong wars in Chinese sections). Occasionally vigilantism of the Southern type will still occur in the North:

[a] See Chapter 27, Section 5.
[b] See Chapter 44, Section 2.
[c] See Chapter 29, Section 4.

On the night of August 11, 1939, seven Negro migratory workers including one woman were routed out of their sleep in an isolated one-room shack on a farm near Cranbury, New Jersey, by a mob of white men with handkerchief masks and guns. All seven were stripped naked, their hands tied and they were told to start across a field. The five single men escaped into the bushes, shots fired after them going over their heads. Jake and Frances Preston, the married couple, were threatened with mutilation and rape, were beaten with a rubber hose, had white enamel poured over them and were told to "head South."

Many believed prominent local citizens had instigated the attack. Local workers were aroused; migrants threatened to leave. Local farmers feared the loss of their laborers. The Workers Defense League offered a $100 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the assailants. After two weeks the state police made ten arrests, one a minor. At first freed on $250 bail the nine self-confessed adult assailants were later given suspended sentences of three to five years. But intimidation of Negroes persisted. So civil suits were then instituted and on May 10, 1940, the Federal District Court of Newark awarded the Prestons damages of $2,000 each, and the other five $1,000 each.[8]

In many Northern cities Negroes relate that they find it difficult to get the courts to punish violations of the civil rights laws; for example, when Negroes are not permitted in certain restaurants and hotels. In such cases it is often difficult to obtain proofs which substantiate the charges, but this does not explain satisfactorily why those laws have as yet so largely remained paper decrees. In the over-all balance, however, infringements of Negro rights that are supposed to be prevented by the civil rights laws are of comparatively little importance.

There are, in many Northern places, Negro judges, Negro court officers and Negro policemen. Commonly there are Negroes on the jury lists. The large majority of all Negro lawyers find it to their advantage to practice in the North.[9] They generally plead cases before the courts and are not, like most of their Southern colleagues, restricted to trying to settle things outside of court. They occasionally have white people among their clientele. Negro lawyers in the North do not generally complain of being treated differently in court from their white colleagues or of meeting prejudice from the juries.[10]

Since, on the whole, Negroes do not meet much more discrimination from officers of the law than do white persons of the same economic and cultural level, *there is in the North no special problem of getting justice for Negroes, outside the general one of improving the working of the machinery of the law for the equal protection of the rights of poor and uneducated people.* The further reservation should be added that Negroes in Border cities—for instance, in Washington and St. Louis—meet relatively more prejudice both from the police and from the courts,[11] and the same thing holds for a city like Detroit which has a large population of white immi-

grants from the South.[a] In a comparable way, the Upper South is considerably more like the North in this respect than is the Lower South.

Part of the explanation of why the Negro gets more legal justice in the North is the fact that Negroes can vote in the North and, consequently, have a share in the ultimate control of the legal system. Nevertheless, the importance of political participation as a cause of equality before the law should not be exaggerated. The lack of discrimination in both respects has a common cause in a general inclination of white people in the North to regard Negroes as full citizens in their formal relations with public authority, even if not in economic competition or social intercourse. This is one point where the ordinary Northerner is unfailingly faithful to the American Creed. He wants justice to be impartial, regardless of race, creed or color.

The North is further removed from the memories of slavery, and its equalitarian philosophy became more rigorously formulated in the prolonged conflict with the South during and after the Civil War. Also, Northern Negroes are concentrated in big cities, where human relations are formalized and where Negroes are a small minority of the total population. The legal machinery in those cities might sometimes be tainted by the corruption of the city administration, but its size alone tends to objectify its operations and prevent its being influenced by the narrowest type of local prejudice. Other reasons would seem to be that Northern Negroes are better educated and have a higher economic status on the average, that Northern Negroes can be and are more inclined to stand up for their rights, and that most organizations fighting for the Negro have their headquarters in the North. Whatever the reasons, it seems to be a fact that *there is a sharp division between North and South in the granting of legal justice to Negroes.* In the North, for the most part, Negroes enjoy equitable justice.

3. THE SOUTHERN HERITAGE

Because the main problems of justice for the Negro are found in the South, this part of the book will deal almost exclusively with the South. *The difference in feeling of personal security between Negroes in the two regions is most striking to an observer. The Southern Negro seems to suspect a possible danger to himself or to other Negroes whenever a white stranger approaches him.* When you ask him where somebody lives, he will be slow and careful in giving information. When you knock at his door, particularly after dark, you will often see fear in his eyes until he comes to know your innocent intentions. It is not true, as is often maintained in the

[a] Detroit also seems to have a larger number of Southern-born policemen than most other Northern cities. In the recent clashes there between the police and the Negroes, many of the police were whites from Kentucky and Tennessee.

South, that this is his reaction only to strangers. I have often witnessed this undercurrent of fear and uncertainty in various undefined situations even when one or more of the white persons participating were personally known to the Negroes or were recognized by their dialect as having a Southern origin. The Northern Negro, in general, appears different in this respect. His self-assurance in behavior often seems preposterous or obstreperous to the Southern white man who has become accustomed to the submissive and guarded manners of the Southern Negro.

The reason for this, as we shall see, is that in the South the Negro's person and property are practically subject to the whim of any white person who wishes to take advantage of him or to punish him for any real or fancied wrongdoing or "insult." A white man can steal from or maltreat a Negro in almost any way without fear of reprisal, because the Negro cannot claim the protection of the police or courts, and personal vengeance on the part of the offended Negro usually results in organized retaliation in the form of bodily injury (including lynching), home burning or banishment. Practically the only check on white maltreatment of Negroes is a rather vague and unformulated feeling on the part of Southern public opinion that a white man should not be "mean" to a Negro except when he "deserves" it. But unless the white man acquires a reputation for being mean and unjust, his occasional violation of a Negro's legal rights is felt to be justified or—at most—"his own business."

The large element of chance and arbitrariness should be emphasized in a discussion of lawlessness in the South. Physical violence and threats against personal security do not, of course, occur to every Negro every day. Some Southern Negroes can probably go through life with only half a dozen "incidents." But violence *may* occur at any time, and it is the fear of it as much as violence itself which creates the injustice and the insecurity. The chance nature of the violence is illustrated by the fact that a nonconforming Northern Negro known to the author spent five years in the South without any trouble, while another Northern Negro, who went South with a determination to comply with all rules so as to avoid difficulty, met violence within a week.

When trying to understand the Southern situation as to law enforcement and the Negro's personal security, it is necessary to examine the historical heritage of the region. Under slavery the Negro was owned, bought, and sold as property; he was worked, housed, fed, and prevented from doing what he wished if it was contrary to the interests of his master. In general, the Negro slave had no "rights" which his owner was bound to respect.[a] Even if in legal theory the slave was given the status of a person under

[a] The North had a small amount of slavery in the early days of the nation, but it was restricted and was abolished by the first years of the nineteenth century. Its tradition was completely annihilated by the anti-slavery sentiment before and during the Civil War.

the law as well as the status of property, it was the latter viewpoint which, in practice, became the determining one. In the very relationship between master and slave it was inherent that—without recourse to courts—force and bodily punishment and, under certain circumstances, even the killing of the slave was allowed. ". . . all slaveholders are under the shield of a perpetual license to murder," exclaimed Hinton R. Helper in his unsparing onslaught on the plantation class and the slavery institution.[12] Thomas Jefferson saw clearly the moral danger of the slavery institution:

> The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it. . . . The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. And with what execration should the statesman be loaded, who, permitting one half the citizens to trample on the rights of the other, transforming those into despots, and these into enemies, destroys the morals of one part, and the *amor patriae* of the other. . . . [Can] the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."[13]

Most states, however, inaugurated statutes to protect the slave from unnecessary sufferings.[14] The master was obliged to provide food, clothing, and shelter, and to treat his slaves humanly. To the extent that these regulations were not sanctioned by the master's own economic interests and his feelings for his human property or by community sentiment, they seem not to have been enforced. The slave could generally not testify against a white man, and the white community was too much in collusion to permit the vindication of the slave's rights against his master. Considering the intensive criticisms of slavery laws and of the treatment of slaves which emanated from Abolitionist circles in the North—there are several learned treatises in the 'forties and 'fifties supporting the popular propaganda[15]—it is perhaps surprising that the Southern states did not build up a defense for their peculiar institution by legislating modernized slave codes, legalizing the humanized views which were expressed in the apologetic literature on slavery and, without doubt, even acted upon most of the time by the majority of slave owners.[16]

Most of the laws relating to the slavery institution were, instead, aimed at regulating in detail the behavior of the slaves, forbidding them to possess or carry weapons, to resist white persons, to assemble in the absence of whites, to leave the plantation without permission. Even those regulations seem not to have been enforced with too much rigidity as it was commonly left to the slave master, in whose interest they were enacted, to supervise his own slaves as he wished. Since all whites enjoyed a superior

status, and since the assumption was upheld that they all shared the responsibility of keeping the Negroes in a lower status, they were given much the same unrestricted powers against the Negroes as the master, except in so far as these powers clashed with his property interests. A slave was not allowed to defend himself against any white man and if the slave were killed, it was considered as a property damage rather than murder and could be absolved by paying a fine.[17]

In this legal system,which was an outgrowth of slavery as an institution, the emergence of the free Negroes introduced an obvious anomaly which became more striking as slavery came more and more to be founded upon racial beliefs.[a] Under the constant fear of slave insurrection,[18] not only were restricting regulations of slave behavior continually elaborated, but the liberties and rights of free Negroes were severely limited.[19] This development is of particular importance for the legal status of the freedmen after Emancipation, as the nearest analogy was the *ante-bellum* status of free Negroes. Another tradition important for the future development was the function of the police. The police system in the South to a great extent served the explicit purpose of supervising Negro slaves and free Negroes and of hindering the former from escape. They were given the widest license to seize, whip and punish Negroes and generally to act as the agents of the masters. The police in the South were, by tradition, watchdogs of all Negroes, slave or free, criminal or innocent.

The psychic pressure upon white society of the slavery system and of the various devices necessary to uphold it against rebellious Negroes, envious poor whites, Northern Abolitionists, and world opinion, must have been intense. The South remained an unstable frontier civilization,[b] where the law was distant and wavering and human life was cheap. "Lynch law is essentially a fruit of frontier conditions with population sparse, officials few, amateurish, and easy-going, and legal machinery consequently inadequate," remarks Schrieke, and continues: "That it prevailed in the ante-bellum South to a degree comparable at all to that in the mining camps was doubtless due to the thinness of settlement and the occasional hysteria over rapes and rumors of revolts by Negroes."[20] But, in addition, the slavery system itself—and more particularly the right it gave and the custom it nurtured to punish bodily other adult human beings—must have conditioned people to violent and arbitrary behavior patterns. Probably more whites than Negroes were killed in the South during the three decades following Andrew Jackson's first administration, which generally is recognized as marking a beginning of increased tension and spreading violence in the South.[21] The Negro slaves had a protection, which the white men did not have, in their value as property.[22]

[a] See Chapter 4.
[b] See Chapter 20.

With these traditions and with all the tension and instability in its social fabric,[23] the South entered the long period of the Civil War and the convulsions which followed. The Negroes—having lost the protection for life and personal security which their property value had provided them, and also, in many cases, the personal relationship to their old masters, and being untrained for the new freedom—became the subjects of much greater violence. The whites—impoverished, bitter, fearful, thoroughly indoctrinated by their own defense ideology, and even more untrained to deal with their new fellow citizens in terms of legal equality—felt little check in practicing this violence. The Reconstruction Amendments, however, gave civil rights to Negroes for the first time. Even after the restoration of white supremacy was accomplished, all state legislation in the South had to be written upon the fictitious assumption that Negroes enjoyed full and equal protection under the law. The administration of justice had to proceed upon the same imaginary principle. In reality, legislation, courts, and police were, on the contrary, used to keep the Negroes "in their place." This intention had to be kept *sub rosa*, so as not to come into conflict with the Constitution. Serious and honest men had to pretend. On the other hand, the belief in legal inequality could never again be wholehearted. The upstanding Southern white men were compelled by their allegiance to their nation and its Constitution to observe a degree of both the form and the content of equality in justice.

So this unique phenomenon, unmatched in history, came into being: a strongly conservative democratic society where conservatism was harnessed to the practice of illegality and where the progressives, instead of the conservatives, had to become cautious defenders of the principle of legality. The South remained provincial and continued its fight against the Creed of the nation and the spirit of the age. The feeling grew, however, that—in this particular respect—it was fighting common sense and its own better conscience. When slavery once was abolished, and its reinstitution written off as undesirable or impractical, and when white men no longer had an economic interest in the persons of specific Negroes, the rational motives for keeping up a reserve of devices, outside the legal ones for keeping Negroes tractable, largely vanished.[24] These other devices served the positive purpose before the War of keeping the slave working for his master; now they mainly served the empty vanity of the weak white man and the desire for domination of the strong white man. The present writer has met few Southern white people—above the lowest level of education and culture—who have not declared themselves prepared *in principle* to abstain from illegality in the sphere of personal security and private property.

There is no question that the movement to normalize the legal order of the South is gaining momentum. The dynamic play of social forces

behind this development has already been discussed.[a] In the legal sphere the influence of the federal courts and, in particular, the Supreme Court, is probably stronger than in the political sphere. The North has never compromised with the South on the principle of equality before the law to the same degree as it has on the principle of universal suffrage. And the group of people in the South who are prepared to take a stand for the former principle is—according to the present writer's definite impressions—considerably larger than the group standing for the latter principle. It may, therefore, be expected that there will be an even more rapid development in the field of justice in the near future than at the present time. *The lingering inequality in justice in the South is probably due more to low and lagging professional standards—certainly among the police, and in many regions even among the lawyers who are willing to enter into court service—than it is to opinion in favor of legal inequality.* Negroes in all classes perceive clearly and intensely that the best protection they can hope for is to receive the rights and privileges guaranteed them by law.

While lack of legal justice can be considered in itself as crucial to the peace and sanity of the South, this problem is interrelated with many others. When the Negro is discriminated against by the police, in court, and in private dealings with whites, this is made more possible by his poverty, his lack of political influence and his social abasement. An improvement in any of these fields will reflect itself in a greater security before the law. On the other hand, inequality in justice is undoubtedly responsible for no small part of the Negro's difficulties in rising economically and socially.[b]

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 4.

[b] The following survey of the facts relative to the administration of legal justice to the Negro in the South is based largely on a series of unpublished studies made for our inquiry by Arthur Raper, summarized in "Race and Class Pressures" (1940). These studies were made in localities all over the South, but emphasize conditions prevailing in the Lower South. For this reason, we shall sometimes fail to report in detail modifications of the general patterns that occur in many communities of the Upper and Border South. These modifications should not be underestimated as they are significant not only as frequent exceptions, but also as indications of change. In general, it might be said that the farther northward one goes in the South, the more similarities he finds to the stronger legal traditions of the North. This does not mean that the gradation is smooth as one travels northward from the Gulf of Mexico: the break at the Mason-Dixon line is so sharp that one cannot doubt that the Upper South is more like the Lower South than it is like the North. Too, many urban areas of the Lower South have as strong a legal structure as the average community in the Upper South.

CHAPTER 25

THE POLICE AND OTHER PUBLIC CONTACTS

1. Local Petty Officials

Practically all public officials in the South are whites. The principle is upheld that Negroes should not be given positions of public authority even on a low level. This situation is, of course, closely related to their disfranchisement. Even in the South, however, Negroes are sometimes appointed to minor offices in the localities where they are permitted to vote.[a]

The Negro's most important public contact is with the policeman. He is the personification of white authority in the Negro community.

> There he *is* "the law" with badge and revolver; his word is final; he is the state's witness in court, and as defined by the police system and the white community, his word must be accepted.[1]

In the policeman's relation to the Negro population in the South, there are several singularities to be observed, all of which have to be explained in the historical setting presented above. One is that he stands not only for civic order as defined in formal laws and regulations, but also for "white supremacy" and the whole set of social customs associated with this concept.[b] In the traditions of the region a break of the caste rules against one white person is conceived of as an aggression against white society and, indeed, as a potential threat to every other white individual. It is demanded that even minor transgressions of caste etiquette should be punished, and the policeman is delegated to carry out this function. Because of this sanction from the police, the caste order of the South, and even the local variations of social custom, become extensions of the law.

To enable the policeman to carry out this function, the courts are supposed to back him even when he proceeds far outside normal police activity. His word must be taken against Negroes without regard for formal legal rules of evidence, even when there are additional circumstantial facts supporting the contention of the Negro party. That this is so is freely admitted in conversation with both judges and police officers in the South.

[a] See Chapter 22, Section 5.
[b] See Part VII.

The reason is given in terms of social necessity. If the policeman were not given this extra-legal backing by the courts, his prestige and his ability to function as the upholder of the caste order would deteriorate. A constant pressure from the Negro people is recognized and is met in this way. Negroes are arrested and sentenced for all sorts of actual or alleged breaks of the caste rules, sometimes even for incidents where it is clear that their only offense was to resist a white person's unlawful aggression.[2] As this practice is against the formal rules of due process, and as, further, the social customs sanctioned in this way are themselves often directly contrary to the law, there is a strange atmosphere of consistent illegality around the activity of the officers of the peace and the whole judicial system in the South. A further result is that the police often assume the duty not only of arresting, but also of sentencing and punishing the culprit, and that the judges are grateful for being in this way spared from cases embarrassing to them as professional lawyers.

Other singularities in the activity of the Southern police system are, on the one hand, the availability of the police for sanctioning private white interests against Negroes and, on the other, the indulgence of private white persons in taking the law into their own hands. The boundary line between public functionaries and private citizens is thus blurred. The relation between master and slave was a relation of public and not only private law.[3] In the rural districts the plantation owners have tenaciously held to the old pattern of executing actual police power themselves over their Negro labor.[4] As in slavery a sort of delegated police power over Negroes is assumed to belong to other white persons than the employer. *All* white people in the neighborhood remain in a sort of taken-for-granted conspiracy to keep *all* Negroes "in their place," and they pretend a "right" to apply personal sanctions of intimidation and violence. The traveler in the rural districts of the Black Belt even today is startled to find how natural and regular it appears to many whites—and to Negroes—that personal threats and bodily punishments enter into employer-employee relations,[5] and, indeed, into most relations between whites and Negroes, even relatively casual ones.

As during slavery, the local police and the courts are expected to assist in upholding this caste pressure. On the one hand, the scope of police and court activity is limited in so far as the sentencing and punishing of Negroes for breaks against law and order in the plantation districts are taken care of by employers or white vigilantes. On the other hand, the peace officers tend to act as the agents of the planters and other white employers, prepared to appear on call and take charge of the case. To an extent these customs were transferred even to the cities. There the less personal and less stable relations between individuals in the two groups

make the Negroes freer in their movement as long as they avoid white contacts, but, for the same reason, those contacts often become harsher.

The philosophies and traditions of the police have been borrowed, and a similar status and function have been assumed, by a large number of other functionaries, for instance, the operators and conductors on public carriers:

> When the Negro boards a street car, bus, or train he meets white operators, and legally they are quasi-officials; in dealing with Negroes and poorer whites they are real officials. For in addition to being legally empowered to carry out their duties, they readily exercise greater authority over the lower status folk.[6]

The Jim Crow regulations vary from city to city, or from state to state; they are complicated and technically impractical,[a] and a constant source of tension and friction. The operators and conductors—like the police officers—feel themselves obliged to sanction and enforce rules of racial etiquette and custom. They also are the watchdogs against "social equality."

Under these conditions it is no wonder that these functionaries often feel themselves—and white authority—challenged. As weak men (their economic and social status is low) with strong powers, they can seldom afford to take back a charge or an order. The nearest patrolman will be at hand to back up any white man having trouble with a Negro by arresting the Negro for "disturbing the peace." The courts will usually feel obliged to back up these functionaries even when it is apparent that they have transgressed their legitimate powers. Practically all Southern Negroes interviewed by the present writer on this question have complained about the arbitrary and high-handed manner in which the Jim Crow regulations in transportation are often handled. Incidents of illegal treatment are frequently reported in the Negro press. Such studies as have been made have largely confirmed these complaints.[7]

To the same category belong a great number of other functionaries.

> The meter readers for electric and gas subscribers, too, approximate quasi-officials when dealing with Negroes. They walk into Negro homes, and often make themselves obnoxious by refusing to remove their hats and show other civilities.[8]

The tax collectors and a number of petty officials at what the Negroes commonly refer to as "the white folks' courthouse" also belong to this group. The mass of Negroes in the South seem to be thoroughly convinced that, in the ordinary case, white solidarity would prevent them from getting justice even if they took their grievances to the higher-ups—if they cannot get some white person to intervene for them.

Practices vary a great deal, however, from community to community. Generally speaking, the Negroes seem to be treated more justly and

[a] See Chapter 28, Section 4.

courteously in the Upper South than in the Deep South. The observer feels that this whole problem of Negroes' public contacts with all the minor functionaries in private and municipal service would deserve intensive study. These contacts are of paramount practical importance: they represent the major part of all official relations of Negroes with the organized society in which they live, and they determine largely their attitudes to this society. A change to easier, friendlier, and more impartial public contacts would improve race relations immensely. As will be pointed out later in this chapter, there is a growing group of public contacts of a new type which meets these demands much better than the old type here reviewed.[a]

2. THE SOUTHERN POLICEMAN

The central relation in this system—and the prototype and sanction of all other public contacts—is that between Negroes and the local police. In purely rural districts the police consist of the sheriff and his deputies. Usually they are petty politicians with no police training at all except the experiences they get in their work. In the rural South the caste rules are so fixed, the contacts between whites and Negroes so continual, the caste control so pervasive, and so much of the daily suppression of the individuals of the lower caste is, as we pointed out, taken care of by employers and landowners themselves, that the peace officers' police duties are intermittent and restricted to occasional incidents. They then appear as the executors of the public will in the locality and are backed by the courts. In the Southern cities where the two racial groups are more separated, the duty of policing the population becomes a continuous and specialized task. The police then also become more directly important for interracial relations.

It is of great interest to study the qualifications and personality type of the Southern policeman who has been awarded this crucial position in the caste society. A special investigation was undertaken for this study by Dr. Arthur Raper, who made an inquiry as of 1940 into the personnel of the police force in 112 towns and cities, in 14 Southern states.[9] The level of general education among policemen is low.[b] In many small cities "almost anyone on the outside of the penitentiary who weighs enough and is not

[a] See Section 5 of this chapter.

[b] "Of the 112 Southern cities, towns and villages from which specific information about the police was secured for this study, 30 had no educational requirements for recruits to the force, while 20 specified grammar school. The remaining 62 required only high school or its equivalent. Even so, the 'equivalent' sufficed in a vast number of cases." (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 14.) Even in the largest cities a college graduate on the police force is a great rarity.

blind or crippled can be considered as a police candidate."[10] Even the formal police training is usually very deficient.[a]

Slightly over half the police systems studied are now using some form of civil service,[b] many of them for less than five years. But civil service requirements, as employed in Southern cities, reduce only slightly the influence of politics on the police system, for elected officials still run the civil service and select among the many who meet the formal requirements.[11] This means a low degree of personal and professional independence. "The fact that many police systems in the South are subject to politics puts a premium on the vote-getting qualities of the policeman."[12] Salaries of policemen rank somewhere between those of unskilled and skilled workers.[c] Less than half the police systems studied have worked out some sort of retirement fund.[d] Ambitious skilled workers like railroad workers, mechanics, carpenters, painters, plumbers, and electricians sometimes take police jobs when unemployed but try to get back to their old trades as soon as regular employment is assured.[13] The vast majority of policemen, however, do not belong to this category, and they hang on to the police force.[e] In the typical Southern police force the turnover is small and the average age high. Even when the police force is replaced for political reasons this does not generally mean a rejuvenation, "for older men can commonly deliver more votes."[14]

Although the policeman in the South is not considered a professional

[a] "Formal training for his duties is provided in only 33 of the 112 communities; in about half of the others, he works as a sort of apprentice under some older officer for a period of three to six months, and commonly at slightly reduced pay. In one-fourth of the communities no training is provided. One day he is a barber, textile worker, truck driver, mechanic, or private night-watchman; the next day, with uniform, badge and gun, he is a full-fledged police officer. In the meantime he may have promised to read a little booklet of four to sixteen pages, which contains rules of the police department." (*Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.)

[b] Sixty-five of 112. (*Ibid.*, p. 14.) In few cases do the Southern city police civil service systems approximate in rigor the systems employed by Northern cities.

[c] "The salary of patrolmen was $100 or below a month in 32 communities, $101 to $125 in 47, $126 to $150 in 24, and $150 or over in 10. Though these salaries are not large, they represent a real increase for most of the people who joined the police force." (*Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.)

[d] "In 13 instances, police are retired at more than half pay, while in 29 others it is one-half or less. Only 2 of the 21 villages studied (with fewer than 5 policemen each) had any retirement plan; 6 of the 32 systems with from 5 to 14 police each had some form of retirement pay, while retirement plans were found in 37 of the 59 communities with 15 or more policemen." (*Ibid.*, p. 16.)

[e] "In the last five years, among the 112 police systems studied, 41 had no police to resign for a better job, and 42 more had less than one-fifth resign for that reason. They stay because they are receiving more income than before—half again as much, often even twice as much. The policeman's salary runs for twelve months a year, too, and for more than a few of them, as will be seen later, there are opportunities for making money on the side." (*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.)

man and is looked down on generally by the middle class whites, an appointment to the police force means an advance in income and economic security to poor white unskilled workers.

> Aside from the matters of monthly income and regularity of employment, it is quite clear that many policemen . . . are hungry for the opportunity to exercise authority. An ex-house-to-house salesman, clerk, truck driver, or textile worker not infrequently likes to have a gun handy, and enjoys the authority which his badge provides.[15]

The typical Southern policeman is thus a low-paid and dependent man, with usually little general education or special police schooling. His social prestige is low. But he is the local representative of the law; he has authority and may at any time resort to the use of his gun. It is not difficult to understand that this economically and socially insecure man, given this tremendous and dangerous authority, continually feels himself on the defensive. "He usually expects to be challenged when about routine duties. . . . This defensive attitude makes the policeman's job tedious and nerve-racking, and leaves the public with the feeling that policemen are crude and hard-boiled."[16] He is a frustrated man, and, with the opportunity given him, it is to be expected that he becomes aggressive. There are practically no curbs to the policeman's aggressiveness when he is dealing with Negroes whom he conceives of as dangerous or as "getting out of their place." He is accustomed also to deal roughly with "outside agitators," "Communists," "subversive influences," and in his mind there is a suspicion that there is a relation between these two groups of enemies of society.

3. THE POLICEMAN IN THE NEGRO NEIGHBORHOOD

This weak man with his strong weapons—backed by all the authority of white society—is now sent to be the white law in the Negro neighborhood. There he is away from home.

> He is an outsider, and there is such a thing as a "bad nigger." Fiction, of course, has dramatized the character, but there are facts which demand recognition. With the cop an outsider, the "bad nigger" an insider, a ready use of firearms is inevitable. The philosophies of the "outside" policeman and of the "bad nigger" contribute to the high homicide rate of Southern cities, for the records show that the police are most likely to get killed in the same cities where brutality, including killings, is most prevalent.[17]

As far as the cultural and social adjustment of the Negroes is concerned, *the Southern police system is undoing much of what Northern philanthropy and Southern state governments are trying to accomplish through education and by other means.* The average Southern policeman is a promoted poor white with a legal sanction to use a weapon. His social heritage

has taught him to despise the Negroes, and he has had little education which could have changed him. His professional experiences with criminals, prostitutes, and loiterers in Negro joints and with such "good niggers" as can be used as informers, spotters, and stool pigeons—often petty criminals and racketeers who as an exchange for police immunity help locate Negroes desired by the police department[18]—are strongly selective and only magnify his prejudices. The result is that probably no group of whites in America have a lower opinion of the Negro people and are more fixed in their views than Southern policemen. To most of them no Negro woman knows what virtue is—"we just don't talk about prostitution among the Negroes," said one of the chiefs of police in a big Southern city to the present author—and practically every Negro man is a potential criminal. They usually hold, in extreme form, all other derogatory beliefs about Negroes; and they are convinced that the traits are "racial." This holds true of the higher ranks in the police departments as well as of the lower ranks. On the other hand, I have also found that some of the younger policemen, particularly if they have had any education, do tend to have slightly more modern views. But they have a hard time maintaining these views against the force of opinion among the older, more experienced men with whom they work.[19]

In many, but not all, Southern communities Negroes complain indignantly about police brutality. It is part of the policeman's philosophy that Negro criminals or suspects, or any Negro who shows signs of insubordination, should be punished bodily, and that this is a device for preventing crime and for keeping the "Negro in his place" generally.[20] It is apparent, however, that the beating of arrested Negroes[a]—frequently in the wagon on the way to jail or later when they are already safely locked up—often serves as vengeance for the fears and perils the policemen are subjected to while pursuing their duties in the Negro community. When once the beating habit has developed in a police department, it is, according to all experience, difficult to stop. It appeals to primitive sadistic impulses ordinarily held down by education and other social controls. In this setting the application of the "third degree" to get "confessions" from Negro suspects easily becomes a routine device.[b] Police brutality is greatest in the regions where murders are most numerous and death sentences are most frequent,[21] which speaks against its having crime-preventing effects. The observer who visits several communities and can make comparisons becomes convinced that, on the contrary, police brutality has thoroughly demoralizing effects on the Negroes.

[a] Policemen will also beat Negroes without arresting them. This occurs in cases of minor insubordination and when policemen are helping plantation owners keep their Negro tenants under control.

[b] Concerning the "third degree," see Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-175.

The most publicized type of police brutality is the extreme case of Negroes being killed by policemen. This phenomenon is important in itself, but it constitutes only a minor portion of all police brutality, and the information available on Negro killings by the police does not even give a reliable index of the wider phenomenon.[22] More than half of all Negroes killed by whites, in both the North and the South, were killed by police.[a] But white policemen are also a great portion of all whites killed by Negroes.[b] Even if this information on reciprocal killings between Negroes and white policemen does not give adequate indication of the extent of police brutality, it tells something about the policeman's role in interracial relations.[23]

The majority of police killings of Negroes must be deemed unnecessary when measured by a decent standard of policemanship.[24] The victim is often totally innocent. But the white policeman in the Negro community is in danger, as the high casualty figures show, and he feels himself in danger. "In the mind of the quick-trigger policeman is the fear of the 'bad nigger.' . . . Sensing the danger of scared policemen, Negroes in turn frequently depend upon the first shot."[25] The situation is not this bad in every community of the South; many localities of the Upper South and some in the Lower South have advanced to higher standards.

The main reasons why Negroes want to have Negro officers appointed to police departments—besides the ordinary group interest of having more public jobs for themselves—are to have a more understanding, less brutal police supervision in the Negro community, and to have an effective supervision of Negro offenders against other Negroes. The second reason is not unimportant. Everywhere in Southern Negro communities I have met the complaint from law-abiding Negroes that they are left practically without police protection.

In 1930 there were 1,297 Negro policemen and 521 detectives, marshals,

[a] "Of the 479 Negroes killed in the South by whites [between 1920 and 1932], 260 or 54.3 per cent of the total were killed by peace officers; of 47 outside of the South, 32 or 68.1 per cent by officers." (Unpublished data compiled by H. C. Brearley in *ibid.*, p. 40.)

Of 202 Southern cities and towns studied by Raper for the period 1935-1940 "115 have had no one killed by the police . . . while 196 Negroes were killed in 61 cities and 67 whites in 40 cities." Northern cities with high figures for police killings are: ". . . Baltimore 13 Negroes and 4 whites, Kansas City 10 Negroes and 18 whites, Cleveland 12 Negroes and 16 whites, Boston 8 whites, and above all Detroit with 28 Negroes and 25 whites. In Washington, D. C., no less than 50 Negroes and 10 whites were killed by police from 1926 to 1938." (Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.)

[b] "Of the 473 whites killed in the South by Negroes [between 1920 and 1932], 173 or 36.6 per cent were peace officers; of 63 outside the South, 18 or 28.6 per cent were officers." (Unpublished data compiled by H. C. Brearley in *ibid.*, pp. 40-41.)

". . . in 32 of the 202 Southern cities and towns from which information was secured 51 policemen had been killed since 1935; in the other 170 communities no policeman had been killed." (Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 38.)

sheriffs, constables, probation and truant officers in public service in the United States. Only 7 per cent were in the South outside the Border states. When the Border states and the District of Columbia are included in the South, the percentage rises to 18.[26] Apparently there was little increase, if any, between 1930 and 1940 in the South.[a] The reluctance to appoint Negro policemen in the South is reflected also in the restrictions put upon the authority of the few there are.[b] It is reported that the use of Negro police seems to be a factor making for a lowering of the crime rate in the Negro community. "They can arrest offenders with less show of force, partly because they know their way around in the community, and partly because they are personally respected."[27]

[a] "The geographic distribution of Negro policemen is in inverse relation to the percentage of Negroes in the total population. Mississippi, South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia and Alabama—the only states with more than one-third Negro population—have not one Negro policeman in them, though they have nearly two-fifths of the total Negro population of the nation. Other states without regular Negro officers are Arkansas and Virginia, both with more than one-fourth of their population Negroes. Only two states with more than one-fourth Negro population have Negro policemen—North Carolina with one at Princeville, a Negro suburb of Tarboro, and Florida with three at Daytona Beach and one each at Fort Myers and Sarasota. In these states there is one Negro policeman to every 200,000 Negroes.

"In Maryland, Delaware, Tennessee and Texas, where Negroes make up from 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the population there are 39 Negro officers, or one to every 41,000 Negroes; while in the five states with from 5 per cent to 10 per cent of the population Negro, there are 165, or one to every 5,700 Negroes. In the remaining 32 states where the Negro accounts for less than 5 per cent of the total population, there are 756 policemen, or one to every 41,000 Negroes.

"The figures above do not include the District of Columbia, which seems to contradict the general pattern. It has 34 Negro policemen, one to every 3,800 Negroes. But the District, with 27 per cent Negroes in 1930, is very deep South in some respects, particularly in its record of police killings of Negroes.

"Excepting the District of Columbia, the South with slightly over three-fourths of the nation's Negro population has less than one-eighth of the nation's Negro policemen, while the North with one-fifth of the Negro population has four-fifths of the policemen, and the West with one per cent of the population has over 5 per cent of the Negro policemen." (*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.)

The figures are as of 1940. One subsidiary reason why the South is hesitant about appointing Negroes as police officers is that, as a rule, they receive the same pay as the white officers. (*Ibid.*, p. 27.)

[b] "The province of authority of the Negro policeman varies with his location on the map. In most of the Northern and Western communities Negro policemen function as officers in any part of town, even though their special duties may often be more or less limited to the Negro section. Farther down the map, the Negro officers are restricted to Negro communities, while in most of the lower border cities with Negro policemen, their authority applies only to Negroes in the Negro section. When offending whites need to be arrested white officers are called in. It was with some feeling of victory that the Negroes in Louisville, a decade ago, won the right for Negro officers to go home in their uniforms as did the white police officers." (*Ibid.*, p. 26.)

4. TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

There are, however, some encouraging signs of change in the police systems of the South. The civil service system seems to be on the increase even in the South. This will tend to lower the age level and raise the educational level of persons appointed to the police force. It will also increase the independence of the police officers. Another factor is the growing influence of the federal police system.

> The F.B.I. is giving real stimulus to better-trained police personnel; many of the larger communities which have not yet set up training schools report that members of their staff are now taking the F.B.I. training course and upon their return will develop a local training school. This approach will in the course of a few years include all the cities of any size.[28]

The increase and improvement of the state police systems likewise tends to raise the standards of Southern policemanship and to set patterns for local police systems. The general influences of education, urbanization, and industrialization also are tending to modernize the administration of local governments in the South. Finally, the new functions of the policemen—answering questions for tourists, helping school children cross the streets, and so on—may serve as a humanizing force tending to counteract the stultifying effects of catching and beating criminals.[a]

The present writer has, from his contact with the Southern police system, become convinced that it represents a crucial and strategic factor in race relations. Could standards be raised—of education, specialized police training, independence of local politics, salary, and social prestige—some of the most morbid tensions in the South would be lessened. Legislators now take it for granted that teachers and social workers ought to have a college degree; *a college education should be even more urgently required for fulfilling the duties of a police officer.*[29] The policeman needs, besides a general education, a special training to make him a professional. This training should not be directed only on the technicalities of crime detection. Even more important is an understanding of the wider aims of crime

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

". . . assistance in crossing streets is provided for Negro school children in scarcely 10 per cent of the communities in such representative Southern states as Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas, as reported by 88 Negro high school principals in these states. We noted above the friendly relations that develop between the school child and the policeman. When the typical chief of police was faced squarely with the question why it would not be a good thing to provide this avenue of understanding for Negro school children, who come from the highest crime sections in the city, the only answer was that he had not thought about it. Some rather haltingly suggested it could not be worked out because the Negro child would not be accepted in the same cordial fashion as the white child. One wonders, however, whether this is true. If it is, it further emphasizes the need for Negro policemen." (*Ibid.*, p. 22.)

prevention. *Ideally the policeman should be something of an educator and a social worker at the same time that he is the arm of the law.* Even in the police systems in the North, where standards of professional policemanship are highest, too little interest has been given to social and educational viewpoints. One result of this is that the policeman in America is not commonly liked and trusted as he rightly ought to be.[30]

Racial and social conditions make the policeman's task much more difficult in the South. *The South, particularly, needs a stress on the preventive aims and the peace-making functions of the police.* Few strategic moves to improve the Southern interracial situation would be more potent than the opening of a pioneering modern police college in the South on a high level, which would give a thorough social and pedagogical training as well as a technical police training. The South is changing, and it is the author's opinion that the graduates from such a school would not need to fear unemployment. The use of equally well-trained Negro policemen, particularly for patrolling the Negro communities, would be an especially wholesome reform. Public opinion in many Southern cities would tolerate such a reform: as in many other fields, local politicians and the public institutions lag behind the possibilities.

5. ANOTHER TYPE OF PUBLIC CONTACT

Besides the police and other functionaries who regard their chief function with respect to Negroes to be restraint and suppression, there are public officials in the South, as elsewhere, who regard their function to be service. Longest established among these are the postal officials, who are unique because they are under federal control and have to meet civil service standards. Southern Negroes know that they can rely upon having their letters duly delivered.[31] And they feel they can expect much more equal treatment and courteous service from Uncle Sam's agencies than from local authorities.

Other people who are building up a tradition of equal and just treatment of Negroes in public contacts are those concerned with social adjustment and social reform. They have become especially numerous and important under the New Deal. These officials have a relatively high level of general education and professional training and, what is even more important, have other goals than the perfunctory ones of preserving the social *status quo.* They are bent upon *preventing* individual and social inefficiencies and wrongs and upon *improving* conditions. Usually they are under some federal control. Even if, as we have seen,[a] they do discriminate against Negroes, they discriminate much less than has been the custom in the South.

[a] See Chapter 15.

To this practically new group of officials belong the relief administrator,[32] the county farm agent, the Farm Security supervisor, the home demonstration agent, and the doctors and nurses of local health programs. Some of these have Negro assistants to handle Negro cases, but many—including even the Farm Security Administration, which is one of the fairest of the New Deal agencies—restrict their personnel to whites. In the F.S.A. this is "... a concession which the agency felt obliged to make to ensure its being allowed to serve the pro rata number of Negro families."[33] The New Deal has not succeeded in stamping out discrimination against Negroes in its agencies in the South, but it has brought discrimination within some limits, and it has given the Negroes a new type of contact with public authority: educated and trained white men and women whose primary interest is not simply to keep them in their place, but to advise them and help them to a better life. This will, in time, stand out as a social and spiritual revolution.

CHAPTER 26

COURTS, SENTENCES AND PRISONS

1. The Southern Courts

William Archer, the sympathetic English traveler, who in 1908 criss-crossed the Southern states in order to inform himself on the Negro problem, summed up the part of his study which dealt with courts and justice in the following words:

> This is one of the few points on which there is little conflict of evidence—the negro, in the main, does not get justice in the courts of the South. The tone of the courts is exemplified in the pious peroration of the lawyer who exclaimed: "God forbid that a jury should ever convict a white man for killing a nigger who knocked his teeth down his throat!" Exceptions there are, no doubt; there are districts in which the negroes themselves report that they are equitably treated. But the rule is that in criminal cases a negro's guilt is lightly assumed, and he is much more heavily punished than a white man would be for the same offence; while in civil cases justice may be done between black and black, but seldom between white and black.[1]

and he quotes with endorsement an intelligent and conservative Negro informant:

> "A negro's case gets no fair hearing; and he is far more severely punished than a white man for the same offence. . . . There is only one court in which we think we get justice, and that is the Federal Court."[2]

Since Archer wrote, a generation has passed: things *have* changed somewhat but not fundamentally. Writing in 1932, Virginius Dabney could, without risking contradiction, refer to "the frequent failure of Southern blacks to obtain even elementary justice when they fall into the toils of the law."[3]

Apart from the basic institutional weakness already referred to,[a] that the courts are too directly controlled by a local public opinion where the Negroes are without a voice, there are some structural characteristics in the judicial procedure which operate against all poor and uneducated groups. The great number of courts, with higher or lower rank and with complicated jurisdictional boundaries between them, are likely to bewilder

[a] See Chapter 24, Section 1.

the unsophisticated citizen who attempts to get his rights protected.[4] Technicalities and legal fictions are allowed to play a great role, to the sacrifice of material justice. This is true of American justice in other parts of the country also,[a] but the very fact that the South after Reconstruction had to build up large parts of its legal system of discrimination against Negroes in evasion of the Constitution has particularly stamped Southern justice with this trait.

Under these circumstances a clever attorney can work wonders, particularly in those rural districts where the judge feels that the attorney knows more about law than he does himself.[5] The strength of the counsel a man can provide depends in general upon his wealth, and Negroes, as a poor group, suffer together with lower class whites. "The root of the evil is"—writes a prominent Southern white lawyer after having expressed his opinion that even the Negro can receive substantial justice in a Southern court if he is properly represented by competent counsel—"that so often his rights suffer because he cannot get into court in civil matters on account of financial want, and most frequently in criminal cases he is without funds to secure proper defense."[6] It is true that, in criminal cases, the court will appoint a lawyer for anybody who cannot afford to provide himself with proper legal aid. The court-appointed lawyer, however, in many cases, performs only perfunctory duties. Often the court will appoint some young lawyer without much experience. "Generally speaking, it is probably true that these charity lawyers are not as efficient as privately employed attorneys, but in many instances such is not the case."[7]

The American bond and bail system works automatically against the poor classes. The poor man, generally, cannot raise bail or bond himself to secure his release from jail pending trial. As the privilege of bail is discretionary, it is most often refused or made prohibitively high to accused Negroes, particularly when the alleged crime is against whites. Then there is what Raper calls "the dynamics of the fee system." Under this system—still in use in more than half the South—all the minor court officials, and in some instances the prosecuting attorneys, get their pay out of fines. This system ". . . puts a premium upon making those arrests and getting those convictions which will yield fees and costs without jeopardizing the political popularity of the fee-getting officials."[8] Equally bad conditions may prevail where there is no fee system: the judge may decide the punishment on the basis of a consideration as to the state's profit. Mississippi, for example, had a net profit of half a million dollars in 1939 from its penitentiaries,[9] and judges were inclined to send criminals to the penitentiary rather than fine them. Where the penitentiary system operates

[a] See Chapter 1, Section 10.

at a loss, the inclination is to fine Negroes and poor whites to reduce the burden of cost of the legal system.[a]

Not only are all the court officials white, but the jury too is usually composed of whites only, except for cases in the federal courts and in some of the large cities. Yet to prohibit Negroes from jury lists is clearly unconstitutional. It has long been established that no statutes which barred Negroes from jury service were constitutional,[10] and higher court decisions have declared invalid convictions made by juries selected from lists which restricted Negroes. An impetus to using Negroes on juries came in 1935 when, in the widely publicized Scottsboro decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the trial was unconstitutional because Negroes had been systematically excluded from jury service. Courts want to have their decisions stand, and so a movement is under way to have Negroes on the jury list and call them in occasionally for service. Techniques are, however, being developed by which it is possible to fulfill legal requirements without using Negro jurors. In the Lower South the matter is usually disregarded. Dr. Raper reports, after a survey of the situation as of 1940, as follows:

> Inquiries about the use of Negro jurors have been made in the past year [1940] in numerous courts in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Florida, North and South Carolina. While Negroes are generally used on the federal grand juries and petit juries throughout most of these states, and in superior court grand and petit juries in the larger cities, the vast majority of the rural courts in the Deep South have made no pretense of putting Negroes on jury lists, much less

[a] "Sometimes the incomes from fines take care of the cost of the police court and the police department. In DeKalb County, Georgia, for example, the local paper editorially boasted that in 1939 the county police department with 15 men on patrol duty, made 1,991 arrests during the year; only 10 of these were dismissed and only 20 were found not guilty. The total cost of operating the police department, including the police court, was approximately $40,000. The total fines collected amounted to $37,732.62, leaving a cost to the county of only $2,300. But this department collected stolen goods and property valued at $20,555.45.

". . . in this county, as is generally the case, the cost of the courts is borne by fines from the poorest people in the community. Negroes and poorer whites will be fined $10 to $40 for possessing a half pint of illegal liquor, while people with status have their liquor as they please, and everybody knows it. Disorderly conduct, loitering, vagrancy—all help pay for the court. Looked at purely from the point of view of maintaining race and class demarcations, the court is as effective as portrayed by the local paper.

"The recorder's courts in nearby Atlanta reported the collection of $236,285 in the first 8 months of 1939. At this rate the collections for the year would exceed $350,000. The cost of these courts for a year is slightly less than $21,000. The 1939 budget for the police department was $1,018,239.91. The fines for the year totalled about one-third of the cost of the police court and police department.

"A similar ratio obtained in Selma, Alabama, where the police budget was $35,000, fines $12,800. In Jackson, Mississippi, $61,000 and $40,000; Macon, Georgia, $141,715.34 and $47,852.85." (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], pp. 160-162.)

calling or using them in trials. . . . North Carolina and Virginia have taken the decisions more seriously. Even in these states, however, numerous courts have merely ignored the matter.

It is the general assumption that the use of Negro jurors need not be considered except in those court sessions in which Negro defendants are being tried on serious charges. Even a capital offense against a Negro does not raise the all-white jury issue unless local officials have reason to believe the case might be appealed on this ground.[11]

To this should be added that Negro lawyers are scarce in the South.[a] In some places, Negro lawyers are not allowed to appear in courts, and even where they are allowed, they tend to stay away. Most of them seem to be engaged in settling matters outside of court or working in real estate or insurance offices or giving legal advice. Their white business is mainly restricted to debt collection among Negroes. In law suits they may work with white lawyers but do not appear much before the courts themselves. Negro clients know that a Negro lawyer is not much use in a Southern courtroom.[12] Lower class Negroes sometimes believe that Negro lawyers are not permitted in courtrooms even where they are permitted. There are other handicaps for Negro lawyers: their clients are usually poor; they cannot afford extensive equipment;[13] they have not had the experience of handling important cases; they cannot specialize.

2. Discrimination in Court

In a court system of this structure, operating within a deeply prejudiced region, discrimination is to be expected. The danger is especially strong in lower courts where the pressure of local public opinion is most strongly felt, and where the judges often are men of limited education and provincial background.

In civil cases the average Negro will not only be up against the inability of meeting the costs involved in a successful litigation—this he shares with the poor white man in the South and elsewhere—but, when his adversary is a white man, he also encounters white solidarity. Greater reliance is ordinarily given a white man's testimony than a Negro's. This follows an old tradition in the South, from slavery times, when a Negro's testimony against a white man was disregarded; and the white judge may justify his partisanship by what he feels to be his experience that Negroes are often actually unreliable. It also fits into a pattern of thinking that it is dangerous for the social order to allow Negroes to vindicate their rights against white people. The writer has, however, frequently been told by Negroes and whites in the South that it is becoming more and more common that judges, with the consent of white society, stand up for giving the Negroes what is due them as long as it concerns merely their property rights.

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 7.

In criminal cases the discrimination does not always run against a Negro defendant. It is part of the Southern tradition to assume that Negroes are disorderly and lack elementary morals, and to show great indulgence toward Negro violence and disorderliness "when they are among themselves." They should, however, not act it out in the presence of whites, "not right out on the street." As long as only Negroes are concerned and no whites are disturbed, great leniency will be shown in most cases. This is particularly true in minor cases which are often treated in a humorous or disdainful manner. The sentences for even major crimes are ordinarily reduced when the victim is another Negro.[14] Attorneys are heard to plead in the juries: "Their code of ethics is a different one from ours." To the patriarchal traditions belong also the undue importance given white "character witnesses" in favor of Negro offenders. The South is full of stories of how Negroes have been acquitted or given a ridiculously mild sentence upon recommendation of their white employers with whom they have a good standing.[15]

The leniency in punishment of Negro crime against Negroes has repeatedly been pointed out to the present writer by white Southerners as evidence of the friendliness of Southern courts toward Negroes. The same thing can be found in the writings of Southerners.[16] Yet the Southern Negro community is not at all happy about this double standard of justice in favor of Negro offenders. Law-abiding Negroes point out that there are criminal and treacherous Negroes who secure immunity from punishment because they are fawning and submissive toward whites. Such persons are a danger to the Negro community. Leniency toward Negro defendants in cases involving crimes against other Negroes is thus actually a form of discrimination.

For offenses which involve any actual or potential danger to whites, however, Negroes are punished more severely than whites.[17] Particularly the lower courts which work on a fee system are inclined to fine Negro defendants heavily without giving them much chance to explain their case. The inclination of the Southern court to make legal punishment a paying business[a] operates against Negroes who can be fined or sent to the penitentiary almost arbitrarily. Negroes alone are subject to a special form of legal injustice which is, however, now becoming rather rare: when white employers are short of workers, they inform the sheriff, who will suddenly begin to enforce vague laws such as that against vagrancy. Formerly the employers could rent prisoners from the state; now they make a deal with the Negro defendant to pay his fine if he will work a certain number of days—fewer than the number he would have to spend in jail.[18]

But quite apart from such pecuniary motives, the courts, particularly the

[a] See Section 1 of this chapter.

lower courts, too often seem to take for granted the guilt of the accused Negro.[a] The present author, during his visits to lower courts in the South, has been amazed to see how carelessly the Negro defendants—and sometimes also defendants belonging to the lower strata of whites—are sentenced upon scanty evidence even when they emphatically deny the charges. There is an astonishing atmosphere of informality and lack of dignity in the courtroom, and speed seems to be the main goal. Neither the judge nor the other court officers seem to see anything irregular in the drama performed; the observer is welcomed and usually asked to sit beside the judge to be better able to watch the interesting scene.

> Most of the Negroes seem to realize that their word in this machine-like courtroom is as nothing when weighed against the white officer's. The judge sometimes smiles understandingly as the arresting officer tells what the defendant did. And most Negroes simply take it. Now and then, however, one glances around until a sympathetic eye is caught and with a wordless stare says eloquently, "Oh, what's the use."[19]

It should be emphasized, however, that there are great differences between different courts, due partly to differences in the personality of the judge. A humane judge, whose mental horizon is not bound by the limits of his local community, will maintain a dignified court and administer impartial justice. As between rural and urban areas, it is difficult to say which is more prejudiced: urban courts have a greater familiarity with, and respect for, law; but rural courts retain some of the old aristocratic patriarchal traditions. According to Raper, in the rural courts, some Negro witnesses may also be used as character witnesses and there is, on the whole, less browbeating, derogatory joking, and open carelessness in the hearing of Negro witnesses, plaintiffs and defendants.[20] The higher state courts and the federal courts observe much more of judicial decorum and are, for this reason, less likely to discriminate against Negroes. The judges in these courts are usually also of a higher grade and are relatively independent of local opinion.

The jury, for the most part, is more guilty of obvious partiality than the judge and the public prosecutor. When the offender is a white man and the victim a Negro, a grand jury will often refuse to indict. Even the federal courts find difficulty in getting indictments in peonage suits,[21] and state courts receive indictments for physical violence against Negroes in an infinitesimally small proportion of the cases. It is notorious that prac-

[a] A white lawyer from a city in the Black Belt writes:

"On the criminal side of the court I think that a great many Negroes are convicted on testimony which would have resulted in the acquittal of a white defendant. A white defendant is presumed to be innocent until the contrary is proven; I am afraid that a Negro is presumed to be guilty until the contrary is proven. A jury which would find a white defendant guilty of a lesser grade of the offense involved will frequently find the Negro guilty of the highest grade." (Letter of July 2, 1940.)

tically never have white lynching mobs been brought to court in the South, even when the killers are known to all in the community and are mentioned by name in the local press. When the offender is a Negro, indictment is easily obtained and no such difficulty at the start will meet the prosecution of the case. The petit jury is even less impartial than the grand jury, since its range of powers is greater.

Public tension and community pressure increase with the seriousness of the alleged crime. A Southern student of law writes:

> One has only to visit a Southern community at a time when some Negro is on trial for the rape or murder of a white person to obtain a vivid picture of the hate and passion and desire for vengeance which is often aroused in the hearts of the Southern whites.
>
> Nowhere is the spirit of mob violence so strong as it is in the courtroom or just outside while a person who is accused of some particularly heinous crime is being tried. The air is charged with an undercurrent of tension and there is a feeling of suspense, as if some exciting incident may occur at any moment. Under circumstances of this kind it is rather difficult for the jury or even the judge to escape being influenced by the feeling which permeates the throng.[22]

There is thus even less possibility for a fair trial when the Negro's crime is serious. In the case of a threatened lynching, the court makes no pretense at justice; the Negro must be condemned, and usually condemned to death, before the crowd gets him. On the other hand, it is quite common for a white criminal to be set free if his crime was against a Negro. Southern whites have told the present author of singular occasions when a Negro got justice against a white man, even in a serious case, as something remarkable and noteworthy. This testifies that it still is an exception.[23] Kelly Miller reflected upon the situation as follows:

> Of the thousands of cases of murder of blacks by whites since emancipation there has been scarcely a legal execution, and comparatively few prison sentences. The offender usually escapes with the stereotyped verdict, "Justifiable homicide," or at best with a nominal fine. If the relations were reversed, whatever the provocative circumstances, the Negro would almost certainly be sentenced to death or to life imprisonment, if indeed the mob allowed the case to reach a judicial hearing. To say that these flagrant discrepancies have not their influence upon the black man's attitude toward the law, would be to deny that he is controlled by ordinary human motives. The best example that the South can set for the Negro would be punishment of white men for their crimes according to the requirement of the law. Mean white men will continue to mistreat Negroes just so long as they can do so with impunity by hiding themselves behind the cloak of racial arrogance.[24]

3. SENTENCES AND PRISONS

The South has the highest crime rates in the country.[a] Both Negroes and whites in the South have a higher crime rate than the average for the

[a] See Chapter 44, Section 2.

nation. *Within* the South, however, the number of convictions of Negroes is not much greater, on the average, than their proportion in the population: in 1939, Negroes constituted 44.0 per cent of the male prisoners convicted of felonies and received by state and federal prisons and reformatories in the three Southern census divisions.[25] In 1940, the proportion of Negroes in the total population of these areas was 23.8 per cent.[26] The main reasons why Negroes do not constitute an unusually large proportion of the criminals sent to prisons would seem to be that most of their crimes are trivial or are committed against other Negroes and so are considered to warrant only a fine or short local jail sentence. When Negroes commit crimes against whites, however, there is good reason to believe that the sentences are unusually heavy. The South makes the widest application of the death penalty,[a] and Negro criminals come in for much more than their share of the executions.[b] Although no conclusive evidence can be adduced, it would seem that Negro criminals serve longer terms for crimes against whites and are pardoned and paroled much less frequently than white criminals in comparable circumstances.[27]

America is world famous for the high aims and accomplishments of many of its progressive penal institutions in the North and West and, particularly, for the courageous scientific and practical discussion about treatment of crime and asociality. But America is famous also for the convict camps in the South. The generally very low level of Southern penal institutions is well known.[28] With the exception of the federal penitentiaries and one or two of the newer state penitentiaries, the Southern prison or prison camp is a place where prisoners are physically tortured for insubordination of any kind, where the guards are of the lowest stratum of society and receive extremely low pay, where the surroundings are dirty and the food abominable, where there is a tradition of callousness

[a] "North Carolina has a death penalty for burglary; Alabama and Virginia for robbery; of six states for arson, only two, Illinois and Delaware, are outside the South, the others being Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. The death sentence for rape, too, is restricted almost wholly to the South and Southwest. The most common offense to be punished by death is murder. Eight states do not use capital punishment for any offense, and the homicide rates in these states are among the lowest in the nation; high homicide rates characterize the states that rely upon the death sentence. The states with no capital punishment are: Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, and Wisconsin." (Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-165.)

[b] "In 10 Southern states, for varying periods, 975 Negroes and 464 whites were sentenced to death. The Negro constitutes less than 30 per cent of the population in these states, but has more than twice as many death sentences imposed. Actual executions make the racial differential still greater, for 60.9 per cent of the Negro death sentences were carried out as compared with 48.7 of the white. The figures for life termers, by race, who actually die in prison are not available, but would most probably show the same race bias. For the Negro is given a more stern sentence and for the same reason is the less likely to have his sentence reduced." (*Ibid.*, p. 166.)

and brutality, where there is not the slightest attempt to reform but only to punish and get work out of the prisoners. Some of the Northern prisons are not good either, and there has been a long, hard struggle to improve very bad prisons in the North, but with the few exceptions noted, Southern prisons do not approximate Northern penal standards. There is no doubt that the average Southern prison is likely to make hardened criminals of all who fall into its clutches.[29] This inexpensive penal system in the South —from the point of view of budgetary income and outgo—is tremendously expensive from the point of view of real social costs.

Conditions are generally so bad in Southern prisons that it would be difficult to say whether Negro prisoners received poorer treatment than white prisoners. The penal institutions in the South are usually segregated for whites and Negroes. There is some opportunity, therefore, for state officials to purchase less food and equipment for Negroes than for whites and to discriminate in other ways. The wardens and guards are, in all cases, Southern poor whites. Probably the most harmful form of discrimination arises out of the fact that several states do not provide separate reformatories for Negro juvenile offenders as they do for white juvenile offenders, and the Negro youth must live with the hardened older criminal.

4. TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

This whole judicial system of courts, sentences and prisons in the South is overripe for fundamental reforms. It represents a tremendous cultural lag in progressive twentieth century America. Reform in this field—especially in the courts—would be strategic in the efforts to improve the Negro people and their living conditions and, consequently, to improve race relations.

There are signs of change. The Supreme Court is increasingly active in censoring the state courts when they transgress the principles of legal procedure: it is pressing the courts to include Negroes on the jury lists, to curb appeals to race prejudice on the part of public prosecutors and private attorneys, to reject evidence obtained by third degree methods, and so on. The attorneys of the federal government and the federal courts in the states have become more diligent in pursuing such offenses against civil liberties of Negroes as fall under their jurisdiction, thereby setting a pattern for the state courts also. Under these two sets of influences, the higher courts of the Southern states are tending increasingly to condemn the more blatant forms of deviation from fair trial in the lower courts.

A new generation of lawyers with a better general education and professional training is coming forward. I have been told that it is becoming easier for Negroes to get even the best local white lawyers to take on their defense in serious cases where there will be much publicity, and white lawyers have testified that their risk of meeting threats and ostracism from white

society for so doing is decidedly diminishing. A first class counsel has great influence upon the morals of lower courts. The difficulty of the matter now is that most Negroes cannot afford good lawyers, even when they are available for a price. Probably the most effective means of bringing the Southern courts more rapidly to acquire a fixed pattern of carefulness and equity would be *the setting up of legal aid agencies everywhere in the South which, manned by high class professional lawyers, would be instructed not to work for any new legislation, but to assist poor whites and Negroes to enforce their rights under existing laws in civil and criminal cases.*[30] They should, to be effective, be kept entirely outside local politics and should be instructed to work not only upon application of clients but also to take the initiative, particularly in following the procedures at police courts and in prisons. Even one such agency, placed in a strategic city in the Black Belt—as, for instance, Atlanta, Georgia—would, without ever leaving purely professional routine work, and merely by the examples being set, change considerably the whole judicial atmosphere of the region.

The growth of the educated class of Negroes in the South[31] and the rising educational level of whites; the decreasing provincialism of the region, consequent to this and to industrialization, urbanization and migration; the increasing importance of Southern liberalism and generally the reflection of the humane spirit of the New Deal, the activity of such organizations as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Interracial Commission are all factors working in the same direction. The continuous influence of public opinion and the press of the North is also a major factor in reform. I have been told repeatedly, sometimes even by liberals in the South, that Northern criticism does more harm than good and is likely to drive Southern public opinion into sullen reaction. This might occasionally be the short-range effect, but I have also seen how, behind this defensive attitude in resenting Northern criticism, the average Southerner feels most embarrassed because of it, and how reform activity in the South is often spurred by considerations of national opinions. Another factor which is bound to have great influence in the future is the developing Negro vote. Already Negroes get more legal justice in those cities where they vote—even when that vote is bought.

It is the author's observation that, *in principle, the average white Southerner is no longer prepared to defend racial inequality of justice.* Much of the judicial discrimination against Negroes in the South seems to be backed or tolerated by public opinion because of carelessness and ignorance in regard to the Negro, rather than by an intentional and considered aim to discriminate. As far as public opinion is part of the problem, the task is, therefore, mainly one of adult education. White people must be taught to understand the damaging effects upon the whole society of a system of justice which is not equitable. Means must be found to bring the pressing

problems of crime prevention, and of punishment and prison reform, into the awareness of the general public.

It is astonishing to observe how far to the background these problems are pushed in America, and how deep the common ignorance of them is even in the higher classes. Most people discuss crime as if it had nothing to do with social conditions and was simply an inevitable outcome of personal badness. Southern whites tend to exaggerate the extent of Negro crime and tend to under-estimate the extent of white crime: one of the results is that they consider crime and prison reform part of the Negro problem and therefore not to be discussed. Rape and sexual crimes play a great role in Southern thinking on the problem, but the idea that such crimes, when they occur, have to be suspected as symptoms of psychic abnormality seems to be entirely absent. I understand that even the great number of murder cases in the South are tried without a sanity hearing. Capital punishment is not a problem to the general American public; that it stimulates violence does not occur to the average American. In the South, even educated people, when they think of punishment for crime, have their minds fixed on vengeance and on the isolation or eradication of the criminal. Seldom do they discuss punishment as a means of general crime prevention. Other techniques of individual prevention—by rebuilding the criminal himself—are usually entirely ignored. Under these circumstances the problems of court and prison reform are considered only by a small minority of the highly cultured.

It is not difficult to understand the psychological mechanism behind this astonishing blind spot in the regional culture. These problems are unpopular because their discussion is bound to result in the rational demonstration that *it is in the interest of society to care for the Negro—and even for the criminal Negro.*

CHAPTER 27

VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION

1. The Pattern of Violence

It is the custom in the South to permit whites to resort to violence and threats of violence against the life, personal security, property and freedom of movement of Negroes. There is a wide variety of behavior, ranging from a mild admonition to murder, which the white man may exercise to control Negroes. While the practice has its origin in the slavery tradition, it continues to flourish because of the laxity and inequity of the administration of law and justice. It would not be possible except for the deficient operation of the judicial sanctions in protecting Negroes' rights and liberties. Both the practice of intimidation and violence and the inadequate functioning of justice in the region are expressions of the same spirit of relative lawlessness; both are tolerated and upheld by the same public opinion. Both are rooted in this strange Southern combination of conservatism and illegality.[a] Both are expressions on the part of the Southern public of its dissatisfaction with formal laws, its disregard for orderly government.

The social pattern of subduing the Negroes by means of physical force was inherent in the slavery system. The master himself, with the backing, if needed, of the local police and, indeed, of all white neighbors, had to execute this force, and he was left practically unrestricted by any formal laws. After Emancipation the Black Codes,[b] of the period 1865-1867, were attempts to legalize a continued white control over the freedmen. Most of these laws were abolished during the Congressional Reconstruction, but their spirit prevailed in the complex of laws protecting the planters' interests—labor enticement laws, crop lien laws, vagrancy laws[c]—by which the states sanctioned the actions of the police and the courts in virtually upholding peonage, in spite of its being a federal offense. As the federal judiciary agencies have lately become active in stamping out peonage, and as the decline in the foreign market, the A.A.A. crop restriction policy, and other factors have made labor supply relatively abundant

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 7.
[b] See Chapter 10, Section 3.
[c] See Chapter 10, Section 4.

in the rural South and peonage unnecessary, these laws have become increasingly obsolete.

But quite apart from laws, and even against the law, there exists a pattern of violence against Negroes in the South upheld by the relative absence of fear of legal reprisal. Any white man can strike or beat a Negro, steal or destroy his property, cheat him in a transaction and even take his life, without much fear of legal reprisal. The minor forms of violence—cheating and striking—are a matter of everyday occurrence, but the major ones are infrequent enough to be talked about. Negroes, of course, try to avoid situations in which such violence is likely to occur, and if Negroes do incur the displeasure of a white man, a mere command or threat is usually enough to control them without the use of actual violence. The Negro's economic dependence upon whites makes these verbal controls especially potent. But accidental insult, and sometimes nothing at all except the general insecurity or sadism of certain whites, can serve as occasion for violence. Of course, there are certain checks on violence: most Southerners do not want to be mean or dishonest toward Negroes directly. Public opinion in the South tends to frown upon any white man who acquires a reputation for being consistently mean or dishonest, and on rare occasions may even ostracize him socially or encourage the application of legal sanctions against him. But the general attitude is one of *laissez faire*: if a plantation owner cheats or beats his Negro tenants, "that's his business"; if a Negro is the victim of a sudden outburst of violence, "he must have done something to deserve it." Above all, the Negro must be kept in his "place."

There is little that Negroes can do to protect themselves, even where they are a majority of the population.[a] They cannot easily secure the protection of police or court against white men. They cannot secure the protection of white employers against white men, unless the latter are poor or have had a bad reputation. They can, of course, strike back but they know that that means a more violent retaliation, often in an organized form and with danger to other Negroes. In an important sense, lynching and the wholesale destruction of Negro property are often merely the extreme forms of organized white retaliation against Negroes who have struck back when they were struck or cheated first by whites.[b] This retaliation more frequently takes a less violent form: the legal system may be called on to imprison the Negro for "attacking a white man"; white men may pretend that they are going to lynch the Negro but end up by only beating him or using the "tar and feather" technique; or the Negro may be "run out of town" and warned not to return.

[a] Negroes cannot protect themselves *especially* where they are a majority of the population, since this is for the most part in the Deep South.

[b] The causes of lynching are discussed in Sections 2 and 3 of this chapter.

The principles that the law and the law-enforcing agencies are supreme, impartial and above all groups in society has never taken strong root.[1] White people are accustomed—individually and in groups—to take the law into their own hands and to expect the police and the courts to countenance this and sometimes lend their active cooperation.[2] In the plantation areas where the social and political subordination of Negroes is solidified, there is not much need for special organizations of vigilantes to effectuate the extra-legal sanctions. The Ku Klux Klan and similar secret societies thrive, rather, in the border regions and in industrial communities.[3] But this is only a testimony that the extra-legal sanctions work more effectively where they are less challenged.

In this region the custom of going armed continually or having weapons within easy reach at home was retained from *ante-bellum* days. This custom was taken over also by the Negroes during Reconstruction days.[4] The writer has been astonished to see how firearms and slashing knives are part of the equipment of many lower class whites and Negroes in the South. The laws against carrying "concealed weapons" are not efficient, as they do not—and for constitutional reasons cannot[5]—forbid the owning, buying and selling of arms. White policemen have often complained to the author that it is not possible to disarm the civil population. They do not urge reforms, however, but take the prevailing situation as natural and inevitable. In the Negro community, where personal security is most lacking, this dangerous pattern of having knives and guns around is most widespread. It undoubtedly contributes to the high record of violent actions, most of the time directed against other Negroes.

2. LYNCHING

Lynching is spectacular and has attracted a good deal of popular and scientific[6] attention. It is one Southern pattern which has continued to arouse disgust and reaction in the North and has, therefore, been made much of by Negro publicists. It should not be forgotten, however, that lynching is just one type of extra-legal violence in a whole range of types that exist in the South. The other types, which were considered earlier in this chapter are much more common than lynching and their bad effects on white morals and Negro security are greater.[7]

Lynchings were becoming common in the South in the 'thirties, 'forties and 'fifties of the nineteenth century. Most of the victims in this early period were white men. The pattern of lynching Negroes became set during Reconstruction. No reliable statistics before 1889 are available. Between 1889 and 1940, according to Tuskegee Institute figures, 3,833 people were lynched, about four-fifths of whom were Negroes. The Southern states account for nine-tenths of the lynchings. More than two-thirds

of the remaining one-tenth occurred in the six states which immediately border the South: Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Kansas. Since the early 1890's, the trend has been toward fewer and fewer lynchings. The annual average in the 'nineties was near 200; in the 'thirties it dropped to slightly over 10. In 1941 it was down to 4, but there are already more than this in 1942 (July). The decrease has been faster outside the South, and the lynching of whites has dropped much more than that of Negroes. Lynching has become, therefore, more and more a Southern phenomenon and a racial one. Against the decrease in number of victims there has been a marked trend toward greatly aggravated brutality, extending to torture, mutilation and other sadistic excesses.[8]

Lynching is a rural and small town custom and occurs most commonly in poor districts.[9] There are some indications that lynchings go in waves and tend to recur in the same districts.[10] The accusations against persons lynched during the period for which there are records were: in 38 per cent of the cases for homicide, 6 per cent for felonious assault, 16 per cent for rape, 7 per cent for attempted rape, 7 per cent for theft, 2 per cent for insult to white persons and 24 per cent for miscellaneous offenses or no offense at all.[11] In the last category are all sorts of irritations: testifying at court against a white man or bringing suit against him, refusal to pay a note, seeking employment out of place, offensive language or boastful remarks.[12] Regarding the accusations for crime, Raper testifies: "Case studies of nearly one hundred lynchings since 1929 convince the writer that around a third of the victims were falsely accused."[a] The meaning of these facts is that, in principle, a lynching is not merely a punishment against an individual but a disciplinary device against the Negro group.[b]

The danger of Negroes' desire to rape white women has acquired a special and strategic position in the defense of the lynching practice.[c] Actually, only 23 per cent of the victims were accused of raping or attempting to rape. There is much reason to believe that this figure has been

[a] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 274. Raper adds that it is his ". . . opinion that a great contribution could be made by some arrangement for immediate factual newspaper reports on each lynching and other race and class violence by trained newspaper men. At present the local representative of the news-gathering agencies sends in the story and usually says about what the community wants said. Expert reporters who could be sent wherever a mob threatened would be free to present the facts in the case." (*Ibid.*, pp. 274-275.)

Raper's idea is that such a service, to be really useful, should be sponsored and underwritten by an impartial agency.

[b] See Section 3 of this chapter.

[c] According to Sir Harry H. Johnston (*The Negro in the New World* [1910], p. 464), "Allusions to the rape or attempted rape of white women or girls, by negroes or mulattoes, are rare in the literature of the United States prior to 1870."

inflated by the fact that a mob which makes the accusation of rape is secure against any further investigation; by the broad Southern definition of rape to include all sex relations between Negro men and white women; and by the psychopathic fears of white women in their contacts with Negro men. The causes of lynching must, therefore, be sought outside the Southern rationalization of "protecting white womanhood."

This does not mean that sex, in a subtler sense, is not a background factor in lynching. The South has an obsession with sex which helps to make this region quite irrational in dealing with Negroes generally. In a special sense, too, as William Archer, Thomas P. Bailey, and Sir Harry Johnston early pointed out,[13] lynching is a way of punishing Negroes for the white Southerners' own guilt feelings in violating Negro women, or for presumed Negro sexual superiority. The dullness and insecurity of rural Southern life, as well as the eminence of emotional puritanical religion, also create an emphasis upon sex in the South which especially affects adolescent, unmarried, and climacteric women, who are inclined to give significance to innocent incidents.[14] The atmosphere around lynching is astonishingly like that of the tragic phenomenon of "witch hunting" which disgraced early Protestantism in so many countries. The sadistic elements in most lynchings also point to a close relation between lynching and thwarted sexual urges.[15]

Lynching is a local community affair. The state authorities usually do not side with the lynchers. They often try to prevent lynchings but seldom take active steps to punish the guilty. This is explainable in view of the tight hold on the courts by local public opinion. The lynchers are seldom indicted by a grand jury. Even more seldom are they sentenced, since the judge, the prosecutor, the jurors, and the witnesses are either in sympathy with the lynchers or, in any case, do not want to press the case. If sentenced, they are usually pardoned.[16] While the state police can be used to prevent lynching, the local police often support the lynching. From his study of 100 lynchings since 1929, Raper estimates that ". . . at least one-half of the lynchings are carried out with police officers participating, and that in nine-tenths of the others the officers either condone or wink at the mob action."[17]

The actual participants in the lynching mobs usually belong to the frustrated lower strata of Southern whites.[18] Occasionally, however, the people of the middle and upper classes take part, and generally they condone the deed, and nearly always they find it advisable to let the incident pass without assisting in bringing the guilty before the court.[19] Women and children are not absent from lynching mobs; indeed, women sometimes incite the mobs into action.[20]

3. THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY OF LYNCHING

The psychopathology of the lynching mob has been discussed intensively in recent years.[21] Poverty and economic fear have been stressed as background factors.[22] It is generally held that the rise of lynchings and race riots during and immediately after the First World War had much to do with the increased mobility of, and competition from, Negroes during this period.[23] A substantial correlation from year to year between low cotton prices and high lynchings is demonstrated.[24]

Economic fear is mixed with social fear: a feeling that the Negro is "getting out of his place," and the white man's social status is being threatened and is in need of defense. ". . . lynching is much more an expression of Southern fear of Negro progress than of Negro crime," writes Walter White.[25] Tannenbaum observed that:

> The South gives indications of being afraid of the Negro. I do not mean physical fear. It is not a matter of cowardice or bravery; it is something deeper and more fundamental. It is a fear of losing grip upon the world. It is an unconscious fear of changing status.[26]

It is this feeling which is behind the common saying which a visitor to the South will hear even today from lower class whites that "a lynching now and then" is expedient or necessary in keeping the Negroes from becoming "uppity." It is commonly observed that after the First World War many lynchings of Negro soldiers—sometimes in uniform—were openly motivated by the fear that they had gotten "wrong ideas" about their social status while serving in France.[27]

The low level of education and general culture in the white South is another important background factor. Allied with it is the prevalence of a narrow-minded and intolerant, "fundamentalist" type of Protestant evangelical religion.[28] Occasional violently emotional revival services, and regular appeals in ordinary preaching to fear and passion rather than to calm reasoning, on the one hand, and denunciations of modern thought, scientific progress, and all kinds of nonconformism, on the other hand, help to create a state of mind which makes a lynching less extraordinary. Methodist and Baptist preachers were active in reviving the Ku Klux Klan after the First World War.[29] With but rare exceptions preachers and local religious leaders have not come out against lynchers.[30]

Another important background factor in the causation of lynching and other major forms of violence is the isolation, the dullness of everyday life and the general boredom of rural and small town life in the South.[31] There is a lack of wholesome recreation or even variation, which gives a

real and sinister meaning to H. L. Mencken's statement that ". . . lynching often takes the place of the merry-go-round, the theatre, the symphony orchestra, and other diversions common to larger communities."[32]

Thus far we have considered the background factors and underlying causes of lynching. The causation is such that, when the time is ripe, almost any incident may touch it off. The incident is usually some crime, real or suspected, by a Negro against a white, or merely a "racial insult," such as when a Negro buys an automobile or steps beyond the etiquette of race relations in any way. Rumors will often start or accelerate a lynching. The lynching itself may take one or two main forms: in a *mob lynching* the whole community will participate with a high degree of frenzy;[33] in a *vigilante lynching* a restricted number of men, often disguised, will perform the deed with much ceremony.

The effects of lynchings are far-reaching. In the locality where it has happened and in a wide region surrounding it, the relations between the two groups deteriorate. The Negroes are terror-stricken and sullen.[34] The whites are anxious and are likely to show the assertiveness and suspicion of persons with bad, but hardened, consciences. Some whites are afraid of Negro retaliation or emigration. Every visitor to such a community must notice the antagonism and mutual lack of confidence between the two groups.

The long-run effects of lynching also are bad. As students of the Negro problem have long recognized, crime will not be hampered but rather stimulated by violence.[35] Far outside the locality where the lynching has occurred, in fact, all over the nation, it brutalizes feelings. Even in the North, some people have ceased to be concerned when another lynching occurs, and they jest about going South to see a lynching. It must have a particularly bad influence upon interracial attitudes of young people in the two groups.[36] Thus lynching has a psychological importance out of all proportion to its small frequency.

In every locality where there has been a lynching there are a great many people—sometimes a clear majority—who, when they think calmly, consider the incident most unfortunate. The nation-wide publicity created around a lynching community is, for one thing, commonly recognized to be damaging. The present writer has met few whites of the middle and upper classes in the South who have expressed themselves as in favor of lynch justice. But equally few have pretended that they would take any personal risks to hinder a lynching, and they make no effort to punish the lynchers. The ordinary Southerner apparently thinks that neither the upholding of the majesty of the law nor the life of even an innocent Negro is worth such a sacrifice. And, above all, Negroes must not have the satisfaction of seeing the whites divided or their assailants punished.

4. TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

It is possible to speculate about the causes for the decline in lynching. If our analysis of the background factors is correct, the rising standard of living and the improved education must have been of importance. The fundamentalism and emotionalism of Southern religion have been decreasing. Cultural isolation is being broken by radio, improved highways and cheap motor cars. There is more diversion from the drab and monotonous small town life, and the sex taboos have been somewhat relaxed. The national agitation around lynching, strengthened after the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909, has undoubtedly been of tremendous importance in awakening influential people in the South to the urgency of stopping lynching. The sharp decline in lynching since 1922 has undoubtedly something to do with the fact that early in that year the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill was put through the House of Representatives. It was later killed in the Senate by the filibuster of the Southern senators, and the sell-out of Western and Northern senators,[37] but the continuous discussion of the measure from then on has probably been of great importance.[a] A prominent Negro leader confided to the present author that, as a force to stamp out lynching, the agitation around the bill is probably as effective, or more effective, than the law itself would be.

Southern organizations of whites have taken to condemning lynching. Some religious denominations of the South declare against lynching at their annual conventions and sponsor programs on racial matters for white youth. One of the most active fights of the Commission for Interracial Cooperation has been against lynching,[b] and, under its auspices, the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching has collected nearly 50,000 signatures of Southern white women and of a few hundred peace officers to a pledge against lynching. Other women's organizations in the South also have been active in the propaganda against lynching. One of the most notable changes has been in the attitudes of the press. Today the great majority of Southern newspapers will come out openly against lynching. State authorities usually try to prevent lynchings, and they have an instrument in the state police systems which can be readily concentrated in any community where people are congregating for a lynching. Behind this movement is the growing strength of Southern liberalism, which we have considered earlier.[38]

[a] Bills against lynching have been introduced in Congress many times since 1922, but none of them has come so close to passage. Southern congressmen center their strategy against anti-lynching legislation by claiming that it would be unconstitutional and an infringement upon states' rights.

[b] See Chapter 39, Section 11.

It is often said that the decrease of lynching is only nominal, or partly so. There are several substitutes for lynching. One is the killing of Negro criminals by the police officers.[39] Similar to this is the precipitate and predetermined trial given to an accused Negro when there is danger that he will be lynched.[a] Another substitute is quiet murder without the formation of a mob.[40] A third substitute, "legal lynchings" proper, is that in which police and court officials promise to vigilante leaders that the accused Negro will receive a quick trial and the death penalty if he is not lynched.[41]

There is no way of finding out whether these substitute practices are really increasing. The present author is rather inclined to believe that they, too, have been declining. But there is no doubt that these substitutes have not declined as rapidly as lynching. All the other forms of violence against Negroes—striking, beating, robbing, destroying property, exiling, threatening—still occur in the South with great, though perhaps slightly decreasing, frequency. Such outrages do not get publicity in the white press and are not actively opposed by white organizations or state governments. Yet it would be easier to prevent and punish them with an adequate police and court system than it would be to curb lynching, for the white perpetrators of these outrages are more often individuals than groups. As in the case of lynching, an aroused Northern and Southern liberal public opinion would be effective in preventing them. In the last analysis, the true perspective of lynching as of these other forms of violence and intimidation is the inherited pattern of white society in the South not to respect the rights of Negroes on equal terms: the custom of tolerating the cheating of Negroes in economic deals and, generally, the insistence that he shall humbly pray for his due as a personal kindness, not proudly demand it as a right.

5. Riots

In one sense, the riot is the most extreme form of extra-legal mob violence used to prevent Negroes from getting justice. In another sense, however, the riot is quite different from all other forms of mob violence: it is not a one-way punishment but a two-way battle. The Negroes may be hopelessly outnumbered and beaten, but they fight back. There is danger to the white man participating in the riot as there usually is not when he engages in other forms of violence against Negroes. Sometimes the killing and beating of a large number of Negroes is called a riot: we prefer to call this a terrorization or massacre and consider it as a magnified, or mass, lynching. Its effects are those of a lynching. In this book we shall reserve the term "riot" to refer to mass violence in which Negroes fight as unreservedly as whites.

[a] Even the death sentence given by the courts to an accused Negro will not always deter a lynching mob.

The riot is as much, or more, characteristic of the North than it is of the South. It is generally only when Negroes think they might have something to gain that they will take the risk of fighting back, and in the North they know that some portion of the white population is on their side and that the police will ultimately restore order. The riot is primarily an urban phenomenon, as lynching is primarily a rural phenomenon, and the Northern Negro population is practically all urban. Housing segregation—or rather the concentration of Negroes in a few compact areas—is almost essential if Negroes are to fight back, and such segregation is more prevalent in Northern cities than in Southern cities.[a]

The pre-Civil War equivalents of the riot were the slave insurrection and its suppression.[b] Unusually bad conditions or the rare rise of bellicose Negro leaders would, not infrequently, provoke small spontaneous insurrections. The major insurrections of the early nineteenth century, led by Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner, were planned well in advance, and met with some success before their ultimate failure. In the North there were small-scale but vicious riots between 1829 and 1840, and again after 1880.[c]

It is impossible to say whether there is a trend in the number of riots. The great number of riots occurred during and just after the First World War, when the North was concerned with the tremendous migration of Negroes from the South and the South was concerned about the possible demands of returning Negro soldiers. According to W. E. B. Du Bois, there were riots in 26 American cities in 1919.[42] The most notorious was the Chicago riot in which 15 whites and 23 Negroes were killed, and 178 whites and 342 Negroes were injured.[43] The riot in Phillips County, Arkansas, in the same year, saw from 25 to 50 persons killed.[44] During the War, the most notorious riots were those in East St. Louis, Illinois, during which at least 39 Negroes and 8 whites were killed,[45] and in Houston, Texas, where 17 whites were killed and 13 Negroes were hanged, 41 were imprisoned for life, and 40 others held for trial.[46] Before the War, the most deadly riots were: the Atlanta, Georgia, riot of 1906 which killed 10 Negroes and 2 whites (more a one-way terrorization than a two-way riot);[47] and the Springfield, Illinois, riot of 1908, which cost the lives of 2 Negroes and 4 whites.[48]

Recent years have seen few race riots. They have become as unpopular as lynchings. The extreme tension of the First World War period has lessened, even if the northward migration and the existence of Negro soldiers continues. The beginning of the Second World War, however, shows some signs of recurrence of riots. There have been a number of

[a] See Chapter 29, Section 3.

[b] See Chapter 35, Section 1.

[c] See: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), pp. 26-27; James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 127-128.

incidents where Negro soldiers have clashed with Southern police and civilians with some fatalities on both sides.[a] In spring, 1942, there was a clash in the North: in trying to move into a government defense housing project built for them in Detroit, Negroes were set upon by white civilians and police. The project was built at the border between Negro and white neighborhoods but had been planned for Negroes. Encouraged by the vacillation of the federal government and the friendliness of the Detroit police (many of whom are Southern-born) and stimulated by the backing of a United States congressman and such organizations as the Ku Klux Klan, white residents of the neighborhood and other parts of the city staged protest demonstrations against the Negro housing project, which led to the riot. Whether these incidents presage another period of post-war riots, it is too early to say. On the whole, it does not seem likely that there will be further riots, of any significant degree of violence, in the North. Detroit is almost unique among Northern cities for its large Southern-born population and for its Ku Klux Klan. The main cause of riots in the North during the period after 1917 was the unusually large migration to the North and the consequent displacement of some whites by Negroes in jobs and residences. So far, the present war boom has seen no unusual northward migration of Negroes and relatively little displacement in jobs. A further reason why there probably will be no riots in the North after this War is that there is developing a new consciousness of the American Creed and of its significance for Negroes.

What may occur in the North, rather than the two-way conflicts which we are calling riots, are some sporadic and unorganized outbreaks on the part of the Negroes with little opposition from the whites. Such was the character of the so-called "Harlem Riot" of 1935 in New York City. If these occur, they will be due to continuing discrimination from the whites and to growing realization by Negroes that peaceful requests for their rights are not getting them anywhere. Whether or not these outbreaks will occur in the North will depend on whether or not the trend continues toward increased willingness to stand by the precepts of the American Creed.

While the future looks fairly peaceful in the North, there are many signs of growing race tension in the South. It seems almost probable that, unless drastic action is taken, severe race riots will break out in the South. We shall give some attention to this situation in the final chapter of this book.

The causation of riots would seem to be much like that of lynching. There is a background of mounting tension, caused by economic insecurity

[a] From the time of the inception of the draft in the fall of 1940 until April, 1942, there were three such clashes serious enough to get nation-wide publicity. These occurred in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Gurdon, Arkansas, and Alexandria, Louisiana. In addition, there was a clash between Southern white soldiers and Negro soldiers at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

of whites, belief that the Negro is rising, sex jealousy, boredom on the part of the lower strata of the white population. The local police are often known to be on the side of the whites. The breaking point is caused by a crime or rumor of crime by a Negro against a white person, or by the attempt of a Negro to claim a legal right. The effects of riots may be even more harmful to amicable race relations than are those of lynching. Whites do not feel the twinge of bad conscience which they have when they have lynched helpless and unresisting Negroes. The feelings of fear and insecurity on the part of the whites are only increased when some of their own number have been killed or injured. The memory of a riot is much longer than that of a lynching, for both whites and Negroes. Their devastation and relative fewness make them landmarks in history.

Part VII

SOCIAL INEQUALITY

CHAPTER 28

THE BASIS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

1. The Value Premise

The word "social" has two distinct meanings. There is the ordinary scientific usage of the term to refer to the whole range of relations between men. There is also the narrower but more popular usage which refers to personal relations, particularly those of an intimate sort. It is in the latter, more limited, sense that we shall use the term "social" in this part. Equality in "social relations" is commonly denied American Negroes. An elaborate system of measures is applied to separate the two groups and to prevent the building up of intimate relations on the plane of equality. Personal identifications of members of the two groups is thereby hindered. Some of these segregation measures have a spatial or institutional character, others are embodied in an etiquette of racial behavior.

Our main value premise in this part is again the precept of *equality of opportunity* in the American Creed. Race and color are not accepted as grounds for discrimination according to the Creed. Social discrimination is defined from this value premise as an arrangement which restricts opportunities for some individuals more than for others. Judged by the norm of equality in the American Creed, such practices are unfair and wrong. The Creed has, in this sphere, been given constitutional sanction in America as far as *public services* and *state regulations* are concerned.

But when segregation and discrimination are the outcome of individual action, the second main norm of the American Creed, namely, *liberty*, can be invoked in their defense. It must be left to the individual white man's own discretion whether or not he wants to receive Negroes in his home, shake hands with them, and eat with them. *If upheld solely by individual choice*, social segregation manifested by *all* white people in an American community can be—and is—defended by the norm of personal liberty. When, however, legal, economic, or social sanctions are applied to enforce conformity from *other* whites, and when Negroes are made to adjust their behavior in response to *organized* white demands, this violates the norm of personal liberty. In the national ideology, the point where approved liberty changes into disapproved restriction on liberty is left somewhat uncertain. The old liberal formula that the individual shall be left free to

follow the dictates of his own will so long as he does not substantially hamper the liberty of other persons does not solve the problem, because it is not definite enough. As remarked in an earlier chapter, the American Creed is in a process of change from "rugged individualism." It is giving increasing weight to "the other fellow's" liberty, and thus narrowing the scope of the actions which become condoned by the individualistic liberty formula.

To apply the American value premises in this condition of internal conflict within the concept of liberty itself—which is only another aspect of its external conflict with the concept of equality—stress has to be laid on the actual amount of discrimination. When there is substantial discrimination present, liberty for the white person has to be overruled by equality. To discern discrimination we must take into account the indirect effects of segregation in terms of cultural isolation, political and legal disabilities, and economic disadvantages, which are often much more important than the direct social discrimination.

From these viewpoints there is hardly any doubt that the major portion of the system of social segregation and discrimination against Negroes is a challenge to the American Creed. As this system is administered in practice, most of it is unconstitutional and even contrary to the state laws which, in the South as in the North, are framed in terms of equality. There remains, however, a residual amount of idiosyncrasy in purely personal relations which may be upheld by the American liberty norm as it does not involve any substantial contradiction to the equality norm. In any case, these personal preferences and prejudices fall outside *res publica*; in Lord Bryce's words:

> As regards social relations, law can do but little save in the way of expressing the view the State takes of how its members should behave to one another. Good feeling and good manners cannot be imposed by statute.[1]

We must, however, also remember that the equalitarian, internally peaceful society, envisaged in the democratic Creed of this country, cannot exist when good feeling and good manners do not usually characterize the relations between members of the society.

We shall, in this chapter, attempt to study the mechanism of social segregation and discrimination, somewhat in detail, as it operates today in various regions of the country. But first we want to penetrate somewhat deeper into the rationalized ideologies behind its various manifestations and into the attitudes of different classes of white people who are upholding the color bar. We shall again have to devote the major part of our inquiry to conditions in the South where more than three-fourths of the Negro people live, and where segregation and discrimination are most prevalent.

2. THE ONE-SIDEDNESS OF THE SYSTEM OF SEGREGATION

I have heard few comments made so frequently and with so much emphasis and so many illustrations as the one that "Negroes are happiest among themselves" and that "Negroes really don't want white company but prefer to be among their own race." Even sociologists, educators, and interracial experts have informed me that, when the two groups keep apart, the wish for separation is as pronounced among Negroes as among whites.[2] In the South, many liberals are eager to stress this assertion as part of the justification for their unwillingness to give up the Southern doctrine that the Negroes must not be allowed to aspire to "social equality." Southern conservatives will usually give a somewhat different twist to the argument and actually insist that Negroes are perfectly satisfied with their social status in the South. But the conservatives are more likely to contradict themselves bluntly in the next sentence by asserting that in the back of the Negro's mind there is a keen desire to be "like white people" and to "marry white girls."

For the moment, we shall leave it an open question whether the whites understand the Negroes correctly on this point. We shall start from the evident fact that—quite independent of whether or not, to what extent, and how the Negroes have accommodated themselves—*social segregation and discrimination is a system of deprivations forced upon the Negro group by the white group.* This is equally true in the North and in the South, though in this respect, as in all others, there is more segregation and discrimination in the South, and thus the phenomenon is easier to observe.

That segregation and discrimination are forced upon the Negroes by the whites becomes apparent in the *one-sidedness* of their application. Negroes are ordinarily never admitted to white churches in the South, but if a strange white man enters a Negro church the visit is received as a great honor. The guest will be ushered to a front seat or to the platform. The service will often be interrupted, an announcement will be made that there is a "white friend" present, and he will be asked to address the Negro audience, which will loudly testify its high appreciation. Likewise, a white stranger will be received with utmost respect and cordiality in any Negro school, and everything will be done to satisfy his every wish, whereas a Negro under similar circumstances would be pushed off the grounds of a white school. Whenever I have entered a Negro theater in the South, the girl in the ticket office has regularly turned a bewildered face and told me that "it is a colored movie." But she has apparently done this because she thought I was making a mistake and wanted to spare me embarrassment. When I answered that I did not care, the ticket office girls usually sold the ticket and received my visit as a courtesy. I have never been refused service in a Negro restaurant in the South.

When the white conductor in a train has told me occasionally that I was in the wrong car, the underlying assumption has also been the same, that the separation was made in order to save white people from having to tolerate Negro company. Contrary to the laws—which are all written on the fiction of equality—he has, with a shrug of his shoulders, always left me where I was after I told him I had gone there purposely to have a look at the Negroes.[a] A Negro who would disclose a similar desire to observe whites would, of course, be dealt with in quite another way.[3] In the streetcars and buses the separation seems to be enforced fairly well in both directions. When, however, the conductor tells me, a white man, that I have taken the wrong seat, it is done in a spirit of respect and in order to help me preserve my caste status. The assumption is that I have made a mistake with no intention of overstepping the rules. In the case of a Negro the assumption is usually the contrary, that he is trying to intrude. In public buildings or private establishments of the South, I have never encountered any objection to my entering the spaces set aside for the Negroes, nor to my riding in the elevator set apart for Negroes if, for any reason, the white car was not there or was filled.

The rules are understood to be for the protection of whites and directed against Negroes. This applies also to social rituals and etiquette. The white man may waive most of the customs, as long as he does not demonstrate such a friendliness that he becomes known as a "nigger lover"; the reaction then comes, however, from the white society. He can recognize the Negro on the street and stop for a chat, or he can ignore him. He can offer his hand to shake, or he can keep it back.[4] Negroes often complain about the uncertainty they experience because of the fact that the initiative in defining the personal situation always belongs to the white man. It is the white man who chooses between the alternatives as to the character of the contact to be established. The Negro, who often does not know how the white man has chosen, receives surprises in one direction or the other, which constantly push him off his balance.[5]

The white man is not completely free either. He cannot go so far as to "lose caste" or to endanger the color line for the rest of the community. And when he takes certain freedoms, he must not allow the Negro to understand that he, the Negro, can claim them as a right. But each restriction on the white man's freedom is made to appear as a privilege, whereas each restriction on the Negro's freedom is culturally defined as an insult or a discrimination. Thus the one-sidedness of the segregation system is *felt* to hold, even when it does not so appear to the outsider.[6] The one-sidedness

[a] Cases could be cited where conductors have forced white men out of the Negro car into the white car. These would seem, however, to be extremely rare in the Lower South, although not uncommon in the Upper South.

of the system of segregation is apparent also in the fact that the better accommodations are always reserved for the white people.

The sanctions which enforce the rules of segregation and discrimination also will be found to be one-sided in their application. They are applied by the whites to the Negroes, never by the Negroes to the whites. Whites occasionally apply them to other whites who go too far, but the latter are felt to have already lost caste. The laws are written upon the pretext of equality but are applied only against the Negroes. The police and the courts, as we have pointed out in preceding chapters, are active in enforcing customs far outside those set down in legal statutes; the object of this enforcement is the Negro. Threats, intimidations, and open violence are additional sanctions, all directed against the Negroes and "nigger-loving" casteless whites. And there are economic sanctions: most Negroes are dependent for their livelihood on the good-will of white employers and white officials. The more perfectly the rules work, the less do the sanctions need to be applied.

In the North, where the whole system of social segregation and discrimination is kept *sub rosa*, the sanctions of the law are ordinarily turned the other way—to protect Negro equality. The Negroes in the North have, for these and other reasons, a greater margin for assertiveness. The author has observed that in the North, and particularly in New York's Harlem, he has occasionally been made to feel unwelcome in Negro restaurants. This attitude, however, is even there an exception. The Negroes who have attempted to "Jim Crow" me have explained their actions partly as revenge and partly as the result of suspicion against the intentions of white people who frequent Negro places. It has always disappeared and changed into the greatest friendliness when I have disclosed myself as not being an American.[7]

A major part of this chapter will be devoted to an analysis of the popular concepts, beliefs, and theories that are advanced by white people to motivate this one-sided system of segregation and discrimination. But before we proceed to this analysis, we shall have to return to the conditions in the *ante-bellum* South. In the field of personal and social relations—as in other fields of the Negro problem—what we are studying is in reality the survivals in modern American society of the slavery institution. The white Southerner is right when, in discussing every single phase of the Negro problem, he constantly falls back in his arguments on the history of the region.

3. THE BEGINNING IN SLAVERY

Inherent in slavery as a social arrangement was the principle that the slave was inferior as a human being. He was allowed certain indulgences but could claim nothing as a right or privilege. The paternalistic rule of the

master who owned his body and all his abilities, including his propensity to procreate, stretched out over the most intimate phases of his life and was absolute, personal and arbitrary. The stamp of social inferiority on the Negro slave became strengthened by the race dogma, the functional importance of which we have studied in an earlier chapter.[a] This biological rationalization and the logic of the slavery institution itself also isolated the free Negroes and dragged them down into social inferiority.

In most relations a fairly complete social separation of the Negro group was enforced as a matter of policy and routine in a slavery society. The lives of the slaves were closely regimented in the interest of exploiting their labor and hindering their escape. Under the influence of the rising fear of slave revolts, the spread of abolitionism in the North, and the actual escape of many Negro slaves along the "underground railroad," the regimentation became increasingly strict during the decades preceding the Civil War. This regimentation of the slaves prevented, almost entirely, social contacts between the slaves and the whites who had no slaves. On the larger plantations the field slaves were usually constrained to the company of each other. Their main white contact was the overseer and, occasionally, the master and members of his family. On small holdings their contacts with the master and his family were more frequent and intensive.[8] Even the household slaves, however, never shared in the whites' life, except as servants whose humble station was made evident by all available means, including a ceremonial etiquette of obsequiousness which naturally developed between two groups of such different culture and such unequal status.

The slaves were provided with living quarters apart from the whites. Their religious activities also were usually separate. When allowed to attend religious services in the presence of white people, they had a segregated place in the church. They received no regular schooling. It was even forbidden by law to teach the slaves to read. They had their own amusements and recreations and never mixed in those of the whites. Their traveling was closely restricted. Marriage between the two groups was, of course, quite out of the question. There was a considerable amount of interracial sex relations, but they were usually of an exploitative type and restricted to those between white men and slave women. Most of these generalizations hold true also of the free Negroes in the South. They were forced into social isolation. White people did not, and could not in a slave society, accept them as equals.

4. THE JIM CROW LAWS

Emancipation loosened the bonds on Negro slaves and allowed them to leave their masters. The majority of freedmen seems to have done some

[a] See Chapter 4.

loitering as a symbolic act and in order to test out the new freedom.[8] Reconstruction temporarily gave civil rights, suffrage, and even some access to public office. It also marked the heroic beginning of the Negroes' efforts to acquire the rudiments of education.

There is no doubt that Congress intended to give the Negroes "social equality" in public life to a substantial degree. The Civil Rights Bill of 1875,[9] which, in many ways, represented the culmination of the federal Reconstruction legislation, was explicit in declaring that all persons within the jurisdiction of the United States should be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of inns, public conveyances on land and water, theaters, and other places of public amusement; subject only to the conditions and limitations established by law, and applicable alike to citizens of every race and color, regardless of previous condition of servitude.[10] The federal courts were given exclusive jurisdiction over offenses against this statute. Stephenson observes in *Race Distinctions in American Law* that "Congress apparently intended to secure not only equal but identical accommodations in all public places for Negroes and Caucasians."[11]

During Congressional Reconstruction some Southern states inserted clauses in their constitutions or in special laws intended to establish the rights of Negroes to share on equal terms in the accommodations of public establishments and conveyances.[12] Louisiana and South Carolina went so far as to require mixed schools.[13] From contemporary accounts of life in the South during Reconstruction, it is evident, however, that Negroes met considerable segregation and discrimination even during these few years of legal equality.[14] It is also apparent that nothing irritated the majority of white Southerners so much as the attempts of Congress and the Reconstruction governments to remove social discrimination from public life.

After Restoration of "white supremacy" the doctrine that the Negroes should be "kept in their place" became the regional creed. When the Supreme Court in 1883 declared the Civil Rights Bill of 1875 unconstitutional in so far as it referred to acts of social discrimination by individuals—endorsing even in this field the political compromise between the white North and South—the way was left open for the Jim Crow legislation of the Southern states and municipalities. For a quarter of a century this system of statutes and regulations—separating the two groups in schools, on railroad cars and on street cars, in hotels and restaurants, in parks and playgrounds, in theaters and public meeting places—continued to grow, with the explicit purpose of diminishing, as far as was practicable and possible, the social contacts between whites and Negroes in the region.[15]

We do not know much about the effects of the Jim Crow legislation. American sociologists, following the Sumner tradition of holding legisla-

[8] See Chapter 10, footnote 7.

tion to be inconsequential,[16] are likely to underrate these effects. Southern Negroes tell quite a different story. From their own experiences in different parts of the South they have told me how the Jim Crow statutes were effective means of tightening and freezing—in many cases of instigating—segregation and discrimination. They have given a picture of how the Negroes were pushed out from voting and officeholding by means of the disfranchisement legislation which swept like a tide over the Southern states during the period from 1875 to 1910.[a] In so far as it concerns the decline in political, civic, and social status of the Negro people in the Southern states, the Restoration of white supremacy in the late 'seventies—according to these informants—was not a final and consummated revolution but *the beginning of a protracted process which lasted until nearly the First World War. During this process the white pressure continuously increased, and the Negroes were continuously pushed backward.* Some older white informants have related much the same story.

Before the Jim Crow legislation there is also said to have been a tendency on the part of white people to treat Negroes somewhat differently depending upon their class and education. This tendency was broken by the laws which applied to *all* Negroes. The legislation thus solidified the caste line and minimized the importance of class differences in the Negro group. This particular effect was probably the more crucial in the formation of the present caste system, since class differentiation within the Negro group continued and, in fact, gained momentum.[b] As we shall find, a tendency is discernible again, in recent decades, to apply the segregation rules with some discretion to Negroes of different class status. If a similar trend was well under way before the Jim Crow laws, those laws must have postponed this particular social process for one or two generations.[c]

While the federal Civil Rights Bill of 1875 was declared unconstitutional, the Reconstruction Amendments to the Constitution—which provided that the Negroes are to enjoy full citizenship in the United States, that they are entitled to "equal benefit of all laws," and that "no state shall

[a] See Chapter 20.

[b] See Chapter 32.

[c] This problem of whether or not, and to what extent, the Jim Crow legislation strengthened and instigated Southern segregation and discrimination patterns is worthy of much more intensive study than has hitherto been given to it. The problem is important by itself as concerning a rather unknown phase of American history. In addition, it has a great theoretical interest. The common opinion among social scientists is that laws, particularly in the social field, are almost insignificant: "stateways cannot change folkways." This opinion is prevalent among Southern authors but is found, in one form or another, in most writings on the South and on the Negro problem even by Northern authors and by Negro writers. I believe this view to be exaggerated and to be an expression of the general American bias toward minimizing the effects of formal legislation, a bias in the *laissez-faire* tradition. (See Chapter 1, Section 11; and Appendix 2, Section 3.) The Jim Crow legislation represents an excellent test case for this *a priori* notion.

make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States"—could not be so easily disposed of. The Southern whites, therefore, in passing their various segregation laws to legalize social discrimination, had to manufacture a legal fiction of the same type as we have already met in the preceding discussion on politics and justice. The legal term for this trick in the social field, expressed or implied in most of the Jim Crow statutes, is "separate, but equal." That is, Negroes were to get equal accommodations, but separate from the whites. It is evident, however, and rarely denied, that there is practically no single instance of segregation in the South which has not been utilized for a significant discrimination. The great difference in quality of service for the two groups in the segregated set-ups for transportation and education is merely the most obvious example of how segregation is an excuse for discrimination.[17] Again the Southern white man is in the moral dilemma of having to frame his laws in terms of equality and to defend them before the Supreme Court—and before his own better conscience, which is tied to the American Creed—while knowing all the time that in reality his laws do not give equality to Negroes, and that he does not want them to do so.

The formal adherence to equality in the American Creed, expressed by the Constitution and in the laws, is, however, even in the field of social relations, far from being without practical importance. Spokesmen for the white South, not only recently but in the very period when the segregation policy was first being legitimatized, have strongly upheld the principle that segregation should not be used for discrimination. Henry W. Grady, for instance, scorned the "fanatics and doctrinaires who hold that separation is discrimination," emphasized that "separation is not offensive to either race" and exclaimed:

> . . . the whites and blacks must walk in separate paths in the South. As near as may be, these paths should be made equal—but separate they must be now and always. This means separate schools, separate churches, *separate accommodations everywhere —but equal accommodations where the same money is charged, or where the State provides for the citizen.*[18]

Further, the legal adherence to the principle of equality gives the Southern liberal a vantage point in his work to improve the status of the Negroes and race relations.[a] Last, but not least, it gives the Negro people a firm legal basis for their fight against social segregation and discrimination. Since the two are inseparable, the fight against inequality challenges the whole segregation system. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has had, from the very beginning, the constitutional provisions for equality as its sword and shield. Potentially the Negro is strong.

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 5.

He has, in his demands upon white Americans, the fundamental law of the land on his side. He has even the better conscience of his white compatriots themselves. He knows it; and the white American knows it, too.

5. Beliefs Supporting Social Inequality

In attempting to understand the motivation of segregation and discrimination, one basic fact to be taken into account is, of course, that many Negroes, particularly in the South, are poor, uneducated, and deficient in health, morals, and manners; and thus not very agreeable as social companions. In the South the importance of this factor is enhanced by the great proportion of Negroes in the total population. It is enhanced also by the democratic structure of public institutions in America.[19] William Archer, who, among the English observers of the Negro problem in America, probably better than anyone else was able to withstand the influence of race prejudice, declares himself for separation in railroad traveling for this reason:

> It is the crowding, the swamping, the submerging of the white race by the black, that the South cannot reasonably be expected to endure.[20]

This point is, however, much more complicated. For one thing, there is a great class of Southern whites who are also poor, uneducated, coarse and dirty. They are traditionally given various epithets, all with the connotation of social inferiority: "crackers," "hill-billies," "clay-eaters," "red-necks," "peckerwoods," "wool hats," "trash," "low-downers," "no 'counts." White farm laborers, sharecroppers, the permanently unemployed, and a great proportion of textile workers and other unskilled laborers are considered to be in this submerged group of lower class whites. Their presence in the South does not help the Negroes, however. It is, rather, the very thing which raises the need for a sky-high color bar. This class of whites knows that upper class whites are disposed to regard them as "just as bad as niggers," and they know, too, that they have always been despised by the Negroes, who have called them "poor white trash," "mean whites," or "po' buckra." It is in their interest, on the one hand, to stress the fundamental equality among all white people, which was the explicit assumption of the slavery doctrine, and, on the other hand, the gulf between whites and Negroes. The rising Negroes became an assault on the status of these poor whites.

The very existence of whites in economic and cultural conditions comparable to those of the masses of Negroes thus becomes a force holding Negroes down. Most middle and upper class whites also get, as we shall find, a satisfaction out of the subserviency and humbleness of the lower class Negroes. As Embree points out: "The attitudes of the aristocrat and of the poor white, starting from opposite motives, often result in the same

discrimination."[21] The ordinary vicious circle—that the actual inferiority of the Negro masses gives reason for discrimination against them, while at the same time discrimination forms a great encumbrance when they attempt to improve themselves—is, in the social sphere, loaded with the desire on the part of lower class whites, and also perhaps the majority of middle and upper class whites, that Negroes remain inferior.

This fact that a large class of whites is not much better off than the masses of Negroes, economically and culturally, while whole groups of Negroes are decidedly on a higher level—in this situation when a general segregation policy protecting *all* whites against *all* Negroes has to be justified—makes the beliefs in the racial inferiority of Negroes a much needed rationalization. We have studied the racial stereotypes from this very viewpoint in an earlier chapter.[a] We pointed out that the racial inferiority doctrine is beginning to come into disrepute with people of higher education and is no longer supported by the press or by leading public figures. As a result, racial beliefs supporting segregation are undoubtedly losing some of their axiomatic solidity even among the masses of white people, although they still play a dominant role in popular thinking.

A tendency to exaggerate the lower class traits of Negroes also is apparent. This would seem to meet the need for justification of the caste order. We are being told constantly that all Negroes are dirty, immoral and unreliable. Exceptions are mentioned, but in an opportunistic fashion those exceptions are not allowed to upset the absolutistic theses. The fact that the average white man seldom or never sees an educated Negro[b] facilitates the adherence to the stereotypes. Even people who are modern enough not to regard these traits as biological and permanent find in them reasons to keep Negroes at a social distance. The feeling may be that Negroes have capacity but that it needs to be developed, and that takes a long time—"several centuries," it is usually said. Often it is argued that the low morals and the ignorance of Negroes are so prevalent that Negroes must be quarantined. It is said that at the present time any measure of social equality would endanger the standards of decency and culture in white society. It is also pointed out that Negroes are different in physical appearance even if they have the same basic mental capacity and moral propensities. These differences are claimed to be repugnant to the white man. Occasionally this repugnance is admitted to be an irrational reaction, as in the following comment by a young, middle class man of Savannah:

> You can't get a white man in the South to call them "Mr." I don't say "Mr." because it makes me feel uncomfortable. I know that's prejudice, but it's instinctive and not reasoning.[22]

[a] See Chapter 4.
[b] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

Besides these beliefs centering around Negro inferiority, there are a great number of other popular thoughts arranged to justify social segregation. One such belief was mentioned in the opening section of this chapter —namely, that Negroes like to be separated, that they are happy in their humble status and would not like to be treated as equals. Another idea with the same function is that separation is necessary in order to prevent friction between the two groups. This thought is usually supported by the reflection that the whites "would not stand for"—or "would not *yet* stand for"—another social order. Segregation thus becomes motivated directly by the whites' will to segregate and by certain untested assumptions regarding the state of public opinion. Segregation and subordination of Negroes are also commonly supported by the consideration that they have "always been" subordinate and that it is part of the mores and social structure that they remain subordinate for a long time. A remark by a machine shop manager in Newport News will illustrate this point of view:

> I explain it in this way. A mule is made to work; a horse is made for beauty. The Negro is the working man of the South. Plenty of Negroes here are much better than the whites. But as a class that is not as true for white people about being the workers.[23]

Earlier, and to some extent even today, this direct application of the conservative principle was bolstered with a religious sanction. Race prejudice is presented as "a deep-rooted, God-implanted instinct."[24] It is often said in the South that God did not create two distinct races without having some intention in so doing. This theological sanction may be illustrated by a remark by a state official in Arkansas:

> The Negro in his place is really an assistant in the South. He's what the Lord Almighty intended him to be, a servant of the people. We couldn't get along without them.[25]

This thought that Negro subordination is part of God's plan for the world has, however, never been uncontested. The Bible, especially the New Testament, is filled with passages supporting equality, and the heart of Christian teaching is to "love thy neighbor as thyself."

Two points need to be made about the beliefs mentioned thus far: First —with the exception of the racial and theological beliefs both of which are gradually losing out—they support segregation but not discrimination, not even that discrimination which arises out of segregation. Second, they do not support a wholesale segregation, for *some* Negroes are not educationally, morally, or occupationally inferior; *some* Negroes do not want to be segregated; and *some* whites feel no repugnance to the physical appearance of the Negro. If one held these beliefs alone, therefore, and were willing to act upon them, and if he were provided with relevant facts, he would

not advocate complete segregation and would permit immediate social equality to some Negroes in their relations to some whites (at the same time he would want to restrict equality for some whites). Further, he would look forward to a time when segregation would be wiped out, and full equality permitted.[a] As this is not the attitude of most whites, we have an indication that those beliefs fundamentally are rationalizations of valuations.

It would, indeed, be possible to defend the caste order simply by arguing that it is in the white people's interests to keep the Negroes subordinate. Such a defense would be logically tight. It could not be challenged as an unscientific belief. Unlike the rationalizations mentioned in previous paragraphs, it need not look forward to an ultimate social equality as ideal. It differs from the other beliefs we have been considering also in that it demands discrimination primarily and segregation only incidentally.[26]

The remarkable thing, however, is that, *in America, social segregation and discrimination will practically never be motivated in this straightforward way as being in white people's interests.* Indeed, to judge from the discussion in all social classes of whites, and this is particularly true of the South, one is led to believe that such base and materialistic considerations never enter into their thoughts. The nearest approach one hears is oblique statements of the type: "This is a white man's country," or: "We've got to make these niggers work for us." Otherwise the matter is only touched by some liberal reformers who, interestingly enough, always try to prove to the whites that it is "in white people's own interest" to do away with this or that injustice against Negroes. I have become convinced that actually the interest motivation seldom explicitly and consciously enters the ordinary white man's mind. It is suppressed, as being in flagrant conflict with the American Creed and the Christian religion. But it is equally clear that most white people actually take good care of their interests and practice discrimination even when it is not required for segregation, and that segregation most often has the "function" of allowing a discrimination held advantageous to the whites.

Again a partial allegiance to the American Creed must be noted. Thomas P. Bailey talked about "the dissociation of a sectional personality."[27] The conflict between moral principles and actual conduct has its locus *within* persons; for this reason it will not be represented clearly in public discussion. The interests will have a part in setting the patterns of behavior and will give the emotional energy for the search for all the rationalizing beliefs we have mentioned. The Creed not only will prevent the interests from being explicitly mentioned and, indeed, from being consciously

[a] Even if one felt that the Negro was repugnant in his physical appearance to some white men, scientific knowledge could reveal to him that antipathies of this sort could be removed, and new ones avoided.

thought of, but will often qualify those rationalizing beliefs by hopes for improvement in Negro status toward greater equality and will actually also bend the behavior patterns considerably away from the crudest forms of outright exploitation.

But as yet we have not discussed the most powerful rationalization for segregation, which is the fear of amalgamation. It is this fear which gives a unique character to the American theory of "no social equality."

6. THE THEORY OF "NO SOCIAL EQUALITY"

In his first encounter with the American Negro problem, perhaps nothing perplexes the outside observer more than the popular term and the popular theory of "no social equality." He will be made to feel from the start that it has concrete implications and a central importance for the Negro problem in America. But, nevertheless, the term is kept vague and elusive, and the theory loose and ambiguous. One moment it will be stretched to cover and justify every form of social segregation and discrimination, and, in addition, all the inequalities in justice, politics and breadwinning. The next moment it will be narrowed to express only the denial of close personal intimacies and intermarriage. The very lack of precision allows the notion of "no social equality" to rationalize the rather illogical and wavering system of color caste in America.

The kernel of the popular theory of "no social equality"[a] will, when pursued, be presented as a firm determination on the part of the whites to block amalgamation and preserve "the purity of the white race."[28] The white man identifies himself with "the white race" and feels that he has a stake in resisting the dissipation of its racial identity. Important in this identification is the notion of "the absolute and unchangeable superiority of the white race."[29] From this racial dogma will often be drawn the *direct* inference that the white man shall dominate in all spheres.[30] But when the logic of this inference is inquired about, the inference will be made *indirect* and will be made to lead over to the danger of amalgamation, or, as it is popularly expressed, "intermarriage."

It is further found that the ban on intermarriage is focused on white women. For them it covers both formal marriage and illicit intercourse. In regard to white men it is taken more or less for granted that they would not stoop to marry Negro women, and that illicit intercourse does not fall under the same intense taboo.[31] Their offspring, under the popular doctrine that maternity is more certain than paternity, become Negroes anyway, and the white race easily avoids pollution with Negro blood. To prevent "intermarriage" in this specific sense of sex relations between white women and Negro men, it is not enough to apply legal and social sanctions against

[a] We have already touched the notion of "no social equality" in Chapter 3, Sections 3 and 4.

it—so the popular theory runs. In using the danger of intermarriage as a defense for the whole caste system, it is assumed both that Negro men have a strong desire for "intermarriage,"[32] and that white women would be open to proposals from Negro men, *if* they are not guarded from even meeting them on an equal plane. The latter assumption, of course, is never openly expressed, but is logically implicit in the popular theory. The conclusion follows that the whole system of segregation and discrimination is justified. Every single measure is defended as necessary to block "social equality" which in its turn is held necessary to prevent "intermarriage."[33]

The basic role of the fear of amalgamation in white attitudes to the race problem is indicated by the popular magical concept of "blood." Educated white Southerners, who know everything about modern genetic and biological research, confess readily that they actually feel an irrational or "instinctive" repugnance in thinking of "intermarriage."[a] These measures of segregation and discrimination are often of the type found in the true taboos and in the notion "not to be touched" of primitive religion. The specific taboos are characterized, further, by a different degree of excitement which attends their violation and a different degree of punishment to the violator: the closer the act to sexual association, the more furious is the public reaction. Sexual association itself is punished by death and is accompanied by tremendous public excitement; the other social relations meet decreasing degrees of public fury. Sex becomes in this popular theory the principle around which the whole structure of segregation of the Negroes—down to disfranchisement and denial of equal opportunities on the labor market—is organized. The reasoning is this: "For, say what we will, may not all the equalities be ultimately based on potential social equality, and that in turn on intermarriage? Here we reach the real *crux* of the question."[34] In cruder language, but with the same logic, the Southern man on the street responds to any plea for social equality: "Would you like to have your daughter marry a Negro?"

This theory of color caste centering around the aversion to amalgamation determines, as we have just observed, the white man's rather definite rank order of the various measures of segregation and discrimination against Negroes. The relative significance attached to each of those measures is dependent upon their degree of expediency or necessity—in the view of white people—as means of upholding the ban on "intermarriage."[b] In this rank order, (1) the ban on intermarriage and other sex relations involving white women and colored men takes precedence before everything else. It is the end for which the other restrictions are arranged as means. Thereafter follow: (2) all sorts of taboos and etiquettes in personal contacts; (3) segregation in schools and churches; (4) segregation

[a] See Chapter 4, Section 6.

[b] See Chapter 3, Section 4.

in hotels, restaurants, and theaters, and other public places where people meet socially; (5) segregation in public conveyances; (6) discrimination in public services; and, finally, inequality in (7) politics, (8) justice and (9) breadwinning and relief.[a]

The degree of liberalism on racial matters in the white South can be designated mainly by the point on this rank order where a man stops because he believes further segregation and discrimination are not necessary to prevent "intermarriage." We have seen that white liberals in the South of the present day, as a matter of principle, rather unanimously stand up against inequality in breadwinning, relief, justice and politics. These fields of discrimination form the chief battleground and considerable changes in them are, as we have seen, on the way. When we ascend to the higher ranks which concern social relations in the narrow sense, we find the Southern liberals less prepared to split off from the majority opinion of the region. Hardly anybody in the South is prepared to go the whole way and argue that even the ban on intermarriage should be lifted. Practically all agree, not only upon the high desirability of preventing "intermarriage," but also that a certain amount of separation between the two groups is expedient and necessary to prevent it. Even the one who has his philosophical doubts on the point must, if he is reasonable, abstain from ever voicing them. The social pressure is so strong that it would be foolish not to conform. Conformity is a political necessity for having any hope of influence; it is, in addition, a personal necessity for not meeting social ostracism.

T. J. Woofter, Jr., who again may be quoted as a representative of Southern liberalism, observes that ". . . unless those forms of separation which are meant to safeguard the purity of the races are present, the majority of the white people flatly refuse to coöperate with Negroes" and finds no alternative to "constant discontent and friction or amalgamation . . . , except the systematic minimization of social contacts."[35] But when Woofter has made this concession in principle to the segregation system of the South, he comes out with demands which, in practice, would change it entirely. He insists that all other forms of segregation than "those . . . which are meant to safeguard the purity of the races" be abolished, and that the administration of the system be just and considerate and, indeed, founded upon the consent of the ruled.[36]

> . . . all that most Negroes see in separation is that it is a means to degrade, an opportunity to exploit them. So long as it presents this aspect to them, it will be galling and insulting, and they will oppose it. Stated positively, this means that, in the final

[a] As we pointed out in Chapter 3, Section 4, it so happens that Negroes have an interest in being released from segregation and discrimination in a rank order just the opposite of the whites' expressed rank order of having them retained. This is a principal fact in all attempts to change and reform race relations.

analysis, if segregation is to be successfully maintained, it must not be confused with discrimination and must finally be approved by the colored people themselves as beneficial to race relations.[37]

Virginius Dabney, to quote another prominent Southern liberal, actually goes so far as to assert that "there is . . . a growing conviction on the part of a substantial body of Southerners that the Jim Crow laws should be abolished,"[38] and argues that even if and in so far as the two population groups in the South should be kept apart, "the accommodations provided for Negroes should be identical with those provided for whites."[39]

It should be noted that neither Woofter nor Dabney takes up for discussion any segregation measure higher up on the white man's rank order than those imposed by the Jim Crow legislation. There they take their stand on the time-honored formula "separate, but equal," and insist only that separation should be rationally motivated, and that the constitutional precept of equality should be enforced.

7. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE "NO SOCIAL EQUALITY" THEORY

The sincerity of the average white person's psychological identification with the "white race" and his aversion to amalgamation should not be doubted; neither should his attitude that the upholding of the caste system, implied in the various segregation and discrimination measures, is necessary to prevent amalgamation. But the manner in which he constantly interchanges the concepts "amalgamation" and "intermarriage"—in the meaning of a white woman's marriage to, or sex relations with, a Negro man—is bewildering. Amalgamation both in the South and in the North is, and has always been, mainly a result, not of marriage, but of illicit sexual relations. And these illicit sex relations have in the main been confined to white men and colored women. It is further well known that Negro women who have status and security are less likely to succumb to sexual advances from white men.[40] Deprivations inflicted upon Negroes in the South must therefore be a factor tending to increase amalgamation rather than to reduce it. Together these facts make the whole anti-amalgamation theory seem inconsistent.

But here we have to recall the very particular definition of the Negro and white "races" in America.[a] Since all mixed bloods are classified as Negroes, sex relations between white men and colored women affect only the Negro race and not the white race. From the white point of view it is not "amalgamation" in the crucial sense. From the same point of view the race of the father does not matter for the racial classification of a Negro child. The child is a Negro anyhow. Sex relations between Negro men and white women, on the other hand, would be like an *attempt* to pour

[a] See Chapter 5, Section 1.

Negro blood into the white race. It cannot succeed, of course, as the child would be considered a Negro. But the white woman would be absolutely degraded—which the white man in the parallel situation is not. She must be protected and this type of amalgamation prevented by all available means. This is, of course, only an extreme case of the morality of "double standards" between the sexes. It is slowly withering away, and white men are gradually also coming to be censured for relations with women of the other group. Still, there is in popular sentiment an abysmal difference between the two types of sexual relations.

The statement frequently made by whites in the South that there is an instinctive and ineradicable sexual repulsion between the two groups is doubtful, in view of the present genetic composition of the Negro people. Besides, if it were true, the insistence upon the whole equipage of measures for racial separation for preventing "intermarriage" would be unnecessary, even to the white Southerner.[a] Even the more general allegation that there is an inherent repulsion to personal intimacies and physical contact between the two groups is unfounded. The friendly behavior of Negro and white children untrained in prejudice and also the acceptability of physical contact with favorite servants are cases in point. There are no reasons brought forward to make it likely that there are sex differentials in this respect, so that white men should react differently from white women. This brings us to a consideration of the extent to which the anti-amalgamation doctrine is merely a rationalization of purely social demands, particularly those concerning social status.

We have already observed that the relative license of white men to have illicit intercourse with Negro women does not extend to formal marriage. The relevant difference between these two types of relations is that the latter, but not the former, does give social status to the Negro woman and does take status away from the white man. For a white woman both legal marriage and illicit relations with Negroes cause her to lose caste. These status concerns are obvious and they are serious enough both in the North and in the South to prevent intermarriage. But as they are functions of the caste apparatus which, in this popular theory, is itself explained as a means of preventing intermarriage, the whole theory becomes largely a logical circle.

The circular character of this reasoning is enhanced when we realize that the great majority of non-liberal white Southerners utilize the dread of

[a] Race prejudice has, therefore, a "function" to perform in lieu of the absence of sex repulsion.

"It is just because primary race feeling is *not* deeply based in human instinct, whereas the mating instinct *is* so based, that a secondary racial feeling, race-pride, comes in from a more developed reflective consciousness to minimize the natural instinct for amalgamation . . ." (Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* [1914], p. 43.)

"intermarriage" and the theory of "no social equality" to justify discriminations which have quite other and wider goals than the purity of the white race. Things are defended in the South as means of preserving racial purity which cannot possibly be defended in this way. To this extent we cannot avoid observing that *what white people really want is to keep the Negroes in a lower status.* "Intermarriage" itself is resented because it would be a supreme indication of "social equality," while the rationalization is that "social equality" is opposed because it would bring "intermarriage."

Not denying the partial reality of the white person's psychological identification with the "white race" and his serious concern about "racial purity," our tentative conclusion is, therefore, that more fundamentally the theory of "no social equality" is a rationalization, and that the demand for "no social equality" is psychologically dominant to the aversion for "intermarriage." The persistent preoccupation with sex and marriage in the rationalization of social segregation and discrimination against Negroes is, to this extent, an irrational escape on the part of the whites from voicing an open demand for difference in social status between the two groups for its own sake. Like the irrational racial beliefs,[a] the fortification in the unapproachable regions of sex of the unequal treatment of the Negro, which this popular theory provides, has been particularly needed in this nation because of the strength of the American Creed. A people with a less emphatic democratic *ethos* would be more able to uphold a caste system without this tense belief in sex and race dangers.

The fixation on the purity of white womanhood, and also part of the intensity of emotion surrounding the whole sphere of segregation and discrimination, are to be understood as the backwashes of the sore conscience on the part of white men for their own or their compeers' relations with, or desires for, Negro women.[41] These psychological effects are greatly magnified because of the puritan *milieu* of America and especially of the South. The upper class men in a less puritanical people could probably have indulged in sex relations with, and sexual day-dreams of, lower caste women in a more matter-of-course way and without generating so much pathos about white womanhood.[42] The Negro people have to carry the burden not only of the white men's sins but also of their virtues. The virtues of the honest, democratic, puritan white Americans in the South are great, and the burden upon the Negroes becomes ponderous.[43]

Our practical conclusion is that it would have cleansing effects on race relations in America, and particularly in the South, to have an open and sober discussion in rational terms of this ever present popular theory of "intermarriage" and "social equality," giving matters their factual ground, true proportions and logical relations. Because it is, to a great extent, an

[a] See Chapter 4.

opportunistic rationalization, and because it refers directly and indirectly to the most touchy spots in American life and American morals, tremendous inhibitions have been built up against a detached and critical discussion of this theory. But such inhibitions are gradually overcome when, in the course of secularized education, people become rational about their life problems. It must never be forgotten that in our increasingly intellectualized civilization even the plain citizen feels an urge for truth and objectivity, and that this rationalistic urge is increasingly competing with the opportunistic demands for rationalization and escape.

There are reasons to believe that a slow but steady cleansing of the American mind is proceeding as the cultural level is raised. The basic racial inferiority doctrine is being undermined by research and education. For a white man to have illicit relations with Negro women is increasingly meeting disapproval. Negroes themselves are more and more frowning upon such relations. This all must tend to dampen the emotional fires around "social equality." Sex and race fears are, however, even today the main defense for segregation and, in fact, for the whole caste order. The question shot at the interviewer touching any point of this order is still: "Would you like to have your daughter (sister) marry a Negro?"

8. Attitudes among Different Classes of Whites in the South

Certain attitudes, common in the South, become more understandable when we have recognized that, behind all rationalizing stereotyped beliefs and popular theories, a main concern of the white man is to preserve social inequality for its own sake. One such attitude is the great sympathy so often displayed in the upper classes of Southern whites toward the "old time darky" who adheres to the patterns of slavery. The "unreconstructed aristocrat" after the Civil War believed with Carlyle that "[the Negro] is useful in God's creation only as a servant";[44] he remained paternalistic; he wanted to keep the Negroes dependent and resented their attempts to rise through education; he mistrusted the younger generation of Negroes; he had a gloomy outlook on the future of race relations. But he liked the individual Negro whom he knew personally and who conformed to the old relation of master-servant—who "stayed in his place."[45]

Even today this attitude helps to determine the relations between the two groups in rural districts.[46] It particularly forms the pattern of the relationship between employer and employee on the plantation and in household service. It is also the basis for the quasi-feudal use of white character witnesses for Negro offenders, and for the great leniency in punishing Negro offenders as long as they have not intruded upon white society.[a] One is amazed to see how often, even today, white people go out of their way to help individual Negroes and how many of them still take

[a] See Chapter 26, Section 2.

it for granted that Negro cooks shall be allowed to pilfer food for their own families from the white man's kitchen. The other side of this paternalistic relation is, of course, that servants are grossly underpaid. But it is not to be denied that on this point there is—in the individual case—a break in the bitterness of caste relations. Negro beggars who make their appeal to this old relationship will often be amply and generously rewarded by white people who are most stingy in paying ordinary wages and who deprive Negro children of their share of the state appropriations for schools in order to provide for white children.[47]

This is a survival of slavery society, where friendliness is restricted to the individual and not extended to the group, and is based on a clear and unchallenged recognition from both sides of an insurmountable social inequality. There are obvious short-term gains in such relations for the Negroes involved.[48] The whites in the South always stress that they, and not the Northerners, like and love the Negro and that they provide for him. The conservative Negro leaders in the Booker T. Washington line—and occasionally the others also—have endorsed this claim by pronouncing that the "best people of the South" always could be counted among "the friends of the race."[49] "No reputable Southerner is half as bad as Senator Tillman talks," exclaimed Kelly Miller,[50] and even the most violent Negro-baiting politicians occasionally show great kindness toward the individual Negroes who are under their personal control.[51]

The paternalistic pattern becomes particularly cherished by the white men as it so openly denotes an aristocratic origin. This gives it its strength to survive. It is a sign of social distinction to a white man to stand in this paternalistic relation to Negroes. This explains why so much of the conversation in the Southern white upper and middle classes turns around the follies of Negro servants. *Their Negro dependents and their own relations to them play a significant role for white people's status in society.*

To receive this traditional friendliness on the part of Southern white upper class persons, a Negro has to be a lower class Negro and to behave as an humble servant. James Weldon Johnson observed:

> . . . in fact, I concluded that if a coloured man wanted to separate himself from his white neighbours, he had but to acquire some money, education, and culture . . . the proudest and fairest lady in the South could with propriety—and it is what she would most likely do—go to the cabin of Aunt Mary, her cook, if Aunt Mary was sick, and minister to her comfort with her own hands; but if Mary's daughter, Eliza, a girl who used to run around my lady's kitchen, but who has received an education and married a prosperous young coloured man, were at death's door, my lady would no more think of crossing the threshold of Eliza's cottage than she would think of going into a bar-room for a drink.[52]

When the Negro rises socially and is no longer a servant, he becomes a stranger to the white upper class. His ambition is suspected. He is disliked.

The exceptions are when he, in spite of not being a servant, can establish a relationship of personal dependence and when he, in this relationship, can act out a role of deference and humility. He is then in the position to confer even more of a sense of status elevation to the white partner, and he is also rewarded by more protection and favors. Moton gives us the Negro angle of this situation:

> In a much more matter of fact way the Negro uses his intimate knowledge of the white man to further his own advancement. Much of what is regarded as racially characteristic of the Negro is nothing more than his artful and adroit accommodation of his manners and methods to what he knows to be the weaknesses and foibles of his white neighbour. Knowing what is expected of him, and knowing too what he himself wants, the Negro craftily uses his knowledge to anticipate opposition and to eliminate friction in securing his desires.[53]

The present author has time and again heard white men with a local public interest praise Negro college presidents and other white-appointed Negro leaders quite beyond any reasonable deserts, merely for their humble demeanor. One influential white editor in the Deep South indulged with zest in lengthy descriptions of the particular manner in which the principal and leading teachers of a nearby Negro educational institution—of which he spoke highly—walked, talked, and laughed, and he ended by exclaiming: "They bear themselves just like old field slaves." This was, in his opinion, a praiseworthy thing. The importance attached by white people to the forms of subservience on the part of Negroes can be measured by the degree to which they show themselves prepared to give in on material interests if those forms are duly observed. This attitude on the part of influential whites puts a premium on the individual Negroes most inclined and best gifted to flatter their superior whites, even if they lack other qualities. It is apparent that this attitude still represents a main difficulty in the effort to get Negro schools and other Negro institutions manned by Negro personnel with high professional standards.

Generally speaking, this attitude on the part of upper class whites has demoralizing effects on Negroes. In employment relations the paternalistic pattern tends to diminish the Negroes' formal responsibilities. The Negro worker has less definite obligations as well as more uncertain rights. He comes to be remunerated, not only for his work, but also for his humility, for his propensity to be satisfied with his "place" and for his cunning in cajoling and flattering his master. He has ready excuses for not becoming a really good worker. He is discouraged when he tries "to work his way up." It is considered better for him never to forget his "place," and he must scrupulously avoid even any suspicion that he seeks to rise above it. If successful, he might see good reasons to conceal it. Upper class Negroes in the South have often confided to me that they find it advantageous to

simulate dependence in order to avert hostility from the whites and engage their paternalism. But even if the successful Negro puts on a show of dependence, he sometimes feels that he is less safe than if he had stayed at the bottom. A psychological *milieu* more effective in stifling spontaneous ambition is hardly thinkable.

This is one of the main roots of Negro "laziness and shiftlessness." And there are circular effects back on the whites[54]—on their own standards and on the standards they expect from the servants. Deference is bought for lowered demands of efficiency. Cable observed this long ago in his pamphlet, *The Negro Question*, and explained that:

> . . . the master-caste [in the South] tolerates, with unsurpassed supineness and unconsciousness, a more indolent, inefficient, slovenly, unclean, untrustworthy, ill mannered, noisy, disrespectful, disputatious, and yet servile domestic and public menial service than is tolerated by any other enlightened people.[55]

This might be slightly exaggerated even for his time, but it is true that patriarchalism breeds unambitious sycophants and keeps labor standards low.

This whole pattern was originally a rural pattern in the South. It fits best today into communities dominated by the semi-feudal plantation system. In the cities of the South, the tendency toward more casual and secondary relations is gradually breaking it up. But even in the cities, among the white upper classes in their relations to domestic servants, large parts of it are preserved today.

There is in the South, however, also another type of aristocratic attitude toward the Negroes, which is equally reluctant to modify the color bar but is prepared to allow the Negro people a maximum of possibilities for cultural growth and economic advancement behind the bar. This attitude, which involves a more unselfish friendliness and a truer social responsibility, not only to the individual Negro, but to the Negroes as a group, is perhaps best expressed by Edgar Gardner Murphy, who had the opinion that "there is no place in our American system for a helot class. . . . We want no fixed and permanent populations of 'the inferior.'"[56] As spokesman for the white South he declared:

> It is willing that the negro, within his own social world, shall become as great, as true, as really free, as nobly gifted as he has capacity to be.[57]

It was Murphy who coined the phrase "parallel civilizations."

This is a clear misinterpretation of the position of the majority of aristocratic white Southerners who most certainly do not look, and never have looked, upon the advancement of the Negro people with this equanimity and generosity. But it is a fair expression of what Murphy, himself, and many other white gentlemen of the region before and after him have felt.

This spirit has animated a growing number of white educators, churchmen, and politicians who, for a long time, in cooperation with Northern philanthropic organizations, have worked—"quietly and cautiously," as they always stress—to improve Negro schools and social conditions. This is also the ideological origin of modern Southern liberalism.[a] It has, from the beginning, stamped the work of the Interracial Commission. Fundamentally it is the attitude of the independent, secure, and cultured Southern upper class person who feels the social responsibility of his position and does not need to flatter his ego by the vulgar means of Negro subservience. He has good fences, and he keeps them up, but just because of this he can afford to be a good Christian neighbor to the poor Negro people around him.

He is well informed enough about social realities in his region to know also that such a policy, in the long run, is the best protection for the whites. He understands that the lower class Negroes, gradually losing their personal relations to the old master class among the whites, are a social menace and an economic liability to the South:

> But build him up. Make him sufficient in himself, give him within his own race, life that will satisfy, and the social question will be solved. The trained Negro is less and less inclined to lose himself in the sea of another race.[58]

The difference in attitude will show up significantly in relation to the upper and middle class Negroes. The ordinary white upper class people will "have no use" for such Negroes. They need cheap labor—faithful, obedient, unambitious labor. Many white Southerners will even today explain to the visitor that they prefer the Negro workers because they are tractable. When Negroes become prosperous, acquire education, or buy land, and when they are no longer dependent, this relationship is broken. But already, writing at the very beginning of this century, Page had pointed out "the urgent need . . . for the negroes to divide up into classes, with character and right conduct as the standard for elevation," and added the admonition: "When they make distinctions themselves, others will recognize their distinctions."[59] The younger school of Southern thinkers took up this idea, but had a greater trust in education and progress than Page, and a greater willingness to make it their own responsibility to do something to assist the rising Negroes in reaching, not only occasional landownership and education, but, in more recent times, to help get for them fair and equal justice, personal security and even political suffrage. Even for some of the modern liberals, however, it is apparent that they have great difficulties in freeing themselves entirely from the patronizing attitude which is the main tradition of the Southern white upper class. "I have frequently noted that with many white up-lifters the Negro is all

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 5.

right until he is up-lifted," James Weldom Johnson observed.[60] But great changes are under way. During this period of transition the ordinary upper class person, even if he is not touched by modern liberalism, will show a vacillating mind when judging the educated Negro trying to climb in social status: one moment hostility will hold sway—this Negro is "smart," "uppity," he "wants to be white"; the next moment respect becomes dominant—"this Negro is as good or better than many whites."

So far we have considered only white upper class people. It is the ambition of the white middle class people in the South to identify themselves with the aristocratic traditions of the region, and, for reasons already mentioned, their relation to the Negroes is crucial to the achievement of their ambition. They will hasten to inform even the casual acquaintance of their relationship to slave owners and of any old Negro servants—particularly if by any stretch of the definition a servant can be called "mammy." In their public contacts many middle class whites try to manifest benevolent condescension toward Negroes. On the other hand, some of them are in competition with Negroes, and many of them are able to rise economically only by exploiting Negroes. Too, their memories include fewer recollections of friendly contacts with Negroes than earlier fears and competitive attitudes. The attitudes of this white middle class toward the rising Negroes are decidedly less friendly than are those of the white upper class, and their attitudes even toward the subservient lower class Negroes are decidedly conflicting.

Lower class whites in the South have no Negro servants in whose humble demeanors they can reflect their own superiority. Instead, they feel actual economic competition or fear of potential competition from the Negroes. They need the caste demarcations for much more substantial reasons than do the middle and upper classes. They are the people likely to stress aggressively that *no* Negro can *ever* attain the status of even the *lowest* white. The educated Negro, the Negro professional or businessman, the Negro landowner, will particularly appear to them "uppity," "smart" and "out of place." They look on the formation behind the color line of a Negro upper and middle class as a challenge to their own status. They want all Negroes kept down "in their place"—this place is to them defined realistically as under themselves. They are naturally jealous of every dollar that goes to Negro education. They will insist that the caste etiquette be enforced upon the rising Negroes as well as upon lower class Negroes.[61]

The lower class whites have been the popular strength behind Negro disfranchisement, and are the audience to which the "nigger-baiting" political demagogue of the South appeals. They create the popular pressure upon the Southern courts to deny the Negroes equal justice. They form the active lynching mobs; they are responsible also for most of the petty

outrages practiced on the Negro group. They are the interested party in economic discrimination against Negroes, keeping Negroes out of jobs which they want themselves. But even in their case, the general attitude of hatred toward Negroes collectively is modulated by occasional friendly relations with individual Negroes, and the most brutish of them have had some contact with the humanitarianism of the American Creed and of Christianity.[62]

The unfriendly attitudes on the part of the lower class whites become, as we have seen in earlier chapters, especially detrimental to the Negroes since upper and middle class whites are inclined to let them have their way. Plantation owners and employers, who use Negro labor as cheaper and more docile, have at times been observed to tolerate, or even cooperate in, the periodic aggressions of poor whites against Negroes. It is a plausible thesis that they do so in the interest of upholding the caste system which is so effective in keeping the Negro docile.[63] It is also difficult to avoid the further reflection that the hatred of lower class whites toward Negroes shows significant signs of being partly dislocated aggression arising from their own social and economic frustrations in white society:

> Although the poor white's antagonism toward the wealthy white is denied expression by considerations of economic and legal expediency, Negro dependents of hated landowners or other employers, offer vulnerable targets for suppressed antagonisms. The poor white utilizes every opportunity for asserting "white supremacy," partly because in his case it is a very meager and uncertain superiority, partly as an outlet for the hatreds generated by the social system of the South. Thus, the Negro is the target of the poor white not only because he is a competitor but also because of the Negro's identification with the upper-class white group of the South.[64]

Thus, in the three-cornered tension among upper class whites, lower class whites, and Negroes, the two white groups agree upon the Negroes as a scapegoat and the proper object for exploitation and hatred. White solidarity is upheld and the caste order protected. This hypothesis—if it could be confirmed by further research—would tend to raise some hope of a change for the better. Displaced aggression is less stable and less deep-rooted than other aggression. It cannot only be eradicated by such economic developments and reforms as mitigate the primary frustration, but it can also be redirected more easily by education.

The bitterness of racial feelings on the part of whites seems to be slowly declining, and the lower classes are probably following the trend. But still they are apparently the most prejudiced. There is one big factor of change, however, which works directly on the lower classes of whites. If labor unions should spread and increasingly come to include both white and Negro workers in a common solidarity, this development would revolutionize the situation. The author has seen how a quick and radical change in racial attitudes has been brought about in some places where the tie of

a common organization has materialized. Aggression has been redirected and a certain amount of labor solidarity has taken the place of white solidarity. The labor movement is, however, still in its infancy in the South. The existing segregation in industrial work will, further, have the effect that, in many industries, trade unions will be white and will actually become an additional barrier against the intrusion of Negro labor, which will certainly not tend to diminish the urge for social discrimination but rather strengthen it. In the fields where there is actual competition for jobs, racial friction will remain one of the principal hindrances to successful unionization, and the odds are that it will often become successful only by eliminating the Negroes.[a] Negro labor will, however, hardly be driven out entirely from Southern industry. As we have shown, there will probably be an increasing pressure for jobs from the side of Negroes driven out of agriculture. If Negroes also become organized and if the collaboration between different unions increases, this might eventually prepare the ground for a growing labor class solidarity. There are great uncertainties involved in this problem and much will depend upon the educational forces in the South and the ideological trend in the whole nation.

9. Social Segregation and Discrimination in the North

At the outbreak of the Civil War, most Northern states were nearly as far removed in time from actual slavery in their own realms as the Southern states are now. Their Negro populations were comparatively small in numbers. But slavery was a living institution within the nation. Though conditions were rather different in different Northern states, the general statement can be made that wherever Negroes lived in significant numbers they met considerable social segregation and discrimination. The Abolitionist propaganda and the gradual definition of emancipation as one of the main goals of the War undoubtedly tended to raise the status of Negroes somewhat. Still, one of the difficulties congressional leaders had in passing the Reconstruction legislation was the resistance in some Northern states where people found that they would have to change not only their behavior but also their laws in order to comply with the new statutes.[65]

In the social field—as in breadwinning, but not as in politics and justice—the North has kept much segregation and discrimination. In some respects, the social bars were raised considerably on account of the mass immigration of poor and ignorant Negroes during and immediately after the First World War. In the latter part of the 'twenties this movement was perhaps turned into a slight tendency in the opposite direction, namely, an appreciation of "The New Negro."[b] After a new wave of unpopularity during the first years of the depression, there seems again to have been a slow but

[a] See Chapter 18, Sections 3 and 4.
[b] See Chapter 35, Section 8.

steady development toward less social discrimination during the era of the New Deal. But quite apart from these uncertain fluctuations during the last couple of decades, it is obviously a gross exaggeration when it is asserted that the North is getting to be "like the South."

Even in the realm of social relations it is of importance that the average Northerner does not think of the Negroes as former slaves. He has not the possessive feeling for them and he does not regard their subservience as a mark of his own social status. He is, therefore, likely to let the Negroes alone unless in his opinion they get to be a nuisance. Upon the ideological plane the ordinary Northerner is, further, apparently conscious that social discrimination is wrong and against the American Creed, while the average Southerner tries to convince himself and the nation that it is right or, in any case, that it is necessary. The white newspapers in the North ordinarily ignore the Negroes and their problems entirely—most of the time more completely than the liberal Southern press. But when they have to come out in the open on the Negro problem, they usually stand for equality. Back of this official attitude, of course, is the fact that most Northerners are not in direct contact with Negroes. The patterns of social discrimination in the South have originally formed themselves as rural ways of life. In the North the rural sections are, and have always been, practically free of Negroes. Even in the big cities in the North, where there are substantial Negro populations, only a small part of the white population has more contacts with Negroes.

Lacking ideological sanction and developing directly contrary to the openly accepted equalitarian Creed, social segregation and discrimination in the North have to keep *sub rosa*. The observer finds that *in the North there is actually much unawareness on the part of white people of the extent of social discrimination against Negroes.* It has been a common experience of this writer to witness how white Northerners are surprised and shocked when they hear about such things, and how they are moved to feel that something ought to be done to stop it. They often do not understand correctly even the implications of their own behavior and often tell the interviewer that they "have never thought of it in that light." This innocence is, of course, opportunistic in a degree, but it is, nevertheless, real and honest too. It denotes the absence of an explicit theory and an intentional policy. In this situation *one of the main difficulties for the Negroes in the North is simply lack of publicity.* It is convenient for the Northerners' good conscience to forget about the Negro.

In so far as the Negroes can get their claims voiced in the press and in legislatures, and are able to put political strength behind them, they are free to press for state action against social discrimination. The chances are that they will meet no *open* opposition. The legislatures will practically never go the other way and attempt to Jim Crow the Negroes by statutes.

The federal Reconstruction legislation has taken better root in the North. When the Supreme Court in 1883 declared the Civil Rights Bill of 1875 unconstitutional, most states in the Northeast and Middle West, and some in the Far West, started to make similar laws of their own, while the Southern states, instead, began to build up the structure of Jim Crow legislation.[a]

With the ideological and legal sanctions directed *against* them, social segregation and discrimination have not acquired the *strength, persuasiveness or institutional fixity* found in the South. Actual discrimination varies a good deal in the North: it seems to be mainly a function of the relative number of Negroes in a community and its distance from the South. In several minor cities in New England with a small, stable Negro population, for instance, social discrimination is hardly noticeable. The Negroes there usually belong to the working class, but often they enter the trades, serve in shops, and even carry on independent businesses catering to whites as well as to Negroes. They belong to the ordinary churches of the community, and the children attend the public schools. Occasional intermarriages do not create great excitement. They fit into the community and usually form a little clique for themselves beside other cliques, but nobody seems to think much about their color. The interracial situation in such a city may remain even today very similar to that of Great Barrington, Massachusetts, some sixty years ago, which W. E. B. Du Bois portrays in his recent autobiography, *Dusk of Dawn.*[66]

In the bigger cities, even in New England, the conditions of life for the Negroes have probably never been so idyllic. Since the migration beginning in 1915, the status of Northern Negroes has fallen perceptibly.[67] In the Northern cities nearer the Mason-Dixon line there has always been, and is even today, more social segregation and discrimination than farther North.

One factor which in every Northern city of any size has contributed to form patterns of segregation and discrimination against Negroes has been residential segregation, which acts as a cause as well as an effect of social distance. This fundamental segregation was caused by the general pattern for ethnic groups to live together in Northern cities. But while Swedes, Italians, and Jews could become Americanized in a generation or two, and disperse themselves into the more anonymous parts of the city, Negroes were caught in their "quarters" because of their inescapable social visibility; and the real estate interest kept watch to enforce residential segregation. With residential segregation naturally comes a certain amount of segregation in schools, in hospitals, and in other public places even when it is

[a] See Section 4 of this chapter; see also Chapter 29. Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont have no civil rights laws expressly relating to race and color. But there is little social discrimination against their small Negro populations.

not intended as part of policy. Personal contacts become, as a matter of course, more or less restricted to Negro neighborhoods. As the Negro sections grew during the northward migration, it became more and more possible for Negroes to have their entire social life in Negro neighborhoods, and white people became conditioned to look upon this as a natural and desirable situation.

In this process white Southerners who also moved northward have played a crucial role. To make a manager of a hotel, a restaurant, or a theater interested in trying to keep Negroes out of his establishment, it is not necessary that more than a tiny minority of customers object, particularly if they make a scene. Time and again I have, in my interviews with managers of various public places in the North, been told this same story: that they, themselves, had no prejudices but that some of their customers would resent seeing Negroes around. The fact that most Negroes are poor and residentially isolated and, hence, do not patronize white places often, and the further fact that upper class Negroes, who could afford to, abstain voluntarily from visiting places where they are afraid of being embarrassed, solidifies the situation. I have also noticed that Negroes often have an entirely exaggerated notion of the difficulties they would meet. They are conditioned to suspect discrimination even when there is no danger of it. So they abstain from going to places where they actually could go without any trouble. When once this pattern is set by themselves the result might later be discrimination when some Negro tries to break it.

The migrating Negroes have probably been even more influential in spreading Southern patterns in the North than the Southern whites. The low cultural level and poverty of the average Southern Negro stand out even more when he comes North where general standards are higher. If he comes without any other education, he is at least thoroughly trained in the entire ceremonial system of scraping his foot, tipping his hat, and using self-abasing vocabulary and dialect, and generally being subservient and unobtrusive in the company of whites. A Negro recently from the South is characterized as much by his manners and bearing as by his racial traits. He might get some ideas of a new freedom of behavior in the North and actually try his best to behave as a full man; and he might, indeed, easily succeed in becoming aggressive and offensive. But fundamentally it takes a radical reeducation to get him out of his Southern demeanor or the reaction to it. For a long time after migrating he will invoke discrimination by his own behavior. The submissive behavior of lower class Southern Negroes is usually not appealing at all to the white Northerner, who has not been brought up to have a patronizing attitude and who does not need it for his own self-elevation. The white Northerner also dislikes the slovenliness and ignorance of the Southern Negro. Thus the Negro often seems only strange, funny or repulsive to the white Northerner.

Even the poor classes of whites in the North come to mistrust and despise the Negroes. The European immigrant groups are the ones thrown into most direct contact and competition with Negroes: they live near each other, often send their children to the same schools, and have to struggle for the same jobs. Obviously attitudes among immigrants vary a good deal. Recent immigrants apparently sometimes feel an interest solidarity with Negroes or, at any rate, lack the intense superiority feeling of the native Americans educated in race prejudice. But the development of prejudice against Negroes is usually one of their first lessons in Americanization. Because they are of low status, they like to have a group like the Negroes to which they can be superior. For these reasons, it should not be surprising if now, since new immigration has been restricted for a considerable time, a study of racial attitudes should show that the immigrant groups are on the average even more prejudiced than native Americans in the same community.

I have an impression that the resentment against Negroes in the North is different from that in the South, not only in intensity, but also in its class direction. It does not seem to be directed particularly against the rising Negroes. In the more anonymous Northern cities, the Negro middle and upper classes do not get into the focus of public resentment as in the South. More important is the Yankee outlook on life in which climbing and social success are generally given a higher value than in the more static Southern society, and the ambitious Negro will more often be rewarded by approval and even by admiration, while in the South he is likely to be considered "smart," "uppity" or "out of his place."

Otherwise, the North is not original in its racial ideology. When there is segregation and discrimination to be justified, the rationalization is sometimes a vague and simplified version of the "no social equality" theory of the South which we have already discussed. It is continuously spread by Southerners moving North and Northerners who have been South, by fiction and by hearsay. But more often the rationalizations run in terms of the alleged racial inferiority of the Negro, his animal-like nature, his unreliability, his low morals, dirtiness and unpleasant manners. The references and associations to amalgamation and intermarriage are much less frequent and direct. This does not mean that the Northerner approves of intermarriage. But he is less emotional in his disapproval. What Paul Lewinson calls "the post-prandial non-sequitur"—if a Negro eats with a white man he is assumed to have the right to marry his daughter—practically does not exist in the North.

In this situation, however, not only is intermarriage frowned upon, but in high schools and colleges there will often be attempts to exclude Negroes from dances and social affairs. Social segregation is, in fact, likely to appear in all sorts of social relations. But there is much less social

segregation and discrimination than in the South: there is no segregation on streetcars, trains, and so on, and above all, there is no rigid ceremonial governing the Negro-white relations and no laws holding the Negro down. The fact that there are no laws or defined rules of etiquette is sometimes said to cause friction and bitterness because some whites in the North will want Negroes to keep away from them, and Negroes cannot tell which whites these are. But the absence of segregating laws also keeps the system from being so relatively locked as in the South. It allows Negroes to be ambitious. And since Negroes in the North have the vote and a reasonable amount of justice in court, and since they can go to good schools and are, in fact, forced to get at least an elementary education, they can struggle for fuller social equality with some hope.

CHAPTER 29

PATTERNS OF SOCIAL SEGREGATION AND DISCRIMINATION

1. Facts and Beliefs Regarding Segregation and Discrimination

In the preceding chapter we were primarily interested in the attitudes displayed in connection with segregation and discrimination and the popular concepts and theories advanced as motivation. Here we shall describe the actual patterns of social segregation. This we shall not be able to do in the detail we should like, partly because it is impossible to cover the whole of social life in a single chapter and partly because no studies have been made which quantify the extent of social segregation in any of its different forms or local variations.[1]

There is no little divergence of opinion as to the extent of segregation and discrimination in the interpersonal sphere. The literature tends to emphasize "interesting" individual experiences, which may be exceptions. In eliciting *opinions* as to the extent of segregation and discrimination, there exists enough divergence of interest to result in the collection of *beliefs* rather than *facts*. These beliefs are important data in themselves, but are no substitute for the facts. Both whites and Negroes in the South have a tendency to exaggerate the general scope and the local stability of segregation and discrimination patterns, to magnify unduly some occasional experience of their own and claim it as "characteristic." This varies considerably, however, depending upon political leanings and personality. The conservative white Southerner will often generalize what is merely occasional in his community and so also will the radical or dissatisfied Negro. The conservative Negro leader and his white friends in interracial work often show the contrary tendency to play down existing segregation and discrimination and to play up small favorable occurrences (that white and colored students meet for a discussion; that a prominent Negro, thanks to the influence of his white friends, can travel in a Pullman sleeper; that a supper is secretly shared). The lower class Negro in the South and in the North will usually be found to have vague and sometimes incorrect ideas of what he, as a Negro, can do and cannot do outside the narrow groove where he lives and where often his chief rule is merely that he

has to be subservient in every contact with whites and try to "keep out of trouble." As already mentioned, the white people in the North often do not realize the scope of actual segregation and discrimination against Negroes, while Negroes in the North, particularly in the upper and middle classes, have beliefs which are wrong in the other direction. These deviations of belief from reality are interesting and worth study. But, to repeat, statements purporting to describe general patterns of segregation and discrimination without systematic quantitative evidence—whether offered spontaneously or after questioning—may be expected to be deficient as descriptions of actual conditions.

We shall consider social segregation and discrimination under three categories: personal, residential, institutional. As we have seen, segregation in interpersonal relations is partly basic to most other forms of segregation and discrimination. Because of the strategic place it holds in the minds of white people, we shall consider it as the peak category of the rank order of social segregation and discrimination.[a] Much of what we shall have to say about the personal sphere is peculiar to the South and is unknown to Northerners. Residential and institutional segregation, on the other hand, are found in the North almost as much as in the South. Residential segregation is treated before institutional because it facilitates the latter by creating "natural" groupings of Negroes separate from whites.

2. Segregation and Discrimination in Interpersonal Relations

The ban on intermarriage has the highest place in the white man's rank order of social segregation and discrimination. Sexual segregation is the most pervasive form of segregation, and the concern about "race purity" is, in a sense, basic. No other way of crossing the color line is so attended by the emotion commonly associated with violating a social taboo as intermarriage and extra-marital relations between a Negro man and a white woman.[2] No excuse for other forms of social segregation and discrimination is so potent as the one that sociable relations on an equal basis between members of the two races *may possibly* lead to intermarriage.

Intermarriage is prohibited by law in all the Southern states, in all but five of the non-Southern states west of the Mississippi River, but only in Indiana among the Northern states east of the Mississippi.[3] In practice there is little intermarriage even where it is not prohibited, since the social isolation from the white world that the white partner must undergo is generally intolerable even to those few white people who have enough social contact and who are unprejudiced enough to consider marriage with Negroes.[4] It is said that—as a reaction to the white attitude and as a matter of "race pride"—the Negro community also is increasingly likely to

[a] See Chapter 3, Section 4, and Chapter 28, Section 6.

ostracize mixed couples. This reaction is, however, much more pronounced toward illicit relations involving Negro women, and it has there the good reason that such relations are mostly of an exploitative type.

Extra-marital relations between Negro men and white women are all but nonexistent in the South.[5] If an incident occurs and is detected, it is either punished by the courts as rape, or the Negro is lynched, or he is run out of town. (The white woman is also run out of town if it becomes known that her action was voluntary.) In the North the sanctions are not so violent. There seems to be some small amount of interracial sexual experimentation in bohemian and radical circles involving Negro men and white women. There are also some white prostitutes catering to Negro men. The extent of extra-marital relations between white men and Negro women is a subject on which investigators give divergent estimates,[a] but there can be no doubt that it is a fairly common phenomenon throughout the South[6] and the North. Though tolerated, it is far from favored by public opinion and is usually clandestine.[b] It is also increasingly of a casual type. The old custom of white men keeping Negro concubines is disappearing in the South[7] and is rare in the North.

The prohibition of intermarriage in most states and the concomitant lack of effective legal protection—for claiming inheritance and alimony, for example—undoubtedly tend to decrease the deterrents on white men to take sexual advantage of Negro women. Miscegenation will thereby be kept on a higher level than under a system where the interests of Negro women and their mixed offspring were more equally protected.[c] The practically complete absence of intermarriage in all states has the social effect of preventing the most intimate type of acceptance into white society: if Negroes can never get into a white family, they can never be treated as "one of the family." Perhaps more important in the South as an effect of the lack of sanction for intermarriage is the regimentation of the whole gamut of contacts between adult members of the two races so that these contacts will be as impersonal as possible. This is commonly called "the etiquette of race relations."[8] This ceremonious attitude in race relations is especially striking when we consider that the American tends to be unceremonious in all his other relations. Although the racial etiquette

[a] See Chapter 5, Section 6.

[b] According to Jenks, one Southern (Louisiana) and two Northern (Nevada and South Dakota) states have laws against cohabitation and concubinage between members of the two races, as well as laws against intermarriage. (Albert E. Jenks, "The Legal Status of Negro-White Amalgamation in the United States," *The American Journal of Sociology* [March, 1916], p. 671.)

[c] This is the chief argument—besides general considerations of civil liberty and equality—of Negro spokesmen who want to have the ban on intermarriage abolished (See Walter White, *Rope and Faggot* [1929], pp. 77 ff.)

serves other functions,[a] its relation to the primary sex taboo is important enough to justify the ranking of the specific items of the etiquette according to their degree of intimacy or of closeness to the sex relation.[b] This would also seem to be the order in which any violation of the etiquette is likely to call forth excited condemnation and violent retaliation and, therefore, also the order of rigidity in the etiquette. The rank order and the correlation between degree of intimacy of the contact and degree of emotion caused by violation of the etiquette are hypotheses developed from impressionistic observations of white people's attitudes and behavior. The hypotheses are applied only to the South, but parallels in the North will be noted.

The relations which, outside of the purely sexual, are most intimate and are never tolerated between Negroes and whites in the South are those which imply erotic advances or associations, if the male partner is a Negro. Any attempt at flirtatious behavior in words or deeds will put him in danger of his life. Negro-white dancing as a heterosexual social activity with strong erotic associations is forbidden in the South whether the Negro partner be male or female. Even in the North interracial dancing seldom occurs. In high schools and colleges Negro students are usually expected not to attend social affairs where dancing is part of the entertainment. The same has been true of social functions given by mixed trade unions. If Negroes are allowed to come, they are often expected to bring partners of their own group. One can observe in the North that, when interracial dancing occurs, it intentionally has the significance for the white participants of demonstrating racial emancipation. The taboo against swimming together in the South is equally absolute, apparently for the reason that it involves the exposure of large parts of the body. In the North the taboo against using the same beaches or swimming pools is ordinarily also strong, though several public beaches, for instance, around New York, are open to both races.

The main symbol of social inequality between the two groups has traditionally been the taboo against eating together. It should at the outset be observed that, generally, the taking of meals in America has little social importance and is almost barren of all the rituals and ceremonial niceties commonly preserved in the older countries. In spite of frequent assertions

[a] One of the most important of the other functions of the etiquette in the South is to give whites—no matter how low in the social scale—a sense of power and importance. This "gain" has been excellently analyzed by John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 98 ff.

[b] This rank order is an expansion of the top layers of the rank order we proposed in Chapter 3, Section 4. It will be remembered that we placed the sexual sphere on top in the rank order of caste-defined relations, with the "social" sphere following it. This chapter gives consideration to these two orders, as previous chapters have considered the lower orders (justice, political and economic relations).

to the contrary, eating in the South when only white people are present is generally an even simpler affair than in the North. But in interracial relations eating together has been infused with a tremendous social significance. "In the South, the table, simple though its fare may be," explains a Southerner, "possesses the sanctity of an intimate social institution. *To break bread together involves, or may involve, everything.*"[9] And, of course, even the less ritualized American eating is, in a degree, an equalitarian activity; persons are forced to exhibit equal susceptibility to physiological needs, and if they are to sit facing each other for half an hour or so, they are inevitably thrown into social conversation.

For whites and Negroes to eat together would call forth serious condemnation in the South. It is apparent—and well in accord with our hypothesis—that if a Negro man and a white woman should eat together, the matter would be even more serious. There are, however, occasions even in the South when upper class Negroes participate in interracial conferences—including the purely business or professional conferences—where eating takes place. In such cases the Negro participants are sometimes served in separate rooms or at separate tables in the same room. Even if there is only one Negro present and the conference is in a private home, the rule is that he must be served at a separate table. Liberal white educators visiting Negro colleges sometimes take part in common meals, and they will not always be served at a separate table. Through this interracial activity, on a high level of social and cultural respectability, the eating taboo is slowly being broken down. People in the South generally know that such things are happening, and they are not as excited about it as they would have been a generation ago. In the case of eating incidental to the ordinary routines of life—such as in factory lunch rooms—Negroes regularly eat in separate rooms or have to wait until the whites have finished. Drinking is apparently less of an issue than eating. It is not considered quite so intimate since it requires less time, and it does not demand that participants sit down. At any rate, it would seem to be slightly less taboo for Negroes and whites to drink together than to eat together. For a white woman to take part in an interracial drinking party would, however, be worse even than eating with Negroes and it practically never occurs.

In the North, the taboo against interracial eating and drinking is weak: Negroes and whites will often be found eating together in restaurants, conferences and factory lunchrooms. Negro servants are practically never invited to eat at the same table with their white employers, but this is only slightly less true of white servants. In some Northern *milieus* it does seem to be considered objectionable for whites to invite Negroes to their houses for social gatherings, but the few occurrences seldom result in any reaction more violent than gossip.[10]

Next in order in degree of intimacy and in degree of reaction aroused

by violation is a series of relations which involve at least one of the elements associated with eating: satisfying physiological needs, sitting down together, and engaging in sociable conversation. In public places, where there is a chance that whites and Negroes will want to use the facilities at the same time, there are separate rest rooms, toilets and drinking fountains all over the South. The use of the same toilet and drinking fountain does occur sometimes where it is not feasible to build separate facilities, as in some gas stations, factories and households. This indicates that the taboo is not quite so strong as in the case of eating and drinking. Separate rest rooms, toilets, and drinking fountains are not maintained in the North.

Perhaps allied with the prohibition against the use of the same facilities for the satisfaction of physiological needs is the prohibition against the participation of Negroes in activities where the human body is used. Dancing and swimming together are, as we have mentioned, especially taboo because of their erotic associations, but the prohibition extends—in a greater or less degree—to the various other sports and games.[a] The prohibition would seem to be less effective where social relations are least necessary—in group or professional sports. Also the prohibition does not extend to children, who often play together freely until puberty—a fact which shows the relation of this phase of the etiquette to sex. Playing together of children is reported to have been much more common in earlier times than now and extended then into the upper classes. Now it is increasingly becoming a lower class pattern both among whites and among Negroes. The Negro upper class families want to spare their children from early interracial experiences.[11] There is no general prohibition against Negroes taking part in sports and games in the North, although individual whites often refuse to play with Negroes. With the increase in sports and the greater preparation of Negroes for them, there has been an increase in interracial participation in them.

The conversation between whites and Negroes in the South is heavily regimented by etiquette. In *content* the serious conversation should be about

[a] Sometimes the prohibition against mixed sports is extended to mixed equipment. Charles S. Johnson (*Patterns of Negro Segregation*, prepared for this study [1943], p. 274) records the case of a principal of a white high school refusing to accept a basketball belonging to his school after the team of a Negro high school had borrowed it.

The principle of "not to be touched" extends in many directions. In a county in Georgia, where the Negro schoolhouses were dilapidated, I observed that in two cases there were good schoolhouses nearby which earlier had been used for white children but had been left vacant as a result of the recent centralization of the white school system. Upon my inquiry why they were not used for the Negro children, I was informed that this was impossible, for these reasons: in the one case, that there was a nearby old white graveyard and that white people in the community would not like to think of the barefoot Negro children passing by the graves and perhaps even treading upon them, and, in the other case, that the schoolhouse was used for occasional elections and that the white voters could not possibly be asked to enter a house used as a Negro school for casting their votes.

those business interests which are shared (as when a white employer instructs his Negro employee or when there is a matter to be discussed concerning the welfare of the Negro community) or it should be polite but formal inquiry into personal affairs (either a white or a Negro person may inquire as to the state of the other's health or business). There can generally be no serious discussion—although there can be the banter of polite conversation or joking—about local or national politics, international relations, or "news," on the one hand, or about items connected with the course of daily life, such as the struggle for existence or the search for pleasure, on the other hand. There are exceptions, of course. Some white women use their Negro servants as sources of gossip and local news.

The conversation is even more regimented in *form* than in content. The Negro is expected to address the white person by the title of "Mr.," "Mrs.," or "Miss."[12] The old slavery title of "Master" disappeared during Reconstruction entirely and was replaced by "Boss" or sometimes "Cap" or "Cap'n." From his side, the white man addresses the Negro by his first name, no matter if they hardly know each other, or by the epithets "boy," "uncle," "elder," "aunty," or the like, which are applied without regard to age. If he wishes to show a little respect without going beyond the etiquette, he uses the exaggerated titles of "doctor," "lawyer," "professor," or other occupational titles, even though the term is not properly applicable.[a] The epithets "nigger" and "darky" are commonly used even in the presence of Negroes, though it is usually well known that Negroes find them insulting. That there has been a slight tendency for this pattern to break down is shown by the use of the Negro's last name without title in many recent business relations. Too, a few salesmen will actually call Negroes by their titles of "Mr.," "Mrs.," and "Miss" in order to gain them as customers. Also significant is the fact that upper and middle class whites in the Upper South are beginning to call upper class Negroes by these titles.[b]

[a] In a small city I found the greatest difficulties in locating the principal of the Negro high school, whom I wanted to see (let us call him Mr. Jim Smith). The white people I asked had never heard about a Negro with that name and did not seem to know even where the Negro high school was. When I finally found him and told him about the difficulties I had met, he inquired: "Whom did you ask for?" I answered: "Mr. Jim Smith." He laughed and told me: "You should have asked for 'Professor Smith' or just for 'Jim'—sure, everybody knows me in this town."

[b] They are more inclined to use the titles of "Mr.," "Mrs.," and "Miss" for Negroes in private than in public. There is a deep and admittedly irrational aversion to using these titles on the part of some upper class whites. An educated Negro in a Southern Negro university was approached by an upper class white lady during the depression to ask for another Negro by his first name (let us call him Sam) who had charge of dispensing emergency relief for Negroes in the locality. Her interlocutor replied, "Sam who?" She did not know his last name and said, "You know who I mean, the nigger who sits at this desk and gives out the emergency relief. I want some relief for some of my niggers." Her interlocutor, wanting to tease her, went on: "Do you mean Mr. So-and-so or Mr. So-and-so," hoping to

Another aspect of the form of conversation between Negroes and whites is the rule that a Negro must never contradict the white man nor mention a delicate subject directly. That is, a good part of the Negro's conversation must be circumlocutory rather than direct. This is much less common now than formerly, but it has not disappeared. The *tone* of the conversation also was formerly fixed and still remains so to a certain extent: the Negro was to use deferential tones and words;[13] the white man was to use condescending tones and words. If the white man became angry or violent in his speech, the Negro could not reciprocate.

The apparent purpose of this etiquette of conversation is the same as that of all the etiquette of race relations. It is to provide a continual demonstration that the Negro is inferior to the white man and "recognizes" his inferiority. This serves not only to flatter the ego of the white man, but also to keep the Negro from real participation in the white man's social life. Conversation with other people is the principal way to participate in the lives of those people, to understand each other completely. In the North, the caste etiquette of conversation does not exist. That is, whites do not expect it. When Southern Negroes act it out they usually embarrass the average Northerner more than they please him. Where Negroes and whites meet socially on the same class level in the North (which they do relatively seldom because of residential and institutional segregation) they actually may come to understand one another. Southern whites have a myth that they "know" their Negroes. This is largely incorrect, and in their franker moments white Southerners will admit that they feel that Negroes are hiding something from them. They cannot know Negroes as they know other human beings because in all their contacts Negroes must, or feel they must, pose in a framework of etiquette. "What the white southern people see who 'know their Negroes' is the role that they have forced the Negro to accept, his caste role."[14] The racial etiquette is a most potent device for bringing persons together physically and having them cooperate for economic ends, while at the same time separating them completely on a social and personal level.

Closely allied to the forms of speech are the forms of bodily action when whites and Negroes appear before one another. For a Negro to sit down in the same room with a white person is not taboo, but it may be done usually

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get her to say "mister" in designating a colored person. She finally broke down in tears and said, "Oh, please give me some relief for my niggers," but she refused to "mister" anybody.

Robert R. Moton, the late principal of Tuskegee, cites the case of "a distinguished Episcopal clergyman, a friend of mine and by everyone recognized as a friend of the race, [who] used to say that he always felt like laughing whenever he heard the principal of Hampton Institute, where he was a frequent visitor, refer to a coloured man as 'Mr.' To him, he said, it sounded just like saying 'Mr. Mule': it seemed no less ridiculous." (*What the Negro Thinks* [1929], p. 195.)

only at the request of the white person. Since the invitation is often not extended, it frequently happens that Negroes are standing in the presence of whites, even those who are of the same or lower socio-economic status as themselves. In conferences and public places, Negroes sit down without invitation, but there is usually segregation: Negroes will sit at one end of the conference table, or in the rear of or on one side of a courtroom, or in the balcony or gallery of a theater which they are permitted to enter. In the North, Negroes, when they are allowed to enter, take seats much in the same manner that whites do. Whatever segregation in seating there is in the North would seem to have a voluntary or class basis rather than a strict caste basis as in the South. Many theaters in the North, however, refuse to let a Negro enter, or, if they are in a state with a civil rights law, they try to find some excuse to make him stay away voluntarily. Where seats are reserved, the management will often try to sell seats to Negroes in a special section. Changing seats on the part of individual whites also will sometimes isolate Negroes in a Northern theater.

In general, the American is a great and indiscriminate hand-shaker. The ceremony is to him a symbol of friendliness and basic human equality. The partial taboo against shaking hands with Negroes is, therefore, significant. Formerly there was practically no hand-shaking between members of the two races except for that occurring when a Negro house servant would greet his returning master. The taboo is much less strong now, but the relation—in so far as it exists—is, as we have mentioned, entirely one-sided: the white man in the South may offer to shake hands with the Negro, but the Negro may not offer his hand to the white man. A white woman practically never shakes hands with a Negro man. The greeting of the Negro has traditionally been a bow and a removal of the hat. This, too, has become much less demanded. While talking, the traditional pattern was for the Negro to remain with hat off, with eyes directed on the ground, and with foot scraping the ground to "demonstrate" that he was incapable of standing and talking like a human being. This pattern, too, has rapidly been going into discard.

If he had to come into a white man's house, the rule was, and still is in most parts of the South, that the Negro must enter by the rear door. Since Negroes could plan this activity in advance they often avoided it by avoiding the need to talk to a white man in his house (by deliberately waiting until he came out to the street, or by going to his office, or by calling to him from the street or from the front yard). This etiquette form still exists for the most part, but many exceptions could be cited. Also, the increase in the number of houses without back doors is helping to break down the pattern. When a white man enters a Negro's house, he cannot be expected to show any signs of respect. He will enter without knocking; he will not remove his hat; he will not stand up when a Negro woman enters the room; he

may even insist that the Negro occupants stand in his presence (the old-fashioned Negro will not presume to sit down anyway unless asked). There is little occasion for a white man to enter a Negro's house: if he wants to see a Negro he will send for him or call him on the telephone, or drive in his car to his house and blow the horn. White salesmen have found that they gained business if they showed Negroes some respect in their own homes, so they quite frequently violate the etiquette.[a] Practically nothing of any phase of the etiquette of bodily action, or of that associated with entering the houses of members of the other race, exists in the North.

In an essential and factual sense the cumbersome racial etiquette is "un-American." American civilization has received its deepest imprints from immigrants from the lower classes in Europe who were not much versed in the intricacies and shibboleths of upper class ceremonial behavior in the old countries and who often consciously resented them on ideological grounds. The equalitarian Revolutionary *ethos* also endorsed simple and unaffected manners. Aristocratic travelers from England and other countries during colonial times complained about the Americans not caring about social distinctions of birth and breeding. This is part of the historical background for the European (and American) myth of the Americans as being particularly "materialistic."[15] European observers with democratic leanings, from de Tocqueville on, have, on the contrary, found the lack of mannerisms of the typical American, his friendly, spontaneous, and equalitarian ways of meeting other human beings, a great charm of the new continent. The symbols a culture acquires are no accident and no forms are of more intrinsic importance than those of human contacts and relations. All these observers have, therefore, related this trait to the democratic and Christian *ethos* of the American Creed. When democratic European countries are said to become "Americanized," one of the positive elements in this change has commonly been recognized to be the throwing off of the inherited class etiquette, which is no longer functional in a modern democracy, and the breaking up of class isolation. Against this background,

[a] In violating the etiquette of caste, the white salesmen simply follow the normal etiquette of the society as a whole. Thus, the term "etiquette" as we have been using it is quite different from the term as understood by the man in the street, especially when applied to the behavior of the white man in the intercaste relation. But the term has a technical sociological meaning, and we are using it in this sense. The sociological term refers to all the formalisms which accompany interpersonal relations, regardless of whether or not they make for pleasant relations and increased mutual respect. But even when used by sociologists the term has the popular connotation of being a means of accommodation, and because of this the term is not the best one that could be used to describe the formalisms of Negro-white contacts: it is hard to see how the deliberate insults of the white man performing the actions required by the etiquette add to the "accommodation" of the intercaste relation.

the caste etiquette in America stands out as a glaring contradiction. It indicates the split in the American's moral personality.

The entire etiquette of interpersonal relations between Negroes and whites in the South is a systematic, integrated structure which serves to isolate the two groups from each other and to place the Negro group in an inferior social status. It formerly regimented practically every personal contact between members of the two races. It is breaking down to a certain extent—especially in those relations which are least intimate and most removed from the sexual.[16] It seems to be breaking down for two reasons: first, some Negroes are rising in class position so that many are above a good proportion of the whites, and class etiquette is chiseling in on caste etiquette; second, modern physical conditions (such as the absence of back doors, through which Negroes are supposed to enter whites' houses) prevent the full performance of an etiquette which developed under other conditions. Both of these conditions are more prevalent in the city than in the country. Coupled with the generally higher degree of secularization of attitudes in the city, they cause the etiquette to be somewhat less rigid in the city than in the country. As implied in the first cause of change, the etiquette is less rigidly applied to upper class than to lower class Negroes. This would not seem to be true, however, where a need was felt to reaffirm the caste line: when, for example, a white person of any class (usually the lower class) feels that a certain Negro or group of Negroes is getting too "uppity." Thus, while in everyday practice the upper class Negro need not abase himself in accordance with the full requirements of the etiquette, he must never be allowed to consider his privilege as a right. Even so, the very existence of the privilege is a sign of change.

Allied with change in the etiquette is uncertainty in its performance. Despite the basic uniformity of the pattern as we have described it, there has always been a great deal of local variation in detailed aspects of the etiquette.[a] This local variation *per se* should not, in most cases, be given too great importance in the study of the racial etiquette. The common denominator is not a stock of basic specific rules of behavior, but rather their common purpose, which is to isolate and subordinate the Negro group. One specific rule or another can equally well fill this function. But with increasing mobility of both Negroes and whites in the South it is becoming difficult for Negroes to follow the local requirements, and whites are in many cases unclear as to what they should expect or demand. Other influences which we have noted as modifying the etiquette also add to the uncertainty

[a] This variation has been a result not only of different local traditions, but also of the number and proportion of Negroes in the community, and the presence or absence of other minority groups. In many Texas communities where there are Negroes, their status is raised by reason of their small number and of the presence of a Mexican minority. In other Texas communities, prejudice against Negroes is very strong.

of its performance from both Negro and white points of view. While such a situation works hardships for individual Negroes—even to the extent of causing them to become innocent victims of police or court punishment or of mob violence—over a span of years it can be seen as a factor helping to break down the etiquette and to raise the status of Negroes in the attitudes of whites. Change from this source has occurred in the Border states to a greater extent than in the rest of the South.

Another area of life in which the patterns of segregation and discrimination are put under a strain is that in which they come in conflict with basically human inclinations. Negroes sometimes appear before whites in situations which evolve feelings of pity and sympathy. The inclinations of whites in these situations would be to help the Negroes were it not for the informal etiquette and formal rules of segregation. Of course, one of the effects of segregation and discrimination is to minimize the number of situations in which Negroes in desperate need of help appear before whites. Too, the etiquette is often so defined as to permit the white person to help the Negro. For example, the mistress could always administer any sort of bodily assistance to faithful servants who needed it without fear of violating the etiquette, whereas normally no white woman could touch a Negro man. There have always been situations, however, in which suffering Negroes have appeared before whites who were forbidden to help them because of the etiquette or formal rules. It is probable that, with the growing impersonality of the employer-servant relation and with the increase in the number of casual contacts, these situations are increasing in number. In such situations, the etiquette or rule is sometimes violated, sometimes not. We may cite illustrations of two types of these situations, where the etiquette was not violated, in order to bring out more fully the nature of the problem:

> The other day I saw a good-looking, modest-appearing, well-dressed, but frail colored woman with a child in her arms attempt to board a street-car. She was about to fail. The conductor started to help her, then looked at the other passengers and desisted. His face was a study. Prejudice won; but it was a Pyrrhic victory.[17]

> When I was working as a truant officer I was bitten by a dog. I went to a private physician. I had to go to the head of the welfare department (F.E.R.A.). The white woman in charge was very nice. She was as nice as white people can be. She sent me to the hospital. When I got there I had to wait a long time, and then I was sent to a white intern. He took me in a little room on one side. It looked like a storeroom. He told me to sit down and said that he wanted to look at my leg. My leg had a bandage on it, and the tape was stuck to the skin. He started tearing the bandage off. I asked him if he didn't have some ether to loosen the bandage with, and he said he didn't have any and that he could get it off without getting any. I was in this small room with the door shut. After he got the bandage off he refused to give me

the Pasteur treatment. I got up and walked out. He followed me and called me everything but a child of God. He certainly did scare me. It is against the law to refuse the Pasteur treatment, but I never got it.[18]

Whether the rule or etiquette will be broken will obviously depend on the nature of the situation, on the presence or absence of white spectators and on the personality of the white man. A study of the effects on the white man's attitudes toward the etiquette and toward his own behavior would shed a great deal of light both on the nature of the etiquette and on human nature. Negroes seldom meet the problem since they are supposed to render assistance to whites under almost all circumstances. This fact only increases their bitterness when whites fail to reciprocate. There are certain situations, however, in which Negroes have the choice of refusing to aid a white person in need because they can avoid doing so without fear of detection. Such a revenge situation provides a subject for study parallel to that mentioned for whites. Even apart from the revenge motive, a Southern Negro, who is passing through territory where he is not known, has good reasons not to stop and offer his services, as he never knows what might come of it in the end. If the white person is a woman, he would be taking a considerable risk in offering to help her.

Conditions are sufficiently different in the *North* to lead us to regard the pattern of segregation and discrimination in interpersonal relations as having a different basis. It certainly does not cover the whole gamut of interpersonal relations but is spotty: it restricts marriage, but does not forbid it; it restricts dancing and swimming together but not eating and drinking together; it does not affect speech and body actions during speech. The Northern pattern could hardly be called an etiquette because it does not require that Negroes act in a special way toward whites or that whites act in a special way toward Negroes. Rather it takes the form of institutionalizing and rendering impersonal a limited number of types of segregation: Negroes are requested not to use bathing beaches reserved for whites; Negroes are requested not to patronize certain dance halls, hotels, and restaurants, and things are made unpleasant for them if they do. There is no organized force to stop intermarriage in most Northern states —whether legal or illegal. The pressure against intermarriage is simply, but effectively, the unorganized one of public opinion. Too, there seems to be little connection in motivation between the types of relations in which there is segregation and discrimination. It would seem much more reasonable in the North than in the South to accept the belief that Negroes are dirty as the main reason why they are not liked on the same bathing beaches. This belief is more natural for Northerners, since there is quite a bit of physical touch contact between Negroes and whites in the South and little in the North. Southerners tie up the bathing prohibition to the sexual prohibition—which Northerners less frequently do. Economic rea-

sons seem to be important ones for demanding housing segregation in the North and are also more freely expressed, while in the South economic considerations are subordinated to, and all the specific segregations rationalized by, the closely interwoven theory of social equality.

For the most part, the etiquette of interpersonal relations between the races does not exist in law. In the South there are laws to segregate Negroes in institutions and to restrict interpersonal relations, but there are no laws to govern the behavior of Negroes and whites meeting on the street or in the house. The etiquette is enforced, however, to an extent by the police and the courts in the South as well as by public opinion and physical violence: policemen in the South consider the racial etiquette as an extension of the law, and the courts recognize "disturbance of the peace" as having almost unlimited scope.[a] The main sanctions are those of individual or group opinion and violence. Deprived of police and court protection, and usually dependent economically on white opinion, the Negro cannot take the risk of violating the etiquette.

3. HOUSING SEGREGATION

If sexual segregation, or rather the concern about "race purity," is basic to most other forms of segregation psychologically—in so far as it gives them a main rationalization and an emotional halo which they otherwise should not have—residential segregation is basic in a mechanical sense. It exerts its influence in an indirect and impersonal way: because Negro people do not live near white people, they cannot—even if they otherwise would—associate with each other in the many activities founded on common neighborhood. Residential segregation also often becomes reflected in uniracial schools, hospitals and other institutions. It is relatively more important in the North than in the South, since laws and etiquette to isolate whites from Negroes are prevalent in the South but practically absent from the North, and therefore institutional segregation in the North often has only residential segregation to rest upon. For this reason, we shall emphasize the Northern situation in this section.

Housing segregation necessarily involves discrimination, if not supplemented by large-scale intelligent planning in the housing field of which America has as yet seen practically nothing. Housing segregation represents a deviation from free competition in the market for apartments and houses and curtails the supply available for Negroes. It creates an "artificial scarcity" whenever Negroes need more residences, due to raised economic standards or increased numbers of the Negro population. It further permits any prejudice on the part of public officials to be freely vented on Negroes without hurting whites. This last mentioned discriminating factor is more

[a] See Chapter 25, Section 1.

potent in the South than in the North, where race prejudice is less solidified and where Negroes have the vote. It is in Southern cities that Negroes receive few neighborhood facilities, such as paved streets, adequate sewage disposal, street lights, and so on. Rapid increases in the Negro population are much more prevalent in Northern cities, and residential segregation—by its curtailment of housing supply available for Negroes—prevents a proportional rise in housing facilities. In some neighborhoods of Northern cities housing conditions for Negroes are actually as bad as, or worse than, Southern ones.[a]

The available statistics refer directly to the actual concentration of Negroes in certain areas of a city and not to segregation in the sense of forced concentration. A sample study of 64 cities[19] in 1930 showed that 84.8 per cent of the blocks were occupied exclusively by whites. On the other hand, only 4.9 per cent of the blocks were completely occupied by nonwhite persons, some of whom were not Negroes. The percentage of blocks containing both whites and nonwhites was 10.3—over twice as large as the percentage of blocks having no whites. A large part of this lack of complete concentration is due to the fact that the data refer to entire blocks and not to individual houses. In many mixed blocks Negroes are concentrated in the backyards. Even so, we should not take it for granted that the concentration of Negroes is complete.[20] Most of the mixed areas, however, are cases of whites living in "Negro areas" and not of Negroes living in "white areas."

Residential concentration tends to be determined by three main factors: poverty preventing individuals from paying for anything more than the cheapest housing accommodation; ethnic attachment; segregation enforced by white people. Even in the absence of enforced segregation Negroes would not be evenly distributed in every city because as a group they are much poorer than urban whites. This applies with particular strength to the masses of Northern Negroes who are newly arrived from the South. Negroes would also be likely to cluster together for convenience and mutual protection. In the North this is again particularly true of Southern-born Negroes who have been brought up in a strict ethnic isolation enforced by the Jim Crow laws and the racial etiquette in the South. The three causal factors are closely interrelated. Even if initially the tendency on the part of whites to enforce segregation on Negroes was but slight, the actual concentration of a growing population consisting of poor uneducated Negroes

[a] See Chapter 16, Section 6. The discussion in this section will refer to cities. The residence of Negro tenants, sharecroppers, and farm laborers is controlled by the farm owners, who usually keep their Negroes separate from their whites when they have them both on the same land. Segregation operates on Negro farm owners in much the same way as it operates on city Negroes—they are seldom allowed to buy the more desirable land or land surrounded by white-owned property. (See Chapter 11, Section 6.)

in the slum sections would soon call forth more active intentions on the part of the whites to force segregation upon this group. These tendencies would become strongest in the middle and upper class areas. Generally it is true both in the South and in the North that segregation as a factor in concentrating the Negro population is a pattern that is most characteristic of higher class areas and is much weaker or totally absent in slum areas. Neither actual concentration nor segregation proper is restricted to Negroes. All the various national groups of immigrants have, for reasons of economy and ethnic cohesion, formed "colonies" in the poorer sections of Northern American cities. As long as they were poor and strange in language and other cultural traits, this concentration has been strengthened by segregation on the part of the older Americans. If this factor has not been noticed so much, the reason is not only that the first two factors were usually sufficient as causes, but also that the situation did not become permanent. For when the members of a national group become so "assimilated" that they no longer regard members of their ancestral group as closer than persons of the dominant group in the society—when they feel themselves to be more American than Italian, Polish, or Czech—they tend to disregard ethnic affiliation in seeking a residence and to pay more attention to their personal needs and their ability to pay rent. Within two or three generations, it has usually been the practice for families which stemmed from a certain section of Europe to forget about their ethnic background in seeking residences and to have the means of paying higher rents in almost the same proportion as Old Americans.

Negroes meet greater difficulties in rising economically, educationally and socially. But even apart from this, they are kept as aliens permanently. Otherwise Negroes who live in a Southern community and whose ancestors have been living there for several generations would no longer be living together, apart from the whites. Northern Negroes would similarly be expected to be distributed throughout Northern cities, rather than forced to remain in the Black Belts, if they were treated as members of ethnic groups from Europe are treated. Negroes who migrated from the South to the North in the last twenty-five years would be expected to live together because they are poor and because they feel less out of place among their own kind. But they would also be beginning to disperse themselves throughout the white population if it were not for segregation. Only Orientals and possibly Mexicans among all separate ethnic groups have as much segregation as Negroes.[21]

From this point of view residential segregation may be defined as residential concentration which, even though it were voluntary at the beginning or caused by "economic necessity," has been forced upon the group from outside: the Negro individual is not allowed to move out of a "Negro" neighborhood. The question whether the average Negro "wants" to live

among his own kind then becomes largely an academic one, as we have no means of ascertaining what he would want if he were free to choose. In this sense practically all the statistically observed Negro housing concentration is, in essence, forced segregation, independent of the factors which have brought it about.

Southern whites do not want Negroes to be completely isolated from them: they derive many advantages from their proximity. Negroes, on their side, are usually dependent on whites for their economic livelihood, directly or indirectly. For these reasons, there are few all-Negro towns or villages in the South, and whites have never seriously endorsed the back-to-Africa and Kansas movements.[22] In some Southern cities, especially in the older ones, Negroes usually live in side streets or along alleys back of the residences of whites and sometimes in rear rooms of the whites' homes themselves—a practice surviving from slavery, when the slaves lived in shacks in the rear of the master's house. In such cases there is also segregation, but the segregation is based on what we may term "ceremonial" distance rather than spatial distance. Ceremonial distance occurs in Northern cities, too, when Negro servants live in or near the white employer's home.[a] In Northern cities, when Negroes were a small element in the population in numbers and in proportion and when they were practically all servants in the homes of wealthy whites (as they still are in many Northern cities outside of the largest ones), they also lived scattered throughout the city near the residences of their employers.

If, however, a Southern city received most of its Negro population after the Civil War, and if a Northern city has a large number of Negroes, such a city will tend to have large areas in which Negroes live separated in space from the whites. In other words, there are roughly two patterns of housing segregation in cities: one is found in Northern cities where there are few Negroes and in old Southern cities where the successors of local slaves make up the bulk of the Negro population; there Negroes live in practically all parts of the city but only along certain poorer streets or alleys. The other is found in Northern cities with a fairly large Negro population and in Southern cities where the proportionate bulk of the Negroes has come in since the Civil War; there Negroes live in a limited number of distinct Black Belts. This is a rather gross classification of types of residential segregation in cities: both patterns are to be found in the same city—and there are many variations.[23] In fact, as Woofter says:

[a] Ceremonial distance is regularly called into existence to preserve spatial segregation on the borderline between white and Negro neighborhoods. It becomes especially apparent when the accidents of city growth have brought wealthy white neighborhoods in close physical proximity to poor Negro neighborhoods. For example, New York's Harlem is adjacent to the Columbia University area and Chicago's small Near North Side Negro community is within a block or two of the Gold Coast.

> Each city has a pattern of its own determined by the percentage of Negroes in the total [population], the distribution of Negro employment, the distribution of the areas where property is within the means of colored families, the attitude of the people toward segregation, and the rate of expansion of business and manufacturing sections.[24]

The geography of a city also helps determine the pattern of segregation. In a flat city like Chicago, which expanded in practically all directions from a single center, Negroes are concentrated in the slums around the central business district and their better class neighborhood stretches out like a spoke from this slum base.[25] In a hilly city like Cincinnati, Negroes are concentrated in the lowlands. In a long, narrow city like New York, Negroes tend to live in a section of the strip, and the transportation lines go right through the Negro section. This latter variation should not lead us to believe that there is no segregation in such a narrow city as Manhattan, although some Negroes would like to believe that there is none. Claude McKay is in error when he says:

> Segregation is a very unfortunate word. It has done much harm to the colored group by paralyzing constructive thinking and action. Not by the greatest flight of the imagination could Negro Harlem be considered as a segregated area. Besides the large percentage of whites who do business there, quite a number of them also reside there in the midst of the colored people. Harlem is more like a depressed area. In my last book I compared it to the servant quarters of a great estate. The servants live on a lower level. But they are not segregated.[26]

To depict more clearly the character of residential segregation in American cities, Appendix 7 describes the pattern of Negro residences in selected cities.

4. Sanctions for Residential Segregation

Probably the chief force maintaining residential segregation of Negroes has been *informal* social pressure from the whites. Few white property owners in white neighborhoods would ever consider selling or renting to Negroes; and even if a few Negro families did succeed in getting a foothold,[a] they would be made to feel the spontaneous hatred of the whites both socially and physically. The main reason why informal social pressure has not always been effective in preventing Negroes from moving into a white neighborhood has been the tremendous need of Negroes to move

[a] The first foothold of Negroes in a white neighborhood is often achieved by accident: a piece of property is deeded to an absentee landlord who has no interest in the neighborhood; a white real estate agent wishes to make the large profit involved in selling to harassed Negroes; one of the local white residents may not be morally integrated into the neighborhood (the strategic 3500 block on fashionable Grand Boulevard in Chicago was supposed to have been first opened to Negroes by a white prostitute who wished to retaliate on her neighbors for exposing her to the police).

out of their intensely overcrowded ghettos and their willingness to bear a great deal of physical and mental punishment to satisfy that need.

The clash of interests is particularly dramatic in the big cities of the North to which Negro immigrants from the South have been streaming since the First World War. When white residents of a neighborhood see that they cannot remove the few Negro intruders and also see more Negro families moving in, they conjure up certain stereotypes of how bad Negro neighbors are and move out of the neighborhood with almost panic speed. For this reason Negroes are dangerous for property values,[a] as well as for neighborhood business, and all whites are aware of this fact. In describing the succession of Negroes down the South Side in Chicago, an informant said, "This was not an incoming of the Negroes, so much as an outgoing of the whites. If one colored person moved into the neighborhood, the rest of the white people immediately moved out."[27]

Such a situation creates a vicious circle, in which race prejudice, economic interests, and residential segregation mutually reinforce one another. When a few Negro families do come into a white neighborhood, some more white families move away. Other Negroes hasten to take their places, because the existing Negro neighborhoods are overcrowded due to segregation. This constant movement of Negroes into white neighborhoods makes the bulk of the white residents feel that their neighborhood is doomed to be predominantly Negro, and they move out—with their attitudes against the Negro reinforced. Yet if there were no segregation, this wholesale invasion would not have occurred. But because it does occur, segregational attitudes are increased, and the vigilant pressure to stall the Negroes at the borderline is kept up.[b]

Various organized techniques have been used to reinforce the spontaneous segregational attitudes and practices of whites in keeping Negro residences restricted to certain areas in a city. These include local zoning ordinances, restrictive covenants and terrorism.

The earliest important legal step to enforce segregation was taken in 1910 when an ordinance was passed in Baltimore, Maryland, after a Negro family

[a] If white property owners in a neighborhood rush to sell their property all at once, property values naturally are hurt. After the transition to Negro occupancy is made, however, property values rise again at least to the level justified by the aging and lack of improvement of the buildings. No statistical study has been made which shows unequivocally that Negroes pay higher rents for equivalent apartments but this seems to be the opinion of all those—including white real estate agents—who have looked into the matter. Certain conditions, such as the lowering of rents to white tenants when there is a threat of Negro succession and the conversion into smaller apartments to meet the needs of Negro tenants, make it extremely difficult to measure the changes in rent that accompany a shift from white to Negro occupancy. (See Chapter 16, Section 6.)

[b] Negroes also get into neighborhoods which have deteriorated because industry, crime, or vice are moving in.

had moved into what had previously been an all-white block. Many Southern and Border cities followed suit,[28] after state courts upheld zoning ordinances. Even after the Louisville ordinance was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States in 1917,[29] certain cities put into effect other segregative laws designed to get around the decision. A more comprehensive and severe denunciation of segregation by law was made in the 1927 decision of the Supreme Court in the New Orleans case, but even as recently as 1940 the North Carolina State Supreme Court had to invalidate a residential segregation ordinance passed in Winston-Salem.

When the courts' opposition to segregation laws passed by public bodies became manifest, and there was more migration of Negroes to cities, organized activities on the part of the interested whites became more widespread. The restrictive covenant—an agreement by property owners in a neighborhood not to sell or rent their property to colored people for a definite period—has been popular, especially in the North. The exact extent of the use of the restrictive covenant has not been ascertained, but: "In Chicago, it has been estimated that 80 per cent of the city is covered by such agreements . . ."[30] This technique has come up several times for court review, but, because of technicalities, the Supreme Court has as yet avoided the principal issue of the general legal status of the covenants.[31] If the Court should follow up its action of declaring all local laws to segregate Negroes unconstitutional by declaring illegal also the private restrictive covenants, segregation in the North would be nearly doomed, and segregation in the South would be set back slightly.

In addition to restrictive covenants, neighborhood associations have served as organized extra-legal agencies to keep Negro and white residences separated. The devices employed by them range all the way from persuasion to bombing. The Washington Park Court Improvement Association in Chicago shifted its function from planting shrubbery and cleaning the streets to preventing Negroes from getting into the neighborhood, when the Black Belt began to expand in the direction of this community.[32]

But in spite of the white vigilance on the frontiers of the Negro districts, the line never gets absolutely fixed in all directions. Now and then a small break occurs, and the Negro community gains a little more space. Here and there some upper class Negroes succeed in moving out to a white neighborhood without causing a wholesale removal of the whites in the area or in building houses on vacant land at the outskirts of cities. If such cities expand, it is possible that these few Negroes will find themselves part of a large white neighborhood—at least in the North. Meanwhile more Southern Negroes move in and the pressure accumulates behind the main front line. The crowded lower class Negro ghetto remains alongside industry, vice and crime centers.[33] Because recent immigrants from Europe, especially

Italians and Jews, have been less prejudiced—and because they are poor and segregated themselves—foreign colonies also become their neighbors. But they are isolated from the main body of whites, and mutual ignorance helps reinforce segregative attitudes and other forms of race prejudice.

Opposed to this hypothesis has been the Southerner's theory that minimizing contacts means minimizing conflicts. In this particular respect, this theory is the less rational in view of the fact that the main distributive effect of segregation is to keep the few well-educated upper and middle class Negroes out of white neighborhoods. Segregation has little effect on the great bulk of poor Negroes except to overcrowd them and increase housing costs, since their poverty and common needs would separate them voluntarily from the whites, just as any European immigrant group is separated. The presence of a small scattering of upper and middle class Negroes in a white neighborhood would not cause conflict (unless certain whites were deliberately out to make it a cause of conflict), and might serve to better race relations. The fact is neglected by the whites that there exists a Negro upper and middle class who are searching for decent homes and who, if they were not shunned by the whites, would contribute to property values in a neighborhood rather than cause them to deteriorate. The socially more serious effect of having segregation, however, is not to force this tiny group of middle and upper class Negroes to live among their own group, but to lay the Negro masses open to exploitation and to drive down their housing standard even below what otherwise would be economically possible.

As pointed out in an earlier chapter,[a] recent government policies have, on the whole, served as devices to strengthen and widen rather than to mitigate residential segregation. The Federal Housing Administration, in effect, extends credit to Negroes only if they build or buy in Negro neighborhoods and to whites only if they build in white areas which are under covenant not to rent or sell to Negroes. This policy of the F.H.A. is the more important since it has been an ambition and accomplishment of thi agency to make housing credit available to low income groups. The effec has probably been to bring about an extension of such "protection" to areas and groups of white people as were earlier without it. The United States Housing Authority and its local affiliates are not so intentionally restrictive. But they have been forced by public opinion to build separate housing projects for whites and Negroes, and even where they have mixed projects, they have been forced, in all but one or two instances, to keep the Negroes at one end and the whites at the other. Negroes have, however, had reasons to be grateful to the U.S.H.A. for the relatively large share of low cost housing this agency has given them

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 6.

even if it has not been effective in opening up new areas for the congested Negro populations in American cities.

The local government authorities have, for natural reasons—both in the South, where the Negroes are numerically strong but disfranchised, and in the North, where they have votes but are small minorities—rather sided with the white segregationalists. In the big Northern cities that have been the goal of the Negro migration northward, they have had the special and potent reason that they do not want to encourage more Negro migration. This reason—which, of course, in consideration of the Negro vote, has not often been announced openly, though, as the author has observed, it is freely admitted in conversation—has had a fateful influence on social policy generally. Even administrators, who on general principles have deplored the standards of public service in the Negro slums, have been inhibited from going in wholeheartedly for reform. They must tell themselves that even without reform the Negroes are much better off in Northern cities than in the South, and that any improvement is likely to attract more Negro migration. This attitude makes them also generally reluctant to enter into large-scale planning, and they use their influence to discourage even the Negro leaders from considering broad programs for social improvement. It is one of the factors which explains why both Negro and white leaders and experts in large Northern cities are found to be so barren of constructive ideas on policies in so far as Negro problems are concerned.[a]

This also explains why, in practice and often in discussion, the only two alternatives have been segregation and free competition. It must be emphasized that segregation *can* be "positive" or "negative." The average individual white's attitude is, of course, only negative: he wants to be "protected" from Negro neighbors.[b] But as long as the Negro population in a city is increasing—or even if it were stationary but the Negro group for some reason, such as higher income or an increased proportion of persons of marriageable age, were in need of more housing facilities—it is an irrational and, indeed, impossible policy in the long run only to "protect" white areas against Negro intrusion. The result will be "doubling up," scandalous housing conditions for Negroes, destroyed home life, mounting juvenile delinquency, and other indications of social pathology which are bound to have their contagious influence upon adjoining white areas. And inevitably the Negros will finally break through somehow and in some degree—this

[a] There is another problem after areas for Negro housing have been attained. This is the problem of finding capital to invest in such housing. (See Chapter 16 and Appendix 7.)

[b] In the opinion poll taken for this inquiry by *Fortune* magazine, from 77 to 87 per cent of the informants in various regions of America expressed themselves in favor of residential segregation of Negroes, based either on legislation or on social pressures. Only 10 to 19 per cent were against segregation. (See: Eugene L. Horowitz, "Race Attitudes," Table XX, in Otto Klineberg [editor], *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published.)

eventual Negro invasion of white areas must actually be considered to be an insufficient "self-healing" which in Northern cities takes the place of intelligent political action. The impossible situation which prevails is being studied in excellent "ecological" research—a branch of social science and a direction of scientific interest which is itself a by-product of big cities' being allowed to grow without any plan. But in the practical field there is great lack of courage and interest. It must be stressed that if white people insist on segregation—and if society is assumed not to tolerate a socially costly sub-standard housing for Negroes—*the logical conclusion is that, in a planned and orderly way, either areas of old housing now inhabited by whites or vacant land must be made available for Negroes.* The F.H.A. has tended to tighten the present impossible situation. The U.S.H.A. has not been in a position to change it. The local city authorities avoid going into the problem. And the Negroes themselves are inarticulate and void of constructive ideas.

It seems of urgent importance that residential segregation and all the connected problems of Negro housing become the object of scientific research with more practical vision than hitherto. The general structure of this complex of problems is clear-cut and ready for social engineering. There is material available for the detailed statistical analysis needed for local planning. The field of conflicting and converging interests is easily mapped in every community. The strategic time for this planning work is now. After the War a great increase in private and public building is likely, since housing construction has been moribund for several years, and popular needs seemed about to cause a building boom when the War started and diverted the construction industries' efforts into the field of defense housing. Also, the War will leave in its wake a tremendous need for public works and private investment to prevent a new and more devasting world depression. To be maximally useful this housing boom should be planned in advance.[a] And it would be prudent not to overlook segregation and the abominable housing conditions for Negroes. Gross inequality in this field is not only a matter for democratic American conscience, but it is also expensive in the end.

5. THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF INSTITUTIONAL SEGREGATION

While there is much segregation of Negroes in the North in public facilities and private commercial establishments—a segregation which we term "institutional," for convenience, to distinguish it from both personal and residential segregation—there is a tremendous difference between the North and the South in this form of segregation. The difference arises out of two facts.

[a] The National Resources Planning Board is now planning for post-war housing construction as a public works program.

One is that institutional segregation in the South is supported and, indeed, inspired by an elaborate racial etiquette and a clearly perceived popular theory of "no social equality." The etiquette is, as we have shown, for the most part entirely lacking in the North, while the theory of "no social equality" is perceived only vaguely and is not invested with the same deadly seriousness as in the South. For this reason institutional segregation fits in more "naturally" in the South, while in the North it is constantly challenging other elements of popular ideologies and customs. The North is more secularized in its way of thinking, and life is more anonymous. It is to a greater degree bent upon technical efficiency, which means that the economic irrationality of institutional segregation, when it does occur, is likely to appear more striking. This last mentioned point becomes the more important since the North, being more law-abiding and having to take the Negro vote into consideration, will usually have to carry on segregation without much financial compensation from discrimination. The second great cause of difference is that in the South institutional segregation is in the laws of the states and of the local communities and thus allows for few individual exceptions. In the North institutional segregation, arising out of personal distaste for Negroes and as a consequence of residential segregation, is entirely extra-legal and often illegal.

Every Southern state and most Border states have structures of state laws and municipal regulations which prohibit Negroes from using the same schools, libraries, parks, playgrounds, railroad cars, railroad stations, sections of streetcars and buses, hotels, restaurants and other facilities as do the whites.[a] In the South there are, in addition, a number of sanctions other than the law for enforcing institutional segregation as well as etiquette. Officials frequently take it upon themselves to force Negroes into a certain action when they have no authority to do so. The inability of Negroes to get justice in the courts extends the powers of the police in the use of physical force. Beating and other forms of physical violence may be perpetrated by almost any white man without much fear of legal reprisal.[b] Equally important sanctions are the organized threat and the risk of Negroes getting the reputation of being "bad" or "uppity," which makes precarious all future relations with whites. The Negro's reliance on the tolerance of the white community for his economic livelihood and physical security makes these threats especially potent.

As long as the Supreme Court upholds the principle established in its decision in 1883 to declare the federal civil rights legislation void, the Jim

[a] See Chapter 28, Section 9. For a survey of these laws and of the extent of the variations in law and judicial procedure in these matters, the reader is referred to Charles S. Mangum's recent book, *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940).

[b] See Part VI.

Crow laws are to be considered constitutional. It is a notorious fact, however, that institutional segregation as it is actually practiced is the basis for gross discrimination, and this is unconstitutional. To prove discrimination before a court is always difficult, and such judicial procedures are expensive and can hardly be undertaken by private individuals. The Negro defense organizations, and primarily the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, because of their limited funds—and also because they do not wish to call forth a new revolutionary movement in the South—have restricted themselves to attacks on selected strategic points. In the legal situation described, and particularly since the Supreme Court in recent years has become increasingly prepared to observe the intent of the Reconstruction Amendments, the defenders of the legal rights of Negroes go from victory to victory.[a]

It is often maintained—even by Negro intellectuals—that the fight for the Negroes' civil rights and against discrimination in institutional segregation is doomed to be fruitless, as the inequalities have much deeper roots and are upheld by other sanctions than law. This criticism, however, overlooks several points. The courts in the Southern states want to have their decisions upheld and the state authorities want to have their policies covered by law as far as possible. It is noticeable everywhere in the South that even the threat of legal action puts a certain restraint on institutional discrimination. And court decisions are increasingly exposing the Southern statutes backing the system of institutional segregation as unconstitutional. *This system is thus gradually losing its legal sanctions and increasingly depending upon extra-legal or illegal sanctions.* The parallel with disfranchisement should be observed.[b]

The dilemma of Southern whites in this field is accentuated by the fact that segregation, which is the proclaimed purpose of the Jim Crow legislation, is financially possible and, indeed, a device of economy only as long as it is combined with substantial discrimination. If institutional segregation should have to be made constitutional in practice—that is, by giving truly equal though separate facilities to both groups—it would in most cases turn out to be financially ruinous. Under the onslaught of legal action, which we shall have to expect to increase rather than to abate, and in the general trend toward legality which is visible in the South, this fundamental dilemma will become increasingly exposed and the stability of the entire system of institutional segregation will be gradually undermined. A factor which, on the contrary, works toward stabilizing the Southern Jim Crow system is the increasing amount of vested interest which the higher strata of the Negro community are acquiring in its preservation. The dilemma of the Negro business and professional class is that the segregation they are

[a] See Chapter 39.

[b] See Chapter 23, Section 1

fighting against affords them the monopolistic basis of their economic existence.[a]

In the North the Jim Crow laws are absent. In addition, eighteen states have civil rights acts roughly similar to the kind which the federal government was prohibited from having by decision of the Supreme Court in 1883.[34] These laws are not rigorously enforced, and there are all sorts of ways of getting around them. But their very existence makes institutional segregation a qualitatively different problem in the North than in the South, and the scope of these laws is continually being increased.[35] Physical violence, organized threats, giving Negroes a bad reputation, extensions of police and court powers and laws are, further, seldom used in the North as sanctions in enforcing institutional segregation.[b] The main sanctions of institutional segregation in the North are individual protest and refusal to serve. The individual protester or refuser may be a white store or organization manager, a white customer, or even—at some risk of legal reprisal —a white public official. These sanctions are much weaker than any others used in the South.

Yet there is institutional segregation in the North, and its effects are far from negligible. Many institutions—such as schools, parks, playgrounds, stores, theaters, other places of amusement—have a community basis, and residential segregation is, therefore, an effective means of getting separate units for Negroes. Sometimes certain devices are employed artificially to increase the separating power of residential segregation. School boundaries, for example, are usually set at the boundary of the white and Negro neighborhoods: if a white child lives in a "Negro school district," he is readily given a permit to go to another school; if a Negro child lives in a "white school district," he is encouraged and sometimes coerced into going to a Negro school. Residential segregation is the main cause of institutional segregation also in other public facilities where it sometimes occurs, at hospitals, clinics, relief agencies, and so on, in the North.

In private facilities and organizations, however, there is the important added control of the manager's or group's desires. In states where there is no civil rights law, a manager of any private organization, commercial or noncommercial, can simply refuse to serve Negroes and may even put up a sign to that effect. In states where there are civil rights laws, no manager or employee may refuse to Negroes, theoretically, the service that he

[a] See Chapter 38, Section 10. A Southern white liberal pointed out to me that until comparatively recently Charleston, South Carolina, had employed white teachers in the Negro schools. He saw in this practice, in such places where the tradition from the *ante-bellum* South had been preserved, an example of white people helping the Negroes to rise. When I later visited Charleston, the Negroes related to me, as their main success in their fight to protect their interests, that they had succeeded in driving out the white teachers from the Negro schools and in giving these jobs to Negroes.

[b] See Chapter 24.

would offer to white persons. Actually, many stores, hotels, and other establishments refuse service to Negroes without excuse unless someone asks the police or courts to take action. Occasionally they even have signs up: "Whites Only." Even when the police and courts take action, the practice may be kept up, since the fine is usually small and the probability of being called before the law a second time also is small. Much more frequently employed than a direct violation of the law are the indirect devices of discouraging the Negro from seeking service in these establishments; by letting him wait indefinitely for service, by telling him that there is no food left in the restaurant or rooms left in the hotel, by giving him dirty or inedible food, by charging him unconscionable prices, by insulting him verbally, and by dozens of other ways of keeping facilities from him without violating the letter of the law.[36]

In addition to residential segregation and managerial refusal of services as techniques of effecting institutional segregation in the North, there are other means that should be mentioned. A voluntary organization, whether for civic, religious, political, economic, or associational purposes, will most often simply not invite Negroes to membership, even though they meet all other requirements. No state attempts to restrict the membership or service policies of voluntary associations. Even semi-public associations in Northern states with civil rights laws—such as the American Red Cross, the United Service Organizations, charities, universities[37]—grossly discriminate against Negroes. A fourth device is for individual whites to insult or stare at Negroes in restaurants or other public places where the management does not restrict service to them.

This all leads to a fifth, and equally important, cause of segregation: voluntary withdrawal of Negroes into their own group. This cause operates in the South, too. It is impossible to draw the line between voluntary withdrawal and forced segregation, and the latter is practically always contributory to the former, indirectly if not directly. The effects—in terms of cultural isolation and lack of equality of opportunity—are the same. In fact, the voluntary withdrawal often goes further than the demand for segregation on the part of the whites. Many Negroes in the upper and middle classes make it a policy to abstain as far as possible from utilizing the Southern Jim Crow set-ups in theaters, transportation, and the like, or from entering places in the North where they know that they are not welcome.

Institutional segregation and discrimination in the Border states is roughly between that of the North and that of the South. In some things, the Border is closer to the South and in others it is more like the North. In a few things, the Border is even harsher than the South: "In Baltimore and Washington, D. C., for example, there is more rigid segregation and rejection of Negro patronage in the large department stores than anywhere

in the South."[38] In Washington the theaters for whites are completely closed to Negroes, but libraries, public buildings and parks are open.[39] The Border states have fewer restrictive laws than the Southern states but do not have the general civil rights laws found in the North. Still, there are a few laws both to restrict association and to prohibit discrimination, and even more laws making these things optional. According to Charles S. Johnson: "It is frequently necessary to be more explicit regarding segregatory intent [in the Border states] than in the South."[40] Still there is probably more confusion about the behavior required and more rapid breakdown of the various types of segregation and discrimination. But confusion and breakdown exist in other regions of the country also. The rules are complicated, and they vary locally even when they are kept stable in time. All Negroes point to this fact, some to argue the irrationality of the segregation system, others to explain how difficult it is for the Negro to find his way through the Jim Crow jungle.

6. Segregation in Specific Types of Institutions

It is in government-owned institutions that legal segregation is most complete in the South. One of the most inclusive definitions of the South—including all the Border states and some localities in such Northern states as Indiana and New Jersey—is that based on legal segregation in schools. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia have two complete sets of elementary and secondary schools as part of state law. With the exception of the District of Columbia, nearly every community in these states has a substantial amount of discrimination coupled with segregation in the provision of education for Negroes. The buildings and equipment are inferior; in rural areas most of the schools are not run during the planting or harvesting seasons; the teachers get a lower rate of pay;[a] Negroes have little control over their school;[41] many common academic subjects are not offered in the secondary schools in order to prevent Negroes from getting anything but a low grade vocational training.[b]

For higher education, Negroes are still worse off. Some of the Southern states support small Negro colleges—never comparable in facilities and personnel with even the average Southern state university. Other Southern states help to support privately run Negro colleges if these colleges agree to accept Negro students of that state at low tuition rates. Since many of these colleges do not have graduate departments, some of the state governments have paid tuition fees at any university in the United States for Negro students who wish to pursue certain studies provided for whites but not for Negroes by the state. Not only is it hard to obtain this out-of-

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 4. At the present time (winter, 1941-1942) Negro teachers in states of the Upper South are waging successful court battles to get equal pay.

[b] See Chapter 41.

state support, but Negro students are faced sometimes with the dilemma of whether to fight for their right to enter the state university or to seek the advantages of the superior Northern universities. In the recent (December, 1938) case of *Lloyd Gaines v. the University of Missouri,* the United States Supreme Court decided that a Negro could insist upon entrance into a regular state university if no separate but equal university were provided for Negroes by that state.[42]

There is little school segregation required by law in the Northern and Western states: Arizona requires it in elementary schools and makes it permissive in secondary schools;[43] Kansas, Wyoming, Indiana, and New Mexico make school segregation permissive in the elementary grades and sometimes also in the secondary grades.[44] Some communities in the southern parts of New Jersey, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois use organized pressure contrary to law to segregate Negroes in at least the elementary grades.[45] In practically all other areas of the North there is partial segregation on a voluntary basis, caused by residential segregation aided by the gerrymandering of school districts and the system of "permits." This segregation is fairly complete for elementary schools, except where Negroes form only a small proportion of the population, but there is much less segregation in secondary schools. In few cases—if any—is this segregation accompanied by discrimination, however, except that form of discrimination which inevitably arises out of isolation. In fact there is probably more discrimination in the mixed schools than in the segregated ones in the North: frequently Negroes in mixed schools are kept out of swimming, dancing, and other athletics, and out of social clubs. There are, however, some Negro teachers in mixed schools in many Northern cities, and Negroes sit on the boards of education in a few big Northern cities.

No Northern state university prohibits the enrollment of Negroes, although a few practice minor forms of discrimination once they are enrolled. This is often a matter of individual prejudice rather than of official policy. Private universities in the North restrict Negroes in rough inverse relation to their excellence: the great universities—Harvard, Chicago, Columbia, and so on, restrict Negroes to no significant extent, if at all. A few exceptions exist: Princeton University, for example, has no Negro students, but this university has Southern traditions. Most of the minor private universities and colleges prohibit or restrict Negroes. Some of these permit the entrance of a few token Negroes, probably to demonstrate a racial liberalism they do not feel. Four or five Northern colleges or universities, outside the Negro ones, have a Negro on their instructional staff.[46] That there is no serious restriction on higher education for Negroes in the North is shown by the fact that there are only four Negro colleges in all the 30 non-Southern states, and two of these were started before the Civil War.

Most other public facilities—such as libraries, parks, playgrounds—are available to Negroes with about the same amount of discrimination and segregation, in the various regions of the country, as in schools. Negroes are not permitted to use these in the South unless they are acting in a servant capacity. Many Southern cities have separate parks, playgrounds, and libraries for Negroes, but in all cases they are poor substitutes for those available to whites. In a few cities in the Upper South Negroes are allowed to enter some of the general parks. In a few Southern cities, such as Nashville and Richmond, upper class Negroes are allowed to use the white library if they sit at a special table or in a special room. Interlibrary loans from the white to the Negro library also improve the situation in some cities.[47] In the North there is no segregation or discrimination in the use of these facilities, except that created by residential segregation and the unfriendliness of a relatively few white officials and members of the public.

Segregation of Negroes in jails, penitentiaries, reformatories, insane asylums, follows the same pattern found for schools and other public facilities, except that there is somewhat more segregation in the North in this respect than in others, and practically no exceptions to the segregational pattern in the South. When the institution has as its primary importance, not to protect white society, but to be of service to the Negro individual or community—as in the case of asylums for the insane and feeble-minded or specialized institutions for juvenile delinquents—many Southern states and localities do not have a Negro unit at all.[48] Charles S. Mangum comments on this last point: "This is one of the most flagrant violations of the spirit of the constitutional guarantee of equal treatment by the states discovered in this investigation."[49]

Negroes may enter public buildings in the South as well as in the North, but in the South the rules are that they must not loiter, must remove their hats, must not expect service until all whites have been accommodated (with the exception of many post offices and other buildings owned by the federal government), must sit in rear or side seats in most courtrooms, and in general must follow the etiquette most cautiously. Of all the institutions run by the government, public bathing beaches, pools and bath houses have the most complete segregation.

The pattern of segregation found in privately run public services is in the South often less rigid than in those operated by government. This differential—not great—occurs because businessmen are more solicitous about Negro customers than local governments are about Negro citizens. A good part of the segregation and discrimination that does occur in such facilities as railroad trains, railroad waiting rooms and ticket offices, streetcars, buses and taxicabs occurs because the law requires it. The law compels the transportation companies to bear the extra costs of maintaining two sets

of facilities. This becomes the more expensive as many Negroes avoid Jim Crow facilities by using their own cars[50] or walking. On the other hand, it is notorious that the companies—with a few exceptions—save money by giving Negroes inferior service for equal charge. While white opinion would no doubt force these companies to maintain segregated facilities, there would be many exceptions and a slow trend toward a breakdown of segregation if there were no laws to keep the pattern rigid. This inference may be drawn from observation of segregation practices in privately run stores where there are no laws to prohibit or to segregate Negro customers.

Oklahoma and all the former slaveholding states, with the exception of Delaware, Missouri, and West Virginia, have laws requiring separation of whites and Negroes on railways operated in their jurisdiction.[51] Delaware has a law making it optional for railroad companies to Jim Crow, and a Missouri state court has upheld the validity of a railway's regulation directing a separation of the races on its coaches.[52] Although these laws could not be meant to apply to a Negro who was merely crossing the state without stopping in it, since such a law would be clearly unconstitutional even if the intra-state Jim Crow law would not, in practice it applies to such Negroes also. The conductors are given police power to enforce these statutes. Certain types of exceptions are commonly made: for nurses, police officers, railway employees. Sometimes the segregation is mainly ceremonial: Negroes may enter Alabama in Pullman cars but are given "Lower 13" (the drawing room in a Pullman with 12 sets of berths).[53] All the Southern states having railway Jim Crow laws, except Alabama, Kentucky, and Maryland, also require separate accommodations on street railways.[54] In those three states, the practice of Jim Crowing is left up to the streetcar companies: it is universal in Alabama, but does not occur in the Border states. It is a common observation that the Jim Crow car is resented more bitterly among Negroes than most other forms of segregation. In the North there is practically no segregation in public carriers.

Segregation is practically complete in the South for hotels and restaurants, places of amusement[a] and cemeteries.[b] The same is true of churches.[c] Many hospitals in the South receive Negro as well as white patients, but they are segregated; the Negro wards are mostly inadequate and inferior,

[a] Negroes are excluded from swimming pools, dance halls, skating rinks, pool parlors and bowling alleys patronized by whites. In theaters and assembly halls, where they are not excluded, they are segregated and usually given poorer seats.

[b] Before the Civil War it was not uncommon for Negro servants to be buried in the white family's plot. With the development of a new taboo in respect to mixed cemeteries, cases have occurred where Negro bones have been dug up and replaced in Negro cemeteries by white men. (Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, p. 170.)

[c] In the *ante-bellum* South slaves often went to the churches of their masters. The exclusion on the part of the whites met a movement on the part of the Negroes to develop their own churches. Today the separation is complete. (See Chapter 40.)

and Negro doctors are not allowed to treat their patients there.[a] In the North the patterns vary a good deal. In all states where there are civil rights laws, hotels, restaurants, and amusement places are theoretically open to Negroes on equal terms with whites. In the states without such legislation, courts usually uphold the rights of proprietors to prohibit or segregate as they please.[55] In practice the higher priced establishments attempt to keep out Negroes all over the North, and the difference is not great in this respect between the South and the North, except for the presence of etiquette in the South. The low and moderate priced places probably most often accept Negro customers. Northern white churches do not prohibit Negroes, or even segregate them, but traditional adherence and residential segregation effectively keep Negroes practically separated in their own churches. Cemeteries are usually segregated even in the North.[56] The Y.M.C.A.'s ordinarily segregate Negroes even in the North, a main reason being that they are usually equipped with swimming pools; the Y.W.C.A.'s seem to show a tendency to be more liberal. There are separate hospitals for Negroes also in the North, and the hospitals which serve both races sometimes segregate Negroes but, on the average, the discrimination involved is slighter. In the North, Negro doctors are frequently given a chance to follow up their Negro cases in the hospitals.

As noted in Chapter 13 and Appendix 6, segregation in factories is usual throughout the South. It is not a matter of law in most cases, however, but is put into effect by the factory owners. If Negroes are allowed in an industry at all, they will usually be put either in a separate building or in a separate part of the regular factory building. The practice of giving Negroes only the hardest and least desirable jobs facilitates segregation. In most factories in the South, Negroes are required to use separate toilets and drinking fountains. Occasionally these things are put into law: a South Carolina law requires segregation in the cotton textile factories with respect to entrances, pay ticket windows, stairways, lavatories, toilets and drinking utensils.[57]

In the ordinary commercial establishments the variation is tremendous, since there are indefinite numbers of combinations of types and degrees of segregation in this field.[58] Only a few Southern communities have complete segregation for every commercial establishment,[b] just as only a few Northern communities have absolutely no segregation or discrimination. The situation is constantly changing in both North and South and is subject to a great variety of personal, customary and legal factors. It is reported from many localities, particularly in the South, that during the depression

[a] See Chapter 7, Section 5.

[b] Some Southern towns, especially in Texas, do not permit any Negro to spend over 24 hours within the town limits. Miami, Florida, and perhaps a few other Southern cities have laws forbidding Negroes to buy or to work outside the Negro district.

the competition for customers made store managers inclined to change their policy to greater compliance toward at least upper class Negroes.[59] There are possibly significant differences in the segregation patterns found for two distinct types of establishments—say, banks and department stores—but without detailed information we shall not risk saying that there definitely are.

We may generalize thus far, however: for each community there would seem to be less discrimination and segregation where the service is less personal and requires least manifestation of personality. Barbershops and beauty parlors will both in the North and in the South be most completely segregated. Stores for clothing will discriminate more than hardware stores. Gas stations will be least segregated; both in the South and in the North the rule is that the customer is to be served without regard to his color, but often with some regard to the quality or make of his car. Discrimination has many degrees: sometimes it will appear only in the way in which customers are served. Clothing stores, for example, may refuse to sell to Negroes, may have separate sections for them, may sell to them as to whites but refuse to let them try on clothing, may let them try on clothing if they keep the clothing from their bodies (for example, cloth over head before trying on hat) or may not discriminate at all. As a general conclusion, we can state that there is a good deal of difference between the North and the South in the discrimination practices of commercial establishments, but less here than in most other fields. The lack of laws, the impersonal nature of the relationship, and the profits to be made by commercial establishments if they cater to Negroes, all tend to weaken the patterns in the South. The present author has observed cities in the Deep South where the ordinary department store apparently discriminates less than in the North.

The prohibitions and restrictions on the Negro in the use of privately run establishments take two major directions: discrimination, and separate establishments for Negroes. There are usually not enough persons or wealth in the Negro community to provide Negroes with some of the more expensive services that are available to whites. This is especially true of theaters, concert halls, lecture halls and dance halls. When Negroes are permitted to go to these in the South—and seldom are they permitted to go to the best ones—they must occupy inferior sections, such as balconies. Segregated sections—whether of trains or of theaters—are commonly frequented by white men who often come there to engage in activities they would not dare to do in white sections (as, for instance, drinking or playing cards). The Negro sections usually have inferior equipment and are poorly cared for. In white stores where he may be served, the Negro customer is handicapped by not being allowed to try on clothing, by not being permitted to exchange any merchandise and by not being given the

full services ordinarily volunteered by clerks. Too, in the South there is the abasing etiquette which is only slightly modified when the Negro is a customer. For all these reasons, Negroes are inclined to patronize establishments devoted exclusively to them.

These may be owned and operated by Negroes or by white men—Jews especially, in the North—but are seldom patronized by whites except those seeking unusual pleasures. Most Negro communities—except the smallest ones—now have the whole gamut of commercial establishments which cater to persons of low income. This is a relatively recent achievement in most cities, since Negroes had little capital to open businesses and Southern whites regarded with disgust any white man who served Negroes exclusively. Negroes of middle and high income are still under great handicaps except in the largest cities. For amusements they have often turned to social clubs rather than to commercial establishments, and they are inclined to stay at the home of a friend while traveling rather than to patronize the cheap restaurants and hotels which in larger cities are available to them. Thus, on the one hand, discrimination has helped to build up a separate Negro community; on the other hand, it has been an outcome of enforced segregation on the part of the whites. While there is less segregation and discrimination against upper class Negroes than against lower class Negroes, the former have isolated themselves more.

The services of white professional men have always been available to Negroes. There are relatively few Negro doctors, lawyers, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, and there are handicaps on the few there are: a Negro lawyer has little chance in a Southern courtroom, and a Negro doctor cannot get into most hospitals to operate.[a] Philanthropic organizations often refuse to hire Negro professionals to serve the members of their own group. Negro professionals are further handicapped by a low reputation in the Negro community. There is much more use of Negro professionals by Negroes in the North than in the South. But everywhere, white professionals are used more frequently by Negroes. Some white professionals refuse to serve Negroes for fear of lowering their prestige, but probably the majority will serve Negroes who can afford to pay their fee. There is one semi-professional service which is unique in that only Negroes serve Negroes: this is the undertaking service. The live Negro body may be handled by the white physician, but the dead one is handled only by the Negro undertaker. This is as much, or more, in accordance with desires of Negroes as of whites. Undertaking is consequently one of the most lucrative businesses open to Negroes.[b]

Voluntary associations—civic, social, business, and professional—almost

[a] See Chapter 14, Sections 6 and 7. A few Negro doctors—mainly in the North but also occasionally in the South—have a significant number of white clients.

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 2.

always prohibit Negro members in the South and sometimes even in the North, unless the association is concerned with some phase of the Negro problem. They simply refuse to invite Negroes to membership or to admit them when they apply for membership, whether by formal policy or by informal *ad hoc* action of the membership committee. Sometimes national organizations—dominated by Northerners—would be willing to admit Negroes but are prevented by their Southern minorities. The only types of groups that almost consistently take in Negroes without restriction are the scientific or other intellectual societies.[60] The professional associations, such as the state bar and medical societies, usually admit Negro members in the North but not in the South; the national organizations are built upon this compromise, where membership depends upon the policy of the local unit.

The position of trade unions has been dealt with earlier in this book;[a] it is still true that most of them exclude or segregate Negroes.

Because of their exclusion from the various associations, Negroes have formed their own associations. Every Negro community is abundantly supplied with social and fraternal organizations, and nearly every city has its Negro businessmen's group. Negro professionals have formed national associations which usually take the name *National* (Medical, Bar) Association in contradistinction to the white *American* (Medical, Bar) Association. Negro clergymen also are excluded from organizations of their white co-professionals, and in reacting have sometimes gone so far as to form new denominations. While the white groups lose a little of the strength which they might get by admitting all qualified persons, regardless of race, Negroes are materially hurt by not getting the advantages of membership in these bodies.

[a] See Chapter 18, Section 3.

CHAPTER 30

EFFECTS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

1. The Incidence of Social Inequality

The "function"—and in any case the effect—of the social mechanism discussed in the preceding chapter is to isolate the Negroes and to assign them to a lower social status. From this point of view, most of the minor variations in place and time are of little social significance. Significant only are those variations in the patterns which denote real differences in the degree of inferior status conferred. We have noticed such differences in relation to regions and social classes. But we have also noticed the "common denominator." Being a Negro involves—everywhere in America, and independent of social class—having an inferior status.

The Southern courts generally take judicial notice of the lower social status of Negroes by sentencing as defamation the act of insinuating a white person to be a Negro.[1] Stephenson quotes a South Carolina court as arguing:

> When we think of the radical distinction subsisting between the white man and the black man, it must be apparent that to impute the condition of the Negro to a white man would affect his [the white man's] social status, and, in case anyone publish a white man to be a Negro, it would not only be galling to his pride, but would tend to interfere seriously with the social relation of the white man with his fellow white men. . . .[2]

When Northern courts do not follow this practice, it does not mean that it is not at all injurious to a white person in the North to be called a Negro, but it indicates primarily that social inequality is not a matter of public policy in the North as it is in the South.

The lower social status of the Negro represents, apparently, a gain to the whites. Besides the direct deprivation it imposes on the Negro, it indirectly hampers his ambitions in spheres of life other than the purely "social." Whereas it was appropriate to center the discussion of the causation of segregation and discrimination around the attitudes of the whites, who enforce the system, it is expedient, when we now proceed to investigate the results of it, to view them as they affect the Negro people.

No responsible Negro leader ever accepted social discrimination or gave up the demand for *ultimate* full equality. Booker T. Washington—the

great conciliatory leader of his people in its relation with white society during the period of grim reaction after Reconstruction—made it a point to observe scrupulously the customs of the South and always avoided offending the prejudices of the white Southerners in so far as was possible.[3] In his speeches and books he sometimes went far in his diplomacy. He not only formally accepted segregation and implicitly the entire racial etiquette, but presented excuses for much more than that. He pressed hard only for his most urgent demands.[a] But in principle he never gave up the Negro protest against social discrimination. His last article, published posthumously in 1915, "My View of Segregation Laws," brought out clearly that he saw that there were limits to the extent to which Negroes could accept segregation. It concluded with the following statement:

> Summarizing the matter in the large, segregation is ill-advised because:
> 1. It is unjust.
> 2. It invites other unjust measures.
> 3. It will not be productive of good, because practically every thoughtful negro resents its injustice and doubts its sincerity. Any race adjustment based on injustice finally defeats itself. The Civil War is the best illustration of what results where it is attempted to make wrong right or seem to be right.
> 4. It is unnecessary.
> 5. It is inconsistent. The negro is segregated from his white neighbor, but white business men are not prevented from doing business in negro neighborhoods.
> 6. There has been no case of segregation of negroes in the United States that has not widened the breach between the two races. Wherever a form of segregation exists it will be found that it has been administered in such a way as to embitter the negro and harm more or less the moral fibre of the white man. That the negro does not express this constant sense of wrong is no proof that he does not feel it.[4]

Robert R. Moton, Washington's successor as a conservative Negro leader trusted by the whites, went even further in his appeal for equality,[5] and the other outstanding Negro leaders have been outspoken in repudiating all social discrimination.

The Negro protest will be discussed in later chapters. For the moment we want to point out an intrinsic difficulty in the makeshift compromise with white society in the South, set forth by Washington in his Atlanta speech of 1895: "In all things purely social we can be separate as the five fingers, and yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Segregation and the racial etiquette mean humiliation and this in itself is a severe discrimination. It has psychological effects. Only fifteen years after the Atlanta compromise, Archer declared the formula impossible:

> But to imagine it realized in perfection is to imagine an impossibility—almost a contradiction in terms. We are, on the one hand, to suppose the negro ambitious,

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 3, and Chapter 38, Section 4.

> progressive, prosperous, and, on the other hand, to imagine him humbly acquiescent in his status as a social pariah. The thing is out of the question; such saintlike humility has long ceased to form any part of the moral equipment of the American negro. The bullet could never be thoroughly encysted; it would always irritate, rankle, fester.[6]

If the Negroes were to rise out of illiteracy, economic distress, and so on, they would no longer have the psychological basis for keeping themselves socially inferior and servile. It is possible that a limited social segregation, purified of all elements of discrimination—of the type the Southern white liberals have dreamed of—would perhaps solve the problem. But this is far beyond present-day practical discussion.

There is a fundamental flaw in that distinction between what is purely social and all the rest of discrimination against Negroes. *Social discrimination is powerful as a means of keeping the Negroes down in all other respects.* In reality it is not possible to isolate a sphere of life and call it "social." There is, in fact, a "social" angle to all relations. When the Negro is disfranchised or kept from public office, the motivation of the whites is partly that political activity is "out of place" for Negroes. When he is discriminated against in courts or by the police, the justification is that he is "inferior" and that he must be "kept in his place." If his citizenship rights were no longer infringed upon, the Negro's social status would immediately rise as well, and—quite apart from state action made possible by his political power—much of the psychological basis for social inequality would be undermined. The very existence of the heavy mechanism of social segregation and discrimination makes inequalities in politics and justice more possible and seemingly justifiable on grounds of inferiority.

The interrelations between social status and economic activity are particularly important. Occupations have numerous social connotations. In the first place, they help to give social status. As long as Negroes, solely because of their color, are forcibly held in a lower social status, they will be shut out from all middle class occupations except in their own segregated social world. White nurses, stenographers, bank clerks, and store attendants will decline to work with Negroes, especially when the white person is a woman and the Negro a man. If social segregation is to be carried out in the factories, it will be expensive to the employer since he will have to provide special coordinating facilities and separate toilets, washrooms and lunchrooms. The same tendencies will work in public employment, in the schools, and in the armed forces; the only difference being that in public employment the state authority might be made to interfere and enforce equality. If a Negro holds any high occupational position, he will seem pretentious.

At the lower end of the occupational scale the tendencies are more complicated. It is clear that white workers with a lower and more uncertain

status in the occupational hierarchy may feel not less but more reason to object to Negro fellow workers. It is to be expected that the present trend of organizational stratification—giving more power over employment policy to the agents of the employees and attempting to raise standards of responsibility and respectability in all occupations—will tend to squeeze out the Negroes. This is not true, however, where they are already firmly entrenched, or their equality can be sanctioned by law, or an ideology of labor solidarity can be successfully invoked. This is the big question of what increasing unionization of labor will mean to the Negroes.[a] Everywhere in the labor market the very idea of their social inferiority is one of the Negroes' strongest handicaps in the competition for jobs. The vicious circle works here, too: the very fact that the masses of Negroes, because of economic discrimination—partly caused by social inequality—are prevented from entering even the bottom of the occupational hierarchy, are paid low wages and, consequently, are poor gives in its turn motivation for continued social discrimination.

The fact that social segregation involves a substantial element of discrimination will add its influence to this vicious circle. Negroes are given inadequate education, health protection, and hospitalization; they are segregated into districts where public services of water provision, sewage and garbage removal, street cleaning, street lighting, street paving, police protection and everything else is neglected or withheld while vice is often allowed. All this must keep the Negro masses inferior and provide reasons for further discrimination in politics, justice and breadwinning.

Under these circumstances there develops also what John M. Mecklin calls "the curious dualism in the social conscience or a double standard of conduct, one for the white and another for the black," which puts the Negro in a still more inferior social position.[7] This is partly the result of social segregation and discrimination but, at the same time, it gives justification to the whites for insisting upon their supremacy and for relegating the Negroes to a subordinate position. Here again we see the vicious circle in operation. It makes the task of the educator and reformer difficult. "As long as it is possible for a negro to violate half of the commands of the decalogue and still not lose social standing with his group, it is useless to hope for material improvement."[8] The ambition of the Negro youth is cramped not only by the severe restrictions placed in his way by segregation and discrimination, but also by the low expectation from both white and Negro society. He is not expected to make good in the same way as the white youth. And if he is not extraordinary, he will not expect it himself and will not really put his shoulder to the wheel.[9]

Segregation and discrimination have had material and moral effects on

[a] See Chapter 18, Sections 3 and 4.

whites, too. Booker T. Washington's famous remark, that the white man could not hold the Negro in the gutter without getting in there himself, has been corroborated by many white Southern and Northern observers.[a] Throughout this book we have been forced to notice the low economic, political, legal, and moral standards of Southern whites—kept low because of discrimination against Negroes and because of obsession with the Negro problem. Even the ambition of Southern whites is stifled partly because, without rising far, it is so easy to remain "superior" to the held-down Negroes. The Southern whites are tempted to remain on low levels of sexual morals, thrift, industriousness, reliability, punctuality, law observance and everything else. This mechanism of descending self-adjustment in a system of moral double-dealing works also in the field of public affairs. There are few popular movements in the South to improve social conditions and standards of efficiency and morality partly because of the feeling that "we" are so much better than "they" and partly because any attempt at improvement is bound to help the Negroes as well as the whites.[b] Most of these things are true of the North as well as of the South, though to a much smaller extent and for reasons connected with other minority groups as well as the Negro.

One of the effects of social segregation is isolation of Negroes and whites. The major effects of isolation are, of course, on Negroes. Contrary to popular opinion, however, there are bad effects on whites also, and these are increasing as the level of Negro cultural attainment is rising. It is as much a misfortune for whites not to have contacts with Negroes of high education and achievement as not to have contacts with other whites of comparable attainment—perhaps more, since such Negroes have a unique range of experience. Whether they know it or not, white people are dwarfing their minds to a certain extent by avoiding contacts with colored people.

2. INCREASING ISOLATION

Against the obstacles of the powerful interlocking system of social, judicial, political, and economic inequalities and disabilities, and in spite of the desire on the part of the majority of Southern whites that the Negroes remain in an inferior social status, and the great indifference and ignorance about it all on the part of most Northern whites, *the Negroes*

[a] Next to Washington's, probably the most frequently quoted remark on this matter is that of Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt University:

"In whatever form slavery may be perpetuated, just so far will it put shackles on the minds of Southern whites. If we treat the Negro unjustly, we shall practice fraud and injustice to each other. We shall necessarily live by the standards of conduct we apply to him. This is the eternal curse of wrong and injustice, a curse that abides on the ruler as well as the slaves. The South will be free only as it grants freedom." (Quoted from Mark Ethridge, "About Will Alexander," *The New Republic* [September 22, 1941], p. 366.)

[b] See Chapter 10, Section 2.

are rising. They are rising most rapidly in the North, but their rate of rise in the South is not inconsiderable. It is one of the paradoxes of the American situation, ultimately due to the split morality of the nation on the issue of racial democracy, that this rise of the Negroes to a great extent is the result of education and other public efforts, which—solicited by the Negro leaders, pushed by a small minority of Southern liberals, and assisted by Northern philanthropy—is largely provided by the Southern states themselves with the approval of the ordinary Southern whites in political power, acting in partial obedience to the American Creed.

The fundamental character of these efforts and their result have been to diffuse American middle class norms to the uneducated and crude Southern "folk Negroes," emerging out of the backwardness of slavery. Besides education, the persistent forces of industrialization and urbanization are having an impact on the Negro. Migration, occupational changes, the easy methods of communication, the Negro press, the growth of Negro organizations, the radio, the moving pictures, and all other vehicles of "modern life" are working upon the minds of Southern Negroes, gradually upsetting the older static tradition of compliance and introducing new thoughts and presumptions, dissatisfaction and unrest. In so far as the caste line remains comparatively fixed, one result of these changes is increasing isolation. The spiritual effects of segregation are accumulating with each new generation, continuously estranging the two groups.

One phase of the rise of the Negroes is the formation of a Negro middle and upper class.[a] A nucleus of such a class was already forming among free Negroes in slavery times. Since then it has been steadily, but slowly, growing, partly as a result of segregation itself, which holds down the Negro masses but opens petty monopolies for a few. These middle and upper class Negroes, who have stepped out of the servant status, live mostly by catering to their own people.[b] Not only have their economic contacts with whites been reduced but, because they know they are not liked by whites and are likely to feel humiliated in all contacts with them, they avoid whites in all other spheres of life. They even avoid, as we have had occasion to mention, the segregated set-ups where contact with whites is formalized and kept to a minimum.

It is the present writer's impression that, generally speaking, this tiny upper group of the Negro community often lives in a seclusion from white society which is simply extraordinary and seldom realized by white people. Measured in terms of the number of personal contacts with white people, there are Negro doctors, dentists, teachers, preachers, morticians, and druggists in the South who might as well be living in a foreign country: ". . . as the progressive colored people advance, they constantly widen the

[a] See Chapter 32.

[b] See Chapter 14.

gulf between themselves and their white neighbors."[10] Those contacts with whites which are unavoidable are becoming increasingly formal and impersonal. This means much for the development of Negro personality and cultural traits. In the present context it means that *white men in all classes usually have few occasions ever to meet a Negro above the servant classes.*[11] Certain minor exceptions will be discussed presently.

Parallel to this tendency is the habit of Southern whites to ostracize those white persons who work with Negroes in the field of education or who in other ways devote themselves to Negro welfare. This pattern was built up after the Civil War in animosity against the educational missionaries from the North. The attitudes are now changing in some respects. One of the chief accomplishments of the Interracial Commission is to have given social respectability among whites to interracial work. But today there are no white teachers of Negroes below the college level in the South, and there is often a sphere of isolation around the white teachers in a Negro college, particularly in the Deep South. The maximum of tolerance given them is often to let them alone because "they are living with the niggers." More important is the related trend for Negro colleges to be manned by an all-Negro staff, which again means a growing separation between the two groups on the middle and upper class level.

From the viewpoint of the popular theory of "no social equality" and the goal of preventing "intermarriage," this development must seem natural and, indeed, highly desirable. If any Negroes would be able to tempt white women to marry them, it would be the educated and economically prosperous ones; it is against them that the bars are most necessary in the Southern whites' own theory of color caste.[a] Nevertheless, white Southerners who have been interested in promoting improved interracial relations have, for a long time, been complaining about the fact that the "races meet only on the lower plane."[12] On this point there is fundamental agreement between Negro and white spokesmen.[13]

The Interracial Commission, various universities, and religious bodies have attempted to counteract this tendency by arranging interracial meetings for representatives of the "best people" of both groups, by teaching white youth about Negro progress and by having college students of both races meet together. Of even greater importance is the growing number of liberal newspapers in the South which make a planned effort to give fuller and more sympathetic publicity to the Negro community.[b] But there is doubt in the present writer's mind whether these laudable efforts outweigh the cumulative tendency in the segregation system itself, which continuously drives toward greater spiritual isolation between the two

[a] See Chapter 28, Section 6.
[b] See Chapter 42, Section 3.

groups. This is a heavy cost for Southern society, and it might create great dangers in the future.[14]

The behavior patterns and attitudes of the small Negro middle and upper class group are of greatest importance for the whole Negro people as they set the standards which are spread from the pulpit and the teacher's desk, by the influential Negro press and through social imitation. As has already been suggested, popular education in America is even more essentially directed on the dissemination of middle class views and ways of life than in most other countries. The cultural rise of the Negro masses means their gradual approach to middle class standards. Negro education is now segregated in the South nearly to the limit and is, consequently, in the hands of this spiritually isolated Negro middle and upper class group. White people do not know much about what goes on in Negro schools or what is printed in the Negro press. They would be shocked if they knew. But more fundamentally, white people are caught in the contradictions of their own thinking. The white control of the Negro schools cannot check, and cannot be intent upon checking, the spread among Negroes of the middle class attitudes leading to Negro social withdrawal. This is what the whites have asked for. Racial pride and voluntary isolation is increasingly becoming the pattern for the whole Negro people. Lower class Negro parents now teach their children to keep out of the way of white people.

Meanwhile the old bonds of intimacy between upper class white families and their Negro servants have been breaking down. This process started immediately after Emancipation but is not yet fully consummated. Contacts are becoming less personal and intensive, more formal, temporary and casual. In so far as Negro professionals increasingly are taking care of the souls and the bodies of Negroes generally, the result is not only the creation of a culturally isolated Negro middle and upper class but also, on the other side of the fence, a new barrier to communication between white people and lower class Negroes.[15] In their daily work also Negroes and whites have been becoming increasingly separated. The only exception in the South to the general trend of increasing separation is the recent coming together of Negro and white workers in the new labor unions.

Voluntary withdrawal is now becoming a habit in all social classes of Negroes.[16] It can be observed on the street. It can be seen in the stores. Raper describes a general store in the rural South, for example:

> Both races frequent the same store, at the same time, for the same purpose; whites and blacks stand together at the counter and buy. Negroes can buy anything, in any part of the store, at any time they have the money or credit to secure it. The members of the two races, however, mingle in the store only when they occupy the status of prospective purchasers, only when they are moving.
>
> As soon as the Negroes have finished their buying, they tend to move off to

themselves. When a Negro goes to sit down at the stove, he just naturally, it seems, sits by a member of his own race. Other Negroes drift in and the "Negro side" of the stove, which may be any side, reaches two-thirds around; half an hour later, the "white side," may take up two-thirds of the circle. All day long this circle around the stove gradually changes its racial complexion, with almost no intermixing of the races. The seating is not prearranged, and doubtless the sitters themselves are unaware of the typical arrangement, which anyone may observe for himself by "hanging around" a store in the rural portions of [a] county.[17]

Even the children keep apart. When occasionally they play together—only in very young ages and then only in the lower classes—the picture is usually one like that observed in Washington, D.C., by E. Franklin Frazier:

The colored children seemed to form a play group within a play group, the white children's talk almost all being addressed to other white children. Moreover, the colored children seemed to hang back and let the white children take the lead during the play. The colored children stood around and watched the white children as if admiring them. However, when the number of colored children increased and the two groups were about equal in numbers, the colored children showed much greater courage in swinging higher and longer on the limb, and much less fear than did the white children. . . . It is apparent from their overt behavior that the colored children hesitated to participate freely in the play group until they had the support of larger numbers of their own race. Even then it appears that they did not participate individually but rather as a group. Their self-consciousness was indicated not only by their initial hesitancy about participating freely in the play but also by their attempt to outstrip the white children.[18]

The present writer has made similar observations in all sorts of life situations:

I once visited a progressive prison in the North, one of the very finest institutions of its kind I have ever seen. The director pointed out to me that he was most eager to avoid every vestige of segregation between white and Negro prisoners. The individual cells where they slept during the night were allotted them in the alphabetic order of their names. But when I looked at the prisoners playing ball, the picture was one of separate cliques of whites and Negroes. Balls were passed from one clique to another but apparently always with minute observance of the color line. The director saw my reflection and explained to me that he has now given up fighting against the prisoners' self-segregation. He had even allowed the common rooms to be divided between the two groups. "The Negroes are nearly all born in the South," he commented. "If I were ignorant about the American race order in which they are all brought up, I should believe that this tenacious segregation is in their blood, or, at least, that the Negroes are just as eager to withdraw as the whites. In a sense they are. But in a deeper sense they are not. It is just social pressure congealed into habit."

This all seems to give a confirmation of the Southern white stereotype that "Negroes are happiest among themselves." and that by the mass of

the Negro people "separation is not looked upon as a hardship but rather as a simple, natural fact, which is never questioned."[a] It is, however, my impression that this is a rationalization just as deceptive, and for a similar cause, as the belief that Southern Negroes are politically apathetic and do not care for suffrage. If they do not bother to try to vote, they have, as we found, in most cases good reasons in various sanctions they would meet and in the knowledge that elections do not have much importance anyhow under the system of the white primary. Likewise the Negroes have good reasons to keep to themselves socially, and the habit has grown into a stiff pattern. But this isolation is a consequence of segregation and discrimination and should not be construed as a cause (except in so far as it is part of a vicious circle), and still less as a moral support for the system. On this point Negroes are, in general, quite sophisticated.

The material presented in the American Youth Commission studies suggests a most important general observation: *there is almost a complete lack of reference in the interviews with young Negroes in the South to intimate and personal, friendly relations with white persons or families of the type so prevalent in earlier times. For the Negro youth growing up today in the Black Belt, both in cities and in the country, this old protective master-servant pattern seems to have almost entirely disappeared.* What still exists of it is felt by the older generation of Negroes and is bound to disappear with them. A social process is drawing to its close. A negative practical conclusion may be drawn from this observation: *in planning for future race relations in the South the factor of personal intimacy and friendliness between individual whites and Negroes upon the old patriarchal principle should be left out entirely as lacking in practical importance.* If it be deemed desirable to establish more positive human contacts in order to mitigate the dangerous accumulating estrangement between the two groups, this must be built on another foundation than the master-servant relation inherited from slavery.

In the North the Negroes have always been more isolated from whites.

[a] A much more representative statement of the Negro attitude toward segregation is that of A. Philip Randolph: "Jim Crow . . . is a moral, spiritual and intellectual insult to the very soul of the Negro." (Mimeographed address, at Madison Square Garden, New York City, June 16, 1942, p. 3.) Du Bois calls attention to what segregation means to the Negro in the South:

"In a world where it means so much to take a man by the hand and sit beside him, to look frankly into his eyes and feel his heart beating with red blood; in a world where a social cigar or a cup of tea together means more than legislative halls and magazine articles and speeches,—one can imagine the consequences of the almost utter absence of such social amenities between estranged races, whose separation extends even to parks and street-cars." (*The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], p. 185.)

A similar statement is made more recently by a prominent white man, Edwin R. Embree (*Brown America* [1933; first edition, 1931], p. 226.)

They have for generations had less of both patriarchal dependence and protection. Before the Great Migration accentuated segregation and discrimination, they had, however, established a place for themselves, in many cases not more isolated and subdued than the several immigrant groups. Their small numbers, their fairly high educational status, and their acceptable manners and personal habits in most places prevented a too severe exclusion. The children ordinarily went to the same schools as did whites; the grown-ups often belonged to the same churches and other organizations and not infrequently visited socially. With the formation of Black Belts in the metropolitan cities, isolation grew. In this particular respect the conditions of the Negro population in the two regions are approaching each other.

3. INTERRACIAL CONTACTS

The isolation we are speaking about—caused by all the barriers to contact involved in etiquette, segregation, and discrimination from the side of the whites and in voluntary withdrawal and resentment from the side of the Negroes—means a decrease of certain types of contacts between the two groups and a distortion of the ones that are left. It is useful here to put the reverse question: What contacts do remain? and what is their significance for interracial relations? To answer these questions there ought to be quantitative studies of the sort we have discussed previously.[a] Since no such studies have been made, our observations have to be general, tentative, and in the nature of somewhat schematic hypotheses for further research.

Negroes constitute about 10 per cent of the American population, and since there has been little[19] attempt to segregate them by region, there is naturally some contact. Of course, Negroes have been concentrated—for historical reasons—in the South, but there are enough Negroes throughout the North and in cities of the West for their appearance to be commonly recognized by the majority of the white inhabitants of these latter areas. The patterns of segregation and withdrawal are so effective, however, that even where Negroes are a common sight *there is actual contact with them in practically only three spheres of life: the casual, the economic and the criminal.*

By *casual contacts* we mean all those instances where Negro individuals and white individuals see each other but without the condition of recognizing each other as individuals, or at least for the whites to recognize the Negroes as individuals. Casual contacts would thus include passing on the street, passing or remaining briefly in the presence of each other in public buildings or public vehicles, having visual or auditory contact with each

[a] Chapter 29, footnote 1.

other by reason of independent relations with common third persons, or the like. Such contacts are the most numerous type, except possibly on the plantation and in other rural areas where either the Negro or the white population forms a small proportion of the total. Casual contacts are important in an urban civilization. But they are especially important in Negro-white contacts, since they are only slightly diminished by patterns of segregation and discrimination as compared to other types of Negro-white contacts. Since the casual contact is one in which the participants have no occasion to regard each other as individuals but only as members of a group, *the main effect of the casual contact would seem to be a strengthening of stereotypes.* Negroes, but not whites, have something of an antidote for the casual contact in their economic contact with whites. The main effect of casual contacts is, therefore, to create and preserve stereotypes of Negroes in the minds of the whites. This is not to say that casual contacts are the only, or even the most important, cause of stereotypes of Negroes. But the impersonality of the comparatively numerous casual contacts allows whites to see Negroes as a relatively uniform biological and social type and to ignore the great variations that would become apparent if observation were more attentive. All Negroes come to look alike to the average white person.

Casual contact between Negroes and whites is probably increasing as Negroes—and whites—are becoming more mobile and as the scope of Negro activity is becoming broader. Also it has been taking on a slightly different character as it enters the urban environment. In a city it is sometimes impossible to avoid close physical contact. Negroes and whites jostle each other unconcernedly on crowded streets, and Negroes have been observed to be standing in the white sections of crowded Jim Crow buses. The increase of casual contacts in Southern cities is undoubtedly wearing away somewhat the strictness of racial etiquette.

The increased range of casual contacts in recent years is not unrelated to the growth of a Negro upper class. This is especially important in the North, where there are no laws against Negroes using public facilities. A well-mannered Negro dressed in good taste who appears in a restaurant, a white church, or a railroad station is likely to weaken unfavorable Negro stereotypes rather than to strengthen them. In the South the effect of the appearance of the upper class Negro is somewhat more problematical. In the long run this will probably have a favorable effect, but in many known instances it has led to violence from lower and middle class whites who felt that the Negroes were getting too "uppity." The Negro's physical appurtenances—that is, his home, store, or automobile—will serve as a casual contact in the same manner as his person.

The effect of increased casual contacts due to increased Negro mobility has, thus far and when considered alone, probably hurt the Negro in the

North, even if other advantages for the Negro people as a whole from the northward migration have more than compensated for this disadvantage. The Northern white man, who formerly felt little prejudice against the few Northern Negroes and was inclined to idealize Negroes as part of his Civil War heritage, reacted unfavorably when the Great Migration brought up thousands of illiterate, dirty, and poor Negroes from the Deep South. In Chicago in 1910, for example, a few Negroes were scattered all over the city, and they were invited to many ordinary white homes as neighbors.[a] Now Negroes are forced to live in definite sections and practically the only white homes they are invited to are those of a few intellectuals and radicals.

Unlike casual contacts, *economic contacts*, though usually not intimate or protracted, are important enough for the whites and Negroes to see one another as individuals. In the great majority of economic contacts, whites see Negroes as economic inferiors, as when they are servants or other types of menial workers. More rarely they meet as economic equals, as when Negro and white workers work on the same level or when businessman meets businessman or salesman meets customer. Practically never do whites see Negroes as their economic superiors. This is due, of course, to the striking differential in economic and occupational status of whites and Negroes. In contacts arising out of economic relationships, the Negro partner is rarely employer, supervisor, skilled worker, merchant, or professional man. An additional reason for this is the fact that Negroes who occupy these higher economic positions tend to serve and to employ other Negroes. Of course, most whites are vaguely aware that there are Negroes in high economic positions. But it is probable that they everywhere underestimate the number of such Negroes, and it is certain that they rarely have enough contact with them to know them as individuals. From their side, Negroes have economic contacts with whites mainly as superiors and occasionally as equals. They thus tend to have their attitudes of inferiority and dependence—already in existence because of the slavery tradition—reinforced. The same can be said of their attitudes of resentment.

There is one sphere of economic relationship which is extremely important for several reasons. We refer to the Negro as a personal and domestic servant, a position in which he held practically a monopoly in the South until the depression of the 1930's, and in which he is numerically important in the North. The social importance of this relationship derives mainly from the fact that it is very intensive on one side. The Negro maid knows the life of her white employer as few white persons know it; and the Negro janitor and elevator operator knows a great deal of what goes on

[a] Gosnell informs us: "Before the Negro migration it was easier for a colored man to be elected to a county-wide position [in Chicago] than it has been since." (Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians* [1935], p. 369.)

in his building.[a] In slavery days the house servant learned the culture of his white master and—from a position on the top of the Negro class structure—transmitted it to the other slaves. Servants no longer have the highest socio-economic status among Negroes, but it can be safely said that Negroes know the white world very well, in its private, though not in its public, aspects.[20]

The white employer, on the other hand, does not know the Negro's world just because he has Negro servants. The white employer ordinarily is interested mainly in getting his servant to work, and his attitude toward the servant is, therefore, usually impersonal. We have already commented upon the fact that this relationship has in the main lost in intimacy and personal friendliness. Even if the white mistress takes an interest in her servant's well-being, she seldom gets first-hand acquaintance with the Negro's living conditions, and Negroes show an extreme suspicion of inquisitive whites, who, even though friendly, have a superior and sometimes insulting attitude.[21] In the South, there are also the barriers of etiquette: when the content of friendliness and mutual feeling of belonging is carved out from the system of etiquette, it becomes, to the Negroes, a cause for generalized resentment against the whites, and, to the whites, a formalization of their power over the Negroes. In both directions the etiquette works toward estranging the two groups. Even if, by some rare chance, a white employer should really come to know intimately his or her Negro servant, he would not thereby come to know the whole wide range of Negro life. What often happens in the employer-servant relationship is that—depending on the degree of friendliness or appreciation of the white employer and the degree of confidence felt by the Negro servant—the white man or woman makes an exception of his or her servant to the stereotyped conception of the "Negro in general." Similarly, the Negro servant might under happy conditions come to regard his or her employer as an exception to the general run of mean and exploitative white people. Too, the lower and dependent position of the Negro servant enhances the white person's belief that "the Negro is all right in his place."

The contacts between white and Negro workers were formerly of the same type. In the trades and handicrafts, the pattern in the South was, and is, that the white worker had a Negro helper. In factories the Negro workers are usually segregated or, in any case, held to certain jobs.[22] As we have pointed out, the mixed trade unions are a new adventure with an uncertain future. It is commonly reported that white workers, if they become accustomed to working with Negro workers, tend to become less prejudiced, and consequently that the Negro workers become less suspi-

[a] All service workers have, in one degree or another, this intimate type of contact with those they serve.

cious and resentful.[a] If, in later stages of the War, necessities in the nature of a national emergency should tend to open up new employment possibilities for Negroes in the war industries, this would probably have permanently beneficial effects on racial attitudes on both sides of the caste gulf. Our general hypothesis is that everything which brings Negro and white workers to experience intimate cooperation and fellowship will, on the balance, break down race prejudice somewhat and raise Negro status. The possibilities for Negroes to rise to the position of skilled workers have, therefore, not only economic significance but also a wider social import as this will tend to weaken the stereotype of the menial Negro.

There are other types of economic contacts between Negroes and whites in which the members of the two groups are of equal or near-equal status. Over a long time span Negro purchasing power has been increasing,[b] and the number of Negro businessmen who can deal as economic equals with whites in a similar position has been rising. The long-run effect of this is probably to make more whites realize that some Negroes have as much capacity as they, although some whites feel nothing but irritation and resentment that can turn into violence at the thought of Negroes rising in the economic scale. The effect, as usual, is cumulative: white merchants and salesmen in the South are chipping away at the etiquette in order to please their Negro customers, and the absence of the etiquette in a social relation helps to create a spirit of equality.

Another sort of economic relationship in which Negroes have a measure of near-equality with whites is that in which the Negro is an entertainer or artist. The Negro as a musician, actor, dancer, or other type of artist is allowed to perform almost freely for a white public in the North—and to some extent in the South[c]—in a way that he can in no other economic sphere outside of the service occupations. His excellence in these fields—cultivated by folk stimulation from earliest childhood and by the realization that other means of earning a living are closed—is recognized. In fact, it is even supported by the stereotypes: the Negro must make up for an intellectual lack by an emotional richness. Nevertheless, a Negro who achieves distinction or popularity in these fields is regarded as an individual, and there can be little doubt that he raises the general prestige level of the Negro population. What has been said of the entertainment and artistic

[a] See Chapter 17, Section 7.

[b] That is, the average Negro has more money to spend (holding constant the purchasing value of the dollar), although his increase has not paralleled that of the average white man.

[c] Negro entertainers may appear before white audiences in the South if there is no implication of social equality. Individual Negro artists appear before Southern white audiences without difficulty. All-Negro dance orchestras may play for white dancers. But Negro players are not allowed in large white bands. In September, 1941, the well-known white band leader, Artie Shaw, broke all his Southern engagements because he was not allowed to bring along his Negro trumpeter, "Hot Lips" Paige.

fields is true also of the athletic field, in which Negroes have achieved notable successes.[a]

Besides the respectable entertainment fields in which Negroes excel, there are the "low-brow" and shady ones. "Black-and-tan" cabarets are sought as amusement centers by many levels of urban whites, occasionally if not frequently. White cabarets, theaters, and burlesques in the North often have the popular attraction of Negro dancers and performers. Negro prostitutes are often considered to be especially desirable, in the South as well as in the North. More often they compete by underselling white prostitutes. The effect on white attitudes toward Negroes of contacts in these circumstances is problematical. Probably such contacts serve only to strengthen the stereotype that Negroes have wilder passions and that their excellence is limited to emotional activities. At most, they increase the favorableness of attitudes toward Negroes in individual cases only.

We mentioned *criminal contacts* as the third most important field of Negro-white relationship. Ordinarily in American societies, as in practically all other societies, criminal relationships are minor. The fact that it is so important in Negro-white relationships has unique causes and unique effects. The actual extent of Negro crime will be discussed in a subsequent chapter;[b] at this point we are interested only in the fact that whites *believe* the Negro to be innately addicted to crime.[c] The importance of Negro crime as a basis of social relations arises not only out of this fact, but also out of the fact that Negro crime gets great publicity. Even today a large proportion—perhaps a majority—of the news about Negroes that appears in the white newspapers of both South and North is about Negro crimes.[23] When a Catholic or Jew, Swede or Bulgarian, commits a crime that is serious enough to get into the newspapers, it is not usual for his religion or nationality to be mentioned. When a Negro commits a newsworthy crime, on the other hand, only rarely is an indication of his race not prominently displayed. To many white Northerners, this crime news is the most important source of information they get about Negroes. To white Southerners, the crime news reinforces the stereotypes and sometimes serves to unite the white community for collective violence against the individual Negro criminal or the local Negro community in general.

The crime news is unfair to Negroes, on the one hand, in that it emphasizes individual cases instead of statistical proportions (a characteristic of all news, but in this case unfair to Negroes because of the racial association with especially disliked crimes) and, on the other hand, in that all

[a] See Chapter 44, Section 5, for a discussion of Negro achievements.

[b] See Chapter 44, Section 2.

[c] This belief is connected with two more basic beliefs: that the Negro cannot control his passions and so is addicted to crimes against persons; that the Negro has no sense of morals and thus is addicted to crimes against property.

other aspects of Negro life are neglected in the white press which gives the unfavorable crime news an undue weight. Sometimes the white press "creates" a Negro crime wave where none actually exists. In the latter part of the summer of 1941, Washington, D.C. was disturbed by a Negro "rape-and-murder wave," according to white newspapers throughout the country. Actually only one Negro was found to be responsible for the several crimes.[24]

Crimes against Negroes outside of lynching receive no publicity in the white press. Lynching receives a wide but declining publicity, especially in the North, and such publicity probably serves to raise Negroes—by contrast with Southern whites—in the attitude of Northern whites.

We have emphasized the most important aspects of the three most important spheres of Negro-white contacts—the casual, the economic and the criminal. The casual contact is inevitable if Negroes live in the same communities as do whites; the economic contact is the main reason for not wanting to send Negroes back to Africa or to segregate them in an isolated region and is, therefore, "inevitable"; the criminal contact is the result of a prejudiced but news-interested society. Besides contacts in the casual, economic, and criminal spheres of life, there are a few contacts between Negroes and whites in almost every other sphere. Usually they are unimportant numerically, but they may be important in bringing about change. The personal relations arising out of Negro activity in science and literature are restricted to a small proportion of the white population, whose prejudice—if not already low—is diminished considerably by such contacts. Indirectly the effect may be greater. The scientific discoveries of a George Washington Carver or the literary product of a Richard Wright will achieve nation-wide publicity and acclaim and will affect people as far down as the lower middle classes. A second minor field of interracial contact of growing importance is that of professional interracial relations.[a] A third minor type of interracial contact is that between radicals. In the main our conclusion is that the lack of personal and intimate contacts between members of the two groups is extraordinary.

4. THE FACTOR OF IGNORANCE

In a sense, this isolation is the result of cultural assimilation itself. When the masses of the Negroes found out that they could acquire an education and make notable cultural achievements and—even more—when they absorbed the white American's ideals of democracy and equality,

[a] The work and significance of such organizations as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League, the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, and the various local or temporary groups of similar purpose will be considered in Chapter 39.

they came to resent discrimination and felt it necessary to withdraw from white society to hold these advantages of America. Lord Bryce observed:

> Slaves or serfs who have been bred up to look upon subjection as their natural lot bear it as the dispensation of Nature. When they have attained a measure of independence, when they speak the tongue and read the books and begin to share the ideas of the dominant race, they resent the inferiority, be it legal or social, to which they find themselves condemned. Discontent appears and social friction is intensified, not only because occasions for it grow more frequent, but because the temper of each race is more angry and suspicious.[25]

The paradox is that *it is the very absorption of modern American culture which is the force driving the Negroes to self-segregation to preserve self-respect. It is, indeed, an impossible proposition to educate the American Negroes and at the same time to keep them satisfied with their lower caste position.* To try to make it possible, the white Americans should, at least, have given them a different kind of education. But this has not been possible in the face of the American Creed. The attempts to keep the Negroes shut out of the wider national and world culture by purposively stamping them with a low-grade vocational education for a servant and peasant life have never, after Reconstruction, been wholehearted enough[a] to prevent the kindling of unrest and resentment.

White Southerners are still proud of insisting that they "know the Negro," but the observer easily finds out that the actual ignorance about the other group is often astonishingly great. The average Southerner knows roughly—with many easily detected opportunistic gaps—the history of the Negro and the conditions under which Negroes live in the South. His lack of knowledge is of the Negro himself as an individual human being—of his ambitions and hopes, of his capacities and achievements. He zealously cultivates barren half-truths into rigid stereotypes about "the Negro race." Because of this pretentious ignorance, and because of the etiquette, the white Southerner cannot talk to a Negro as man to man and understand him. This, and the habit of living physically near this strange and unknown people—and resisting energetically the incorporation of it into the total life of the community—breeds among Southern whites a strained type of systematic human indifference and callousness. Although the Southerner will not admit it, he is beset by guilt-feelings, knowing as he does that his attitude toward the Negroes is un-American and un-Christian. Hence he needs to dress his systematic ignorance in stereotypes. The Southern whites need the sanctioning tradition: "the Negroes we have always with us." They need the ceremonial distance to prevent the Negroes' injuries and sufferings from coming to their attention. W. E. B. Du Bois comments bitterly:

[a] See Chapter 41.

> It is easy for men to discount and misunderstand the suffering or harm done others. Once accustomed to poverty, to the sight of toil and degradation, it easily seems normal and natural; once it is hidden beneath a different color of skin, a different stature or a different habit of action and speech, and all consciousness of inflicting ill disappears.[26]

Under the old master-servant relationship, the white man's "understanding" of the Negro was not great, but with the disappearance of this relationship even this small amount of sympathetic knowledge declined. What remains is a technique of how to work Negroes and how to keep them "in their place," which is not a difficult task for a majority group which can dispose of all the social power instruments—economic, legal, political, and physical—and has made up its mind to use them for this purpose.[27] But insight into the thoughts and feelings of Negroes, their social organization and modes of living, their frustrations and ambitions is vanishing. Some white Southerners are aware of this fact. Baker reported that they were already so thirty years ago:

> I don't know how many Southern people have told me in different ways of how extremely difficult it is to get at the real feeling of a Negro, to make him tell what goes on in his clubs and churches or in his innumerable societies.[28]

The present author has often met the same revealing curiosity on the part of white Southerners. In spite of human curiosity, however, Southerners do not really seek to know the Negro or to have intimate contacts with him, and consequently their feelings toward Negroes remain hard.

On their side, Negroes in the South instantaneously become reserved and secretive when they are in company with "their own whites." I have also witnessed how submissiveness, laughter, and fluent talking—which are sometimes displayed by Negroes in accordance with the rural tradition of interracial formality—most of the time, in reality, are nothing but a mask behind which they conceal their true selves.[29] Robert R. Moton, when writing a book on *What the Negro Thinks,* for white people, confirms the growing seclusiveness of his group. The Negro "seldom tells all the truth about such matters," he points out, and adds: "a great deal of it may not find its way into this volume."[30] Baker drew the conclusion, after observing the Negro's deliberate secretiveness, that this was a major source of deteriorating race relations.

> The Negro has long been defensively secretive. Slavery made him that. In the past, the instinct was passive and defensive; but with growing education and intelligent leadership it is rapidly becoming conscious, self-directive and offensive. And right there, it seems to me, lies the great cause of the increased strain in the South.[31]

The Northerner also is ignorant about the Negro, but his ignorance is less systematic and, therefore, often less deep. As he is ordinarily less

inhibited from looking upon the Negro as a normal human being, and as his observation of the Negro is not blinded by the etiquette, he is usually more cognizant of Negro attitudes and capacities and is more willing to lend a sympathetic ear to the Negro's plight. But he is much more ignorant of the conditions which the Negro faces. If the Southerner's whole race philosophy and even his kindliest thoughts are insulting to the new type of Negro emerging out of the cultural assimilation process, the Northerner is likely to insult him out of sheer ignorance. The average Northerner does not realize that to call a Negro woman a "Negress" is taken as an insult, and he does not understand in what high esteem the Negro holds the title "Mr." He does not see the discrimination under which the Negroes labor. Not knowing the patterns of violence and of laxness of law in the South, the Northerner does not comprehend the full reason for the Negroes' pathological bitterness and fear.

On his side, the Negro is inclined to be suspicious of the Northerner's good intentions and to retain in the North the cynical attitude and secretive manners that he has developed as a camouflage in the Southern race warfare. As a servant the Negro goes into middle and upper class homes even in the North and acquires a sort of knowledge about white people. But this knowledge is distorted, since it covers only the private life of the whites and not the public life. Seldom does a Negro know how white people on his own level live and think. In part, the Negro's ignorance is an effect of exclusion from white society. In part, it is the result of the Negro's having different interests and worries. He is preoccupied with Negro life and problems, and this makes him a little blind to the general American ones.

Mutual ignorance and the paucity of common interests is a barrier to, and a modifier of, social contact between even educated and liberal whites and Negroes in the North, even in the extraordinary circles where segregation and discrimination play no role. I have seen Negro and white social scientists together as friends and colleagues. But I know that when their minds meet it usually concerns some aspect of the Negro problem. The Negro is ordinarily not present—and if he is present, he is a stranger—when the whites meet to discuss more general problems. If this is true among liberal social scientists, it is still more true among prejudiced people in all classes. The Negro is an alien in America, and in a sense this becomes the more evident when he steps out of his old role of the servant who lives entirely for the comfort of his white superiors. Ignorance and disparity of interests, arising out of segregation and discrimination on the part of whites, increased by voluntary withdrawal and race pride on the part of Negroes, becomes itself an important element increasing and perpetuating isolation between the groups.

5. PRESENT DYNAMICS

Negroes adjust and have to adjust to this situation. They become conditioned to patterns of behavior which not only permit but call for discriminatory observance on the part of the whites. The people who live in the system of existing relations have to give it a meaning. The Negroes have the escape, however, that they can consider the system unjust and irrational and can explain it in terms of white people's prejudices, material interest, moral wrongness and social power. They can avoid contacts and in the unavoidable ones have a mental reservation to their servility. It becomes to them a sign of education and class to do so and thereby preserve their intellectual integrity. Many Negroes succeed in doing this, and their number is growing. *But the unfortunate whites have to believe in the system of segregation and discrimination and to justify it to themselves.* It cannot be made intelligible and defensible except by false assumptions, in which the whites force themselves to believe.

So the social order perpetuates itself and with it the sentiments and beliefs by which it must be expressed. The lower caste may with some exertion release themselves intellectually. The higher caste, on the contrary, is enslaved in its prejudices by its short-range interests. Without their prejudices, white people would have to choose between either giving up the caste system and taking the resultant social, political, and economic losses, or becoming thoroughly cynical and losing their self-respect. The whites feel the Negroes' resentment and suspect new attitudes. Formerly, the whites got some support for their false prejudices from the Negroes. This is becoming less and less true. Now they can hardly claim to "know their Negroes" and are forced to admit their ignorance. The social separation they asked for is becoming a reality. Thus the tragedy is not only on the Negro side.

But the system *is* changing, though slowly. Modern knowledge and modern industrial conditions make it cumbersome. The South is becoming "normalized" and integrated into the national culture. Like every other "normal" province, it is beginning to dislike being provincial. The world publicity around the Dayton trial, for instance, did much to censor fundamentalism in Southern religion. A great part of the region's peculiarities in its racial relations is becoming, even to the Southerner, associated with backwardness. The Southerner is beginning to take on an apologetic tone when he speaks of his attitude toward the Negro. To insist upon the full racial etiquette is beginning to be regarded as affectation.

The South has long eagerly seized upon every act of prejudice practiced against the Negro in the North and, indeed, all other social ills of the other region. The visitor finds even the average run of white Southerners intensely aware of the bad slum conditions in Northern metropolises and

of the North's labor troubles. Even the Southern liberal has the habit of never mentioning a fault of the South without mentioning a corresponding condition in the North. Many a Northern visitor to the South gets the feeling that the South is "still fighting the Civil War." But, as Kelly Miller observed, the "you also" argument is never resorted to except in palliation of conduct that is felt to be intrinsically indefensible.[82]

Southerners travel and migrate and are visited by Northerners and Europeans. They listen to the radio[83] and read papers, magazines and books directed to the wider national audience. Southern writers—in social science, politics, and *belles-lettres*—aspire to national recognition and not only provincial applause. The thesis that the region is poor and culturally backward, and that this is largely due to the presence of the Negroes and to the Southern Negro policy, has been for a long time developed by Southern authors. The average Southerner is beginning to feel the need for fundamental reforms. Many Southern newspapers have become liberal. Interracial work is beginning to be recognized as socially respectable.

The diffusion of scientific knowledge regarding race cannot be regionalized any more effectively than it can be segregated along a color line. Racial beliefs are becoming undermined, at least for the younger generation in the middle and upper classes. Most of them never reach the printing press or the microphone any more, as they are no longer intellectually respectable. The educated classes of whites are gradually coming to regard those who believe in the Negro's biological inferiority as narrow-minded and backward. When a person arrives at the point where he says that he knows his views are irrational but that "they are just instinctive" with him, he is beginning to retreat from these views.

The capital N in "Negro" is finding its way into the Southern newspapers as it earlier did into books. It is becoming a mark of education in the white South to speak of Negroes as "niggras" and not as "niggers"—a compromise pronunciation which still offends the Yankee Negro but is a great step from the Southern white man's traditional point of view. In Southern newspapers Negro problems and Negro activity even outside crime are beginning to be commented upon, not only to draw Negro subscribers, but also because these matters are actually found to be of some general community interest. Letters from Negroes are not infrequently printed and sometimes the content discussed with respect. It would be no great revolution, at least not in the Upper South, if a newspaper one morning carried a portrait of a distinguished Negro on the front page. In liberal newspapers in the Upper South, Negro pictures have already occasionally been printed in the back pages.

The educated, respectable, self-possessed Negro is to the average white Southerner not so often as earlier just the "smart nigger" or the "uppity nigger." As the South becomes urbanized and some Negroes rise in status,

it is becoming increasingly impracticable and, in some relations, actually impossible to bracket all Negroes together and treat them alike. Social classes among Negroes are becoming recognized. Titles of respect, the offer to shake hands, permission to use the front door and other symbols of politeness are more and more presented to certain Negroes who have attained social success.

We must not exaggerate these signs of wear and tear on the Southern color bar. *"Social equality" is still a terribly important matter in the region. But it is not as important as it was a generation ago.* One needs only to compare the tremendous upheaval in the South when President Theodore Roosevelt in the first decade of the twentieth century had Booker T. Washington to a luncheon at the White House[34] with the relatively calm irritation the white South manifested in the 'thirties when President Franklin Roosevelt and his gallant lady did much more radical things. It even continued to vote for him. The South is surely changing.

But the changes themselves elicit race prejudice. From one point of view, Robert E. Park is right, of course, in explaining race prejudice as "merely an elementary expression of conservatism," as "the resistance of the social order to change." When the Negro moves around and improves his status, he is bound to stimulate animosity.[35] The white South was—and is—annoyed whenever the Negro showed signs of moving out of his "place." And the white North definitely became more prejudiced when hundreds of thousands of crude Southern Negroes moved in. But conditions for Negroes are improving, Southerners are being jolted out of their racial beliefs, and the group of white people interested in doing something positive for the Negro has grown. The increase in prejudice due to the rise of the Negro is a local and temporary phenomenon in both the North and the South.

The Second World War is bound to influence the trends of prejudice and discrimination. At the time of revising this book (August, 1942) it is still too early to make a more definite prediction. It would seem though, that the War would tend to decrease social discrimination in the North. The equalitarian Creed has been made more conscious to the Northerners. Radio speeches and newspaper editorials keep on pointing to the inequalities inflicted upon the Negroes as a contradiction to the democratic cause for which America is fighting. There have been some incidents of racial friction in Detroit and other places but, generally speaking, race relations have rather improved. In New Jersey and other states the police and the courts have become more active in stamping out illegal discrimination in restaurants and other public places.

In the South, however, reports in the press as well as what we hear related by competent Negro and white observers point to a rising tension between the two groups. There seems to be an increased determination on

the part of white Southerners to defend unchanged the patterns of segregation and discrimination. Even some Southern liberals fall in with the tendency toward a hardened white opinion. Mark Ethridge, former chairman of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice and editor of a liberal Southern newspaper, the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, declared at the Birmingham hearings of the F.E.P.C. in July, 1942, that:

> There is no power in the world—not even in all the mechanized armies of the earth, Allied and Axis—which could now force the Southern white people to the abandonment of the principle of social segregation. It is a cruel disillusionment, bearing the germs of strife and perhaps tragedy, for any of their [the Negroes'] leaders to tell them that they can expect it, or that they can exact it as the price of their participation in the war.[36]

There has been some friction between Negro soldiers and Southerners, and the South's old fear of the armed Negro is rising.

Much the same thing happened during the First World War. But this time the isolation between the two groups is more complete. White people in the South know less about Negroes and care less about them. This time the Negroes, on their side, are firmer in their protest, even in the South.[a] And this time the North is likely to be more interested in what happens to race relations in the South.

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 10.

Part VIII

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

CHAPTER 31

CASTE AND CLASS

1. The Concepts "Caste" and "Class"

The Emancipation of 1863 stopped the practice of calling the Negroes "slaves." For a while "freedmen" and "ex-slaves" were popular terms, but it soon became evident that the nation wished to forget the issue which tore the country apart. Yet some term had to be found to describe the inferior status of the Negro, especially in scientific and literary circles. In the literature the term "caste," which was already in use before the Civil War, was increasingly employed.

As alternatives—often as synonyms—for denoting the Negro as a separate group in American society and its relationship with other groups, the term "race" and sometimes the term "class" have been used. The former term, "race," is, as we have shown in Chapter 5, inappropriate in a scientific inquiry, since it has biological and genetic connotations which are incorrect in this context and which are particularly dangerous as they run parallel to widely spread false racial beliefs. The latter term, "class," is impractical and confusing in this context since it is generally used to refer to a nonrigid status group from which an individual member can rise or fall. There is a class stratification *within* each of the two groups. When used also to indicate the difference *between* the Negro and white groups, the term "class" is liable to blur a significant distinction between the two types of social differences. The recently introduced terms "minority group" and "minority status,"[1] are also impractical as we have pointed out in Chapter 3, since they fail to make a distinction between the *temporary* social disabilities of recent white immigrants and the *permanent* disabilities of Negroes and other colored people.[a] We need a term to distinguish the large and systematic type of social differentiation from the small and spotty type and have throughout this book used the term "caste."

The sole criterion in defining scientific terms is practicality. Concepts are our created instruments and have no other form of reality than in our own usage. Their purpose is to help make our thinking clear and our observations accurate. The scientifically important difference between the terms "caste" and "class" as we are using them is, from this point of view, *a*

[a] See Chapter 3, Sections 1 and 2.

relatively large difference in freedom of movement between groups. This difference is foremost in marriage relations. Intermarriage between Negroes and whites is forbidden by law in 30 states of the Union and even where it is not legally forbidden it is so universally condemned by whites that it occurs extremely infrequently.[a] The ban on intermarriage is one expression of the still broader principle, which is valid for the entire United States without any exception, that *a man born a Negro or a white is not allowed to pass from the one status to the other as he can pass from one class to another.*[b] *In this important respect, the caste system of America is closed and rigid, while the class system is, in a measure, always open and mobile.* This has social significance because, as is evident from the preceding chapters, being a Negro means being subject to considerable disabilities in practically all spheres of life.

It should, however, be clear that the actual content of the Negro's lower caste status in America, that is, *the social relations across the caste line, vary considerably from region to region within the country and from class to class within the Negro group. It also shows considerable change in time.* But variation and change are universal characteristics of social phenomena and cannot be allowed to hinder us from searching for valid generalizations. It will only have to be remembered constantly that when the term "caste relations" is used in this inquiry to denote a social phenomenon in present-day America, this term must be understood in a *relative* and *quantitative sense.* It does not assume an invariability in space and time in the culture, nor absolute identity with similar phenomena in other cultures.[2] It should be pointed out, incidentally, that those societies to which the term "caste" is applied without controversy—notably the *ante-bellum* slavery society of the South and the Hindu society of India—do not have the "stable equilibrium" which American sociologists from their distance are often inclined to attribute to them.[c]

Much of the controversy around the concept caste seems, indeed, to be the unfortunate result of not distinguishing clearly between the caste *relation* and the caste *line.* The changes and variations which occur in the American caste system relate only to caste relations, not to the dividing line between the castes. The latter stays rigid and unblurred. It will remain fixed until it becomes possible for a person to pass legitimately from the lower caste to the higher without misrepresentation of his origin. The American definition of "Negro" as any person who has the slightest amount of Negro ancestry has its significance in making the caste line

[a] See Chapter 29, Section 2.

[b] A person can pass if he misrepresents his orgin, which it is impossible to do in most cases. For discussion of "passing" see Chapter 5, Section 7. Also see Section 4 of this chapter.

[c] A Hindu acquaintance once told me that the situation in the United States is as much, or more, describable by the term "caste" as is the situation in India.

absolutely rigid. Had the caste line been drawn differently—for example, on the criterion of predominance of white or Negro ancestry or of cultural assimilation—it would not have been possible to hold the caste line so rigid.

The general definition of caste which we have adopted permits us to infer a concrete definition for our particular problem. When we say that Negroes form a lower caste in America, we mean that they are subject to certain disabilities solely because they are "Negroes" in the rigid American definition and not because they are poor and ill-educated. It is true, of course, that their caste position keeps them poor and ill-educated on the average, and that there is a complex circle of causation, but in any concrete instance at any given time there is little difficulty in deciding whether a certain disability or discrimination is due to a Negro's poverty or lack of education, on the one hand, or his caste position, on the other hand. In this concrete sense, practically the entire factual content of the preceding parts of this book may be considered to define caste in the case of the American Negro.

We conceive of the social differentiation between Negroes and whites as based on tradition and, more specifically, on the traditions of slavery society. We have attempted to trace this cultural heritage in various spheres of life. The caste system is upheld by its own inertia and by the superior caste's interests in upholding it. The beliefs and sentiments among the whites centering around the idea of the Negroes' inferiority have been analyzed and their "functional" role as rationalizations of the superior caste's interests has been stressed. The racial beliefs and the popular theory of "no social equality" were found to have a kernel of magical logic, signified by the notion of "blood." We have been brought to view the caste order as fundamentally a system of disabilities forced by the whites upon the Negroes,[a] and our discussion of the Negro problem up to this point has, therefore, been mainly a study of the whites' attitudes and behavior. And even when we proceed to inquire about the internal social structure of the Negro caste, about Negro ideologies, Negro leadership and defense organizations, the Negro community and its institutions, Negro culture and accomplishments, and Negro social pathology, we shall continue to meet the same determinants. Little of this can be explained in terms of Negro characteristics. The Negro problem is primarily a white man's problem.[b] In this part we shall find that *the class order within the Negro caste is chiefly a function of the historical caste order of America.*

[a] The voluntary withdrawal and the self-imposed segregation were shown to be a secondary reaction to a primary white pressure.

[b] See Introduction, Section 3.

2. THE "MEANING" OF THE CONCEPTS "CASTE" AND "CLASS"

When attempting to define our value premise for the discussion of social stratification in this chapter, we have first to take notice of the fact that Americans in general in all castes and classes are outspoken in their disapproval of distinctions in social status. Leaving out of consideration for the moment the several subordinate castes (Asiatics and Indians, as well as Negroes), whose members have specific reasons for favoring an equalitarian social philosophy, the visitor from abroad meets everywhere in America an ideology denouncing class differences which is more pronounced and sanctioned by more patriotic pride than perhaps anywhere else in Western civilization. This ideology has clearly a definite intent to mark off American ideals from those of the Old World.

Even the educated Americans exaggerate the amount of class discrimination in Europe, especially with regard to England, the old mother country.[3] This is an old tradition from colonial times. But it has been adopted and strengthened by wave after wave of immigrants who partly rationalized their uprooting and transference to this country by a belief in the rigidity of the class system in Europe and the free competition and boundless opportunities in the New World. As we have pointed out, this equalitarianism was—for the whites—given a most prominent place even in the ideology of the *ante-bellum* South.[a]

This ideology permeates popular thinking to the degree that Americans in general do not recognize their own actual class status. Most Americans —in all social classes—believe they are "middle class."[4] Perhaps this national theory is responsible also for the fact that American sociology (which generally must be given the highest ranking in the world) is weak and undeveloped in regard to the problems of social stratification. When recently a group of social anthropologists and sociologists stressed caste and class,[5] their colleagues everywhere in America exhibited an interest in the adventure rather out of proportion to the specific scientific novelties involved. Also the tendency to exaggerate the rigor of the American class and caste system, which is sometimes apparent in the work of the group of investigators led by Professor W. Lloyd Warner, is more easily understood when it is recalled that they are out to challenge a popular national theory with deep historical anchoring in the American Creed.[6]

Before we proceed, it is necessary to consider some reasons why the popular theory that America has little class stratification is more plausible and, indeed, also more true than superficial observation of the tremendous socio-economic differentiation would lead one to believe. Because of the settling of the colonies largely by religious dissenters, the Revolution against England, the expulsion and voluntary exile of the Loyalist Tories,

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 4.

and the adoption of a democratic Constitution, the country started out without the heritage of royalty, a titled aristocracy or a church hierarchy. The frontier, the mobility, the relatively democratic structure of higher education, and the democratic form of government were factors hindering the emergence of rigid class distinctions.[a] Even today a higher percentage of Americans in the highest positions of wealth, authority, and culture have near relatives on the farms or in the factories than do people of similar status in most other capitalistic countries. A democratic simplicity and a great deal of formal equality in everyday contacts have been characteristic of America. The "American dream" and an optimistic outlook on the future for every individual have been cherished.

On the other hand, there have been factors which have accentuated social distinctions. These include: the immense and unprecedented differences in income and wealth, which until recently have been left comparatively undisturbed by taxation; the relatively unrestricted property rights inherited from English common law, which not only allowed monopolistic exploitation on a huge scale of the natural resources of the new continent, but also permitted types of consumption directly intended to demarcate social distance;[b] the relatively small scope of public ownership and controls over consumption and production generally and particularly over natural resources such as minerals, waterfalls, forests, and the means of transportation; the relative lack of producers' and consumers' cooperatives; the absence, until recently, of organized efforts to equalize economic and educational opportunities of rural and urban localities and of the major regions of the country; the continuous mass immigration until recently and the practice of ruthlessly exploiting immigrants; the consequent cultural and racial fragmentation of the lower strata of the population; and the lack of organized and persistent popular movements.

Even though there are tremendous differences in wealth and social position among Americans, this is not the predominant influence in the national *ethos*. The American Creed has insisted upon condemning class differences, and it continues to do so in the face of the facts. Part of the paradox is solved, however, when we observe that *the American Creed does not demand equality of economic and social rewards independent of an individual's luck, ability and push. It merely demands equality of opportunity*. Abraham Lincoln expressed this in concrete and pertinent terms:

[a] It is symbolic, but not directly important, that there is a provision in the Constitution forbidding the acceptance of titles of nobility.

[b] The unrestrictive property laws have, for instance, made it possible for rich people in America actually to keep out the common people not only from the spots where their homes are built but from whole sections of country including roads, lake shores, fields and forests.

> What is the true condition of the laborer? I take it that it is best to leave each man free to acquire property as fast as he can. Some will get wealthy. I don't believe in a law to prevent a man from getting rich; it would do more harm than good. So while we don't propose any war upon capital, we do wish to allow the humblest man an equal chance to get rich with anybody else. When one starts poor, as most do in the race of life, free society is such that he knows he can better his condition; he knows that there is no fixed condition of labor for his whole life. . . . I want every man to have a chance—and I believe a black man is entitled to it—in which he can better his condition—when he may look forward and hope to be a hired laborer this year and the next, work for himself afterwards, and finally *to hire men* to work for him. That is the true system.[7]

The class differences denounced by the American Creed are the rigid and closed ones. The Creed demands *free competition,* which in this sphere of social stratification represents the combination of the two basic norms: "equality" and "liberty." And it is prepared to accept the outcome of competition—if it is really free—though there be some inequality. This demand is the essence of American economic and social liberalism. Behind it is the theory that lack of free competition results in social inefficiency. Rigid class distinctions, therefore, hamper social progress. And this gives us the clue to the more precise valuation of caste and class in the American Creed. A contemporary American sociologist, investigating the American minority problem, emphatically expresses and gives his allegiance to this national valuation:

> Democracy is an empty word unless it means the free recognition of ability, native and acquired, whether it be found in rich or poor, alien or native, black man or white. Minorities in the United States consume as much of our national wealth as they are permitted by group prejudices and productive capacity. When their productivity is artificially held far below their potentialities, the final result is not that there is more left for a dog-in-the-manger majority, but that a selfish majority is defeating its own purpose by limiting the total national productivity to the detriment of the welfare of American residents as a whole. The days are gone when one class in the western world may long prosper, at the expense of the masses.[8]

Our value premise in this chapter will be the American ideal of free competition and full integration in this sense. Social distinctions which hamper free competition are, from the viewpoint of the American Creed, wrong and harmful. From this value premise we derive our more precise definition of caste and class. The "meaning" of social status and of distinctions in social status is not an *a priori* evident matter. It varies from one culture to another depending upon what is commonly considered important. It is not quite the same in England, France, Sweden and America. It has to be defined, or otherwise we do not know exactly what we are observing and measuring. And it is usually best defined in terms of the *ethos* in the particular national culture we are studying.

In a vague way we mean, of course, somewhat the same thing by social status in all the capitalistic democratic civilizations within the Western sphere, and we know that social status is ordinarily connected with income, wealth, occupation, education, family background, home ownership. Owing primarily to the great immigration to America, nationality, length of residence, language, and religion are additional factors indicating or determining class in this nation. These characteristics have different relative importance for the class structure in different national cultures. And none of them gives the full "meaning" of class in any one of the Western cultures.

One school of thought defines class in terms of class feeling: the consciousness of the individuals of a class that they belong together in a corporate unity, and that they have different interests from individuals in other classes. This criterion—which has been worked out partly under the influence of Marx's class sociology and which is closely related to the idea of "class struggle"—is obviously inadequate at least as far as America is concerned. In America, particularly in the lower strata, class feeling, in this sense of interest solidarity, is undeveloped. It does not give the true meaning or importance of class to any ordinary American.

The Warner group defines class as "the largest group of people whose members have intimate social access to one another."[9] This suggestive definition seizes upon the fact that, even when class consciousness and class solidarity are not developed,[10] people do feel social distance and act it out in their everyday life by forming more or less cohesive groups for leisure time activity.[11] This group formation centers around the family and has the most important effects in controlling the behavior of individuals even outside the leisure time spheres of their life, and particularly in determining the social orientation given children and youth.[12]

This viewpoint is certainly wholesome as a reaction against the tendencies to use the most easily available class indices—income and occupation—as more than approximate measures of social class.[13] But it obviously overemphasizes the role of purely social contacts and under-emphasizes the importance of other criteria. It fails to consider such important things as the imperfect correlation of leisure groups, the continuity of the social status scale, the arbitrariness of class demarcations, the differential infrequency of social contacts, the difficulty of separating social from purely personal distances, the relation between social structures in all the various American communities, the desire of some individuals to gain a position of leadership in a lower class rather than rise to a higher one. The ordinary American—particularly the male American—will not recognize his own class concept in this definition.

Class is in America one of the "value-loaded" terms and has to be related to our value premise. *Classes and class differences in America are thus in*

this inquiry conceived of as the result of restriction of free competition and, consequently, of the lack of full social integration. The upper classes enjoy their privileges because the lower classes are restricted in their "pursuit of happiness" by various types of relative or absolute social monopolies. Attaching importance to family background instead of, or in addition to, merit is one type of monopoly and the basic one for the degree of closedness and rigidity of a class system. The ownership of wealth and income and, in America, national origin or religion become other causes of monopolies, if education is not absolutely democratic and if positions in the occupational hierarchy are not filled with regard to merit only. In view of the inequality of opportunity in getting an occupation, and since occupational positions carry incomes roughly in proportion to their status associations, it is possible, in an approximate way, to determine social class by considering income or occupation as the chief index of social monopoly.

This view of the American class structure also gives a nucleus of a theory for the causal relations between income, wealth, occupation, education, family background, home ownership, national origin, language and religion, on the one hand, and the integration of them to form a class system, on the other hand. In America, as elsewhere in the Western world, the development of democracy and of economic and social technology, as well as the growth of occupational organizations and their increasing stress on professionalism, all tend to make education more and more important as a vehicle for social mobility. Education gives respectability by itself and opens the road to higher occupations and incomes. The "self-made man" without educational background and professional training is disappearing even in America. Higher education is held a monopoly practically closed not only to older generations who have passed their chance—which is not contrary to the American Creed with its stress on equality of opportunity—but often also to youth without a certain minimum amount of wealth, parental push, and all the other factors associated with high social status.

In a similar way each of the other factors can be linked to the rest and used as an index of social status in general. Participation in cliques, clubs, associations—which Warner considers to be most important for determining one's class position—is itself a factor determined in large part by these other factors and contributes to their significance by emphasizing them, by serving as a source of information that helps one to make money, by encouraging a certain type of social behavior. Class consciousness may or may not be present in this system of interrelated factors determining class position, depending, among other things, upon how shut up in their pigeon holes the individuals of a class actually feel themselves. If class consciousness is present, it will tend to have reciprocal influences with other factors.

Caste, as distinguished from class, consists of such drastic restrictions

of free competition in the various spheres of life that the individual in a lower caste cannot, by any means, change his status, except by a secret and illegitimate "passing," which is possible only to the few who have the physical appearance of members of the upper caste. Caste may thus in a sense be viewed as the extreme case of absolutely rigid class. Such a harsh deviation from the ordinary American social structure and the American Creed could not occur without a certain internal conflict and without a system of false beliefs and blindnesses aided by certain mechanical controls in law and social structure. To the extent, however, that false beliefs in Negro inferiority are removed by education and to the extent that white people are made to see the degradations they heap on Negroes, to that extent will the American Creed be able to make its assault on caste.

Within each caste, people also feel social distance and restrict free competition, so that each caste has its own class system. The dividing line between two castes is by definition clear-cut, consciously felt by every member of each caste, and easily observable. No arbitrariness is involved in drawing it. The class lines, on the other hand, are blurred and flexible. The very fact that individuals move and marry between the classes, that they have legitimate relatives in other classes and that competition is not nearly so restricted in any sphere, blurs any division lines that are set. Lines dividing the classes are not defined in law or even in custom, as caste lines are. Therefore, it is probably most correct to conceive of the class order as a *social continuum*. In most communities, and certainly in the United States as a whole, class differences between the nearest individuals at *any* point of the scale cannot be easily detected. It is only differences between individuals further away from each other that are easily observable. This is true for practically every one of the factors that go to make up the class system—income, family background, social participation, and so on—and it is doubly true of the class system as a whole since the factors are not perfectly correlated. There are no "natural" class boundaries.

For scientific purposes, of course, we have to draw lines breaking up the social continuum of the class order. But they are arbitrary. It has been customary for a long time to divide the population into three classes: "upper class," "middle class," "lower class." It would be possible, however, to have four or five classes. The Warner group uses a system of six classes, dividing the conventional three classes each into two. For some purposes even more classes would be most convenient. But we should never imagine that there is any deeper reality in our measuring scale than there is in measuring a distance in kilometers instead of miles. If a conventional class division—for instance, the one in three classes—entered into the popular consciousness, people might come to think of themselves as organized in this way, which would undoubtedly have certain consequences for the actual class situation. In some European countries this might hold true. In America, where the

social class structure is dimly intellectualized by the general public—in spite of much observance in actual life of small and big status differences—this is not quite so true.[a]

The actual class stratification differs much between different communities. This is particularly true between rural and urban communities, between communities in the different historical regions of the country, and between the white and Negro castes. Different class divisions for each of these would be appropriate. If for convenience's sake the same scale of division is being used, this should not lead us to exaggerate the similarity between the different class structures.[b] What is regarded as the upper class in one community or caste, for example, would not be regarded as upper class in another community or caste, even if community associations and caste marks were changed.

3. THE CASTE STRUGGLE

The Marxian concept of "class struggle"—with its basic idea of a class of proletarian workers who are kept together in a close bond of solidarity of interests against a superior class of capitalist employers owning and controlling the means of production, between which there is a middle class bound to disappear as the grain is ground between two millstones—is in all Western countries a superficial and erroneous notion. It minimizes the distinctions that exist within each of the two main groups; it exaggerates the cleft between them, and, especially, the consciousness of it; and it misrepresents the role and the development of the middle classes. It is "too simple and sweeping to fit the facts of the class-system."[14] In America it is made still more inapplicable by the traversing systems of color caste. The concept of "caste struggle," on the other hand, is much more realistic. Archer talked of a "state of war" between Negroes and whites in the United States;[15] James Weldon Johnson spoke about "the tremendous struggle which is going on between the races in the South."[16] The caste

[a] An exception to this occurs at the very top of the social status scale in America, where each big city, and some smaller ones, has its "400" and its social register and where, in recent years, part of the nation has become aware of "America's 60 families."

[b] Even where there is no caste division in a community, it sometimes requires doing violence to facts to consider all members of that community on a single social status continuum. Social status, as we have seen, is made up of many components, which do not correlate perfectly. One's position on the income continuum, for example, may be higher than his position on the family background continuum. To get a single social status continuum these components need to be weighted and combined. But sometimes even then the members of a community who are found to have equivalent social status will be found to follow different lines of social advancement. It may be found, for example, that a physician, an army captain and an artist have about the same social status. While none looks down on any of the others, and all may be invited to the same party, their interests, associations, and lines of advancement are so dissimilar that it is more convenient, for most purposes, to consider the community as having several parallel social status continua.

distinctions are actually gulfs which divide the population into antagonistic camps. And this is a conscious fact to practically every individual in the system.

The caste line—or, as it is more popularly known, the color line—is not only an expression of caste differences and caste conflicts, but it has come itself to be a catalyst to widen differences and engender conflicts. To maintain the color line has, to the ordinary white man, the "function" of upholding the caste system itself, of keeping the "Negro in his place." The color line has become the bulwark against the whites' own adherence to the American Creed, against trends of improvement in Negroes' education, against other social trends which stress the irrationality of the caste system, and against the demands of the Negroes. The color line has taken on a mystical significance: sophisticated Southern whites, for example, will often speak with compassionate regret of the sacrifices the Negroes "have to" make and the discriminations to which they "have to" submit—"have to" in order to preserve the color line as an end in itself. This necessitates a constant vigilance. Southern whites feel a caste solidarity that permits no exception: some of them may not enforce the etiquette against all Negroes in all its rigor, but none will interfere with another white man when he is enforcing his superiority against a Negro. A white man who becomes known as a "nigger lover" loses caste and is generally ostracized if not made the object of violence. Even a Southern white child feels the caste solidarity and learns that he can insult an adult Negro with impunity.[17]

An extreme illustration of white solidarity in the South is given every time the whites, in a community where a lynching has occurred, conspire not to let the lynchers be indicted and sentenced.[18] In less spectacular cases it operates everywhere. Davis and Gardner give a good description of its psychology and its relation to Negro pressure:

> Although the whippings described above appear to be more or less routine punishments of Negroes for some specific violation of the caste rules, in many of them there is another factor involved. Periodically there seems to develop a situation in which a number of Negroes begin to rebel against the caste restrictions. This is not an open revolt but a gradual pressure, probably more or less unconscious, in which, little by little, they move out of the strict pattern of approved behavior. The whites feel this pressure and begin to express resentment. They say the Negroes are getting "uppity," that they are getting out of their place, and that something should be done about it. Frequently, the encroachment has been so gradual that the whites have no very definite occurrence to put their hands on; that is, most of the specific acts have been within the variations ordinarily permitted, yet close enough to the limits of variation to be irritating to the whites. Finally, the hostility of the whites reaches such a pitch that any small infraction will spur them to open action. A Negro does something which ordinarily might be passed over, or which usually provokes only a mild punishment, but the whites respond with violence. The Negro victim then becomes both a scapegoat and an object lesson for his group. He suffers

> for all the minor caste violations which have aroused the whites, and he becomes a warning against future violations. After such an outburst, the Negroes again abide strictly by the caste rules, the enmity of the whites is dispelled, and the tension relaxes. The whites always say after such an outburst: "We haven't had any trouble since then."[19]

In the North, a large proportion of the white population would never discriminate against Negroes, and there is a small number who stand up against violation of the Negro's rights even if the matter does not concern them personally. Since such friends of the Negroes are not ostracized, and are in fact looked up to as "fighters," the color line may be said to be broken at spots in the North. Further, as seen in the previous chapter, the color line in the North is not a part of the law or of the structure of buildings and so does not have the concreteness that it has in the South. But still there is a color line in the North: most white individuals and groups discriminate in one way if not in another; all feel a difference between themselves and Negroes even if the feeling is only that Negroes labor under a different history, different conditions, and a different problem, and no Negro can legitimately pass out of the Negro group. A crisis brings out the character of the color line in the North more distinctly: An example is provided by a struggle around a Negro housing project in Detroit that culminated in a minor riot in early 1942. The federal government (U.S.H.A.) built a housing project for Negro defense workers in Detroit and named it after the Negro poet, Sojourner Truth. The project was built in a mixed white and Negro neighborhood, and as the project neared completion the local whites—aided by the Ku Klux Klan—picketed the city hall in protest against Negro occupancy. The congressman for the district joined in the protest; the federal authorities temporarily abandoned the idea of giving the project to Negroes but later went back to their original intention. When Negroes tried to enter the homes for which they had paid rent, they were prevented from doing so by a white mob that used violence, and the Detroit police aided the mob and arrested Negroes. On the other hand, there was a nation-wide protest against this treatment of the Negroes, and even the common man of other Northern cities and towns could be heard to say that it was "pretty bad" when the police were beating Negroes and preventing them from moving into homes built for them. Public opinion helped to stiffen the backs of the federal authorities who, without this new and powerful backing, would probably have bowed to local sentiment. The caste line in the North exists, but has gaps.

The mechanism of the caste struggle in the South can be illuminated by observing more closely what happens when a person breaks caste solidarity. On the white side this exceptional person is called the "nigger lover." To be known by this characterization means social and economic death. Except for legal differences, such a person is virtually dealt with as a traitor in

fundamentally the same sense as a citizen who, during the war, is in friendly contact with the enemy. The "scab" who goes over to the employer during a strike is another appropriate comparison. The disgrace and the persecution of the "nigger lover," the traitor and the labor "scab" is fundamentally independent of their motives. These will usually and unquestionably be presumed to be base. No explanation is accepted. The reason is in all three cases that they are considered dangerous to the interests of the group. In recent years the "nigger lover" has generally been associated with the "reds," and the "Communists," terms that in all America and particularly in the South are given a wide and vague meaning.

Interracial workers in the South have to tread carefully in order not to invoke this terrible condemnation of being "nigger lovers." They know—and their Negro friends "understand"—that they will have to avoid breaking such social etiquette as would "offend public opinion." I have repeatedly been informed by white participants in interracial work about the fine diplomacy involved, about the compliant understanding of the Negroes, and of the tremendous importance of this matter both to their own welfare and to the success of their interracial undertakings. The Negroes in the South, knowing the whites' treatment of "nigger lovers" and the probability that they themselves would come in for a share, often show considerable shyness with a friendly white man, until they feel sure that he is going to leave the community soon and that he will not advertise his friendliness. The fear of being stamped as "nigger lovers" on the part of the white interracialists accounts for their preference to "work quietly" and for their reluctance to appeal to the white masses. By working only with the "best people of both races" they hope, and have actually succeeded, in gaining social respectability for their strivings. But they always stress that they are treading upon a volcano, even if white solidarity is apparently losing some of its fury.[a]

The Negro, from his side, is even more aware of the caste line than is the white man. Because Negroes are a numerically smaller element in the population of most communities, the average Negro has more contacts with whites than the average white man has with Negroes. Too, the contact usually means more to the Negro; it is the Negro who must be prepared to meet the white man in the way demanded by etiquette, and an insult rankles longer than an expression of ego-superiority. Further: the Negro thinks and talks more about his caste position than the white man, especially in the North, and thus has many more caste experiences in his imagination. Since the caste line restricts the Negro without providing him with many compensating advantages, he feels it not only surrounding him but also

[a] Some white interracial workers have not been able to avoid the designation of "nigger lover." But they manage to exist by living in the anonymity of cities and by getting their economic support from Northern philanthropy.

holding him back. Du Bois has expressed the Negro's feeling of caste in poetic language:

> It is difficult to let others see the full psychological meaning of caste segregation. It is as though one, looking out from a dark cave in a side of an impending mountain, sees the world passing and speaks to it; speaks courteously and persuasively, showing them how these entombed souls are hindered in their natural movement, expression, and development; and how their loosening from prison would be a matter not simply of courtesy, sympathy, and help to them, but aid to all the world. One talks on evenly and logically in this way but notices that the passing throng does not even turn its head, or if it does, glances curiously and walks on. It gradually penetrates the minds of the prisoners that the people passing do not hear; that some thick sheet of invisible but horribly tangible plate glass is between them and the world. They get excited; they talk louder; they gesticulate. Some of the passing world stop in curiosity; these gesticulations seem so pointless; they laugh and pass on. They still either do not hear at all, or hear but dimly, and even what they hear, they do not understand. Then the people within may become hysterical. They may scream and hurl themselves against the barriers, hardly realizing in their bewilderment that they are screaming in a vacuum unheard and that their antics may actually seem funny to those outside looking in. They may even, here and there, break through in blood and disfigurement, and find themselves faced by a horrified, implacable, and quite overwhelming mob of people frightened for their own very existence.[20]

The counterpart to white solidarity on the Negro side of the caste gulf is the "protective community." It is revealing of the nature of the system of superior and subordinate castes that this Negro cohesion is defensive instead of offensive, and that, compared with white solidarity, it is imperfect. The individual Negro, as a member of the lower caste, feels his weakness and will be tempted, on occasion, to split Negro solidarity by seeking individual refuge, personal security and advantages with the whites. Commenting upon the Atlanta riot in 1906, when 10 Negroes were killed and 60 wounded, Ray Stannard Baker remarked:

> It is highly significant of Southern conditions—which the North does not understand—that the first instinct of thousands of Negroes in Atlanta, when the riot broke out, was not to run away from the white people but to run to them. The white man who takes the most radical position in opposition to the Negro race will often be found . . . defending "his Negroes" in court or elsewhere. . . . Even Hoke Smith, Governor-elect of Georgia, who is more distrusted by the Negroes as a race probably than any other white man in Georgia, protected many Negroes in his house during the disturbance.[21]

The historical background of this attitude lies in the patriarchal relations between master and slave.[a] Its tenacity is explained by the power situation.

On the other hand, there has been a growing tendency on the part of

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

Negroes to fight back, to maintain solidarity in a crisis. Claude McKay wrote:

> If we must die, let it not be like hogs
> Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
> While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
> Making their mock at our accursed lot.
> If we must die, Oh let us nobly die,
> So that our precious blood may not be shed
> In vain; then even the monsters we defy
> Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!
>
> Oh, kinsmen! we must meet the common foe!
> Though far outnumbered let us show us brave,
> And for their thousand blows deal one death-blow!
> What though before us lies the open grave?
> Like men we'll face the murderous cowardly pack,
> Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back![22]

McKay tells how the poem was reprinted in every Negro publication of any consequence, that it was repeated in Negro clubs, cabarets, and at Negro mass meetings, and that ministers ended their sermons with it. The Negro statesman, James Weldon Johnson, in his *Negro Americans, What Now?* prompts his people:

> When we are confronted by the lawless, pitiless, brutish mob, and we know that life is forfeit, we should not give it up; we should, if we can, sell it, and at the dearest price we are able to put on it.[23]

Johnson is, of course, far from recommending force as a political means for Negroes. Just above the words quoted in the text he stated:

> We must condemn physical force and banish it from our minds. But I do not condemn it on any moral or pacific grounds. The resort to force remains and will doubtless always remain the rightful recourse of oppressed peoples. Our own country was established upon that right. I condemn physical force because I know that in our case it would be futile.[24]

But even today when the mob or the vigilantes are out for Negro blood in the South the ordinary effect will be that the Negroes in terror will individually stay where they are or run to seek escape. They will ordinarily not fight back.[a] Considering the power situation, they cannot be criticized. They are probably wise, not only individually but in the interest of their group.[25] In Northern cities, where the Negro population is more compact and

[a] Since the beginning of the Second World War, Southern Negroes have shown some inclination to organize and fight back when they are attacked. (See Chapter 27, Section 5; Chapter 35, Section 10; and Chapter 45, Section 7.)

where they have legal protection and the suffrage, the situation is becoming different. There they will fight.[a]

But Negro solidarity produced by caste pressure and appearing as a mutually protective cohesion has its function in more ordinary and everyday problems. Even then it has nothing of the strength and regularity of white solidarity. Perhaps we can best illustrate the difference by observing the Negro who breaks caste solidarity. The Negro counterpart to the "nigger lover" is the "white man's nigger." He is much less exceptional. In the Negro community there is no fuss about his motives: they are simply assumed to be the selfish ones of attempting to benefit from playing up to the whites. His crime is not that he "fraternizes" with individuals of the other caste, but, quite the contrary, that he submits to excessive subservience and that he takes orders and carries them out even against the interests of his own caste. He will usually not be universally condemned by the Negro community. There are regularly other Negroes who would be prepared to take the same role or are actually doing it. In a way he is only exaggerating the "natural" role of the lower caste individual. To the white man he is a "good" Negro, continuing the cherished tradition from slavery. He puts the white man into his "natural" aristocratic role and becomes rewarded with condescending benevolence.[b]

The disapproval of the "white man's nigger" in the Negro community will depend upon the relative material and cultural independence of the community and usually varies directly with the social and educational status of the reacting individual Negro. It never approaches the rage, on the other side of the caste line, against a "nigger lover." His white protection will make the "white man's nigger" powerful. I have observed in several instances, both in the South and in the North, that individuals who are notorious as "white man's niggers" or "Uncle Toms" have a status in the Negro community for this very reason. Negroes in general, even if they dislike them, and, in a sense, despise them, are nevertheless inclined to envy them and give them deference at the same time. Negroes ordinarily, it must be remembered, depend upon the good-will and help of whites in most matters. When Negroes want something done in their community, they will send their "Uncle Toms" as intermediaries. They will often do so even if they know in the individual case that those persons are thoroughly unreliable from the Negro point of view and, perhaps, that they actually act as spies and stool pigeons for the whites. The Negroes know that they will not succeed if they try to ignore the white man's trusted Negroes. The "white man's nigger" exists in the North as well as in the South, but he is rarer and has less influence in his own caste. In the South he is sometimes an humble uneducated servant or ex-servant,

[a] See Chapter 27, Section 5.

[b] See Chapter 34.

but may also be a businessman, a landowner, a school principal or a college president. He is then the white-appointed "leader" of his race.[a]

4. CROSSING THE CASTE LINE

Another interesting side glance on the American caste system is provided by observing the phenomenon called "passing." To cross the caste line from the white side would be a comparatively easy matter, since in America a Negro is not necessarily supposed to have any Negro features at all.[b] The passer would also be fairly unsuspected, as it is generally assumed that nobody would want to descend in caste status. And there is no reason—except race pride emerging as a reflection of and a reaction against white superiority—why Negroes would resent such passing. Passing from the white to the Negro caste occurs extremely rarely.[26]

For all practical purposes "passing" means that a Negro becomes a white man, that is, moves from the lower to the higher caste. In the American caste order, this can be accomplished only by the deception of the white people with whom the passer comes to associate and by a conspiracy of silence on the part of other Negroes who might know about it. A few persons with half of their ancestry Negro are known to have passed, and, of course, passing is much easier for those with smaller proportions of Negro ancestry.[c] Even if there are probably quite a substantial number of Ameri-

[a] For a discussion of Negro leadership, see Part IX.

[b] See Chapter 5, Sections 1 and 7.

[c] Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer, "The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation," in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published, manuscript pp. 82-83 and 100 ff.; and Caroline Bond Day, *A Study of Negro-White Families in the United States* (1932), pp. 10-11.

I have made numerous observations which discount the common notion that Southern whites are particularly trained to identify a Negro by his physical appearance. My opinion on this point, which is contrary to that of most Negro and white experts with whom I have discussed the matter, becomes more reasonable when it is recognized that, though Southern white people undoubtedly see more Negroes, they constantly see them in the relatively rigidly defined caste role of the Southern Negro. In the marginal case, when a strange person's physical appearance leaves room for doubt, they probably recognize the Negro mostly from his bearing and his way of doing things. If, however, a Negro throws off the Negro role and starts to walk, talk, and behave as an ordinary white man, he must, I believe, have quite distinct Negro features to be recognized as a Negro in the South, at least in the first encounter. On the other hand, the fact that Negroes in the South are trained to appear and behave in a very different way from white people must raise a great subjective and objective barrier for every Southern or Southern-reared Negro who would like to pass in the South or in the North.

Once I traveled by car for a considerable time all over the Lower South with a Negro colleague who was reared and trained in the West and the North to be a very "normal" person judged by white standards of behavior. As was, of course, necessary, we separated for the night, I staying in a hotel and he somewhere in the protective Negro community. We carried with us a portable dictaphone for recording our interviews, and we needed to work together for some hours now and then in my hotel room. My colleague, who has

can Negroes passing over permanently to the white caste every year,[a] a much greater number would be able to pass if they wanted to depart from the Negro community and were prepared to take the personal costs and the risks involved.

Passing requires anonymity and is, therefore, restricted to the larger cities where everyone does not know everyone else. A Negro from a small community can pass only if he leaves that community. Only a small portion of all passing is intentional and complete. There is a considerable amount of inadvertent and nonvoluntary passing. This must be particularly true in the

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some unmistakable Negro features, found soon that it was not necessary to go through all the ordinary inconveniences with the hotel manager to get up to my hotel room. He just walked straight in, kept his hat on his head and behaved as a normal white person of the educated class. Nobody bothered him. My explanation is that the ordinary white Southerner, if he sees a man walking into a hotel and carrying himself with assurance and ease, actually *does not see his color.* He, literally, "does not believe his eyes." Behind the Southern whites' not seeing a Negro in my friend, might also—unconsciously—be the realization of all the trouble it would mean for them to effectuate the caste rules, if they recognized facts, and the great risk they incurred if they were mistaken.

My general conclusion is that the white Southerner, being accustomed to seeing all Negroes in a subservient caste role and living in a society where the inconvenience and risk involved in telling a person that he is a Negro are so considerable, will have greater difficulties in recognizing a Negro who steps out of his caste role. This hypothesis could be tested by properly controlled experiments.

I had once another experience which throws light on the same problem from the sex angle. The N.A.A.C.P. had, in 1939, their annual convention in Richmond, Virginia. I visited the meetings and took part in a boat excursion which ended the convention. On board I approached a group of officers and crew (whites) who held themselves strictly apart, looking on the Association members who had crowded their ship for the day with an unmistakable mixture of superiority, dislike, embarrassment, interest and friendly humor. My advance was first received coldly and deprecatingly—as I understood later, because they assumed I was a Negro. But when they had become aware of my foreign accent, and I had told them that I was a stranger who by chance had come on the boat, just for the excursion, they were most friendly and entertained me for more than an hour by telling me everything about the Negro and the Negro problem in America. During the course of our conversation I remarked that there were apparently a lot of white people, too, on the boat. At first they just laughed at my remark and insisted that all persons present were Negroes. Some Negroes are so fair, they told me, that only Southerners, who know them by lifelong intimate association can distinguish them from whites. I insisted and pointed to Mr. Walter White, the secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. and some other "white" Negroes, and actually succeeded in drawing an acknowledgment that he and some other men (who I knew were all Negroes) were, indeed, white upon closer observation. One of my interlocutors went to have a closer look at the persons I had pointed out, and came back and confirmed authoritatively that they were indeed white. "There are some 'nigger lovers' in the North and we have a few down here, too," he commented. When, however, I then pointed to a lady (whom I knew to be white) and intimated that she might be white, the whole company dismissed my idea as nothing less than absurd and, indeed, insulting. "No white woman would be together with niggers." Their theories of "white womanhood" obviously blinded them in a literal sense.

[a] See Chapter 5, Section 7.

North where segregation is not so complete and is actually illegal. Much passing is partial and sporadic, as when Negroes (in Washington, for example) pass for whites to attend theaters, lectures, concerts and receptions. To some extent such passing breaks the cultural and spiritual isolation of the Negro community and favors the dissemination of broader ideas and patterns into the Negro community.[27] In the Deep South passing for such purposes is so dangerous that it is much less common. Another type of temporary passing is that done by Negro youths to secure entrance to educational institutions where Negroes are not allowed, or where they are allowed but feel more comfortable appearing as whites. I have come across several such cases, all in the North. In the South the risk incurred would ordinarily be too great.

In the Northern and Border states it seems to be relatively common for light-skinned Negroes to "pass professionally" but preserve a Negro social life. Negro girls have practically no chance of getting employment as stenographers or secretaries, salesclerks in department stores, telephone operators, outside the establishments run by Negroes for Negroes.[a] In most communities their chances are slight even to become regular teachers, social workers, or the like, if they do not conceal their Negro ancestry. This practice is fairly widespread. Some establishments take the precautions through their personnel departments of making home visits and other inquiries in order not to get Negroes in their employment. Not only in these female middle class occupations but in all male and female trades where Negroes are excluded, there must be a similar incentive to attempt to "pass professionally." Since the middle and upper class occupations are almost all closed to Negroes, these occupations—especially medicine, dentistry, journalism, acting, in addition to those mentioned above—are most pervaded by "professional passers." The retention of a Negro social life while passing for white occupationally involves considerable difficulties in all sorts of personal relations with associates in the place of work, and there is a great risk of being found out. This explains why the practice seems to be so much more common in the North and the Border states than in the real South. In none of the regions, it should be emphasized, is it possible for the bulk of the Negroes to pass, because of their obviously Negroid physical appearance.

Professional passing often seems to be a transitional stage of life. Probably in most cases these passers voluntarily retreat from the higher caste's occupational life by getting married or employed in the segregated sphere, or they become detected after some time and have to flee the ground with shame. Sometimes professional passing is, however, only a step on the way to complete and permanent passing. By cutting off their Negro relations entirely they are able to decrease the risk of being exposed. But their fuller

[a] See Chapter 14.

participation in the life of the higher caste will mean that they will be hit the harder if they are found out.

In view of the advantages to be had by passing, it is not difficult to explain why Negroes pass, professionally or completely. It is more difficult, however, to explain why Negroes do not pass over to the white race more often than they actually do. On this point, as on all others concerning this necessarily secretive matter, our actual knowledge is most inadequate. It is probable that race pride and a missionary spirit of wanting to remain in the lower caste in order to fight its cause or otherwise work for its elevation might be a prominent motive for certain individuals. But for the great majority of passable Negroes such an explanation is not plausible and is seldom advanced. A young and gifted college graduate among my Negro friends, who had "passed" in college but later accepted a teaching position as a Negro in his home city, gave, upon my questioning, the following reasons why he preferred not to pass: (1) When passing as a white (with some Indian blood), he could never overcome a slight feeling of strain and nervousness when in company; he would have to make forced explanations concerning his family; and he always felt suspicion around him—probably more suspicion, he remarked, than there actually was. (2) Because of his teaching position and his "good looks" he is "tops" in the Negro community; while if he were white in a similar job, he would be one among many and far from the social ceiling. (3) Because his profession was one in which there are few qualified Negro workers, he got his position more easily as a Negro than he would have as a white man. He was aware that he could advance further in the white world, but observed that even a large advance as a white man would carry much less esteem than a correspondingly smaller advance as a Negro. (4) Social life was so much more pleasant in the higher ranks of the Negro community than in the corresponding ranks of the white community: a Negro had so many more intimate associates; there were so many more social affairs and family entertainments going on in the Negro community—due probably, he observed, to the Negro's reaction against segregation in public places.

I am inclined to believe that this young man's account of his reasons for preferring to be an upper class Negro, protected by the professional monopolies enjoyed by this class and surrounded by the social pleasantness of Negro society, rather than to be an isolated middle class white person with a minimum of initial contacts, was not only an honest statement on his own part, but is also fairly representative of many other passable young Negroes' motivation to stay Negro. Particularly important is his observation that light-skinned Negroes have great advantages in the Negro community and that a disproportionate number of them are in the upper strata or have hopes of getting there.[a]

[a] See Chapter 32.

Light-skinned and "good featured" Negro women are preferred as marriage partners by Negro men, while their chances on the white marriage market as lonely women without a known or presentable family must be slight. This explains why Negro women pass even less frequently than do Negro men.[28] Established personal relations, from family bonds to less intimate but still not meaningless relations, will to a degree always tie a Negro to his own caste, and will tend to do so more and more the older and better established he becomes. Quite often marriage will put a stop to all dreams of passing, since it is less likely that the mate is also capable of passing. The unfamiliarity with life conditions and expected patterns of behavior on the other side of the gulf also acts as a deterrent. As Wirth points out, this particular factor is likely to decline in importance as educational and cultural opportunities for Negroes widen.[29] Negroes believe that social life is generally more pleasant among Negroes than among whites: ". . . white people don't begin to have the good times that Negroes do. They're stiff and cold. They aren't sociable. They don't laugh."[30] Even if such pronouncements are often only compensating rationalizations, they have probably enough background in personal conviction to be of real importance in motivation. Finally, there is the important factor of inertia: complete passing is a major step that requires careful planning and decisive action, and it is not surprising that many Negroes who could take this step do not.

To the whites, passing is an insult and a social and racial danger. Most whites have heard about passing, but, for natural reasons, do not know any specific cases. Most Negroes, particularly in the upper strata, on the contrary, know of many other Negroes, sometimes half a hundred or more, who pass as whites. As they usually do not expose them, this shows a significant difference between the two castes in attitude toward passing. Many Negroes obviously take a sort of vicarious satisfaction out of the deception of the whites. It is a big joke to them. Some show envy. This is particularly apparent among darker Negroes who cannot think of passing. Negroes realize, of course, that as a mass they cannot find an escape from the lower caste by passing. Further, they are increasingly brought to the compensatory feeling of race pride:

> The Negro community is built around the idea of adjustment to being a Negro, and it rejects escape into the white world. Community opinion builds up a picture of whites as a different kind of being, with whom one associates but does not become intimate. Without much conscious instruction, the child is taught that his first loyalties are to the Negro group. He may criticize Negroes and even dislike them, but he is a Negro and must not even wish to be otherwise. This doctrine is reinforced by stories of the meanness and cruelty of white people. To wish to be white is a sacrifice of pride. It is equivalent to a statement that Negroes are inferior, and, consequently, that the youth himself is inferior.[31]

This, however, does not necessarily mean that a Negro becomes willing to disclose another Negro who is passing. The spirit of the protective community will usually work to help the ex-member to pass. If a passing Negro is disclosed by other Negroes, the cause is ordinarily not Negro solidarity but rather private envy, of which there is a great deal in a frustrated lower caste.

As a social phenomenon, passing is so deeply connected with the psychological complexes—built around caste and sex—of both groups that it has come to be a central theme of fiction and of popular imagination and story telling. The adventures of the lonesome passer, who extinguishes his entire earlier life, breaks all personal and social anchorings, and starts a new life where he has to fear his own shadow, are alluring to all and have an especially frightening import to whites. There is a general sentimentality for the unhappy mulatto—the "marginal man" with split allegiances and frustrations in both directions[a] which is especially applied to the mulatto who passes. From all we know about personality problems there is probably, as yet, substantial truth in the picture of the passer which our literary phantasy paints for us. But since there has been little observation of the personality problems of the passers, the picture of their difficulty is hard to define.

[a] See Chapter 32, Section 6.

CHAPTER 32

THE NEGRO CLASS STRUCTURE

1. The Negro Class Order in the American Caste System[a]

The caste principle, as insisted upon and enforced by white society, would undoubtedly be best satisfied by a classless Negro community wherein all Negroes in all respects—educationally, occupationally, and economically—were in the lowest bracket and placed under the lowest class of whites. That "all Negroes are alike" and should be treated in the same way is still insisted upon by many whites, especially in the lower classes, who actually feel, or fear, competition from the Negroes and who are inclined to sense a challenge to their status in the fact that some Negroes rise from the bottom even if they professionally and socially keep entirely within the Negro community.[1] The popular theories rationalizing and justifying the caste order to the whites have been framed to fit this principle of a homogeneous lower caste. None of the Jim Crow legislation distinguishes between classes of Negroes.

This absolutistic principle has, however, never been fully realized even in the South. Already in slavery society there came to be a social stratification within the slave community, as house servants and skilled mechanics acquired a level of living and culture and enjoyed a social prestige different from that of the field slaves. The blood ties of the former group of slaves with the white upper class widened this difference. There may also have been some difference in status between the slaves owned by the aristocracy and the slaves owned by the small farmers.[2] Contemporary sources give us the impression that the hatred between Negro slaves and "poor white trash" was largely due to this social stratification in the Negro group.[3] It was mainly the superior slave who could be a challenge and danger to the poor whites, and it was he who, on his side, would have the social basis for a contemptuous attitude toward them. The early emergence of a

[a] In this chapter we shall confine ourselves to the relation between caste and *Negro* classes. This does not mean that caste has no effect on the white class structure. Attitudes and actions toward Negroes have always differentiated the various white classes in the South. (See Chapter 28, Section 8.) Also there have been concrete effects: for example, when practically all Negroes were below them during slavery, the lower class whites probably felt less social distance from upper class whites in the South than today when they realize that many Negroes have a class status above them.

class of free Negroes, which at the time of Emancipation had grown to one-half million individuals, strengthened this trend toward a social stratification of the Negro population in America. All sorts of restrictive laws were enacted and also partly enforced to keep the free Negroes down. But in spite of this, their condition of life and social status was different from that of the masses of slaves.[4]

After Emancipation this development continued. The measures to keep the Negroes disfranchised and deprived of full civil rights and the whole structure of social and economic discrimination are to be viewed as attempts to enforce the caste principle against the constitutional prescripts and against the tendency of some Negroes to rise out of complete dependence. The Constitution—and the partial hold of the American Creed even on the Southern whites' own minds—prevented effective caste legislation. All laws, even in the South, had to be written upon the pretense of equality. Education for Negroes was kept backward, but it was given in some measure and gradually improved. Some Negroes became landowners, often under the protection of individual white patronage. And, most important of all, social segregation itself—which has always been maintained as the last absolute barrier—afforded protection for a rising number of Negro professionals and businessmen. Negroes had to be ministered to, their educational institutions had to be manned, their corpses had to be washed and buried, and, as white people did not wish to take on these tasks and as Negroes gradually found out their own needs and chances, a Negro middle and upper class developed to perform these functions, and thus drew its vitality from the very fact of American caste. The dividing line between the two castes did not crack, however. Thus, this dual system of social class developed, *one class system on each side of the caste line.*

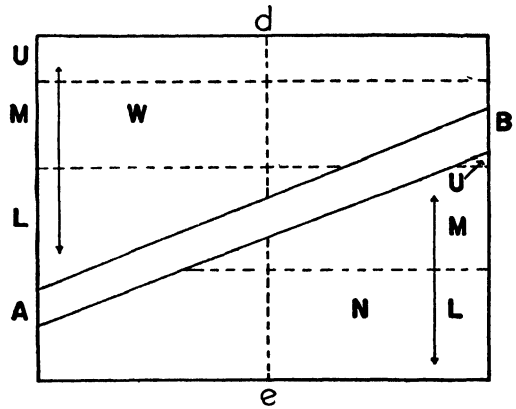
Robert E. Park has schematized this development as follows:

> Originally race relations in the South could be rather accurately represented by a horizontal line, with all the white folk above, and all the Negro folk below. But at present these relations are assuming new forms, and in consequence changing in character and meaning. With the development of industrial and professional classes within the Negro race, the distinction between the races tends to assume the form of a vertical line. On one side of this line the Negro is represented in most of the occupational and professional classes; on the other side of the line the white man is similarly represented. The situation *was* this:
>
> All white
>
> ———
>
> All colored
>
> It is *now* this:
>
> | *White* | | *Colored* |
> |---|---|---|
> | Professional occupation | : | Professional occupation |
> | Business occupation | : | Business occupation |
> | Labor | : | Labor |

> The result is to develop in every occupational class professional and industrial bi-racial organizations. Bi-racial organizations preserve race distinction, but change their content. The distances which separate the races are maintained, but the attitudes involved are different. *The races no longer look up and down: they look across.*[5]

This description contains—as the author is probably well aware—several overstatements. The caste line is not vertical but rather "diagonal" (that is, a sloped line). The line has moved, and is moving, from horizontal, but it is still far away from the vertical position, as Warner has shown.[6] But Warner is not correct either, since he thinks of the caste line as a straight one, implying that the Negro group gets proportionately smaller

WARNER'S DIAGRAM[1]



[1] W. Lloyd Warner, Introduction to *Deep South*, by Allison Davis, B. B. Gardner and M. R. Gardner (1941), p. 10.

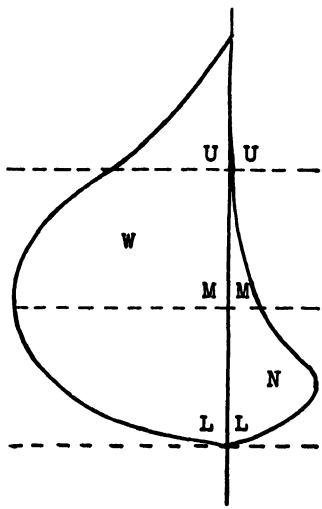
Legend: W—White. N—Negro. U—Upper Class. M—Middle Class. L—Lower Class. AB—Caste Line. de—Ultimate Position of Caste Line.

as one goes up the social status scale. Actually, the Negro middle and upper class are *more than proportionately* smaller than their lower class. Du Bois brings this out clearly.

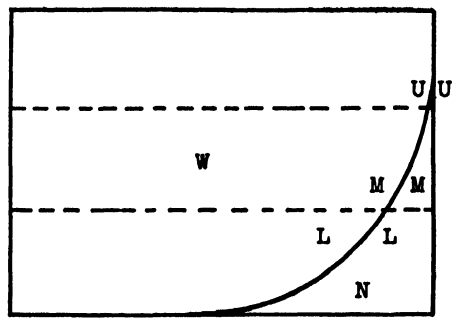
> It goes without saying that while Negroes are thus manifestly of low average culture, in no place nor at any time do they form a homogeneous group. Even in the country districts of the lower South, Allison Davis likens the group to a steeple with wide base tapering to a high pinnacle. This means that while the poor, ignorant, sick and anti-social form a vast foundation, that upward from that base stretch classes whose highest members, although few in number, reach above the average not only of the Negroes but of the whites, and may justly be compared to the better-class white culture. The class structure of the whites, on the other hand, resembles a tower bulging near the center with the lowest classes small in number as compared with the middle and lower middle classes; and the highest classes far more numerous in proportion than those among blacks.[7]

We can diagram the caste-class situation in two ways: one, in terms of absolute numbers after the manner of the ordinary population pyramid—as in Du Bois' description; two, in terms of percentages at each social level—after the pattern of a box diagram. The latter diagram brings out the line, in temporal changes in which Warner and others have been interested. The pyramid and the line are drawn hypothetically—it would take an enormous amount of work to draw them with an approximation of empirical quantitative accuracy. But as to their general shape there can be

ABSOLUTE NUMBERS OF WHITES AND NEGROES AT EACH LEVEL OF SOCIAL STATUS



PERCENTAGE OF WHITES AND NEGROES AT EACH LEVEL OF SOCIAL STATUS



Legend: W—White. N—Negro. U—Upper Class. M—Middle Class. L—Lower Class.

little doubt: the pyramid is heavier at the bottom on the Negro side than on the white side, and the line is a *diagonal curve*, not a straight line diagonal.[8]

There is at least one weakness of all diagrams of this sort: they assume that the class structures of the two castes are exactly comparable, which they are not. On the same class level—that is, assuming white and Negro individuals with the same education, occupation, income, and so on—the white does *not* "look across" the caste line upon the Negro, but he definitely *looks down* upon him.[a] And this fundamental fact of caste is

[a] On the other hand, *within the Negro community*, the upper class Negro is placed higher than is the white man of comparable income, education, and so on, in the white community. Du Bois observed this:

materialized in a great number of political, judicial, and social disabilities imposed upon Negroes somewhat independent of their class, and in the rigid rule that the Negro is not allowed to pass legitimately from the one side to the other.

The diagonal and curved character of the caste line and this fact that whites can look down on Negroes of the same income, educational, or other level, form one of what Dollard calls the major "gains" of the caste order to the whites.[9] The difference between the South and the North and, in a degree, between rural and urban communities is, from this point of view, that the caste line tends to be somewhat more vertical in the latter than in the former regions and localities. The caste status of the Negro in the North and in cities generally has fewer rigid restrictions of free competition. In this direction the class system has been continually moving in the South and—except for the transitional extraordinary pressure of recent mass immigration—also in the North.

We have seen that Southern whites, especially in the lower brackets, often refuse to recognize class differences in the Negro community and insist upon distinguishing only between "bad niggers," "good niggers," and "uppity niggers," and that they, until recently, have succeeded in retaining a legal and political system which corresponds most closely to this view. But this uncompromising attitude is disappearing under the pressure of the facts of Negro social differentiation. Thus the actual import of caste is gradually changing as the Negro class structure develops—except in the fundamental restriction that no Negro is allowed to ascend into the white caste.

2. CASTE DETERMINES CLASS

While the Negro class structure has developed contrary to the caste principle and actually implies a considerable modification of caste relations, fundamentally this class structure is a function of the caste order. We have repeatedly had to refer to this important fact that, while the caste order has held the Negro worker down, it has at the same time created petty monopolies for a tiny Negro middle and upper class. Negroes understand this, although they seldom discuss it openly.[a]

". . . a white Philadelphian with $1,500 a year can call himself poor and live simply. A Negro with $1,500 a year ranks with the richest of his race and must usually spend more in proportion than his white neighbor in rent, dress and entertainment." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* [1899], p. 178.)

[a] The author once attended a meeting in Detroit where one of the national Negro leaders gave a speech. The church where the meeting was held was filled with professionals and business people of the local Negro upper class with a sprinkling of humbler people. After the address, there was some discussion, and the eternal question of Negro strategy was brought up. The speaker in answering began to give the standard arguments for a cautious approach. In the middle of his answer he seemed to sense the futility of the ques-

The lower caste monopolies are strongest in some of the professions and in the service occupations near the professions (funeral work, beauty work, retail trade, and so on); some monopolistic leeway is also afforded small-scale Negro banking, insurance and real estate. For the rest of the occupations, the caste barriers block the way for Negroes.[a] It is thus understandable that, next to the small size of the middle and upper class, the Negro class system has its most characteristic feature in the fact that, on the whole, capitalist business and wealth mean so relatively little, and that general education and professional training mean so relatively much, as criteria for attaining upper class status.[b] This is evidently not due to a lower valuation of wealth among Negroes than among whites. Rather independent of the respectability of the source, wealth is as sure—and perhaps even a little more sure—to give upper class status among American Negroes as it does among whites. But there is so little of it in the Negro community. And education is such a high value to this group, which has to struggle for it, that it is understandable why education is more important, relatively, for Negro status than for white status. Among the consequences of the relative prestige of education among Negroes is that practically all Negro college teachers are upper class, and that most of the national Negro leaders are academic men. In both these respects, the American Negro world is strikingly different from the American white world.

One of the consequences of the small range of wealth and occupation in the Negro community, and of the importance of education, is that there is probably less social distance between bottom and top among Negroes than there is among whites. It is not uncommon for a Negro boy—especially in the North—to rise from the lowest to the highest social status in one generation. While a white boy could rise the same absolute social distance in the white caste during his lifetime—that is, he could attain the same increase in education, wealth, and manners—this distance would not appear so great because he would still be far from the top. This fact has tended to keep the various Negro classes in better contact with each other, except for the declining mulatto aristocracies, than is the case with the white classes. Other factors—such as caste pressure, the northward migration, and the

tion; he smiled and remarked that perhaps segregation should not be bullied so without qualifications: "How would you all feel if you awakened tomorrow morning and found yourself in the wild sea of white competition?" He cashed in a big laugh, somewhat nervous and bashful, but relieving.

[a] See Chapters 13 and 14.

[b] Two other characteristics that are rather unique make for upper class status in the Negro world: caste leadership and achievement in the white world. Marcus Garvey, Oscar DePriest, and Father Divine, on the one hand, and Joe Louis, Paul Robeson, and Rochester, on the other hand, have high status and would have had it even if they were neither rich nor educated.

existence of national organizations fighting for the whole caste—have had a similar effect.

Another characteristic of the Negro class structure—which would superficially seem contradictory to the previously mentioned trait, but is not on closer examination—is the smaller amount of pride in individual climbing among upper class Negroes. It is my impression that, in a sense, the typical Negro upper class person attaches more importance to family background than the typical Yankee. At least he is less likely to brag about his lowly origin. In this, as in many other respects, the American Negro seems more similar to the Southern white man, who also places a lower estimation on the self-made man. I should imagine that this is not only a cultural pattern borrowed from Southern white society but also, and more fundamentally, a trait connected with the fact that both Negroes and Southern whites are, though in different degrees, disadvantaged groups and do not feel the security of the Yankee, who can afford to brag about having started as newsboy or shoeshiner.[a]

Also important for the spirit of the Negro class structure is the fact that such a relatively large portion of the Negro middle class groups in all regions of America have positions in personal service of whites. In Southern cities some of the upper class Negroes still engage in some of the service occupations, as they did even in the Northern cities a generation ago. A great number of their sons and daughters have proceeded into the upper class professions. I have also been struck by the relatively high proportion of upper class professionals who during their college years, for lack of other employment opportunities open to Negroes, have done service work for whites. It appears plausible that both the refined and worldly-wise manners, especially in the older generation of upper class Negroes, and their often conservative social and economic views are not unconnected with such earlier experiences in personal service of well-to-do whites.[10]

An individual's relation to white society is of utmost importance for his social status in the Negro community. This aspect of the Negro class structure will be considered in the next part on Negro leadership and concerted action.

3. COLOR AND CLASS

The American order of color caste has even more directly stamped the Negro class system by including relative whiteness as one of the main

[a] A special reason why upper class Negroes often make so much of their family background is that if they had free Negro or upper class white ancestry it puts them above the hated slave background.

A few Negroes who have risen very high and who are secure may—like the white man—boast of their lowly origin. Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington did this.

factors determining status within the Negro community. This has a history as old as class stratification itself among Negroes. Mixed bloods have always been preferred by the whites in practically all respects. They made a better appearance to the whites and were assumed to be mentally more capable. They had a higher sales value on the slave market.[11] The select classes of trained mechanics and house servants who early came in closer contact with the dominant culture of the whites seem largely to have been drawn from the group of mixed bloods, and their superior training further raised their status.

A sexual selection added its influence to this occupational differentiation. The fair-skinned house girls were more frequently used as mistresses by men of the planter class than were the plantation hands. They became the mothers of successive generations of even whiter children. Many white fathers freed their illegitimate mulatto offspring and often also the children's mothers, or gave them the opportunity to work out their freedom on easy terms. Some were helped to education and sent to the free states in the North. Some were given a start in business or helped to acquire land.

For this reason the free Negro population everywhere contained a greater proportion of mixed bloods than did the slave population.[12] The mulattoes followed the white people's valuation and associated their privileges with their lighter color. They considered themselves superior to the black slave people and attributed their superiority to the fact of their mixed blood. The black slaves, too, came to hold this same valuation. The white people, however, excluded even the fairest of the mulatto group from their own caste—in so far as they did not succeed in passing—and the mulattoes, in their turn, held themselves more and more aloof from the black slaves and the humbler blacks among the free Negroes; thus the mulattoes tended early to form a separate intermediary caste of their own. Although they were constantly augmented by mulatto ex-slaves, they seldom married down into the slave group. In such cities as New Orleans, Charleston, Mobile, Natchez, and later Washington, highly exclusive mulatto societies were formed which still exist, to a certain extent, today. Color thus became a badge of status and social distinction among the Negro people.

Emancipation destroyed any possibility there might have been for the mulatto group to form an intermediary caste of their own in America as a substitute for their not being able to get into the white group.[a] Even their upper class position lost in relative exclusiveness as their monopoly of freedom was extinguished and white philanthropy began to aid the recently emancipated slave masses. The new definition of the Negro problem in the

[a] In South Africa, the mulatto group holds itself as a separate caste, even though the blacks are not slaves. A similar situation exists in many other countries. Our statement refers to conditions in the United States only.

South and the increased antagonism on the white side toward all Negroes who were "out of their place" made the whites less inclined to draw a distinction between light and dark Negroes.

But at the same time Emancipation broadened the basis for a Negro upper class and increased the possibilities for this class relatively even more than for the Negro masses themselves. What there was in the Negro people of "family background," tradition of freedom, education and property ownership was mostly in the hands of mulattoes. They became the political leaders of the freedmen during Reconstruction, as well as their teachers, professionals and business people. Compared with the newly freed slave population they had a tremendous head-start. In the social stratification of the Negro community their social distance toward the Negro masses perpetuated itself. Darker Negroes who rose from the masses to distinction in the Negro community by getting an education or by conducting successful business enterprises showed an almost universal desire to marry light-skinned women and so to become adopted members of the light-colored aristocracy and to give their children a heritage of lighter color. Blackness of skin remained undesirable and even took on an association of badness.[13]

Without any doubt a Negro with light skin and other European features has in the North an advantage with white people when competing for jobs available for Negroes.[14] It is less true in the South, particularly in the humbler occupations. The whites continue to associate the nearness to their own physical type with superior endowments and cultural advancement, and the preponderance of fair-skinned Negroes in the upper strata seems to give this prejudice a basis in fact. Perhaps of even greater importance is the fact that the Negro community itself has accepted this color preference.[15] In conversation Negroes often try to deny or to minimize this fact. But there are a number of indications which an observer cannot help recording. For one thing, many individual Negroes will be found, when speaking about themselves, to rate their own color lighter than it actually is, but practically none to rate it darker.[16] The desire on the part of Negro women of all shades and in all social classes to bleach their skin and straighten their hair—observed decades ago by Ray Stannard Baker and William Archer[17]—has been the basis for some of the most important Negro businesses and some of the largest fortunes. Cosmetics for such purposes are most prominently advertised in the Negro press. The pictures of the social lions displayed on the social pages of the Negro newspapers give evidence in the same direction, as does listening to the undertones of conversation in Negro society even when an outsider is present.

Cliques, clubs, and social life in general seem to be permeated by this color preference.[18] The color problem enters into the Negro home, where children show differences in shades, and into the schools.[19] In marriage

selection, as we have had occasion to mention previously, it becomes a dominant factor. It is impossible not to observe that in the higher classes the wives regularly tend to be of a lighter shade of color than the husbands.[20] For a dark Negro woman, especially in the middle or upper classes, the chances of getting a husband are fewer than for a dark Negro man: men achieve more on the basis of merit and also take the initiative in marriage selection. A fair Negro woman, on the other hand, has such superior marriage chances that this fact is generally recognized as the major explanation of why passable women do not seem to pass out of the Negro caste as often as do passable men.

Fair-skinned Negroes have not been allowed by the white caste to establish an intermediary caste of their own. Their superior status has not been recognized. With great consistency they have been relegated to the Negro caste. In the Negro community their exclusiveness has been broken up by social mobility, aided by the growth of the Negro upper classes. Darker Negroes *can* rise to the top among Negroes in social status, and intermarriage with lighter Negroes *is* possible and actually not infrequent. But the marriage selection referred to and the greater opportunities generally for economic and cultural advance of fair-skinned Negroes have preserved an inherited situation where the darker individuals tend to form the lower classes while the fairer individuals tend to belong to the upper strata. The actual quantitative correlation between class and color is not known.[21] It would seem, however, as if it were higher in urban districts than in rural ones.[22] It is also probable that, in spite of the selective factors still working in favor of the fair-skinned individuals, the relative proportion of dark-skinned individuals in the upper classes is increasing as these classes are growing. The "blue-veined" societies are breaking up.

As the Negro community is becoming increasingly "race conscious" it is no longer proper to display color preferences publicly. The light-skinned Negroes have to pledge allegiance to the Negro race. There is and has always been much envy on the part of darker Negroes toward lighter ones. There is even some tendency to regard a light skin as a badge of undesirable illegitimacy, especially when the light-skinned individual has a dark-skinned mother or siblings.[23] There is also a slight tendency to attribute bad biological effects to miscegenation.[24] The Garvey Back-to-Africa movement appealed systematically to the darker Negroes and tried to impute superiority to an unmixed African heritage.[a] Other more recent movements have made similar appeals.[b] This reaction has, however, never outweighed the primary tendency, which has always been to regard physical and cultural similarity to white people with esteem and deference. And the reaction itself is in many cases a psychological defense against a dominant

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 7.
[b] See Chapter 39, Section 2.

belief in the desirability of light skin and "good" features. It has often been remarked that this tendency is not entirely unique among Negroes. It will appear in every disadvantaged group, for instance, among Jews in America. But Negro features are so distinct that only in the Negro problem does this factor become of great social importance.

Their color valuation is only one instance, among many, of the much more general tendency for the Negro people, to the degree that they are becoming acculturated, to take over the valuations of the superior white caste.[a] In other spheres this process can, on the whole, be regarded as a wholesome and advantageous adjustment of the Negroes to American life. In this particular respect, however, a conflict emerges which is unsolvable, as the average Negro cannot effectively change his color and other physical features. If the dark Negro accepts the white man's valuation of skin color, he must stamp himself as inferior. If the light Negro accepts this valuation, he places himself above the darker Negroes but below the whites, and he reduces his loyalty to his caste. The conflict produces a personality problem for practically every single Negro. And few Negroes accomplish an entirely successful adjustment.

There is a considerable literature on the personality problem of the light-skinned Negro.[25] He has been characterized as a "marginal man"—"one whom fate has condemned to live in two societies and in two, not merely different but antagonistic cultures"[26]—and he has been assumed to show restlessness, instability, and all sorts of deviations from a harmonious and well-balanced personality type.[27] This literature, which is largely of a speculative character,[28] probably reflects—like the great amount of fiction devoted to the mulatto—more the imaginative expectations of white people as they think of themselves with their white skin, if placed under the caste yoke, than the actual life situation of mulattoes in the Negro caste. It is forgotten that the Negro upper strata enjoy considerable protection behind the wall of segregation and that a light skin in all social strata of the Negro community has definite advantages, two factors which must tend to make mulattoes rather more satisfied to be Negroes than are the darker Negroes.[b] It should not be denied, of course, that there are fair-skinned Negroes in America who develop the personality traits traditionally ascribed to them.[c]

[a] See Chapter 44, Section 1.

[b] Another problem for dark-skinned Negroes who reach the upper class arises out of the fact that they are newly arrived and so have a tenseness which the light-skinned who, for the most part, are long established in the upper class, do not have.

The studies for the American Youth Commission (see footnote 9 of Chapter 30) corroborate the author's impression that the personality problems of the dark-skinned Negro are often greater than are those of the light-skinned Negro. This is especially true among the educated groups.

[c] I have met two violently anti-Negro mulattoes who identified themselves with the whites. One was a passer. The other was just a little bit too dark to pass safely. The latter proudly

But, as Wirth and Goldhamer point out, "It is important to recognize . . . that in a sense *every* Negro, whether light or dark, is a marginal man in American society."[29] And skin color is only one factor among many creating personality problems for Negroes.

4. THE CLASSES IN THE NEGRO COMMUNITY[a]

The static or cross-sectional configuration of the Negro class system, particularly as it is observable in the South, has recently been delineated in a number of community studies,[30] and we know much more on this topic today than we did ten years ago. In all these studies the conventional division of a population into three classes—"lower class," "middle class," "upper class"—has been applied to the Negro community.[31] Some of these studies, further, subdivide each of the three classes into two. It is quite convenient for the investigator to describe two extremes—the lower and upper classes—and then handle the great amount of variation by describing a middle class between them. We shall follow this pattern for the convenience of both ourselves and the reader. It should be understood that the description is in terms of the average, the general and the typical. Actually each class has a considerable amount of variation and there are often individuals who are complete exceptions. The actual situation, it must be remembered, is one of a continuum of social status, with an imperfect correlation between the factors making up social status and between social status and the other traits which are to be ascribed to the various classes. There are also differences between regions and communities, and the class structure is constantly changing.

The Negro *lower class*, as it is usually described, contains the large majority of Negroes everywhere.[32] Any reasonable criteria used to describe the white lower class would, when applied to Negroes, put the majority of the latter in the lower class.[33] They are the unskilled or semi-skilled laborers and domestic workers of the cities in the South and the North; and the agricultural wage laborers, tenants and household servants in Southern rural districts. During the 'thirties a large portion of this group has, permanently or temporarily, been on relief. Incomes are low and uncertain;

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emphasized that he was "the descendant of slave owners," which, of course, is not uncommon in the Negro world, but in his announcement it had a definitely sadistic and hateful import. I have been with many passers; with the exception mentioned, they did not show any extraordinary hatred of Negroes or any abnormal fixation on "white blood." Fair-skinned nonpassing Negroes are generally conscious of their social advantage and are sometimes cautiously critical of the black masses. They do not ordinarily appear particularly off balance, but are rather inclined to belong to the complacent type of well-accommodated *petit bourgeois* Negro.

[a] For other dynamic interpretations of Negro classes, see: E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), pp. 393-475; and Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), Chapters 9 and 10.

levels of living do not include most of what is considered cultural necessities according to the "American standard."[a] They generally have little education. The older generation is often illiterate or practically illiterate. Books, periodicals, and newspapers, social movements and ideas, play an almost insignificant role in their lives.

This class is Southern in origin and character. Even in the Northern cities the lower class of Negroes is largely made up of recent migrants from the South and of their children. Both economically and culturally the Southern origin projects into present time the attitude and behavior patterns from slavery to a great extent. Lower class Negroes have kept more of the mental servility and dependence of the slave population and developed less resourcefulness, self-reliance and sense of individual dignity. Their situation is not favorable for developing strong incentives to personal accomplishment and improvement. Standards of industry and honesty are generally low. Judged by American standards, their family life is disorganized and their sexual morals are lax.[b] Aggression and violence are neither rare nor censored much by community disapproval.[c] They are the group most subject to lack of legal protection in the South, and they probably have least respect for law and justice as it is applied in that region.[d]

Before the Civil War, ignorance and isolation probably kept most of the slaves accommodated to their inferior caste status. The bulk of this group remained in the lower class after the War. As the intimate servant-master relations have been progressively broken up, Negroes became increasingly resentful, in a sullen and concealed way, and behind their caste mask often manifested bitter resignation and suspicion against the whites. Some of them have been looked upon by the whites as the "good old darkies," but others are turning into "bad niggers," likely to fight back.[34] Their strangeness is increasingly felt. This process has gone much further in the North than in the South and, in the South, further in urban districts than in rural ones.

This Negro lower class is, to reiterate, not homogeneous. In respect to security of employment and level of income, but more fundamentally to variations in family circumstances and individual endowments and propensities, some are falling below the average class norm and some are managing to keep above. To a section of the lower class belong the chronic relief cases, the habitual criminals, prostitutes, gamblers and vagabonds. It is a matter of definition and, partly, a matter of unemployment cycles, where the dividing line is to be drawn. In some cases, a gambler will have the prestige

[a] Concerning occupational status, unemployment and relief, incomes and levels of living, see Chapters 15 and 16.

[b] See Chapter 43, Section 2.

[c] See Chapter 44, Section 2.

[d] See Part VI.

and wealth of a person in the middle or upper class, and during the depression of the 'thirties, the majority of the Negro population became either actual or potential relief clients. For the rural districts, Charles S. Johnson emphasizes rightly that a distinction should be made between the "folk Negro" and the rest of the lower class. The "folk Negro" has a low degree of assimilation to modern American standards but has, nevertheless, some measure of family organization and internal group cohesion.[35] In the upper levels of the lower class, there are many persons who have definite ambitions to better their own, or at least their children's, status. These people will take care not to let their insurance lapse; they will have more permanent affiliation with churches and lodges; they will try to keep their children in school. It is again a matter of definition as to how large a portion of the Negro lower class should be included in this sub-group.

At the other end of the social status scale is the small Negro *upper class*. In rural districts the ownership and successful management of a sizable farm may be said to give a person upper class status. All over the country the training for a profession or the carrying on of a substantial business, particularly in the field of banking or insurance, but also in contracting, real estate, and personal service, is the regular basis for an upper class position. In smaller communities even today, and previously also in big cities, every steady employment where some training or skill was required, and the income was substantially above the average among Negroes, conferred upper class status. Employment by public agencies, particularly federal agencies like the United States postal service, has always carried high social esteem in the Negro community, and if coupled with some home ownership and some education, usually put the person in the upper class. Generally, in the absence of wealth, higher education is becoming practically an essential to an upper class position.[36]

Often family background is stressed in this class. The family is organized upon the paternalistic principle, legal marriage is an accepted form, and illegitimacy and desertion are not condoned. Children are shielded as far as possible both from influences of the lower class Negroes and from humiliating experiences of the caste system. They are ordinarily given a higher education and assisted to acquire professional training. As Negroes are commonly believed to be loud, ignorant, dirty, boisterous, and lax in sexual and all other morals, good manners and respectability become nearly an obsession in the Negro upper class. If the community offers a choice, they will tend to belong to Episcopal, Congregational, or Presbyterian churches, or, in any case, to those churches where there is less "shouting" and where the preacher also has some education and refinement. In Southern cities the Negro upper class will often adhere more closely to strict puritanical standards of conduct than the white upper or middle class.[37] In the larger cities, however, the younger generation in the upper class shows allegiance

to the modern American fashion of being "smart" and "sporting." Conspicuous consumption in automobiles, dresses, and parties carried on with "good taste"—is becoming of increasing importance and may even supplant respectability as the major characteristic of upper class status.

The Negro upper class is most thoroughly assimilated into the national culture, but it is also most isolated from the whites.[a] They are the most race conscious. They provide the leadership and often almost the entire membership of the nationally established Negro defense organizations, such as the local branches of the N.A.A.C.P.[38] But they sometimes feel great difficulty in identifying themselves with the Negro masses whose spokesmen they are,[39] although, perhaps, no more than the white upper class with the white lower class. *The Negro upper class is characterized by many of the traits which are in complete contrast to those of the masses of Negroes in the lower class.* Their social ambition is to keep up this distinction. In private they are often the severest critics of the Negro masses. Their resentment against the "lazy, promiscuous, uneducated, good-for-nothing" lower class Negro is apparent to every observer. W. E. B. Du Bois talks about the "inner problems of contact with their own lower classes with which they have few or no social institutions capable of dealing."[40]

But their small numbers in rural districts and small cities of the South and the segregation everywhere enforce physical proximity to the lower class Negroes and make isolation difficult. The Negro masses, further, usually form the basis for their economic position and their income: usually they cannot afford too much exclusiveness. Moreover, they think of themselves, and are thought of by all other Negroes and by the whites, as the "Negro élite," membership in which confers the presumption of local leadership. This ties them spiritually to the protective Negro community. "Though the upper class is relatively small in numbers, . . . it provides the standards and values, and symbolizes the aspirations of the Negro community; being the most articulate element in the community, its outlook and interests are often regarded as those of the community at large."[41] Not only as a basis for its economic livelihood but also as a sounding board for its role of leadership, the Negro upper class needs contact with the Negro masses. They have their social status and, indeed, their existence as an upper class only *by virtue of their relationship to the lower classes of Negroes.*

The conflict in their attitudes toward the lower class creates a tension and confusion in the political convictions of the upper class. Their wealth and security tend to make them conservative; their extreme dependence on the lower class forces them to sympathize with reforms which would aid the

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2. This fact does not, however, prevent upper class Negroes from occasionally enjoying class solidarity over the caste line with upper class whites. See Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 53; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), p. 83; and Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), p. 338.

lower class—and, therefore, themselves indirectly. Negro doctors, for example, have reasons to be against socialized medicine, as do many white doctors, since they might lose some of their clients. But they stand to profit enormously if the government should use Negro doctors to treat Negro patients under a socialized set-up.[a]

The Negro *middle class* is usually assumed to be larger than the upper class but smaller than the lower class.[b] There would be a good deal of difference of opinion among experts as to what occupations were associated with middle class status. They have usually achieved a small but, in comparison with the lower class, less insecure occupational position, but are characterized even more by a striving toward a better economic position. Usually they have had primary or secondary education, but few have been to college except the school teachers. Education has a high ranking in their scale of social values, and they want to give their children this means of fuller cultural emancipation. They also look down on the lower class Negroes and attempt to appear respectable. Thrift, independence, honesty and industriousness are included in their standards. In the middle class, it becomes a proud boast never to have been in trouble with the law. Their family life is rather stabilized. Even if many of them are married under common law,[c] these marriages tend to be relatively stable. Extra-marital relations are not uncommon, at least for the men, but it is expected that affairs shall be carried on in decent secrecy. They are ordinarily energetic and loyal members of lodges and of churches—usually of the Baptist or Methodist variety.

In the bigger cities where prostitution, gambling, and other types of "protected" businesses reach considerable importance, there is, parallel to the ordinary "respectable" class structure, a less respectable, or "shady," class structure. Its upper class consists of the successful racketeers. The middle class may be said to consist of their lieutenants and the less successful independents. The lower class would then consist of hangers-on and petty criminals. Wealth and power is the main criterion of status in this society.

[a] See Chapter 15, Section 4.

[b] This arbitrary assumption would have an empirical justification if, as we assumed, the class pyramid has a tapering point and concave sides. See Section 1 of this chapter.

[c] There is a divergence of opinion among those who have studied the matter as to whether the middle class among Negroes tends to have formal marriage or only common-law marriage. Those who say that the Negro middle class tends to have legalized marriage probably consider that the middle class contains people occupied in skilled work and business. They are also probably thinking of Negroes in the North. We follow Powdermaker (*op. cit.*, pp. 152-153): "In the middle class, licensed marriages are few." We regard the middle class as consisting of mainly semi-skilled workers and workers in the "higher" service occupations, and we are giving main emphasis to conditions in the South. Practically all experts agree that the Negro middle class family is fairly stable, even where it has common-law marriage (see, for example Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 87; E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], p. 278).

Education, family background, and respectability have no significance. The upper and middle classes of this shady society have a certain prestige with the lower classes of the general Negro society in the cities. For this reason, vice and crime can appear as a desirable career to almost any lower class urban youth. This shady Negro society has a parallel in the white world, but the shady white society probably has less general prestige.[a]

The foregoing picture of the Negro class structure is, like most other descriptions, static. Actually, however, the Negro class structure is dynamic: not only is there movement between the classes and changes within each of the classes, but also the entire class system is moving upward. We have set forth our specifications for a study of class structure and the Negro community, which takes into account this dynamic perspective, in Appendix 8.

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 10.

Part IX

LEADERSHIP AND CONCERTED ACTION

CHAPTER 33

THE AMERICAN PATTERN OF INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP AND MASS PASSIVITY

1. "Intelligent Leadership"

Despite the democratic organization of American society with its emphasis upon liberty, equality of opportunity (with a strong leaning in favor of the underdog), and individualism,[a] the idea of leadership pervades American thought and collective action. The demand for "intelligent leadership" is raised in all political camps, social and professional groups, and, indeed, in every collective activity centered around any interest or purpose—church, school, business, recreation, philanthropy, the campus life of a college, the entertaining of a group of visitors, the selling of a patent medicine, the propagation of an idea or of an interest. As a standard demand it appears with great frequency in public speeches and newspaper editorials and will seldom be absent even when the social reformer or the social scientist speaks.

If an ordinary American faces a situation which he recognizes as a "problem" without having any specific views as to how to "solve" it, he tends to resort to two general recommendations: one, traditionally, is "education"; the other is "leadership." The belief in "education" is a part of, or a principal conclusion from, the American Creed.[b] The demand for "leadership" plays on a different plane of his personality. It is a result less of a conscious ideological principle than of a pragmatic approach to those activities which require the cooperation of many individuals. For this reason it is also much less a part of Americans' self-knowledge. While the democratic Creed and the belief in education are an ever present popular theory with highest national sanctions—held conscious not only by affirmative references in practically every solemn public utterance, but also maintained by an ever growing literature—it will be found that Americans in general are quite unaware that the leadership idea is a particular characteristic of their culture. Since the leadership concept—though, with a quite different import—has recently become associated with fascism and nazism, it is

[a] See Chapter 1.

[b] See Chapters 1 and 41.

understandable that Americans regularly show a marked reluctance to admit the fact even when it is pointed out by the observer.

What Americans display in their demand for leadership are primarily the general traits of their culture which may be referred to as individualism and romanticism. The ordinary American has a liking for the personal and the dynamic in collective activity, a longing for the uniquely human, the unexpected, the adventurous. He wants changes, and he likes to associate them with new faces. He hopes for individuals to step out of the mass, to find the formulas for directing the course of events, to take the lead. And he is prepared to create room for the exceptional individual's initiative. He is willing to gamble quite a bit on his choice. Not least important in his attitude toward the "outstanding" person is the inclination to be hopefully experimental. James Bryce observed:

> I doubt if there be any country [except the United States] where a really brilliant man, confident in his own strength, and adding the charm of a striking personality to the gift of popular eloquence, would find an easier path to fame and power, and would exert more influence over the minds and emotions of the multitude. Such a man, speaking to the people with the independence of conscious strength, would find himself appreciated and respected.[1]

In retrospect the American becomes rather pronouncedly a hero-worshiper. He usually conceives of the American Revolution as the deed of a group of outstanding, courageous and resourceful individuals. The Republic has its "Founding Fathers," such as few other democratic nations have. In fact, the American dramatizes and personifies the entire history of his country and of the world. Social changes are rarely looked upon as the outcome of broad trends and deep forces. The long toils and seemingly blind moves of anonymous masses are pushed into the background of his world view.[2]

Like no other people, Americans have continually succeeded in creating popular heroes—national, local and professional. Outstanding individuals may become heroes while they are still living. In no other part of Western culture is it less true that "no one is a prophet in his own country and his own time." A rising leader in America has quite commonly the backing of his home town and his own group: the American ideas of "favorite son" and "local boy who made good" are significant indications of this trait of American culture.

American individualism and romanticism have, in this particular respect, a personality basis to operate upon, which, for want of a better term, we shall call "personal generosity." On the average, Americans show a greater kindness and patience with others than Europeans do. This attitude is a natural product of the opportunities on the frontier and, more generally, in a rapidly expanding economy. Americans worship success. This peculiar-

ity has been the object of their own and others' ironical and often scornful comments. What has less often been pointed out is that this success cult in America is not particularly self-centered; instead it is generous. *Usually it is not in his own but in other persons' success that the ordinary American rejoices and takes pride.* He identifies himself with those who succeed. He is inclined to "jump on the bandwagon," as the American expression runs, to "be on the winning side."

Americans have thus come to develop an unmatched capacity for vicarious satisfaction in watching others fight. The immense and agitated crowds of spectators, who can always be counted on to fill the stadiums when a hard struggle is staged, testify to this, as does also the manner in which international and national news is presented by press and radio to suit the American public. In America, as everywhere else, ninety-nine out of a hundred do not "succeed," of course—or "succeed" only if the standards are set low. But the extraordinary fact is that these ninety-nine less successful individuals in America, when they see their own hopes disappointed and their ambitions thwarted, are less likely than similar individuals in other countries to retreat into sour chagrin. The individual who is rising in America is not held back much by the mortification of his fellows and compeers. Occasionally he may even be pushed ahead.

Let us not be misunderstood. Of course there is personal envy in America, too. But there has been decidedly less of it than in the more static, less "boundless" civilizations of the Old World. Luck, ability and drive in others are more tolerated and less checked in America. Climbing is more generally acclaimed. Leadership is more readily accepted.

2. "COMMUNITY LEADERS"

So it becomes more natural, and more possible, in America, to associate the dynamic forces of society with individuals instead of with masses. In the Negro problem it is evident to the observer that the "community leaders" are given an astonishingly important role. When the white people want to influence Negro attitudes or behavior in one direction or another—to get the Negro farmers to plant a garden around their shacks, to screen their windows, to keep their children in school, to cure and prevent syphilis, to keep Negroes more respectful to the whites, to prevent them from joining trade unions, and to frighten them against "outside meddlers" or "red" seducers—the natural device (besides the long-range one of "education") is to appeal to the "community leaders." These leaders are expected to get it over to the Negro masses, who are supposed to be rather passive.

There are, as we shall point out, special reasons in the caste situation for this practice. But more fundamentally *this is a common American culture pattern.* Caste accentuates it, but in the sphere of the Negro problem both whites and Negroes display a general attitude toward leadership and follow-

ership which permeates the entire American nation. It is incorrect to discuss Negro leadership except in this general setting. If we should study Negro leadership as an isolated phenomenon, we should be inclined to ascribe to the Negro people certain cultural characteristics which are simply American. Actually the Negro, in this as in so many other respects, because of the peculiar circumstances in which he lives, is an "exaggerated American."

For in all America it is assumed that every group contains leaders who control the attitudes of the group. Everywhere—not least in idealistic pursuits—the method of reaching a goal is assumed to be the indirect one of first reaching the leaders and, through them, influencing the masses. The leaders are organized locally in civic clubs of all sorts, and they are conscious of their role. They create a "public opinion," the peculiarity of which becomes apparent when, for instance, it is said about a strike which has failed, in spite of the fact that practically all the workers—making up the majority of the population—participate, that "local opinion did not favor the strikers," or even more explicitly that "public opinion suppressed the strike."

3. Mass Passivity

The other side of this picture is, of course, the relative inertia and inarticulateness of the masses in America. The remarkable lack of self-generating, self-disciplined, organized people's movements in America is a significant historical fact usually overlooked by American historians and social scientists.

The new continent has always offered fertile soil for "isms," including every possible "European-ism" and, in addition, a great variety of home-grown ones. Communist societies have been built by Shakers, Rappites, Zoarites, True Inspirationists, and other sects, and by secularized Owenites and Fourierists. The Mormons experimented with polygamy, as well as with communism, and the Oneida Community with idealistic unchastity. Fantastic slogans of easy money and cheap credit, "ham and eggs," "thirty dollars every Thursday," "share the wealth," "every man a king," have inflamed local sections of opinion and startled the world.

America has had its full share of utopians and idealists, and much more than its due of charlatans and demagogues. America is also the country of countless associations.[a] For every conceivable "cause" there is at least one association and often several. De Tocqueville and Bryce observed this, and it is true today. Americans in the upper and middle classes are great "joiners" and "supporters" of all sorts of schemes for the common good. If a proposal makes sense to people, their participation and purse can be counted on. But somehow the associations seldom reach down to the masses

[a] See Chapter 43, Section 5.

of people. In spite of all this lively organizational activity, America has had few protracted zealous movements among the people. There has frequently been popular unrest among farmers and workers in America; they have been dissatisfied and have dimly felt the need of one reform or another. Occasionally there have been bloody clashes: resort to violence both by employers and by workers in settling labor disputes has, until recently, been rather characteristic of America. Undoubtedly a general influence on the course of national and local politics has been exerted by the masses through democratic elections. But for some reason these forces, working in the masses, have seldom crystallized into orderly mass organizations.

The trade union movement is one of the oldest in the world, but in America it has always been comparatively inconsequential. Even with the active support of the federal government during the 'thirties, instituting protective legislation unmatched in other democratic countries, it has not even reached the size of the peak unemployment.[a] The observer is struck by the importance played by salaried "organizers" and the relative unimportance of, or often the lack of, a spontaneous drive from the workers themselves. There has never been much of a cooperative movement in America. Often cooperatives are still petty neighborhood organizations based on the activity of the individual idealists—the "leaders"—more than on the concerted effect of cold economic reasoning and of the desire for independence and economic power on the part of the mass of consumers. The diverse activities collectively known as "adult education" in America are often laudable strivings to disseminate education among the common people by universities, philanthropic organizations, state and federal agencies, radio companies, or groups of enlightened community leaders. There is still little concerted drive for self-education in civic affairs. There is no spontaneous mass desire for knowledge as a means of achieving power and independence.

The passivity of the masses in America is, of course, a product of the nation's history. The huge immigration through the decades has constantly held the lower classes in a state of cultural fragmentation. They have been split in national, linguistic, and religious sub-groups, which has hampered class solidarity and prevented effective mass organization. Folk movements require close understanding among the individuals in the group, a deep feeling of common loyalty, and even a preparedness to share in collective sacrifices for a distant common goal. Only on a basis of psychological identification with the interest group is it possible to ask the individual to renounce his own short-range interests for the group's long-range ones. The immigrants have felt social distance to other lower class persons with different cultural origin. Also because they have difficulty in communicating

[a] The top estimate of union membership in 1940 was 9 million. Estimates of peak unemployment in 1933-1935 ranged between 10 and 14 million.

with other Americans, immigrants have had to have leaders for this purpose. Bent on accommodation to social and economic pressure and on individual climbing, they have been conditioned to be even more individualistic than the native Americans.

The open frontier[a] and the relatively good prospects for every able and energetic individual to rise out of the lower classes kept down social discontent. Perhaps even more important, this social mobility drained the masses in every generation of most of their organizational catalysts. Few potential "leaders" remained in the lower classes to stimulate their loyalty and to organize their resistance against pressure. Since American industry was organized as it was, it required no sinister intention of the industrial executive to promote the rising labor leader to personnel expert or labor manager to the great advantage of the enterprise, but at the expense of weakening the energy of the workers. The way into independent business was even more open. If the workers wanted to keep a man under these circumstances, they had to give him a salary which raised him much above their economic and social level.[b] A similar process worked on the potential organizers of cooperatives, farmers' movements and, indeed, every germ of concerted action on behalf of the lower classes in America.

Cultural fragmentation, the division of interest of the lower classes, and their loss of leaders, thus stamped the masses with inertia. They are accustomed to being static and receptive. They are not daring, but long for security. They do not know how to cooperate and how to pool risks and sacrifices for a common goal. They do not meet much. They do not organize. They do not speak for themselves: they are the listeners in America. They seldom elect representatives from their own midst to Congress, to state legislatures or to city councils. They rather support friendly leaders from the upper strata, particularly lawyers. Labor politics in America has constantly held to the common minority pattern of supporting parties and individual candidates who favored them and of assailing candidates who opposed them. Labor has never—except in a few localities—successfully sought political power for itself. It has never seriously tried to plan to utilize its large potential share of the electorate to capture the government of the country. Farmers' politics has, in the main, followed the same minority scheme. Farmers' organizations in America have constantly been in danger of being run by the small top group of big farmers, who, most of the time, have different interests from the mass of small farmers. Gener-

[a] Pioneer communities also had to depend heavily on leaders to maintain law and order, and these leaders have often remained after the legal order was more firmly established.

[b] In no other democratic country is the salary scale of trade union officials so differentiated and the higher brackets so high, compared with workers' income, as in America.

ally speaking, the lower classes in America have been inarticulate and powerless.

This is the more striking when the lower classes are compared with the "Pullman class," which had greater cultural homogeneity, more self-confidence, and more of a tendency to pool its power than a similar class in most other countries. There are closer ties and a more easy understanding between upper class persons in the various professions and businesses in this country than anywhere else. They travel more than in other countries; being together on a Pullman train brings people together intimately. They meet constantly for conferences. They are accustomed to being dynamic and courageous and to taking big risks. They know how to cooperate and even how to sacrifice for a common cause. They feel responsibility for the whole nation, as they view its interests, partly because they usually have a long line of American ancestry. The "Pullman class" has been fairly open to talent from below and has contained a disproportionate amount of the nation's brains and courage. Its members have been willing and prepared to take the leadership made so easy for them by the inertia of the masses.

For judging future possibilities, it is important to note that the era of mass immigration has ended. The proportion of foreign-born white persons in the population is decreasing from decade to decade: it was 12.5 per cent in 1920, 10.9 per cent in 1930 but only 8.7 per cent in 1940.[3] The other main factors behind the political inertia of the American masses—the open frontier and the easy escape out of the lower classes—are also disappearing. There is no longer any free land, and agriculture is depressed and likely to remain depressed. The modern organization of American industry is not favorable to small independent enterprise, and no lower class person can accumulate the huge capital necessary to start a large enterprise. The control of production from Washington during the present War is inevitably stepping up this movement to eradicate small independent business. The growth and improvement of education and the trend toward professionalization in all desirable occupations also has helped to eliminate the "self-made man" even in America. Ambitions for children are real, but they cannot compensate entirely for the lessened possibilities for climbing of the parents themselves.

The class barriers are thus becoming higher and more unyielding, at the same time as the cultural heterogeneity within those barriers is continuously decreasing. The masses receive a steadily improved general education and keep a greater number of their own potential leaders. These trends might make them active and articulate. For the time being, however, there are only minor indications of such a change. If and when it comes, it is destined to remake the entire public and social life of America.

The present observer is inclined to view the American pattern of individual leadership as a great strength of this nation, but the passivity of the

masses as a weakness. These two cultural traits of America have, in their historical development, been complementary. But individual activity and mass activity are not necessarily antagonistic principles. It is possible to envisage a future development where the masses in America participate more intensively in political activities of various sorts, but where, nevertheless, outstanding individuals are permitted to have wide space for their initiative according to the great American tradition. Such a social system, if it ever developed, would realize in the highest degree the age-old ideal of a vitalized democracy. It would result, not only in a decrease in the immense class differences in America, but more fundamentally, it would effect a higher degree of integration in society of the many millions of anonymous and atomized individuals: a strengthening of the ties of loyalty running through the entire social fabric; a more efficient and uncorrupted performance of all public functions; and a more intense and secure feeling on the part of the common citizen of his belongingness to, responsibility for, and participation in the commonwealth as a great cooperative human endeavor—a realization of a fuller life.

4. The Patterns Exemplified in Politics and Throughout the American Social Structure

This is a dream—and a dream well in line with the ideals contained in the American Creed—but the American patterns of individual leadership and mass passivity are a reality that can be studied in all social spheres. They are, of course, particularly apparent in the political life of the nation. In both local and national politics the individual officeholder is—for the period he is in office—awarded much more power than he would be in democratic European nations. What is even more important, he is allowed and, indeed, expected to follow the inclinations of his personal drives and ideas much more unhampered by laws and regulations or particularly by continuous and democratic participation from the people.[a]

In local politics, America has, on the whole, not spread political responsibility upon countless citizens' boards, as have, for example, the Northern

[a] This is another and most important aspect of the relative lack of an independent and law-abiding administration, commented upon in Chapter 20, Section 2. It is also closely related to the fact that the American political parties do not correspond closely to the broad divisions of ideals and interests among the people.

This American party system breaks up the natural groupings based on the ideals and interests of the American electorate. It can itself be explained only by taking the passivity of the masses into account. On the other hand, it results in elections being fought relatively much more over personalities than over programs, which, in its turn, enhances the importance of the personality of the individual candidates. Another effect is that citizens, in the masses, are not being trained to have systematic, consistent, and stable political ideas, which also is likely to make the electorate more easily moved by individual leaders. Again we see a social mechanism adhering to the principles of cumulative causation in a vicious circle. See Appendix 3.

European countries (including England), thereby widening political participation and making politics more anonymous and less dependent on outstanding leadership. Much more, not only of broad policy-making, but also of detailed decisions are, in America, centralized in the offices of salaried functionaries. *Political participation of the ordinary citizen in America is pretty much restricted to the intermittently recurring elections. Politics is not organized to be a daily concern and responsibility of the common citizen.* The relative paucity of trade unions, cooperatives, and other civic interest organizations tends to accentuate this abstention on the part of the common citizens from sharing in the government of their communities as a normal routine of life.[a] In this essential sense American politics is centralized. The same is even more true of national politics.

The basic democracy, however, is maintained in spite of the extraordinary power awarded to the individual officeholders and the equally extraordinary lack of participation by the common citizens in the running of public affairs. *While American democracy is weak from the aspect of the citizens' sharing in political action and responsibility, it is strong in the ultimate electoral controls.* And there is logic in this. Several elements of what, from the other side of the Atlantic, looks like "exaggerated democracy" in American measures of popular contral may be explained as having their "function" in preserving for the common man the ultimate political power in this system of government where he participates so little in its daily duties.[b] It is this trait which prevents the delegation of such tremendous power to leaders and the hero worship from degenerating into fascism.

[a] It should be observed that this American pattern of nonparticipation in government, the historical explanation of which we have hinted at above, does not have its roots in the American Creed. The development came to run contrary to the hopes of Thomas Jefferson. In his desire for a decentralized government there was an expectation of the growth of a close and never ceasing democratic collaboration in community affairs. John Dewey has recently pointed out:

"His project for general political organization on the basis of small units, small enough so that all its members could have direct communication with one another and take care of all community affairs was never acted upon. It never received much attention in the press of immediate practical problems." (*Freedom and Culture* [1939], p. 159.)

[b] The great political power awarded the President of the United States is prescribed in the Constitution. But this is a formal explanation. The head of the state in other countries also often has, according to the constitutions, great powers, which in the course of development he has not been allowed to retain. In America it has fitted well into the general leadership pattern to let the President retain this great power. But he is elected by popular vote—the device for indirect election provided in the Constitution broke down nearly at the beginning. And—most important from our viewpoint—it became the tradition to restrict the period of office to two terms. Both the power concentration in the Presidency and the restriction of the power period to eight years are a direct outflow of the common American attitude of leadership. Contrariwise, the actual development of this central conspicuous power institution in American politics has undoubtedly had its influence in molding attitudes in all other political spheres and in the entire American culture.

Americans have thus such "exaggerated" democratic devices as frequent elections, long ballots (so that even minor officers can be elected), the initiative and referendum, short terms of office, prohibitions against running for a second or third term. The intensive and ruthless publicity focused upon all officeholders—which does not even spare their private life—serves the same "function" of making officeholding precarious. Finally, the American system of "checks and balances" has not only gone into the federal and state constitutions but has become deeply entrenched in the American attitude toward all power problems even outside politics proper. Americans are inclined to give not only much power but *overlapping power* to two or more officials or agencies and then leave it up to them to work out a *modus vivendi* through cooperation, mutual hamperings and occasional stalls.

The Roosevelt administration, with all its duplication of offices for the same or similar functions, exaggerates only somewhat an American tradition. In a lesser degree this is a trait which runs through the whole gamut of social institutions in America.

To the foreign observer this American pattern of power control, built upon systematic friction and actual competition of competent people, looks sometimes not only cumbersome but wasteful of energy and dangerous to reasonable efficiency of government. In a system where such extraordinary powers are constantly being delegated to the functionaries and where so little is held for the participation of the common men, this device, like the others mentioned, serves the "function" of keeping the executives within popular control. For when competing holders of power come in conflict and eventually stall, the ultimate arbiter is the electorate at the next election. It is to this arbiter—and, in advance, to "public opinion"—that they plead when they are in danger of getting stuck.

The patterns of strong and competitive personal leadership and weak followership, which we have exemplified for politics, permeate the entire social structure. In most of these other fields the popular check on the system—that is, the strong electionary system—is much weaker. This gives much greater power to leaders. In large sectors of the labor union movement it is thus a problem of how to avoid complete boss rule and how to preserve that minimum of democracy which consists in the leaders' being regularly elected and having to report to meetings of the common union members. When in recent years the question of industrial unions *versus* craft unions finally was brought before the public, it appeared as a fight between William Green and John L. Lewis. Cooperatives, when they infrequently managed to get securely established in America, often degenerated into ordinary business partnerships. Universities in America have never been controlled by the professors but by their presidents—not elected by the professors—and their appointed deans, subject to the control of

boards of trustees who are outside and above the university. In modern business corporations in America, shareholders have lost their power to directors and other "insiders."[4] Even in small groups—civic committees, research projects, or Sunday schools—the same pattern prevails: the leaders run the show, the masses are passive except for an occasional election.

The general public interest in personalities and in short-run developments manifests itself in government and business as well as in other phases of life. In Washington and in Wall Street, as well as in the other American centers of power control, the perspective is predominantly that of actual happenings yesterday and tomorrow and of individual persons in the spotlight: What effect will this minor event have? What one person is behind what other person? What idea has caught whom?

One earlier observation should be reiterated. The idea and reality of leadership is not an object for much reflection in America; indeed, it is almost not part of conscious knowledge. There is no popular theory to explain it or justify it. It is not a fortified and preached ideology like the American Creed.[a] Not only the unsophisticated common citizens but also the social scientists have observed these facts without much questioning or evaluation. The patterns of leadership and followership simply exist as things which are a matter of course. They have not yet been detected to be important problems.

In the following chapter we want to present a typology—a schematic but, if possible, realistic guide to the leadership traits of America as displayed in the Negro community—in the hope that it will be useful both for immediate orientation and for framing new research into this important aspect of the Negro problem which concerns power and power relations.

[a] There is, of course, much emphasis on character building, and training for leadership in America. But it is not recognized openly that there can be only a few leaders and the desire for a few trained leaders is not organized into an ideology or popular theory.

CHAPTER 34

ACCOMMODATING LEADERSHIP

1. Leadership and Caste

The Negro world conforms closely to the general American pattern just described. In fact, the caste situation—by holding down participation and integration of Negroes—has the effect of exaggerating the pattern.

We base our typology of Negro leadership upon the two extreme policies of behavior on behalf of the Negro as a subordinated caste: *accommodation* and *protest*. The first attitude is mainly static; the second is mainly dynamic. In this chapter we shall ignore almost entirely the dynamic attitude of protest and discuss the intercaste relation in terms of social statics. The object of study here is thus the role of the accommodating Negro leader. Our analysis will approach fuller realism only when we, in later chapters, bring in also the protest motive. This reservation should be held in mind when reading this chapter.

Accommodation is undoubtedly stronger than protest, particularly in the South where the structure of caste is most pervasive and unyielding. In a sense, accommodation is historically the "natural" or the "normal" behavior of Negroes and, even at present, the most "realistic" one. But it is practically never wholehearted in any American Negro, however well adjusted to his situation he seems to be. Every Negro has some feeling of protest against caste, and every Negro has some sort of conflict with the white world. Some Negroes are primarily driven by the protest motive. Social changes which affect Negro attitudes—for example, the development of Negro education, caste isolation, class stratification, and the northward migration—are all giving the protest motive increasing weight, at the same time as the economic, political, judicial, and ideological changes in American society tend to give an ever wider scope for Negro protest. Both main motives—or any intermediate one composed of a blend of these two—have their main origin in, and take their specific character from, the caste situation.

2. The Interest of Southern Whites and Negroes with Respect to Negro Leadership

The white caste has an obvious interest in trying to have accommodating Negro leaders to help them control the Negro group. Under no circum-

stances, in any community where the Negro forms a substantial portion of the total population, are the attitudes and behavior of the Negroes a matter of no concern to the whites. Negroes may be robbed of suffrage and subdued by partiality in justice, by strict segregation rules, by economic dependence, and by other caste sanctions; but it makes a great deal of difference to the whites how the Negroes—within the narrow margin of their freedom—feel, think and act.

The whites have a material interest in keeping the Negroes in a mood of wanting to be faithful and fairly efficient workers. They have an interest in seeing to it that the Negroes preserve as decent standards of home-making, education, health, and law observance as possible, so that at least contagious diseases and crime will not react back upon the whites too much. In this particular respect, whites formerly under-estimated the community of interest which follows from being neighbors, but they are increasingly becoming aware of it.

Further, as we have seen, the whites in the South have a strong interest that Negroes be willing, and not only forced, to observe the complicated system of racial etiquette. Southern whites also see a danger in that Negroes are becoming influenced by certain social ideas prevalent in the wider society. They want to keep them away from "red agitators" and "outside meddlers." In most Southern communities the ruling classes of whites want to keep Negroes from joining labor unions. Some are quite frank in wanting to keep Negroes from reading the Constitution or studying social subjects. Besides these and other interests of a clearly selfish type, many whites feel an altruistic interest in influencing Negroes to gain improved standards of knowledge, morals and conduct.

As the contacts between the two groups are becoming increasingly restricted and formalized, whites are more and more compelled to attempt to influence the Negro masses indirectly. For this they need liaison agents in the persons of Negro "leaders." This need was considerably smaller in earlier times when numerous personal and, in a sense, friendly master-servant relations were in existence. These personal relations of old times are now almost gone.[a] This means that the whites have seen their possibilities of controlling the Negro masses directly—that is, by acting themselves as "Negro leaders"—much diminished. The whites have increasingly to resort to leaders in the Negro group. They have, therefore, an interest in helping those leaders obtain as much prestige and influence in the Negro community as possible—as long as they cooperate with the whites faithfully.

On the other side of the caste gulf, the Negroes need persons to establish contact with the influential people in the white group. They need Negro leaders who can talk to, and get things from, the whites. The Negroes in

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

the South are dependent upon the whites not only for a share in the public services, but individually for small favors and personal protection in a social order determined nearly exclusively by the whites, usually in an arbitrary fashion. The importance of Negro leaders to the masses of Negroes—as to the whites—is also increasing as it is becoming more rare for Negroes to have individual white friends to appeal to when they are in danger or in need of assistance.[a]

Under these circumstances it is understandable that the individual Negro who becomes known to have contact with substantial white people gains prestige and influence among Negroes for this very reason. Correspondingly, an accommodating Negro who is known to be influential in the Negro community becomes, because of this, the more useful to the whites. The Negro leader in this setting serves a "function" to both castes and his influence in both groups is cumulative—prestige in the Negro community being an effect as well as a cause of prestige among the whites. Out of this peculiar power system, a situation develops where Negro leaders play an even more important role than is usual, according to the common American pattern.

3. In the North and on the National Scene

In the North fewer white people are in a position where they have to care much about how the Negroes fare, or what they think and do. The Negroes, on their side, have the protection of fairly impartial justice and of the anonymity of large cities. They also have the vote and can press their needs in the regular fashion of American minority politics. They are, therefore, decidedly less dependent on accommodating leaders to court the whites. For neither of the two castes does the Negro leader fill such important functions as in the South.

But the pattern of pleading to the whites through their own leaders, who are trusted by the whites, is firmly rooted in the traditions of Southern-born Negroes who make up the great majority of adult Negroes in the North. Northern Negroes, also, are a poor group and are frequently in need of public assistance and private charity. They are discriminated against in various ways, particularly with respect to employment opportunities. They live in segregated districts and have few contacts with white people in most spheres of life. Though they have the vote, they are everywhere in a small minority. For all these reasons many of the Southern attitudes and policies in regard to Negro leadership can be observed to continue in the North.

[a] Factors which are decreasing the importance of accommodating Negro leaders to the Negro masses in the South are, on the other hand: the raised standards of legal culture in the region, the increasing professionalism and independence in state and local government administration, and particularly the growth of federal assistance and control. (See Parts V and VI of this book.)

Isolation breeds suspicion among Negroes against the majority group. And suspicion is, in fact, justified. For isolation bars the growth of feelings of mutual identification and of solidarity of interests and ideals in both groups. A white man's purposes when stepping down to lead Negroes must be scrutinized carefully before he can be trusted. This is a pragmatic truth obvious even to the most unsophisticated Negroes, and it has a basis in the Negro people's history through centuries. Northern Negroes will thus be reluctant to listen to white people with a thorough trustfulness and an entirely open mind. Indeed, they are able to give freer play to their suspicion than Southern Negroes as they are less controlled and dependent. Too, the growing race pride exerts its influence in this direction. Northern Negroes, therefore, also seek the intermediation of leaders from their own group.

On the white side, those politicians, public officials, philanthropists, educators, union leaders, and all other white persons in the North who have to maintain contact with and exert influence upon the Negro group must sense this suspicion. They usually also find the Negroes strange in many ways. Negroes seldom constitute the main interest in their various pursuits. They welcome the Negro leader as a great convenience, therefore, as a means of dealing with the Negroes indirectly.[1]

The Northern situation, however, is different from the Southern situation in two closely coordinated respects: (1) that the white majority is not motivated by an interest solidarity against Negroes, reaching practically every white individual,[a] and (2) that the Negro minority is not cramped by anything like the formidable, all pervasive, Southern system of political, judicial and social caste controls. One effect of this difference is that the Northern situation gives greater opportunity for the protest motive to come out in the open and not only, as in the South, to contribute its queer, subdued undertones to the pretended harmony of accommodation.[b]

A number of circumstances make the Negro look to the North in his national political interest. National power is centered in the North. In national politics the South is quite like a minority group itself—a "problem" to the nation and to itself—politically, economically and culturally. Negroes have the vote in the North. For these reasons the relations between whites and Negroes in national affairs tend to conform more to Northern than to Southern local patterns. But Negro leaders are needed. The Negro people are set apart; they have distinctive problems; and they are hardly represented at all in the policy-forming and policy-deciding private or public organs. The federal government and its various agencies, the political parties, and the philanthropic organizations have difficulty in reaching Negroes through their normal means of public contact. They must

[a] See Chapter 2, Section 8.

[b] See Chapters 35 and 37.

seek to open up special channels to the Negro people by engaging trusted Negroes as observers, advisers and directors of Negro opinion. The Negroes feel the same need for "contact" persons of their own.

The individual Negroes who are appealed to in the national power field immediately win great prestige in the Negro world. To deal with Negro leaders who have great influence among the masses of Negroes is, on the other hand, a great asset to the white-dominated national organizations, including the federal government. Fundamentally the same causal mechanism, therefore, operates in the national realm of intercaste relations as in the Southern or Northern local community.

4. THE "GLASS PLATE"

In the sphere of power and influence—in politics proper and outside of it, locally and nationally, in the South and in the North—the population thus becomes split into a white majority and a Negro minority, and the power relations running between these two blocs are concentrated and canalized in special liaison agents in the minority bloc. Whites who want to deal with the Negro masses do not have to go among them directly as they have to go among, say, Episcopalians. But it is, of course, just as difficult, and, in fact, more difficult, for Negroes to have direct contacts with the white population. Corresponding to the Negro leaders, there are white leaders.

The isolation implied in caste means thus, in the realm of power and influence, that *intercaste relations become indirect from both sides. Direct contacts are established only between the two groups of leaders, acting on behalf of the two blocs.* Except for those individuals, the invisible glass plate, of which Du Bois spoke,[a] is in operation. Common whites and blacks see each other, though usually only as strange stereotypes. But they cannot hear each other, except dimly. And they do not understand what they dimly hear from the other side of the glass plate. They do not trust and believe what they perhaps understand. Like two foreign nations, *Negroes and whites in America deal with each other through the medium of plenipotentiaries.*[b]

In a sense the white leaders have, from the Negroes' point of view, a similar "function" of acting as liaison agents to the Negro bloc. But there is this difference between the two groups of leaders: the white leaders are not "accommodating." They are not acting as "protest" leaders, either. The entire axis between the two extreme poles of accommodation and protest, which sets the orbit of Negro attitudes and behavior, exists only on the

[a] *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), pp. 130-131. Quoted in our Chapter 31, Section 2, p. 680.

[b] There are, of course, the exceptions of master-servant relations, but they are decreasing, and they have always been treated as exceptions. There are also the exceptions in the academic and artistic worlds, but they are few. (See Chapter 30, Section 3.)

Negro side. The white leaders' "function" to serve as liaison agents with Negroes is only incidental to their power in white society. Unlike the Negro leaders they have, in addition, to run the whole society. This is a consequence of all the power being held on the white side. The Negroes do not, therefore, pick their white agents in the same manner as the whites choose their Negro ones. The Negroes cannot confer much power upon whites of their choice. In the South they do not partake in the selection of even political leaders. The Negroes—through their leaders—have to accept the white leadership as it exists, determined exclusively by the whites. They have to try to "get in" with the ones who are already on top in white society.[a]

To this a few qualifications must be made. First, in some Southern communities white persons, distinguished by birth, education, or wealth, who have prestige but do not care to exert active leadership generally, may occasionally be induced to step in and use their potential power in favor of the Negroes or one individual Negro. When Negroes turn to such a person they might be said to pick him as a white leader for their purposes. The assumption is, however, that he already has latent power. The Negroes do not award him influence by selecting him, as whites do when they pick a Negro leader. He has, rather, to be careful not to assist the Negroes too often and too much, as this might wear out his prestige. He might even become known as a "nigger lover," which would be the end of his usefulness to the Negroes.

Second, some white persons actually specialize in becoming the fixers and pleaders for Negroes while they are not active as white leaders generally. They are the white interracialists of the South. In order to have protracted influence they require moral and financial backing from Northern philanthropists or, lately, from the federal government.[b] They should, in addition, preferably have upper class status because of birth, education or occupation. Even when they have both Northern backing and Southern status their influence in matters affecting Negroes is likely to be uncertain and narrow in scope. Acclaim from the Negroes is usually more a result of their activity than a basis for the assumption of it.

In the North, the fact of Negro suffrage means that in the sphere of politics proper Negroes participate in selecting the white officeholders (and occasionally add some Negro representatives). Support from Negroes,

[a] It is true that, according to Southern aristocratic traditions, to have Negro dependents—who, in servant fashion, display gratitude and attachment—gives status in white society. Negroes are, therefore, in the position to deliver something to the white leader which has social significance. But in the Southern caste situation, the Negroes will have to be prepared to pay this price to practically any possessor of white power and influence who asks for it.

[b] See Chapter 21, Section 5.

therefore, means something in the North. Their opposition might occasionally turn an election against a candidate. The actual and the still greater potential significance of the Negroes' sharing in the political power in the North has been discussed in Chapters 22 and 23. Negroes are, however, only a tiny minority everywhere in the North. Even if the difference from the South is enormous, Negroes are, most of the time and in most respects, dependent on white leaders who do not feel dependent on Negro opinion.

This is, generally speaking, still more true in other power spheres than in politics proper; for example, in philanthropy, in educational institutions, in professional associations. Poverty and cultural backwardness generally prevent Negroes from having practically any primary power over the selection of white leaders in these fields. An exception is the labor movement. In so far as unions are kept open to Negroes, and where unions are democratic, Negroes have their due portion of power much according to the rules in politics. National power relations are much like those in Northern communities.

The following discussion will deal only with Negro leaders. It must never be forgotten, however, that Negro leaders ordinarily do not deal with the white people but only with white leaders. Negro leaders are, in fact, even more isolated from the whites in general than are the white leaders from the Negroes. We shall find, however, that some of the protest leaders actually do try to reach white public opinion. Walter White, and the whole set-up of the N.A.A.C.P., is steadily hammering at the glass plate, as did James Weldon Johnson and W. E. B. Du Bois before him and Frederick Douglass still earlier. Such an effort is effective practically only on the national scene. The carefully worded "letters to the editor" by Negroes to liberal Southern newspapers, which are sometimes printed—reminding the whites of their Constitution, their democratic faith and their Christian religion, and respectfully drawing their attention to some form of discrimination—represent local attempts in the same direction.

The direct approach by Negroes to the white world stems almost entirely from the protest motive. The accommodating Negro leaders generally do not even attempt to reach white public opinion directly. On the national scene, Booker T. Washington and, after him, Robert R. Moton were exceptions. But Moton's errand, when disclosing to the general public "what the Negro thinks," was to give vent to a protest, modified by acceptable and soothing words, and, in a degree, the same can be said of Washington. Washington's main motive, however, was accommodation *for a price.* This was his message in the Atlanta speech of 1895 and in countless other addresses to white audiences in the North and in the South, where he promised Negro patience, boosted Negro efforts, begged for money for his school and indulgence generally for his poor people. He had become a

personality with prestige whose voice could pierce the caste wall. And he was freely allowed audience since he toned down the Negro protest. On the local scene the accommodation motive by itself does not usually encourage Negro leaders to such adventures of trying to reach behind the white leaders to the white people. and there is generally no white public which wants to listen to them.

5. ACCOMMODATING LEADERSHIP AND CLASS

Negro leadership—as determined by caste in the way we have sketched—stands in an even closer relation to class than does white leadership. In a previous part of this book,[a] we saw that Negro classes generally were mainly a function of caste. One ramification of this thesis was touched upon only lightly and spared for the present discussion of Negro leadership: namely, that an individual Negro's relation to white society is of utmost importance for his class status in the Negro community.

It always gives a Negro scientist, physician, or lawyer prestige if he is esteemed by his white colleagues. Prestige will bring him not only deference but also clients and increased earnings. The Negro press eagerly records and plays up the slightest recognition shown a Negro by whites. A professional position outside the segregated Negro world, even if unpretentious, also carries high prestige. Being consulted by whites concerning Negro welfare, taking part in mixed conferences or having any personal relation to individual whites confers status.[2] This common view in the Negro community is, of course, realistic. White standards are, on the average, higher, and an indication that whites recognize a Negro as having approached or reached those standards means most of the time that he is exceptionally good in his line. More important still, the whites have the power, and friendly consideration from whites confers power upon the individual Negro participating in such a relation. The belief that whites have power has been exaggerated in the Negro community, so that friendly relations with certain individual whites confer status upon a Negro even when these whites actually have no power.

The import of this is that *leadership conferred upon a Negro by whites raises his class status in the Negro community.*[3] Correspondingly, it can be stated that an upper class position in the Negro community nearly automatically, with certain exceptions that we shall note later, gives a Negro the role of Negro leader.[4] He is expected to act according to this role by both whites and Negroes. Because most upper class Negroes are leaders, there is an extraordinarily close correlation between leadership and class position in the Negro community. On the other hand, there are more lower class leaders among Negroes than among whites—partly because a much greater proportion of Negroes are lower class and partly because of the

[a] See Chapter 32.

tradition of a strong lower class preacher and lodge leader among Negroes. Still, we believe that practically all upper class Negroes are leaders, something that is not true among whites. In order to understand this, several other things must be considered.

For one thing, the Negro upper class is—because of caste—such a small proportion of the total Negro population[a] that the scarcity value of upper class status becomes relatively high. In smaller communities only a handful of persons have upper class status; in all communities they are few enough to be in close contact with each other.

The upper class Negro is, furthermore, culturally most like the group of whites who have social power. Under a long-range view, the social classes represent various degrees of acculturation to dominant American culture patterns or gradations of lag in the assimilation process.[b] During this process standards of living have been raised, illiteracy and mortality rates have declined, the patriarchal type of family organization has made its influence felt, and, generally, white American middle class norms and standards have been filtering downward in the Negro people. The upper class represents the most assimilated group of Negroes. In part, they have status in the Negro community for the very reason that they are culturally most like upper class whites. It is natural also that upper and middle class whites feel most closely akin to this group of Negroes.

The attitude of whites in the Old South was, on the contrary, that the lowly "darky" was the favored and trusted Negro, while the educated, socially rising "Negro gentleman" was to be suspected and disliked. When a social stratification in the Negro people first appeared during slavery, the whole complex of legislation to suppress the free Negroes, to hinder the education of slaves, and to check the meetings of Negroes was expressly intended to prevent Negro individuals of a higher status from leading the Negro masses, and, indeed, to prevent the formation of a Negro upper class. The inclinations of white people remained much the same after the Civil War.[c] The Jim Crow legislation followed a similar tendency.[d] The white masses even today are usually most bitter and distrustful toward upper class Negroes.[e] This is still often the expressed opinion also of the upper class whites who are in control of the political and social power in Southern communities.[f]

But even in the South it has become more and more unfeasible to trust

[a] See Chapter 32, Section 4.

[b] We are referring to assimilation away from patterns in slavery, not patterns in Africa. See Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), pp. 354, *passim*. See also Chapter 43, Section 1, of this book.

[c] See Chapters 10, 20 and 24.

[d] See Chapter 28, Section 4.

[e] See Chapter 28, Section 8.

[f] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

the Negro leadership to the lower class "Uncle Toms" of the old type. One reason has already been mentioned: the paternalistic personal relations in which they developed have decreased in frequency. There are fewer "good old darkies" available. Also, as wealth and education have become somewhat more attainable to Negroes, those who were favored with these things—the slowly growing upper class, who thus came to symbolize Negro advancement and race pride—supplanted the "darkies" in prestige in the Negro community. Even white backing could not entirely shield the "darkies" from ridicule and contempt on the part of the Negroes of superior wealth and education.

In this situation, the upholding of the old-time "darkies" as white-appointed Negro leaders would have implied an unyielding refusal to recognize the entire rising Negro class structure and the Negro's respect for education. It soon became apparent that such a policy would be ineffective and unrealistic. The development of a Negro upper class could not be checked: as we have pointed out, this class grew partly because of segregation itself. A protracted resistance to recognizing the growth of class stratification in the Negro community would also have run contrary to the dominant class pattern within American white society. By analogy a Negro class structure seemed the more natural as personal ties to white society became broken, and as the Negro group was more definitely set apart.

Finally, a large portion of the Negro upper class is actually appointed by the whites or is dependent for status upon the influential local whites. The whites soon learned that they could find as many "Uncle Toms" among Negroes of upper class status as among the old-time "darkies," and that educated persons often were much more capable of carrying out their tasks as white-appointed Negro leaders.

6. SEVERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Thus the whites accepted and strengthened the ever closer correlation between leadership and upper class status. But the correlation is still not perfect. Part of the explanation is the carry-over of old slavery attitudes among whites. I have observed communities, particularly in the Old South, where the leading whites have insisted on giving their ear even in public affairs to some old, practically illiterate ex-servant, while cold-shouldering the upper class Negroes. In the dependent situation of Southern Negroes, the Negro community is then willy-nilly compelled to use those old "darkies" as pleaders whenever the influential whites have to be appealed to.

Under such circumstances, a tremendous internal friction in the Negro community is likely to develop. The contempt of the upper class Negroes for the uneducated white-appointed "leaders" becomes increased by resentment born of a feeling of extreme humiliation. The "leaders," on their

part, feeling the contempt and resentment of the "uppity" Negroes, often turn into thorough sycophants toward the whites and into "stuck-up" petty tyrants toward the Negro community.[5]

For reasons already touched upon, this arrangement is not the kind of leadership control of the Negroes which is most effective from the point of view of white interests. In the cases of this type I have observed, it has been apparent that the influential whites are motivated not only by their pride in adhering to traditional paternalistic patterns of the Old South, by their fear of ambitious capable Negroes, and by their personal liking for their favored "darkies," but also that they actually enjoy putting the Negro community in this situation. The humiliation of the "uppity" Negroes is, in other words, intentional.[a]

Such situations are becoming rare. I have observed, however, that another custom is still widespread everywhere in the South: to use servants, ex-servants, and other lower class Negroes as reporters and stool pigeons in the Negro community. Even if those spotters are usually not used in attempts to influence the Negroes positively, their spy activity and their being known "to be in with" white people give them a sort of power among their own people. Often they are utilized by the whites to "let it be known" in an informal way what the whites want and expect. This is a remnant of the old direct caste control. It is declining as employment relations are becoming more impersonal and as race solidarity in the Negro group is increasing.

More important reasons for an imperfect correlation in the South between leadership and upper class position are, however, certain facts within the Negro community itself. Many upper class Negroes do not care for the leadership role. It is true that they have superior status only in relation to the masses of other Negroes, and that they often depend economically on lower class Negroes as clients and customers. But they also may have a desire to isolate themselves from the Negro lower classes.[b] Many also do not have the easy manners, the engaging and spirited personality, and the ability to speak the language of "the people" necessary to approach and influence the Negro masses. Some have made themselves so personally unpopular with Negroes or whites that they cannot act as leaders.[6] Many are so filled by the protest motive that they feel a personal humiliation when this has to be put under cover in taking the role of accommodating Negro leaders. They retreat rather into the role of sullen, but personally watchful, individualists, nourishing hatred against the whites above them,

[a] This is an example of the element of sadism generally so visible in the white Southerners' paternalism. It is also reflected in the standard stories told and retold about Negro stupidity and immorality, always with an intense display of pleasure which the outsider does not feel.

[b] See Chapter 32, Section 4.

contempt for the Negro masses below them, and disgust—sometimes mixed with envy—for the accommodating Negro leaders beside them. Their "adjustment" is to "mind their own business."

In practically every Southern Negro community, there is this partial voluntary retreat of the Negro upper class from active leadership. Thus the common assumption among whites that upper class Negroes in general are leaders of their people is not quite true. Upper class Negroes pretend that it is true in order to gain prestige. It is also an expectation on the part of white community leaders who happen to know about them, observe their superiority in education, manners, standards, and wealth, and take their influence among the common Negroes for granted. It must always be remembered that the whites' actual knowledge about the Negroes in their own community nowadays is usually rudimentary. It is not unusual to find that a certain Negro has succeeded in impressing the local whites with an exaggerated belief in his actual influence among his own people.

More important than unwillingness or inability on the part of Negro upper class persons to play the leadership role is a more or less conscious repugnance on the part of the Negro lower classes against following them. "Too much" education often meets suspicion among lower class Negroes. Many Negro preachers, who usually do not suffer from over-education, have nourished this prejudice as they saw education draw people from religious faith and, particularly, from respect for themselves. The usual class envy between upper and lower class individuals in the Negro community is an ever present element in the situation, and is strengthened when, as in the case of the accommodating Negro leaders, the Negro protest against the whites cannot be invoked as a bond of race loyalty.[a]

The extreme result of this class conflict is that the Negro masses in the South—as well as large parts of the white masses in the same region—often become, not only as inactive as is necessary for accepting readily the leadership imposed upon them from the outside, but, indeed, so utterly passive that they simply do not care very much for anything except their animal demands and their personal security. Their economic, social, and cultural situation, as we have described it in previous chapters, makes this understandable. It is difficult indeed to reach the amorphous Negro masses at all, especially in rural districts.

It is often said that the Negro church and the fraternal and burial lodges are the only media by which those masses can be reached. The present observer is inclined to consider this statement as exaggerated in two directions: first, even the church and the lodges do not have a steady and strong influence on the lowest Negro classes; second, the Negro school, the Negro press, and the Negro professions are becoming vehicles which have considerable influence with the lower strata.

[a] See Chapters 35 and 37.

But there is enough truth in the statement to raise it above doubt that the Negro preacher—and, to a lesser extent, the lodge official—has more influence with the Negro masses than a white lower class preacher or lodge leader has with the white masses. The majority of Negro preachers and many local lodge leaders are not highly educated and do not belong to the upper classes. Particularly is this true of the ministers in the lower class churches and of the "jack-leg preachers," who are the ones who really reach down to the masses. Their uncouth manners, language, and standards in general are assets in retaining a grip over lower class congregations. Negro ministers who are educated and who have upper class status actually often have to affect bad grammer and an accent and to use figures of speech taken from the cotton field and the corn patch in order to catch the attention of the masses and to exert some real leadership.[7] The great influence of the Negro preacher is exceptionally well known by the whites, and he is usually considered as a force for "good race relations," that is, for shepherding his flock into respect and obedience.[a] Such are the barriers to and inhibitions of the Negroes of upper class status in becoming effective mass leaders in the Negro community. But with these reservations—and keeping in mind that a large portion of the Negro masses is amorphous, utterly apathetic, and not "led" much at all, but more like Thomas Nelson Page's vision of a "vast sluggish mass of uncooled lava" [8]—it remains true that leadership and upper class status are strongly correlated in the South and that the tendency is toward an even closer correlation.

The author also has the impression that Negro leaders, more often than whites (among their own people), take on a rather dictatorial and paternalistic attitude toward their Negro followers. They seem to mimic, in a smaller degree, the role of the upper class white Southerner in his relation to his Negro dependents. There is often a considerable amount of bossing and ordering around in a Negro group assembled for any purpose. The Negro upper class person in a leadership position will often entertain the observer with much the same generalized derogatory statements about the common run of Negroes as white people use. When the Negro preacher in church starts out to elaborate the shortcomings of "the race," the implication of his being a Negro leader is most of the time apparent. The teacher's cadence when addressing children in the Negro school sounds more condescending than in white schools. The organization of life in Negro colleges seems to be definitely less democratic than in white colleges in America, even, and not least, when the staff of teachers is mainly Negro. The president in his relations to the

[a] The role of the preacher and the church as the pillars of caste observance among Negroes, but sometimes also as catalysts for the Negro protest, will be further discussed in Chapter 40.

professors and they in their relations to the students act more dictatorially and more arbitrarily.

7. ACCOMMODATING LEADERS IN THE NORTH

In the North, there has never been much love for the lowly "darkies" on the part of the whites. They have never felt much of an interest or inclination to lift poor, uneducated servants as leaders over the Negro community. There has been more acclaim of social climbing generally than in the South.[a] Almost from the beginning the Negro upper class was accepted by the whites, without resistance, as the source of Negro leaders.

On the other hand, probably a somewhat greater proportion of upper class Negroes in the North do not care for the responsibilities and rewards of being active Negro leaders. On the whole, the Negro masses are less passive. The preachers have, perhaps, rather less prominence as leaders and are, on the average, somewhat better educated and have a higher social status.

Negro suffrage in the North, however, creates space for a political leadership which, in order to be able to deliver the Negro vote to the party machines, must be chosen from people who really meet the common lower class Negroes. A good many of the petty politicians in Northern cities are lower class Negroes. Negroes who enjoy a sort of "upper class" status outside the respectable society—big-time gamblers, criminals, and so on—are often the machine lieutenants, precinct captains and bosses, or the "insiders" in the political game.

The odor of corruption and the connection with crime and vice which often surrounds American city politics, particularly in the slums, deter, of course, many upper class Negroes, as well as many upper class whites, from taking any active part in political leadership. This does not mean, however, that there is not a good deal of honest and devoted political leadership among Northern Negroes. It comes often from upper class Negroes. But proportionately the upper classes monopolize less of the actual leadership in local politics than in other fields. And the labor unions, which are stronger in the North, are training a new type of lower or middle class Negro leader of particular importance in politics. They can there often compete successfully with the upper class leaders. They are just as often as honest and as devoted to the Negro cause as are the upper class leaders.[9]

On the national scene, upper class status and, particularly, considerable education and personal ability are necessary for Negro leaders.

[a] See Chapter 28, Section 9.

8. THE GLAMOUR PERSONALITIES

One peculiar angle of the relation between Negro leadership and social class is high-lighted in the popular glamour and potential power of a Negro who has accomplished or achieved something extraordinary, particularly in competition with whites.

Attainments are apparently given a relatively higher rating in the Negro than in the white community. The Negro press eagerly publicizes "the first" Negro to win this or that degree, to be appointed to one position or another, or to succeed in a business or profession formerly monopolized by whites. This tendency among a subordinated group living in a society dominated by strong competitive motives is entirely natural; it has a close parallel in the women's world. In fact, the entire Negro upper class gets peculiar symbolic significance and power in the Negro community for the very reason that it consists of persons who have acquired white people's education and wealth and who are engaged in doing things which are above the traditional "Negro jobs." They have broken through the barriers, and their achievements offer every Negro a gloating consolation in his lowly status and a ray of hope.

Under this principle every Negro who rises to national prominence and acclaim is a race hero: he has symbolically fought the Negro struggle and won. Great singers like Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, and Paul Robeson have their prestige augmented by the eager vibrations of pride and hope from the whole Negro people acting as a huge sounding board. So have successful Negro authors like Richard Wright and Langston Hughes; scientists like George Washington Carver and Ernest E. Just; athletes like Joe Louis and Henry Armstrong; entertainers like Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, the king of tap-dancing, and Duke Ellington, the famous jazz band leader.

Any one of them could, if he chose, exert a considerable power as an active Negro leader in a technical sense. Jesse Owens, who at the 1936 Olympics established himself as the world's fastest runner and one of the greatest track athletes in history, was young and inexperienced, in fact not yet out of college. But on the basis of his specialized mastery of running and the acclaim accorded him in the white and Negro press, Owens was considered a valuable political asset and employed by the Republican party to attract the Negro vote.

The situation of the Negro glamour personality is, however—and this must be noted if we want to observe true proportions—not different from what is ordinary in white America. The popularity of the "first" or the "oldest," the "biggest" or the "smallest," the "best" or the "worst," the "only" or the "most ordinary" specimen of a type has always given its particular color to American conceptions of things and persons. It is

characteristic of a young culture. Negroes are only following a common American pattern, which, as usual, their caste status leads them to exaggerate somewhat. The early history of Charles Lindbergh is a case in point. The white public also influences Negroes to expect too much from a Negro who achieves something in a particular field. All Negroes look alike to many whites, and whoever, by whatever means, comes before the public eye becomes regarded as an outstanding Negro and is expected to hold a position of unwarranted importance in Negro affairs.

It must also be noted that Negro celebrities—actually perhaps even more carefully than white ones in America—generally show great restraint in avoiding the temptation of stepping outside their narrow field of competence. Marian Anderson is a good example of scrupulous adherence to this rule. When Paul Robeson and Richard Wright sometimes discuss general aspects of the Negro problem, they do so only after study and consideration. These two have deliberately taken up politics as a major interest. They act then in the same spirit and the same capacity as, for instance, Pearl Buck when she steps out of her role as a writer of novels and writes a social and philosophical essay on the women's problem. Although the possibilities and the temptations have been so great, glamour personalities have usually not exploited Negroes or the Negro problem.

It may be suggested that in the Negro world, and specifically in Northern Negro communities, women have a somewhat greater opportunity to reach active leadership than in white society. Negro women are not so often put aside into "women's auxiliaries" as are white women. If this hypothesis is correct, it corresponds well with the fact of Negro women's relatively greater economic and social independence.

CHAPTER 35

THE NEGRO PROTEST

1. The Slave Revolts

There has always been another type of Negro leader than the "pussy-footing" Uncle Tom. And there has always been another main motive than accommodation for practically all Negro leadership: both as part of the leaders' own intuitions and as a conditioning demand from their Negro followers and from their white supporters.

The leaders of the numerous local slave insurrections[1]—Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, and many others, known and unknown—represented early types of pure protest leaders, "race men" in the modern popular Negro terminology. They rose against overwhelming odds and succumbed with their followers. Many plots to revolt were prematurely revealed to the white masters by Negro stool pigeons who sought to curry favor by their betrayal. The chief short-range result of the persistent series of slave rebellions or attempts at rebellion was an ever closer regimentation of free and slave Negroes.[a]

These race martyrs can be said to have laid the foundations, not only for the tradition of Negro protest, but also—because of their regular and conspicuous failure—for the "realistic" theory of race relations. This theory is favored by Southern white liberals and is accepted by the great majority of accommodating Southern Negro leaders; it holds that everything which stirs up the resistance of the whites will deteriorate the Negroes' status, and that reforms must be pushed quietly and in such ways that the whites hardly notice them before they are accomplished facts comfortably sunk into a new *status quo*.[b]

American Negroes, in attempting to integrate themselves into American society, have had to pay the price of forgetting their historical heroes and martyrs. Charles S. Johnson makes the following interesting observation:

> . . . Denmark Vesey, a Negro who resisted slavery and led an insurrection in the effort to throw off the oppression, is a type which contradicts the assumption that

[a] See Chapter 24, Section 3, and Chapter 28, Section 3. The rise of militant Abolitionism in the North was a complementary cause.

[b] See Chapter 21, Section 5, and Chapter 38, Section 4.

Negroes are innately docile as a race and were content with slavery. In a sense, Vesey represents the spirit of independence for which the founding fathers of America are praised—an insurrection is merely an unsuccessful revolution. But Denmark Vesey is a symbol of a spirit too violent to be acceptable to the white community. There are no Negro schools named for him, and it would be extremely poor taste and bad judgment for the Negroes to take any pride in his courage and philosophy. There is, indeed, little chance for Negro youth to know about him at all.[2]

2. THE NEGRO ABOLITIONISTS AND RECONSTRUCTION POLITICIANS

The Negro fighters in the Abolitionist movement in the North—William G. Allen, Dr. James McCune Smith, Martin Delany, William Wells-Brown, Sojourner Truth, Robert Purvis, Samuel E. Cornish, Charles Lenox Remond, Henry Highland Garnet, David Ruggles, William Still, Harriet Tubman, Charles Bennet Ray, John M. Langston, Frederick Douglass, and many others—represented a second early crop of Negro protest leaders. Unlike the slave insurgents, these leaders set the future pattern on which Negroes based their protest. The new pattern consisted of nonviolent legal activities in accord with the democratic principles of the American Creed and the Christian religion. Frederick Douglass, the outstanding Negro leader of this period, in 1852, in his 4th of July oration at Rochester, voiced the Negro protest thus:

> What to the American slave is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy licence; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are, to him, more bombast, fraud, deception, impiety and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. . . .
>
> You boast of your love of liberty, your superior civilization, and your pure Christianity, while the whole political power of the nation (as embodied in the two great political parties) is solemnly pledged to support and perpetuate the enslavement of three millions of your countrymen. You hurl your anathemas at the crown-headed tyrants of Russia and Austria and pride yourselves on your democratic institutions, while you yourselves consent to be the mere *tools* and *bodyguards* of the tyrants of Virginia and Carolina. You invite to your shores fugitives of oppression from abroad, honor them with banquets, greet them with ovations, cheer them, toast them, salute them, protect them, and pour out your money to them like water; but the fugitive from your own land you advertise, hunt, arrest, shoot, and kill. You glory in your refinement and your universal education; yet you maintain a system as barbarous and dreadful as ever stained the character of a nation—a system begun in avarice, supported in pride, and perpetuated in cruelty. You shed tears over fallen Hungary, and make the sad story of her wrongs the theme of your poets, statesmen and orators, till your gallant sons are ready to fly to arms to vindicate her cause against the oppressor; but, in

regard to the ten thousand wrongs of the American slave, you would enforce the strictest silence, and would hail him as an enemy of the nation who dares to make those wrongs the subject of public discourse![3]

During the Civil War the Abolitionist leaders had to argue and protest for two years before Negroes were given the right and chance to do their share of the fighting. When they were finally allowed into the Union Army, it was for reasons of military necessity.[a] The Emancipation Proclamation was issued mainly for the same reason and in order to win over world opinion for the Northern cause. The War was finally won, and freedom materialized for the four million slaves.

The mass of slaves, even the more intelligent ones, and certainly the great group of field hands, were in religious and hysterical fervor. This was the coming of the Lord. This was the fulfillment of prophecy and legend. It was the Golden Dawn, after chains of a thousand years. It was everything miraculous and perfect and promising. For the first time in their life, they could travel; they could see; they could change the dead level of their labor; they could talk to friends and sit at sundown and in moonlight, listening and imparting wonder-tales. They could hunt in the swamps, and fish in the rivers, and above all, they could stand up and assert themselves. They need not fear the patrol; they need not even cringe before a white face, and touch their hats.[4]

During Reconstruction, Frederick Douglass, P. B. Pinchback, John Langston, and others of the Negro Abolitionist tradition constituted the center of a much larger group of Republican Negro politicians. As they were on the winning side, and as not only emancipation from slavery, but suffrage and other civil liberties, had been accorded to the Negroes by Congress, not protest but power consolidation and power exploitation became their main concern. In many minor issues they actually often followed a most accommodating pattern.

When, however, Restoration of white supremacy violently robbed the Negroes of suffrage and civil liberties in the South, the reasons for Negro protest again mounted. In the North, however, there was no immediate parallel to Southern Restoration and consequently no special incentive to protest. Too, the Northern Negroes lost their white co-fighters. A great deflation of ideals occurred, as is usual after a successful war. In a spirit of opportunistic optimism and ideological defeatism the Northerners wanted to get back to normalcy. The Negro was a thorn in their flesh. He stood in the way of a return to national solidarity and a development of trade relations between the two regions. With some guilt, but probably more relief the Northerners found out, when the compromise between the regions was a *fait accompli*, that apparently they did not care much about the Negroes, anyhow. A whole series of scientific, historical, and political writings—

[a] Lincoln is reported to have said: "Without the Negroes' help, neither the present nor any coming administration can save the Union."

reaching into the present time—got under way to rationalize the national compromise of the 1870's.[a]

Northerners sought to protect their conscience partly by means of the humanitarian work carried on by the reformers and philanthropists among Negroes in the South. And with some valid self-righteousness the Yankees could point out that in the North the scattered Negro population kept its suffrage and civil liberties. But the Negro problem as a national issue was dead in the North. In the South the protracted process of legalizing political and social discrimination continued its course. There was nothing left for the Negro protest but to fight a losing struggle and to go underground.

3. THE TUSKEGEE COMPROMISE

In this great calamity for the Negro cause, Booker T. Washington stepped forward and established himself as the national leader of a pragmatic and conciliatory school of thought, to which a great number of national and local Negro leaders, particularly in the South, adhered.

It is wrong to characterize Washington as an all-out accommodating leader. He never relinquished the right to full equality in all respects as the ultimate goal. But for the time being he was prepared to give up social and political equality, even to soft-pedal the protest against inequalities in justice. He was also willing to flatter the Southern whites and be harsh toward the Negroes—*if* the Negroes were only allowed to work undisturbed with their white friends for education and business. But neither in education nor in business did he assault the basic inequalities. In both fields he accepted the white doctrine of the Negroes' "place." In education he pleaded for vocational training, which—independent of whether or not it be judged the most advantageous direction of schooling for the Negroes—certainly comforted the whites in their beliefs about what the Negroes were good for and where they would be held in the occupational hierarchy.[b] Washington did not insist upon the Negroes rights, but he wanted a measure of tolerance and some material assistance. Through thrift, skill, and industry the Negroes were gradually to improve so much that, at a later stage, the discussion again could be taken up concerning his rights. This was Washington's philosophy. To quote a typical statement of his:

> I believe the past and present teach but one lesson—to the Negro's friends and to the Negro himself,—that there is but one way out, that there is but one hope of solution; and that is for the Negro in every part of America to resolve from henceforth that he will throw aside every non-essential and cling only to essential,—that

[a] See Chapter 20, Sections 6 and 7.

[b] See Chapter 41, Sections 4 and 5.

his pillar of fire by night and pillar of cloud by day shall be property, economy, education, and Christian character. To us just now these are the wheat, all else the chaff.[5]

Kelly Miller gives a characterization of Booker T. Washington in contradistinction to Frederick Douglass, which sets these two Negro leaders in a frame of the two spiritual tendencies of American culture at large: the uncompromising spirit of the American Creed and the spirit of business realism:

The radical and conservative tendencies of the Negro race cannot be better described than by comparing, or rather contrasting, the two superlative colored men in whom we find their highest embodiment—Frederick Douglass and Booker Washington, who were both picked out and exploited by white men as the mouthpiece and intermediaries of the black race. The two men are in part products of their times, but are also natural antipodes. Douglass lived in the day of moral giants; Washington lives in the era of merchant princes. The contemporaries of Douglass emphasized the rights of men; those of Washington, his productive capacity. The age of Douglass acknowledged the sanction of the Golden Rule; that of Washington worships the Rule of *Gold*. The equality of men was constantly dinned into Douglass's ears; Washington hears nothing but the inferiority of the Negro and the dominance of the Saxon. Douglass could hardly receive a hearing today; Washington would have been hooted off the stage a generation ago. Thus all truly useful men must be, in a measure, time servers; for unless they serve their time, they can scarcely serve at all. But great as was the diversity of formative influences that shaped these two great lives, there is no less opposability in their innate bias of character. Douglass was like a lion, bold and fearless; Washington is lamblike, meek and submissive. Douglass escaped from personal bondage, which his soul abhorred; but for Lincoln's proclamation, Washington would probably have arisen to esteem and favor in the eyes of his master as a good and faithful servant. Douglass insisted upon rights; Washington insists upon duty. Douglass held up for public scorn the sins of the white man; Washington portrays the faults of his own race. Douglass spoke what he thought the world should hear; Washington speaks only what he feels it is disposed to listen to. Douglass's conduct was actuated by principle; Washington's by prudence. Douglass had no limited, copyrighted programme for his race, but appealed to the Decalogue, the Golden Rule, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States; Washington, holding these great principles in the shadowy background, presents a practical expedient applicable to present needs. Douglass was a moralist insisting upon the application of righteousness to public affairs; Washington is a practical opportunist, accepting the best terms which he thinks it possible to secure.[6]

It is a political axiom that Negroes can never, in any period, hope to attain more *in the short-term power bargain* than the most benevolent white groups are prepared to give them.[a] This much Washington attained. With shrewd insight, Washington took exactly as much off the Negro protest—and it had to be a big reduction—as was needed in order to get

[a] See Chapter 23, Section 1, and Chapter 39, Section 13.

the maximum cooperation from the only two white groups in America who in this era of ideological reaction cared anything at all about the Negroes: the Northern humanitarians[a] and philanthropists and the Southern upper class school of "parallel civilizations."[b] Both of these liberal groups demanded appeasement above all. And *so the Southern conservatives were actually allowed to set the conditions upon which Washington and the Southern and Northern liberals could come to terms.*

But this was hardly Washington's fault. It is not proven that he could have pressed the bargain he made for the Negro people more in their favor. Remembering the grim reaction of the period, it is difficult to study his various moves without increasingly feeling that he was truly a great politician, probably the greatest one the Negro people have ever had. For his time, and for the region where he worked and where then nine-tenths of all Negroes lived, his policy of abstaining from talk of rights and of "casting down your buckets where you are" was entirely realistic. Even today it is still—in local affairs where the short-range view must dominate—the only workable Negro policy in the South. Charles S. Johnson points out: "Practically all Southern Negroes *accept* racial segregation."[7] As we have seen in previous chapters, practically all Southern Negroes have actually to accept much more, including disfranchisement and gross arbitrariness and laxity in justice.

It is a different question, however, if *under the long-range perspective* it was true statesmanship or, more specifically, if it was all the statesmanship that was called for by the interests of the Negro people. The only reason why this problem needs to be raised is the fact that *Washington was not only a national Negro leader, but actually held a virtual monopoly of national Negro leadership for several decades.* Had this not been so, it is natural that a division of responsibility would have worked itself out, so that different individuals and groups would have taken care of the long-range and the short-range interests. The actual course of policy would have become the result of discussion and interaction between them. This view will be given considerable weight when, in Chapter 39, we come

[a] As an example of how far Northern humanitarians had left the Abolitionist tradition by 1900, see the speech of W. H. Baldwin to the American Association of Social Science ("Present Problems of Negro Education," *Journal of Social Science* [December, 1899], pp. 64-68). See also Chapter 21, Section 5, of this book.

[b] See Chapter 28, Section 4 and Section 8.

"A people, like a class, to advance must either be strong enough to make its way against all hostility, or must secure the friendship of others, particularly of those nearest it. If the Negro race in the South proposes, and is powerful enough to overcome the white race, let it try this method—it will soon find out its error; if not, it must secure the friendship of that race." (Thomas Nelson Page, *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* [1904], pp. 306-307.)

to evaluate the different organized forces which are today shaping Negro policy.

4. The Spirit of Niagara and Harper's Ferry

Among the Negro intellectuals, particularly in the North, Washington and the gradually fortified "Tuskegee Machine" met severe criticism.[8] It became vocal in 1901 when two Negro intellectuals, Monroe Trotter and George Forbes, began the publication of the Boston *Guardian*.[9] W. E. B. Du Bois soon was drawn more and more from his brilliant scientific pursuits,[10] and became the leader of this protest group. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) he gave literary form to a philosophy antagonistic to Washington's. Du Bois demanded full social and political equality for Negroes, according to the Constitution, and complete cultural assimilation. And he offered his demands not as ultimate goals but as a matter of practical policy of the day.

In the summer of 1905, twenty-nine Negro intellectuals met at Niagara Falls (on Canadian soil, since they met discrimination in the Buffalo hotel at which reservations had been made for the conference). They had high hopes of forming a national protest organization with branches in the several states to wage a battle against all forms of segregation and discrimination, and, incidentally, against Washington's gradualist and conciliatory policy, which, they considered, sold out Negroes' rights for a pittance and even broke their courage to protest. A generation later, Du Bois, when writing his autobiography, gives the following concentrated expression to this criticism:

> At a time when Negro civil rights called for organized and aggressive defense, he [Mr. Washington] broke down that defense by advising acquiescence or at least no open agitation. During the period when laws disfranchising the Negro were being passed in all the Southern states, between 1890 and 1909, and when these were being supplemented by "Jim Crow" travel laws and other enactments making color caste legal, his public speeches, while they did not entirely ignore this development tended continually to excuse it, to emphasize the short-comings of the Negro, and were interpreted widely as putting the chief onus for his condition upon the Negro himself.[11]

The Niagara movement held two more meetings—one at Harper's Ferry—and issued proclamations. But it never grew to be anything more than a feeble junto. It had against it Booker T. Washington and all his Negro and white friends, and it was not discreet for ambitious young Negroes to belong to this movement.

The Niagara movement represented the first organized attempt to raise the Negro protest against the great reaction after Reconstruction. Its main importance was that it brought to open conflict and wide public debate two types of Negro strategy, one stressing accommodation and the other rais-

ing the Negro protest. Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois became national symbols for these two main streams of Negro thought. Two groups of followers assembled behind them.

> Between these two groups there were incessant attacks and counter-attacks; the former declaring that the latter were visionaries, doctrinaires, and incendiaries; the latter charging the former with minimizing political and civil rights, with encouraging opposition to higher training and higher opportunities for Negro youth, with giving sanction to certain prejudiced practices and attitudes toward the Negro, thus yielding up in fundamental principles more than could be balanced by any immediate gains One not familiar with this phase of Negro life in the twelve—or fourteen—year period following 1903 (the year of publication of *The Souls of Black Folk*) cannot imagine the bitterness of the antagonism between these two wings.[12]

Ray Stannard Baker, writing in 1908, observed: "It has come, indeed, to the point where most Negroes of any intelligence at all have taken their place on one side or the other."[13]

During this period, a pattern of Negro thinking and Negro controversy became established. I have found—particularly in the South, where conditions have changed less than in the North—that this discussion still goes on among intellectual and professional Negroes in much the same terms as at the beginning of the century.[a]

The agitation did not, for a long time, seriously encroach upon Booker T. Washington's power position. But he had increasingly to concede a place before the Negro public to astute critics of his conciliatory policy and to proponents of a more militant course of action. And he had to watch his own words and deeds carefully. He had, thereafter, to reckon not only with reactions from the whites, but also with reactions from the Negroes. As he grew older he increasingly took on symbolic dignity in his personal appearance. He also became more interested in stressing the principal demands of Negroes for ultimate equality. The irritation between the two groups remained, but when he died in 1915 he had moved considerably toward his opponents. And he knew that he no longer spoke alone for the whole Negro people. Robert R. Moton, his successor as head of the Tuskegee Institute—and symbolic conservative Negro leader in the eyes of the whites—could still less claim to be the sole Negro leader. Also, under the influence both of the criticism from the Du Bois group and of much changed conditions, he came increasingly to move toward an ideology which incorporated and expressed the Negro protest in cautious but no uncertain terms. Du Bois, on his side, had become prepared to accept

[a] Commenting upon this observation recently, a prominent Negro social scientist, well acquainted with Negro education in the South, remarked that the Washington-Du Bois controversy gives the Negro teacher in Southern high schools and colleges, where he has to watch carefully all his words, a protective historical front and an irreproachable excuse for discussing Negro policy with his students.

segregation in practice if it meant greater material advantage for Negroes. For example, he accepted segregation in the Army in order to get any Negro officers among the fighting forces at all. But the First World War and the post-war development fundamentally changed the psychology of the Negro people and the basic conditions for both accommodation and protest.

By the year 1909-1910, the Niagara movement had ceased to be an effective organization.[14] At this time, however, the stage was already set for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which we shall consider in Chapter 39, and the Niagara movement merged with it. The N.A.A.C.P. has, since its foundation, been the central organization of Negro protest, carried on in the spirit of the Abolitionists and in collaboration with Northern white liberals. But the protest motive has also gone—to a varying degree—into the policy of all the other Negro betterment organizations. It has, in fact, become part of the ideology of the entire Negro people to an ever increasing extent.

5. THE PROTEST IS STILL RISING

It cannot be doubted that the spirit of American Negroes in all classes is different today from what it was a generation ago. The protest motive is still rising. It is bound to change considerably the conditions under which Negro leadership functions.

The main factors in this development toward greater "race consciousness" and increasing dissatisfaction with the caste position will be dealt with in later chapters in so far as they have not already been touched upon. The Negro betterment organizations have themselves helped this development even when the Negro protest has not been their central theme. When Negroes are brought together to discuss and plan for any purpose, this by itself makes them feel a new courage to voice, or at least to formulate to themselves, their protest. They cannot avoid reminding each other of the actually existing reasons for serious complaints.

The Negro press, which is reaching ever deeper down into the Negro masses, has, as one of its chief aims, to give a national account of the injustices against Negroes and of the accomplishments and aspirations of Negroes. Its existence, its popular spread, and its content are a testimony of Negro unrest. Its cumulative effect in spurring race consciousness must be tremendous.

Negro churches and lodges often may have served an escape purpose by deflecting attention from worldly ills and by diverting social dissatisfaction. On a more fundamental plane, however, they are vehicles for a teaching which is equalitarian. Christianity is a radical creed, even if its radical potentialities are kept suppressed. These institutions also move along with

their membership. Generally they tend to give respectability to a form of life which is bound to strengthen the protest motive. Occasionally they are even more active. The school, merely by raising the general educational level, tends to influence the Negroes even more strongly in the same direction.

Generally speaking, every agency working for assimilation of the Negro people in the broader American civilization, which is democratic in its fundamental values, is bound to strengthen the Negro protest against caste. And so even is every agency that brings Negroes together for any kind of political, economic or social discussion. The growing isolation, which we commented upon in an earlier chapter,[a] is itself partly an expression of the Negro protest. As caste isolation becomes perfected and as the general education of the Negro people makes caste less bearable, sullen race consciousness and acute dissatisfaction increase.

6. THE SHOCK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE POST-WAR CRISIS

The upheaval in Southern agriculture prior to the First World War, the mass migration to cities and to the North, and the War itself, all acted as stimulants to the rising unrest of the American Negro people. Urbanization and mobility are inimical to the traditionally peaceful and innocent accommodation of rural Southern Negroes. The War, too, made the whites place a higher value on democracy as "the American way of life." As part of this revival of democratic ideology among the whites, there was a certain amount of talk about lack of democracy at home which must be eliminated. These developments raised vague hopes among Negroes, or at least tended to fix their own attention on their anomalous position in American democracy.

The Negroes wanted to fight in that War, too. And they were needed: 400,000 Negro men were drafted. But they often found themselves segregated in labor camps or as servants. They met discrimination everywhere and derogatory rumors about their behavior as soldiers were spread.[15] Some 200,000 Negroes went to France to fight, and so got a vision of the larger world. Everything that happened was eagerly reported by the Negro press and was widely discussed.

After the War the homecoming Negro soldier met the suspicions and fears of the Southern whites. In the North their new footholds in industry were contested by anxious white job-seekers in the post-war depression. A wave of lynchings swept the South, and even more bloody race riots swept the North. Without doubt the accumulated experiences during and immediately after the First World War were a most severe shock to the American Negroes and had lasting effects.[16]

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

7. THE GARVEY MOVEMENT

After the end of the First World War, America witnessed the first and, as yet, the only real mass movement of Negroes—[a] *The Universal Negro Improvement Association*—organized by a remarkable West Indian full-blooded Negro, Marcus Garvey. Garvey was a prophet and a visionary. From his early youth he had consecrated his life to the Negro protest. He had made a first unsuccessful attempt to start a Negro protest movement in America as early as 1916. In 1918 he returned to America after a visit to Europe.

Garvey understood how to capitalize upon the growing dissatisfaction among American Negroes.[17] He renounced all hopes of any assistance or understanding from the American whites. The white Americans might fight to save the world for democracy and to protect the rights of oppressed minorities in Europe, he told his listeners, but they would continue to oppress their own minorities and particularly the Negroes in the South. They might condemn Germany for treating an international agreement as a scrap of paper, while they bluntly ignored their own Constitution in so far as Negroes' rights were concerned. Racial prejudice was so ingrained in their whole civilization that it was absolutely futile to appeal to their sense of justice and their high-sounding democratic principles. Negroes, therefore, had to assert themselves against the whites:

> Being subservient to the will and caprice of progressive races will not prove anything superior in us. Being satisfied to drink of the dregs from the cup of human progress will not demonstrate our fitness as a people to exist alongside of others, but when of our own initiative we strike out to build industries, governments, and ultimately empires, then and only then will we as a race prove to our Creator and to man in general that we are fit to survive and capable of shaping our own destiny.[18]

He also denounced practically the whole Negro leadership. They were all bent upon cultural assimilation; they were all looking for white support in some form or another; and they were all making a compromise between accommodation and protest. Within a short time he succeeded in making bitter enemies of practically all Negro intellectuals.[b] Against him were mobilized most leaders in the Negro schools, in the Negro churches, the Negro organizations and the Negro press. He heartily responded by naming them opportunists, liars, thieves, traitors and bastards.

Over their heads he appealed to the common Negroes, and especially to the darker Negroes. He exalted everything black. Black stood for strength and beauty, not for inferiority. He even declared God and Christ

[a] There have been other local mass movements of Negroes, but the Garvey movement is the only one that has been on a national scale.

[b] A few intellectuals did come over to Garvey—notably Emmett Scott and the Rev. Dr. George A. McGuire. (See Claude McKay, *Harlem* [1940], pp. 152 and 162.)

black to spare the Negroes the humiliation of worshiping the images of white men. He preached the purity of the race and condemned amalgamation. He gave Africa a grand history and instilled a new pride of ancestry among even the downtrodden lower class Negroes in America:

> But when we come to consider the history of man, was not the Negro a power, was he not great once? Yes, honest students of history can recall the day when Egypt, Ethiopia and Timbuctoo towered in their civilizations, towered above Europe, towered above Asia. When Europe was inhabited by a race of cannibals, a race of savages, naked men, heathens and pagans, Africa was peopled with a race of cultured black men, who were masters in art, science and literature; men who were cultured and refined; men, who, it was said, were like the gods. Even the great poets of old sang in beautiful sonnets of the delight it afforded the gods to be in companionship with the Ethiopians. Why, then, should we lose hope? Black men, you were once great; you shall be great again. Lose not courage, lose not faith, go forward. The thing to do is to get organized; keep separated and you will be exploited, you will be robbed, you will be killed. Get organized, and you will compel the world to respect you. If the world fails to give you consideration, because you are black men, because you are Negroes, four hundred millions of you shall, through organization, shake the pillars of the universe and bring down creation, even as Samson brought down the temple upon his head and upon the heads of the Philistines.[19]

The only hope for American Negroes was to flee this country of oppression and return to Africa. In solidarity with all the Negro peoples in the world, they should then build up a country of their own. Negroes should become a nation and have the opportunity to live under their own leadership and to develop their own culture.

> Wake up Ethiopia! Wake up Africa! Let us work toward the one glorious end of a free, redeemed and mighty nation. Let Africa be a bright star among the constellation of nations.[20]

He appealed to the League of Nations and took up negotiations with the Republic of Liberia. An army would eventually be needed to drive out the white usurpers: and so Garvey founded the Universal African Legion, The Universal Black Cross Nurses, the Universal African Motor Corps, the Juvenile, The Black Eagle Flying Corps—all with uniforms and officers. A steamship line also was needed: and so he sponsored the organization of the Black Star Line and purchased ships.

The Empire of Africa was formally announced in 1921, and Garvey was inaugurated President-General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and provisional President of Africa. He ruled with the assistance of one Potentate and one Supreme Deputy Potentate and created a nobility of Knights of the Nile, Knights of the Distinguished Service Order of Ethiopia, and Dukes of the Niger and of Uganda. He staged parades and consecrated a flag for his organization: black, red, and green—"black for the race," "red for their blood" and "green for their hopes." In the devices of

ceremony, ritual, and pomp, Garvey only followed the romantic patterns of American secret orders, but he certainly made more effective use of them. All members of his organizations, even if they were not officers or noblemen, were "fellowmen of the Negro race" and collaborators in a world-wide struggle to free Negroes and erect again the great African culture.

Garvey set up his organization with local branches and a number of subsidiary organizations. He traveled and agitated. He published the *Negro World* as the official newspaper of the movement. He organized cooperative enterprises—grocery stores, laundries, restaurants, hotels, printing plants. He built a big meeting hall, all under the auspices of the Universal Negro Improvement Association. During 1920-1921 the movement reached its peak. It was strong in many parts of the country. In spite of having practically all the intellectual and organizational Negro forces working desperately against him, he assembled the Negro masses under his banner.[a]

Eventually his movement collapsed. His various business ventures failed or involved him in legal tangles. The counterpropaganda became increasingly effective. The Universal Negro Improvement Association began to decline toward the end of 1921. He was finally imprisoned by federal authorities on the charge of using the mails to defraud in connection with the sale of stock for his Black Star Line. After a long legal contest during which he foolishly insisted on pleading his own case and turning the trial into a farce, he was finally sentenced in 1925 and brought to the federal prison at Atlanta, Georgia, as a convict. After two years, he was released and deported as an undesirable alien. He continued to agitate from the West Indies but without any success. In 1940 he died in London, poor and forgotten.

The law suit marked the end of his organization as an important mass movement among American Negroes, even though there are some living off-shoots in religious sects[b] and also in some less important protest organizations.[c] There must also remain memories in the Negro community. The precise nature of these are not known. "When the curtain dropped on the Garvey theatricals, the black man of America was exactly where Garvey had found him, though a little bit sadder, perhaps a bit poorer—if not wiser," is Ralph Bunche's conclusion.[21] But the thinking and the feeling of the Negro masses on this point remains a mystery.

[a] "It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the total membership of Garvey's organization at its peak. Garvey gave the probably exaggerated estimate of 6,000,000 members. William Pickens, on the other hand—one of Garvey's bitter enemies among the Negro intellectuals—charged that the organization never enrolled as many as 1,000,000. Kelly Miller cited the figure of 4,000,000." (Ralph Bunche, "Programs, Ideologies, Tactics, and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Inter-racial Organizations," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 2, p. 398.)

[b] See Chapter 40, Section 2.

[c] See Chapter 39, Section 2.

Du Bois, Garvey's arch-enemy whom he had solemnly "excluded" from the race, has this to say in retrospect:

> It was a grandiose and bombastic scheme, utterly impracticable as a whole, but it was sincere and had some practical features; and Garvey proved not only an astonishing popular leader, but a master of propaganda. Within a few years, news of his movement, of his promises and plans, reached Europe and Asia, and penetrated every corner of Africa.[22]

James Weldon Johnson comments:

> Garvey failed; yet he might have succeeded with more than moderate success. He had energy and daring and the Napoleonic personality, the personality that draws masses of followers. He stirred the imagination of the Negro masses as no Negro ever had. He raised more money in a few years than any other Negro organization had ever dreamed of. He had great power and great possibilities within his grasp. But his deficiencies as a leader outweighed his abilities.[23]

Fascinating as Marcus Garvey was as a political prophet and as a mass leader, *the response from the Negro masses is even more interesting*. Negro intellectuals, for understandable reasons, show certain inhibitions in dealing with the topic as do the white students of the Negro problem. But it is worthy of intensive historical investigation and careful reflection. For one thing, it proves that it *is* possible to reach the Negro masses if they are appealed to in an effective way. It testifies to the basic unrest in the Negro community. It tells of a dissatisfaction so deep that it mounts to hopelessness of ever gaining a full life in America. It suggests that the effective method of lining up the American Negroes into a mass movement is a strongly emotional race-chauvinistic protest appeal. Considering the caste conditions under which Negroes live, this is not surprising.

On the other hand, the Garvey movement illustrates—as the slave insurrections did a century earlier—that a Negro movement in America is doomed to ultimate dissolution and collapse if it cannot gain white support. This is a real dilemma. For white support will be denied to emotional Negro chauvinism when it takes organizational and political form. This problem will be taken up for further discussion at the end of Chapter 39.

8. POST-WAR RADICALISM AMONG NEGRO INTELLECTUALS

While the Garvey movement had its spectacular rise and fall, many other things happened on the intellectual Negro front which did not have much immediate effect upon the Negro masses but did set the patterns for Negro intellectuals until the present time.

After 1917 an attempt was made to organize and release the Negro protest into a political movement allied to radical white labor. Such young Negro socialists as Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph started left-wing organs, the principal of which were the *Messenger*, the *Emancipator*,

the *Challenge* and the *Crusader*. They preached labor solidarity across the race line.[a] The Communists, to the left of this group, later appealed to the Negroes as an oppressed people under imperialist exploitation and promised "self determination for the Negro in the Black Belt," to be realized by the setting up of an independent black republic. The new republic should comprise those more or less contiguous areas in the South in which the Negro population is a majority.[24] This fanciful construction failed utterly to strike the imagination of the Negro masses and is probably part of the reason why the Communist party did not catch more Negro intellectuals.[b]

More to the right of the *Messenger* group was "the New Negro movement," a somewhat undefined term to describe an outburst of intellectual and artistic activity and a tendency to glorify things Negro in a creative way. Although it was somewhat chauvinistically Negro and although it was nurtured by Negro intellectual leaders—especially by Du Bois, as editor of *The Crisis*, Charles Johnson, as editor of *Opportunity*, and Alain Locke, editor of the representative volume, *The New Negro* (1925)—it was primarily a white-sponsored movement. For a number of reasons—partly connected with the northward migration and partly with post-war escapism —Northern city whites suddenly became fascinated by the "exotic" African in their midst. The hiring of the Negro to furnish amusement—in literature and art as well as in jazz bands and burlesque shows—was characteristic of the "whoopee" period of the 1920's. The movement had its serious side also, since outstanding artists used the African motif in their work. It was serious from the side of the producers, but not from the side of the consumers.

This white patronage—which brought money and fame (and notoriety) to a relatively small number of Negroes—gave the Negro masses the beginnings of respect for their potentialities and their heritage.[c] Although Northern white opinion of the Negro was probably permanently raised by the movement, it was primarily a fad to most whites. It crashed with the stock market in 1929, although it has left permanent effects on the artistic tastes and entertainment interests of whites in the North and throughout the world. With the decline of white support, the movement largely broke up among Negroes, but its nucleus—an implicit understanding between Negro artists and intellectuals—has remained in a modified form until the present day.

9. NEGRO HISTORY AND CULTURE

The 'twenties and 'thirties also saw the rapid growth of a movement to discover a cultural tradition for American Negroes. When Garvey exalted

[a] This important theory will be discussed in Chapter 38, Sections 5, 6 and 7.

[b] See Chapter 23, Section 2.

[c] More specific effects of the New Negro movement are discussed in Chapter 44, Section 5.

the historical background of the Negro people, he stole weapons from his enemies, the Negro intellectuals.

For a long time, even before the Civil War, diligent work had been going on to provide the Negro people with a respectable past. In a sense the numerous slave biographies—the most important of which was *Narrative of the Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*[25]—served such a purpose. Any Negro who emerges to prominence has usually had a remarkable life, and autobiographies have always played an important role among Negro writings.[a] Still more directly the searching of historical sources to unveil the deeds of Negroes in the American Revolution and in other American wars is part of this movement. So is also the eager attempt to reveal partial Negro ancestry of prominent individuals all over the world (Pushkin, Dumas, Alexander Hamilton and others).

Much of all this is zealous dilettantism, sometimes of a quite fantastic nature.[26] But increasingly it is coming under the control of historical methods of research. White historians have usually been biased by their preconceptions about the Negroes' inherent inferiority and by the specific rationalization needs these preconceptions have been serving.[b] Even apart from this, they have not had much interest in the Negroes except as objects of white exploitation and contests. The Negro people have, in their hands, become more a part of the natural resources or the scenery of the country. Negro historians see tasks both in rectifying wrong notions of the white historians and in concentrating upon the neglected aspects of the Negroes' history.[c] This movement was given impetus in 1915 by the organization of *The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History* and its chief publication, *The Journal of Negro History*. The moving spirit behind the organization, and the editor of the *Journal*, is Dr. Carter G. Woodson.[d]

[a] These Negro autobiographies have sometimes ranked among the classic American autobiographies. Besides Douglass' *Autobiography*, there is Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*; James Weldon Johnson's *Along This Way* (his famous *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* is fictional); James D. Corrother's *In Spite of the Handicap*; Claude McKay's *A Long Way from Home*; Langston Hughes' *The Big Sea*; Du Bois' *Dusk of Dawn* (and, in a sense, several earlier books, including the tremendously influential *The Souls of Black Folk*).

[b] See footnote 32 to Chapter 20.

[c] An excellent illustration of the "protest" nature of Negro history is given by the fact that one of the popular books of this type has the title *The Negro, Too, in American History* (by Merl R. Eppse [1939]).

[d] Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune is the present president, and there are other officers and directors.

Dr. Woodson is also the leader of the whole modern Negro History movement. Lawrence Reddick puts it: ". . . the history of Negro historiography falls into two divisions, *before* Woodson and *after* Woodson." ("A New Interpretation for Negro History," *The Journal of Negro History* [January, 1937], p. 21.)

The articles in the *Journal* meet all standards of historical scholarship, at least as much as in other historical journals.

In spite of all scholarly pretenses and accomplishments, this movement is basically an expression of the Negro protest.[27] Its avowed purpose is to enhance self-respect and race-respect among Negroes by substituting a belief in race achievements for the traditional belief in race inferiority. As Reddick puts it, ". . . Negro History is quite different from the study of the Negro. Frankly, the former differs from the latter in that Negro History has a *purpose* which is built upon a *faith*."[28] Propagandistic activities go on side by side with the scholarly ones. Various devices are used to bring the findings of historical research before the Negro public. Since 1937, the Association has been publishing the *Negro History Bulletin* which is for a wider audience than the scholarly *Journal of Negro History*. Summaries of articles from both journals in popular style are furnished Negro newspapers. Popular pamphlets and books are sold by house-to-house agents in the Negro community.[29] Displays are prepared for various types of Negro gatherings. Contact is made with certain types of Negro clubs. Perhaps the most successful single device is "Negro History Week,"[30] during which the written and spoken word is applied with concentrated effort, especially to Negro school children. If the teacher is Negro and at all aware of the historical research, the Negro school child gets this new angle on the history of the Negro throughout the year, but during Negro History Week, the Association makes a special effort to reach all Negro children.

> Just as the white American school child is taught American history from the point of view of the American chauvinist, the Negro school child is to see it from the point of view of the black racialist.[31]

When we call the activities of the Negro History movement "propaganda," we do not mean to imply that there is any distortion in the facts presented. Excellent historical research has accompanied the efforts to publicize it. But there has been a definite distortion in the emphasis and the perspective given the facts: mediocrities have been expanded into "great men"; cultural achievements which are no better—and no worse—than any others are placed on a pinnacle; minor historical events are magnified into crises. This seems entirely excusable, however, in view of the greater distortion and falsification of the facts in the writings of white historians. As propaganda, "Negro history" serves the same purpose for historical periods as the Negro newspapers serve for contemporary life: they both serve as a counterpoison to the false and belittling treatment of the Negro in newspapers and books written by whites.

In one phase of their activities, Negro historians have the support of some white scientists. This is in the field of African culture, for which anthropologists have recently manifested a new interest and a new apprecia-

tion. It was a basic means of satisfying white men's needs to justify slavery and white superiority that the "dark continent" be regarded as a place of cultureless savagery. This tradition of African inferiority has continued in the white world long after the American Indian, the Polynesian, and the Stone Age man were given applause for high cultural achievement. Only recently have even the anthropologists realized that African Negroes have surpassed most other pre-literate groups in at least the fields of government, law and technology. The general white public still does not realize this, but during the New Negro movement of the 1920's there developed something of an appreciation for modified African music and art. One white anthropologist, Melville J. Herskovits, has recently rendered yeoman service to the Negro History propagandists. He has not only made excellent field studies of certain African and West Indian Negro groups, but has written a general book to glorify African culture generally and to show how it has survived in the American Negro community. He has avowedly done this to give the Negro confidence in himself and to give the white man less "reason" to have race prejudice.

> To give the Negro an appreciation of his past is to endow him with the confidence in his own position in this country and in the world which he must have, and which he can best attain when he has available a foundation of scientific fact concerning the ancestral cultures of Africa and the survivals of Africanisms in the New World. And it must again be emphasized that when such a body of fact, solidly grounded, is established, a ferment must follow which, when this information is diffused over the population as a whole, will influence opinion in general concerning Negro abilities and potentialities, and thus contribute to a lessening of interracial tensions.[32]

Aside from the question of admiring their past achievements, Negroes are faced with the question of whether they should attempt to build morale by glorifying their present achievements or attempt to raise standards by criticizing the present low ones. Almost all Negroes, at least among the youth, are agreed that some of the traits for which they are praised by Southern whites (loyalty, tractability, happy-go-luckiness) are not the traits of which they should be primarily proud.[33] But there are other alleged Negro traits that white men praise which present more of a dilemma to Negroes. These are the so-called special Negro aptitudes for music, art, poetry and the dance. Not only have jazz, the blues, and tap-dancing captured the popular entertainment world, but spirituals have been adjudged "America's only folk music," and a few Negro actors, singers and poets have been counted among the best. In certain branches of sports, too, Negroes have come out on top. Because of white applause, Negroes can take heart in these achievements and can use them to protest against discrimination.

But some Negroes have doubts about some of these things. They feel that it is unwise for Negroes to specialize in so few fields, but rather that they should put more effort into breaking into new fields. They feel that there is something of a "double standard" when the white man applauds—that some lesser Negro poets and actors are getting applause because they are Negroes rather than because they have outranked the whites in free competition. They know that achievements in some of these fields merely strengthen the harmful stereotypes, that Negroes are innately more emotional and unrestrained and animal-like. They believe that the spirituals are a "badge of slavery" and retain the memories of slavery in both whites and Negroes, and that emphasis on things African is emphasis on the primitive background of Negroes. Finally, they are afraid of the "parallel civilizations" theory held by some whites: that Negroes should retain "their own" cultural heritage and not lose it for the general American culture.[a] All these things—feels this small group of Negroes, mainly intellectuals—will not redound to the ultimate advantage of Negroes but will tie them more strongly into a subordinate position. But even they, like the rest of the Negroes, take vicarious satisfaction in the present-day achievements of individual Negroes, and in so doing express their protest against their subordinate caste position.[b]

10. The Great Depression and the Second World War

The Great Depression struck the Negroes even harder than it did the whites. Not only did they lose jobs in the cities in greater numbers than did whites, but many of those who retained employment—especially in agriculture—were driven down to starvation wages. Movements like the Black Shirts were organized to deprive Negroes of what jobs they had. Unemployed Negroes, unlike many unemployed whites, had no savings upon which they could fall back in the crisis. Also stinging in its effects was the collapse of the "New Negro" movement in the arts and entertainment field; this had been giving many Negroes long-range hope for a raised status. Between 1930 and 1933 there was utter distress and pessimism among Negroes; practically the only ones with hope were the few who turned to communism.

Negroes were frankly skeptical of the new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, because he was a Democrat, and because rumors were spread that he was ill and his death would see the elevation of John N. Garner, the Vice-President from the South, to the Presidency. In Chicago, typical of Northern cities where Negroes voted, only about 23 per cent of the

[a] For a discussion of the "parallel civilizations" theory from the viewpoint of the white proponents, see Chapter 28, Sections 4 and 8.

[b] These achievements also encourage some Negroes and help build up a "tradition of success," the lack of which has helped to keep Negroes down in the past.

Negro vote went to Roosevelt in the 1932 election. Yet they swung rapidly around and became the strongest supporters of his politics.[a] With their new admiration for the New Deal, Negroes experienced a lift in their hopes for themselves. Unemployment relief removed much of the economic suffering, at least in the North. The United States Housing projects, Farm Security work, and other federal activities helped some Negroes to reorganize themselves. Politically, the Negroes were stimulated by their release from the Republican party and by the presence of Negroes in advisory positions in many government agencies. Above all, they were thrilled by Roosevelt's appeal to the underdog and by the obvious friendliness toward Negroes on the part of the President and Mrs. Roosevelt. There had been no race riots for several years; lynchings reached a new low; Southern liberalism—with federal government support—seemed to be growing. All these things made the late 1930's a period of somewhat less despair and pessimism for Negroes than the early 1930's. But there was little long-range hope: Negroes had relief, but no jobs; and there was no significant improvement in their position on any other front.

When the United States entered the Second World War in December, 1941, Negroes were not optimistic as to what its significance for them would be. They knew that the democratic war aims were not meant for them. The memories of the riots that followed the First World War rankled in their minds. Their difficulties in getting into the armed forces and into war industry in the period of preparation for war convinced them that an increase of activities would only mean that there were more fields in which Negroes would be discriminated against. But there was more reason and more opportunity to protest. The democratic ideology stimulated by the War and the heroic example of the colored peoples of China, the Philippine Islands, and elsewhere, outweighed the emphasis upon "wartime unity and harmony," and gave the Negro protest an ear among the whites, at least in the North. These same things made the Negro want to protest more.

We shall have more to say on the influence of the present War upon Negro attitudes in the last chapter. We shall find that the Negro protest has risen higher than ever. It is possible that at a later stage of the War, when the white unemployment reserve is worked off, the Negroes will see their employment opportunity rise. It is also possible that the white liberals will be able to open the doors somewhat more in the armed forces. It is possible that some more specific promises of measures against discrimination, not only in the economic field, but also in justice, politics, education, and other public services will be given to meet the low morale of the Negroes and to allay the uneasy feeling of many whites when faced before the world with the inconsistency between their democratic faith and their

[a] See Chapter 23, footnote 8.

treatment of Negroes. It is even possible that some real start will be made toward fulfilling the promises. Whether any promises to the Negro are fulfilled or not, it can be predicted with a fairly high degree of certainty that *this War, when and if it is won, and its sour aftermath will act like the First World War did—as a great shock to the Negro people and as a stimulant to their protest.*

CHAPTER 36

THE PROTEST MOTIVE AND NEGRO PERSONALITY

1. A Mental Reservation

The Negro protest is shut in by caste. Most of it is doomed to be introverted and self-consuming. An uproar like the Garvey movement is likely only to make the Negro protest appear intrinsically the more hopeless afterward.

Negroes are only a tenth of the American nation. As an effect of the perfected caste controls, described in earlier parts of the book, their political and social power is much less than a tenth. Therefore, Negroes can never cherish the healthy hope of coming into power. A Negro movement can never expect to grow into a democratic majority in politics or in any other sphere of American life. And to escape from America is a fantastic dream from which Negroes always awake and find that they do not even want it to happen. There is a sense of hopelessness in the Negro cause. Meanwhile the individual Negro has to find his path through life as it is.

But there is no wholehearted acceptance of the present situation. Deep down in the most dependent and destitute classes of Negroes in the rural South, the individual Negro of the masses ordinarily keeps a recess in his mind where he harbors the Negro protest. In the lower classes, and wherever the caste controls are severe, it is usually framed in the Christian ideals of human brotherhood and all men's fundamental equality before God. Church and religion is a much needed front to give respectability and acceptability to the suppressed Negro protest. The world can safely be claimed to be wrong in the light of Christian ideals. The rich and mighty white people are the possessors of this unrighteous world. Sometime, somehow, the wrongs are going to be corrected and "the last shall be first and the first shall be last." There is not only consolation and escape in this religious teaching, but it also serves as a means of guarding the democratic faith in the minds of downtrodden black people. It gives a supreme sanction to ideas from the American Creed, ideas which are unrealistic and fantastic in the light of the actual situation. This is the Negro protest in its most concealed form. In the upper strata, and generally in the North, the Negro protest is much more clearly thought out and overtly expressed in social, economic and political terms.

On a high intellectual level one way of preserving human dignity in the face of outward humiliation is to follow the well-known formula of James Weldon Johnson:

> The pledge to myself which I have endeavored to keep through the greater part of my life is:
>
> I will not allow one prejudiced person or one million or one hundred million to blight my life. I will not let prejudice or any of its attendant humiliations and injustices bear me down to spiritual defeat. My inner life is mine, and I shall defend and maintain its integrity against all the powers of hell.[1]

2. THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DEFEATISM

This attitude is not so uncommon as one would think, even among Negroes of humble status. But with the individual Negro there is always a tendency for the protest to become bent into defeatism. Negroes on all class levels give vent to this spirit of defeatism in expressions such as "niggers ain't for nothing," "niggers ain't got a thing," "we're the underdogs," "Negroes can't win," "there is just no hope for Negroes," "why bother?"

This cannot be said publicly, though. The protest motive does not allow it. No Negro leader could ever preach it. No Negro newspaper could print it. It must be denied eagerly and persistently. But privately it can be said, and it *is* said.

Sometimes—and this also in all classes—the blame will be put on Negro inferiority: "niggers are no good," "niggers have no guts," "Negroes lack courage," "Negroes are lazy," "Negroes have no foresight and persistency," "Negroes can't work for themselves," "black is evil." This agrees with what most white people believe and want to believe. To Negroes it represents the old caste accommodation pattern. It kills ambition and makes low standards of morals and accomplishments seem natural for Negroes.[a] It is a convenient philosophy and may, in a sense, be necessary for a balanced personality.

But Negro inferiority cannot be admitted publicly. It has been the result of the rising Negro protest that there is, in nearly the entire Negro population, a *theoretical* belief that Negroes are just as highly endowed with inherent capabilities and propensities as are white people. An emphatic assertion of equality of the Negro people's potentialities is a central theme in the propagation of Negro race consciousness and race pride. "The Negro is behind the white man because he has not had the same chance, and not from any inherent difference in his nature and desires,"[2] has been a thesis which for decades every Negro leader has found it necessary to assert. Not only Negro leaders and educators but all whites who address Negroes in a

[a] See Chapter 9, Section 2, and Chapter 30, Section 1.

spirit other than the oppressive one find it always of greatest importance to combat what has come to be known as the Negro "inferiority complex." As we have shown, science has supported the Negro position of equal average endowment, and even prejudiced whites, with any sense of responsibility, no longer *publicly* state that Negroes are inherently inferior.[a]

To admit Negro inferiority is thus treason to the race. But the lives of Negroes are filled with disappointments. Equality in endowment is not visibly demonstrated in accomplishment, except rarely. Even Negroes who are articulately race conscious have their moments of tiredness when they slip back into the inferiority doctrine, in the same way as religious persons have their moments of doubt about the existence of a divine providence. The inferiority doctrine remains, therefore, as an ever present undercurrent in Negro consciousness which must constantly be suppressed. It creeps up in conversation, and it flavors the jokes, particularly when Negroes are among themselves. It provides the terms of abuse and insult in intra-Negro quarrels. It plays an important role in the relations between the classes in the Negro community. It is no longer—and this is a result of the Negro protest—an attitude of carefree complacency, but a complacency tainted with much bitterness.

3. THE STRUGGLE FOR BALANCE

The standard explanation of Negro failures, and the only one publicly accepted, is to place the responsibility upon the caste system and the whites who uphold it: "the whites are mean to Negroes," "white people won't give the Negro a chance," "the whites are keeping Negroes down," "the American caste system degrades Negroes to half-men," "all odds are against us," "Negroes meet unfairness everywhere." As the Negro protest is rising and is becoming popularized, the view becomes more and more widespread that white oppression and the caste deprivations are to be blamed and not Negro inferiority.

In a way, this theory is an attempt at a rational explanation of the low status of Negroes. It preserves self-respect and does not necessarily damage ambition. Many Negroes who strive hard to keep up and improve their status actually succeed in holding to this theory without mental conflict. They place themselves and their group in a true perspective. They measure their failures and accomplishments in realistic terms: of their own abilities, of the caste deprivations, and of the factor of pure chance (which is always of major importance in the individual case but is balanced out for the group). Such persons thus keep a balanced personality, but in a way that is more pretentious and less demoralizing, because less complacent, than the old caste accommodation. It may be said to be the goal of all Negro educa-

[a] See Chapter 6.

tion to adjust Negro youth to this balanced state of realistic conception of one's self and the world and of *accommodation under protest.*

The temptations are great, however, to lose this precious balance, either by falling into the bitter complacency of the inferiority doctrine referred to above or by overdoing the equality doctrine and trying to build up a strained case that black is superior to white.[a] A third temptation is to exaggerate the accusation against the whites and so use the caste disabilities to cover all personal failures. The growing isolation makes such a self-deception the more easy to accomplish and, indeed, difficult to avoid. The whites' race prejudice and the general fact of belonging to a group that is discriminated against provide a ready excuse for sub-standard performance and for beliefs which are just as effective as the old inferiority doctrine and personally less unflattering.

The effects, however, are even more thoroughly demoralizing. There is not only complacency but more comforting self-pity. There is also at times a cynical disregard for "the rules of the game" when dealing with white people in such extraordinary circumstances where they cannot, or are not inclined to, hit back and put the screws on.[b] This is an angle of the general problem of the double standard to which we shall return.[c] It has a Negro side—in so far as Negroes accept the easy escape, with or without acceptance of the inferiority doctrine also—and is thus not caused only by white forbearance and paternalism.

The caste pressures thus make it exceedingly difficult for an American Negro to preserve a true perspective of himself and his own group in relation to the larger white society. The increasing abstract knowledge of the world outside—of its opportunities, its rewards, its different norms of competition and cooperation—which results from the proceeding acculturation at the same time as there is increasing group isolation, only increases the tensions. When once-off balance in one direction or the other, it is easy to lose stability and to slide to and fro among various contradictory attitudes. There is irritation and resentment involved in each of them, except in the old naïve and easy-going inferiority belief, which hardly exists any more because of the Negro protest. Normal individuals do not like to find irritation and resentment in themselves. It thus becomes opportune and, indeed, highly practical to try not to think too much about it. For "what is the use?"

[a] See Chapter 35, Sections 7 and 9; Chapter 38, Section 12; and Chapter 39, Section 2.

[b] I once heard a white official of a philanthropic agency, who had discovered some financial double-dealing of a Negro research worker, comment upon his decision just to forget about it in somewhat the following words: "We must remember that these people are held down in a subordinate class. When we lift up one of them and deal with him as one of us, how can we assume that he should deal with us as a gentleman?"

[c] See Section 5 of this chapter.

4. NEGRO SENSITIVENESS

The upper classes are in many ways better protected, but they feel humiliations more intensively. It requires hard and continuous struggle to overcome the effects of the deprivations and humiliations. The intensity of this struggle is suggested by the fact that often a small personal incident has the power suddenly to infuriate even those Negroes who pretend that they are not "race men." They feel overwhelmed by the discriminations and the prejudice. This is what is called Negro "sensitiveness."[3]

Referring to the South, Charles S. Johnson gives the following interesting analysis of why upper class Negroes are more sensitive:

> The greater sensitivity of the upper-class Negro to racial discrimination is attributable to two factors: (1) his greater familiarity with political and social thought, and (2) the contradiction between his personal achievements and his social position. The upper-class Negro is more aware of the regional variations in racial prejudice. He sees the race system of the South as a local phenomenon, while the less educated Negro is apt to regard white domination as part of the order of the universe. The upper-class Negro also feels himself entitled by training and ability to achieve a high social position in the community—a position denied by reason of race alone.[4]

Much of the Negro sensitiveness is centered around the word "Negro" and its several synonyms. Even the lower class Negro in the rural South feels insulted when he is called a "nigger" by a white man. The word is hated because it symbolizes what prejudiced white people think of Negroes. It is often used, however, between Negroes of all classes not only as an insult but often in friendly joking. But it is insulting if it is used by a white person. In Chapter 29 we have discussed other names and modes of address to which Negroes are sensitive. All these words suggest to Negroes that the white man who uses them regards Negroes as inferior, and in the South white men who use them usually do have this attitude and express it intentionally in the words. The large number of these words and special ways of addressing Negroes indicate why Negroes have much to be "sensitive" about.

Indeed, the entire racial "etiquette" and system of segregation in the South are taken as insults by the Negro. At every hand the Southern white man has given the Negro much to be sensitive about. The mere assumption by the Southerner that his deprecation of the Negro is not taken as an insult helps to make the Negro sensitive. Ray Stannard Baker tells of the following occurrence:

> I was lunching with several fine Southern men, and they talked, as usual, with the greatest freedom in the full hearing of the Negro waiters. Somehow, I could not help watching to see if the Negroes took any notice of what was said. I wondered if they were sensitive. Finally, I put the question to one of my friends: "Oh," he said.

"we never mind them; they don't care." One of the waiters instantly spoke up: "No, don't mind me; I'm only a block of wood."[5]

The constant insulting in the South has developed the trait of sensitiveness in some Negroes to an unusually high degree. There is much cause for sensitiveness in the North also, but sometimes certain actions of Northern whites are taken as insults by Negroes when no insult is intended. This is understandable, of course, in view of the mutual ignorance of the two races in the North, but it nevertheless makes for mental unhealthiness on the part of some Negroes.

In the lower classes the protest motive is weaker and the equality doctrine not practical. The desire to maintain personal dignity and the social pressure to keep up respectability are not so strong. It is possible to take a more cynical, and even exploitative, attitude toward white people's pretenses of superiority. Frazier tells us how lower class parents in Washington "caution their children to avoid conflicts, to ignore insults, and to adopt techniques for 'getting by.' These techniques include 'acting like a monkey,' 'jibbering,' flattery, and plain lying."[6] One Negro youth expressed himself thus:

> I'm always being told I can't do something because I'm a "nigger." I don't feel badly about it all. I know being a "nigger" there are things I can't do, places I can't go, but I feel that where some tell me something I can't do, somebody will tell me I can do something I want to do. So I don't mind trying and if you know how to flatter and "jive" white people, you can get farther than they expect "niggers" to go. I usually make a big joke of it and act the part of a clown. I generally get just what I'm after. After all, I think that's all white people want anyway. They just want "niggers," to recognize them as superior, and I'm the man to play their game. I don't care what he says or does as long as he kicks in. One thing sure, he wouldn't call me "nigger" down on Delaware Avenue. Then, too, I usually remember even if he lets you do things, he really doesn't want you to, and you're still a "nigger" to him. I don't feel badly about being told I can't do something because if he lets me hang around long enough, I'll get something out of him.[7]

Another Negro boy who gave about the same account confessed however: "I hate myself, every time I say 'boss' or 'coat-tail' a peckerwood."[8]

Frazier brings this attitude into relation with the fact that so many of the lower class families were born in the South, and Davis and Dollard, studying Southern Negro youth, inform us that "the role of entertainer and clown is a familiar one to lower-class people."[9] Without doubt it is less common in the Northern cities, and it is becoming less common everywhere. The pattern that is becoming generally approved is an attempt at voluntary withdrawal. This pattern has become perfected in the upper classes; it is spreading into the lower classes.[a] In the unavoidable contacts

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

with whites, however, their prejudices, and in the South the racial etiquette, must be accepted with good grace in order to avoid trouble and to get along.

5. NEGRO AGGRESSION

But some Negroes will openly tell the interviewer that: "I just get mad when I think about it all." Some really "get mad" occasionally and hit at the whites in the fury of frustration.

In the growing generation of Negroes, there are a good many individuals like Bigger Thomas, the hero of Richard Wright's popular novel, *Native Son*. They can be seen walking the streets unemployed; standing around on the corners; or laughing, playing, and fighting in the joints and pool-rooms everywhere in the Negro slums of American cities. They have a bearing of their whole body, a way of carrying their hats, a way of looking cheeky and talking coolly, and a general recklessness about their own and others' personal security and property, which gives one a feeling that carelessness, asociality, and fear have reached their zenith. In some cities they are known in the Negro community by the appropriate epithet "cats."

Some few Negroes even outside the world of the "cats" consciously think out their aggression against the white caste, at least as a temporary flight of the imagination to relieve inner tension. Ralph Bunche testifies:

> There are Negroes too, who, fed up with frustration of their life here, see no hope and express an angry desire to "shoot their way out of it." I have on many occasions heard Negroes exclaim: "Just give us machine guns and we'll blow the lid off the whole damn business." Sterling Brown's "Ballad for Joe Meek" is no mere fantasy and the humble Negro turned "bad" is not confined to the pages of fiction, granted that he is the exception. The worm does turn and a cornered rat will fight.[10]

But physical attack upon the whites is suicidal. Aggression has to be kept suppressed and normally is suppressed. It creeps up, however, in thousands of ways. The whites do not get as wholehearted a response from their Negroes as they would if the latter were well satisfied with the necessity of accommodation. Not only occasional acts of violence but much laziness, carelessness, unreliability, petty stealing and lying are undoubtedly to be explained as concealed aggression.[11] The shielding of Negro criminals and suspects, the dislike of testifying against another Negro, and generally the defensive solidarity in the protective Negro community has a definite taint of hostility.

The truth is that *Negroes generally do not feel they have unqualified moral obligations to white people.* This is an observation which a stranger visiting around in the Negro communities cannot help making time and again. The voluntary withdrawal which has intensified the isolation between the two castes is also an expression of the Negro protest under cover.

A less dangerous outlet for aggression is to deflect it from the white

caste and direct it upon other Negroes.[12] This means that the caste protest turns inward upon the Negro community. The lack of police protection in the Negro community and the leniency toward Negro offenders if they restrict their activity to other Negroes makes this outlet for aggression even more inviting.[a] There are no reasons to assume that Negroes are endowed with a greater innate propensity to violence than other people.[b] The excess of physical assaults—and of altercations—within the Negro community is rather to be explained as a misplaced aggression of a severely frustrated subordinate caste.[13]

This outlet is, however, prohibited in the Negro middle and upper classes where respectability is a supreme norm and fighting and squabbling are severely censored. Hindered by caste, prudence, and respectability from taking it out on either the whites or on other Negroes in blows and scoldings, they have to store up their aggression. This is probably another cause of their greater sensitivity. Some few find an outlet in organizational activity for the Negro cause.

6. Upper Class Reactions

Caste solidarity is founded upon the entirely negative principle that all Negroes find themselves enclosed together behind the same caste bar and bruise their heads against it. Caste does not allow any Negro, when he has raised himself above the rest—and even if he then hates them—to leave the group. This is a background against which the relation between the different classes in the Negro community should be viewed. It is convenient to distinguish these relations, as seen by the minute upper class, from the conception held by the Negro masses.

As has already been indicated, there are many upper class Negroes who try to escape from race and caste.[14] They have arranged a little isolated world for themselves and want to hear as little as possible about their being Negroes or the existence of a Negro problem. They make it a point not to read Negro papers or Negro books; they keep themselves and their children apart from "common Negroes." They try to share the conservative political opinions of the whites of similar class status; they often over-do this considerably. They despise lower class Negroes, and they balance the account by despising lower class whites too.

In a sense this is a type of accommodation. It relinquishes the Negro protest but it does not accept the inferiority doctrine, at least not in so far as it applies to themselves. When people who hold this attitude play up class, it is instrumental in allowing them to play down caste. To preserve their attitude they keep as far as possible from interracial situations where the reality of caste would become acute. But, since whites of their class do

[a] See Part VI.

[b] See Chapter 6.

not accept them, they are doomed to loneliness together with some few like-minded and like-classed Negroes.

The students at Negro colleges enjoy a particularly protected life for some years, and it will be found that often the entire campus, or at least the majority cliques, arrange their life according to this pattern of isolation from the whites and from the Negro masses. They ordinarily meet difficulties in keeping it up in later life when they have left college. But many will try. The observer finds in Negro communities everywhere individual families or clusterings of families of this sort; in the bigger cities they form small exclusive societies. By their escape into class they have, however, only succeeded in isolating themselves from the Negroes, but have not succeeded in integrating themselves into the wider world, either socially and economically or ideologically. Their personality situation is usually more cramped than that of ordinary members of the Negro caste. While making it a policy to overlook caste humiliations, some small incident may, as we pointed out, cause them to flare up in accumulated resentment.

Most upper class Negroes cannot sustain and cannot afford for economic reasons even to attempt the isolation from the Negro caste which this type of escape presupposes. They must *identify themselves with "the race."* But their class is also important to them. They often then try to take the whole "race" along in an imaginary escape into class. Many Negroes who by individual ability, hard work, or luck have succeeded in climbing the social ladder in the Negro community—often thanks to social monopolies created by the segregation and discrimination they protest against—feel satisfied with their own exceptional success only to the degree that they generalize it and think of it as applicable to the whole race. They are then inclined to minimize the handicaps the Negro caste labors under. There is a considerable amount of accommodation in this attitude. I have often met Negro upper class persons who have idealized their own life history and, on this ground, come to entertain totally exaggerated notions about Negro progress in recent time and Negro opportunities for the future.[a]

This attitude seems to be quite common among individualistic businessmen and professionals. They borrow the spirit of the ordinary local American chamber of commerce, boast of their accomplishments and opportunities, and assume that they apply to the whole Negro people. Successful Negro preachers and educators, and some white friends of the Negro, join in the choir as it serves the good purpose of encouraging the Negro people to clamp down on the Negro protest somewhat, and to make a less resentful, more positive attitude toward life possible for the young and the rising. But there is little basis in reality for this attitude. It also is an escape. The boaster often reveals that he, himself, is not unaware of the self-deception

[a] There are perfect parallels in the white world among "self-made men" who have risen from poverty.

he has made into a "race philosophy" by showing in one way or another that he actually considers himself as a great exception while common Negroes are classed as inferior.

This last view is more consistently displayed by many upper class Negroes in the South who studiously build up their careers by pleasing white people and acquiring their patronage. In private they are often as overbearing to common Negroes as they are weak and unassertive to the whites. But they, too, usually cannot stand absolute loneliness, and they, too, usually need the Negro masses as a basis for their economy. As trusted "white men's niggers" they also need Negro followers to earn the patronage of their white "angels." For these reasons they, too, will have to keep their superiority feelings somewhat camouflaged.

Between this last type, the "white man's nigger," and the next to the last, the Negro boaster, fall most of the balanced and well-adjusted upper class Negroes. The types are not rigidly demarcated: most individuals move, to a certain extent, from one type to another according to the situation and to their own mood at the moment.

7. THE "FUNCTION OF RACIAL SOLIDARITY"

All upper class Negroes, except the first type, who tries to escape "the race," have their status defined in relation to the Negro masses, and practically all depend upon the lower classes of Negroes for their economy and their social position. The Negro masses are the only people they can influence, and to many upper class Negroes this is important not only in itself but also as a basis for influence with white people.

Upper class Negroes, further, share some of the disabilities of Negroes in general since many of the caste controls do not spare them. They undoubtedly feel the humiliation of caste more strongly, even if they suffer less from specific deprivations. Their formula for being accepted as "belonging" to the Negro caste is the appeal to "race." In order to gain their purpose, this appeal has to be invested with a certain amount of protest. It becomes an appeal to race solidarity.

The feeling of racial solidarity and the work for Negro betterment fill many of them with an altruistic urge. They experience the joy and consolation of identification with a wider goal than that of self-elevation. Many thus succeed in building up a balanced personality in striving unselfishly for the Negro group. But there should be no reason for surprise that in this narrow shut-in world, to which they are doomed, much envy and personal strife enters into all collaboration with their fellow Negroes. There is much mutual suspicion of one another's motives and reliability.

The Negro lower classes are, of course, likely to view the superior status and opportunities of upper class Negroes and their pretensions with envy. It is quite natural that the Negro upper class gets the brunt of the antago-

nism from the lower classes which arises out of the latters' poverty and dependence and which rightly should partly be directed against the caste system and the whites.[15] As the Negro protest becomes more articulate also among lower class Negroes, there is likely to be, however, a partial redirection of their antagonism in this latter direction and a mitigation of the class protest against the Negro upper class. *Upper class Negroes find it necessary to instigate a protest against caste on the part of the Negro masses as a means of averting lower class opposition against themselves and to steer it instead against the white caste.* For them the preaching of race solidarity is an instrument to assert Negro leadership.[16] It is also desirable in order to strengthen their economic monopolies behind the segregation wall.

The protest motive allows, on the other side of the bargain, the lower class Negroes to take vicarious satisfaction in the attainments of the upper class Negroes. It gives basis to the symbolic significance of upper class status which we mentioned earlier.[a] As we have repeatedly pointed out, the common Negroes need the Negro upper class as liaison agents to the whites.

In this way, *both upper class and lower class Negroes are likely to swing between, on the one side, desire for intense isolation and resentment against other Negro social classes and, on the other side, race solidarity based on the caste protest against white society.* For few individuals in any one of the various classes is the state of his feelings toward the rest of the Negro community a stable one. For all Negroes, the Negro protest fills a "function" of allowing a higher degree of caste solidarity.

[a] See Chapter 34, Sections 5 and 8.

CHAPTER 37

COMPROMISE LEADERSHIP

1. The Daily Compromise

In discussing the accommodating Negro leader in Chapter 34, we assumed for the purposes of abstract analysis that the protest motive was absent. This assumption, however, has some real truth in it, as we shall show in the present chapter. The accommodation motive has predominant importance in the daily life of American Negroes. But it is true that the protest motive is ever present. In some degree it has reached practically all American Negroes. To many individuals it is a major interest. And the Negro protest is bound to rise even higher. But the influence of the protest motive is limited mainly to the propagation of certain ideas about how things *should* be. In any case but few Negro individuals are in a position to do anything practical about it. Everyone, however, has to get on with his own life from day to day, *now and here*. Even when the individual plans for future employment, for business, or for schooling, he has to reckon with the world as it is. He has to accommodate.

The Negro protest is thus mainly suppressed and turned inward. But it has effects upon Negro personality, upon the relations between the classes in the Negro community, and also upon caste relations. The whites, on their side, are accustomed to a certain amount of Negro unreliability, dishonesty, laziness, secretiveness, and even insolence and impudence. They shut their eyes to its explanation in Negro dissatisfaction and the other results of the caste system. The average white man, in the South, actually gets enjoyment out of observing and joking about Negro inefficiency and slyness. He knows that he gets the services of Negroes for a cheap price, and so he can afford to joke about this. But, apparently, he also wants to convince himself that the Negroes are well satisfied.[1] Now and then, however, he reveals to the observer, more or less incidentally, that he knows about and understands the Negro protest.

The Southerner keeps watching all the time for germs of unrest and dissatisfaction in the Negro community. He preserves the machinery of caste controls in a state of perpetual preparedness and applies it occasionally as an exercise or a demonstration. In this system, the Negroes *have to* accommodate individually and as a group. This is the situation in the South. As we shall observe later, the Northern situation is considerably different.

2. THE VULNERABILITY OF THE NEGRO LEADER

In the protective Negro community much goes on which the white man does not know about. The reality of this reserve is well known to Negroes, and it is coming to effective use in the Negro church, the Negro school and the Negro press. But the Negro leader has stepped out of the anonymity, and the eyes of influential white people are focused on him. He has to watch his moves carefully in order not to fall out with them. This would end his usefulness to the Negro community as a go-between. And it would spell his own ruin, as the whites have a close control on his income and his status.

In the South practically all Negro teachers—from the lonely teacher in a dilapidated one-room school house isolated off somewhere in a rural county, to the president of a Negro college—are appointed by white leaders and they hold their position under the threat of being dismissed if they become troublesome.[a] The Negro church is often claimed to be the one independent Negro institution founded entirely upon the organizational efforts and the economic contributions of the Negro people themselves. But the observer finds that to an amazing extent there are ties of small mortgage loans and petty contributions from whites which restrict the freedom of the preachers. Negro professionals and Negro businessmen, operating in the tight areas behind the caste wall, are also dependent on the good-will, the indulgence, and sometimes the assistance of whites. The same is even more true of the successful Negro landowner, who in most Southern areas meets the envy of poor whites, and so needs the protection of the substantial white people in the community. And for all local Negro leaders, it is perhaps not the economic sanction that is most important, but the sanction of physical punishment, destruction of property and banishment.

In a sense, every ambitious and successful Negro is more dependent upon the whites than is his caste fellow in the lower class. He is more conspicuous. He has more to lose and he has more to gain. If he becomes aggressive, he is adding to all the odds he labors under, the risk of losing the good-will and protection of the influential whites. The Southern whites have many ways of keeping this prospect constantly before his mind. He knows he has to "go slow."

3. IMPERSONAL MOTIVES

This should not be construed to imply that there is a crude self-seeking opportunism on the part of Negro leaders or a cynical despotism on the part of the whites. The power situation is conducive to the creation of both, and the standards of power morals are low. But even the most right-minded ambitious Negro would be foolish not to realize that he has to keep in line

[a] See Chapter 41, Section 1.

if he wants to do something for his own people. Accommodation on his part can be, and often is, altruistically motivated. He can view it as a sacrifice of personal dignity and conviction which he undergoes to further, not only his own aspirations, but also those of his whole group. He can point out, rightly, that reckless opposition on his part might endanger Negro welfare.

There is much bitterness among Southern Negro leaders because they are criticized for being "Uncle Toms," especially by Northern Negro intellectuals. They will tell the observer that it takes little courage to stay in the safety of the North and to keep on protesting against Negro sufferings in the South. "They should come down here and feel the fears, uncertainties, and utter dependence of one of us in their own bones," said one prominent Negro banker in the Upper South. And he added: "If they then continued their outbursts, we would know that they are crazy, and we would have to try to get rid of them as a public danger. But, sure, they would come along. They would be cautious and pussy-footing as we are."[2]

On the white side, the motives are usually neither base nor crude. Often a Southern school board will try to appoint the best Negro they can get for teacher, school principal or college president. When they look for a "cautious," "sane," "sober," "safe," "restrained," and "temperate" Negro, they have in view a person who they honestly think will be good for "racial harmony." The same is true when they help a Negro preacher whom they consider a well-intentioned person. Mortgage loans and contributions to Negro churches are most of the time not given with the conscious intent to fabricate caste controls but to help religious work among Negroes by ministers who have their respect. But they operate within the framework of the Southern white philosophy of race relations.

According to this philosophy, the whites should "look after their Negroes." Negroes should not protest but accommodate. They should not demand their rights but beg for help and assistance. Everything then works out for the good of both groups. When they dismiss a "radical" professor from a Southern Negro college or put the screws on an incautious preacher, doctor, or businessman or do not listen to his requests any longer, they act "in the best interest of the Negro group." Even whites who personally would prefer to be more broad-minded, even Northern philanthropists who would help the South, have to take into account "the public opinion among whites," what "people will stand for down here."

The selection and the behavior of Negro leaders in the South is an outcome of this fact, that practically all the economic and political powers are concentrated in the white caste while the small amount of influence, status, and wealth that there is in the Negro community is derivative and dependent. The Negro masses are well aware of this situation. They need Negro leaders who can get things from the whites. They know that a Negro leader

who starts to act aggressively is not only losing his own power and often his livelihood but might endanger the welfare of the whole Negro community.

In Southern Negro communities there is apparently much suspicion against "radical," "hot-headed" and "outspoken" Negroes. Negroes do not want to be observed associating with such persons, because they might "get in trouble." A barricade will often be thrown up around them by a common consent that they are "queer." The Negro community itself will thus often, before there is any white interference, advise individual Negroes who show signs of aggression that they had better trim their sails.

4. THE PROTEST MOTIVE

Nevertheless, the protest motive is not without influence on Negro leadership in the South. For one thing, some protest is almost a necessary ingredient in the leadership appeal to Negroes. The furthering of race pride and racial solidarity is the means of diminishing internal strivings in the Negro community and of lining up the community into a working unity. Whites sometimes understand this, and there is, therefore, also a certain amount of "tolerated impudence" which a trusted and influential Negro leader can get away with even in the presence of whites. If the Negro community feels sure that he, nevertheless, retains the ear of whites, such a guarded outspokenness will increase his prestige. Negro leaders are often keenly aware of just how far they can go with white people—just what they can afford to say, how they should say it, and when they should say it. Often a protest will be produced under the cover of a joke, or in a similar form, so that the whites do not quite get the full meaning or, anyhow, can pretend that they have not got it. There is a whole technique for how to "tell it right in the face of the whites" without being caught. The stories about such successful protests under cover form a mythology around a Negro leader who has the admiration and allegiance of his community.

But much more generally the Negro community enjoys the demonstration of the Negro protest—as long as it does not become too dangerous for racial harmony. The vicarious satisfaction taken in the victories of Negro athletes who have beaten white competitors has long been observed.[3] The esteem in the Negro community for the "bad nigger" is another point. The "bad nigger" is one who will deliberately run the risks involved in ignoring the caste etiquette, behaving impudently and threateningly toward whites and actually committing crimes of violence against them. Because he often creates fear in the white community, and because he sometimes acts the role of "Robin Hood" for lesser Negroes in trouble with whites, he is accorded a fearful respect by other Negroes.[4] He certainly does not become a Negro "leader." But, particularly in the lower

classes, he is a race hero and will be protected by them by means of pretended ignorance as to his doings and whereabouts.

Whenever a Negro leader can afford—without endangering his own status or the peace of the Negro community—to speak up against, or behave slightingly toward, members of the superior caste, this will increase his prestige.[4]

5. THE DOUBLE ROLE

More generally, the presence of the protest motive in the Negro community tends to induce the Negro leader to take on two different appearances: one toward the whites and another toward the Negro followership. Toward the Negroes he will pretend that he has dared to say things and to take positions much in exaggeration of what actually has happened. The present author, when comparing notes from interviews in the Negro community with what the white community leaders have told him about their "good Negroes," has frequently observed this discrepancy.[5]

A dual standard of behavior is not unnatural for a Southern Negro. It is rather to be expected of anybody in the lower layer of the Southern caste system. But the Negro leaders especially are pressed into such a pattern as they are more regularly, and in a sense professionally, in contact with whites and have a more considerable stake in the game.

> They play two roles and must wear two fronts. . . . The adjustments and adaptations of the Negro leader are apt to be more pronounced and in bolder relief than those of the common Negro for the reason that the Negro leader clearly has much more to lose. He has two worlds to please and to seek his status in.[6]

There is a limit, though, to what an accommodating Negro leader can pretend in the Negro community of what he has been bold enough to say or do. What he says to the Negroes, if it is really startling, will most of the time be reported by servants and other stool pigeons to the whites, and might make them suspicious of him.

The Negro community gets a revenge against the whites not only out of the Negro leaders' cautious aggressions but also out of the whites' being

[4] A Negro school principal in one of the larger cities in the Deep South once took me around and showed me various aspects of Negro life in the community. All the time and even when we were alone he displayed towards me the usual cumbersome caste etiquette of the region. In the evening he had called together a meeting of some twenty leading Negro citizens for a conference with me, for which he acted as chairman. He now developed an entirely new personal relation to me and became bossy, careless, and even impudent, but under a general cover of exaggerated friendliness and great familiarity. The next day when we continued our explorations of the condition in the city he had again returned to his ordinary caste role of unobtrusive and overpolite Southern Negro. I even sensed a sort of excuse for the previous evening. My tentative explanation was that he had put on the show of superiority at the meeting to impress his Negro friends, after he had carefully surveyed me and, rightly, found that there was no risk involved.

deceived. The satisfaction when some member of the community has succeeded in "pulling the wool" over the eyes of trusting white men is apparent. If deception is achieved, the Negroes seem to enjoy their leaders' spreading the flattery thick when approaching the whites. This is the most concealed, the almost perverted, form of the Negro protest.

6. NEGRO LEADERSHIP TECHNIQUES

This situation is likely to make the Negro leader sophisticated and "wise." He becomes intensely conscious of all his moves. One Southern Negro leader outlined the most effective technique to use, when approaching influential white people to get them to do something for the Negro community, in the following words:

> Don't emphasize the Negro's "right" . . . don't *press* for anything . . . make him feel he's a big man, get to other white men to make him want to avoid seeming small, and you can make him jump through the barrel. You can make him a friend or a rattlesnake, depending on your approach.[7]

Another Negro leader told us:

> I'm a respectable citizen, but when I try to get my rights I do so in a way that will not be obnoxious, and not in a radical way. I don't believe in radicalism. We *ask* for things, but never *demand*. When I'm in Rome, I burn Roman candles . . . but I don't "Uncle Tom."[8]

A Negro editor in another Southern city explained:

> If a Negro goes so far as to make an enemy of the white man who has the power he is foolish. You can't hit a man in the mouth and expect him to loan you money. By all means keep in with the man who hires and pays you. A man wouldn't be head of a big concern if he weren't a smart man, and a smart man will always react to facts. My approach is to the fellow on top because he is going to have to take care of me and I must work with him—he has the stick.[9]

The successful Negro leader becomes a consummate manipulator. Getting the white man to do what he wants becomes a fine art. This is what is called "playing 'possum." The Negro leader gets satisfaction out of his performance and feels pride in his skill in flattering, beguiling, and outwitting the white man. The South is full of folklore and legend on this aspect of Negro leadership.[10] And the stories are told among whites too, just as are stories about clever children or animals.

Every person in this game has a double standard of understanding and behavior. The white leaders know that they are supposed to be outwitted by the subservient but sly Negro leaders. In the Southern aristocratic tradition they are supposed not only to permit and to enjoy the flattery of the Negro leaders but also to let them get away with something for themselves and for their group. It is the price due the Negro leaders for their adaptive

skills and for their tactful abstention from raising the Negro protest. The Negro leaders also know their double role.

The Negro community is thus, on the one hand, filled by the Negro protest and it demands to be appealed to in terms of Negro solidarity. It also wants to feel that the protest is getting over to the whites. On the other hand, the Negro community knows the caste situation, is afraid of radical leaders and trouble-makers, and wants its go-betweens to be able to make some real deliveries.

7. MORAL CONSEQUENCES

This situation is pregnant with all sorts of double-dealing, cynicism and low morals in the Negro community. The leaders are under constant suspicion from the Negro community that they are dishonest, venal and self-seeking. One observing Negro citizen expressed a common view when he told us: "You give a few Negroes a break, hand them a job, and all problems are solved."[11] The complaints about "bad leadership"—"incompetent," "selfish," "treacherous," "corrupt"—were raised in every single Negro community the present author has visited. These complaints may, indeed, be said to constitute one of the unifying popular theories in the Negro world, a point upon which everybody can agree. "There are few Negro leaders," Ralph Bunche confirms, "who are not suspect immediately they attain any eminence. The racial situation has created a vicious circle in Negro reasoning on leadership, and the Negro leader is caught in it."[12]

The Negro community in the South cannot expect—and does not want—its leaders to act out the protest the common Negroes actually feel. There is, indeed, little reason to believe that the leaders are less militant than the community seriously wants them to be. But the common Negroes do feel humiliated and frustrated. And they can afford to take it out on their leaders by defaming them for their "kowtowing," "pussy-footing," and "Uncle Tomming"; by calling them "handkerchief heads" and "hats in hand"; and particularly by suspecting them for being prepared to barter away their own honor and the interests of the group for a job or a hand-out. *The Negro hates the Negro role in American society, and the Negro leader, who acts out this role in public life, becomes the symbol of what the Negro hates.*

The Southern Negro leader—not being allowed to state and follow a clear ideological line but doomed to opportunism, having constantly to compromise with his pride and dignity, and never being allowed to speak upon the authority of the strength of an organized group behind him but appearing as an individual person trusted by the adversary group before him—does not have the sanctions ordinarily operating to preserve the honor and loyalty of a representative leader. The temptation to sell out the group and to look out for his own petty interest is great. He thus easily

comes to justify the common suspicions around him by becoming a self-seeker and opportunist. The anger in the Negro community against unscrupulous leaders is often directed against the fact that they do not get more for themselves out of their unscrupulousness in sacrificing the common interest:

> That [leadership] which can be bought . . . is usually purchaseable for "peanut money." The scorn for the practice among Negroes, frequently expressed is often less due to the fact that Negro leaders "sell out" than because they do so so cheaply.[13]

8. LEADERSHIP RIVALRY

Since power and prestige are scarce commodities in the Negro community, the struggle for leadership often becomes ruthless. Such is the situation even in those fields where there is little white interference.[14] White influence is likely to increase bitter personal rivalry, as the leader comes to operate as a single individual, trusted by the whites but generally without any organized backing or control in the Negro community and without a cause or an issue.

For the same reasons this rivalry does not provide a check on dishonesty. It rather loosens still more the loyalty of the Negro community. It also provides the influential whites with increased possibilities to "divide and rule." And it defiles still more the atmosphere around Negro leadership. The rivalry, the envy, and the disunity in the Negro community, and the destructive effects, are felt by even the poorest Negro, who will everywhere tell the inquirer that "Negroes just can't stick together." "Lambasting our leaders is quite a popular pastime," observes James Weldon Johnson.[15] Under those circumstances the attainment of Negro leadership also tends to "do something" to the individual Negro:

> For when a value is scarce its possession tends to inflate the possessor. The Negro leader often quickly puffs up when given power. He "struts" and puts up a big front, or puts on "airs," often indulges in exhibitionism. It is often truly said that the Negro leader "can't stand power." Actually, there is a sort of ambivalence which characterizes the attitudes of Negro leaders. The leader will pay lip-service to the concepts of democracy for he understands their significance and appeal to the Negro as a group. But in his personal views and relationship the Negro leader is ordinarily very allergic to democracy—he prefers to play the role of the aristocrat, or the dictator or tyrant. *For leadership itself is a form of escape.*[16]

9. QUALIFICATIONS

It should be observed that *these detrimental effects upon public confidence and morals in the Negro community are derivative from the basic lack of democracy inherent in the Southern caste situation,* and, further, that *they become increased by the rising Negro protest as long as it is denied free outlet.* They have close parallels in all other subordinate groups.

In this situation it is understandable why so many well-equipped upper class Negroes in the South withdraw voluntarily from attempting to play a leadership role. Bad odor around the whole activity is an additional reason for such withdrawal besides the ones mentioned in an earlier section.[a] But many cannot afford to withdraw entirely. So many of the vocations and positions which mean an economic and social career in the Negro community are under white control, directly or indirectly. And the influential whites reckon on their Negro college presidents, their Negro high school principals, their favored Negro ministers, farmers and businessmen to shepherd the Negro community.

This may, indeed, be a blessing to the Negro community as so many of the most devoted and capable Negro leaders in the South actually are persons who would prefer to stay away and mind their own business, if their position, and, especially, white expectations, did not draw them out as Negro leaders. It must never be forgotten—in spite of what many Negro interlocutors in their dismay and pessimism tell the interviewer to the contrary—that there are *in the South many honest and diligent Negro leaders* who unselfishly forward Negro interests by a slow, patient, but determined, plodding along against odds and difficulties. And an important aspect of the changing South is that—as the general educational level is raised, racial liberalism progresses, and federal agencies become important —*they are the Negro leaders to become increasingly trusted by the whites in power.*

10. In Southern Cities

In the rural South only accommodating Negro leadership is yet possible. In Southern cities—except in the smaller ones—the observer finds single individuals and small groups of followers around them who use the protection of the greater anonymity of the segregated urban Negro community to raise cautiously the banner of Negro protest.

They usually try to get the Negroes to attempt to register as voters. Upper class Negroes seldom become active protest leaders, as they would have too much to lose. Teachers or preachers are practically never active protest leaders. Such leaders seldom have conspicuous success, as the ordinary community leaders usually keep aloof, and as the Negro masses are apathetic.

The N.A.A.C.P., a national protest organization, has branches in most of the larger Southern cities. With exceptions, those branches are not active for a protracted period and they *cannot* be active, since the margin of freedom for the Negro protest is narrow. They have a social function and, in addition, the symbolic function of keeping the flame of protest burning in the community, and of collecting the contributions to be sent to the National

[a] See Chapter 36, Section 6.

Office in New York in order to make it possible for its staff to attack problems on the national front.[a]

The present writer once interviewed the president of the N.A.A.C.P. branch in one of the smaller capitals of the Deep South. He was a distinguished, elderly gentleman, a postal clerk who for many decades, upon the basis of his economic independence as a federal employee, had led a cautious fight for Negro interests in his community. During our conversation I asked him whether they had any other similar organizations in the city, and the following conversation ensued:

"Yes, there is the League for Civic Improvement."

"Why do you bother to have two organizations with the same purpose of trying to improve the position of Negroes?"

"Sir, that is easily explainable. The N.A.A.C.P. stands firm on its principles and demands our rights as American citizens. But it accomplishes little or nothing in this town, and it arouses a good deal of anger in the whites. On the other hand, the League for Civic Improvement is humble and 'pussy-footing.' It begs for many favors from the whites, and succeeds quite often. The N.A.A.C.P. cannot be compromised in all the tricks that Negroes have to perform down here. But we pay our dues to it to keep it up as an organization. The League for Civic Improvement does all the dirty work."

"Would you please tell me who is president of this League for Civic Improvement? I should like to meet him."

"I am. We are all the same people in both organizations."

This story revealed much of the political shrewdness by which the difficulties are sometimes met.

In a few places in the South there are appearing a few Negro labor leaders in new mixed unions, primarily in Birmingham and Baltimore and in other areas where Negroes are in mining and building construction. These Negro leaders usually keep faithfully and cautiously to their specialty. Toward the white union leaders they ordinarily act out the traditional accommodating Negro leader's role, though with considerably more backbone since they have an organized body of Negro workers behind them. The future of the Negro labor leader in the South, as well as the answer to the question whether he will have influence in broader spheres of politics and culture, remains uncertain.

11. IN THE NORTH

In the North the protest motive has a much freer scope and can come out into the open. Negro power in politics and in trade unions is more substantial. White people are not united, as in the South, in a systematic effort to keep the Negroes suppressed. The Negro community, therefore, demands a display of actual opposition from its leaders.

[a] See Chapter 39.

The Negro leaders are also much freer in their actions. They do not fear violence, intimidation and banishment. Even the controls over their economic prospects are much less tight. But white protection and assistance mean much in the North also. Negro preachers in the North get hand-outs, too. Negro teachers and other public employees are mostly appointed by whites in the North, too. But since the jobs are actually considered as concessions to Negro power and protest, the jobholders are not appointed entirely without consideration of the desires of the Negro community. And the civil service regulations are usually more effective in the North in protecting the independence of jobholders.

It is, thus, surprising that one meets in Northern Negro communities the same complaints about the great incompetence and venality of Negro leaders. One observes also much of the same keen and destructive personal rivalry of leaders. Part of this may be explained as a cultural heritage from the Southern situation. The greater freedom requires a radical reeducation which is far from finished among Southern-born Negroes in the North and among their children. Another part may be due to the fact that the Negro protest is not only much freer in the North but is also more widespread and more intensely felt. As the constructive outlets for this more intensive Negro protest are not too wide in the North either, it turns back on the Negro community and results in internal suspicion and vicious competition.

But more important in explaining dissatisfaction with leaders is the fact that the share in power which the Negroes hold in the North creates a much greater stimulus for various white interests to buy the Negro leaders. As the Negro people are poor and inexperienced in holding power, the temptations seem strong. Political parties have a reason in the North, which they do not have in the South, to bribe Negro newspaper editors, preachers, and other community leaders before elections. Employers occasionally feel inclined to do the same in order to keep Negro workers hostile to the trade unions. And even other white interests in the North, where it is less possible than in the South to frighten the Negro community in the direction wanted, will instead buy off its leaders.

It is possible—and, judging from the many sorry stories told to the present author, even probable—that there is just as much or more outright corruption in the Northern Negro leadership as in the Southern. And even in the absence of corruption, the Northern leaders, like the Southern ones, are apparently often interested in their own advancement more than in the cause they pretend to serve. Nevertheless, the Negro community also gets something—and indeed comparatively much—out of the greater freedom and out of its share in power. And the Northern situation is conducive to a gradual education of the Negro people to the opportunities and the duties of free citizenship. The masses can demand that their leaders be struggling protest leaders, clarifying and defining the Negro demands, and making

the necessary compromises in the full light of publicity. In the North the recognition of full democracy in principle and unhampered rights to fight for its gradual realization in practice give Negroes a basis for hope.

12. ON THE NATIONAL SCENE

The conspicuousness of Negro leadership on the national plane and the severe demands on competence and devotion have a cleansing effect.

It is the writer's impression that national Negro leadership is no more corrupt nor more ridden with personal envy and rivalry than other national leadership. Indeed, it compares favorably in these respects with, for instance, national white labor leadership. The actual power situation will often induce national Negro leaders to be compromising and even accommodating. Considerations of personal advancement will sometimes make Negro advisors in government agencies and Negro aspirants for such jobs more interested in calming down the Negro protest than in giving it force and expression. But they are persistently watched by the Negro press and by the national Negro protest and betterment organizations. In politics and all other power fields the national Negro leaders, in conspiracy with their white allies, rather succeed in squeezing out more consideration for the Negro cause than corresponds to the actual strength of their organized backing—though, of course, far less than its potential future strength.

On the national scene—and also in the larger Northern cities—one often observes a phenomenon which has an exact parallel in the women's world, namely, that it is felt appropriate to have "one Negro" on boards, on committees, on petitions, and so on. Ralph Bunche comments:

> Not infrequently, Negroes are shoved into positions of leadership by white leaders for purely strategic reasons. It is common practice in numerous organizations and movements today, especially those of the liberal variety, to say "we must have a Negro on this." This attitude has even found reflection in the purely academic and scholarly organizations where it has been deemed necessary to project a Negro now and then into some position of prominence in order to demonstrate the liberality and tolerance of the group.[17]

The Negro appointed in this manner—for no other reason than that he is a Negro—often does not have the personal qualifications for holding a prominent position. This is an angle of the much broader problem of the "double standard" which we discussed in a previous chapter.[a] The caste situation generally works to the detriment of Negroes, but there are individual Negroes who are given recognition and advantages which they would not get if the measures were objective under a casteless system.

This sketch of Negro leadership is frankly impressionistic and partly speculative, as no intensive research on this topic has been made. It has been

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 9.

needed as a background for the account to follow on Negro ideologies and on Negro organizations and concerted action. In Appendix 9 we present a number of problems for research and a few methodological points, intended as a guide for future investigations.

CHAPTER 38

NEGRO POPULAR THEORIES[a]

1. Instability

Negro thinking is thinking under the pressure and conflicts to which the Negro is subjected. Du Bois pointed out:

> It is doubtful if there is another group of twelve million people in the midst of a modern cultured land who are so widely inhibited and mentally confined as the American Negro. Within the colored race the philosophy of salvation has by the pressure of caste been curiously twisted and distorted. Shall they use the torch and dynamite? Shall they go North, or fight it out in the South? Shall they segregate themselves even more than they are now, in states, towns, cities or sections? Shall they leave the country? Are they Americans or foreigners? Shall they stand and sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee"? Shall they marry and rear children and save and buy homes, or deliberately commit race suicide?[1]

Frustration and defeatism, forced accommodation under concealed protest, vicious competition modified by caste solidarity, form the main texture into which the patterns of Negro political and social thinking are woven. Upon the personality basis we have sketched in Chapter 36, these patterns cannot possibly become consistent and stable. And Negro political and social thinking does not have much connection with broader American and world problems. To an American Negro, there is little point in having definite opinions about the world.

To an extent this is true of the little fellow everywhere in a big world.

[a] Throughout this book, and especially in this chapter, we use the term "popular theories" to refer to a consciously thought-out, though not necessarily logical or accurate, system of ideas held by a large group of people concerning something that is important or interesting to them. Popular theories may be attempts at abstract explanation or attempts at practical solution of problems which bother these people. They include not only beliefs concerning facts but also valuations, and they are usually complex in that they contain many beliefs and valuations and in that they have far-reaching implications. Some writers have used the term "ideologies" in the same way that we use the term "popular beliefs," but there is no unanimity among those who use the term as to its definition, and the term is almost completely foreign to the man in the street. Other writers have used the terms "popular beliefs" and "mass beliefs" in somewhat the same way as we use the term "popular theories," but in this book we have restricted the term "belief" to a simple comprehension of facts, as distinguished from valuations.

Everyone who is not on top has to work out his compromise between accommodation and protest. But the average white American has a better chance to do this constructively. He can feel himself in power by identifying himself with the American nation of which he is a full-fledged citizen, and by aligning himself with a group that can struggle with hope of coming into power sometime in the future. Corresponding to these affiliations with the nation, with a political party, and with various opinion and interest groups, popular theories are being developed about how society *is* and how it *should be* conserved or changed. The feeling of belongingness and integration gives white men some stability and self-assurance. It is true that even the white masses in America show a relatively low degree of participation in, and responsibility for, the larger society.[a] Moreover, public opinion is relatively unstable in America, and propaganda an important factor. Even the ordinary white man in America has a less well-organized system of opinions on general matters than he would have in a social order with more democratic participation. But the difference between whites and Negroes is tremendous.

Negroes are denied identification with the nation or with national groups to a much larger degree. To them social speculation, therefore, moves in a sphere of unreality and futility. Instead of organized popular theories or ideas, the observer finds in the Negro world, for the most part, only *a fluid and amorphous mass of all sorts of embryos of thoughts. Negroes seem to be held in a state of eternal preparedness for a great number of contradictory opinions*—ready to accept one type or another depending upon how they are driven by pressures or where they see an opportunity. Under certain circumstances, the masses of American Negroes might, for example, rally around a violently anti-American, anti-Western, anti-white, black chauvinism of the Garvey type, centered around the idea of Africa as the mother country. But they might just as likely, if only a slight change of stimulus is provided, join in an all-out effort to fight for their native country, the United States of America, for the Western civilization to which they belong, and for the tenets of democracy in the entire world, which form their cherished political faith. Or they might develop a passive cynicism toward it all. Negro intellectuals usually do not have such a tremendous instability of opinion as the masses. But compared with white intellectuals they show the same difference as Negro masses compared with the white masses.

This is what white Americans perceive when they tell the observer that Negroes are "emotional" or "unstable." In a sense this judgment is correct. And this trait can be observed not only in Negroes' popular theories, or lack of theories, about the larger society, but also in the type of religious

[a] See Chapter 33.

experience they seek, the news they read, the art they create, and in the disorganization and rivalry manifested in their families and social gatherings.[a] Most American whites believe that emotionalism and lack of rationality are inborn in the Negro race. But scientific studies have made such inherent temperamental differences between Negroes and whites seem improbable.[b] The present author is inclined, for these reasons, to view this characteristic of Negro thinking as a result of caste exclusion from participation in the larger American society.

2. NEGRO PROVINCIALISM

Another observable characteristic of the Negroes' thinking about social and political matters is its provincialism.

Here also we note an effect of caste exclusion, and not a racial trait. Provincialism in social and political thinking is not restricted to Negroes. Everybody is inclined to consider national and international issues from the point of view of personal, group, class or regional interests. The range of vision stands apparently in a close correspondence to the degree of participation in the larger society. And again, when comparing American whites and Negroes, we note a quantitative difference in both cause and effect that is so great as to become qualitative.

Negroes have so many odds directed against them and suffer so many injustices—and the dominant American Creed which provides the common floor for all social and political thinking in the country is so uncompromisingly democratic—that it is only natural that when Negroes come to think at all about social and political problems they think nearly exclusively about their own problems. The Negro protest defines the ills of the Negro group ever more sharply in their minds and emotionalizes narrowness. Race consciousness and race pride give it a glorification and a systematization. *As the Negro protest and race consciousness are steadily rising, Negro provincialism may even increase in the short run, in spite of the better educational facilities and a greater acculturation.*

The Negroes are so destitute of power in American society that it would, indeed, be unrealistic for them to try a flight into a wider range of problems. It seems functional and rational that they restrict their efforts to what is nearest home. They are not expected to have a worth-while judgment on national and international affairs, except in so far as Negro interests are concerned. To most groups of white Americans it would be preposterous and impudent, or at least peculiar, if Negroes started to discuss general problems as ordinary Americans and human beings. They are allowed—in various degrees—to protest; or it is, at any rate, taken for granted that they should protest. But they are neither expected nor allowed

[a] See Chapters 42, 43 and 44.

[b] See Chapter 6.

to participate. So the Negro protest and the white expectation harmonize and accumulate in their effects to narrow the range of Negro thinking.

This vicious circle of caste operates upon the finest brains in the Negro people and gives even to the writings of a Du Bois a queer touch of unreality as soon as he leaves *his* problem, which is the American Negro problem, and makes a frustrated effort to view it in a wider setting as an ordinary American and as a human being. A corresponding and complementary feeling of queerness is felt by the foreign observer when he turns over the leaves of the hundreds of recent books and articles by white Americans on American democracy and its implications. In this literature the subject of the Negro is a void or is taken care of by some awkward, mostly un-informed and helpless, excuses. This is, of course, seen clearly by the Negro intellectual. Ralph Bunche remarks:

> . . . consciously or unconsciously, America has contrived an artful technique of avoidance and evasion. For example, American newspaper editorials carry glowing praise for the tenets of liberty and equality upon which the society is founded, but ignore completely the inconsistent Negro status. One author has recently written a book entitled *American Problems of Today*, and yet barely mentions the Negro in one or two incidental passages.[2]

The tragedy of caste is that it does not spare the integrity of the soul either of the Negro or of the white man. But the difference in degree of distortion of world view is just as great as the difference in size between the American Negro community and the rest of the world.

Negro thinking is almost completely determined by white opinions—negatively and positively. It develops as an answer to the popular theories prevalent among whites by which they rationalize their upholding of caste. In this sense it is a derivative, or secondary, thinking. The Negroes do not formulate the issues to be debated; these are set for them by the dominant group. Negro thinking develops upon the presuppositions of white thinking. In its purest protest form it is a blunt denial and a refutation of white opinions. Accommodation may bend the denial toward qualified denial or even qualified agreement. But Negro thinking seldom moves outside the orbit fixed by the whites' conceptions about the Negroes and about caste.

Restricted and focused in this way, the problem of housing becomes to Negroes a problem of residential segregation and their share in public housing projects. Education becomes Negro education. Politics concerns Negro disfranchisement and what the Negroes will get out of the kaleidoscopic and unintelligible chance play of strange national and world events. The fight between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. is a question of whether Negroes will be allowed into the labor unions. World trends in agricultural economics and American agricultural policy are seen only in terms of cotton and the Negro sharecropper.

The national budget and its short-range and long-range balancing, the principles of taxation, monetary policy, and banking, have no sensible meaning in the Negro world, except perhaps in terms of unemployment relief. The World War becomes translated into the administrative details concerning the extent to which Negroes will be kept from working in defense industries and from service in the armed forces. Being denied full fellowship by white America, the identification with the nation is somewhat uncertain and blurred by a constant reminder of color. Africa gets the American Negroes' loyalty to nation, besides the United States. Thus the Negroes ". . . must perpetually discuss the 'Negro Problem,' —must live, move, and have their being in it, and interpret all else in its light or darkness," Du Bois complains.[3] And Ralph Bunche observes:

> . . . when the Negro views any matter of broad governmental policy, he ordinarily weighs it not as an American citizen, but as a Negro American. His first queries will always be: "How will it effect 'Negroes'?" "Will it be so administered as to embrace Negroes fairly?" "What safeguards are taken to insure equal Negro participation in its benefits?" In other words, the Negro has learned from bitter experience that he must constantly be on the alert to hold his own in the society. . . . Thus there is a constant conflict between the Negro's . . . desire to be a full-fledged American citizen . . . and the necessity forced upon him by tradition and sentiment in the country, to "think Negro" first.[4]

The American caste situation being what it is, there should be nothing astonishing in the provincialism of the Negroes in their thinking or in their fixation on white opinions. The Negroes can even be said to act in a practical and rational way when they concentrate their efforts on their own worries and press their own local and national interests. It is also—from their point of view—only a matter of prudence if they feel inclined to view the white Americans' international ambitions and allegiances with skepticism and reserve. The Negro caste is, in a sense, "a nation within a nation," and an oppressed and exploited nation at that. It prays to become assimilated, but this is not permitted. It is thus understandable and, in some respects and some degree, even necessary that the Negroes fortify their souls with a dose of black chauvinism.

But all this does not make a half-truth into a truth. It does not wipe out the distorting effects of huge gaps in knowledge and interests. Negro provincialism damages the efficiency of the Negroes' own struggle for a larger share. But it cannot be helped, since it is rooted in caste. A balanced and integrated world view is denied American Negroes, together with many other good things in our social life. They will not be able to emerge completely from instability, provincialism, and distortion of opinions until that time in the future when American society itself is eventually delivered from caste.

3. THE THINKING ON THE NEGRO PROBLEM

Negro thinking in social and political terms is thus exclusively a thinking about the Negro problem. The formation of popular theories among Negroes concerning the Negro problem also does not result in articulate, systematized and stable opinions. Particularly in the lower classes, and in the Southern rural districts, the ideological structure of Negro thinking—even in its own narrow, caste-restricted realm—is loose, chaotic and rambling. This is understandable since the major determinants in the Negro problem are outside the Negroes' control and usually outside their vision.

Some main elements, and particularly the doctrine of Negro equality, have, however, been fixed by the Negro protest, as far as public expressions go, even if it is a hard struggle for the individual Negro to keep up this badge of Negro solidarity.[a] But for the other elements, the popular Negro theories on their own problem have not only been developed and formulated by the small fraction of articulate upper class professionals and intellectuals but they have been reaching down to the Negro masses only slowly. In this process they have become blurred and simplified:

> . . . there is little evidence that these articulated conceptions have filtered down into the inert Negro mass, whose intellectual muscles are lax. It is this "elite" group which alone indulges in vivacious theorizing on the "problem."[5]

The popular theories on Negro strategy all try to solve the fundamental problem of how to make a compromise between accommodation and protest. Any workable policy has also to engender support from white groups. One axis, convenient for our purpose of reaching a useful typology of Negro ideologies, concerns *what social class or group among the whites is chosen as a prospective ally.*

4. COURTING THE "BEST PEOPLE AMONG THE WHITES"

The traditional alignment in the South, following a pattern inherited from slavery and white paternalism, is for the Negroes to seek support from the white upper class.

Both the lower class Negroes and the upper class Negro leaders feel that the "quality folks," the "best people among the whites" are the friends of the Negroes. They are held to be "too big" for prejudice. They are secure and out of competition. The lower class whites, on the other hand, have been considered as the Negroes' natural enemies. There is, as we have seen, a portion of truth in this view.[b]

The Negroes have therefore looked to those whites who have secure

[a] See Chapter 36, Section 2.

[b] See Chapter 17, Section 6, and Chapter 18, Section 3.

social and economic positions to give them assistance and backing. On the labor market Negroes have usually trusted the employers and have expected them to give them jobs and to protect them from the antagonism of white workers. Negroes have seen the necessity of being tractable toward the employing class and of working for lower pay and keeping down demands in order to hold their jobs. Formerly Negroes gained entrance to jobs as labor scabs and strike-breakers. In education and business, too, and in interracial relations generally, their hopes have been focused on the better class of white people.

Booker T. Washington developed and utilized successfully this philosophy as a short-range strategy. He gave it an optimistic slant—and made a reservation for the Negro protest—by developing the idea that progress was possible if a strong Negro middle class could be founded upon white help and upon individual thrift and energy. If the Negro could become a good producer, his products would call forth a good price in return.

> Nothing else so soon brings about right relations between the two races in the south as the commercial progress of the Negro. Friction between the races will pass away as the black man, by reason of his skill, intelligence, and character, can produce something that the white man wants or respects in the commercial world.[6]

The results would be not only gradually higher standards of efficiency, earnings, and consumption, but also a growing respect from the whites who would finally give Negroes suffrage, equal justice and, if not "social equality," at least equal public services.[7]

This philosophy has been taken over without substantial change by the Negro leaders and organizations pursuing a policy of conciliation, expediency, gradualism and realism. It still forms part of upper and middle class, and even lower class, Negro thinking which is not too absorbed with protest. It was, naturally, never conducive to broadening the horizon for Negro opinions on general issues. It rather tied Negro thought to what was narrowly opportune for "getting along with white folks." By allying the Negro cause so exclusively with upper class white interests, it even kept Negroes, for a long time, from considering labor solidarity across the caste line. Booker T. Washington did much to raise the feeling for the dignity of labor so utterly destroyed by the institution of slavery. But he had no good words to say for labor unionism or labor solidarity between white and Negro workers. It should be remembered, though, that labor unions were nearly absent from the South in Booker T. Washington's time and very weak in the North and, further, that they did not usually show much friendliness toward Negroes.[a] Until after the First World War labor unions were looked upon as the natural enemies of Negroes.

[a] See Appendix 6.

The trends of change in American society have made this optimistic, gradualist philosophy increasingly unrealistic even as a short-range strategy. For one thing, the outlook for Negro progress along economic lines can no longer be presented as so bright. The Negro's economic position is deteriorating, while his legal, political, and social position is improving. In any case, much success cannot be hoped for along the directions Washington pursued. The whole middle class ideology of Washington turns out to be a blind alley. The best prospect for an average graduate of Tuskegee, or of any of the other schools like it, is to become a teacher, not a "doer," in business, crafts or agriculture.

The common Negroes, who cannot aspire to exploit the petty monopolies behind the segregation wall, as teachers, preachers, professionals or businessmen, have to compete for unskilled jobs and for the opportunity to advance to semi-skilled and skilled jobs in industry. Unemployment, meanwhile, has taken on proportions in America greater than ever before in history, which is serious for an unpopular labor group like the Negroes. The power over employment is increasingly held not by employers, but by labor unions. Many cities where Negroes live in tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands are now "union towns."

The functions of the philanthropic organizations—to which Booker T. Washington and his many successors pleaded and from which they so often got a helping hand—are in the process of being taken over by the states and the federal government. The federal government, particularly, is becoming a decisive factor as far as Negro interests as workers or unemployed workers are concerned. Even Negro education is becoming dependent upon the federal government. And the government is becoming less dependent upon the white upper classes. It depends upon the general electorate and, in labor issues, increasingly upon organized labor.

This new configuration was hardly visible before the First World War and is to a great extent the result of the Great Depression during the 'thirties and of the New Deal.

5. THE DOCTRINE OF LABOR SOLIDARITY

The wave of socialistic thought after the First World War, to which we have referred in Chapter 35, brought to the fore the demand for labor solidarity across the caste line.[8] But the American labor movement passed through a period of infirmity during the 'twenties and it was not until the New Deal that labor solidarity became a realistic basis for Negro policy.

The younger generation of Negro intellectuals, with few exceptions, supported by a gradually growing number of Negro trade unionists, have since 1930 preached labor solidarity as the cure-all of Negro ills. White labor is explained to be the Negroes' "natural" ally; the old alignment with the white upper class was a "bourgeois illusion."[9] Whether or not

white labor is the Negroes' natural ally will be discussed presently. Before embarking upon this task it should, however, be remarked that, even if a reliance upon the white upper class today would be an "illusion," this does not prove that it was so in Booker T. Washington's time, fifty years ago, when, as we have pointed out, the power situation in America was a very different one.

Ralph Bunche, who, with reservations, is in fundamental agreement with the view that the Negroes' main hope lies in an alignment with white labor, explains this new view:

> This conception [that of class consciousness and class unity] . . . postulates the identity of interests of the working masses of the two races, and that these interests can be protected only by unity of action by both groups, against the employers and the capitalistic structure which dictate their exploitation.
> . . . This conception of the problem finds its immediate roots in the economic competition institutionalized by the capitalistic system. Under this system all workers are equally exploited, and division in the ranks of the working class is a fatal weakness. The employing class exploits the traditional hostility between black and white workers, deriving from the days of slavery, by playing black against white, keeping the two groups divided through fanning the flames of race hatred, and thus providing a mutual threat. Thus the Negro is often used as a scab and strike-breaker. This division decimates the strength of labor unions and reduces the collective bargaining power of all workers. The strength of the working class is in its unity and its ability to present a unified front to the bosses. Therefore, white and Negro workers must cast aside their traditional prejudices, in their own welfare; they must lock arms and march shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed working masses. The overwhelming majority of Negroes are working class, and most of these are unskilled. Thus, practically the entire Negro race would be included in the scope of this ideology. The black and white masses, once united, could employ the terrifying power of their numbers to wring concessions from the employers and from the government itself. Some visualize the formation of a powerful labor party in which all workers, of whatever race, color or creed, would work together for the exertion of that political influence, to which their numbers entitle them, on behalf of the masses of the people. Economic interest was thus to override conventional group prejudice, and the Negro worker would be accepted as a brother and equal. The basis of race conflict is economic competition, it is said, and as soon as the economic structure undergoes such alterations as are necessary in order to guarantee economic security to the working masses, the dynamic causes of race conflict will have been liquidated.[10]

The Negroes are advised to think less about race and more about class—not upper class, but working class. In this attitude there is evidently a tendency to explain away caste as far as possible. The caste disabilities are said to be due to the poverty and economic dependence of Negroes and not to their color. "The Negro sharecroppers suffer not because of their black face but because of exploitation, just like the white sharecroppers," is a thesis I have often heard developed by Negro intellectuals. They criticize

Negro "racialism," and particularly the fight carried on by the N.A.A.C.P. for suffrage and civil rights. It is said that the vote and the abolition of social segregation might have both a practical and still more a prestige value to the tiny Negro "élite," but these things have little significance for Negroes. Ralph Bunche explains the view:

> . . . it is not at all established that the Negro sharecroppers and the day laborer in the rural South, or the unskilled worker in Birmingham, is more exercised about being deprived of his right to vote, or being Jim Crowed on a street car, than he is about his inability to earn enough to make ends meet. These Negroes might well say that the poor white man of the South hasn't been able to do very much for himself with the ballot in all the years that he has had it.
>
> There is a tendency toward creating excessive illusions in this sort of thinking [along the line of civil liberties]. The inherent fallacy in the political militancy thus outlined is found in the failure to recognize that the instrumentalities of the State, —Constitution, government and laws,—can do no more than reflect the political, social and economic ideology of the dominant population, and that the political arm of the State cannot be divorced from the prevailing economic structure. Civil liberties are circumscribed by the dominant mores of the society.[11]

Speaking particularly about the redemption of the Negro masses in the South, Bunche stresses:

> This will never be accomplished at the Southern polls, not at least until labor, farm and industrial, black and white, has become so strongly organized and so bold as to present a forceful challenge to the authority of the entrenched interests. In other words the South must be subjected to a new agrarian and industrial revolution before any significant changes in the fundamental relationships—political, economic or racial—will occur.[12]

To this critical view of the fight for civil liberties we shall return in Chapter 39 when we come to analyze the activity of the N.A.A.C.P.[13]

6. SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

The assumption that race prejudice and caste conflict have their roots in economic competition and that the whole caste problem is "basically" economic has come to be widespread and is now accepted by practically all Negro and most white writers on the Negro problem.[a] It is always possible to point out numerous instances where economic competition or fear of competition have instigated or aggravated caste conflicts. Some employers have intentionally played off the two groups against each other in order to rule by division. And the white upper classes—even if their interests are not made conscious in this blunt way—have probably to a large extent been dominated by a fear that lower class whites and blacks might come to

[a] This statement, as far as the Negroes are concerned, is true for the 1930's. It has become slightly less true as the war spirit has rekindled a belief in values other than economic and has stimulated a new growth of variegated ideals.

terms and unite against them.[a] This motive is sometimes visible, for example, in the fight about the poll tax or the labor unions in the South.

Nevertheless, this hypothesis and, indeed, the very idea that one factor or another is "basic" or "primary" to the caste system, is erroneous. In the cumulative causation of interrelated social factors none of them is so unimportant that it should be neglected. Each factor can be made the object of induced change, and this will move the whole system—including the economic factors, whether they are the ones originally changed or not—in one direction or the other.[b] From a practical point of view, this reveals the fallacy of criticizing activities to improve Negro status because they do not attack the "basic" cause.

The further hypothesis that there exists a "natural" identity of interests between Negro and white workers is about as meaningful or meaningless a statement as the one that all mankind wants peace. It depends. The term "interest" when applied to a group of people is crude and ambiguous unless it is ascertained how the bonds of psychological identification are fixed. When it is said that all Negro and white workers have a "common interest," the assumption must be that they actually care about each other's welfare, that *they all feel as a group.*

> In economic discussion of group interests it seems often to be forgotten that such a conception has its ground in a purely psychological assumption of an actual experience of collectivistic feelings, which in reality may be absent or present in various degrees of intensity. When, for instance, it is argued that a special group of workers in the labor market, distinguished and visible on account of sex, age, color, culture, or what not, has common interests with other workers against the employers and not with the employers against the other workers, and that the other idea is an illusion, the truth of the statement is entirely dependent on the subjective factor: whether there is, in fact, a sentiment of solidarity in the entire labor group or not. The term "interest" is thus subjectively determined in two dimensions: first, of course, as to individual utility, as economic analysis has always assumed, and, second, as to the degree of factual emotional solidarity ties. Particularly in the weighing of remote *contra* immediate interests is this second factor of importance.[14]

If white and black workers do not feel united as a group, there is, of course, no "common interest." "Labor solidarity" is not a thing by itself; it exists, or does not exist, only in the feelings of the workers for each other. If white workers feel a group unity among themselves, from which they exclude Negroes, they are likely to try to push Negroes out of employment. If in such a situation white employers—for whatever reasons—are inclined to accept Negro workers, the interest solidarity actually ties the Negro workers to the white employers instead of to the white workers.

[a] See Chapter 17, Section 4, and Appendix 6. Compare Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), *passim.*

[b] See Chapter 3, Section 7, and Appendix 3.

It is argued, however, that, from an interest viewpoint, white workers "should" feel an identity with Negro workers, and that they are working against their own interests by wanting to discriminate against Negroes. Such a split prevents the formation of strong labor unions; if white workers want effective union power, they will have to try to align Negro workers with them. This is true in those fields of employment where Negroes are already entrenched, and where they cannot be pushed out by the whites. It is true, for instance, in longshore work and coal mining.[a] But it is not so true in the greater number of industries where Negroes are at present effectively excluded or safely segregated in "Negro jobs." In those latter fields this reason for labor solidarity with Negro workers will become even less significant for white workers to the degree that they come to control employment by their unions.

A feeling of "common interest" can be promoted, however, by the actual spread of the ideology of class solidarity. Of this there is as yet comparatively little in America. It is true that both the A.F. of L. and the C.I.O. are, in principle, committed to nondiscrimination. So is the whole American nation. Actually the record has been worse on the union front than in many other fields of American culture. We have reviewed these facts and discussed the relations between the American trade union movement and Negro workers.[b] Our tentative conclusion was that the future development of those relations is important for the welfare of the Negro people but also uncertain. The outcome will probably depend upon political decisions by governments and legislatures, which, in their turn, depend upon electorates in which labor is an important element but not the only one. For the outcome, the strength of the American Creed as a social force will be important. The civil rights and the votes which American Negroes will be able to hold are going to be important in this struggle to open further the labor unions to them.

7. THE PRAGMATIC "TRUTH" OF THE LABOR SOLIDARITY DOCTRINE

The eager intent to explain away race prejudice and caste in the simple terms of economic competition, and the exaggerated notions about the relative unimportance of caste, is an attempt to escape from caste into class. As such, it is closely similar to the tendency of certain Negro upper class persons, already described, who also want to forget about caste and want to align themselves with the white upper class.[c] The differences are, however,

[a] See Appendix 6. It is true also in Southern agriculture, since *all* Negro sharecroppers can never be pushed out, even though many of them have been. There will always be enough Negro sharecroppers who can be used by the plantation owners to destroy an all-white union which excludes the Negroes.

[b] See Chapter 18, Section 3.

[c] See Chapter 36, Section 6.

significant. In the theory of labor solidarity the identification would include the whole Negro people. The aim of this theory is to unify the whole Negro people, not with the white upper class, but with the white working class. And the underlying ideology stems from Marxist proletarian radicalism instead of from American middle class conservatism.

The theory of labor solidarity has been taken up as a last "solution" of the Negro problem, and as such is escapist in nature; its escape character becomes painfully obvious to every member of the school as soon as he leaves abstract reasoning and goes down to the labor market, because there he meets caste and has to talk race and even racial solidarity. The theory is, however, increasingly becoming "realistic" and even pragmatically "true" as a Negro strategy, in the same sense that Booker T. Washington's theory was realistic and true in his time. With the power over employment opportunities increasingly held by the labor unions, the Negroes simply have to try to get into them in order not to be left out of employment. The Negro leaders have to try to educate the Negro masses to be less suspicious of unions. And they have to plead labor solidarity to white workers as the most important element of the American Creed.

It is also visible how not only the N.A.A.C.P., but also such conservative agencies for Negro collective action as the Negro church and the Urban League, in recent years have been becoming friendly to unions—provided they let the Negroes in. In practically the whole Negro world the observer finds that the C.I.O. is looked upon as a great Negro hope because it has followed a more equalitarian policy than the A.F. of L. Practically all articulate voices among Negroes are coming out in favor of unionism—with this one condition that they do not discriminate against Negroes.

This new policy preserves much more of the Negro protest but attempts to merge it with a class protest as far as possible. This attempt requires much accommodation and even humiliation. Many unions are as closed to Negro workers as the "quality folks" were to the Negro upper classes. Ralph Bunche faces this situation with a square realism which can well match what the old master politician, Booker T. Washington, must often have thought about the upper class Southerners he had to deal with, although he carefully avoided saying it in so many words:

> Negotiations with the poor whites on a national level is admittedly not easy, but the Negro has long exploited his humility, his ability to "take low," to bow and scrape, in his relations with the white employer and the white philanthropist. If he must, he can employ these artifices to much better advantage for himself in nudging into the good graces of organized labor. This is no time for picayunishness and displays of petty pride.[15]

If the dream should ever come true and if—under the influence of a growing labor solidarity and considerable government pressure—the Negro

workers should become widely and wholeheartedly accepted in the American labor movement, be given fair chances for employment and advancement, and have a voice in affairs of the unions, one of the consequences of this tremendous break of the caste order would be the widening of the horizon of Negro social and political thinking. The Negro intellectuals and labor leaders, having the goal of aligning the Negroes to the labor movement, usually have concentrated their thinking on the practical question of how to get the Negroes into the unions. If this were once accomplished and an identification reached with the white laboring masses, it would mean the beginning of a liberation of the Negro soul. James Weldon Johnson wrote:

> Organized labor holds the main gate of our industrial and economic corral; and on the day that it throws open that gate . . . there will be a crack in the wall of racial discrimination that will be heard round the world.[16]

Granted that attempts toward an understanding with the white working class are of paramount importance, other sectors should not be forgotten. *The Negroes' status in America is so precarious that they simply have to get the support of all possible allies in the white camp.* In addition to the labor unionists, Negroes must seek the support of the civil liberties group in the North, the Southern liberals and interracialists in the South, and even the Southern aristocratic conservatives where they are prepared to give a helping hand. Furthermore, *the vicious circle keeping Negroes down is so perfected by such interlocking caste controls that the Negroes must attempt to move the whole system by attacking as many points as possible.*

Negro strategy would build on an illusion if it set all its hope on a blitzkrieg directed toward a "basic" factor. In the nature of things it must work on the broadest possible front. There is a place for both the radical and the conservative Negro leaders, for social workers and labor organizers, for organizations that can speak to the employers and those that can approach the workers, and for organizations that can lead the Negroes in politics. The practical conclusions from this eclectic principle will be drawn in the following chapter.

8. "THE ADVANTAGES OF THE DISADVANTAGES"

Repeatedly we have pointed out the fundamental dilemma of the Negro upper classes. On the one hand, upper class Negroes are the ones who feel most intensely the humiliations of segregation and discrimination. They are also in a position where they, more than the masses, can see the limits set by the caste system to their personal ambitions. They need to appeal to racial solidarity against caste if only to avert the aggression against themselves from the lower classes and to direct it upon the whites. On the other hand, segregation and discrimination create an economic shelter for them. In the main, they enjoy their economic and social status thanks to the petty

monopolies behind the caste bar. This applies to ministers, teachers, and practically all other professionals, as well as to most Negro businessmen. Caste is their opportunity. They are exploiting "the advantages of the disadvantages."[a]

When we remember, further, that the upper class Negroes, even more than other upper class American groups, are responsible for the thinking on their group's problem, the question must be raised as to how this situation influences popular theories on the Negro problem. This is a viewpoint somewhat different from the viewpoint we have followed until now, when we have asked with what white group Negroes have sought allegiance. Here a crucial matter is the attitude toward segregation. It is the upper class Negroes who have felt and expressed most clearly and persistently the Negro protest against segregation. They have manned the chief organization to defend the civil rights of Negroes, the N.A.A.C.P.; they have developed the doctrine that all segregation is wrong and that full democratic participation and integration is right and is the ultimate goal to be fought for. The observer often finds them complaining that lower class Negroes do not resent strongly enough the Jim Crow restrictions.

The sincerity of the upper class Negroes' opposition to segregation cannot be doubted. The fact that they themselves thrive in its shelter is seldom discussed openly and publicly.[b] When occasionally it is brought up, the intellectual dilemma is projected into a distant future by the recognition that segregation will not be abolished soon, and by the reflection that such a change will lose opportunities for them in the Negro market but gain opportunities for them in the wider American market.

Nevertheless, the opposition against segregation in upper class circles is directed primarily against those sectors of the caste system where it functions least as a shelter to themselves. The protest is thus outspoken and unanimous in regard to exclusion from hotels, restaurants, theaters, concerts, and segregation in transportation facilities. It is ordinarily less unanimous with respect to segregation in education. Negro schools provide employment for Negro teachers who, with present prejudice, would most of the time have less chance in a nonsegregated school system. If there is a segregated school system, the main interest becomes to improve the Negro schools and to guarantee the Negro teachers equal salaries.

In regard to segregation in hospitals the observer finds the same ambivalence. As soon as separate Negro set-ups are provided at all, the Negro protest shows a tendency to become directed toward demanding better facilities in these set-ups and, particularly, toward the monopolizing of the jobs as

[a] This term was popularized by H. B. Frissell, the second principal of Hampton Institute.

[b] Except, of course, by the critics among the radical Negro intellectuals and by the social scientists.

doctors and nurses for Negroes. This, by the way, is a demand which is the more reasonable as Negro doctors and nurses are excluded practically everywhere from white hospitals, even where there are Negro wards. But the Negro protest has here accepted the segregation policy. "I was heart and soul . . . in [the] fight against segregation and yet I knew that for a hundred years in this America of ours it was going to be at least partially in vain," comments Du Bois with reference to a particular incident during his work with the N.A.A.C.P. and continues:

> . . . what Negroes need is hospital treatment now; and what Negro physicians need is hospital practice; and to meet their present need, poor hospitals are better than none; segregated hospitals are better than those where the Negro patients are neglected or relegated to the cellar. . . . I am certain that for many generations American Negroes in the United States have got to accept separate medical institutions. They may dislike it; they may and ought to protest against it; nevertheless it will remain for a long time their only path to health, to education, to economic survival.[17]

Ordinarily this policy is not expressed so bluntly, at least not publicly, but it is the guiding theory for most practical Negro policy on the local scene. It runs through the whole gamut of Negro professions and businesses. It was definitely part of Booker T. Washington's strategy:

> Let us in future spend less time talking about the part of the city that we cannot live in, and more time in making that part of the city that we live in beautiful and attractive.[18]

In judging this opportunistic policy it should be held in mind that, in the main, the economic and social interests of the articulate Negro upper class groups run parallel to obvious interests of the whole Negro people, as there is usually little prospect that segregation and discrimination will be stamped out in the near future. Excluded from, or separated and discriminated against, in all sorts of public and private institutions and facilities, Negroes need more and improved schools, parks, playgrounds, hospitals, Y.M.C.A.'s, funeral homes, taxi companies and all sorts of Negro professional and business activities.

The N.A.A.C.P. is by necessity caught in the same ideological compromise.[a] In principle the Association fights all segregation. As a long-range solution it demands that all color bars be torn down. Often its practical task, however, will be to defend the Negroes' interests that a reasonable equality is observed within the existing system of segregation:

> The NAACP from the beginning faced this bogey. It was not, never had been, and never could be an organization that took an absolute stand against race segregation of any sort under all circumstances. This would be a stupid stand in the face of clear and uncontrovertible facts. When the NAACP was formed, the great mass of Negro

[a] See Chapter 39, Section 8.

children were being trained in Negro schools; the great mass of Negro churchgoers were members of Negro churches; the great mass of Negro citizens lived in Negro neighborhoods; the great mass of Negro voters voted with the same political party; and the mass of Negroes joined with Negroes and co-operated with Negroes in order to fight the extension of this segregation and to move toward better conditions. What was true in 1910 was still true in 1940 and will be true in 1970. But with this vast difference: that the segregated Negro institutions are better organized, more intelligently planned and more efficiently conducted, and today form in themselves the best and most compelling argument for the ultimate abolition of the color line.

To have started out in this organization with a slogan "no segregation," would have been impossible. What we did say was no increase in segregation; but even that stand we were unable to maintain. Whenever we found that an increase of segregation was in the interest of the Negro race, naturally we had to advocate it. We had to advocate better teachers for Negro schools and larger appropriation of funds. We had to advocate a segregated camp for the training of Negro officers in the World War. We had to advocate group action of Negro voters in elections. We had to advocate all sorts of organized movement among Negroes to fight oppression and in the long run end segregation.[19]

Du Bois wrote this several years after he had left the N.A.A.C.P. as a result of a controversy with the Association mainly fought on this issue. He would not have said it in so many words fifteen years earlier, and the present leadership of the Association would probably not want to do it even today. But it is substantially a true characterization. Outside its important activity of defending full equality and democratic participation in politics, justice, and breadwinning, and besides its equally important long-range propaganda against all forms of segregation,[a] the Association finds itself, today as earlier, working for a more just administration of segregated set-ups.

As Negro institutions are improved and increasingly manned exclusively by Negro professionals, segregation itself is undoubtedly becoming fortified in America. And it should not be concealed either that powerful Negro vested interests in segregation are created. The trend is also in line with the rise of the Negro protest, which, on the one hand, means intensified "race pride" and, on the other hand, voluntary withdrawal and increasing isolation of Negroes from the larger American scene.[b] The Negro protest, primarily caused by and directed against segregation, thus comes to build up a new spiritual basis for segregation.

9. CONDONING SEGREGATION

"Whether self-segregation for his protection, for inner development and growth in intelligence and social efficiency, will increase his acceptability to white Americans or not, that growth must go on,"[20] writes Du

[a] See Chapter 39, Sections 5 to 9.

[b] See Chapter 30, Section 2.

Bois in his old age when he has become pessimistic about erasing the color bar in a reasonable future. Instead he urges the building up of a cooperative black economy for defense and mutual aid:

> To a degree, but not completely, this is a program of segregation. The consumer group is in important aspects a self-segregated group. We are now segregated largely without reason. Let us put reason and power beneath this segregation.[21]

A few important reservations must now be stressed. One is that few upper class Negroes are prepared to follow Du Bois into this open endorsement of segregation. A second is that Du Bois—like Booker T. Washington before him and practically all other Negro pleaders for a positive utilization of segregation—does not accept segregation as an ultimate solution but rather expects that the policy recommended will favor its earlier breakdown. Speaking particularly about segregated housing and rural settlement projects, he explains:

> Rail if you will against the race segregation here involved and condoned, but take advantage of it by planting secure centers of Negro co-operative effort and particularly of economic power to make us spiritually free for initiative and creation in other and wider fields, and for eventually breaking down all segregation based on color or curl of hair.[a]

A third reservation is even more important, though it can only by implication be inferred from what is said or written. Neither Du Bois nor any other Negro leader will be found prepared to urge the full utilization of segregation, which would be advantageous if segregation were accepted as an ultimate solution of the Negro problem.

A Negro leader, who really accepted segregation and stopped criticizing it, could face the dominant whites with a number of far-reaching demands. If, thus, Negroes accepted as final their disfranchisement in the South and condoned the exclusion of Negroes from politics, they could reasonably ask for a wide amount of self-government for Negroes. They could demand the right to elect their own school boards and governing bodies for their own hospitals and other public institutions. They could ask for Negro policemen to protect the Negro communities and perhaps even for separate lower Negro courts to settle civil and criminal cases between Negroes. Certain problems of fiscal clearing and white supervision would have to be settled, but with some legal ingenuity they could be solved. It would even be reasonable to ask for separate state and national representations of the disfranchised Southern Negroes. Even if such a representative body should have only the right to discuss and petition regarding legislation which

[a] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 215. The present writer does not share the optimism contained in the last part of this statement. Better utilization of segregation by Negroes will give the caste system a certain moral sanction and, probably even more important, will fortify it by Negro vested interests.

concerned Negro interests, it would not be without great importance to the Negro people.

If Negroes accepted residential segregation, they could reasonably demand that it be developed into a rationally planned policy, so that space is set aside for Negro sections. Residential segregation without such a positive policy is more cruel than it need be and than it is usually meant to be. Likewise, if Negroes accepted widespread economic discrimination, they could demand that at least certain "Negro jobs" be set aside and also be defended against white intruders. The present situation of one-sided competition and exploitation, where Negroes are excluded by the whites, but where the whites are free to squeeze Negroes out of even their traditional jobs, easily results in a concentration of unemployment among the Negro people and their gradual relegation to relief as a normal "occupation."

The outside observer of the irrational, inefficient, and cruel American caste system cannot help making such reflections. He finds, however, that an intelligent discussion along those lines is almost entirely absent from America. This absence reveals certain moral taboos of greatest importance. I have taken interest in discussing these matters with many American Negroes. Few of them have failed to see the sense of the proposals raised. But none has expressed approval of them. And they are never touched upon in Negro literature and in public discussion; they have never been thought through. The explanation is this: *Negroes feel that they cannot afford to sell out the rights they have under the Constitution and the American Creed, even when these rights have not materialized and even when there is no immediate prospect of making them a reality. At the same time Negroes show, by taking this position, that they have not lost their belief that ultimately the American Creed will come out on top.* Referring merely to the proposal of an isolated black economy, and not to the more general problem of complete segregation in all fields, which is never mentioned by Negroes, James Weldon Johnson once said:

> Clear thinking reveals that the outcome of voluntary isolation would be a permanent secondary status, so acknowledged by the race. Such a status would, it is true, solve some phases of the race question. It would smooth away a good part of the friction and bring about a certain protection and security. The status of slavery carried some advantages of that sort. But I do not believe we shall ever be willing to pay such a price for security and peace.[22]

More surprising, perhaps, is the fact that white writers—who usually implicitly condone segregation and who therefore might be expected to want to improve the present very wasteful caste system[23]—never say a word on this problem, which, from their point of view, should be so para-

mount.[a] Again the explanation of this lack of intellectual clarity and persistence cannot be given simply in terms of the relatively undeveloped state of scientific social engineering in America. For in most other fields at least attempts at rational practical thinking and social planning are present. The explanation will have to be sought in moral taboos. *The whites also are inhibited by the American Creed from thinking constructively along segregation lines.* They may observe and analyze scientifically the segregation system as it works; they may condone it implicitly or explicitly as advantageous or inevitable under the circumstances; they may do it with eyes open to the sufferings and inefficiencies in the system as it is. But they cannot permit themselves to think through carefully and in any detail how a segregation system could be rationally organized. For *this would imply an open break with the principles of equality and liberty.*

The extraordinary thing is how the national *ethos* works, in the short run, as a bar against clear and constructive thinking toward mitigating the inequalities which, contrary to the American Creed, are inflicted upon a weak group. In the long run, this same Creed might come to save, not only, as now, America's face, but perhaps also its soul.[b]

10. Boosting Negro Business

The idea that the development of a Negro middle class of landowners, businessmen, and professionals would have importance in the fight for equality and opportunity is old with the Negro people. It was pronounced before the Civil War. It played an important role in Booker T. Washington's philosophy:

> . . . wherever I have seen a black man who was succeeding in his business, who was a taxpayer and who possessed intelligence and high character, that individual was treated with the highest respect by the members of the white race. In proportion as we can multiply these examples, North and South, will our problem be solved.[24]

In 1900 he founded the National Negro Business League, which is still functioning. The resolution drawn up by the business section at the first meeting of the National Negro Congress, in 1936, made it equally clear that Negro business is much more than "business":

> The development of sound and thriving Negro business is most indispensable to the general elevation of the Negro's social and economic security . . . all Negroes consider it their inescapable duty to support Negro business by their patronage.[25]

The same advice has been given the Negro people by their white friends through generations. Upon this theory Negro education, particularly along

[a] Southern white writers are no real exception. It is true—as we have shown in earlier parts of this inquiry—that they often in *general terms* plead for certain alleviations of unnecessary suffering inflicted upon the Negroes at the same time as they hold to the necessity of the caste system. But there their thinking stops.

[b] See Chapter 1.

Tuskegee lines, has been aided and directed. Sir Harry Johnston, reviewing the Negro problem in the beginning of this century, pointed to the Jews and drew this lesson:

> Money solves all human difficulties. It will buy you love and respect, power and social standing. With money you can create armies and build navies, you can control the votes of your fellow-citizens, found and shape their educational institutes, conduct a Press, overcome disease, make actual the charity of early Christianity, achieve all purposes that are noble, and check the Devil at every turn; whether he crop up in the forms of alcoholism, disease, intestinal worms, religious intolerance, political oppression, waste of the earth's natural resources, or the misuse of corrugated iron. If you are rich you can roof your dwellings with tiles of the most beautiful, or stone slabs, or wooden shingles, marble terraces or leaden sheets; if you are poor you must content yourself with corrugated iron and know that your dwelling is a blot on the landscape.
>
> The one undoubted solution of the Negro's difficulties throughout the world is for him to turn his strong arms and strong legs, his fine sight, subtle hearing, deft fingers, and rapidly-developed brain to making of Money . . .[26]

And through the decades, Negroes have been told by white people and by their own leaders that in business they have fair chances. Moton stated it thus:

> It is in business, perhaps, that the Negro gets more honest consideration and a fairer deal than in any other of his contacts with the white men, not even excepting religion.[27]

Business will stimulate the Negro's initiative, give him valuable training and experience, increase his self-confidence, increase his wealth, create a relatively secure middle and upper class, give employment to Negroes in the lower classes, and provide a reservoir of resources which can be used in competition with the whites. "Business" in this popular theory includes all free professions. The scant success in building up a substantial Negro business and professional class and the explanations of this have been reviewed in Chapter 14. But the ideology is more alive than ever. Practically all Negro businessmen and professionals met in the course of this study have this theory. It is preached in church and taught in school.

Its popularity is understandable. Negro professionals and business men —except those to whom caste gives an absolute monopoly, as it does to most teachers in Negro schools and colleges, preachers, morticians, beauticians—have to compete with whites and have to seek to build up a relative monopoly by appealing to racial solidarity. Their standards are often lower than those of their white competitors. And they meet suspicion from the Negro customers. The last phenomenon observed by all students, is well stated by Bunche:

> This placid acceptance of Negro inferiority is the refrain of the professional Negro's plaint. Negro doctors and lawyers, Negro businessmen, and even Negro teachers claim to suffer from the lack of confidence in the ability of Negroes typical of so many of the group. It is alleged that many Negroes go out of their way and even suffer humiliations from whites, in order to avoid going to the Negro doctor or hospital. A Negro lawyer will charge that the local Negro doctors, who themselves lose much of their potential Negro clientele to white doctors, will yet engage only white lawyers when they require legal service; and vice versa. Negro students at Negro private schools under white control, have, occasionally, when polled, indicated a preference for white teachers, though this is a sentiment that is fast changing. Negro businessmen allege that Negroes prefer to go downtown to white stores which do not want their trade, and often suffer insults, rather than trade in a Negro store. And even when, by circumstance, Negroes are compelled to turn to the Negro professional man, they not infrequently do so without confidence. I was seated in the outer office of a prominent Negro dentist in Richmond not long ago, when a Negro woman came in with an infected tooth. She informed the dentist that the "white lady" she works for had told her to come. After careful examination the dentist informed her that the tooth would have to be extracted. She became firm on hearing this and promptly informed him that he was quite wrong, as her "lady" had assured her that the tooth would not need to come out. The dentist could not convince her of the correctness of his trained judgment over that of her white "lady," so she stalked out angrily.[28]

Against this, Negro business and professional men have to appeal to their prospective clientele by developing race pride. They promise the advance of the whole race if Negroes only learn to stick together and to patronize race business.

In more recent times two new ideological arguments have been added. One is the program of a cooperative Negro economy set forth recently by Du Bois:[29]

> We believe that the labor force and intelligence of twelve million people is more than sufficient to supply their own wants and make their advancement secure. Therefore, we believe that, if carefully and intelligently planned, a co-operative Negro industrial system in America can be established in the midst of and in conjunction with the surrounding national industrial organization and in intelligent accord with that reconstruction of the economic basis of the nation which must sooner or later be accomplished.[30]

Du Bois' blueprint of ". . . a racial attempt to use the power of the Negro as a consumer not only for his economic uplift but in addition to that, for his economic education,"[31] has remained in the realm of beautiful dreams and is likely to stay there. Americans in general have been weak in their cooperative endeavors, and there is little chance that the Negroes could take a lead in this field. The development of chain businesses in America has actually substituted for one of the chief accomplishments of consumers' cooperation in other countries to rationalize retail trade and lower consumers' costs, and at the same time, has made the prospect for consumers'

cooperation in America, at this late stage, extremely unfavorable. But it should not be denied that even discussion among Negroes of Du Bois' proposal would mean an advance in economic education of the Negro people.

The second new idea is the use of the weapons of the boycott and picketing against white stores and other businesses in Negro districts which refuse to employ Negro workers. In numerous movements all over the country—sometimes with support from the local branches of the N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League but usually directed by *ad hoc* organizations—the slogan "don't buy where you can't work" has been raised.[a] An unusual degree of militancy and tenacity has often been shown, and in some instances signal success has been won.

This last movement has, of course, limited possibilities. At most, it can increase the employment of a few more white collar workers in the segregated Negro districts. It turns on a petty middle class racial basis and might even have great dangers. The Negro masses must seek employment in the general labor market, and their hope is in nondiscrimination, not in apportioning jobs according to race. Speaking about this utilization of the boycott weapon, James Weldon Johnson remarks:

> In our case it might prove a boomerang; on the very argument for the employment of Negroes where we spend our money, Negro employees may be let out where we spend no money.[32]

11. CRITICISM OF NEGRO BUSINESS CHAUVINISM

The weaknesses of Negro business chauvinism are apparent from a consideration of the facts about existing Negro business.[b] In so far as Negro-owned business is inefficient compared to white-owned business, it cannot exist for a long time. James Weldon Johnson makes the following pointed observation:

> It is a common practice among us to go into business relying on "race pride." Now, "race pride" may be a pretty good business slogan, but it is a mighty shaky business foundation. A Negro American in business must give as excellent quality, as low a price, and as prompt and courteous service as any competitor, otherwise he runs a tremendous risk in counting on the patronage even of members of his own race. "Race pride" may induce them once or twice to buy . . . a pair of shoes that cost more and wear out quicker, but it won't keep them doing it. The Negro business men who have succeeded have been those who have maintained as high quality, as low prices, and as good service as their competitors.[33]

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 2. For a description of the movement in New York City, see Claude McKay, *Harlem* (1940), pp. 184-196. Another slogan of the movement is "double duty dollar"—referring to the fact that the dollar both buys good and helps the Negro.

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 2.

Aside from its capacity for maintaining itself, Negro business has been thought of as a means of improving the whole Negro people. As can be expected, the advocates of interracial labor solidarity are critical of this aspect of the ideology. Ralph Bunche develops the views of this school in criticizing Negro business ideology:

> It would seem clear . . . that this hope for the salvation of the Negro within the existing ideological and physical framework, by the erection of a black business structure within the walls of white capitalism, is doomed to futility. In the first place, it would affect beneficially only a relative handful of Negroes, and these would mainly be those who have sufficient capital to become entrepreneurs. The advocates of Negro business have little to say about the welfare of Negro workers engaged in such business, except to suggest that they do not suffer from a discriminatory policy of employment. No one argues, however, that their wages and hours would be better, their working conditions improved, or their work less hard. What evidence there is points in quite the opposite direction. The apologists for the self-sufficiency ideology are in pursuit of a policy of pure expediency and opportunism through exploitation of the segregation incident to the racial dualism of America. They refuse to believe that it is impossible to wring much wealth out of the already poverty-stricken Negro ghettoes of the nation. Moreover, it should be clear that Negro enterprise exists only on the sufferance of that dominant white business world which completely controls credit, basic industry and the state. "Big" Negro business is an economic will-o'-the-wisp. Negro business strikes its appeal for support on a racial note, viz: the race can progress only through economic unity. But the small, individually-owned Negro businesses have little chance to meet successfully the price competition of the large-capital, more efficient and often nation-wide white business. The very poverty of the Negro consumer dictates that he must buy where buying is cheapest; and he can ill afford to invest in racial good-will while he has far too little for food. In this sense, Negro business looms as a parasitical growth on the Negro society, in that it exploits the "race problem." It demands for itself special privilege and parades under the chauvinistic protection of "race loyalty," thus further exploiting an already down-trodden group. It represents the welfare only of the pitifully small Negro middle-class group, though demanding support for its ideology from the race conscious Negro masses. Negro business may offer a measure of relief from racial and economic disadvantage to a handful of the more able or the more fortunate members of the race. But it is much more certain that the vast majority of Negroes in America will continue to till the soil and to toil in the industries of white America.[34]

This is sound reasoning. But when all this is said—when it is granted that there is no prospect that Negro business will ever develop to great importance and that, in any case, even if the business class is benefited, no great gains are assured to the mass of the Negro people—there are, nevertheless, some credit items which should not be ignored. *The chief advantage is the tiny Negro business and professional class itself, which lives by providing goods and services to Negroes.* It is this class which has the education and leisure necessary to articulate the Negro protest and to take up successful collective bargaining with white society.

In the long run, this class can be depended upon to voice the interests of the broad masses of Negroes, simply because its own interests are convergent with those of the masses of Negroes. The Negro preacher, doctor, lawyer, journalist, real estate dealer, insurance man, banker, mortician, and retail merchant has his business founded upon Negro purchasing power. If he serves only the upper strata, his interests are, nevertheless, indirectly tied to the interests of the masses, as the majority of his customers live off the common Negroes. He might sometimes exploit the masses mercilessly. But fundamentally he must want the Negroes to get employment and good pay or, if employment shrinks, he must want them to get public relief, because otherwise he will fail himself.

He must want the common Negroes to have the vote, because otherwise he will be less protected himself. He must want justice, because a prejudiced police and court system is a danger to him too. And when he fights against the humiliations of the Jim Crow system, which hurt him more than the Negro masses, even this is in the long run to the advantage of all Negroes. That there are exceptions and conflicts of interest is not denied. But neither should it be concealed that, in the main, the Negro masses can rely upon their upper class people to wage a fight that is in their interest.

12. "BACK TO AFRICA"

The idea of sending American Negroes back to Africa or to some other place outside the United States has, in the main, been confined to the whites. As Bunche observes: "The real significance of the colonization schemes is to be found in the conception of the Negro as an evil that had to be done away with."[35] This is true also in the case of such humanitarians and liberals as Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln when they showed interest in such projects.

The American Colonization Society was thus organized in 1817 to rid America of the free Negroes who were considered a danger to slavery in the Southern states. Its work proceeded parallel to the measures taken to regiment the slaves, to discourage manumission, to hinder slave and free Negroes from being taught to read, and generally to suppress the free Negro population.[a] There were individual sponsors who had a different view, but in general the Society took a pro-slavery attitude.

> In spite of great efforts, the colonization scheme was a failure, owing to inadequate capital, the unwillingness of the free Negroes to emigrate, and the inability of those of them who did go to Liberia to develop any kind of prosperous community in that equatorial region—their failure, of course, being taken as conclusive evidence of the Negro's incapacity for self-government. The chief result of the Colonization Society's crusade was the passage of laws in the southern states prohibiting the education of Negroes, whether slave or free, under penalty of fine and imprisonment.[36]

[a] See Chapter 20, Section 4.

Most of the Abolitionists prior to the Civil War were critical of the movement, and Garrison pointed out that in the zenith of its activity a great many more slaves were brought illegally from Africa every year than the Society had ever sent there during all the years of its existence. After the Civil War and Emancipation the movement gradually vanished.

Most of the Negroes who went to Africa under the Society's auspices did so as part of a bargain with their masters in return for their freedom.[a] But there were some free Negroes who considered that colonization would be preferable to their anomalous and hopeless position in America. Since then there has always been some discussion among Negroes about the advisability of colonization.[37] The Garvey movement, referred to in Chapter 35, shows that the Negro masses are not immune to the idea. There have always been individual whites who have propagandized for it. Recently Senator Bilbo of Mississippi has made himself the white spokesman for it. He claims that more than two million Negroes signed a petition to the President endorsing his proposal, but this is probably a great exaggeration. In an interview with the present writer, he explained that he will wait for an increase of Negro support and for favorable circumstances, but when the question has so matured, he will take it up for more effective political pressure. Negro intellectuals are practically united against the back-to-Africa proposal. And this is understandable. They are entirely American in their culture; they want to stay in America and fight it out here.

The issue is dead at present but it might rise again. Should America enter into a period of protracted unemployment after the present War, and should this unemployment become more concentrated upon the Negro people—prospects which are not unlikely—then the Negro, who has traditionally been looked upon by the whites as cheap labor, might increasingly come to be looked upon as a relief burden. It is not beyond possibility that a large proportion of Southern whites might under certain circumstances come to demand the sending away of Negroes from America. And we know that if the pressure is hard, there will be considerable response in the Negro masses to Negro leaders who promise to take them back to Africa.[38]

However, under the perspective of present trends, there is also a more positive aspect of Negro colonization in Africa. Under the moral pressure of the present War, American and British statesmen are now making declarations that equality and liberty will be established in the whole world. The Atlantic Charter is only one example of a whole trend of public commitments to the freedom of suppressed peoples. Applied to Africa, these vague promises can have no other import than that the imperialistic exploitation of the Black Continent shall come to an end after the present War and that the century-old dreams of a true colonization of Africa will

[a] See Chapter 8, Section 2, especially footnote 4.

finally be realized. This cannot occur, however, until Africa is not a chessboard divided among European powers but is ruled in the interests of humanity and its own native population and with the goal that its various peoples will be independent as soon as possible, and until capital is invested in health and education and in the development of its natural resources. Lord Hailey, an Englishman, has already done some of the necessary spade work[39] of scientific inquiry for such practical work; a committee under his chairmanship is now preparing further plans. The problem is also being discussed in America. A committee of prominent white and Negro Americans under the chairmanship of Anson Phelps Stokes—The Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims—has recently (1942) published a report, *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, containing constructive proposals for a new African policy.

There are several factors which make it more probable, perhaps, that something positive will materialize out of the vague promises. One is that America has not taken any part in the African skin game. Another one is the fact that Russia and China are bound to play an important role in the peace. If anything in line with the promises would be carried out, it would be natural that American Negroes would take both a great interest in the adventure and an active part in its staging. Many Negroes in America feel an emotional attachment to Africa and its population. And because of their color they would, with greater ease, gain the confidence of the African Negroes. Until now there have been few such thoughts in the American Negro world. But Du Bois, who has become the most catholic of all Negro thinkers, with room for nearly every idea, remarks:

> . . . my plan would not decline frankly to face the possibility of eventual emigration from America of some considerable part of the Negro population, in case they could find a chance for free and favorable development unmolested and unthreatened, and in case the race prejudice in America persisted to such an extent that it would not permit the full development of the capacities and aspirations of the Negro race.[40]

The post-war development might perhaps come to realize not only the second but also the first of these two conditions.

13. MISCELLANEOUS IDEOLOGIES

The white colonization schemes have practically never—even in the period when large regions of this country were unexploited—considered the possibility of settling the Negroes separately on the North American continent. Neither has there been much of a drive among Negroes to attempt to establish segregated Negro regions. The advocates of a Negro "Forty-Ninth State" have never found much of an audience. As we mentioned,[a] the Communist phantasmagoria of a liberated, Negro-governed Black Belt fell flat among the American Negroes.

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 8.

The account of Negro ideologies in this chapter is only selective. There are a great number of other loose ideas rambling around in the Negro world, on how to solve the Negro problem; some of them are referred to in other chapters of this part. Amalgamation and passing are sometimes referred to vaguely as an "ultimate solution." There are popular chauvinistic theories connected with religious ideas in the various churches and sects. Racialism of the Garvey type is harbored among the masses and, as Bunche observes, "there are, in the Negro universities, a good many 'academic Garveyites'."[41] Under this racial perspective the world may assume queer proportions:

> Thus many Negroes hold to a conception of the Negro problem that can be described only as an "optimistic fatalism." The burdens of the present are lightened in the conviction of the inevitability of the "black man's day" when all will be reversed. Whereas the Lothrop Stoddards bombard the white man with warning that the dark tide is rising, the black man considers this an augury of that future day when the world will see the "bottom rail on top," when black men will rule and their past will be vindicated. The heroic struggle of the British Indians for independence is acclaimed: Japan's rise to power in the East—even her invasion of China—is regarded as a source of great encouragement; every instance of rebellion in Africa, the Dutch East Indies, the West Indies, is hailed as a victory. Ethiopia was championed against Italy, and Liberia is a source of great pride. Every outbreak in Europe is considered of utmost importance to the dark races of the world. The internecine conflicts, the conflagrations in the white world are all regarded as certain signs of the ultimate decline and fall from dominance of the white races, upon which the dark peoples will invest the chancellories of the world. It is pointed out that the dark people greatly outnumber the whites in the population of the world. That all this will transpire is never doubted; it is not a product of reason or cold calculation, but is based upon blind faith. It is foretold in the stars, the scriptures, by the prophets; it is written and must come to pass.[42]

Even the most superb political brains of the Negro people, constantly holding themselves with intentional effort to positive thinking, must sometimes feel tired and pessimistic when facing the difficulties of getting a hearing from the dominant whites. Confesses James Weldon Johnson:

> There is in us all a stronger tendency toward isolation than we may be aware of. There come times when the most persistent integrationist becomes an isolationist, when he curses the white world and consigns it to hell. This tendency toward isolation is strong because it springs from a deep-seated, natural desire—a desire for respite from the unremitting, gruelling struggle; for a place in which refuge might be taken. We are again and again confronted by this question. It is ever present, though often dormant.[43]

What holds Negro thinking in a fairly consistent scheme and directs it most of the time upon positive goals is, in the final analysis, the determina-

tion to hold to the American Creed. Bowen summarizes a study of Negro opinion thus:

> But admitting the division of public opinion among Negroes, this survey found that on some matters Negro opinion is more united than white opinion is upon almost anything. It found for instance, that Negro opinion is, so to speak, completely united on the proposition that, given the necessary technical qualifications, Negroes should be equally eligible with whites for any job in the United States. It found Negro opinion united on the proposition that skin color should not be penalized in any way whatsoever. It found division of opinion as to how this can be brought about, but the division is as to ways and means, not as to objective. In other words, the color line itself is unjust and tyrannical.[44]

It is true that all Negroes down to the poorest Southern sharecropper are attached to Uncle Sam and expect more justice from Washington than from the state capitol, and more from the state capitol than from the county courthouse. The Negro people have a clear and unanimous view on the problem of "state rights *versus* federal rights." They are for centralization. "They feel themselves as Americans and want to be nothing else," observes Schrieke:

> But there is the real problem: they are American and Negro. As Negroes they see themselves constantly through American eyes. That unreconciled double-consciousness is their greatest trouble.[45]

This dual pull is the correspondence in the Negro world to what we for the white world have called the American Dilemma. Du Bois has expressed the tragedy of it:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.[46]

CHAPTER 39

NEGRO IMPROVEMENT AND PROTEST ORGANIZATIONS

1. A General American Pattern

A rich vegetation of associations and organizations for worth-while causes is an American characteristic. Americans are great "joiners," and they enjoy "campaigns" and "drives" for membership or contributions. Social clubs are plentiful, and even they are taken with a seriousness difficult for a stranger to understand. Enthusiasm is invested in committee work of small importance in churches, lodges, clubs and civic organizations of all kinds.

Undoubtedly, this cultural trait is partly to be explained as an outflow of the idealism and moralism of the American people. Americans generally are eager to improve their society.[a] They also have a kindly spirit of neighborliness. They like to meet each other and to feel tied together for a common cause. For these things they are prepared to sacrifice freely of their time and their money. It is natural for the ordinary American, when he sees something that is wrong, to feel not only that "there should be a law against it,"[b] but also that an organization should be founded to combat it.

More fundamentally, this trait is an indication of political frustration. Americans are a politically minded people, and the traditions of democracy are strong. But they do not have much of an outlet for their public interests within their political system, as it has come to develop in practice. We have observed in a previous chapter that the degree of participation on the part of the common citizen in the daily duties and responsibilities of government is low in America—that is, *between* the recurrent elections and *except* for his part in forming the nebulous but powerful "public opinion."[c] This frustration is accentuated because the political parties are not built around broad ideals and common interests. The lack of political goals often goes to the extreme when parties become what the Americans call political "machines." Only to an unusually low degree can the ordinary American feel the political party to be a medium for his aspirations in the field of

[a] See Chapter 1, Section 12.
[b] See Chapter 1, Sections 8 and 9.
[c] See Chapter 33, Section 3.

social ideals. In so far as party politics is corrupt, it becomes the more understandable why the American wants to keep his efforts for worthy causes "outside party politics."[a] The huge amount of organizational activity is thus partly a sort of substitute satisfaction for the Americans' lively political interests which they find so thwarted in the American practice of government.

The lack of people's movements with broad well-integrated goals is part of this American setting.[b] The improvement and reform organizations usually have specialized aims, and an American who is using them to define himself with regard to his political leanings will have to—and often does—belong to a great number of them. In addition to such splits on issues, there is also a large overlapping of, and consequently competition between, organizations. Belonging to these organizations is, further, predominantly an upper and middle class pattern. The lower classes do not join organizations to the same extent. The organizations they do join are more likely to be merely social or religious.

No improvement or reform organization has ever developed a mass following for any length of time. If an organization should be able to build up a real mass following and keep it for any length of time, this would, of course, mean the formation of a new type of political party.[1] If this happened to a significant number of reform groups at the same time and if they came to join together in broader formations, it would effect a change in the political system. Natural outlets would be created for people's public interests, and most of the betterment organizations would have lost their excuse for existence. But the actual situation has never been thus.

In this setting the organizations actually have more of a "function" for the citizens' viewpoint than they would have in a system of democratic politics with more popular participation. Organizations are, in a sense, the salt of American politics. As there is so little idealism and, indeed, so few issues in ordinary party politics in America and, instead, often so much corruption, the ideals have to be pressed upon government from the outside. "Pressure groups" belong to this political system, where ideals and broad interests are so unsatisfactorily integrated into the democratic process.

This general American pattern will have to be kept in mind when we survey the Negro protest and improvement organizations. We shall find that, as usual, the Negro culture follows closely the American pattern with some differences in details, explainable in terms of the singular circumstances in which the Negro people live. As in other instances, those differences are of a type to make the Negro appear as an exaggerated American.

On the one hand, the Negroes must feel more frustrated in the American

[a] See Chapter 1, Section 10.

[b] See Chapter 33.

political system than the whites. The majority of Negroes live in the South and are disfranchised. In the North they live in big cities where machine rule is usual. Nationally as well as locally, the political parties give only scant attention to the Negroes' ideals and interests. Their extraordinary caste status gives Negroes tremendous grievances against society around which to rally. The Negro cause is conspicuously defined by the conflict between caste and the American Creed. On the other hand, there are certain factors which decrease interest in public affairs among Negroes. A greater proportion of the Negro people belong to the lower classes, and those classes among the Negroes are, on the average, poorer, less educated, more apathetic than in comparable white groups. There is more defeatism in all social classes of Negroes, and in the South there is even sheer fear of expressing an opinion. For these reasons, we might expect that the Negroes have plenty of organizations expressing the Negro protest, or some compromise between protest and accommodation; but we cannot expect much of a mass following.

We shall devote the major part of this chapter to a discussion of the three most important organizations for Negro protest and betterment: the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.), the Urban League, and the Commission on Interracial Relations. But we shall first mention the other organizations active in the field,[a] as they stood at the outbreak of the Second World War. Later we shall consider the development during the War. The value premises for our analysis are accounted for in a concluding section on Negro strategy.

2. NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS

There are still some remnants of the Garvey nationalist movement, officially entitled *The Universal Negro Improvement Association.*[b] A West

[a] In this chapter we shall not deal at all with certain white-dominated organizations. A number of left-wing organizations—the Communist party, the Socialist party, the American Civil Liberties Union, the International Labor Defense, the League for Industrial Democracy, the Workers Alliance of America, the American League for Peace and Democracy, the Independent Labor League of America, and others—have shown a more or less special interest in the Negro. (See Ralph Bunche, "The Programs, Ideologies, Tactics, and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 4, pp. 675 ff.) Some movements—usually more to the right—have concentrated on the South, as the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (see Chapter 21, Section 5), the Southern Committee for Peoples' Rights of North Carolina, the Citizens' Fact Finding Movement in Georgia, the Committee on Economic and Racial Justice (with headquarters in New York) (see *idem*).

Finally, we shall not deal with the anti-Negro organizations—such as the Ku Klux Klan, the Women of the Ku Klux Klan, The Alabama Women's League for White Supremacy, The Alabama Women's Democratic Club, The National Association for the Preservation of the White Race, The White America Society. (For an analysis of these, see *ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 736 ff.)

[b] See Chapter 35, Section 7.

Indian Negro doctor, heading the New York division, which had established itself as an independent organization, explained its present-day (January, 1940) position to an interviewer for this study:

> We don't advocate going back to Africa. That will come in time. The main problem of the Negro is economic and that is what we must face. It's the Negro's problem and he must solve it by himself. . . . I say, if we can solve our economic problem, then to hell with the white man and that is exactly what we propose to do . . .
>
> Sir, the Negro must learn to keep his business to himself. He must be wise as a serpent and appear to be harmless as a dove. He must strike at the right moment. Let the European war start. Some Negroes are crying for peace. Peace, hell! Let them kill each other as long as they want to. The longer they do that, the better off the Negroes will be.[2]

This leader claimed for his own organization a membership of some 700 and referred to other small groups which carried on the original Garvey movement.[3]

The Peace Movement of Ethiopia is a back-to-Africa movement of a very different temper. It was founded at a meeting in Chicago at the end of 1932 and has been working in support of the "repatriation" bill of Senator Bilbo.[a] It is claimed that, within eight months, 400,000 names were obtained on a petition directed to the President of the United States requesting that he use relief funds to settle Negroes in Africa instead of supporting them as unemployed here. It is also claimed that a supplementary petition contains around 2,000,000 names from all states in the Union. The leaders of the movement are obscure.[4] The belief is strong in many quarters that they are the agents of Senator Bilbo.

In the memorial presented to the President at the end of 1933, the petitioners explained, among other things:

> We are simple minded, sincere, lowly, law-abiding workers who have maintained traditions of simple honesty, industry and frugality as much from choice as from necessity. Few of us have education, but we have learned not to heed the blandishments of self-seeking politicians, imposters, and the unworthy and undesirable products of the hectic civilization that is foreign to our nature. . . . Given an opportunity in our ancestral Africa, the knowledge of farming and of simple farm machinery and implements, which we have acquired here, would enable us to carve a frugal but decent livelihood out of the virgin soil and favorable climate of Liberia. . . . We are a liability now, and any cost of this project, no matter how great, would still, we sincerely believe, be a sound investment for the American people. . . . We, the subjoined and accompanying signatories, merely ask respectfully that we be eliminated from an over-crowded labor market and given a helping hand in establishing such social and economic independence as we are fitted for—establishing it where it will give no offense and where it may serve as an object lesson to tempt those who remain.[5]

[a] See Chapter 38, Section 12.

This sounds much more like the wishful dreaming of a kindly conservative Southern white man than an expression of thoughts and desires of American Negroes. In fact, I have nowhere seen any traces of this organization in the Negro communities I have visited. When the President found it impracticable to act favorably upon the petition, the memorialists turned to the General Assembly of Virginia, since Virginia had taken the initiative in acquiring the territory which is now Liberia. This legislative body resolved to recommend the proposal.[6]

The National Union for People of African Descent is another paper organization of American Negroes. It is extremely chauvinistic in the Garvey tradition. The aim of the organization is to create a sort of extra-territorial independence for the Negro people:

> . . . to obtain a nation, a flag, an army and navy exclusively of the black people, and through these media to ultimately throw off the yoke of white domination, white culture, and white mores.[7]

It has been helped by Negro unrest but does not seem to have made much headway.

The National Movement for the Establishment of the Forty-Ninth State wants to establish a territorial state in some less populated part of America:

> . . . not an isolated uncivilized hostile colony around which to build a figurative wall of China shutting out the possibilities of travel and growth from within and without; not a separate nation, but an interdependent commonwealth like any other of the present 48 states.[8]

In the Garvey tradition, this movement holds a fatalistic and pessimistic view of the Negroes' future in white America. White people do not consider giving Negroes justice and, therefore, Negroes will not get any unless they get off by themselves. Like all other organizations of this type—except the Garvey movement itself—it has never amounted to much.

During the present war crisis there have been rumors about various "fifth column" groups among American Negroes. For several years there have been attempts to disseminate Japanese propaganda to Negroes, but with minor success. Individual Negroes of the type who have been active in the small groups which are the remnants of the Garvey movement have given response, but their influence on Negro opinion is small. To our knowledge, only a few dozen Negroes have been arrested for advocating the cause of Japan.[a] There is undoubtedly a small group of Negroes who are in some degree friendly to Japan. A larger number take a vicarious satisfaction in imagining a Japanese (or German) invasion of the Southern

[a] In addition, some members of the Islamic cults have been arrested for failing to register for the draft. (*PM* [September 15, 1942 and September 22, 1942].) Two of the persons attempting to win Negroes to the cause of Japan were white. One was a follower

states.[9] But on the whole, while Negroes are dissatisfied, their protest has not turned in a treasonable direction. In fact, it may be said that their pro-democratic, anti-fascist ideology is at least as strong as that of most white groups in the United States.[a]

3. BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The National Negro Business League, founded by Booker T. Washington in 1900, has its purpose defined in the preamble to its constitution:

> That through the promotion of commercial achievement the race could be led to a position of influence in American life and thus pave the way to economic independence.[10]

The League functions as the national center for local business leagues, Negro chambers of commerce, and similar organizations of Negro business and professional men and women. Annually it conducts a three-day convention. Bunche reports about these conventions:

> The proceedings of these meetings consist mainly of informal business "life histories" given by the members, in which they trace the origin, development and present status of the business with which they are identified. This is in furtherance of the League's policy of stimulating and promoting business.[11]

It publishes a journal, *Negro Business,* and other propaganda material.[12] In 1929 the Business League launched *The Colored Merchants' Association* (C.M.A.) stores. This was a cooperative endeavor. The idea was to reduce costs and prices by cooperative buying and group advertising. But few Negro businesses were attracted, and the Negro consumers were generally not willing to accept the untested brands sold by the C.M.A. stores instead of the nationally advertised, standard brands offered by the white chain stores. The project failed during the depression.

We have discussed and criticized the ideology behind this movement in the preceding chapter.[b] Nothing the present writer has observed in Negro communities in various parts of America contradicts Bunche's evaluation:

> In terms of its influence on economic betterment of the Negro, the National Negro Business League has been inconsequential. As a factor in shaping the psychology and thinking of Negroes, however, it has been vastly important. . . . It has pursued the narrowest type of racial chauvinism, for it has organized, not business, but *Negro*

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of the professional Fascist, Joe McWilliams. (*PM* [September 15, 1942].) The other owned the "Negro News Syndicate" and was supported by the Japanese. (*Time* magazine, [September 14, 1942], p. 46.)

[a] This is mainly an impression, but it has some substantiation in the various confidential polls of public opinion now being carried on, and in such small studies as that of Delbert C. Miller, "Effect of the War Declaration on the National Morale of American College Students," *The American Sociological Review* (October, 1942), pp. 631-644.

[b] See Chapter 38, Section 10.

business and has employed the racial situation as its main stock in trade in bidding for the support of Negro patronage.[18]

In 1918 Du Bois made an effort to create a national organization for consumers' cooperation. Upon his call, there met in the *Crisis* office "twelve colored men from seven different states" and they established *The Negro Co-operative Guild*.[14] Some abortive attempts to open cooperative stores in various cities were made, but nothing came out of it. Du Bois comments in 1940:

> The whole movement needed more careful preliminary spade work, with popular education both of consumers and managers; and for lack of this, it temporarily failed. It must and will be revived.[15]

We have touched upon the spontaneous movement, "don't buy where you can't work." There is no national organization behind this movement, but there are, or have been, several organizations with this purpose in many cities, as, for instance, *The Colored Clerks' Circle* in St. Louis and *The New Negro Alliance* in Washington.[16] The movement is a logical corollary of the Negro business philosophy. It is doomed to be rather inconsequential and even has potentialities damaging to Negro interests.[a]

Similar to the *National Negro Business League* are: *The National Negro Bankers' Association, The National Negro Insurance Association, The National Medical Association, The National Teachers' Association,* and *The National Bar Association.*[17] These organizations exist largely as substitutes for the ordinary professional organizations which to a large extent—and in the South regularly—exclude Negroes.[b] Also the Negro fraternities and sororities belong to this group of professional organizations. All of them are "race organizations" in the sense that they have as one of their purposes the improvement not only of their particular group's status but also that of the Negro people as a whole. Many of them do a considerable amount of lobbying and petitioning. In fact, even the churches, the lodges, and the social clubs are to a degree organizations for race defense. This tendency became intensified during the war crisis.

Special mention must be given to the *National Council of Negro Women* even though we cannot describe or evaluate it. It is under the presidency of Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, the outstanding Negro woman "race leader," president of Bethune-Cookman College in Florida, Negro advisor to the National Youth Administration and long head of the "Black Cabinet" in Washington.[c]

It is possible to view all the Negro organizations mentioned in this section as rather futile and inconsequential. This is the attitude prevailing

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 2, and Chapter 38, Section 11.

[b] See Chapter 29, Section 6.

[c] The "Black Cabinet" was discussed in Chapter 22, Section 5.

among the younger Negro intellectuals. When they are studied one by one and measured by their rather limited accomplishments, this view seems to be justified. Taken together, however, they mean that Negroes have increasingly become organized in natural social groups for concerted action, have become trained in orderly cooperation, and have become accustomed to plan and work together. All of them give an institutional sanction to protests against various kinds of discrimination. When seen in perspective, they represent bases for attempts at broader organizations.

To this category of Negro organizations belong Negro trade unions, but we have considered them in Chapter 38 and in Appendix 6.

4. THE NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS MOVEMENT

The Joint Committee on National Recovery was formed in the early days of the New Deal to watch out for Negro rights in the policy-making at Washington. Under the chairmanship of George Haynes, and with John P. Davis as executive secretary, it protested against wage differentials in industry and discriminatory administration of the agricultural programs, and it upheld the interests of Negroes in the code hearings under the N.R.A. It was supported financially by some twenty-two independent Negro organizations, though its major support came from the N.A.A.C.P.[18]

The National Negro Congress grew out of a conference in the spring of 1935 held at Howard University under the joint auspices of its Division of Social Sciences and of the Joint Committee on National Recovery. The idea was born that a national Negro agency, embracing all the existing Negro trade unions, religious, fraternal, and civic bodies, could give more strength and unity to all those organizations and, particularly, help awaken a response from the Negro masses. Stress was laid upon economic and social betterment as well as upon justice and citizens' rights.[19] For a time the National Negro Congress, which emerged out of these deliberations, actually showed prospects of becoming a strong Negro movement, though it finally failed.

The first National Negro Congress met in Chicago in February, 1936, for a three-day session. It was attended by 817 delegates, representing 585 organizations from 28 states and the District of Columbia. In a great number of resolutions, the Congress expressed the Negroes' dissatisfaction and protest and made practical proposals for change. Heading the list of resolutions was the general one to the effect that the Congress was not, and would never be, affiliated or dominated by any political faction or party.[20] A. Philip Randolph—the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, who is not only the most prominent Negro trade unionist but one of the wisest Negro statesmen in the present generation—undertook the presidency and John P. Davis, who had been the secretary of the Joint Committee on National Recovery, became the executive secretary of the

new organization. Local councils were established in many cities and seemed, in the beginning, to have been quite active. As late as 1939 and 1940, when the present writer traveled around in this country, the local councils of the National Negro Congress were the most important Negro organizations in some Western cities.

In October, 1937, the second National Negro Congress was held in Philadelphia. The delegates formed a total of 1,149 persons. Nothing important happened. Account was given of the progress in building up the organization. It is apparent that a chief difficulty was to get it on a sound financial basis. The third—and so far, the last—Congress meeting was held in Washington, D.C., in April, 1940. There were around 900 Negro and 400 white delegates representing organizations from all parts of the country. At this meeting the Congress sealed its doom by becoming simply a front organization for the Communist party.[21] Randolph was ushered from the presidency, and the Congress sank to unimportance, from which it will probably never rise again.[22]

The failure of the National Negro Congress seems due mainly to the following factors: lack of political training and understanding on the part of the rank and file of the Negro representatives for the various local Negro organizations; inability to raise even modest funds for the work of the organization; the skill, determination, and resources of the Communists, and their success in getting some of their group into the leadership of the Congress. Since 1940 the Congress has been kept up by the Communist party as a paper organization with some scattered local following, but it has largely lost its support from the other Negro organizations which originally furnished its basis.

The March on Washington Committee, led by A. Philip Randolph and created to voice the Negro protest in the war emergency, is in a sense a continuation of the nonpartisan general Negro movement represented by the Congress in its first year. We shall consider this Committee later.

The Southern Negro Youth Congress[23] was organized in Richmond, Virginia, in 1937, as a federation of Southern youth organizations. A yearly congress is held, the last one in April, 1942, at Tuskegee Institute.[24] Local councils are organized to conduct youth forums, work for crime reduction programs, health projects, vocational guidance campaigns, and similar activities in the interest of Negro youth. Owing to the "special problems" which face Negroes in the South, the local organizations have usually not been militant on questions of Negroes' rights. In spite of this, the author found that upper class Negroes in the South often considered the movement "radical" and dangerous for interracial peace.[25] Bunche gives, in 1940, this summary evaluation:

> The Southern Negro Youth Congress is a flame that flickers only feebly in a few Southern cities today. It started with promise but, lacking competent leadership, it

failed to catch the imagination of the young Negro of the South. Its program has been diffuse and recently, at least, seems to take its cue in the major essentials from the "line" laid down by the American Communist Party. . . . Moreover, no serious effort has been made to reach the lower class Negro youth of the South who are in dire need of guidance and encouragement. In its present form the Negro Youth Congress is run by and for a select group of Negro school boys and girls who are themselves terribly confused and often frustrated. It can contribute but little toward the progressive development of the Negro.[26]

This might be true enough, yet it should be recalled that any organization, even if its immediate accomplishments are small, represents a coming together of Negroes for concerted action, which gives training and vision.

5. THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is without question the most important agency for the Negroes in their struggle against caste. At several points in our inquiry, we have seen how it functions. It is an interracial movement. As a matter of fact, it was started on white people's initiative. In the summer of 1908 there had occurred a severe race riot in Springfield, Illinois, the home of Abraham Lincoln. Scores of Negroes had been killed or wounded and many had been driven out of the city. Wide publicity was given the affair in the press and one writer, William English Walling, threw a challenge to the nation: there was a need for a revival of the spirit of the Abolitionists to win liberty and justice for the Negro in America. The appeal was answered by Mary White Ovington. In January, 1909, Miss Ovington met with Mr. Walling and Dr. Henry Moskowitz in New York, and the plans were laid for the organization that was to become the N.A.A.C.P. Of these three, Miss Ovington is still active on the board of the N.A.A.C.P.[a]

Oswald Garrison Villard was asked to draft a call for a conference on February 12, 1909, the one hundredth anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Signed by many prominent white and Negro liberals, the document pointed in ringing phrases to the injustices inflicted upon the Negro against the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, and called upon

. . . all believers in democracy to join in a national conference for the discussion of present evils, the voicing of protests, and the renewal of the struggle for civil and political liberty.[27]

[a] Mary White Ovington, *How the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Began* (1914), cited by Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 24. The following account of the N.A.A.C.P. has drawn heavily from Bunche's memorandum, compared with critical comments and information given by Walter White, the Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., and Roy Wilkins, the Assistant Secretary of the N.A.A.C.P. and Editor of *The Crisis*. See also Paul E. Baker, *Negro-White Adjustment* (1934), pp. 43 ff.

At this first conference a committee of forty was formed to carry on the work. Mass meetings were held, pamphlets distributed, and memberships solicited. The following year, at a second conference, a merger was consummated of the forces of the Negro liberals of the Niagara Movement [a] and of the white liberals of Abolitionist traditions. Out of these two groups the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was formed. Moorfield Storey of Boston was elected the first president. He and all other officers of the new organization were white, except Du Bois, who was to become the salaried Director of Publicity and Research. The platform adopted was practically identical with that of the Niagara Movement. It was at the time considered extremely radical.[28] "Thus," comments Bunche, "the N.A.A.C.P., propelled by dominant white hands, embarked upon the civil liberties course that the Negro-inspired Niagara Movement had futilely tried to navigate."[29] From the beginning Du Bois gave the tone to the new organization's activity. By 1914 there were thirteen Negro members on the Board of Directors, most of whom were veterans of the Niagara Movement. In 1910 the publication of the organization's journal, *The Crisis*, began and it soon became popular.

The long-run objective of the organization has always been to win full equality for the Negro as an American citizen. The specific objectives can best be presented by the following citation from its program as announced in 1940:

1. Anti-lynching legislation.
2. Legislation to end peonage and debt slavery among the sharecroppers and tenant farmers of the South.
3. Enfranchisement of the Negro in the South.
4. Abolition of injustices in legal procedure, particularly criminal procedure, based solely upon color or race.
5. Equitable distribution of funds for public education.
6. Abolition of segregation, discrimination, insult, and humiliation based on race or color.
7. Equality of opportunity to work in all fields with equal pay for equal work.
8. Abolition of discrimination against Negroes in the right to collective bargaining through membership in organized labor unions.[30]

The N.A.A.C.P. works through the National Office in New York City and through branches or local associations in cities everywhere in the country.[31] The National Office determines the policy of the organization and supervises the work of the branches.[32] The National Office, including *The Crisis*, employs 13 salaried executive officers and 17 other paid employees. All are Negroes. The president of the Association has always been a white man; at present he is Arthur B. Spingarn, who succeeded his brother, the late Joel E. Spingarn. The Board of Directors has mem-

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 4.

bers of both races; at present it is composed of 30 Negroes and 17 whites. There are 13 vice-presidents, 4 of whom are Negroes.[33] The main executive officer and the responsible head of the Association is the secretary. This office is now held by Walter White. Few branch officers are white, although some whites serve on executive committees of branches. It is estimated that about 10 per cent of the total membership of the Association is white. The Association is interracial only at the top, but practically all Negro at the base.

The war crisis is giving increasing importance to the Association and during the last few years there has been a remarkable increase in the number of local branches and in membership rolls. Currently there are 481 branches of the Association and, in addition, 77 youth councils[34] and 22 college chapters. The total membership of the Association is approximately 85,000. *The Crisis* has a circulation of about 17,500 copies. Since 1940 the Association has published a monthly paper, the *N.A.A.C.P. Bulletin*, which goes to all members. The National Office operates on a budget of around $85,000. Much the larger part of the budget is derived from membership fees, but a smaller part is raised by contributions from individuals and from a few foundations, most often given for specific purposes.[35]

The branches—and consequently the National Association—have nowhere been able to build up a real mass following among Negroes. The membership is still largely confined to the upper classes. It should be remembered, though, that lack of mass participation is not peculiar to the N.A.A.C.P. or even to the Negro world but is a characteristic of American public life as a whole. Few similar organizations have reached the organizational stability and the membership size of the N.A.A.C.P. It should also be stressed that, while the lack of mass following is a weakness, the high intellectual quality of the membership of the N.A.A.C.P. is an asset. Few organizations in the entire country compare with the N.A.A.C.P. in respect to the education and mental alertness of the persons attracted to it. In a study of 5,512 Negro college graduates from all areas and of all ages, Charles S. Johnson found that 25 per cent of them were members of the N.A.A.C.P.[36] No other organization for Negroes approached this percentage. The quality of the membership is reflected in the National Office. The national leaders of Negroes have generally been intellectuals,[37] and the N.A.A.C.P. represents the highest manifestation of this general tendency. In most branches Negro professionals and businessmen constitute almost exclusively the officers, boards and executive committees.

More fundamentally, however, this structure of the Association is a weakness. The Association should have a much larger popular support in order to be able to fight with greatest success. The national leaders of the movement, and also most of the local branch officers I have come in contact with, are aware of the fact that the Association, if it wants to grow, must

gain more members in the lower and middle classes of the Negro people. In the present war crisis the Association is making great strides forward, and it is reported that Negro workers are increasingly coming to join the Association.[38] There is also in recent years a visible tendency to try to get workers, and, particularly, trade union officials, on the boards of the branches. It is not improbable that as a result of the rigors and exigencies of the War, the N.A.A.C.P. will come out as an organization much stronger in membership and with much more of a following among the masses.

6. THE N.A.A.C.P. BRANCHES

The activity of the Association depends largely upon the effective organization of its branches. They provide it with membership, the larger part of its financial support, and information from and contacts with its field of work. The branches are the lifeline of the Association, and the National Office is constantly struggling to maintain them in vigor and to found new branches, especially in recent years.[39]

It is a heavy task the Association demands from the branches. We quote from a summary made by Bunche from the instructions given by the National Office:

> The branches are to assume responsibility for the general welfare of the Negro population of the particular locality. In carrying out the broad program enunciated by the National Office, they are local vigilante groups covering all of the ramifications of Negro life in a prejudice ridden *milieu*. The branches are to check on "biased and discriminatory legislation, biased and discriminatory administration of the law, and injustice in the courts." They are to combat attempts at racial discrimination in civil rights, parks, museums, theaters, conveyances and other public places, and in charitable and public agencies. They are expected to bring test cases on the rights of Negro citizens before the courts, where great injustice is done because of race or color prejudice. Instances of police brutality against Negroes are to be fought, and Northern branches are admonished to be on the alert for cases of extradition involving Negroes who have sought refuge in the North against Southern injustice. Branches are to seek to secure new laws and ordinances to protect the welfare of Negro citizens and to prevent race discrimination. . . . The branches are expected to assume responsibility for stimulating school attendance of Negro children, and encouraging Negro youth to attend high school and college, and also to see to it "that careful technical training in some branch of modern industry is furnished all colored children." The branches must oppose all forms of educational discrimination, and demand equal educational accommodations and facilities for Negro youth; direct educational segregation, and the subtle zoning of educational districts so as to segregate Negro children indirectly, should be fought, and the branches should cooperate in the current fight to equalize teachers' salaries in Southern schools, and to eliminate the Negro-white differentials in educational appropriations. Similarly the branches are to look after the health needs of the Negro communities; tax supported hospitals excluding Negro patients should be attacked, and efforts put forth to place Negro

nurses and internes in municipal hospitals. The branches are to strive for wider employment opportunities and better wages for Negroes; discrimination in Civil Service employments should be opposed. The branches should cooperate with all community efforts touching the welfare of Negro citizens, and should combat unfavorable treatment of the Negro in the local press. They should cultivate cordial relations between the races in the community. Negroes should be encouraged to qualify for voting and to vote; all possible influence should be brought to bear toward the adoption and enforcement of civil rights laws; discriminatory practices in the administration of relief and on government work projects should be exposed and protested; and better housing for Negroes should be striven for.[40]

As suggested in this statement, the National Office advises its branches on tactics as well as aims. The branches are advised "that injury to one Negro on racial grounds affects the status of the whole group, and hence, the health and happiness of our American civilization."[41] The present War, with the many problems it raises or aggravates for Negroes, has, of course, increased the demands upon the branches.

When these things are considered: the immensity of the tasks set for the branches; the high demands made upon the time, interest, intelligence, and tact of the branch officers; the fact that those officers are not salaried but work on a voluntary basis in their free time; the inherent difficulties of minority tactics and, particularly, the power situation in the South; the fact that few white people outside the national center of the organization are prepared to give assistance or even sympathy to the work; while poverty, ignorance, and defeatism are widespread among the Negro masses—when all these adverse factors are considered, it should not be a surprise that hardly any branch even approaches the realization of the ideals envisaged for its active working.[42] If we consider the handicaps under which the branches work, we should classify them, before the War, as a few energetic branches, some dormant branches, and the majority of branches somewhere between.[43] As is natural, branches in the South had small membership rolls and showed little activity. They often seemed to run through a sort of irregular vitality cycle.

(1) The normal condition is local inactivity but with maintenance of a basic membership roll and more or less regular meetings, where the stress is usually given to the general goals of the Association more than to the specific problems of the locality. There are always social and educational entertainments. Belonging to the Association and paying dues is, in the upper classes, considered a minimum duty of a "race man" and a sign of community spirit and social respectability. "In the main," states a president of a local association in the Upper South, "we are concerned with collecting the dollar to aid the national group financially—you see we have so many organizations here to take up people's time."[44]
Another head of a branch in the Deep South, whose policy is one of caution because he fears greater repression by local whites, explains it this way: "Our

task is to supply the material and the money; the folks up North have got to stick their necks out for us."[45]

(2) Now and then, ordinarily not for a period of many years, the local association flares up to importance in the community on account of a particularly self-sacrificing and energetic leader or group of leaders. Some actions are taken: In the North, these may be anything within the scope of the organization's aims. In the South they are usually restricted to the following things: a drive to get Negroes to register and vote; the organization of Negro voters to defeat a bond issue when Negro interests are flagrantly neglected; a representation to the authorities for more adequate schools or hospital facilities, for improved housing conditions, parks, and playgrounds, for the hiring of Negro policemen or firemen to serve in Negro districts, for the equalization of salaries of Negro teachers, against occasional police brutality; the instigation of a law suit to save a victim from the injustice of the region. No Southern branch could ever have the resources—or the boldness—to raise more than one or two such issues at a time. By its activity it receives publicity, and a membership drive will temporarily raise the enrollment considerably.

(3) After some time the activity falls again, either because the leaders move away or get disillusioned, or because of developing factionalism and internal strife and jealousy. Sometimes the cause is that influential white people in the community scare the leaders, or at least some of them, by telling them that they have to slow down. In either case the branch returns to its normal condition of relative ineffectiveness with maintenance and watchfulness. In extreme cases the branch can be totally destroyed.

In many Southern communities conservative or dependent upper and middle class Negroes shared the common white opinion in the region that the N.A.A.C.P. is a "foreign" or "radical" organization, that its policy is "tactless" and "tends to stir up undue hostility between the races." They stayed away from it entirely or made a compromise by paying dues but never attending meetings and by generally advising the organization to abstain from taking any action. I often heard the complaint that teachers are timid about identifying themselves with the Association for fear of jeopardizing their jobs, and that preachers are reluctant to join since their churches are often mortgaged by white people. In other communities, teachers and preachers were important in the local associations, but they did not usually urge action. Most other upper class Negroes also are dependent on the whites and have to proceed carefully. One prominent Negro leader in a city in the Deep South, which has a bad history of intimidation of Negroes, commented to us upon a recent unsuccessful effort to get a branch started again:

> They went about it wrong. The best way to get an organization like that started here is to go talk to the white man first.[46]

This attitude should not be criticized in levity but must be understood against the background of the Southern caste situation.

Another difficulty of the typical N.A.A.C.P. branch is the competition for interest, time, and money from churches, lodges and social clubs of all sorts. Particularly as the N.A.A.C.P. cannot promise much in immediate returns for the individual, this competition is serious. Other competition comes from independent local civic organizations, often with the same local program.[47] There are hundreds of such organizations, often several in one city. The explanation of this is partly the same as of the great number of splits in sects and churches.[a] The local organizations sometimes thrive upon the spread of suspicion and even hostility against the N.A.A.C.P. as "foreign," "outside" or "meddling by a clique of New Yorkers." But more often the motives for the split are even more superficial and petty. Undoubtedly, it would mean a great increase in strength for the N.A.A.C.P. —and an equally great asset for the Negroes' organizational activity as a whole—if these organizations could be integrated as branches of the Association.

Sometimes, however, there are more objective reasons for organizational duplication. In an earlier chapter we have given an illustration from a city in the Lower South where a League for Civic Improvement was maintained to do the pussy-footing with which the N.A.A.C.P. could not be compromised.[b] In a city in the Upper South there is a powerful Committee on Negro Affairs with a membership of around a thousand, carrying on most of the Negro politics in the community. The N.A.A.C.P. branch has only about a hundred members. According to the president, the main function of the branch now seems to be one of patient waiting—it will step into the breach if the Committee fails or if the backing of the National Office is needed.[48] The leaders of the Committee on Negro Affairs, on the other hand, point out that the N.A.A.C.P. "helps us because the white man will do things for us to keep the N.A.A.C.P. out." A prominent Negro leader in one of the largest cities of the Deep South, who, himself, regards the N.A.A.C.P. as "radical," explains:

> The South doesn't like the N.A.A.C.P. and regards it as an alien force; but though whites won't give to the radical group what it demands, the conservative group can come behind and capitalize on the situation created by the "radicals." Therefore, both radical and conservative Negro groups are necessary—the radicals do the blocking and tackling and the conservatives "carry the ball."[49]

If all the difficulties under which a Negro protest movement has to work in the South are remembered, it is rather remarkable, in the final analysis, that the N.A.A.C.P. has been able to keep up and slowly build out its network of branches in the region, and that several of the Southern branches have been so relatively active. A strength of the organization is

[a] See Chapter 40.

[b] See Chapter 37, Section 10.

that, even if the formal membership is small, the great majority of Negroes in all classes in the South, as well as in the North, back its program.

The N.A.A.C.P. branches in the Northern cities usually have larger membership rolls than those in Southern cities, not only because there are many more Negroes in the average Northern Negro community, but also because most of the specific difficulties under which the Southern branches labor are absent. They are free to carry out campaigns and to take cases into court. The Negro vote gives them a backing for their demands. Considering the much more favorable conditions under which the Northern branches work, it should be no surprise that they are generally stronger and more active than Southern branches. The surprising thing is that they are not stronger and more active than they actually are.

7. THE N.A.A.C.P. NATIONAL OFFICE

The major part of the work carried on by the Association is performed by its National Office, which strikes the observer as unusually effective in its work. Owing to the National Office, the Association exerts—locally and nationally—an influence out of proportion to its small membership. The 33-year life span of the Association and the constant publicity it has received over the years give it prestige, stability, and respect, which the national officers know how to capitalize upon.

Generally, the National Office acts as a "watchdog" over Negro rights. When anything important develops on the national or on some local scene which is adverse to Negro interest, the Association promptly intervenes. A usual measure is that its secretary directs a telegram or letter to the responsible officials, which is made public through the press service of the Association. Of special importance is its watch on national legislation. The National Office tries to get hearings before Congressional committees and other investigating bodies and places on record its information and its demands on behalf of the Negroes. In the same way the Association fights for remedial legislation and for the adoption of changes in administrative practice. It is prepared to associate itself with other white or Negro organizations in cases touching Negro rights and interests.

Systematic lobbying, primarily in Washington, but also in state capitals, is kept up. Much of this work falls upon the shoulders of the secretary, Walter White. The Association tries to get on public record the opinions in crucial problems of federal administrators, congressmen, governors, other state officials, and important personalities in organizations and in business.

It loses no opportunity to place each and every elected or appointed official on record regarding specific cases affecting Negroes, such as lynching, riots, civil service discrimination, segregation, the right to vote, public works, unemployment relief, slander of the Negro race, etc. Where an official is derelict in his duty or openly

> prejudiced against Negroes, the National Office rallies the Branches to political action against him. In this way it has defeated for re-election many politicians guilty of race bias.[50]

The Association has successfully fought the appointment or election to public office of persons known to be prejudiced against Negroes.[51]

The Association puts its trust in publicity. A large part of the activity of the National Office is in the nature of educational propaganda. It not only publishes *The Crisis* and the *N.A.A.C.P. Bulletin*, but also a great many pamphlets, brochures and books on various aspects of the Negro problem. The officers of the National Office strive to present their case to the white public also through articles in outstanding national periodicals. The National Office provides data for research work on the Negro problem and for political work even when it is carried on outside the Association. From its staff or from a circle of active sympathizers, it furnishes speakers for important meetings. The officers of the Association travel widely on lecture tours all over the country. Most of the officers have traveled and lectured abroad, displaying the American Negro case to a world audience. Du Bois represented the Association as a lobbyist at the Versailles Peace Conference "in order to interpret to the Peace delegates the interests of the Negro peoples of the world."[52] The National Office has its own press service, which is used by the Negro press[a] and, occasionally, also by liberal white magazines and newspapers. In its publicity the National Office has a militant and challenging tone but is ordinarily—as far as the present author has been able to check during the course of this study—scrupulously correct in statements of fact.

In a broader sense, all the work of the Association is centered around creating favorable publicity for the Negro people and winning a hearing for their grievances from the general American public. Publicity is, therefore, an important aspect of all its moves. It succeeds rather well in reaching the alert strata of the Negro people—mainly through Negro newspapers—but it attempts also to reach the white public. There it is less successful, but more successful than any other agency. Its unceasing efforts are based upon the typical American democratic trust in the righteousness of the common man:

> . . . we must win the American public to want this right for us. They are a just people and if we could by education get them to see how silly and needlessly cruel it is to deny a person food and shelter, they would help enforce the law.[53]

In its lobbying the National Office pretends with grace to represent the Negro people and is not afraid of making threats by referring to the Negro vote. When we consider the weakness of its local branches and the general rivalry and apathy in the Negro communities, this appears to be largely

[a] See Chapter 42.

bluffing, and it is often successful bluffing. This is said not in criticism but in sincere admiration.[a]

From the very beginning, the Association has laid stress on its legal redress work, and this has always been a most important and, certainly, the most spectacular part of its activity.[54] The Association takes its stand on the legal equality of all the citizens of the country stipulated in the Constitution,[b] and in most of the laws of the several states of the South and the North. It brings selected cases of discrimination and segregation to the test of law suits.

In hundreds of cases, the lawyers of the N.A.A.C.P. have been instrumental in saving Negroes from unequal treatment by the courts, sometimes getting them acquitted when they were sentenced or in danger of being sentenced on flimsy evidence; sometimes getting death penalties or other severe penalties reduced.[55] The frequently successful fights to prevent the extradition of Negroes from Northern to Southern communities, when the likelihood of obtaining a fair trial for the Negroes sought could be shown to be questionable, has proved time and again an especially effective means of focusing national attention upon the low standards of legal culture in the South.[56] In numerous cases the exclusion of Negroes from grand and petit juries has been challenged, and the Association shares in establishing precedents by which the principle is now firmly established that the exclusion of Negroes from jury service is a denial of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitu-

[a] Roy Wilkins comments on this point: " . . . the issues on which the N.A.A.C.P. uses the threat of reprisal by voters are carefully selected out of our long experience with items we know colored voters will resent at the polls, regardless of party affiliations or other distracting factors. But it must be remembered that we labor under no illusions so far as marshalling a complete bloc of Negro voters as such against any particular candidate or proposal. We know that party affiliation comes first with many colored people, just as it does with other racial groups. They are loyal, Democratic workers, for instance, first of all. We know that job-holding, or the hope of winning jobs will influence the vote more than consideration for racial ideals. We know that some communities will vote for segregated Negro schools on the excuse that only through those schools can they get jobs for their daughters as teachers. In other words, there is no such thing as a purely Negro vote. Nevertheless, on some broad questions, grievously aggravated in some community or by some politician, it is possible to swing a goodly section of the Negro vote in the way it should go, despite other factors operating." (Memorandum [August 11, 1942].)

[b] There is an interesting story from the First World War told by James Weldon Johnson. Du Bois, who was then editor of *The Crisis*, had been to the front in France and had a good deal to say about the treatment of the Negro soldier:

"The utterances of Dr. Du Bois in *The Crisis*, the organ of the association, brought a visit to the office from agents of the Department of Justice; in reply to the query: 'Just what is this organization fighting for?' Dr. Du Bois said: 'We are fighting for the enforcement of the Constitution of the United States.' This was an ultimate condensation of the program of the association." (*Black Manhattan*, p. 247.)

tion.[57] Police brutality, third degree methods in forcing confessions, and peonage have been fought.

The Association has likewise been continuously active in defending the Negroes' right to vote.[a] In 1915 it succeeded in having the "grandfather clauses" of Southern state constitutions declared unconstitutional. It has fought several other cases connected with the white primary and other means of disfranchising Negroes. As we know, it has not succeeded in hindering the wholesale disfranchisement of the Southern Negro population. But it has put a stop to Southern legislatures enacting the most bluntly discriminatory provisions against the suffrage of Negroes and has thus achieved a strategic situation where the white South increasingly bases disfranchisement upon extra-legal measures.[b] In the very year of the foundation of the Association a movement started to legalize residential segregation by city ordinance.[c] Challenging the constitutionality of this type of legislation was one of the main efforts of the Association during its first decade. In the famous Louisville Segregation Case, a decisive victory was won. The Association has been constantly vigilant, though with considerable caution, against the Jim Crow laws and, particularly, against inferior facilities for Negroes in segregated set-ups of various sorts. In recent years it has concentrated its attack on the barriers against Negro students[58] and on the unequal salaries of Negro teachers.[d]

The fights in court must not be viewed in isolation from the attempts to influence legislatures and administrators. Both types of effort are part of a grand strategy to win legal equality for the Negro people. The Association has spared no pains in pushing any and all Congressional action in favor of the Negro people, or in opposing measures having an actual or potential detrimental effect. Foremost among these efforts to influence legislation is the long fight for a federal anti-lynching law.[59] In this it has not succeeded as yet, but the important effect has been to keep the national conscience awake to lynching as a public scandal. In 1922, when the anti-lynching bill was first seriously considered in Congress, the number of lynchings dropped spectacularly.[e] The Association—which has employed a "watcher" in each branch of Congress and now has a bureau in Washington—has been able to stop much discriminatory legislation, including bills against intermarriage, Jim Crow bills, and residential segregation bills for the District of Columbia.[60] It has fought for increased federal aid to education, for an equal distribution of federal funds for education; against discriminatory provisions in the Wages and Hours Act; against discrimination

[a] See Chapter 22, Section 2.
[b] The importance of this is discussed in Chapter 23, Section 4.
[c] See Chapter 29, Section 4.
[d] See Chapter 14, Section 4.
[e] See Chapter 27, Section 4.

in C.W.A., P.W.A., W.P.A. projects; against administrational discrimination in the T.V.A., local relief, and public utilities; and for many other things.[61]

8. THE STRATEGY OF THE N.A.A.C.P.

Both for strategic and for financial reasons the Association cannot afford to be a legal aid society for Negroes. The cases pursued are selected because of their general importance. The N.A.A.C.P. does not, therefore, substitute for institutions to enforce the laws and to aid poor people which we suggested were needed.[a] This need is becoming less and less met by the Association, as it has shifted its emphasis from legal defense to legal offense.[62]

The author has found that some conservative Negroes and most conservative and liberal whites in the South accuse the N.A.A.C.P. of being "reckless" in striking in all directions against the caste order of the region without any thought whatever as to what can possibly be attained. When, with this criticism in mind, I have studied the actions of the N.A.A.C.P. over the decades, I have, on the contrary, come to the conclusion that the Association is working according to a quite clearly conceived tactical plan, which is only more far-seeing than is customary in America, particularly in the South.[b] The Association has wisely avoided launching a wholesale legal campaign against the Southern segregation system, as this would have provoked a general reaction. It has selected its points of attack with care and has pushed the front with caution; sometimes it has preferred only to preserve a favorable defense position. On the other hand, when the N.A.A.C.P. is striking—for instance, for a federal anti-lynching law or for improved educational facilities for Negroes as in the Gaines Case—the effect is not, as it is often asserted, an intensified reaction in the South, but, on the contrary, a definite movement towards adjustment with the national norms.

In this sense, the tactics of the N.A.A.C.P. are "opportunistic"—though within the framework of a long-range policy to reach full equality for Negroes. The Association has often accepted segregation, and in fact, has sometimes had to promote further segregation, while it has been pressing for increased opportunity and equality within the segregated system.[c] The principle of opportunism, but also the integration of opportunism into the long-range aims, is a conscious tactic:

> In cases where race discrimination is too strongly entrenched to be attacked at present, it [the branch] should secure at least equal rights and accommodations for colored citizens.[63]

[a] See Chapter 26, Section 4.
[b] See Chapter 33, Section 1.
[c] See Chapter 38, Section 9.

and it is:

> . . . convinced of the futility of any program to produce separate but equal educational opportunities for education for one-tenth of America's population, so they work for the day when the same and not equal opportunities are open to all. But on the way to the goal, the campaign to get those opportunities for all in states having laws requiring separate systems of education must be waged. Equal buildings, equal equipment in the buildings, equal salaries, equal length of school term, equal transportation facilities, equal per capita expenditure—all these are steps toward our goal.[64]

The N.A.A.C.P. has also been accused of being "radical." This criticism has been excellently evaluated by Bunche:

> The leadership and membership of the N.A.A.C.P., both Negro and white, is not recruited from the ranks of radicals. The program and tactics of the organization remain well within the bounds of respectability. It has, of course, been branded as radical by those who resent its militant demands for Negro equality and rights. But never, in the history of the organization, has there been aught but acceptance of the fundaments of the "American way" of life; the only demands for change have been directed toward Negro status. Its membership and its hold upon the black masses have never been strong enough to permit it to utter serious threats, nor to invoke mass pressure. Thus its tactics have had to conform to the dictates of expediency and opportunism; good strategy and the need for cultivating the prestige of the organization and the decree that demands shall be made and cases fought only when circumstances are of such favorable nature as to afford good chance of victory.[65]

9. CRITIQUE OF THE N.A.A.C.P.

The N.A.A.C.P. has been criticized by the most diverse groups for its concentration on publicity, suffrage and civil liberties. To the Northern sociologist with *laissez-faire* (do nothing) leanings, the N.A.A.C.P. and all the other organizations represent a superficial and inconsequential quack-doctoring of symptoms instead of a scientific treatment of causes. The "fundamental causes" are conflicts of "interests" which are not supposed to be touched by propaganda or law suits.[66] To the Southern liberal of a more contemplative temper, the struggle of the N.A.A.C.P. is a Don Quixotian battle against the unshakable "folkways and mores" of his unhappy region.[67] To the younger school of more or less Marxian-influenced Negro intellectuals, the N.A.A.C.P.'s policy is in the main only an evasion of the central problem, which is the economic one.[68] Different as these critical judgments are in motivation, they all express the fundamental defeatism in regard to the upholding of law and order which has become so widespread among American intellectuals of all colors and political creeds.[a]

This pessimism is exaggerated and, consequently, the criticism against the N.A.A.C.P. is largely unjustified. In our inquiry we started out by stressing the faltering systems of law and order in America. The low legal

[a] See Chapter 1, Sections 11 and 12.

culture, particularly in the South, was thereafter given great importance in nearly every specific aspect of our study. But we have also observed the definite trend toward a more equitable administration of the law in the South, and we have found that this trend is not unrelated to efforts of the type here discussed. With specific reference to the N.A.A.C.P., the present writer is inclined to agree with James Weldon Johnson who was once secretary of the organization:

> There is a school that holds that these legal victories are empty. They are not. At the very least, they provide the ground upon which we may make a stand for our rights.[69]

Very rightly Johnson points to the legal status of the Negro when the N.A.A.C.P. began to fight its battle, and the danger in the trend then under way, as the only basis for evaluating the organization:

> When the N.A.A.C.P. was founded, the great danger facing us was that we should lose the vestiges of our rights by default. The organization checked that danger. It acted as a watchman on the wall, sounding the alarms that called us to defense. Its work would be of value if only for the reason that without it our status would be worse than it is.[70]

Another Negro writer, Bertram W. Doyle, though of the "accommodation" school, testifies to the same effect:

> The significance of the agitation for rights and equality, as exemplified in, say, Mr. Du Bois, formerly a guiding spirit in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was that under his scheme the races were not to be allowed to come to terms, and race relations were not again to be fixed in custom and formulated in codes before the Negro had fully experienced his freedom. Resistance to compromise has, then, helped to keep the racial situation in a state of flux and has tended to serve notice on the white man that weaker peoples expect him to live up to the principle established in his laws—those laws to which he proclaims loyalty.[71]

Thus, an evaluation of the N.A.A.C.P. requires us to examine the cases won by it and to note the effects of these victories. In the field of residential segregation, while the N.A.A.C.P. has not succeeded in getting the courts to outlaw private restrictive covenants, it has succeeded in having all laws to enforce residential segregation declared unconstitutional. This has meant that the Negroes are not completely ghettoized, and that they can expand in a city, though with much difficulty.[a] More important, the legal fight still goes on, and it is not improbable that the Supreme Court will soon come to reverse its stand on the constitutionality of even the private restrictive covenants. Similarly, in regard to suffrage: it is true that the Southern states have so far succeeded in evading the Supreme Court decisions on the

[a] See Chapter 29, Sections 3 and 4.

unconstitutionality of the white primary by having the primaries arranged as private party affairs.[a] But the fight is continuing, and even this barricade may fall as the "grandfather clauses" fell earlier. Perhaps the poll tax stipulations also will be declared unconstitutional if Congress does not make them illegal first. Likewise, though the decision in the Gaines Case will probably not open the Southern universities to Negroes in the near future, it is already forcing the Southern states to take action to improve the education situation for Negroes. Generally speaking, the fight against injustice and discrimination in the South and the keeping of national attention on the matter are social forces working for change which it seems unrealistic not to take into account.

The young Negro intellectuals who are critical of the N.A.A.C.P. have, however, a more positive point in mind.[b] On second thought they will usually concede the importance of the legal fight and also agree that it has crystallized the Negro protest.[c] But they insist that the N.A.A.C.P. has not attacked the fundamental economic problems.[d] They want the N.A.A.C.P. to come out with a radical economic program. They understand that this would alienate from the organizations many of their white and Negro supporters,[72] but apparently they do not care about this or about the loss in effectiveness of the present activity which would be a consequence.

This criticism is not new. Early in the history of the Association, the Socialists clamored against the narrow racial program of the N.A.A.C.P. They wanted it to attack the economic system, to embrace the economic and political philosophy of socialism. In later years, the Communist party has likewise been insisting that any Negro organization which does not devote itself to the revolutionary cause is futile. As an aftermath of this discussion, the young Negro intellectuals today—who are not Communists

[a] See Chapter 22, Section 2.

[b] We shall exemplify this widespread criticism of the N.A.A.C.P., as well as the other Negro betterment organizations, by statements made by Bunche in the work which has been basic to the description and analysis presented in this chapter. Even if we differ from Bunche on fundamental points, we want to stress that we have chosen to use his presentation as an object for criticism, not because it is weak, but, on the contrary, because it is the most clearly argued and ablest presentation of a view which we cannot share.

[c] "The N.A.A.C.P. unquestionably deserves full credit for setting a new pattern of thought among Negroes with respect to their problems. The vigor with which the Association, from the date of its inception, fought for the rights of Negroes before the courts opened the eyes of the Negro to an entirely new vista." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 141.)

[d] ". . . it [the N.A.A.C.P.] has ignored the fundamental conditions giving rise to the race problem. It has understood well enough that the Negro suffers from race prejudice, but has failed to concern itself with the root causes of race prejudice." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 142; compare *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 145, *passim.*)

". . . the South must be subjected to a new agrarian and industrial revolution before any significant changes in the fundamental relationship—political, economic or racial—will occur. This is what the N.A.A.C.P. apparently lacks the understanding and courage to face." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 147.)

and often not even Socialists—deprecate the N.A.A.C.P. as "bourgeois" and "middle class."

To this criticism the N.A.A.C.P. answers that it considers its work in the civil liberties sphere important enough not to be lightheartedly jeopardized by radical adventures in other directions. It has machinery set up for this work, and three decades' experience has gone into perfecting it. This is a form of capital working for the Negro people which should not be squandered. It has "good-will" and a public "respectability" which might appear only as an object of ridicule to the radical intellectual but which, in the daily fight of the organization, is an asset. For a Negro protest or betterment organization to adopt a revolutionary program would be suicidal for the organization and damaging to the Negro cause.[a]

To the outside observer the reasons are strongly on the side of the N.A.A.C.P. against its critics. The American Constitution and the entire legal system of the land give the Negro a strategic strength in his fight against caste which it would be senseless not to utilize to the utmost. As it is possible to get the support of the Northern liberals—and of an increasing number of the Southern liberals, too—in the Negroes' fight for justice, this should be taken advantage of. A more or less radical economic program would not only jeopardize this support, but from a technical viewpoint, it is also impracticable to over-burden an agency with such divergent tasks.

Leaving aside their assumption that the economic factors are "basic,"[b] the critics are, of course, right in urging that there be organized efforts to tackle the Negroes' difficulties in breadwinning and, particularly, in gaining entrance into the labor unions. The question is, however, whether or

[a] "I feel very strongly that critics of the Association are not being reasonable where they maintain, in the light of the known American public opinion, and the known shackled condition of the Negro in the country, that an organization for his improvement should embark upon a political and economic revolutionary program.

"These organizations, if you will, must be somewhat opportunistic in their operation. The identification of the Negro's cause prominently and predominantly with a political and economic revolutionary program would be suicidal. The dangers inherent in such a procedure are but demonstrated by the fact that no racial group in America has adopted such a program.

"Indeed, it may be questioned whether the white masses have accepted such a philosophy as the way out of their obvious difficulties. Only an infinitesimal minority of persons in this country subscribes openly to and works actively in such a program. To ask the Negro, the most vulnerable, the poorest, the one most at mercy of the majority, to embark upon this is asking more than is practicable or sensible." (Roy Wilkins, in memorandum of March 12, 1941.)

"The white masses of America are not radical, to say nothing of the black masses. They are radical only with respect to the status of the Negro; on all other matters they are as conservative as the average American." (Roy Wilkins in memorandum of August 11, 1942.)

[b] See Chapter 3, Section 5, and Chapter 38, Section 6.

not this is the proper task for the N.A.A.C.P. To an extent it is, undoubtedly, and the Association has, during the New Deal, become increasingly active in fighting discrimination in public welfare policy and in the labor market. Outside such questions of discriminatory legislation and administration as the Association is particularly competent to handle, it leaves most of these problems to the Urban League, and the two organizations even have a gentleman's agreement of long standing to observe such a division of responsibility. The Urban League has, however, even stronger reasons for not embarking upon broad and fundamental economic reform programs, as we shall see shortly.

There is thus, unquestionably, room for more concerted action on the side of the Negro people. Particularly there is need of an agency attempting to integrate Negro labor into the trade union movement.[a] But the realization of this need should not be turned into criticism of the existing agencies serving other functions. Instead, the critics should go ahead and form the organizations they see the need of—soliciting advice and aid in their work from the experienced and established organizations. These critics—like most people who discuss the Negro protest and betterment organizations—assume without question that there should be just one unified Negro movement. We shall take up this important problem of Negro strategy later. Our conclusion will be that a suppressed minority group like the Negro people is best served by *several organizations* dividing the field and maximizing the support that can be gained from different groups of whites.

In this light should also be judged the criticism against the N.A.A.C.P. that it has "not become an important factor in the national political scene."[73] In our discussion of the Negro in politics, we have observed the need for organizing, locally and nationally, a collective bargaining agency for the Negro people to deal with the political parties.[b] But again there is a question whether the N.A.A.C.P. can undertake to carry out this task to a greater degree than it already does—which involves taking a stand in local and national political conflicts and supporting one party or the other —without losing in effectiveness in its primary function of fighting for legal equality for the Negro. Again it is a question of whether this task should not be given to another agency.

An indisputable weakness of the N.A.A.C.P. is its lack of mass support.[c]

[a] See Chapter 18, Section 3.

[b] See Chapter 23, Sections 1 and 2.

[c] ". . . the N.A.A.C.P. does not have a mass basis. It has never assumed the proportions of a crusade, nor has it ever, in any single instance, attracted the masses of people to its banner. It is not impressed upon the mass consciousness, and it is a bald truth that the average Negro in the street has never heard of the Association nor of any of its leaders. It has shown a pitiful lack of knowledge of mass technique and of how to pitch an appeal

This is, as we pointed out, admitted by the leaders of the Association.[a] When passing judgment on this problem of tactics, it should, in fairness, be recalled that we are actually asking why a severely disadvantaged group has not accomplished something which only rarely and imperfectly has been done among the whites in America. It should be borne in mind that the easiest means of rallying the American Negroes into a mass movement are such that they would destroy the organization. The Garvey movement demonstrated that the Negro masses can best be stirred into unity by an irrational and intensively racial, emotional appeal, the very thing which both the Association and its critics rightly shun. It is also questionable whether—as some of the critics of the Association hold—a greater stress on economic reform by itself has any more appeal than the fight against lynching and injustice. Poor and uneducated people all over the world are not particularly interested in economic revolution or even economic reform but must be educated to have such an interest.

When all this is said, it nevertheless stands out as a most pressing need for the organization to broaden its membership basis and to strengthen the activity of its branches.[74] There are, however, no easy panaceas available. It is the author's judgment that important steps are: (1) to have more working class members on the local boards; (2) to intensify propaganda in the schools and among the youth; (3) to stress adult education by organizing "study circles" and forums; (4) to get out more pamphlets and books on living issues and more printed directions both for individual studies and for adult education. More important, however, is the actual fighting done for the Negro. At present the war crisis is helping the Association win increasing support from the Negro people. Also in the somewhat longer perspective, the future seems promising for the Association. As the Negro masses are becoming educated and more articulate, and as the Negro protest is rising, this courageous organization with its experienced and cautious tactics will be able to count on increasing support.

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so as to reach the ears of the masses. Were it able to stir the people, it could establish itself on a sound and independent financial basis; it could develop a feeling of solidarity among Negroes; and it could then employ an expanded paid professional leadership which would make possible the execution of an effective national program." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 151; compare *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 142 ff.)

[a] "There are weaknesses in our branch structure and we have not yet found the formula for selling to the public the nature, the extent, the details, and the significance of the Association's program. Some have suggested that we might follow the example of Marcus Garvey and others in the utilization of fancy titles and robes. The Association, however, has felt that reverting to some of these methods of attracting the masses would do more harm in the long run to the organization, than good." (Walter White, in letter, March 15, 1941.)

"I believe that we recognize our lack of skill at mass appeal, and I believe we are on the way to doing something about it." (Roy Wilkins, in memorandum, March 12, 1941.)

10. THE URBAN LEAGUE

Much of what has been said of the N.A.A.C.P. applies also to the *Urban League.* Like the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League is an interracial movement. Both organizations were started on white initiative. In 1906 a group of whites and Negroes formed *The Committee for Improving the Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York City.* About the same time, another interracial group in New York formed *The League for Protection of Colored Women.* In 1910 a third interracial group held a conference which constituted itself into *The Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes.* The following year these three organizations decided to merge into one: *The National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes.* The philanthropists, social workers, and professionals who made up the nucleus of the new organization "held that the Negro needed not alms but opportunity—opportunity to work at the job for which the Negro was best fitted, with equal pay for equal work, and equal opportunity for advancement."[75] The late professor, Edwin R. A. Seligman, became the first president of the organization.

The National Urban League is the parent organization. It has its central office in New York. In order to expand the work of the League in Southern communities, it has a Southern Field Branch Office in Atlanta, Georgia. The National Urban League is governed by an Executive Board of fifteen persons of whom seven are Negroes and eight whites. The president of the organization was for many years L. Hollingsworth Wood, and the executive secretary was Eugene Kinckle Jones, both of whom had been with the League since its beginning. They are now both retiring and are being replaced by William H. Baldwin and Lester B. Granger, respectively.* Besides the executive secretary there is a staff of eight executive officers and ten office workers. One of the officers is white but all the other employees of the National League are Negroes. The League publishes *Opportunity* and *The Secretariat,* the one directed to the general public, the other serving as house organ for the organization. The National League operates at present upon a budget of approximately $60,000 (including *Opportunity*). It is raised by contributions from foundations and from individuals.[76]

Local branches of the League are established in 46 cities. Of these, 12 are in the South, including the Border states, 2 are on the Pacific Coast, 12 are in the Northeast, and the remainder are in the Middle West. These figures reflect the history of the organization. It came into being to assist the unadjusted groups of Negroes migrating to Northern urban and industrial areas, but it has spread out to the Southern and West Coast cities which have similar needs.

The local Urban Leagues are governed by interracial boards. Sometimes

* Mr. Jones retains the office of General Secretary but is on leave from his duties.

there are other committees, usually interracial in composition. Many local Leagues, for example, have a committee on industrial relations. Each local office is staffed by a trained secretary, who is the responsible head of the work, and by specialized social workers and office workers, of a number determined by the financial resources of the local League. Thirty-nine of the forty-six local Urban Leagues are members of city-wide Community Chests, and most of these receive the greater part and often all of their financial resources from this source. Most local Leagues have incomes from individual contributions; some receive membership dues. For much of their work the local Leagues are able to solicit voluntary services from ministers, teachers, doctors, and other public spirited citizens in the Negro community. The National Office estimates that the combined budget of the local branches at present approximates half a million dollars annually.[a]

The activity of the local Urban Leagues is as wide in scope as modern social work when applied to the variegated needs of the poverty-stricken Negro communities. The outside observer cannot help but be impressed, not only by the urge to keep abreast of the latest developments in the broader social work field, but also with the attempts to find new solutions for the specialized problems of the Negro ghetto. It is apparent, however, that, particularly in the South, the Leagues work under tremendous handicaps on account of indifference and even hostility from most white people and halfheartedness on the part of even white sponsors and friends. It is also apparent that, all over the country, the efficiency of the work is kept down by inadequate financial resources.

Any detailed description of the activities of the local Leagues in attempting to get even the smallest economic openings for Negro workers and, generally, to heal the wounds of caste and mass poverty is out of the question in this book. They touch problems of education, home and neighborhood, problems of youth, recreation, vocational guidance and training, welfare work, housing, health, morals and manners. The Leagues carry on day nurseries, sometimes with baby clinics, child placement agencies, and, occasionally, schools for Negro girls who have become pregnant; they organize clubs for boys, girls, mothers, neighborhood and other groups; training schools for janitors or domestics; parent-teacher associations; study groups in trade unionism; health weeks, and so on. To mitigate delinquency among Negroes they offer to cooperate with the law-enforcement agencies and to perform such tasks as furnishing supplementary parole supervisors, safeguarding the interest of girls appearing in court, and, in some cases, finding homes for them. Fights are waged against commercialized prostitu-

[a] The statements in this and the following paragraphs are founded upon Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 220 ff., upon information supplied by L. Hollingsworth Wood, Eugene Kinckle Jones, and Lester B. Granger of the National Urban League, and upon the writer's own observations.

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

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

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

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

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

—it is obvious that the activity should be financed, and financed much more generously, from the public purse: by the city, the state and the federal government. The League's activity among maladjusted Negroes in the industrial cities of America has national importance. It is concerned with the effects of such nation-wide American phenomena as the migration from rural areas—partly caused by national agricultural policy—and the almost universal economic discrimination against Negroes by whites.[a]

There are few informed persons in America, among either whites or Negroes, who do not appreciate the social service work done by the League. In many communities, however, white people often look upon the League as "dangerous," "radical" and too "friendly to labor." Among the younger Negro intellectuals, on the contrary, the League is commonly accused of being too "timid." The League has "made no serious effort to define its program in any fundamental way," it is said.[77] Because of its dependence upon white philanthropy, it advocates "a policy of racial expediency and conciliation, which is characterized by extreme opportunism."[78]

Against these charges the League retorts that "it is a social service organization attempting to perform a helpful task in a limited field."[79] Indeed:

> . . . the League could not be considered as a Negro movement, but an organization of American citizens who are convinced that an important development in our democratic institutions is that of according to the large Negro minority in America their economic rights. . . .
>
> The League is truly an interracial movement and cooperatively interracial at that. It would be expected, therefore, that the League should advocate conciliation in its highest sense. Any movement of this character which advocates understanding through conference and discussion must necessarily refrain from advocating mass action of one race calculated to force the other group to make concessions.[80]

The dispute has come to center about the League's attitude toward trade unionism. The National Urban League stated long ago that its official policy is in favor of collective bargaining and against strike-breaking, provided the unions are kept open to Negro workers.[81] There have been some incidents in which the League is alleged to have condoned strike-breaking.[82] More important is the general accusation that the League has not wholeheartedly worked to integrate Negro workers into the labor movement.[83]

I have found: (1) that almost everywhere the functionaries of the local Leagues are definitely in favor of trade unionism; (2) that in many cities, particularly in the South, local opinion—as represented by the Community Chests and the boards of the Leagues—hinders them from taking the action they would like to take to integrate Negro workers into labor unions; (3) that in still more cities, including many Northern cities, the unions do not take a very responsive attitude but are even more difficult to court than

[a] See Part IV, especially Chapter 12.

are local employers; (4) that a League which might organize actual strike-breaking against a union open to Negroes—if it has ever occurred—is now out of the question everywhere; (5) that such an action, even against a union that openly discriminates against Negroes, is extremely unlikely in most cities and is not likely to occur except as a last resort. Generally speaking, *local Urban Leagues change with the community, and, in most cities, change as much in advance of the community as is possible while maintaining community good-will and financial support for their program.* Much the same is true about the National Urban League. As the trade union movement and collective bargaining are gradually becoming normal and appreciated factors in American society, the Urban League is increasingly holding the lead as a pro-union force working among the Negro people.

This does not mean that it is likely that the League will ever become the agency needed in order to fight the Negroes' way into the labor unions. This should not be turned into a criticism of the League but into positive thinking and action on the part of interested Negro experts and leaders to form such an agency, utilizing the experience, the advice, and the good-will from the League as well as from the N.A.A.C.P. The Negro leaders who see the need for a Negro movement with a broader and more radical economic program should not—from their own point of view—spend their fire in criticizing this useful social service agency, which has been able to solicit so much help from the whites and to soothe so much suffering among the Negro people. They should, instead, appreciate what is obvious to any impartial observer: namely, that this organization, even though its tasks have been lowly, has been able to maintain a fighting spirit. It has been, and is now more than ever, pressing and fighting, intervening and proposing, educating and propagating for ideas and measures which—even from the point of view of its critics—are headed in the right direction even though they are not drastic enough in their opinion.[a] Again we observe that the critics of the Negro organizations are making the tactical blunder of assum-

[a] After reading this section, E. Franklin Frazier writes (letter, September 2, 1942):

"Although you have shown why the Urban League has not reached Negro workers as some critics have charged, I still feel that this is a defect in their program which is not attributable solely to lack of resources but rather to the general outlook of the leaders. I agree with you that much educational work must be done to secure the cooperation of Negro workers. In fact education of the upper layer of the Negro working class should have been and is still an important function of the Urban League. But still I feel that their general outlook and the class position of its leaders have been responsible to a large extent for their failure to carry on such an educational program. For example, I recall that in one city where they attempted to organize a Workers' Council they invited only professional people and neglected the more intelligent and more articulate members of the working class. As I was invited to the meetings I pointed out this defect but still the leaders insisted upon getting the professional class or educated people. I do not think that the Workers' Councils which the Urban League has formed have had much influence upon the Negro working class."

ing as self-evident that there should be only one unified Negro movement.[84]

11. THE COMMISSION ON INTERRACIAL COOPERATION[a]

The Commission on Interracial Cooperation, or the Interracial Commission, as it is commonly known, like the N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League, is not a Negro movement proper but a joint effort by whites and Negroes.[b] While the two former organizations have a national scope and their central offices are in New York, the Interracial Commission works in the South only and has its center in Atlanta, which is also the headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan and the capital of Georgia, one of the most backward states in the Union.

This is indicative of much. The N.A.A.C.P. as a militant protest organization needs to work in an atmosphere where it can speak and act freely. The Urban League as a social service institution for unadjusted Negroes in industrial cities needs to be near the main concentrations of urban Negroes as well as near the chief centers of white philanthropy. But the Interracial Commission has set itself the much more difficult task of *working from within* to improve race relations in the region they are worst. The other two organizations can be "national." The Interracial Commission needs to be recognized as "Southern." It can receive grants from Northern philanthropy, which is an established Southern pattern, but, in order not to have its work appear as "outside meddling," the Commission must have its seat in the South, its leaders and officers must be Southerners, and they must lay stress on regional pride and patriotism.

There are more differences which should be understood in the same light. In the other two organizations, Negroes played an important role almost from the start and soon took over almost the entire political work. They gradually became predominantly Negro organizations. The Interracial Commission, on the other hand, has been much more exclusively the out-

[a] In our analysis of the interracial movement we choose to concentrate on the Commission for Interracial Cooperation and its local affiliates. It should not be inferred that we underestimate the other agencies for interracial work even if we do not give any specific account of them. Much of what we have to say on the Atlanta Commission has bearing on some of the other agencies as well. Other agencies like the Commission on Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the Interracial Departments of the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. have different purposes, methods and sponsorship. (For analyses of these agencies, see Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 498 ff., and Paul E. Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 24 ff.)

[b] The following short analysis of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation is based upon the writer's own observations and upon Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 444 ff., Paul E. Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 17 ff., various publications of the Commission, information given by Howard W. Odum, Will W. Alexander, R. B. Eleazer. Jessie Daniel Ames, Emily H. Clay of the Commission, and Arthur F. Raper, formerly the Research Secretary of the Commission.

come of white people's activity. The Commission can employ Negro field workers, but it cannot, without endangering its good-will, have a single Negro employee working in its office.[85] The N.A.A.C.P. tries, at least, to get mass support and the Urban League works, of course, mostly with poor Negroes. The Interracial Commission, on the contrary, has had to direct its main effort on "the best elements of the two races." The two other organizations are, in a measure, opportunistic, as must be all minority organizations for concerted action. The Interracial Commission has to go much further in compromise in its practical work. These differences are all explained by differences in the tasks approached and the political conditions under which the organizations are working. No one who has read earlier parts of this inquiry will lightheartedly turn them into criticism against the Southern interracial movement.

Like Southern liberalism itself,[a] of which the interacial movement is an operative part, the attempt to bring representatives of the two groups together in constructive efforts to improve race relations in the South has a long history. Thomas Nelson Page wrote in 1904:

> A possible step in reaching the solution of the question might be for a reasonably limited number of representative Southern men to meet in conference a reasonable number of those colored men of the South who are more familiar with actual conditions there, and thus are representative of the most enlightened and experienced portion of that race. These, in a spirit of kindness and of justice, might confer together and try to find some common ground on which both shall stand, and formulate some common measures as to which both sides shall agree and which both shall advocate.[86]

Booker T. Washington and his white supporters in the South had the same vision. It is related that after the Atlanta riot in 1906, Washington boarded the first train for the city and interested the leading white people in conferring with a limited number of prominent Negroes in the local community.[87] Ray Stannard Baker said that "this was the first important occasion in the South upon which an attempt was made to get the two races together for any serious consideration of their differences."[88] There had, however, previously been some conferences on Southern education sponsored by Northern philanthropists. Too, many churches and other religious institutions had earlier sponsored interracial work, and they are still active in it.

Nevertheless, the Commission on Interracial Cooperation represented a new and courageous start. It was organized in 1919 as an effort to meet the great uncertainty and strain in the relations between whites and Negroes after the First World War.[89] The leading spirit of the movement and, later, the director of the work was W. W. Alexander. The purpose of the new organization was:

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 5.

> . . . to quench, if possible, the fires of racial antagonism which were flaming at that time with such deadly menace in all sections of the country.[90]

Local interracial committees were started, and a series of ten-day schools for whites and Negroes, respectively, were held for the purpose of training leaders of both races to promote the interracial work. The schools concentrated upon community readjustment and care for the returning troops.[91] Started for the purpose of meeting a temporary emergency, the Commission's work was so successful and was deemed so important that it was decided to transform it into a permanent institution.

In the beginning the Commission sought to build up a network of local interracial committees. At one time there were state committees in every Southern state and local committees in more than eight hundred counties. A staff of salaried officers organized and directed great numbers of volunteer workers. During this early period a main emphasis in the Commission's program was placed on the correction of specific wrongs in the local communities. During the 'thirties the Commission encountered financial difficulties in keeping up its field staff. There was also some disappointment over the work in the local branches. The emphasis was then shifted to the educational approach and to the work of the Atlanta office. In 1938 only three of the Southern state commissions were even formally functioning.[92] At that time the Commission changed policy and started again to reorganize and revitalize state and local committees.[93] This reorganization work is still going on.

The center of the activity is the Atlanta office, which employs three white officers and four white office workers. The Executive Director is Will W. Alexander, and the Associate Director is C. H. Tobias; Alexander is white, Tobias is a Negro. Neither of these is actively engaged in the actual work of the Commission at the present time. The President is a prominent Southern white liberal, Howard W. Odum. The work is directed by a main governing Commission of 104 whites and 53 Negroes, representing the whole South.[a] The Commission meets annually. Abstaining from laying down any fixed constitution,[94] the main Commission and the Atlanta office carry on their own activity and assist in steering the activity of the state and local committees.[95] The Commission works on a yearly budget of around $70,000.[96] It is estimated that approximately 85 per cent of the financial support of the Commission comes from foundation grants.[97]

The Commission on Interracial Cooperation is the organization of Southern liberalism in its activity on the Negro issue. In its publications it demands a fair opportunity for the Negro as a breadwinner; equal participation in government welfare programs; equal justice under the law; suf-

[a] "Although the membership is composed of more white people than Negroes, our meetings are usually attended by a larger number of Negroes." (Emily H. Clay in letter, August 24, 1942.)

frage and other civil liberties. It does not attack segregation but stands up against discrimination.[a] The South is far from having achieved the Commission's aims, and the liberal forces of the region are weak. The Commission is, therefore, compelled to adopt in practice a gradualistic approach. "Sometimes asking for *all* you want is the best way to get nothing." R. B. Eleazer, the Educational Director of the Commission, has explained these tactics in the following words:

> The philosophy of the movement is not that of "seeking to solve the race problem," but simply that of taking the next practical step in the direction of interracial justice and good will.[98]

The chief political means of approaching the goal set up by the Commission are conciliation, moral persuasion and education. Its practical task is formulated as the attempt to promote:

> . . . the creation of a better spirit, the correction of grievances, and the promotion of interracial understanding and sympathy.[b]

[a] "The Commission has taken positive and public stands in its monthly paper *The Southern Frontier*, in its county forums, and at annual state conventions, on questions involving political and economic equality and extension of equal participation in all social and public welfare benefits. These include elimination of the white primary, abolition of the poll tax as a qualification for voting, Negro policemen, equal pay for equal work, including equalization of teachers' salaries, equal training in skilled and semi-skilled work, opening of tax-supported hospitals to Negro doctors, and equal provision of recreational centers for Negroes. Legislatively, the Commission, in cooperation with state committees, has worked to secure appropriations for graduate and professional training for Negroes and for the creation of training schools for Negro girls; in fact, the Commission's program, through its state and local committees, has included every field of public service supported wholly or in part with tax funds." (Memorandum by Jessie Daniel Ames, August, 1940.)

[b] *A Practical Approach to the Race Problem*, pamphlet issued by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (1939); cited by Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 456.

The difference in tactics between the Commission and other organizations such as the N.A.A.C.P., as viewed by the Commission itself, is expressed in a recent report from the Commission's Negro field secretary, Dr. C. H. Bynum, communicated to me by Emily H. Clay (in a letter of August 24, 1942). Bynum says:

"In my opinion there is no fundamental difference in the programs of the Commission and other more vocal groups. The differences are in the approaches to the problem of race relations. We break down the general objective and others use the general compounded objective. We consolidate gains; others attempt 'blitz splits in the lines.' We use educational agencies; others seek greater concentration of governmental control. We balance permanent gains against probable imposed ruptures; others fight for violent ruptures predicated upon revolutionary changes.

"My personal predictions are without value, but history indicates that we may suffer heartbreaking reversals in race relations when peace comes. Southern culture patterns may bend, but they will not break. Who knows what will be the outcome of continued 'invasion of states rights'? No pessimist am I, but I prefer the surety of acceptance to the resentment of imposition. Acceptance may become a part of the general culture; imposition will

In this spirit the Commission has sponsored and carried out important researches on various phases of the Negro problem, such as cotton tenancy and lynching.[a] It publishes monthly *The Southern Frontier*[b] and a great number of pamphlets and educational material. It tries to influence the white press to give more favorable publicity to Negroes and to suppress such material as is likely to inflame white opinion. For this purpose it maintains a press service which goes to both the white and the Negro press. The Commission arranges interracial meetings for students and churchgoers. The Commission carries its message to conventions, conferences, and synods, and through the church press. The Commission has encouraged the introduction of courses on race relations in hundreds of colleges and high schools throughout the South. It has succeeded in getting pledges from 750 college professors, representing 400 white colleges of the South, to give rational discussions of race relations and of Negro capacity and achievement.[99] It attempts to influence strategic persons in state and local governments to give the Negroes more consideration. Sometimes the Commission enters legal redress work in selected cases which have broader applications. The Commission has thus recently, by following a peonage case to the Supreme Court, succeeded in getting Georgia's labor contract law pronounced unconstitutional,[100] and is at present carrying another case to the Supreme Court involving a young Negro accused of rape, whose guilt is very doubtful.[101]

From the beginning a main interest of the Commission was that of stamping out lynching. It has carried its attack through all the publicity agencies which could be used and especially directed it to women, officers of the law and of the courts, and to the church. In 1931 the Commission organized the *Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching*, headed by Jessie Daniel Ames, the Director of Field Work in the Atlanta Office. This organization has succeeded in aligning more than 40,000 women, who nave pledged themselves to take certain active steps to help eliminate this blight on the South. Besides the prevention of lynching, the educational activity of the Commission covers health protection, sanitation, housing, relief, tenancy, agricultural adjustment, resettlement, and so on. The Commission has been active in securing Negro representation on boards and committees on government programs.

The Commission has a large share in the achievement of the dramatic

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engender smoldering feelings which may at any hour leap into a blazing flame of madness."

[a] "The Commission's research program was abandoned in 1939 and no research work has been carried on since that time, a large number of our members being of the opinion that the greater results could be obtained by directing our efforts to activities in the field." (Memorandum by Emily H. Clay, August, 1942.)

[b] The circulation of *The Southern Frontier*, which began in January, 1940, has now reached 2,300. (Emily H. Clay, letter, August 24, 1942.)

decrease in lynching, and generally, in the greater enforcement of law in the South during the last two decades. The Commission was able largely to nullify the influence of the fascistic Black Shirt movement that grew up during the 1930's to eliminate Negroes from all jobs while there was any unemployment of whites. Few other organizations could have made the effective appeal to Southern whites which the situation called for. The Commission's surveys—for instance, of the tenancy problem—have been of great importance in the national discussion and for national policy. The work of the Farm Security Administration,[a] which for a long period was headed by W. W. Alexander, the Director of the Commission, is much in line with the efforts of the Commission and has set in effect many plans propagated and partly prepared by the Commission. The Commission has had its important part in the development of a friendlier attitude toward the Negro on the part of the white press in the South. The local interracial committees have also gotten much for the Negroes:

> . . . scores of Negroes have been extended legal aid in cases in which they were subjected to persecution, intimidation or exploitation; sewers, street paving, water, lights, library facilities, rest rooms, and other civic advantages, such as parks, playgrounds, pools and other recreation facilities, have been obtained for Negro communities; community chests have been induced to include Negro welfare agencies in their budgets; day nurseries and social centers have been conducted, and the appointment of colored probation officers has been secured.[102]

The fact that in most of these and other respects the Negro is still discriminated against in the South should not be allowed to conceal the fact that many small changes here and there have occurred, due to the activity of the interracial movement.

The Commission has not escaped criticism from conservative Southerners. The President of the Commission, Howard W. Odum, tells us:

> It [the Commission] has been investigated by the Ku Klux and by the Talmadge regime, and many efforts have been made "to get it." In recent years I have had very critical letters from some of the "best" people protesting against the radical viewpoint which the Commission has taken within the last few years.[103]

But, as we have pointed out earlier in this inquiry, one of the most important accomplishments of the Commission—which has a far-reaching cumulative effect—*is to have rendered interracial work socially respectable in the conservative South.* Liberal white Southerners, on their part, have usually backed the Commission. Whites in the North, outside the philanthropists, seldom know or care much about this work.

Negroes, on the other hand, tend to be critical of the Commission—even the older and more conservative Negro leaders. Few Negroes in the South have wholeheartedly praised its work. Several of the Negroes who have

[a] See Chapter 12, Section 12.

taken part in the local interracial committees or in the Atlanta Commission have privately made acid comments on the interracial movement. They complain that the white participants are not sincere enough, and that there is too much of the old paternalism in the whole approach. The Commission is frequently called a "face saving" device, a "gesture organization." But these observations were made in the years 1938-1939, when the activity in the local committees was at a low ebb and when the activity also of the main Commission was not as vigorous as earlier. The revitalization which the Commission has since gone through may have changed the attitudes of conservative Negro leaders.

By the younger Negro intellectuals the Commission is condemned for the "naïve assumption that when the two races know and understand each other better, the principal incidents of the race problem will then disappear."[104] The Commission is accused of having a "defeatist attitude, since it accepts the existing racial patterns while asking favors and exceptions with them."[a] The Commission is criticized for using "influence" instead of "pressure." They point out that the Commission does not reach, and has not even attempted to reach, the lower classes of whites and Negroes between whom the friction is most acute.[105]

This criticism seems too strong. It overlooks the power situation in the South. A movement which sets out to change public opinion and social institutions in the South and which wants to reap some fruit in the near future must make opportunism its tactical principle. It must develop an indirect approach instead of a direct attack. And it is no "naive assumption" that ignorance fortifies race prejudice, injustice and discrimination in the South. Education and cooperation will, therefore, have their effects even if they are slow to develop liberal political power which can force great reforms. The Commission *is* a useful agency. This, of course, should not exclude other and more radical efforts at the same time. Also it does not exclude a criticism that the Commission could work more effectively. But its

[a] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4, pp. 557 ff.

"In the very nature of race relations in this country, the white members of the interracial groups must take upon themselves the responsibility for fixing the measures of values in inter-group relationships. It is not merely a question of *how much* the Negro is to ask for or to expect, but also *how* he is to ask for it, or indeed, whether he should *ask* for it at all, since it may often be more 'strategic' to permit his sympathetic white friends to act on his behalf. It is the whites alone who are in a position to advise the Negro that it is better for him to ask for little and to anticipate something than to ask for too much and gain nothing. It is the white, also, who can lean on realism and inform the Negro that if he goes before responsible officials in the community and demands or asks for benefits, his appeals are apt to be ignored. Whereas, if his white friends appear in his behalf, he has a better chance to receive the favor. That this half-a-loaf approach of the interracialist has won local benefits of various kinds for Negroes in particular communities is not denied; but this is no storming of the bastions of racial prejudice nor does it even aim toward them." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 559-560.)

main tactics must be condoned. These tactics *are* radical in the South, and among white people they can secure the backing of only the small group of Southern liberals.

If this is agreed, the question remains, however, whether the Commission could not be made into a more efficient organ for Southern liberalism. While liberalism generally has been on the advance, the interracial movement seems to have been losing out during the 'thirties. The Commission has not fulfilled the promises it once gave. The South has been changing[a] and there have been many new possibilities which the movement has not utilized. When the writer traveled in the South in 1938-1939 and observed the great needs and weak efforts, he felt strongly that there was room for more courage and vision in the work of the Commission. *The respectability the Commission has built up for interracial work in the South is a form of capital, but as such it is of no use at all if it is not invested, and even risked, in new ventures.* What is called for is, indeed, something of the spirit of the young W. W. Alexander when he first led the movement and before he was drawn into other important activities—that spirit, expanded and adjusted to the new situation. The post-war crisis in the South will not be minor. Already there are signs of unusual restlessness among both whites and Negroes in the South. A revitalized Interracial Commission will be much needed.

From this viewpoint the reestablishment of state and local committees, which has been started, seems to be an important move in the right direction. So as to be more influential in the political development of the region, *a broader appeal must be attempted, in order to reach directly even the middle and lower classes of whites.* Until recently the Commission has been working mainly with the "intelligent leadership" of the South and it admits that "the mass mind is still largely untouched."[106] The reservation should be made, however, that through the press, the churches, and the schools the Commission has already been influencing even the "mass mind." The new labor unions offer an opportunity for far-reaching work with the industrial workers.

The efforts to tie larger groups of the Southern people to the Commission's work are important also in order to *lay a firmer financial basis for its work.* It is demoralizing for the South to rely nearly exclusively on Northern philanthropy. The movement is working for interests which are vital for the future of the South. The liberals in the region should be made to feel that they are accomplishing something by their own sacrifices. There are people in the South with substantial incomes, and, while it is true that most of them are conservative and inclined to look upon any sort of activity in the field of race with apprehension, some are liberal and might be made to see their responsibility. But even apart from such gifts, ordinary people

[a] See Chapter 21, Section 4.

with moderate means can afford to pay membership dues.[107] If the Commission could raise its budget, this would greatly increase the possibilities of building up local organizations and of intensifying its work in all directions.

The present War and the peace crisis to follow it will severely test the whole work of the Commission. It is attempting to meet this test by increased activity.

12. THE NEGRO ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE WAR

A War fought in the name of "the four freedoms" is a great opportunity for Negro organizations. The exclusion of Negroes from defense jobs, the limited opportunities and maltreatment of Negro soldiers, the restrictions in the Army and Navy, bring home to every Negro individual the cause for which the Negro organizations are fighting.

In the First World War, Du Bois, then the leader of the N.A.A.C.P., wrote his famous article in *The Crisis,* "Close the Ranks," in which he virtually postponed the settlement of Negro grievances until the end of the War:

> We of the colored race have no ordinary interest in the outcome. That which the German power represents spells death to the aspirations of Negroes and all dark races for equality, freedom, and democracy. Let us not hesitate. *Let us, while the war lasts, forget our special grievances and close ranks shoulder to shoulder with our white fellow-citizens and the allied nations that are fighting for democracy.* We make no ordinary sacrifice, but we make it gladly and willingly with our eyes lifted to the hills.[108]

With few exceptions, Negro leaders in the Second World War have taken a different stand. They stress, of course, the loyalty of the Negro, but they do it more to inflate racial pride and to lay a basis for the accusations against the dominant whites who do not allow the Negro to make his full contribution to the war effort. They keep on emphasizing that Negro morale is low because of injustices and humiliations. They demand full civic, political and economic equality more strongly than ever. Walter White, in a statement issued a few days after the Pearl Harbor catastrophe, is typical of this Negro policy:

> Memories of all Negroes except those of the very young are bitter-green regarding the last World War. . . . I urge [Negroes] to remember that the declarations of war do not lessen the obligation to preserve and extend civil liberties here while the fight is being made to restore freedom from dictatorship abroad. . . .
>
> We Negroes are faced with a Hobson's choice. But there *is* a choice. If Hitler wins, every single right we now possess and for which we have struggled here in America for three centuries will be instantaneously wiped out by Hitler triumphs. If the Allies win, we shall at least have the right to continue fighting for a share of democracy for ourselves.[109]

For the Negro organizations, the War has provided more issues of immediate importance to attack. The organizations have increased in importance to the Negro people. Membership rolls have increased, particularly for the N.A.A.C.P. A new impetus to organizational cooperation has set in. Churches and fraternal organizations have increasingly been drawn into this cooperation. National conferences of organizational leaders are held from time to time, sometimes on governmental initiative, but usually without it. The N.A.A.C.P. has, on the whole, been in the lead in this activity.[a]

One of the most interesting effects of the War is the emergence of a new Negro organization: *The March-on-Washington Committee.* A. Philip Randolph, head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, in January, 1941, invited to a conference representatives of most of the Negro organizations. He proposed that a committee be formed to organize a march on the nation's capital to express the Negro protest against discrimination and to impress on the Administration the necessity of doing something about it. The Committee was formed, and preparation for the March made, when, on the initiative of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, conferences were held between the President and members of the Administration, on the one hand, and members of the Committee, on the other hand.[110] The President issued an Executive Order intended to abolish all discrimination (on account of race, color, creed, or national origin) in employment in defense industries and government agencies, and appointed the Committee on Fair Employment Practice to implement his order.[b] Randolph, on his side, called off the March for the time being.

The March-on-Washington Committee, which, of course, gained a tremendous prestige among Negroes on account of its conspicuous success, did not dissolve. It did not even relinquish its idea of a March. The March-on-Washington movement remains a popular organization in many parts of the country. It is headed by a committee of national Negro leaders and has the backing of the major Negro organizations. It also has local affiliates. Its chief way of reaching the people is through mass meetings. The movement restricts its membership to Negroes. Randolph gives the reason for this:

> Just as the Jews have the Zionist Movement fighting on their specific problems; the workers have trade unions dealing with their specific problems; women have their movements handling their special problems, so the Negro needs an all-Negro movement to fight to solve his specific problems. . . . Nor does this all-Negro movement idea imply that interracial movements are not necessary, valuable and sound.

[a] At a conference, in January, 1942, of National Organizations on Problems of Negroes in a World at War, the N.A.A.C.P. was accepted as the clearing house for a number of committees appointed to make recommendations on various problems.

[b] See Chapter 19, Section 3.

It means that interracial movements need to be supplemented by specific religious groups of Jews and Catholics and Protestants. For no Negro is secure from intolerance and race prejudice so long as one Jew is a victim of anti-semitism or a Catholic is victimized as Governor Alfred E. Smith was by religious bigotry during the Presidential campaign against Herbert Hoover, or a trade unionist is harassed by a tory open-shopper.[111]

The March-on-Washington movement is interesting for several reasons. It is, on the one hand, something of a mass movement with the main backing from Negro workers, but has at the same time the backing of the established Negro organizations. Though a mass movement, it is disciplined and has not used racial emotionalism as an appeal. It demonstrates the strategy and tactics of orderly trade unionism. For the Negro cause it is prepared to use pressure even against the President. But it knows just how far it can go with the support that it has. Randolph, the leader of the movement, has so far (August, 1942) steered its course with admirable force and restraint.

The outside observer may be allowed to express the opinion that the Negro strategy during the war crisis has been skillful. The Negro leaders know full well that they have immense possibilities of putting pressure upon the American nation during this War for democracy. The plight of the Negro people is so great that they cannot afford not to make use of these possibilities. But they are wise enough to adjust the tactics to the terrain in various issues and regions of the country, and are careful not to lose the sympathy of the liberal forces among the whites. I have the feeling that, during the struggle for Negro rights, the Negro organizations—principally the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League, and the trade unions—have trained a small group of devoted and accomplished politicians much superior to the average run of white politicians. It is a great pity, and a loss to the public life of the American nation, that these Negro leaders are limited to the Negro struggle alone and cannot get an outlet for their ability in tasks of more general importance.

13. NEGRO STRATEGY

Certain general observations and conclusions on Negro strategy should now be brought together. Before we do this, the value premises, which have been applied in the foregoing sections, should be made explicit. They are only an adaptation of the valuations contained in the American Creed which have been defined in the introductions to Parts III to VIII of this book. We are assuming that:

1. It is neither practical nor desirable for American citizens of Negro descent to be deported from this country. The problem is how to adjust race relations in America.

2. All concerted action by, or on behalf of, American Negroes should

be judged by the criterion of its efficacy in contributing to the ultimate extermination of caste in America. *The interests of the Negro people in winning unabridged citizenship in American society are taken for granted in the American Creed.* We are further assuming, as an evident matter of fact, that the power situation is such in America that Negroes can never hope to break down the caste wall except with the assistance of white people. Indeed, the actual power situation makes it *an obvious Negro interest and, consequently, a general American interest to engage as many white groups as possible as allies in the struggle against caste.*

It is a peculiar trait of much of the discussion of Negro concerted action in America that it usually proceeds upon the assumption that one unified Negro movement is the desideratum.[112] This assumption is unrealistic and impractical for several reasons. For one thing, a unified Negro movement would not appeal to the Negro masses except by an emotional, race-chauvinistic protest appeal. Such a movement, even if it were staged differently from the Garvey movement, would probably estrange the greater part not only of the Negro intellectuals, but also of the rest of the Negro upper class. It would definitely estrange practically all white groups. By this we do not mean that the racial appeal should not be used at all. It has to be used, but with caution. Still less do we mean that the Negro masses should not be appealed to. They should, but by movements with specific and limited practical aims. If, because of these reservations, the Negro masses are not reached within the near future to the same extent as would be possible in a race-chauvinistic, unified Negro movement, that is a price which will have to be paid.

When we look over the field of Negro protest and betterment organizations, we find that *only when Negroes have collaborated with whites have organizations been built up which have had any strength and which have been able to do something practical.* Except for the March-on-Washington movement—which has a temporary and limited purpose and which, in addition, is backed by the regular organizations—all purely Negro organizations have been disappointments. There are several explanations for this. One is that Negroes on the whole are poor. The completely Negro organizations have usually not had the sort of financial backing which has been available to interracial organizations. Another explanation is the lack of political culture in the traditions of the Negro people, because they have been subdued for generations. Political culture is one of the last accomplishments of any civilization, and there is not too much of it in this great and heterogeneous country as a whole, particularly on the state and municipal levels where Negroes have most of their political contacts. A third explanation is the existence of the interracial organizations. They have naturally drawn to themselves much of the individual talent for political leadership in the Negro people. A fourth, and basic, explanation is the obvious fact in

the power situation, that it is advantageous and, indeed, necessary to have white allies in order to accomplish anything.

Leaving aside the interpretation of the history of concerted action for Negro interests and facing the problem as a question of political strategy, it will be apparent that *both the interest in keeping as allies as many white groups as possible and the interest in maintaining a high effectiveness in the work being done, speak for having, not one Negro organization, but a whole set of organizations specializing on different tasks and applying a different degree of opportunism or radicalism.* This means that none of the existing organizations should be criticized by applying the norm of an imaginary unified Negro movement, which would be expected to do *all* that the critics want done for the Negroes.

There is thus need for a militant organization like the N.A.A.C.P. to uphold the great Abolitionist tradition, taking its stand on the American Constitution and fighting for equality in justice and for suffrage, keeping alive the unabridged ideals of the American Creed, but having enough opportunism to take advantage of the possibilities of even minor improvements within the segregated setup if that can be done without violating the grand strategy aimed at exterminating segregation in the future. Such an organization will always have its influential white adherents. There is also need for a social service organization like the Urban League, doing its work among the victims of caste, educating and protecting Negroes, and exerting its pressure against the dominant white society from the welfare point of view. In America there will always be white supporters for such work, and they will be drawn from wider circles than the liberals of Abolitionist traditions who will come out for the N.A.A.C.P. In addition, there is in the South a pressing need for an interracial movement—indeed a need for a much more efficient agency than the present Commission on Interracial Cooperation—to exploit regional pride and the will to interracial understanding among white Southerners. Everything churches and other groups can do to increase the number of white people in the South and the North who are willing to do something for Negroes is a clear gain for the Negro cause.

There is little "overlapping" or "duplication" among the various existing Negro organizations. In so far as there is duplication, it is useful. It means that different white groups are being engaged for the same ultimate end who could not agree as to the immediate ends. Another important observation is that *there is actually little friction and rivalry among the three main organizations.* The N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League have been able, most of the time, to work out both a division of responsibility and—in certain respects—a collaboration. Even in relation to the Interracial Commission, there has been surprisingly little rivalry and destructive competition.

Instead of unification there seems to be *need for further specialization.* It is a pressing need that concerted action be taken to integrate Negro workers into the labor movement.[a] It is a task of educating white and Negro workers and of fighting those labor organizations that discriminate against Negroes. This work cannot very well be done by any of the existing organizations without their becoming less efficient in the tasks they now perform and without their becoming weakened by losing some of their present white—and Negro—support. The Negro labor movement, which we thus propose, should also be interracial in order to be optimally strong and efficient. The chief difficulty in the way of its realization at present is the split in the American labor movement. Negro workers as a national group cannot afford to cast their entire lot in with the C.I.O., the A.F. of L., or with the John L. Lewis insurgents. Meanwhile, the local and occupational centers of a Negro labor movement that already exist are outposts, the importance of which should not be underestimated, nor should the services rendered for these groups by the N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League.

Negroes also need an agency to carry on—locally and nationally—a political collective bargaining with the political parties.[b] This organization is the most difficult one to effectuate, since—unlike the others—it should preferably be a pure Negro organization. In order to work effectively it should be narrowly specialized to play the political game. It should, further, be manned by the most intelligent, the freest and the most respected Negro leaders. It should not be affiliated with any of the political parties. The National Negro Congress, in its short history, has shown how this task should not be approached.

There is also need for a legal aid agency concentrating its work on improving the law enforcement of the South. The N.A.A.C.P. cannot function as such. To the degree that it does, this weakens it by drawing too heavily on its financial and personnel resources. Such an agency should preferably *not* be set up separately for Negroes, but should be an agency to defend the rights of all poor and disadvantaged people.[c] It should not assist in the prosecution of strategic cases only, but of all cases where there has been injustice and illegality.[d]

Some of the wisest Negro thinkers have understood that the Negro

[a] See Chapter 18, Section 3; Chapter 38, Sections 6 and 7. Similar proposals are made by Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, *The Black Workers and the New Unions* (1939), especially pp. 425-434; and W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 207.

[b] See Chapter 23, Sections 1 and 2.

[c] See Chapter 26, Section 4.

[d] The Civil Liberties Union does this sort of work, but its activity is not concentrated in the South and it restricts its work to defense of civil liberties rather than to all legal aid. The Union has some political ideals, which restrict its ability to get money. The organization we propose should be completely nonpolitical.

movement should split on several fronts and that it should make the most of possible allies among the whites. Kelly Miller has this to say:

> The progress of all peoples is marked by alterations of combat and contention on the one hand, and compromise and concession on the other, and progress is the result of the play and counterplay of these forces. Colored men should have a larger tolerance for the widest latitude of opinion and method. Too frequently what passes as "an irrepressible conflict" is merely difference in point of view.[113]

James Weldon Johnson wrote:

> We should establish and cultivate friendly interracial relations whenever we can do so without loss of self-respect. I do not put this on the grounds of brotherly love or any of the other humanitarian shibboleths; I put it squarely on the grounds of necessity and common sense. Here we are, caught in a trap of circumstances, a minority in the midst of a majority numbering a hundred and ten millions; and we have got to escape from the trap, and escape depends largely on our ability to command and win the fair will, at least, and the good will, if possible, of that great majority. . . .
>
> It seems to me that the present stage of our situation requires diversified leadership. I am certain that there are two elements which are necessary. We need an element of radicalism and an element of conservatism; radicalism to keep us from becoming satisfied and conservatism to give us balance; to the end that the main body will be steady, but alive, alert, and progressive. We should guard against being stagnant, on the one hand, or wild-eyed on the other.[114]

Negroes should attempt to develop that type of political culture which is ideal in any democratic nation. There must be radicals, liberals and conservatives. Viewed as a going system of collective action all three factions and many others have their "functions" in the concert. The intelligent citizen should be able to see this. It is required of him, of course, to take his own stand and to fight by his individual opinion, but, nevertheless, to be able, not only to "see the viewpoint of the other fellow," but actually to understand and appreciate his "function" in the system. When this mutual understanding is reached in a nation—which is a high stage of political culture—the radical or the conservative will find that it does not decrease in the least his efficiency in fighting for his own opinions. On the contrary, he can strike harder and better—at the same time as he becomes a little more careful about where he hits.

An American Negro should, in the same way, select the front where he wants to take his stand. But he should keep his eyes wide open to the desirability that other Negroes have other stands. The Negro labor organizer should be grateful that there are others who fight for his civil liberties and still others who do the welfare work for his potential members. The militant Negro should be able to see the usefulness—in some situations—of some Negro leaders who understand how to do the "pussy-footing," and contrariwise. The present writer has found many individual Negro leaders, most of them active in the organizations discussed in this chapter, who see

this fundamental principle of democratic politics more clearly than is common among white Americans discussing national politics.

The fact that Negroes will have to seek a maximum number of white allies should not, however, be a reason for neglecting the organization of the masses of Negroes. All efforts of their own are required for the Negroes' advancement. A. Philip Randolph, speaking vainly to the National Negro Congress when it went down, rightly observed:

> The only rational conclusion, then, seems to be that the Negro and the other darker races must look to themselves for freedom. Salvation for a race, nation, or class, must come from within. Freedom is never granted; it is won. Justice is never given, it is exacted. Freedom and justice must be struggled for by the oppressed of all lands and races, and the struggle must be continuous, for freedom is never a final fact, but a continuing evolving process to higher and higher levels of human, social, economic, political and religious relationships.[115]

By this Randolph did not mean isolation in a black movement:

> But Negroes must not fight for their liberation alone. They must join sound, broad, liberal, social movements that seek to preserve American democracy and advance the cause of social and religious freedom.[116]

A word must be added on the moral aspect of Negro leadership. To the outside observer, one of the most discouraging facts in present-day America is the great indifference shown by the average white citizen toward corruption in politics, particularly in the states and municipalities where Negro concerted action will have to do most of its work. In the shut-in Negro world, there are, as we have observed,[a] so many special reasons for cynicism and amorality that dishonest leadership—except on the national level—is not unusual.

To the Negro people dishonest leadership is a most important cause of weakness in concerted action. It should be preached against and fought against. It should be a main topic in the teaching at Negro universities, in the Negro journals, in Negro adult education. If a generation of young Negroes could be brought up to understand how scrupulous honesty could tremendously strengthen the Negro cause—and, incidentally, in the long run advance them individually much more than the petty handouts by which they are now tempted—this would mean a great deal for Negro progress.

[a] See Chapter 36.

CHAPTER 40

THE NEGRO CHURCH

1. Nonpolitical Agencies for Negro Concerted Action

The primary functions of the Negro church, school, and press, which will be dealt with in this and the following two chapters, are not, of course, to be agencies of power for the Negro caste. Nevertheless, they are of importance to the power relations within the Negro community and between Negroes and whites. They bring Negroes together for a common cause. They train them for concerted action. They provide an organized followership for Negro leaders. In these institutions, theories of accommodation and protest become formulated and spread. These institutions sometimes take action themselves in the power field, attempting to improve the Negro's lot or voicing the Negro protest. Even more often they provide the means by which Negro leaders and organizations, which are more directly concerned with power problems, can reach the Negro people.

The Negro churches and the press are manned exclusively by Negroes. They are not interracial institutions as are the successful Negro protest and improvement organizations we analyzed in the preceding chapter. The school—when it is a "Negro school," that is, when it is segregated—is also almost always Negro-staffed, except for a few colleges. None of these organizations is, however, outside the control of the whites. The Negro press is the freest among these Negro agencies; the Negro school is the most tightly controlled. But *in all these institutions Negroes are among themselves.* They are usually away from the presence of whites, and this creates a feeling of freedom, in smaller matters even if not in major policies.

The very existence of these Negro institutions is, of course, due to caste. Without caste there would be no need in America for a specialized Negro press, for segregated schools or for separate churches. Under the caste system they all take on a defensive function for the Negroes, and sometimes they take on an offensive function. Generally speaking, the Negro press is, in this sense, more radical than the other nonpolitical agencies. Besides its primary function of replacing the old "grapevine telegraph" in the protective Negro community and of providing Negro news, it is one of the chief organs for the Negro protest. The other agencies are generally

more accommodating. We have already expressed our conviction that all these agencies, however, in the long run tend to build up the Negro protest.[a]

Our treatment of these nonpolitical Negro institutions will be restricted mainly by the viewpoint of power and power relations followed throughout this part of our inquiry, and even in this respect it will not be so intensive as their importance warrants. The religious, educational, and cultural aspects of their activity will be almost entirely neglected. Some further considerations as to their role in the Negro community and as to what they indicate of Negro culture will be given in the next part of the book.

2. SOME HISTORICAL NOTES[b]

With few exceptions the Negro slaves brought to America had not been converted to Christianity.[1] For nearly a century many slaveholders felt reluctant to let the Negro slaves receive religious instruction as there was a belief that a baptized Christian could not be held as a slave. But when theologians, legislatures, and courts declared, around the year 1700, that conversion to Christianity was not incompatible with the worldly status of a slave, slaveholders went out of their way to provide a religious teaching and a place of worship for their slaves, or at least did nothing to hinder missionary work among them. Their primary motive undoubtedly was that the Christian religion, as it was expounded, suited their interests in keeping the slaves humble, meek and obedient. But the Christian duty to spread the gospel was probably also taken seriously, perhaps particularly so in order to compensate for many other deprivations to which the Negroes were subjected.

On many plantations the slaves were allowed to attend the same churches as did the whites, being seated sometimes in a gallery especially provided, sometimes in a separate section of the main floor. The service was then nearly always conducted by a white minister. But there were also Negro ministers, usually attending to the religious needs of only their own people, and separate worship soon became common. After the rebellion in 1831 led by Nat Turner, a Negro preacher, the fear of slave revolts and uprisings made masters endeavor to check the separate religious meetings of their slaves. But there was no complete stoppage of religion among Negroes. The idea of free worship and the advantages of having a slave work off his frustration in religion were too strong. Slaves were allowed into most white churches and could even meet by themselves if a white minister led them or if any white man observed them. Practically the only religious

[a] See Chapter 35.

[b] Most of the factual data for this section have been taken from Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, "The Church and the Race Problem in the United States," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 1.

meetings completely free of whites, however, were secret ones. Free Negroes, of course, continued to have their own churches, but a strong effort was made to separate them completely from the slaves. Some whites felt that only white ministers should be allowed to preach to Negroes, but on the whole, as long as the Negro preacher kept to the subjects of God and the other-world, and as long as he implanted a spirit of obedience to the existing order and the white master, there was little attempt to replace him. Undoubtedly the great bulk of the Southern Negro preachers advocated complete acceptance of slave status.

Still, the church service was one of the few occasions when slaves were allowed to congregate, when they could feel a spiritual union with other Negroes, when they could feel that they were equal to the white man—in the eyes of God—and when they could see one of their own number, the preacher, rise above the dead level of slavehood and even occasionally be admired by white people. The slaves on a plantation could regard the Negro preacher as their leader—one who could go to the white master and beg for trivial favors.

In the North, the few Negro churches before the Civil War served much the same functions as they do today. Many of them—like some white churches—were "stations" in the "underground railroad," at which an escaping slave could get means either to become established in the North or to go to Canada. The Northern Negro church was also a center of Negro Abolitionist activities. The slavery issue in national politics of these times actually gave the Negro church in the North as great an interest and stake in worldly affairs as it has today.

At the time of Emancipation probably only a minority of the Negro slaves were nominal Christians.[a] At the end of the Civil War, there was, on the one hand, an almost complete and permanent expulsion of Negroes from the white churches of the South and, on the other hand, a general movement among the Negroes themselves to build up their own denominations. This period witnessed another wave of conversion to Christianity of the Negroes and the firm establishment of the independent Negro church. Southern Negro religious leaders were helped much by white and Negro missionaries from the North. Observing the church situation in the 'seventies, Sir George Campbell gives the following picture of this religious activity:

> Every man and woman likes to be himself or herself an active member of the Church. And though their preachers are in a great degree their leaders, these preachers are chosen by the people from the people, under a system for the most part congregational, and are rather preachers because they are leaders than leaders because they are preachers. In this matter of religion the negroes have utterly eman-

[a] ". . . only one adult in six was a nominal Christian." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro* [1915], p. 227.)

cipated themselves from all white guidance—they have their own churches and their own preachers, all coloured men—and the share they take in the self-government of their churches really is a very important education. The preachers to our eyes may seem peculiar. American orators somewhat exaggerate and emphasize our style, and the black preachers somewhat exaggerate the American style; but on the whole I felt considerably edified by them. They come to the point in a way that is refreshing after some sermons that one has heard.[2]

Many Negro political leaders during Reconstruction were recruited from the preachers. After Reconstruction many of them returned to the pulpit. Under the pressure of political reaction, the Negro church in the South came to have much the same role as it did before the Civil War. Negro frustration was sublimated into emotionalism, and Negro hopes were fixed on the after-world. Negro preachers even cautioned their flocks to obey all the caste rules. But there was a new factor, which increased the possibility of the Negro church to serve as a power agency for Negroes; the white preachers and the white observer in the Negro church disappeared. There remained, however, the Negro stool pigeon who reported to the whites on the activities of Negroes in church and elsewhere.

In practically all rural areas, and in many of the urban ones, the preacher stood out as the acknowledged local leader of the Negroes. His function became to transmit the whites' wishes to the Negroes and to beg the whites for favors for his people. He became—in our terminology—the typical accommodating Negro leader.[a] To this degree the Negro church perpetuated the traditions of slavery.

In the actual power situation after Restoration of white supremacy, this was a realistic and, in a sense, necessary policy. If it becomes known that a Negro preacher in the South criticizes the caste system—except in very general terms—he is usually threatened and may be punished physically or exiled. His church is also in danger. If, on the other hand, he keeps in the good graces of the influential whites, he can reckon with their backing and support. To get money for his church and other advantages for himself and his group, the Negro preacher has to emphasize the patriarchal relationship—pointing out how "good" the Negro church is; that is, how the church keeps Negroes from going against the caste system.[3] Negro sermons in the South no longer contain any appeal to accept a slave status. They even seldom contain, directly at least, admonitions to accept caste subordination. But this advice is implied when the Negroes' attention is turned away from worldly ills.

The Negro church came to serve a vital role linked intimately with the status of the race. The doctrine of otherworldliness provided an essential escape from the tedium and tribulations, first of slavery and later of economic serfdom. . . . The

[a] See Chapter 34.

indifference of the Negro church to current social issues and its emphasis on the values of a future life lent indirect but vital support to the race patterns of the early post-slavery period.[4]

Accepting this role, the Negro church in the South has earned considerable good-will among the whites. Church and religion have a tremendous moral prestige in America, and the Negro church shares—on a lower level—in this appreciation. The white Southerner of today will often praise the Negroes for their "old time religion." Negroes are assumed to be endowed with particularly strong religious feelings. Religion is assumed to be a force for good in all respects and, particularly, for race relations. It is also taken for granted that the Negroes should be left a considerable freedom to develop their religious life as they want to, without interference. The Negro churches are, therefore, not closely controlled. The Negro preacher is trusted.

Thus the Negro church in the South did not become an institution that led the opposition to the caste system. Yet as an institution that received the sanction of Southern whites, the Negro church was able in some cases to modify the harshness of the system, and it has helped to maintain the solidarity of Negroes in their cautious pressure to ameliorate their position. In many cases, the churches helped to support schools, and education was one of the main ways that Negroes, individually and collectively, could rise in the world.

In the North the Negro church has, of course, remained far more independent. The ministers have been free to preach what they please without fearing intervention from the whites.[a] They have taken stands in local politics and in labor strife—though perhaps, more often than not, serving white benefactors primarily instead of the Negro cause. In not a few cases the Negro church became a center for social work in the Negro community.

[a] In more recent times there have developed some very minor sects which are openly anti-white, but since they take no overt action other than to prohibit whites from attending their services, few whites even know of their existence. Notable among the anti-white sects are the various "Islamic" cults. They claim to adhere to Mohammedanism instead of Christianity and look to the brown peoples of Asia Minor and North Africa to save them from the whites. One of these cults in Chicago, known as the Moors, is not only a religious group but an economic unit and a harem as well. Some 200 Negroes, mostly women, live together in a few ramshackle buildings in the Near North Side slum area.

Another anti-white group, the African Orthodox Church, is of somewhat greater numerical importance and has branches in many cities, but it has mollified its anti-white position somewhat in recent years. This church stemmed from the Garvey movement of the early 1920's (see Chapter 35, Section 7) and has affiliated itself with the Greek Orthodox Church. Its anti-white position was that of the whole Garvey movement, but recently it has permitted whites to attend service, although it still prohibits whites from becoming church leaders and emphasizes "segregated but equal." (J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], pp. 288-290.)

Some ministers have taken the lead in expressing to the world the Negroes' needs and protest.[a] But on the whole even the Northern Negro church has remained a conservative institution with its interests directed upon other-worldly matters and has largely ignored the practical problems of the Negroes' fate in this world.[b]

3. THE NEGRO CHURCH AND THE GENERAL AMERICAN PATTERN OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY

To the outsider the main observation about Negro churches and Negro religious life is that they adhere so closely to the common American pattern. There are differences, and they are important; but more important are the similarities. Again we shall see how the caste system forces the Negro to become an "exaggerated American."

Americans generally are a religious people; Southerners are more religious than the rest of the nation, and the Negroes, perhaps, still a little more religious than the white Southerners. Negroes, on the whole, attend church probably in greater numbers than do whites although not in greater numbers than certain white groups like the Catholics. Among Negroes, as among whites, females attend more than males, the middle-aged and old attend more than the youth, the uneducated attend more than the educated, the lower and middle classes more than the upper classes.[5]

Particularly significant among these differentials is that between youth and age, since the tendency for Negro youth to abandon the church is perhaps even greater than among most white youth, with the exception of the Jews. This is explainable not only because of the general trend caused by increasing education and sophistication, but also by the very "backwardness" of the Negro church manifested in its emotionalism and puritanism. Still, as in white America, church membership confers respectability, and when young people marry and want to settle down, they are likely to join a church—though often one somewhat less attached to emotionalism and puritanism than the one attended by their parents. There is a trend toward a more intellectual and formal church service in the Negro as in the white

[a] An outstanding case is that of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in the Harlem section of New York City. It had 8,000 members in 1939, which made it by far the largest Negro church in the city. It claims many more thousands today. The young, popular, and ambitious minister, Rev. A. Clayton Powell, has not only taken a lead in sponsoring community welfare work, but has helped the workers' side in several strikes, has succeeded in getting jobs for Negroes, and has become a publisher of a Negro newspaper and a member of the New York City Council.

In Chicago, to take another exceptional case, the Good Shepherd Church sponsors a community center, which is directed by a Negro sociologist, Horace Cayton, and which ranks among the best of its kind. In several other instances upper class and educated Negroes have focused their efforts to improve the Negro community upon the large urban churches.

[b] See Section 5 of this chapter, especially the study by Mays and Nicholson cited there.

community. The difference is mainly that Negroes—together with some poor, isolated groups of whites—are lagging about half a century behind.[a]

Today it is probable that a greater proportion of Negroes than of whites belong to churches as formal church members. According to the United States Census of Religious Bodies, which is very inaccurate but has the best data available for the country as a whole, Negro churches claimed 5,660,618 members in 1936 and white churches 50,146,748.[6] Even if we make all the assumptions that work in the direction of under-enumerating Negro church membership, the Negroes still have a larger membership: 44.0 per cent of the Negro population are members of Negro churches, as compared to 42.4 per cent of the white population in white churches.[7] Actually the discrepancy is much greater, since we have neglected the significant number of Negroes who are members of white churches. The census overlooks many of the small denominations to which Negroes adhere more than whites; we have not subtracted Orientals and Indians from church figures but have done so for our population base; we have ignored the fact that whites belong, in greater proportion, to those churches that count membership from birth rather than from confirmation (for example, the Roman Catholic Church); we have neglected the fact that the Jewish churches report as members all persons living in communities in which local congregations are situated.

America as a whole is still predominantly Protestant in spite of the "new" immigration; Southern whites and Negroes are even more Protestant. In American Protestantism various low church denominations with less formalized ritual have always been predominant. The great majority of Negroes belong to the Baptist and Methodist churches or to small sects which have branched out from them, and the ritual of these churches tends to have little elaborateness or formality.[b] As in the white American population,

[a] See Chapter 43, Section 3.

[b] The only comprehensive statistics of religious affiliation for the United States are those of the Census of *Religious Bodies, 1936*. (U. S. Bureau of the Census [1941].) This census reports that the various Negro Baptist bodies claimed 68.80 per cent of all members of Negro churches and the Methodist bodies 24.65 per cent. Next in size, according to this report, was the Roman Catholic Church with 2.43 per cent. The Protestant Episcopal Church, the Congregational churches, the Presbyterian churches, the Lutheran Church, and the Christian Science Church together claimed only 1.30 per cent. All the rest of the churches reported only 2.83 per cent of the church membership. Obviously there is something seriously wrong with these figures: many of the smaller sects are missing altogether; the African Orthodox Church certainly has more than 1,952 members, and the Holiness Church has more than 7,379 members. (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 850-853.)

We guess that the actual percentage distribution of membership in Negro churches would show the Baptist proportion smaller, the Catholic proportion larger and the miscellaneous group's proportion larger. It should be remembered that the census figures refer to Negro churches only and do not include Negro members of white churches. According to *The Negro Handbook* there were 298,998 Negro Catholics in the United

among the Negroes the small upper class tends, more than the lower classes, to belong to the Episcopalian, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches.[a] Protestant religion in America has always had relatively more emotionalism than in other countries: revival meetings and evangelists have played a greater role, and the regular church services have exhibited more emotional traits. The South is somewhat extreme in this respect, too, and the Negroes

TABLE 1

NEGRO MEMBERSHIP IN HARLEM CHURCHES BY DENOMINATION: 1930

Denomination	Number	Per Cent
Baptist	27,948	41
Methodist	13,740	20
Protestant Episcopal	7,151	11
Roman Catholic[a]	4,990	7
Presbyterian	1,805	3
Adventist	1,000	2
Congregationalist	950	1
Moravian and Lutheran	900	1
Other	9,139	14
Total	67,623	100

Source: The Greater New York Federation of Churches, *The Negro Churches in Manhattan* (1930), pp. 17–18.

[a] Includes 5 churches having both Negro and white parishioners.

still more so.[b] As in the white population there is a class differential as well as a geographical one in regard to degree of emotionalism in religious service. Upper and middle class Negroes are likely to frown upon the old practices which still prevail in the lower classes.

States as of January 1, 1940. It was estimated that about one-third of them were in mixed churches. The 1936 Census of Religious Bodies reported only 137,684 Catholics in Negro churches. (Florence Murray [editor], *The Negro Handbook* [1942], p. 102; these figures were taken from John Thomas Gillard, *Colored Catholics in the United States* [1941].)

[a] The geographical distribution of Negro denominations is fairly even, on the whole, but there are significant exceptions that must be noted. In the South, Negroes have roughly the same denominational distribution as lower and middle class whites: they are mainly Baptist or Methodist with a concentration of Roman Catholic in southern Louisiana. In the North there is a much greater diversity: not only have Negroes gone into the established churches dominant in the North—the Episcopalian, Catholic, Presbyterian—but have started scores of new sects. Table 1 shows the distribution of Negro church membership in the Harlem section of New York City in 1930. Since 1930 we may guess that the Episcopal, Catholic and "Other" churches—"Other" being predominantly the new Negro sects but also some of the white-dominated churches such as the Christian Science Church—have increased their membership, partly at the expense of the Baptist and Methodist churches. The Father Divine Peace Mission has developed since 1932—mainly in New York but also in other Northern and Western cities—and it symbolizes the rapid growth of new Negro sects.

[b] See Chapter 43, Section 3.

In other respects than its emotionalism, the Negro church is quite like any lower class white Protestant church. Negro churches have made no innovations in theology or in the general character of the church service.[8] Some of the Negro cults—notably the one led by Father Divine—are exceptions, but for a long time there have been similar phenomena in the white world. The visitor to an average Negro church will see much the same type of service—with choir singing, hymns by the congregation, organ music (in the larger churches), prayer, sermon, collection—and hear the same theological terms that he does in the average white Protestant church. Except for a slight slant in the direction of "race,"[9] there is nothing in the formal content of the sermon to indicate that the church is a Negro church.

God and the angels are ordinarily white to Negroes, as they are to white churchgoers.[10] There is spiritual singing in Negro churches—especially in the rural Southern and the smaller Northern churches—and the spirituals *are* different from anything that can be found in the white churches.[a] But the ordinary hymns of the various Protestant churches are also in common use. The appeals used by the preacher, his way of handling his voice and the movements of his body, and the responses given by the audience in Negro churches also are different, but less so if the comparison is made with lower class white churches in isolated regions. Negro churches have, in addition to regular services, Sunday schools and various voluntary associations, and they provide some entertainment[11] and engage in an amount of educational and missionary work, just as most white churches do.

Americans are divided into a great number of denominations. In addition, each denomination often has several churches even in fairly small-sized communities. For these reasons individual congregations are, on the average, small in America. The split into miniature congregations is driven nearly to its limit in the Negro world.[b] With a relatively small congrega-

[a] See Chapter 44, Section 5.

[b] According to statistics, the 1936 Census of Religious Bodies (*Religious Bodies: 1936*, pp. 86, 850-851), the number of members per church were:

	Total churches	Urban	Rural
Negro	148	219	109
Non-Negro	311	616	139

Since the census figures on churches are usually not very accurate, we may cite three sample studies on the number of members in the average Negro church.

In 185 rural churches studied by Mays and Nicholson (Benjamin E. Mays and J. W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* [1933], p. 15), the average membership was 145 persons, of whom 50 per cent were actually contributing to the support of the churches. Compared to these figures, 609 urban churches had an average membership of 586 persons, of whom 43 per cent were contributing financial support. But in considering the size of the urban church, a sharp division must be made between the churches with edifices or halls and the "storefront" or residence churches.

In Harlem, for example, out of 163 Negro churches, 122 were meeting in residences or stores in 1930. These 122 churches claimed a total membership of 14,913, or 122 apiece

tion, and with no support from public funds, the individual minister in America is dependent on his church membership. The soliciting of contributions thus becomes an important part of the life of an American church. In the Negro church the collection of money becomes of pathetic importance, and a good portion of the time during an average church service is taken up by it.

For the same reasons the American church becomes forcefully stimulated to make itself as indispensable as possible to the people, and it undertakes many functions of a social nature in order to "sell" itself to the public. The church in the segregated Negro ghetto tends to take on even more functions of a nonreligious type than does the white church.

> The church has been, and continues to be, the outstanding social institution in the Negro community. It has a far wider function than to bring spiritual inspiration to its communicants. Among rural Negroes the church is still the only institution which provides an effective organization of the group, an approved and tolerated place for social activities, a forum for expression on many issues, an outlet for emotional repressions, and a plan for social living. It is a complex institution meeting a wide variety of needs.[12]

The Negro church was, from the beginning, the logical center for community life. It is thus much more than a place of worship.

> It is a social center, it is a club, it is an arena for the exercise of one's capabilities and powers, a world in which one may achieve self-realization and preferment. Of course, a church means something of the same sort to all groups; but with the Negro all those attributes are magnified because of the fact that they are so curtailed for him in the world at large. . . . Aside from any spiritual benefits derived, going to church means being dressed in one's best clothes, forgetting for the time about work, having the chance to acquit oneself with credit before one's fellows, and having the opportunity of meeting, talking and laughing with friends and of casting an appraising and approving eye upon the opposite sex. Going to church is an outlet for the Negro's religious emotions; but not the least reason why he is willing to support so many churches is that they furnish so many agreeable activities and so much real enjoyment. He is willing to support them because he has not yet, and will not have until there is far greater economic and intellectual development and social organization, any other agencies that can fill their place.[13]

The stronger dependence of the church and the minister on the active church members involves, of course, a fundamental democratization of organized religious life in America. American churches have had to come

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on the average, and this was probably an over-statement. The other 41 churches had regular edifices or halls and claimed 51,220 members, or 1,250 apiece on the average. (See The Greater New York Federation of Churches, *The Negro Churches in Manhattan* [1930], pp. 11 and 17.)

In Chicago, a more careful study of 266 storefront churches in 1938 showed that they averaged only about 30 members apiece. (Drake, *op. cit.*, pp. 308-309.)

down to the people. In a veritable struggle for life they have had to go into competition with all other demands on peoples' money and time—and into competition with each other. Occasionally this is dangerous for the minister's integrity. He has to be a diplomat and a businessman and may have to compromise his ideals. The Negro churches are forced in the same direction as are white churches, but much more so.

In one particular respect the great split into denominations and individual congregations in America is anti-democratic in its results. It makes for a greater manifestation of social class distinction than there would be if most people belonged to the same state-supported church.[14] Belonging to one church or another serves in America as a means of class identification, just like membership in clubs. Even in this respect Negroes conform to the American pattern, but they exaggerate it slightly as high social status is rarer and respectability more precious in the lower caste.

4. A Segregated Church

Both the strength and the weakness of the Negro church as a power agency for the Negro people is related to the facts that the Negro church is a segregated church and that there is astonishingly little interracial cooperation between white and Negro churches. In both respects the South is extreme, but the situation in the North is not very different.

This virtual isolation between institutionalized religious life in the two castes is somewhat more easily explainable when we remember that churches in America have come to have significance for the social class the individual church member belongs to or aspires to belong to. Nevertheless, church segregation is a great moral dilemma to many earnest Christians among the whites. Embree explains to us:

> Segregation in Christian churches is an embarrassment. In a religion whose central teaching is brotherly love and the golden rule, preachers have to do a great deal of rationalizing as they expound their own gospel.[15]

Among Negroes all over the country this point is constantly made to prove the insincerity of white people.

Southern whites usually succeed in keeping the Christian challenge of religious brotherhood off their minds. The observer feels that the very incompatibility between the uncompromising Christian creed, on the one hand, and the actual caste relations, on the other hand, is a reason why white ministers in the South keep so aloof from the race problem and why the white church in the South has generally played so inconsequential a part in changing race relations. It is also a reason why the white minister has been closely watched by his congregation so that he does not start to draw practical conclusions from Christian doctrine that would favor the improvement of race relations. Bailey complained a generation ago:

> Even in religion does the black blight of unfreedom appear. . . . Let a preacher in a Southern pulpit begin to plead for the negroes, and he at once endangers his popularity if not his support. Preachers do thus plead, on occasion, and are generously called "courageous" by some of their friends. Why should a minister of the church be "courageous" when he reminds his parishioners of the fundamental principle of Christianity, the priceless value of every human soul? And yet I should personally advise nine out of ten clergymen to leave this negro question severely alone. . . . If a special student of the negro question must submit to being called "brave" because he gently insinuates that, according to Christianity, negroes have immortal souls and that Christ died for those souls, although he has prefaced his remarks with a stiff statement of his adhesion to "Southern" principles, is it surprising that the people should want their ministers to keep clear of a subject which they ordinarily have not studied? On the other hand, I have heard esteemed and godly ministers make heartless remarks about negroes, remarks so cruelly harsh and unsympathetic that they aroused my indignation that alleged ambassadors of the Most High should speak so slightingly of any of God's children. . . . When men *must* use certain thought molds in politics, and *must* fear the effects of disturbing a bristling racial orthodoxy, it is natural that they should not be free in religion.[16]

The visitor to the South today finds Bailey's analysis of the moral dilemma of Southern ministers and church people still to the point. Things have changed, it is true, but not much. There are today more white ministers who dare to take an interest in their Negro neighbors, but the great majority of them keep astonishingly aloof—so much so that Moton could observe: "As a class, white ministers appear to have fewer contacts with Negroes than any group of their race."[17] Meetings of religious denominations for larger districts have acquired, under the influence of the interracial movement, the custom of "going on record" against lynching and for improved race relations. But the effects of this in the *local* community, where the minister faces the congregation which pays his salary, is usually slight.

As far as casual observations give a basis of judgment, sermons in Southern white churches are more "theological," less concerned with the citizen's daily problems, than in the North.[18] The average Southern white man, for natural reasons, can only be grateful not to have his stand on race relations exposed to the teachings of Christianity. It is commonly observed that the fundamentalism of the region is not unrelated to the moral difficulty of holding to Southern traditions in dealing with Negroes at the same time as being a Christian. Southern white church people have spent millions for foreign missions as against very small amounts for home mission work among their poor Negro neighbors.[19]

The moral situation is not altogether different in the North. It is true that the Northern whites since the Civil War have been generously supporting missionary work among Negroes in the South and denominational Negro schools and colleges. This is actually one of the great educational deeds of modern times. It is also true that many white churches in the

North have a few Negro members, and that they rarely would turn away Negro visitors who came to a service. But usually they cannot afford to let the Negro membership grow too large. Baker observed that he "found strange things in Boston": some Episcopal churches had had increased Negro attendance, and this created a serious problem. A prominent white church leader explained the matter to him in the following words:

> What *shall* we do with these Negroes! I for one would like to have them stay. I believe it is in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, but the proportion is growing so large that white people are drifting away from us. Strangers avoid us. Our organization is expensive to keep up and the Negroes are able to contribute very little in proportion to their numbers. Think about it yourself: What shall we do? If we allow the Negroes to attend freely it means that eventually all the white people will leave and we shall have a Negro church whether we want it or not.[20]

Similar situations and attitudes can be observed today everywhere in Northern cities with a heavy Negro population.

If this moral problem of organized American Christianity has not become more conspicuous and troublesome for white people's conscience, the explanation is that probably most Negroes—the caste situation being what it is—prefer to worship in Negro churches, even if they are against church segregation in principle. In the South they have no other choice anyway, and the question is not very practical. Even in the North Negroes usually feel more comfortable by themselves. And Negro preachers have a vested interest in segregated churches. It can be observed that Negro preachers suspect many of the projects looking toward interracial cooperation in church activities as attempts to deprive them of influence. They feel, often with some justification, that interracial religious activity would mean having white men as church leaders for Negroes but not Negroes as church leaders for whites.[21] Negro preachers have resented it when white denominations have sent white missionaries to convert Negroes.[22]

We find also that the white-dominated churches, which have been trying to keep their doors more open to Negroes and have sometimes made special efforts to convert Negroes, have not been too successful. The Roman Catholic Church belongs to this group. Although the Catholic Church can claim a greater proportion of Northern Negroes today than fifteen years ago, the proportion of all Northern Negroes with religious affiliations who were members of Catholic churches is probably still below 5 per cent.[23] On the whole, the Roman Catholic Church prefers to have Negroes attend all-Negro churches, on the basis of residential segregation and of attempts to dissuade them from attending white churches.[a]

[a] Gillard estimates that in 1940 about one-third of the Negro Catholics in the United States were in mixed churches. (Cited in *The Negro Handbook*, p. 102.)

In the South, especially in southern Louisiana where the French and Creole traditions are dominant, the Roman Catholic Church is the only one where Negroes are allowed

Of the Protestant churches, the Congregationalists and Quaker churches have probably been most nearly equalitarian,[24] but they have made little headway among Negroes. The Episcopalian and Christian Science churches have in the North much the same policy toward Negroes as does the Roman Catholic Church. A small but increasing proportion of upper and middle class Negroes have joined these churches and have some contact with the upper class whites who dominate them.[a]

The great majority of white churches, in the North as well as in the South, thus do not want to have a substantial Negro membership. The great majority of Negroes do not seem to want to join white churches, even if they are allowed. As usual the caste separation has been fortified by its own effects.

There is also astonishingly little interracial cooperation between the white and Negro churches of the same denomination. In the South there is practically no contact at all between Negroes and whites for religious pur-

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to attend white churches. But even here, the dominant tendency is to keep Negroes in their own churches, to prevent Negroes from joining in interchurch Catholic meetings or celebrations, and to provide a separate set of white priests—who seldom mingle with the other priests—for the Negroes. (See Allison Davis, "The Negro Church and Associations in the Lower South," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 15, *passim*.) The Catholic Negro churches have—with rare exceptions—white priests. According to Gillard, there were only 23 Negro priests in the Roman Catholic Church in 1941, and 6 of these were on foreign missions. (Cited in *The Negro Handbook*, pp. 102-103.)

[a] The Holiness Church, while predominantly white, has occasionally bi-racial congregations. It has not been attracting many new members lately.

The small Bahai Church is in America dominated by upper class Northern whites who have an explicit policy in favor of interracialism and internationalism. A small number of upper class Negroes have joined. It is the only white-dominated church in which there may be said to be absolutely no segregation or discrimination.

Similar to the Bahai Church in its principle against any form of racial discrimination, but quite different in that it is Negro-dominated and in that it is patterned after the emotional lower class type of Negro church, is the Father Divine Peace Mission movement. Estimates of the total membership of this bizarre sect, which has attracted members in significant numbers only since 1932, range up to 2 million (John Hoshor, *God in a Rolls Royce* [1936], p. xi), but there is good reason to believe that it was less than 15,000 in 1940 (Edward Nelson Palmer, "Father Divine Peace Mission," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Appendix C of Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 6.) Over half the members are concentrated in New York City, and practically all the rest are in other Northern and Western cities; there are practically no adherents in the South. Most estimates have it that about 10 per cent of the members are white (*idem*), and one of the strongest injunctions of the sect is against recognition of color differences. The relation between the members is particularly intimate since they are enjoined to trade at "peace" stores and many of the members live together in the several "Heavens" which Father Divine has established in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. While racial differences are not to be noticed, it must, of course, be important to his followers that God in the person of Father Divine, is a Negro.

poses,[a] except for some outcast white who can occasionally be seen attending Negro churches, the formal and restricted interracial work between ministers which is sometimes arranged for[b] and the white man who attends a Negro church for amusement or study. In the North there are more interracial contacts[c] but not enough to modify the basic fact of church separation. What little there is probably tends to improve race relations, to bring the Negro church closer to white norms of religious behavior, and to get money from the whites for the Negro church.[25]

5. ITS WEAKNESS

The Negro church is the oldest and—in membership—by far the strongest of all Negro organizations. Like the lodges, burial societies, and the great number of social clubs, the Negro church by its very existence involves a certain power consolidation. Meetings of the church officials in a denomination and church papers—read at least by most of the ministers—provide for an ideological cohesion, not only in religious matters but, to an extent, also in the common race interests. It also has some significance when, for instance, it is pointed out about Mr. Mordecai Johnson, the

[a] The Catholic Church in the region around New Orleans is an exception (see footnote a few pages back). Also, in the South occasionally a white preacher will visit a Negro Spiritualist Church to conduct a service (Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 20.)

[b] Once a year some Southern churches participate in "Interracial Sunday" sponsored by the Commission on Race Relations of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. Negro singers appear in white churches, occasionally a leading Negro will make a speech, and the white minister will devote his sermon to race relations. (Paul E. Baker, *Negro-White Adjustment* [1934], pp. 226-228.)

[c] The following five points of interracial contact in the North are taken, with slight modifications, from Drake, *op. cit.*, p. 221. Drake made his summary on the basis of interviews with Negro pastors and other church officials in Chicago. The description is fairly representative for all large Northern cities:

1. There is occasionally an exchange of pulpits or choirs between Negro and white ministers on "Interracial Sunday" and a few other ceremonial occasions. In 1940, there were 45 exchanges in Chicago on Interracial Sunday. Only Negroes from large, well-established churches participate, and the white ministers are usually from small churches.
2. Young people's groups have "interracial programs," "good will activities," and so on. These are infrequent and informal except among the Congregationalists and Catholics (the Catholic Youth Organizations are particularly significant).
3. Where Negro churches belong to predominantly white denominations, there are the usual conferences, and similar meetings (especially in Holiness, Congregational, Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches).
4. Infrequent visits are made by white persons to Negro churches for special programs, money-raising events, or for political purposes.
5. Visits occur by both Negro and white persons to "unorthodox" or exotic churches. It might be said that only the curious and the maladjusted go (especially Holiness, Spiritualist and the smaller sects).

President of Howard University, that he is a Baptist minister and has the backing of the Negro Baptist world.

Potentially, the Negro church is undoubtedly a power institution. It has the Negro masses organized and, if the church bodies decided to do so, they could line up the Negroes behind a program. Actually, the Negro church is, on the whole, passive in the field of intercaste power relations. It generally provides meeting halls and encourages church members to attend when other organizations want to influence the Negroes. But viewed as an instrument of collective action to improve the Negroes' position in American society, the church has been relatively inefficient and uninfluential. In the South it has not taken a lead in attacking the caste system or even in bringing about minor reforms; in the North it has only occasionally been a strong force for social action.

This might be deemed deplorable, but it should not be surprising. Christian churches generally have, for the most part, conformed to the power situation of the time and the locality. They have favored a passive acceptance of one's worldly condition and, indeed, have seen their main function in providing escape and consolation to the sufferers. If there is any relation at all between the interest of a Negro church in social issues and the social status of its membership, the relation is that a church tends to be the more other-worldly the poorer its members are and the more they are in need of concerted efforts to improve their lot in this life. The churches where the poor white people in the South worship are similar to the common Negro churches.[26]

Even in this respect the Negro church is an ordinary American church with certain traits exaggerated because of caste. Of 100 sermons delivered in urban Negro churches and analyzed by Mays and Nicholson, only 26 touched upon practical problems.[a] The rural Negro church makes an even poorer showing in this respect.[b] Too, the Negro church is out of touch with

[a] Fifty-four others were classified as dealing with "other-worldly" topics, and the remaining 20 were doctrinal or theological. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 59 and 70.) Mays and Nicholson also reported, as have other students of the Negro church, that the sermons were characterized by poor logic, poor grammar and pronunciation, and an excessive display of oratorical tricks.

[b] Not only the sermons, but practically all the prayers, spirituals, and Church school literature of the three major Negro denominations support traditional, compensatory patterns, according to Mays. (B. E. Mays, *The Negro's God* [1938], p. 245.) Mays describes these patterns thus: "Though recognizing notable exceptions, they are compensatory and traditional in character because they are neither developed nor interpreted in terms of social rehabilitation. They are conducive to developing in the Negro a complacent, laissez-faire attitude toward life. They support the view that God in His good time and in His own way will bring about the conditions that will lead to the fulfillment of social needs. They encourage Negroes to feel that God will see to it that things work out all right; if not in this world, certainly in the world to come. They make God influential chiefly in the beyond, in preparing a home for the faithful—a home where His suffering servants will be free of the trials and tribulations which beset them on the earth." (*Idem.*)

current social life in the field of morals; the preaching of traditional puritanical morals has little effect on the bulk of the Negro population, and the real moral problems of the people are seldom considered in the church.

Practically all Negro leaders have criticized the Negro church on these points. Booker T. Washington, for example, said:

> From the nature of things, all through slavery it was life in the future world that was emphasized in religious teaching rather than life in this world. In his religious meetings in *ante-bellum* days the Negro was prevented from discussing many points of practical religion which related to this world; and the white minister, who was his spiritual guide, found it more convenient to talk about heaven than earth, so very naturally that today in his religious meeting it is the Negro's feelings which are worked upon mostly, and it is description of the glories of heaven that occupy most of the time of his sermon.[27]

Ignorance, poverty, cultural isolation, and the tradition of dependence are responsible for this situation, in the same way as they are factors keeping Negroes down in other areas of life.

The frequent schisms in Negro churches weaken their institutional strength. New Negro churches and sects seldom begin because of theological divergences, but rather because a preacher wants to get a congregation,[28] because some members of a church feel that the minister is too emotional or not emotional enough, because some members feel that they have little in common with other members of the church, as well as because of outside missionary influences and division.[29] The competition between the preachers is intense and, as we said, most churches are small. There is little collaboration between the churches. Overhead expenses tend to be relatively high in the small church establishments.[30] Since, in addition, the membership of the churches is composed usually of poor people, the economic basis of most churches is precariously weak.[a]

Poverty often makes the Negro church dependent upon white benefactors. It also prevents paying such salaries[b] that ambitious young men could be tempted to educate themselves properly for the ministry.[c] In fact the

[a] Negro churches usually have poor business practices. There is little secretarial help, thus there is poor accounting, and the money is sometimes just given to the minister or to a few church officers to do what they please with it. There is probably a significant amount of misappropriation of funds under this system. (See Mays and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-197 and 259-265, and Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], p. 238.)

[b] Mays and Nicholson (*op. cit.*, p. 189) reported from their 1930 sample study that 69.4 per cent of Negro ministers had an annual income of less than $2,000. The average rural preacher got only $266 per church per year, but often he served several churches or had some other outside source of income. See Chapter 14, Section 5.

[c] According to a sample study by Woodson, ". . . only seven-tenths of one per cent of Negro high school graduates contemplate taking up the ministry, and many of those who have been known to qualify themselves thus do not stay in the ministry." (Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Professional Man and the Community* [1934]. p. 80.)

idea that a preacher should have education for his task is still usually lacking, and the average preacher has not much more of it than do the members of his flock.[31] The chief prerequisite for becoming a minister in most of the denominations to which Negroes belong is traditionally not education, but a "call" which is more often the manifestation of temporary hysteria or opportunistic self-inspiration than of a deep soul-searching. There are many exceptions, of course, and they are becoming somewhat more frequent, but the preachers who come to their profession through a "call" are still numerically significant. Such preachers tend to retain the emotionalism that has traditionally been identified with the Negro's religion.

The ministry was once the chief outlet for Negro ambition. Under slavery, as we have noted, the preacher stood out as the leader and spokesman for his group. After slavery his monopoly of status in the Negro community diminished as business and professional men increased in number.[32] Increasingly status within the Negro caste is being based on education. Since there is little in the way of special attention paid to the Negro minister's education—except for a minority, practically all in the cities—he is rapidly falling in relative status. Upper and middle class Negroes deprecate the common uneducated Negro preacher. Initiative and leadership in matters concerning the Negro community tend to pass to this new upper class of Negro businessmen and professionals. Meanwhile, taking up preaching is still one of the few possibilities of rising for the individual without a professional training.

As a class Negro preachers are losing influence, because they are not changing as fast as the rest of the Negro community. This is now on the verge of becoming a most serious problem, endangering the future of the Negro church. As improvements in education have been rapid in the last decades, the bulk of the old Negro preachers are today below the bulk of younger generation Negroes in education. Young people have begun to look down on the old-fashioned Negro preacher.[33] Lately the problem seems to have become as serious in rural areas as in cities. It is true that city youths are better educated and more sophisticated, but so also are city ministers who occasionally make some attempt to adjust to the needs of youth.[34]

It is difficult to see how the continuing decline of the minister's prestige and leadership can be stopped. Few college students are going into the ministry.[35] The ministry is no longer a profession which attracts the

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Mays reports that there were 253 fewer students enrolled in Negro seminaries in 1939 than in 1924. Including 92 Negro students in Northern white seminaries, there were only 850 Negroes enrolled in all seminaries in 1939, and only 254 of these were college graduates. (Benjamin E. Mays, "The Negro Church in American Life," *Christendom* [Summer, 1940], pp. 389-391.)

brightest and most ambitious young Negroes.[a] The development under way will take a long time to manifest its complete effects. But it goes on and will spell the further decline of the Negro church as an active influence in the Negro community, if it does not begin to reform itself radically.

6. TRENDS AND OUTLOOK

The Negro church has been lagging ideologically, too. While for a long time the protest has been rising in the Negro community, the church has, on the whole, remained conservative and accommodating. Its traditions from slavery help to explain this. Its other-worldly outlook is itself an expression of political fatalism. In a city in the Deep South with a Negro population of 43,000 (Savannah), there are ninety Negro churches, one hundred active preachers and another hundred "jack legs"; here where the Negro ministry with few exceptions had been discouraging a recent movement to get the Negroes registered for voting, a Negro preacher explained:

> All we preachers is supposed to do is to preach the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and Him Crucified, and that's all.[b]

In most Negro communities visited by the present writer the progressive Negro leaders, trying to organize the Negro community for defense, complained about the timidity and disinterest on the part of the preachers. "They talk too much about heaven and too little about down here." Regularly the explanation was given that the churches were mortgaged to influential white people and that the preacher got small handouts from employers and politicians. Without doubt the preacher's old position of the white man's trusted Negro "leader" secures small advantages not only to himself but also to his group—and according to the scheme we analyzed

[a] In the last decade or so, there have been summer institutes established for Negro ministers—such as the one sponsored by the white Southern Methodist Episcopal Church—but relatively few Negroes participate, and even the education thus offered is completely inadequate for lack of time and money.

[b] Ralph J. Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 79-80.

Sterner and I once attended a Sunday evening service in a Negro Baptist church in one of the capitals of the Upper South. The preacher developed the theme that nothing in this world was of any great importance: real estate, automobiles, fine clothes, learnedness, prestige, money, all this is nothing. It is not worth striving for. But an humble, peaceful heart will be remunerated in heaven. After the service we went up to the preacher for a talk. We asked him if he should not instead try to instil more worldly ambition in his poor and disadvantaged group. The preacher began to explain to us, as foreigners, that this would not do at all in the South. The role of the Negro church, he told us, was to make the poor Negroes satisfied with their lowly status. He finished by exclaiming: "We are the policemen of the Negroes. If we did not keep down their ambitions and divert them into religion, there would be upheaval in the South." This preacher is not typical in his philosophy of extreme accommodation or in his intellectual clarity. But it is significant that he exists.

in Chapter 34—it does give him prestige in the Negro community. But as the Negro protest rises, the traditional Negro preacher alienates a growing section of the Negroes from the church.

Care must be taken, however, not to over-state the criticism against the Negro church on this point. In both the North and the South one quite often meets Negro preachers who are active in the work for protest and betterment. Progressive ministers are still exceptions, but their existence might signify a trend. There seems to be less animosity against labor unions among Negro preachers—reflecting the increase in power of the unions referred to in Chapter 38. As the Negro protest is rising, the preacher finds generally that he has to change his appeal to keep his congregation in line.

When discussing the Negro church as it is and as it might come to be, it must never be forgotten that *the Negro church fundamentally is an expression of the Negro community itself.* If the church has been other-worldly in outlook and indulged in emotional ecstasy, it is primarily because the downtrodden common Negroes have craved religious escape from poverty and other tribulations. If the preachers have been timid and pussy-footing, it is because Negroes in general have condoned such a policy and would have feared radical leaders. The rivalry and factionalism, the organizational weakness and economic dependence of the Negro church, the often faltering economic and sexual morals of the preachers and their suspicion of higher education—all this reflects life as it is lived in the subordinate caste of American Negroes.

When the Negro community changes, the church also will change. It is true that the church has not given much of a lead to reforms but has rather lagged when viewed from the advanced positions of Negro youth and Negro intellectuals. But few Christian churches have ever been, whether in America or elsewhere, the spearheads of reform. That this fundamental truth is understood—underneath all bitter criticism—is seen in the fact that Negro intellectuals are much more willing to cooperate with Negro churches than white intellectuals with white churches.[36] The Negro protest and improvement organizations cooperate with all "respectable" Negro churches. The solidarity behind the abstract church institution in the Negro community is simply amazing. The visitor finds everywhere a widespread criticism, but this is focused mainly on the preachers. Few question the church as such, its benevolent influence and its great potentialities.

The Negro church is part of the whole circular process which is moving the American Negroes onward in their struggle against caste. The increasing education of the Negro masses is either making them demand something more of their church than praise of the other-world and emotional catharsis, or causing them to stand aloof from the institutionalized forms of religion. Not only the upper classes of Negroes are now critical of the shouting and noisy religious hysteria in oldtime Negro churches and new

cults, but so are young people in all classes. The issue of emotionalism is still a keen divider but the dividing line now cuts deeper into the Negro community. In many Negro communities perhaps the majority still cling to the old patterns and resent persons—including ministers—who will not participate with them in the display of intense religious feeling. But, according to Mays and Nicholson, even in the rural South the revival meetings are less successful than they used to be, the professional evangelist is beginning to disappear, and the regular sermons attempt to be more thought-provoking.[37]

This is all part of the general process of acculturation. With considerable lag, the Negro clergymen, too, are acquiring a better education, which is reflected in their work. Negro preachers are increasingly in competition with professionals, businessmen, politicians, and labor union officials for local leadership. Competition is compelling them to try to do something positive for the Negro community. The social work programs of the relatively few churches which have them are mainly a development of the last decade or two, and we expect to see the trend continuing, especially in the North. The movement to the North and to the Southern cities also tends to emancipate the Negro preacher from white pressure. The fact that he gets more of his prestige from Negroes than from whites in the North is beneficial to the Negro community. These trends are making the Negro church a more efficient instrument for amelioration of the Negro's position at the same time as they are reducing the relative importance of the church in the Negro community.

CHAPTER 41

THE NEGRO SCHOOL

1. Negro Education as Concerted Action

The trend toward a rising educational level of the Negro population is of tremendous importance for the power relations discussed in this Part of our inquiry. Education means an assimilation of white American culture. It decreases the dissimilarity of the Negroes from other Americans. Since the white culture is permeated by democratic valuations, and since the caste relation is anything but democratic, education is likely to increase dissatisfaction among Negroes. This dissatisfaction strengthens the urge to withdraw from contact with prejudiced whites and causes an intensified isolation between the two groups.[a] Increasing education provides theories and tools for the rising Negro protest against caste status in which Negroes are held. It trains and helps to give an economic livelihood to Negro leaders.

In the Negro community, education is the main factor for the stratification of the Negro people into social classes.[b] The professionals who base their status upon having acquired a higher education form a substantial part of the Negro upper classes. And even in the middle and lower classes, educational levels signify class differences in the Negro community. In addition, education has a symbolic significance in the Negro world: the educated Negro has, in one important respect, become equal to the better class of whites.

These tendencies are most unhampered in the North. There Negroes have practically the entire educational system flung open to them without much discrimination. They are often taught in mixed schools and by white teachers; some of the Negro teachers have white pupils. Little attempt is made to adjust the teaching specifically to the Negroes' existing status and future possibilities. The American Creed permeates instruction, and the Negro as well as the white youths are inculcated with the traditional American virtues of efficiency, thrift and ambition. The American dream of individual success is held out to the Negroes as to other students. But employment opportunities—and, to a lesser extent, some other good things

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 2.
[b] See Chapter 32, Sections 1 and 2.

of life—are so closed to them that severe conflicts in their minds are bound to appear.

Their situation is, however, not entirely unique. Even among the youths from other poor and disadvantaged groups in the North the ideals implanted by the schools do not fit life as they actually experience it.[1] The conflicts are, of course, accentuated in the case of Negroes. Often they become cynical in regard to the official democratic ideals taught by the school. But more fundamentally they will be found to have drunk of them deeply. The American Creed and the American virtues mean much more to Negroes than to whites. They are all turned into the rising Negro protest.

The situation is more complicated in the South. The Negro schools are segregated and the Negro school system is controlled by different groups with different interests and opinions concerning the desirability of preserving or changing the caste status of Negroes. Looked upon as a "movement," Negro education in the South is, like the successful Negro organizations, an interracial endeavor. White liberals in the region and Northern philanthropists have given powerful assistance in building up Negro education in the South. They have thereby taken and kept some of the controls. In the main, however, the control over Negro education has been preserved by other whites representing the political power of the region. The salaried officers of the movement—the college presidents, the school principals, the professors, and the teachers—are now practically all Negroes; in the elementary schools and in the high schools they are exclusively Negroes. With this set-up, it is natural and, indeed, necessary that the Negro school adhere rather closely to the accommodating pattern.[a]

Negro teachers on all levels are dependent on the white community leaders. This dependence is particularly strong in the case of elementary school teachers in rural districts. Their salaries are low, and their security as to tenure almost nothing. They can be used as disseminators of the whites' expectations and demands on the Negro community. But the extreme dependence and poverty of rural Negro school teachers, and the existence of Negroes who are somewhat better off and more independent than they, practically excluded them from having any status of leadership in the Negro community. In so far as their teaching is concerned, they are, however, more independent than it appears. This is solely because the white superintendent and the white school board ordinarily care little about what goes on in the Negro school. There are still counties where the superintendent has never visited the majority of his Negro schools. As long as Negro stool pigeons do not transfer reports that she puts wrong ideas into the children's heads, the rural Negro school teacher is usually ignored.

In cities the situation is different. Negro elementary and high schools

[a] See Chapter 34.

are better; teachers are better trained and better paid. In the Negro community teachers have a higher social status. As individuals they also achieve a measure of independence because they are usually anonymous to the white superintendent and school board. In the cities, the white community as a whole does not follow so closely what happens among the Negroes. The Negro principal in a city school, however, is directly responsible to white officials and watches his teachers more closely than do superintendents of rural schools.

In state colleges the situation is similar, except that the professors have a still higher social status in the Negro community and except that the college tends to become a little closed community of its own, with its own norms, which tends to increase somewhat the independence of the teachers.

In the private colleges there is much more independence from local white opinion within the limits of the campus. A friendly white churchman belonging to the interracial movement recently told the students of Atlanta University, in a commencement address, that the teachers there enjoyed greater academic freedom than their white colleagues at the Georgia state institutions, and this is probably true. The influence exerted by the Northern philanthropists and church bodies who have contributed to the colleges —often exercised through Southern white liberals and interracialists and through outstanding conservative Negro leaders—is, to a great extent, effective as a means of upholding the independence of Negro college presidents and professors.

As conditions are in the South, it is apparent that this influence is indispensable for this purpose. Neither the Negro teachers themselves nor any outside Negro institution could provide a power backing effective enough to keep off local white pressure. This outside white control gives the Negro teachers a considerably greater freedom even to inculcate a protest attitude—if it is cautiously done—than is allowed in publicly supported educational institutions. But it is inherent in the Southern caste situation, and in the traditions of the movement to build up Negro education in the region, that even this control is conservatively directed when compared with Northern standards.

In spite of these controls, strongest at the bottom of the educational system but strong also in the higher institutions, there is no doubt, however, that *the long-range effect of the rising level of education in the Negro people goes in the direction of nourishing and strengthening the Negro protest.* Negro-baiting Senator Vardaman knew this when he said:

> What the North is sending South is not money but dynamite; this education is ruining our Negroes. They're demanding equality.[2]

This would probably hold true of any education, independent of the controls held and the direction given. An increased ability on the part of the

Negroes to understand the printed and spoken word cannot avoid opening up contact for them with the wider world, where equalitarian ideas are prevalent. But in the South there is not much supervision of Negro schools. And as we shall see later, Southern whites have been prohibited by their allegiance to the American Creed from making a perfected helot training out of Negro education.

2. Education in American Thought and Life

Even where the Negro school exists as a separate institution it is, like all other Negro institutions, patterned on the white American school as a model. It is different only for reasons connected with the caste situation. Even in their thinking on education, Negroes are typical, or overtypical, Americans.

As background for our discussion we shall have to remember the role of education in American democratic thought and life.[a] Education has always been the great hope for both individual and society.[b] In the American Creed it has been the main ground upon which "equality of opportunity for the individual" and "free outlet for ability" could be based. Education has also been considered as the best way—and the way most compatible with American individualistic ideals—to improve society.

Research in, and discussion of, education is prolific. In America, pedagogy anticipated by several generations the recent trend to environmentalism in the social sciences[c] and the belief in the changeability of human beings. It gave a basis for the belief in democratic values and expressed the social optimism of American liberalism. The major American contribution to philosophy—the theory of pragmatism—bears visibly the marks of having been developed in a culture where education was awarded this prominent role. And it was in line with American cultural potentialities when John Dewey turned it into a theory of education. No philosopher from another country would be likely to express himself as he did in the following:

> The philosophy of education is one phase of philosophy in general. It may be seriously questioned whether it is not the most important single phase of general

[a] See Chapter 9, Section 3.

[b] To many Americans the great stress on education early in the life of the new nation has become so commonplace that they do not see anything exceptional in it. Wilkerson, for instance, observes that the federal Constitution was silent on the question of education and that so were also many of the earlier state constitutions. (Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro in American Education," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 1, pp. 10-11.) The remarkable thing is, of course, that. on the contrary, some state constitutions in America did touch the question of public education. There were European countries where public education was introduced earlier than in America, or equally early. But nowhere would it have been considered important enough to deserve constitutional sanction.

[c] See Chapters 4 and 6.

philosophy . . . the whole philosophic problem of the origin, nature, and function of knowledge is a live issue in education, not just a problem for exercise of intellectual dialectic gymnastics.[3]

At least since the time of Horace Mann, Americans have been leading in the development of pedagogical thinking. The marriage between philosophy and pedagogy in Dewey and his followers has given America the most perfected educational theory developed in modern times. Under the slogan "education for a changing world" and supported by a whole science of "educational sociology," it requires that education be set in relation to the society in which the individual lives. The introduction of this value relation into discussions of educational goals and means is a paramount contribution of America. And this has remained not only an achievement of academic speculation and research but has, to a large extent, come to influence policy-making agencies in the educational field. America has, therefore, seen more of enterprising and experimental progressive redirecting of schools than has any other country.

The duty of society to provide for public education was early established in America, and private endowments for educational purposes have been magnificent. America spends more money and provides its youth, on the average, with more schooling than any other country in the world. America has also succeeded in a relatively higher degree than any other country in making real the old democratic principle that the complete educational ladder should be held open to the most intelligent and industrious youths, independent of private means and support from their family. Education has been, and is increasingly becoming, a chief means of climbing the social status scale. It is entirely within this great American tradition when white people, who have wanted to help the Negroes, have concentrated their main efforts on improving Negro education.

American Negroes have taken over the American faith in education. Booker T. Washington's picture of the freedmen's drive for education is classical:

Few people who were not right in the midst of the scenes can form any exact idea of the intense desire which the people of my race showed for education. It was a whole race trying to go to school. Few were too young, and none too old, to make the attempt to learn. As fast as any kind of teachers could be secured, not only were day-schools filled, but night-schools as well. The great ambition of the older people was to try to learn to read the Bible before they died. With this end in view, men and women who were fifty or seventy-five years old, would be found in the night-schools. Sunday-schools were formed soon after freedom, but the principal book studied in the Sunday-school was the spelling-book. Day-school, night-school, and Sunday-school were always crowded, and often many had to be turned away for want of room.[4]

Campbell observed in the 'seventies that ". . . the blacks are very anxious to learn—more so than the lower whites."[5] Bryce remarked some decades later that "there is something pathetic in the eagerness of the Negroes, parents, young people, and children to obtain education."[6] And Baker wrote at the beginning of this century:

> The eagerness of the coloured people for a chance to send their children to school is something astonishing and pathetic. They will submit to all sorts of inconveniences in order that their children may get an education.[7]

As self-improvement through business or social improvement through government appeared so much less possible for them, Negroes have come to affix an even stronger trust in the magic of education. It is true that some Negroes may lately have lost their faith in education, either because the schools available to them—in the South—are so inadequate or—in the North—because they achieve education but not the things they hoped to do with it. This attitude of dissatisfaction is probably part of the explanation why Negro children tend to drop out of high school more than do whites.[a] If both sources of dissatisfaction could be removed, there is reason to believe that American Negroes would revert to their original belief in education. And, aside from such dissatisfaction and even cynicism, the masses of Negroes show even today a naïve, almost religious faith in education. To an extent, this faith was misplaced: many Negroes hoped to escape drudgery through education alone. But it is also true that this faith has been justified to a large extent: education is one of the things which has given the Negroes something of a permanent advance in their condition.

The American zeal for education has always been focused on the individual's *opportunity*. The stress on enforcing a basic *minimum* standard of education for *all* young people in the nation has been less. In education as in many other fields of culture, America shows great disparity; there are at once many model schools and a considerable amount of illiteracy and semi-illiteracy. Bryce observed:

> If one part of the people is as educated and capable as that of Switzerland, another is as ignorant and politically untrained as that of Russia.[8]

And a similar statement holds true today.

This disparity is partly explainable in terms of size of the country and in terms of the administrative decentralization of the school system. But when one observes the tremendous differences in amount and quality of education between some of the cities and some of the rural districts in one single state, as, for instance, Illinois, he cannot avoid believing that more basic still is a general toleration by Americans of dissimilar status between regions and

[a] See Chapter 43, Section 4.

groups of people. In any case, these dissimilarities in educational facilities for whites in different regions are important for the Negro problem. A differential treatment of Negroes as a group has been less spectacular and has seemed less indefensible with this as a setting.

There is no doubt that a change of American attitudes in this respect is under way and that an increasing stress is placed upon the desirability of raising the educational level in the sub-standard regions to greater equality. This change—which is part of a much more general tendency of the American Creed to include ideals of greater economic equalization [a]—has taken form in the proposals for greater federal aid to education. The Negroes' chance of getting more equality in education is bound up with this movement.[b]

Considering the importance attached to education in America, it is surprising that the teacher has not been awarded a higher status in American society. Learning has never given much prestige, and until recently the teacher has been held on a relatively low economic level without much security of tenure, in most places. And even today he is, relatively speaking, not well paid, and his tenure is not secure, particularly in the South. Teachers in America have not even been allowed to have as much power over the government of their own schools as they have in comparable countries. Their status as employees is stressed. This applies to all teachers, though in different degrees. The teachers in grade schools, mostly women, are socially and economically placed at a disadvantage compared with other professionals with the same amount of preparation. The professors at colleges and universities are generally accorded middle class status, definitely below that of a successful businessman.

The Negro community is, in this respect, more similar to northern European societies. The teacher generally has a symbolic prestige from the importance of his calling. Because of the scarcity of business opportunities and of successful businessmen in the Negro community, the teacher is also more free from competition for prestige. It should be recalled, however, that the great personal dependency of the teacher, particularly in the rural South, and her low income tend to deflate her position in the Negro community.

Another peculiarity of America, which is not unconnected with the relatively low prestige of the teachers and of learning, is a common tendency to look upon education as something produced by the school and finished by graduation. The ordinary American does not conceive of education as a process which continues through adult life and is dependent upon the individual's own exertion. To few Americans does it seem to be an important goal in life continuously to improve their education. Few schools on any

[a] See Chapter 9, Sections 3 and 4.
[b] See Chapter 15, Section 3.

level direct much of their attention to preserving and developing the "educability" of the students. The very perfection of text books and too much teaching is likely to make the student more passive in his attainment of knowledge. Too little is generally asked of the students; too much—in teaching—is required of the teachers.[a] This is, perhaps, one of the reasons why the final educational results do not measure up to the great amount of funds and time which go into schooling in America. In this respect the Negro schools do not differ from white schools. In fact, they can, even less well than white schools, afford to disregard the more formal requirements and go in for experimentation.

In this connection should be noted the relative absence in America of a civic adult education movement upheld by the concerted efforts of the people themselves. We have related this to the relative political passivity of the American citizens between elections.[b] The government of American municipalities does not decentralize power and responsibility to a great number of boards and councils, and does not offer, therefore, much opportunity for participation to the ordinary citizen. This decreases the functional importance of civic adult education, as does also the relative absence of organized mass movements. If this is true of the white Americans, it is, of course, much more true of the Negroes, particularly in the South where they are largely disfranchised. Lack of participation in the wider community must depress interest in continued self-education, except when it is vocational or professional and motivated by narrow considerations of individual economic advancement.

America is, however, prominent in the type of passive mass education through such agencies as the radio, press, popular magazines and movies. The rise of the Negro population, not only to literacy but to a real capability of consuming the spoken and printed word, and the increasing efficacy of those agencies, must have a strong influence in raising the culture level of Negroes. Through these media, they are made more American.

[a] This is definitely true also of the ordinary college and, to an extent, also of the graduate school. There are too many arranged courses, too much "spoon feeding." The heavy lecturing—which the observer relates to the legislators' and the entire society's lack of respect for the learned profession and *their* demand to get labor for their money, as well as to the tradition of preaching kept in institutions which were almost all denominational seminaries in the beginning—is perhaps even more dangerous for the teachers than for the students as nothing is so indoctrinating as to listen to one's own voice. It keeps the professors from scientific work; and it keeps the students from finding their own way to the sources of knowledge. The "self-made man" is generally an American ideal, but in the schools it is less well realized than in other spheres of culture. The "spoon feeding" in higher institutions is the more important since they set the patterns, to a considerable extent, for the lower schools.

[b] See Chapter 33.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEGRO EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH

The history of Negro education in the South is one of heroic deeds as well as of patient, high-minded and self-sacrificing toil. In this context we can only present the outlines of the subject.

One of the cultural disparities between the North and the South at the outbreak of the Civil War was that the Northern states had established tax-supported public schools, while the public school movement was only in its beginning in the South.[9] The few Negroes in the North shared, on the whole, in the better educational opportunities in the region.[10] In the South most white people had little or no formal schooling. In all Southern states (except a few of the Border states and the District of Columbia) it was forbidden to teach slaves how to read and write, and several states extended the prohibition to free Negroes.[11]

Still, a few of the slave owners, or their wives and daughters, considered it a Christian duty to teach the slaves to read, and by 1860 perhaps as much as 5 per cent of the slaves could read and write.[12] A larger proportion of the free Negroes had acquired some schooling. The education of Negroes under slavery cannot be discussed without noting also the excellent training as artisans and handicraftsmen a small proportion of the slaves received. Each plantation was a more or less self-sufficient economy outside of its major crop export and food import, and, therefore, required slaves with each of the skills necessary to keep up the community. In the cities many slaves worked in the commercial handicrafts. The artisan tradition was passed on from person to person and usually did not require schools or the teaching of the more general arts.[a]

After the Civil War there came a tremendous demand for education in the South. Du Bois rightly points out that:

> The uprising of the black man, and the pouring of himself into organized effort for education, in those years between 1861 and 1871, was one of the marvelous occurrences of the modern world; almost without parallel in the history of civilization.[13]

A significant number of Union soldiers stayed in the South to teach the freedmen the "three R's." They were immediately assisted by better trained idealists—largely Abolitionists from the North, especially from New England.[14] Northern Negroes also came down to swell the number of teachers. As soon as these front-rank teachers had given their pupils an elementary education, the latter had no difficulty in finding positions as teachers. Wages were low and living conditions poor for teachers, but idealism was burning, and a rudimentary education spread.

The Freedmen's Bureau did some of its most important work in establish-

[a] See Appendix 6.

ing and supporting schools for Negroes. Missionary and church organizations in the North contributed not only by sending down teachers but also by giving money for buildings and support of the students. Indeed, most of the Negroes who received education in the South between 1865 and 1880 were schooled in institutions supported by the charity of Northern churches.[15] Fisk, Atlanta, Howard and Hampton were founded in these years. The Negro communities themselves collected much money for their schools, particularly on the elementary level.

As a part of this movement the Reconstruction governments laid the basis for a public school system in the South for both whites and Negroes. In all Southern states the great American principle of free public schools for all children was written into the new constitutions or other statutes. The Restoration governments only continued what their predecessors had organized for the whites. The Negroes were severely discriminated against; in many parts of the South Negro education deteriorated for decades. This period of reaction was a most crucial time for Negro education. Du Bois is probably right when he says that "had it not been for the Negro school and college, the Negro would, to all intents and purposes, have been driven back to slavery."[16]

The great wonder is that the principle of the Negroes' right to public education was not renounced altogether. But it did not happen. One explanation is the persistency and magnanimity of Northern philanthropy. But this activity was pursued under the indulgence of the Southern state and municipal authorities. And, though their own contributions to Negro education in many regions were not much more than face saving, *the important thing is that face saving was deemed necessary and that the Negroes' statutory right to public education remained unassailable in the South.* The American Creed, backed by the Constitution, showed itself strong enough not to allow the sacred principle of public education to succumb. Even in the South—as it came out of the Civil War and Reconstruction—the caste interest could never be pursued wholeheartedly. The moral dilemma, and the apologetic attitude, growing out of the partial allegiance to the American Creed, is illustrated in a pronouncement like the following from Thomas Nelson Page:

> The South has faithfully applied itself during all these years to giving the Negroes all the opportunities possible for attaining an education, and it is one of the most creditable pages in her history that in face of the horror of Negro-domination during the Reconstruction period; of the disappointment at the small results; in face of the fact that the education of the Negroes has appeared to be used by them only as a weapon with which to oppose the white race, the latter should have persistently given so largely of its store to provide this misused education.[17]

Almost as soon as the movement for the education of Negro youth began, the quarrel started as to whether Negro education should be "classical" or

"industrial."[18] If the white Southerners had to permit the Negroes to get any education at all, they wanted it to be of the sort which would make the Negro a better servant and laborer, not that which would teach him to rise out of his "place." The New England school teachers—who did most of the teaching at first—wanted to train the Negroes as they themselves had been trained in the North: the "three R's" at the elementary level, with such subjects as Latin, Greek, geometry, rhetoric coming in at the secondary and college levels. But General S. C. Armstrong, a Union officer during the Civil War,[19] had established Hampton Institute in the tidewater region of Virginia as an "agricultural institution." He wanted to see continued the skilled artisan tradition that had existed among Negroes before the War. His most famous pupil, Booker T. Washington, founded the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama and became the apostle of industrial education for Negroes. There is no doubt that—quite apart from the pedagogical merits of this type of education—his message was extremely timely in the actual power situation of the Restoration. It reconciled many Southern white men to the idea of Negro education, and Washington has probably no small share in the salvaging of Negro education from the great danger of its being entirely destroyed. Meanwhile, the New England advocates of a classical education and their Negro followers carried on at Atlanta, Fisk, and at a few other Southern centers of Negro college education. The elementary schools—there were practically no secondary schools for Negroes in the South at this time—followed the patterns set by the dominant colleges.

The struggle between the conservative and the radical group of Negro leaders became focused on the issue: "industrial" *versus* "classical" education for Negroes. Washington became the champion for the former position, and he was backed by the white South and the bulk of Northern philanthropy. Du Bois headed the group of Negro intellectuals who feared that most often the intention, and in any case the result, would be to keep Negroes out of the higher and more general culture of America.[a] This dispute was important in the development of Negro ideologies. It scarcely meant much for the actual development of Negro education in the South,

[a] In this particular issue there was more heat and rivalry between the two groups than actual differences of opinion. Du Bois never deprecated in a wholesale manner vocational education; in later days he became, in fact, more and more positively in favor of it. Washington, on his side, had never accepted the dominant white man's idea that education for the Negro ought only to be training him to be a field hand or domestic servant and to know his lowly "place." In his famous Atlanta speech of 1895 he said:

"To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man, . . . I would say: 'Cast down your bucket where you are,—cast it down in making friends in every *manly* way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded.

" 'Cast it down in agriculture, *mechanics*, *in commerce*, in domestic service, and *in the professions*'." (*Up From Slavery* [1901; first edition, 1900], p. 219. Italics ours.)

which was dominated by the whites. If Negro education in the South did not become turned entirely into industrial education on the elementary level, the main explanation was, as we shall see, the growing expense of such training after the Industrial Revolution and the competitive interest of white workers to keep the Negroes out of the crafts and industry. On the higher level, a nonvocational Negro education had, as Du Bois always emphasized, its chief strength in the fact that Tuskegee Institute and other similar schools raised a demand for teachers with a broader educational background.

During all this time, from the Civil War until today, there has been a steady stream of money going from Northern philanthropy to Southern education. A large part of it has gone to white education. But a considerable portion has gone to Negro education, and it has had strategic importance: first, to give it a start during Reconstruction, later to hinder its complete destruction during Restoration, and to advance it in recent decades.

From about 1865 to about 1875, the period of "classical" education, most of the money came from Northern reform groups and churches, aided by state funds allocated by the Reconstruction governments. From about 1880 to about 1905 these sources were pretty dry, and educators of Negroes appealed to wealthy Northern businessmen, who had little interest in Negroes but could be relied upon to donate to most nonradical charitable causes. This was also the period when Negro college students formed singing groups which appeared before Northern audiences and took up collections.

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Negro education received a great boost when the Northern philanthropic foundations stepped into the picture on a much larger scale.[20] Before then the George Peabody Fund (established in 1867) gave money to both white and Negro common schools and teacher-training schools in the South.[21] The John F. Slater Fund (established in 1882) supported industrial and teacher-training schools. Both Funds were small, and at first dominated by conservative principles. In 1908 a Quaker lady of Philadelphia, Miss Anna T. Jeanes, established a Fund to give impetus to the small rural Southern Negro school. Mr. Jackson Davis, then school superintendent of Henrico County in Virginia and now an officer on the General Education Board, and Miss Virginia Randolph, a Negro teacher in that county, worked out the plan for this Fund. This plan calls for a rural industrial supervisor who goes from school to school in a county and helps the teachers organize their domestic science, their gardening and their simple carpentry work. At first the Fund paid the salaries of these "Jeanes' teachers," but gradually many of the county school boards took over the function. The remnants of the Peabody, Slater, and Jeanes Funds have been recently integrated into the Southern Educa-

tion Foundation, which still helps to pay part of the salaries of the Jeanes teachers.[22]

Another step was taken by the General Education Board, with money provided by John D. Rockefeller, under the direction of Wallace Buttrick. This foundation paid for state supervisors of Negro education who were to be under the state superintendents. The supervisors, who were white Southerners, had no official authority whatever, but they have been most important in raising the standards of the Negro public schools of the South. They plead to the state and county officials for improved educational facilities, and they get their authority out of their political independence, their intimate knowledge of their fields, and the fact that they act as the local agents for the several foundations interested in aiding Negro education.[23] They are now gradually becoming integrated in the state administration and are paid out of state funds.

Jackson Davis, N. C. Newbold, and several other leading educational statesmen of the South have been engaged in this work. The General Education Board has also given much money for fellowships, colleges, libraries, and other educational facilities for Southern Negroes and has made it possible for the Slater and Jeanes Funds to continue with their work. In 1911, Mr. Julius Rosenwald began the successful activity of giving one-third of the funds required for the erection of a rural school building, provided the school authorities, with the aid of white friends and the Negro people themselves, would furnish the other two-thirds.[24] The Rosenwald Fund has established libraries for Negroes, has assisted Negro universities and colleges and has given generously to Negro scholars for fellowships and research projects. The John F. Slater Fund, given a new direction after 1910 under the leadership of Dr. James H. Dillard, established the first "high schools" for Negroes in the rural South to give prospective teachers in the rural Negro elementary schools some education beyond that of the elementary school itself. The small Phelps-Stokes Fund (established in 1911) has devoted itself to assisting Negro and white college students, making studies of Negro problems and improving educational facilities for Negroes in the United States and in Africa. Andrew Carnegie, and the large foundation which he established, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, have given significant sums to Negro colleges and libraries, to various Negro improvement organizations, and to research projects on the Negro—including the present study.[a]

[a] In addition to the foundations mentioned in the text, there are others working in the field of Negro education:

(1) The Daniel Hand Fund (established in 1888), directed by the American Missionary Association, aids Negro schools and colleges along with others;

(2) The du Pont family has donated gifts for the education of the small Negro population of Delaware;

(3) The Duke family has donated gifts to Negro colleges in North Carolina;

The support of Negro education in the South given by Northern philanthropic organizations has been important in terms of both the funds spent and the initiative taken. It has also spurred the Southern state and municipal authorities. Federal aid has had its importance and might come to mean more in the future. The general facts about this and about the discriminations in the South against Negro education in terms of financial expenditure have been reviewed in Chapter 15. We shall later add some notes on what this means for the actual character of education.

The stress then will be on elementary and secondary education. At the college level, Hampton and Tuskegee continue with their vocational emphasis but have recently tended to give a good basic education of the academic type. Most of the Negro liberal arts and teachers' colleges of the South are inadequate; more so even than the average white Southern college or university, which is notoriously inferior to the bulk of Northern colleges and universities.[25] The best Negro universities in the South—Howard (in Washington, D.C., supported by the federal government), Fisk (in Nashville, Tennessee, privately supported), Atlanta (in Atlanta, Georgia, privately supported)—are as adequate in many ways as the better Southern white universities. There are also one or two Negro colleges—for example, Talladega (in Alabama, privately supported)—that rank with the better white colleges. Only a half-dozen of the Southern Negro universities offer any training on the graduate or professional level and, with the exception of Howard University, graduate training is restricted to a few fields. Many Southern Negro students go to the great Northern universities. Many Northern Negro students go to Southern Negro colleges.

The control of Negro schools in the South has been shifting somewhat in recent years. As elementary and secondary education for Negroes is coming to be taken for granted by white Southerners, the support for it is coming less from Northern philanthropy and more from state and local tax funds assisted by federal grants-in-aid. With the support has gone the control, and the South now has complete control of Negro education on the elementary and secondary levels. Negroes hold some of the control over their own schools, partly because they help to pay for them by voluntary contributions, but mainly because they are the only teachers now in

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(4) The Guggenheim Memorial Foundation provides research fellowships (some 20 outstanding Negroes have received these);

(5) There have been gifts by many Negro philanthropists. (See Horace M. Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* [1934], pp. 145-147);

(6) Church missions support a significant proportion of the secondary schools and colleges for Negroes in the South;

(7) The Harmon Foundation gives awards to Negroes for outstanding achievement and holds exhibits of fine arts by Negroes. Other small foundations have special prizes for Negroes.

Southern Negro schools, and white school supervisors do not care to bother with Negro schools unless they hear that something is being taught that they do not like. But ultimate control is held by the white superintendents and school boards, subject only to the few restrictions entailed in accepting federal grants-in-aid and to the advice of the General Education Board supervisors. The same is true of the public colleges. The private colleges and universities for Negroes in the South are still supported, in large measure, by Northern philanthropy; control over them is still held by the trustees (who often come from outside the community where the colleges are located), by the foundations and other philanthropists, and by the Negro faculty itself which is expressly permitted a significant degree of autonomy.

4. THE WHITES' ATTITUDES TOWARD NEGRO EDUCATION

There are apparent conflicts of valuations between whites and Negroes in regard to Negro education. These conflicts, the interests involved, and the theories expressing them determine the forms of Negro education. But the situation is not so simple as just a difference of opinion. In fact, many whites are as eager to improve Negro education as is any Negro, and there are some Negroes who are rather on the other side of the fence, at least for the purpose of an opportunistic accommodation. The situation is complicated by the fact that both whites and Negroes are divided in their own minds. They harbor conflicting valuations within themselves. Only by keeping this constantly in mind can we understand the development of Negro education and correctly evaluate future prospects.

The American Creed definitely prescribes that the Negro child or youth should have just as much educational opportunity as is offered anyone else in the same community. Negroes should be trained to become good and equal citizens in a democracy which places culture high in its hierarchy of values. This equalitarian valuation is strong enough to dominate public policy in the North, in spite of the fact that probably most white people in the North, too, believe the Negroes to be inferior and, anyhow, do not care so much for their potentialities and possibilities as for those of whites. In the South the existing great discrimination in education is an indication that another valuation is dominating white people's actions. But it is a great mistake to believe that the American Creed is not also present and active in the motivations of Southern whites. Behavior is as always a moral compromise. Negroes would not be getting so much education as they are actually getting in the South if the equalitarian Creed were not also active.[8]

[8] The division of white opinion with respect to Negro education is brought out by a poll of public opinion in July, 1940. (Planned by the American Youth Commission, interviews by the American Institute of Public Opinion; tabulations and analyses by several individuals and groups; published by the National Education Association. See *National Education*

By itself, the interest of upholding the caste system would motivate Southern whites to give Negroes practically no education at all or would restrict it to the transmission of only such lowly skills as would make Negroes better servants and farm hands. There is no mistake about this interest; it is real and has economic importance. Charles S. Johnson gives an account of it as it appears in the rural South:

> Literacy is not an asset in the plantation economy, and it was not only discouraged but usually forbidden. The belief that education spoiled the slave carried over with but little modification for many years into the belief that education spoils a field hand. The oldest members of the community are illiterate, and in those working relations which reveal least change from the past this lack has proved no important handicap. Reading and figuring carry elements of danger to established relations. Since the detailed direction of planting and handling of accounts are the sphere of the planter, theoretically it is he who can profit most from the technique of literacy. Too much attention to reading about the outside, and particularly to figuring, on the part of Negro tenants, would surely make them less satisfied with their status and bring them into harsh conflict with the system. The need of enough education to read and figure arises largely among those families desirous of escaping from the dependent relationship under the old plantation system.[26]

The poorer classes of whites in this respect have interests similar to those of the planters. They are in competition with Negroes for jobs and for social status. One of the things which demarcates them as superior and increases the future potentialities of their children is the fact that white children in publicly supported school buses are taken to fine consolidated schools while often Negro children are given only what amounts to a sham education in dilapidated one-room schools or old Negro churches by underpaid, badly trained Negro teachers. The observer, visiting Southern rural counties, gets clear statements of these interests on the part of all classes of whites who want to preserve the traditional caste order. The segregated school system of the South, in addition, allows a substantial saving by keeping Negro education low.

The caste interest is not merely economic. The whites have told themselves that education will make the Negro conscious of "rights" which he

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Association Research Bulletin [November, 1940], p. 204.) A cross section of the nation was asked, "Do you think that the same amount of tax money should be spent in this state for the education of a Negro child as for a white child?" Southern whites were split equally: 45 per cent answered "yes"; 46 per cent answered "no" (9 per cent are reported as having "no opinion"). Northern whites were in favor of equal educational expenditures by a heavy majority: 86 per cent answered "yes"; 10 per cent answered "no" (4 per cent are reported as having "no opinion").

The large minority in favor of equality in the South is remarkable. As a guide for practical policy, however, it has to be discounted because of the peculiarity, which we noticed in Chapter 28 and elsewhere, that Southern whites often become convinced by their legal pretense "separate but equal" that Negroes actually get equal schooling.

should not know about. It will make him dissatisfied where he has been happy and accommodated. It will raise some Negroes above many whites in culture. It will make many more Negroes "uppity" and obnoxious. The supremacy of individual whites is bound up with Negro ignorance. If the Negro stays in the only "place" where he should be, then he does not need any education. These opinions also make sense in the light of the white caste's undoubted interest in keeping education away from the Negroes.

The white people have among themselves all the power, and so their convergent interests have molded Negro education in rural districts. The low standard of Negro schools is the result. But even in the rural South the observer sees the impact of the American Creed. Often it is revealed only in a bad conscience. This is apparent everywhere. In most localities there also seems to be a gradual improvement of Negro schools. In practically all places no obstacles are placed in the way of outside help if it observes the proper Southern forms, and it will even be encouraged either verbally or by "matching" it with local financial support. The scattering around the entire region of the Rosenwald schoolhouses is a case in point. Exertions by the Negroes to collect money among themselves for educational purposes are never discouraged but applauded by almost everybody. This is not said by way of excusing the bald and illegal discrimination in the rural school systems in the South, but only to stress the fact that the white caste interests are practically never driven to their logical end.

In the urban South, whites of the employing class do not have the same material interests in keeping the Negroes ignorant. They have rather to gain if their Negro servants and laborers have at least some education. The poorer classes of whites have scarcely any such gains to reap, however. They are interested in keeping Negroes as much as possible out of competition on the labor market. The general interest of keeping the Negroes down to preserve the caste order intact is present in the cities too. It is shared by all classes, but, of course, felt most strongly by the poorer whites. City populations are, however, more closely integrated in the life of the nation: the regional traditions are somewhat weaker, the cultural level among whites is higher, the American Creed is stronger. So we find that Southern cities offer the Negroes a substantially better education. In the Border states the integration in the national life and the strength of the American Creed are still stronger, and we find also that the educational facilities available to Negroes are more nearly equal to those of the whites.

The primary rationalization of this gradual deviation in the South from the policy representing the crude caste interest is usually phrased in the popular theory of the American Creed—that education of the youths of the poorer classes is beneficial not only to themselves but to society. Thomas Nelson Page presented the liberal Southerners' attitude toward the education of the Negro masses many years ago:

> There is much truth in the saying that unless the whites lift the Negroes up, the Negroes will drag them down, though it is not true in the full sense in which it was intended. It is not true to the extent that the white must lift the Negro up to his own level; it is true to the extent that he must not leave him debased—at least must not leave him here debased. If he does, then the Negro will inevitably hold him, if not drag him down. No country in the present stage of the world's progress can long maintain itself in the front rank, and no people can long maintain themselves at the top of the list of peoples if they have to carry perpetually the burden of a vast and densely ignorant population, and where that population belongs to another race, the argument must be all the stronger. Certainly, no section can, under such a burden keep pace with a section which has no such burden. Whatever the case may have been in the past, the time has gone by, possibly forever, when the ignorance of the working-class was an asset. Nations and peoples and, much more, sections of peoples, are now strong and prosperous almost in direct ratio to their knowledge and enlightenment. . . .
>
> Viewing the matter economically, the Negro race, like every other race, must be of far more value to the country in which it is placed, if the Negro is properly educated, elevated, and trained, than if he is allowed to remain in ignorance and degradation. He is a greater peril to the community in which he lives if he remains in ignorance and degradation than if he is enlightened. If the South expects ever to compete with the North, she must educate and train her population, and, in my judgment, not merely her white population but her entire population.[27]

This has been the main argument through decades for improving the educational facilities for Negroes in the South. Usually it is restricted by assertion of their lower capability of responding to education. Usually also it is qualified by the insistence on a particular kind of education as more suitable for Negroes.

There is petty pressure on Negro education in the South, but the truth is that the *Southern whites have never had the nerve to make of Negro education an accomplished instrument to keep the Negroes in their caste status.* It would have been possible, but it has not been done. The Southern whites' caste policy has been halfhearted all through, but particularly so in education. The explanation is again that they are also good Americans with all the standardized American ideals about education. The interest of educating the Negroes to become faithful helots has been obvious, but the Southern whites have not even attempted to make it effective in practice. Instead, they have merely kept Negro education poor and bad. And even on that point they have been gradually giving up resistance to the command of the Creed. This is the deeper dynamics of Negro education.

5. "INDUSTRIAL" *versus* "CLASSICAL" EDUCATION OF NEGROES

Quite independent of how the specific value of "vocational" or "industrial" education, as compared with a more liberal education, is viewed, there is no doubt that the popularity among whites, now as earlier, of the

former type of Negro education is mainly motivated by the interests of preserving the caste order. "Industrial" education for Negroes is the formula upon which Southern whites have been able to strike a compromise between their belief in education, which stems from the American Creed, and their interests as white Southerners in preserving the caste order of the region.

The argument runs: The Negroes are, and must be, servants, farm laborers, and industrial workers; they should, however, be trained to do their work better; then, in their "place," they would be better citizens too. What is needed, consequently, is a Negro education which bothers less with bookish learning and more with life in a humble status, daily duties, and the building up of character; the Negroes have to begin at the bottom and they will probably stay low, but they should be given the chance of moving upward slowly. The advocate of improved industrial training of Negroes also stresses the very material interest of the better class of white people to have more efficient servants. The play of these arguments can be observed today, when, for instance, one accompanies the State Agent for Negro Education in a rural county trying to persuade the local white leaders to spend money to improve Negro education.

The formula, "industrial education for Negroes," thus has a different meaning for different white people. There are some who have a genuine belief in the superiority generally of a practical stress in all public education. There are many more who see strong particular reasons for this educational goal in the actual situation of Southern Negroes. Many have their primary interest in improving Negro education as such and know that it is politically much more feasible if it is proposed in this way. To many the formula is, however, only a rationalization for discrimination and for holding appropriations low for Negro schools.[a]

> Industrial education becomes a byword. In the mind of one man it meant that the negro should be taught only to know the relative distance between two rows of cotton or corn, and how to deport himself with becoming behavior behind the chair while his white lord and master sits at meat; while, in the mind of another it stood for the awakening of the best powers and possibilities. To the white man of the South it may have meant that the negro was to be made more serviceable to him and more easily amenable to his imperious will. To the white man of the North it may have meant that the black man was to be made a competent worker, equipped with intelligence and skill such as are demanded of Northern workmen. However variant may have been the interpretations of the meaning of industrial education, there was a general agreement to discredit the higher culture of the race.[28]

This has, among other things, the implication that *in the South the problem of "industrial" versus "classical" education for Negroes is not, and has*

[a] Although, as we shall presently observe, true vocational education actually is more expensive.

never been, discussed merely in terms of pedagogical advantages and disadvantages. The political caste problem is always and necessarily involved. And the type of education to be given Negroes is always and necessarily connected with the amount of education and the financial obligations to be undertaken.[29]

Two factors complicate the issue even more: the high relative costs of modern vocational education and the white laborers' fear of the Negroes as competitors. In the period immediately after the Civil War, vocational education was—a fact now often forgotten—motivated also as a less expensive way of giving Negroes some schooling. General Armstrong, when founding Hampton Institute, stressed the agricultural and vocational line, not only for the reason that such a training best fitted the occupational possibilities of the freed slaves, but also because it allowed the students to earn something toward their maintenance at school.[30] In his appeals for funds for Tuskegee Institute, Booker T. Washington likewise always emphasized this element of economy, and particularly how the students, by their own work, erected many of the buildings and provided much toward the support of themselves and the school.

The pedagogical aim of vocational education outside agriculture in those days was to continue and build up the artisan tradition from slavery and to turn out young Negroes skilled in the old handicrafts—train them to be carpenters, masons, blacksmiths, shoemakers. When, however, the Industrial Revolution finally hit the South in full force, the demand of efficient industry was no longer for the artisan but for the skilled machine operator. The old handicrafts became relatively less important. Even agriculture did not show much demand for skilled Negro labor. On the plantations the employers continued to be best satisfied with the ignorant field hands who were not disturbingly ambitious, and the trend toward increased Negro landownership turned downward shortly after 1900. If Negroes—outside domestic service—were to be given effective vocational education, this would require such an elaborate equipment for the schools that it would become more expensive than "classical" education.

At the same time and partly for the same basic reasons, the interest of the white workers against allowing Negroes to acquire skills became stronger. In agriculture and in the stagnating crafts, new skilled Negro labor was not welcome; in industry it became a principle that all skilled jobs should be reserved for the whites.

> What if the industrial education of the Negro should be found to conflict with the interests of the white laborer or skilled worker? Does any one suppose that it is the purpose of the South so to educate the Negro (or even allow him to be so educated) as to enable him to take the bread from the white man's mouth? And does any one suppose that the laboring white man of the arrogant and aggressive Anglo-

Saxon race will stand tamely by with folded arms while there is danger of its being done? This is the central point of the whole situation.[31]

By and large, *in spite of all the talk about it, no effective industrial training was ever given the Negroes in the Southern public schools,* except training for cooking and menial service. The expensive vocational training, which conflicted so harshly with the interests of the white workers, has never become much more than a slogan. Negro education has mostly remained "academic" and differs only in its low level of expenditure and effectiveness.

Even at the well-endowed centers of Hampton and Tuskegee, the industrial training offered was in demand almost solely because of a need for teachers in the lesser schools, rather than because of the needs of modern industry. This explains why they have been able to realize, in some lines at least, the vocational idea as well as they have, without coming into greater conflict with the interests of white workers. The schools to which those teachers have gone, and are now going, are usually not nearly so well equipped that they could be called "vocational" in any serious meaning of the term. They usually are poor schools, not deserving much of a classification into either "vocational" or "classical." A few exceptional schools excluded, they offer at best some training in domestic service for girls—which, for understandable reasons, meets more encouragement and less fear of competition—or a poor training in the technique of rapidly disappearing handicrafts, sometimes adjusted slightly to modern times by courses in "automobile repair work" or the like.[32]

The discussion of whether Negroes should have a vocational or a liberal schooling is thus only in part a real issue. Partly it is a cover for the more general problem as to what extent Negroes should have much education at all. The lines are blurred because the argument for vocational education is used both by the people who want to have more education for Negroes and by those who want to restrict it. The main conflict is between the ever present equalitarian American Creed, on the one hand, and the caste interest, on the other. The actual situation is different between regions; opinions are divided and confused within almost every individual. Let us, as an example, have a Southern liberal survey the field of opinions, as he sees it, and attempt to formulate his own attitude:

It is surprising to note the prejudice with which a great many southern whites view the whole subject of Negro education. Their sincere opinion that the Negro should not be given educational opportunities comparable to those which are provided for the white children is at least partly due to the strong belief that better facilities in the colored schools would not yield a proper return in human values. This belief is a heritage from slavery. Of course there is also the attitude that the educated Negro will lose the humility which has characterized his relations with the southern white man ever since Reconstruction. The white laboring man is no doubt influenced in his opposition to better educational facilities for Negroes by the fear that Negroes

will enter skilled trades and thereby create a new and very effective rivalry in a field in which the whites have not had as much competition as they have where the task requires less training and education. However, certain farsighted leaders and some others realize that the Negro must be given better schools. They believe that improved colored school facilities will benefit not only the Negroes but also the whites. They feel that the colored man is entitled to a good high school education in subjects which may be selected with a view to the peculiar social situation in the South. The Negro must be trained for the jobs which are available under present conditions. Cultural training in the arts and sciences must for the present be subordinated to an education which is more suitable to his needs. In this way the greatest number will be benefited. The curriculum for the colored schools needs a great deal of study with a view toward revision.[33]

6. Negro Attitudes

The attitudes of the whites are of greatest importance for the growth of Negro education, as they have all the power. The Negroes are, however, not without influence, partly because the whites are divided among themselves and divided in their own conscience. The remarkable thing is that the Negroes are split in much the same way and on the same issues.

It is natural, to begin with, that the American Creed interest is more stressed with the Negroes. Deep down in their souls practically all Negroes feel that they have the right to equal opportunities for education. And the sanctity of the American Creed gives them the opportunity to express this opinion and to press the whites for concessions. The stress on education in American culture makes the Negro protest most respectable. But the observer finds also that there are a few upper class Negroes who express about the same opinion as whites, that common Negroes do not need and should not have much education. This is rare, however, and the opinion has to be concealed.

Much more important is the split in the Negro world as to what kind of education is desirable. On the one hand, they sense the caste motivation behind most whites' interest in industrial education for Negroes. They know also that they can hope to win the respect of the whites and take their place as equal citizens in American democracy only if they are educated in the nonvocational cultural values of the broader society. On the other hand, they see the actual caste situation as a reality and know that many lines of work are closed to them. In order to utilize fully the openings left, and in order eventually to open up new roads into industrial employment, they often conclude that Negroes are in particular need of vocational training. They realize also that the great poverty and cultural backwardness of their people motivate a special adaptation of Negro education. On this point there is a possibility of striking a compromise with the liberal white man. In the North most Negroes will not make this concession, and by no means all Negroes, perhaps not even a majority, in the South are prepared to take

the stand. Even the ones who do, stress at the same time the necessity of raising educational opportunities and of improving the schools.

Concerning the content of teaching in other respects, Negroes are also divided. On the one hand, they are inclined to feel that the Northern system, where a standardized teaching is given students independent of whether they are whites or Negroes, is the only right thing. On the other hand, they feel that the students get to know too little about Negro problems. They thus want an adjustment of teaching toward the status of Negroes, usually not in order to make the Negroes weak and otherwise fit into the white man's wishful picture about "good niggers" but, on the contrary, to make Negroes better prepared to fight for their rights. They feel that education should not only be accepted passively but should be used as a tool of concerted action to gain the equal status they are seeking. For this reason many, if not most, Negro leaders desire that Negro students should get special training in Negro problems.

Du Bois, who originally was the most uncompromising advocate of the idea that no difference at all should be made in teaching Negro and white students, later came out with the opinion that the Negro student should not only be taught general history and social subjects as they were taught to white students, but also Negro history and Negro problems and, indeed, a special race strategy for meeting their individual and collective problems in America. Negro youth should even be taught to have pride in Africa.[34]

This opinion, except perhaps for the last point, is now commonly shared by most Negro intellectuals. The institution of "Negro History Week" has emanated from such attitudes.[a] Negro colleges and high schools are devoting an increasing interest to Negro problems. White interracialists condone these things.[35] Other whites do not care but feel, as we have said, that it is the Negroes' right to discuss their own problems if they want to.

There is a further controversy as to whether Negro education ought to be segregated or not. In the North the official opinion among whites is that segregation is not compatible with equality, but, as we have seen, much segregation is actually in effect as a consequence of residential segregation and of gerrymandering districts and granting permits to transfer. In the South direct segregation in schools is a necessary means of keeping up the tremendous financial discrimination against Negro schools. In recent years not even Southern liberals—with some rare exceptions—have stated that they favored mixed education. Segregation is usually not motivated by financial reasons but as a precaution against social equality.[36]

Negroes are divided on the issues of segregated schools. In so far as segregation means discrimination and is a badge of Negro inferiority, they are against it,[37] although many Southern Negroes would not take an open stand that would anger Southern whites. Some Negroes, however, prefer

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 9.

the segregated school, even for the North, when the mixed school involves humiliation for Negro students and discrimination against Negro teachers. Du Bois has expressed this point of view succinctly:

> . . . theoretically, the Negro needs neither segregated schools nor mixed schools. What he needs is Education. What he must remember is that there is no magic, either in mixed schools or in segregated schools. A mixed school with poor and unsympathetic teachers, with hostile opinion, and no teaching concerning black folk, is bad. A segregated school with ignorant placeholders, inadequate equipment, poor salaries, and wretched housing, is equally bad. Other things being equal, the mixed school is the broader, more natural basis for the education of all youth. It gives wider contacts; it inspires greater self-confidence; and suppresses the inferiority complex. But other things seldom are equal, and in that case, Sympathy, Knowledge, and the Truth, outweigh all that the mixed school can offer.[38]

Other Negroes prefer the mixed schools at any cost, since for them it is a matter of principle or since they believe that it is a means of improving race relations.[a]

7. TRENDS AND PROBLEMS

Schrieke, surveying Southern education a few years ago, sums up the situation in the following words:

> . . . although there is some sort and some amount of Negro education everywhere, Negro education still does not have a fixed, legitimate, acknowledged place. It is realized that something must be done in order to keep the Negro satisfied and in order to uphold the American slogan of free schools for every child, but it is rare that a community has any real interest in planning or building a wise system of education for the race. Politically, it is not generally admitted that the Negro has a right to schools or to other public services. . . . The Negro is still not recognized as a citizen despite the Civil War amendments.[39]

This somewhat pessimistic evaluation is warranted by the facts. The educational facilities for Negroes, particularly in many rural regions, are scandalously poor.[b] The white community often blinds itself to the entire matter.

[a] There are many minor elements in the controversy. Frazier, for example, reports that some dark-skinned children in Washington and Louisville preferred mixed schools since the white teacher made no distinction between them and light-skinned Negroes—a distinction claimed to be made by some light-skinned Negro teachers. (E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], pp. 96-97.) On the other hand, some Negro upper class parents would like to keep their children away from the Negro schools, where prevail "dirt, noise, bad manners, filthy tales, no discipline," overcrowding and poorly trained teachers. (W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* [1940], p. 178.)

[b] The present writer has gone into many one-room, one-teacher Negro schools and hardly believed his eyes and his ears when he ascertained the primitive school building, the lack of practically all equipment, the extreme lack of contact with modern American civilization on the part of the untrained, poorly paid, Negro woman serving as teacher, and the bottomless ignorance of the pupils. I once visited such a school in a rural county of Georgia, not far from Atlanta. The building was an old Rosenwald school, dilapidated but far better

But in appraising the situation, it is equally important to recognize that there are dissimilarities in the level of educational facilities offered Negroes, and that there is a definite tendency upward.

This trend is gaining momentum and is pushed not only by Northern philanthropy and the intervention of federal agencies, but also by the growing force of Southern liberalism.[a] The rising educational level of the whites in the region gives an increasing basis for understanding the necessity of doing something for Negro education. The skillful strategy of the N.A.A.C.P. is probably going to enforce a raise in the wages of Southern Negro teachers over the next decade and will, if it does not open the door of the graduate schools to Negroes, at least compel the Southern states to

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than many other school buildings in the region. The students were in all age groups from 6 to 7 years upward to 16 to 17. There was also an imbecile man of about 20 staying on as a steady student veteran. (The lack of institutions for old Negro mental defectives makes the great majority of them stay in their homes, and the homes find it often convenient to send them to school. There they are, of course, a great danger from several viewpoints.) The teacher, a sickly girl about 20 years old, looked shy and full of fear; she said she had had high school training.

The students seemed to enjoy the visit and it was easy to establish a human contact with them. No one could tell who was President of the United States or even what the President was. Only one of the older students knew, or thought he knew, of Booker T. Washington. He said that Washington was "a big white man," and intimated that he might be the President of the United States. This student, obviously a naturally very bright boy, was the only one who knew anything about Europe and England; they were "beyond the Atlantic," he informed me, but he thought that Europe was in England. No one had ever heard about Walter White, John Hope, Du Bois, or Moton. No one had heard of the N.A.A.C.P. One boy identified Carver as a "colored man who makes medicine." Several could identify Joe Louis, Ella Fitzgerald, and Henry Armstrong. Asked if they knew what the Constitution of the United States was and what it meant to them, all remained in solemn silence, until the bright boy helped us out, informing us that it was a "newspaper in Atlanta."

When telling such a horror story it must, at once, be added that it is not typical, though a large portion of rural Negro schools are at, or near, this cultural level. But it is remarkable, and a significant characteristic of the whole system, that it can exist even as an isolated case. It should also be said that there are a few white schools in some regions of the South which do not reach much higher. I recollect that some white school children in Louisiana believed that Huey Long was still living (autumn, 1938) and was the President of the United States.

A further reflection is that the usual measures of school efficiency (see Chapter 43, Section 4) are inadequate when the problem is to sound the bottom of ignorance in many Negro schools.

[a] As an example of what can now be publicly stated in the South concerning the low existing level of Negro educational facilities and the need for improved ones, we may note the excellent Louisiana Educational Survey. Charles S. Johnson and Associates prepared the monograph on the Negro public schools, and his report is summarized in popular form in the "summary report" prepared by Carleton Washburne (*Louisiana Looks at Its Schools* [1942]). Seldom has such an excellent survey appeared regarding the schools of any state, and the fact that this survey emanates from one of the Deep Southern states is a most hopeful sign.

initiate some sort of graduate training in the state-supported Negro colleges. In the beginning this graduate training will perhaps be merely a sham gesture, but a basis for further advance will have been created. Segregation will probably be upheld on all levels while discrimination is being fought and decreased. Segregation will less and less be a means of economy; gradually it will, instead, become a financial burden. It is not unlikely that segregation will then start to break down on the highest level. In the total view, the prospects are thus not entirely discouraging. In fact, *there have never been, since Reconstruction, fewer reasons for a defeatist attitude in regard to Negro education in the South.*

In spite of much and heated discussion regarding the type of Negro education, its actual development has never followed any plan or theory. The main problem has always been not what sort but *how much education the Negro should have and how much he gets.* Even today the chief problem is how to get increased appropriations and improved standards. As we have hinted, the theory of "industrial" training for Negroes has had its main function in being a bait for the powers of the purse in Northern philanthropy and in Southern public budgets. And the truth is that *any type of improved education for Negroes is salutary.*

There is an immense need of *new school buildings* for Negroes, particularly in rural districts but also in most Southern cities. There is also need for new *equipment* of all sorts, for *consolidated schools* and for *school buses.* After the close of the present war there is going to be, in all likelihood, a great necessity for public works to mitigate unemployment, and much of this activity is bound to be directed upon erecting buildings for public schools.

The only sound and democratic principle for distributing the benefits of the post-war public works policy in various districts and groups would be to build for those districts and groups in the nation whose old buildings are worst. Such a policy would, in the South, mean concentrating almost the whole activity on building Negro schools and other buildings for Negroes. The old Negro schools are generally so bad and inadequate that this kind of public construction would suffice to occupy the unemployed for quite a while. Such a policy will probably not be followed for political reasons. It is, however, not only a Negro interest but a general democratic interest that this policy be pressed, so that Negro schools get the maximum out of any post-war unemployment emergency. As communities usually want to have buildings erected independent of their purposes if they do not have to pay for them—because they mean work and income for the community—and as Southerners are not likely to object too much if Negro school buildings are built with federal money, it should be taken up for deliberation whether it would not be a wise policy to distribute federal aid to education in the form of taking over the responsibility for erecting and furnishing the buildings.

A second most important condition for progress is to improve *the standards of Negro teachers.* This has been seen by the Northern foundations and also by many of the Southern state authorities, and much effort has gone into improving teacher training in the South. Southern state and private Negro colleges largely serve this purpose. Many of the small Negro colleges in the South are inadequate and the whole system needs to be systematized. Many of them will, perhaps, succumb in the financial strain of the present War, and this might turn out to be a blessing in disguise if the remaining colleges are increased and improved correspondingly. The establishment of a new model teacher-training college in the South would be a great service which a farsighted federal policy could undertake in order to equalize educational opportunities for Negroes. Meanwhile the raised salary scales, to which the South will be compelled, will probably raise the standards of training Negro teachers. Negro teachers need not only better training and higher salaries; they also need more security of tenure. If the rural teacher could be given a greater independence and a higher prestige, this, by itself, would make her a better teacher and, particularly, increase the influence of the school over the community.

If the federal government undertakes further financial responsibility for education,[a] it will be up against a problem which has been bothering the philanthropic foundations for a long time, although it is seldom discussed openly: How is it possible to aid without decreasing local responsibility? In the author's judgment, *Northern philanthropy in its grand-scale charity toward the South, incidental to its positive accomplishments, has also had a demoralizing influence on the South.* The South has become accustomed to taking it for granted that not only rich people in the North, but also poor church boards, should send money South, thus eternally repaying "the responsibility of the North for Reconstruction." Thus far, rich people in the South have been less inclined to give away their money for philanthropic purposes.

For these moral reasons it is important, when the federal government steps in, that local financial responsibility be preserved as much as possible. *The ideal solution would be that the federal government pay certain basic costs all over the country,* such as original building costs and a basic teacher's salary. It is, of course, of special importance that, as far as possible, *absence of discrimination be made a condition for aid.* Otherwise the idea will become established that Negro education is the business of the federal government and less a concern of the state and the municipalities. In this sense there is a danger that the Negro people might become "the ward of the nation."

Our assumption was that, to improve Negro education, larger appropriations, better buildings, more equipment, better paid and trained teachers

[a] For a consideration of what the federal government has already done, see Chapter 15, Section 3.

are essential. By this we did not want to discount altogether the problem of the direction of Negro education but only to retain true proportions. The main fault with Negro education is that it is undernourished and inadequate. As it is improved, however, the problem of its direction becomes important. Even when Negro education is on a low level, as in most rural districts at present, it is, of course, important not to have it misdirected. But the choice seems, for the most part, still to be between an antediluvian "industrial" education and an equally antediluvian "classical" education.[40]

The Jeanes teacher movement and other constructive attempts in Southern Negro education have tried to work out a makeshift policy in which the emphasis is laid upon maintaining and enriching the relations of the student to his community.[41] This is all very well, and entirely in line with modern educational theory as it has been developed in America. But one main point seems forgotten. With the present trends in Southern agriculture and American agricultural policy, it is fairly certain that many of the children born in a cotton county today are going to live and work not in cotton districts but in Northern and Southern cities. Many of the children born in a Southern city are going to live in the different environment of the Northern metropolis. If the American economy and economic policy are not going to stagnate, Negroes are going to work in new occupations within the next generation. *What is needed is an education which makes the Negro child adaptable to and movable in the American culture at large.*

Even the Negro child who will stay in Southern agriculture will need to use various types of machinery, to follow popular journals in his field, to deal with credit institutions and government agencies, and successfully to take part in organizations. He needs to be able to read, write, and reckon, and to be lifted so high above illiteracy that he actually participates in modern American society. Before all, he needs not to be specialized, but to be changeable, "educable." And *he needs it more than the white child, because life will be more difficult for him.*

The right balance between "industrial" and "classical" education can be struck if due weight is given to the prospect of mobility and change. The masses of Negro children are going to be laborers on the farms and in industries; some are going to be skilled laborers. We do not know where and in what occupation they are going to work, but we know there is going to be much moving around. They need to be taught skills; but the value of any vocational training should be judged in terms of the extent to which the skills acquired are transferable into skills in other trades. They need to be familiarized with the printed word and culture that is found in books, and, indeed, to get as much of the general American culture as they possibly can.

Meanwhile, Southern Negro schools are going to remain inadequate. The North will continue for many decades to get untutored and crude

Negro immigrants from the South. These uneducated masses of Southern-born Negroes will be a heavy burden on the social and economic order in the North. It is, therefore, an interest for Northern cities, and not only for the migratory Negroes, that *a program of adult education be instituted to teach the migrating Negro masses the elements of American culture and also, perhaps, elements of vocational skills.*

More significant in the dynamics of Negro education than the low average standards in some regions are the high standards in others, and the general trend toward improvement. The American nation will not have peace with its conscience until inequality is stamped out, and the principle of public education is realized universally.

CHAPTER 42

THE NEGRO PRESS

1. An Organ for the Negro Protest

Most white people in America are entirely unaware of the bitter and relentless criticism of themselves; of their policies in domestic or international affairs; their legal and political practices; their business enterprises; their churches, schools, and other institutions; their social customs, their opinions and prejudices; and almost everything else in white American civilization. Week in and week out these are presented to the Negro people in their own press. It is a fighting press.

> Negro papers are first of all race papers. They are first and foremost interested in the advancement of the race. A large percentage of the editorials are concerned with justice to the race, with equal privileges, with facts of race progress, or with complaint against conditions as they are. Of course there occur from time to time well written editorials on topics of general interest, such as world peace, better political adjustment, or the progress of civilization; but it still remains true that most of the editorials are distinctly racial. The articles in these papers are usually propaganda—that is, they follow the line of the editorials. A great many are genuinely inflammatory.[1]

The Negro papers offer something not found in the white press:

> Through all the Negro press there flows an undercurrent of feeling that the race considers itself a part of America and yet has no voice in the American newspaper. Members of this group want to learn about each other, they want the stories of their success, conflicts, and issues told, and they want to express themselves in public.[2]

The purpose of the press is clearly conceived. P. B. Young, the editor of one of the best Negro papers, the Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, expresses it thus:

> Traditionally our press is a special pleader; it is an advocate of human rights.[3]

There are at present about 210 Negro weekly, semi-weekly, or bi-weekly newspapers.[a] Some of these are for the general Negro public; others are

[a] Florence Murray (editor), *The Negro Handbook* (1942), p. 201. (The figures are taken from a U. S. Bureau of the Census report for 1940.) There have been repeated attempts to launch Negro dailies but they have regularly failed. (See G. James Fleming, "The Negro Press," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Chapter IX.) The Atlanta

organs of Negro religious denominations and labor organizations. Most of the general newspapers have a circulation limited to the locality where they are published. But ten to twenty Negro papers have large circulations extending to whole regions and sometimes to all Negro America. In addition there are some 129 monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly magazines.[4] Two of these have outstanding national importance: *The Crisis*, published by the N.A.A.C.P., and *Opportunity*, published by the National Urban League.[a] The others are almost all organs of Negro religious denominations, fraternal orders, professional groups, colleges and schools. Only four Negro magazines are pictorial or theatrical.[5] The weekly press alone has a total circulation of around one and a half million.[6]

Practically all Negroes who can read are exposed to the influence of the Negro press at least some of the time. Perhaps a third of the Negro families in cities regularly subscribe to Negro newspapers,[7] but the proportion is much smaller in rural areas. The readers of the Negro press are, however, the most alert and articulate individuals who form Negro opinion. Newspapers are commonly passed from family to family, and they are sometimes read out loud in informal gatherings. They are available in barbershops, and sometimes in churches, lodges and pool parlors. Their contents are passed by word of mouth among those who cannot read.[8] Indirectly, therefore, even aside from circulation figures, this press influences a large proportion of the Negro population.

No unifying central agency directs the opinions expressed in the Negro press. Like white newspapers, Negro newspapers are in keen competition with one another for circulation. Without discounting either the idealistic zeal and the strength of personal opinion of many editors, columnists, and other Negro newspapersmen, or the influence of petty corruption in the Negro papers, by and large the Negro press provides the news and the opinions which its reading public wants. This inference has the corollary

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Daily World is the only daily newspaper at the present time. In 1940 its daily circulation was about 5,000, but it had a weekly edition with a larger circulation. (*Ibid.*, Chapter IX, pp. 8 ff.)

[a] Among the magazines, *The Interracial Review*, an organ for Catholic Action, comes next perhaps in importance. *Silhouette* is a picture monthly, surviving *Flash* and *Candid*, which followed the *Life* pattern. A high place is held by *The Journal of Negro History*, edited by Carter G. Woodson; *Journal of Negro Education*, edited by Charles Thompson of Howard University; and *Phylon, The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture*, edited by W. E. B. Du Bois. For some further notes on the publications or organizations and on the earlier appearances and disappearances of Negro magazines, see Fleming, *op. cit.*, Chapter XII. Also see: Sidney V. Reedy, "The Negro Magazine: A Critical Study of Its Educational Significance," *Journal of Negro Education* (October, 1934), pp. 598-604. In this chapter we shall concentrate our attention on the regular Negro weeklies, which, at least directly, are of greatest importance for the formation of Negro opinion. Most of what we have to say is, *mutatis mutandis*, valid for the periodicals also.

conclusion that Negro opinion—at least among the more alert and articulate groups—can be ascertained and studied in the Negro press.

The opinions expressed in the Negro press—directly in the editorials and columns and indirectly in the type of news selected—are remarkably similar all over the country. This is undoubtedly caused by the common demands of the reading public and the similarity of *milieu* of the competing journalists. Negro papers in the South tend to be more cautious and less belligerent. But a large proportion of all Negro papers bought and read in the South are published in the North.[9] This Northern competition explains to some extent why even Southern Negro newspapers give such a relatively blunt expression to the Negro protest. The more basic explanation, however, is that this is what the Southern Negro public wants to read, too. In the South, where concerted action on the part of Negroes is usually so severely checked, and where Negro leadership in all practical matters has to be accommodating, most of the time,[a] the Negro press serves as a safety-valve for the boiling Negro protest.

This is possible—like the great amount of Negro protest within the walls of the Negro church and the Negro school—because the whites seldom know much about it. Whites, apparently, very rarely see Negro papers. Even when they do come across them, there is a certain abstract feeling among all Americans for the freedom of the press which, even in the South, covers the Negro newspapers. The Southern Negro press, further, usually takes the precaution of not attaching its protest too much to local issues and news, but to general principles, national issues, and news from distant points. The local pages in Southern Negro papers are usually restrained.

Northern Negro papers are less afraid of carrying the Negro protest into local news and issues. But even in the North most of the local coverage tends to be restricted to news and gossip about the town. Indirectly, however, even the pages devoted to the local community have a protest purpose as well as an informational purpose in both the North and the South. All Negroes, and particularly the ambitious upper and middle classes of Negroes who make up most of the reading public, are aware that white Americans deny them social status and social distinction. This makes class and accomplishment seem tremendously important. The display of Negro "society news" in the Negro press is partly an answer to the social derogation from the whites.

The more important and open expressions of the Negro protest are to be found in the news coverage of the whole American Negro world and, to an extent, the Negro world outside the United States, and also in the columns and editorials on the status of the Negro people. It is a characteristic of the Negro press that if, on the one hand, it is provincial in focusing interest on the race angle, it, on the other hand, embraces the whole race

[a] See Chapters 34 and 37.

world. *The press defines the Negro group to the Negroes themselves.* The individual Negro is invited to share in the sufferings, grievances, and pretensions of the millions of Negroes far outside the narrow local community. This creates a feeling of strength and solidarity. The press, more than any other institution, has created the Negro group as a social and psychological reality to the individual Negro.

For this reason the Negro press is far more than a mere expression of the Negro protest. By expressing the protest, the press also magnifies it, acting like a huge sounding board. The press is also the chief agency of group control. It tells the individual how he should think and feel as an American Negro and creates a tremendous power of suggestion by implying that all other Negroes think and feel in this manner. It keeps the Negro spokesman in line. Every public figure knows he will be reported, and he has to weigh his words carefully. Both the leaders and the masses are kept under racial discipline by the press. This promotes unanimity without the aid of central direction.

The Negro press is thus strongly opinionated. This points to a difference between the Negro press and the foreign-language press supported by the various immigrant groups in America.[a] Both types of "minority press" serve the interest of their groups to read more news about themselves than the "majority press" cares to give them. Many individuals in the immigrant groups are also not familiar with the English language, and a foreign-language paper is to them a practical news agency. Many more feel a certain pride in a non-American origin and culture. But this attachment is usually experienced as a sentimental quality of distinction, besides that of being, or becoming, an American. Immigrants are usually bent on assimilation and, as good prospects are held out to them,[b] they feel little desire to protest.[c]

Negroes, on the contrary, have no language of their own, and their culture is American. But, however much culturally assimilated they are, they are not accepted as full-fledged Americans. They protest, not because they feel themselves different, but because they want to be similar and are forcibly held to be different.[d] The news in the Negro papers is selected and

[a] For a sociological analysis of the immigrant press, see Robert E. Park, *The Immigrant Press and Its Control* (1922).

[b] See Chapter 3, Section 1.

[c] This is true in all ordinary immigrant groups which do not feel very disadvantaged, and who are consequently not in opposition to their treatment in America. Exceptions are the papers of very disadvantaged groups or of extremely radical sub-groups.

[d] To the white American their pretensions are preposterous. "The impatient, all but militant and anti-social attitude of an influential section of the Negro press is to be condemned in this connection. These editors show an unfortunate lack of appreciation of the traits of the people they aspire to lead. Their language implies that the Negro is only an Anglo-Saxon who is so unfortunate as to have a black skin. Such a race philosophy only

edited to prove the theory that they are similar and that they should be treated as ordinary Americans.

In a sense, the Negro newspapers have, thus, an opposite purpose from the ordinary immigrant papers, which take full assimilation of the group for granted and cater only to temporary language difficulties and to a sentimental pride in keeping up a cherished ethnic and cultural distinction. The foreign-language press is doomed to disappear as the immigrants become fully assimilated and are not replenished by new immigration. The Negro press, on the contrary, is bound to become ever stronger as Negroes are increasingly educated and culturally assimilated but not given entrance to the white world.

In spite of this basic difference in purpose and "function," the two types of press are interesting to compare. In many important technical respects they show similarities. Both the immigrant papers and the Negro papers usually have their reading public spread all over the country, and both tend to become regional or national in circulation. Both ordinarily serve a reading public below the average in income. Both, therefore, have difficulty in soliciting advertising, which tends to keep them marginal as economic enterprises. At present, the foreign-language press is often better protected against competition from the majority press; it can support many dailies.[a] With the decrease in the number of persons who read only a foreign language well, even the foreign-language papers will tend to become what the Negro papers already are, namely, papers read in addition to ordinary American newspapers. They will then also tend to be weekly and to be published in English, until they finally disappear altogether.[b]

2. THE GROWTH OF THE NEGRO PRESS[10]

The development of the Negro press follows closely two interrelated trends: the rising Negro protest and the increase of Negro literacy. The Negro press was born in the struggle against slavery as a Negro branch of the Abolitionist propaganda organs in the North. The first Negro newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, was launched in 1827 in New York by John B. Russwurm and Samuel E. Cornish. Detweiler counts 24 Negro journals appearing before the Civil War. Some of them were rather short-lived.[11]

works injustice to the Negro himself and it is high time to discard it." (John M. Mecklin, *Democracy and Race Friction* [1914], p. 46.)

[a] In Chicago alone there are some 20 to 25 foreign-language daily newspapers (Elizabeth D. Johns, "The Role of the Negro Newspaper in the Negro Community," unpublished manuscript made available through the courtesy of the author [1940], p. 24), while the Negroes have not succeeded in keeping up dailies. There is at present only one Negro daily (see footnote a few pages back). This is in spite of the fact that there are nearly 13 million Negroes in the country, as compared to only 11 million foreign-born whites and the latter are split up into many nationalities.

[b] This process has proceeded far, for instance, in the Scandinavian language groups.

The most famous of them was the *North Star,* edited by Frederick Douglass. It continued to be published—later as *Frederick Douglass's Paper*—until Emancipation, and had some white subscribers. Emancipation marked the end of this first period of Negro journalism. For the later development of the Negro press the tradition of militancy set during this first period was important. Many of those journals had been protesting, not only against slavery but also against discrimination in the North, and had advocated full civil liberties. They generally kept a high intellectual standard. James Weldon Johnson testifies:

> It is astounding on glancing backward to see how well written and edited were the majority of these periodicals. They stated and pleaded their cause with a logic and eloquence which seldom fell below the highest level of the journalism of the period. And yet it is not, after all, astounding—there was the great cause, the auspicious time; and, by some curiously propitious means there were, too, the men able to measure up to the cause and the time. There were among the editors of these papers, especially in New York, men of ability and men of learning.[12]

After Emancipation, Negro papers could be published and distributed in the South. The campaign of Negroes to learn to read and the high prestige of the printed word provided a steadily growing Negro public. Negro papers started after Emancipation were "organs" for the Republican party. The Restoration was a hard blow for the Negro press, but the slow migration to the North and the gradually rising proportion of literates in the Negro population sustained a rising number of Negro newspapers.

In 1870 there were only about 10 Negro journals in America; in 1880 there were 31; and in 1890 there were 154.[13] In 1880 there were Negro publications in nineteen states; in 1890 in twenty-eight states. Most of these journals had a small circulation; many were only fly-by-night enterprises. Some of them, as the Washington *Bee,* the Cleveland *Gazette,* the Philadelphia *Tribune,* and the New York *Age,* were, however, destined to have many years of national influence. Their success was largely the result of the "force of the personalities of their editors."[14]

From the Negroes' point of view, this period was a time of reaction and pessimism. The Negro press was not belligerent according to present standards, but followed Booker T. Washington's conciliatory course.[a] But in 1901 the Boston *Guardian* was launched by William Monroe Trotter as an uncompromisingly militant organ in the Abolitionist tradition. It got

[a] When the Niagara movement started, one of the main points of the reform program launched by the radical Negro intellectuals was to fight the corruption of the Negro press. More specifically, they accused the "Tuskegee Machine" (see Chapter 35, Section 3) of exerting undue pressure upon the Negro press In 1904 Du Bois published a statement in the Boston *Guardian* concerning the venality of certain Negro papers which he charged had sold out to Mr. Washington. In his autobiography he reiterates the charges. (See *Dusk of Dawn* [1940], pp. 76 ff., 86 ff., *passim*).

a nation-wide reading public among the Negro intellectuals and was a force behind the Niagara movement.[a] In 1905, Robert S. Abbott started his Chicago *Defender*, which was destined to revolutionize Negro journalism. The foundation of the N.A.A.C.P. in 1909 and the publishing of *The Crisis* in 1910 gave further impulse to racial radicalism in the press.

But it was the First World War that provided the tide of protest upon which the press rose in importance and militancy. It was largely the Negro newspapers that made the Negroes fully conscious of the inconsistency between America's war aims to "make the world safe for democracy" and her treatment of this minority at home. It was also the Negro press that made the northward migration into a Negro protest movement.[b]

There was a more immediate personal interest in the contents of the press. Negroes wanted to read about employment possibilities and the stream of migration; about what happened to the 400,000 drafted Negro men and the 200,000 Negro soldiers in France. As riots increased in number and bloodiness, they wanted to read about them. The government believed that the Negro press was dangerous for morale during the War, and had to call a conference of Negro editors and other Negro leaders. It was staged as an important move and provided headlines in the Negro press. "With 'copy' like this to work on, every paper could exploit the war, and could benefit from it if its publisher was capable or willing to make the most of the circumstances."[15]

The Negro, due to the War and to the Great Migration, had moved out of the isolated Negro community. In some places in the South attempts were made to keep out Negro newspapers from the North.[16] This, again, provided stories and grievances and gave additional emotional value to the Northern Negro newspaper in the eyes of Southern Negroes. The circulation of the Negro press swelled.

After the War there were other things to keep up this interest in Negro newspapers: the continued wave of lynchings and riots, the Garvey movement, the friendliness on the part of the Communists and other radical groups emerging during the 'twenties, the continuing migration and the problems that accompanied it. During the 'thirties Negro welfare was deeply involved in most government policies, and there was a new type of discrimination. The shift of the Negro vote from the Republican party to the New Deal Democrats was a dramatic move of Northern Negroes.

The Second World War again increased unrest, suspicion, and dissatisfaction, which it is the opportunity of the press to stir up and organize. Again the inconsistency between expressed war aims and domestic policy becomes glaring. Again there is discrimination in the Army, Navy, and Air Force, and in the war industries. Again there are Negro heroes, unrec-

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 4.

[b] See Chapters 8 and 35.

ognized by the whites, to praise. And again the low war morale of the Negro people becomes a worry to the government. Again white leaders come out with declarations that justice must be given to Negroes. The Administration makes cautious concessions. Negro leaders are more determined. All this makes good "copy."

Now the color question is involved in the world conflagration. There is probably not a single issue of any one of the big weeklies which does not point out the failure of the British to give India independence, or contain editorial reflections to the effect that the defeat in Singapore and elsewhere was due to the Britishers' having maltreated and lost the confidence of the natives. China, moreover, cannot be expected to have too much trust in America which discriminates against all colored people. There is plenty of psychological compensation which the Negro press can now offer, and the opportunity is well exploited. There is little doubt that the Negro press is again making headway—carried along upon the rising tide of the protest.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEGRO PRESS

Negro newspapers are similar to ordinary American newspapers, particularly those circulating among the lower classes. Many of the dissimilarities are only the exaggerations of common American traits, called forth by the caste situation. For a true perspective, it is important to keep this constantly in mind when discussing the characteristics of the Negro press in terms of dissimilarities.

As already mentioned, the Negro newspaper is typically an "additional paper." More white papers are probably bought and read by Negroes than Negro papers. The Negro papers, therefore, largely supplement the ordinary papers with Negro news and opinions.

Even in this field they are not without competition. A few liberal white newspapers in the South present noncontroversial news from the local Negro world and, occasionally, some from other places. Some Southern newspapers sell a special edition, often marked with a star or several stars, in the Negro community, which is never seen in the white section of the city. Not only are most whites unaware of these "black star" editions, but many Negroes believe they are buying the regular white newspaper. In these special editions Negroes get a whole page or more for themselves, often substituting for the financial news. There they may be called by the titles of Mr. and Mrs. and have plenty of information on local Negro social life, associations and churches. These white newspapers do not give as much Negro news from the rest of the nation as Negro newspapers, and they do not express the Negro protest.

It is difficult to determine how much competition the white press in the South—of both the liberal and "black star" types—offers to the Negro press. The fact that the Negro newspaper is only an "additional" paper

that comes out once a week may cause Negroes to neglect it. The limited coverage of the Negro press and its reporting of news that is usually a few days old work against it. Also, some Negroes get "fed up" with the problem and protest news, and turn with relief to a general newspaper that contains the little social news about Negroes in which they are interested. On the other hand, because the Negro paper is only an "additional" one, like a magazine, Negroes may be willing to buy both papers if they buy any at all. The fact that the Negro press in the whole country has a circulation of about one and a half millions, which includes about one-third of all Negro families in the country,[a] is a reason for believing that their weekly newspapers are not greatly hurt by competition from the Southern white daily press.

There are, however, two types of indirect competition. First, the provision of some Negro news in "black star" editions and in the regular liberal newspapers prevents the Negro press from carrying on a completely effective campaign against the white press on grounds of discrimination. Second, because of this and because Negro newspapers could not afford to provide general national and local news in addition to Negro news, the existence of the white press prevents the success of a daily Negro newspaper. Indeed, there is much soundness in the argument that the Negro newspaper remain a weekly one, since it could not hope to compete in providing general news as a daily paper. Many Negroes claim to get "fed up" on the Negro newspaper. This attitude would become accentuated if the Negro newspaper should appear daily.

In the North there are no special Negro editions of the white daily press, and, with rare exceptions, white papers give even less attention to Negro life than is becoming standard in the Southern liberal press. One exception that should be mentioned is the New York newspaper with a national circulation, *PM*.[17] Although they do not give space to Negro news, it is possible that the Hearst newspapers attract a good many lower class Negroes. It is not known how much the white daily press competes with the Negro weekly press in the North, but it is probable that the competition is even less than in the South. The stronger "race pride" in the North and the high quality of many of the large Northern Negro newspapers are also factors.

As the Negro newspaper is a weekly paper, as Negro news is not too plentiful because of the paucity of agencies and reporters to communicate it, and as much of the news is several days old when it appears in the weekly press, it is natural that editorials, columns, and other non-news

[a] This equation is not quite justified, of course, because some families subscribe to more than one Negro newspaper. But it will do for rough calculations, since one and a half million persons, if they were no more than one person from each family, would include more than one-third of all Negro families.

items are given a proportionally larger space than in an ordinary daily newspaper, and that the news itself is more "edited." This is true, incidentally, of all weeklies, whether Negro or not. In the Negro weekly it is further motivated by the strong propaganda purpose: the news is presented mainly to prove the thesis of the Negro protest.

The Negro weekly is ordinarily a "sensational" paper. It is true that there are degrees: The highly respected and respectable Norfolk *Journal and Guide* is more conservative in its appearance, and many of the poor Negro organs in smaller cities do not reach the technical standard where sensationalism is possible. But by and large, the statement is true. Sensational journalism is, however, not an un-American trait. The Negro press has merely adopted a technique from the white press with which it is in competition. The most sensational white newspapers are found in the big cities, and there they appeal to the masses. Fleming observes:

> It is not by accident, it should be pointed out, that the Negro papers which traditionally and consistently feature big, black headlines across Page One and show other marks of sensationalism are in the cities where Hearst papers are also published with their striking headlines making appeal also to the Negro and other mass readers. For instance, there are Negro papers which have lost circulation because Hearst papers, and others, could do a better job of carrying features giving "number" tips to policy players and bringing the daily reports of the stock market for betting purposes.[18]

The Negro editors and publishers give the same type of defense for the sensationalistic technique in journalism as do their white colleagues:

> . . . they want to reach the largest possible number of readers, in order to use that following as an instrument for improving and advancing the race.[19]

Thus the main factor in the explanation of why the Negro press exaggerates the American pattern of sensational journalism is, of course, that the Negro community, compared with the white world, is so predominantly lower class. It is true that the lower half of the Negro community probably does not belong to the regular and direct audience of the Negro press.[20] Even if practically all persons belonging to the upper class were to buy Negro papers, this could not sustain them. The main reading public must belong to the middle class and the upper layers of the lower class. Hence, in the main, an expansion of the circulation, which every paper aims at, must be obtained in the lower strata of the Negro community. In this struggle to increase circulation, sensationalism is a rational policy.

Sensationalism also occurs in the Negro press because it is an "additional" Negro paper. Its excuse for existing is to select those items with a race angle and to "play them up," as they are "played down" in the ordinary white press. In hammering the Negro protest week after week, the press is constantly in danger of becoming abstract and tedious. It must, therefore,

attempt to "personalize" the news as much as possible. It must accentuate the human-interest angle, and create a feeling that people are fighting and that big things are happening.

Much space is thus devoted to crime. This might seem surprising since Negroes rightly accuse white newspapers of giving too much space to Negro crime and too little to all other Negro activities. But most Negroes, like other lower class persons, want to read about crimes.[a] Furthermore, the white papers write much about crimes committed by Negroes against whites, but little about crimes in the Negro community and about crimes committed by white persons against Negroes. The last item, particularly, is important to the Negro newspapers seeking to combat and, if possible, to reverse the white stereotypes of "the criminal Negro." Crimes against Negroes by whites are always "played up" greatly. Lynchings are, of course, and have always been, a specialty for the Negro press. In the other direction, the Negro press is likely to treat as sensational individual accomplishments of Negroes and public statements by whites for or against the caste system. It will also dramatize the society news.

Few features in the Negro press seem more ridiculous to the ordinary white American than the display of Negro society. At the same time, no other news items in the Negro press demonstrate better how the social patterns and interests of Negroes are typically, and even over-typically, those of ordinary Americans. Fleming observes rightly:

> Many a sermon has been preached about Negro "sassiety" and of the way Negroes fritter away their time in the frivolities recorded on the society page. The answer lies

[a] It is interesting to observe, on the other hand, that "sex" is played up less in the Negro press than in the white tabloids appealing to lower class people. The Negro newspapers have more pictures of women, but almost generally they are dressed and they are presented in a social setting. These pictures are displayed in order to show off Negro society. The great social role given women is a general American trait and is, in the Negro world, particularly understandable when we remember the close ideological association between "white supremacy" in the South and "Southern womanhood." There seem, however, to be fewer pictures of alluring women displayed to tempt the sexual appetite of the readers. This impressionistic observation is corroborated by Susan M. Kingsbury, Hornell Hart, and Associates, *Newspapers and the News* (1937); four Negro papers (the Chicago *Defender*, the New York *Amsterdam News*, the New York *Age* and the Baltimore *Afro-American*) were found to give "less attention" to sex interests than did the white tabloid. (*Ibid.*, p. 88.) To the outside observer the lively interest in everything with "sex-appeal" in America appears as a backwash of puritanism. The observation has also been made by Negroes. James Weldon Johnson comments:

"An examination of the vast number of salacious white periodicals published in the U.S. would incline one to think that sex has gone to the white man's head, transferred its seat to the imagination. When sex goes to the head, it loses its lusty, wholesome quality and begins to fester, to become maggoty. Sex with us is, in a large measure, still in the lusty, wholesome stage. Let's keep it there as long as we possibly can." (*Negro Americans, What Now?* [1934], pp. 29-30.)

in the background of the Negro: a people whose tastes, goals and ideals—both from formal training and informal ideals—are strictly American, with no special religious or nationalistic heritage being passed on to them in a way comparable to the experience of the Jew or the offspring of more recent immigrants. In addition, Negroes in America have been largely a servant class, coming into close contact with the "cream" of American social position. From the days of slavery, therefore, they have known what is considered good taste and fine manners, and have sought to make their own lives after the pattern of the masters. Negroes also read the magazines and newspapers and see the same moving pictures as does the rest of America! There is more truth than jest in the saying among Negroes that if you visit a Negro's home where the dinner service is complete in every detail and where the host and hostess know what to do with every piece of dinnerware, behold! there is a household where someone, at some time, has been a butler, valet, maid or cook to some of the best families of America (not wholly true, but suggestive).[21]

The "society" page of the Negro newspaper is a direct copy of that of the white paper. It is certainly no more exaggerated than the gossip pages of the small-town American newspaper. Whites are amused by it partly because of their belief in the inferiority of the Negro, but also partly because they are seldom aware of the existence of a Negro upper class, especially one so attentive to the social niceties.

Most upper and middle class Negroes "over-do" their social activity because they are struggling for status as individuals. Social mobility is great. Negroes stress "society" because whites deny them social prestige. They have to create prestige and distinctions of prestige among themselves, and there is an element of the caste protest in demonstrating that they have done it. But apart from this, Negroes, in their isolated and cramped world, enjoy reading about themselves in pleasant situations just like other small-town Americans. The society pages in a Negro paper are, indeed, most similar to the small-city white newspaper. While the Negro paper has the character of a small-town paper, at the same time, by covering the whole country and the world from the race angle in its general news, it keeps the character of a general race paper.

It seems probable that the society news in a Negro paper—as also in the small-city white paper—is of greatest importance for keeping up its sale. Many editors say that they feel that Negroes buy their papers partly because there they can read about themselves and their friends or social competitors. The Negro paper gives almost every upper or middle class Negro family a chance now and then to see one of the family displayed with name and picture, at least as a member of a club, a church, a committee, a high school class, or as attending a tea, a dance, a bridge party or a sports event. Fleming observes:

In the large, anybody not in the criminal class, can get a "personal" or "social note" in the Negro paper.[22]

This personal publicity in many cases also gives the editor or, in bigger Negro papers, his usually underpaid employees, some additional income.[a]

Usually it is not so much the arrived upper class persons who strive for publicity in this Negro press as the people who are striving and aspire for recognition. But the former group gets its share because it is the pride of the Negro community and most often it dominates the civic organizations like the N.A.A.C.P., even if it leaves the churches and the lodges to the ambitious middle class. The news about all this organizational activity in the isolated Negro community—of churches, clubs, associations—serves primarily a purely practical purpose of giving certain information which is not offered in the ordinary press. It also defines the Negro community as an institutionalized society to the individual Negro, who is excluded so much from white society, and it gives him a feeling of security and belongingness. In all organizational activity there is also usually a "race cause" present, and even this news serves the protest motive in some degree. And, more or less incidentally, it supplements the society news in reporting on personal status and accomplishments of prominent individuals.

The sports columns, likewise, have for their purpose to record and exalt Negro performances. Even the comics usually have, in addition to their regular purpose to distract and amuse, also a race message to tell: that the Negro is witty, that he is clever, that he is strong, and occasionally, that the whites are mean and inferior. When the Negro press indulges in self-criticism of the "race," there is often a prefatory repudiation of the white stereotypes of the "lazy" or "criminal" Negro and an attempt to redefine the characteristics in Negro terms: that Negroes are too good-hearted, too easily deceived and cannot "keep together." The Negro press makes an emphatic appeal to the Negroes to show in life and deed that the whites are mistaken. The Negro newspapers do what the national press in every country can be observed to do: they flatter the group and appeal to group-pride even when admonishing; they help to make it feel self-confident and superior.

4. The Controls of the Negro Press

The Negro press is primarily controlled by the *active members* of the upper and middle classes of the Negro community. As we have mentioned, these classes make up a great part of its subscribers. The people who publish and write the Negro newspapers belong to the upper class. It is the doings and sayings of people in the upper and middle classes that are recorded in the Negro press. They, therefore, set its tone. Indeed, the

[a] I have met this practice of demanding a small amount of money for taking society news and even associational material in many Negro communities, but can, of course, neither know about its financial importance nor if it is also a practice in the comparable white press.

Negro newspapers are one of the chief agencies for the Negro upper class to spread its opinions among the lower classes of the Negro community.

In the Negro newspapers one can see displayed the dilemma of the upper class which we have often commented upon. They react with even more resentment than lower class Negroes against the humiliation of Jim Crow segregation. However, the caste barriers serve partly as a protection to give them special opportunities and status. They need to appeal to racial solidarity to avert lower class hostility against themselves and to perfect their economic and social monopolies. But they also must desire to stress accomplishments and distinctions within the Negro community behind the caste wall, and they want to have painted in the Negro press the pleasantness of the life they enjoy. Frazier observes:

> The Negro upper class, as we have remarked, has an essentially middle-class outlook (that is, in the historic sense), but in their philosophy and behavior one finds all forms of antiquated aristocratic attitudes toward work and expenditures as well as a "sporting complex." On the other hand, this class places great emphasis upon success and conspicuous consumption. Because of their isolation, members of this class overemphasize the importance of their position in the Negro world and speak contemptuously of poor whites (who incidentally include public school teachers). They exhibit an almost childish awe toward professional men, especially physicians. The confusion in ideals and values is also vividly represented in Negro newspapers. These news organs are intensely race conscious and exhibit considerable pride in the achievements of the Negro, most of which are meager performances as measured by broader standards. In addition to carrying a large number of advertisements of products designed to conceal Negro characteristics, these papers constantly play up the slightest recognition shown the Negro by whites. The confusion in ideologies is shown in other respects. For example, a casual reader of the *Afro-American* might get the impression that this newspaper is far to the "left" and espouses working class ideals, but a regular reader would find that upon occasions it is likely to play up the activities of Negro "society" or voice some reactionary religious or economic ideal.[23]

The upper class control of the Negro press gives it an essential conservatism, which only the casual white reader will not observe. The Negro lower classes, however, are caught in the same dilemma. They have accepted white values, even when they are brought to protest against white exclusion. They thus take a vicarious satisfaction out of reading about Negro accomplishments and even about the conspicuous consumption of the Negro upper classes. The lower classes also are radical only in the race question.

The upper class should not, therefore, be held entirely responsible for the ideology of the Negro press. The lower classes also play a part in its control, since they contain the bulk of potential readers. As the educational level is raised and the circulation of Negro newspapers broadened, their control can be expected to have increasing weight. In all political matters which have a bearing upon the welfare of the poorer classes, the majority

of Negro papers take a "radical" stand. The same is becoming true on the issue of labor unionism. The fact that most persons in the upper class are dependent, directly or indirectly, upon the economic welfare of the masses for their livelihood tends to bend the political opinions of the Negro upper class toward economic "radicalism."

Park, in his study of the immigrant press, pointed out: "In many cases the advertisements reveal the organization of the immigrant community more fully than does the rest of the paper,"[24] and the same is true also of the Negro paper. The main observation about the advertising in the Negro press is that there is so little of it. And there does not seem to be much of a trend toward an increase.[a] In the almost complete absence of much ordinary commercial advertising, the ads for "hair-straighteners," "skin-bleachers," and other cosmetics, patent medicines, dream books and "occults" become the more conspicuous.[25] They often include half or more of all advertising in a Negro paper.

The paucity of advertising, of course, makes the economy of a Negro newspaper precarious.[b] It cannot keep the copy price too high, either, if it wants a substantial circulation. These factors explain why some Negro papers are so weak economically. It is often pointed out by Negro newspapermen that the paucity of advertising at least has one good effect, that the Negro press becomes freer from any outside controls. It depends more exclusively on its readers. There is undoubtedly some truth in this. On the other hand, the weak economy of the average Negro newspaper must make it easier to buy it for little money, if anybody cares to. There is gossip in the Negro communities about how one or another Negro paper has "sold out for an ad." It is significant that small Negro newspapers often start up in Northern cities just before an important election and disappear after the election is over.[26]

[a] Fleming reports from the 1940 meeting of the Negro Newspaper Publishers' Association in Chicago:

"At the recent meeting . . . publisher after publisher reported his paper's losing fight to get advertising for soap, dental cream and chain grocery stores—and even now such copy is for the most part scant and infrequent, while there are even beer and whiskey concerns which turn down every suggestion to advertise in Negro papers.

"Department store copy is absent because so many such stores are not anxious to have any, or any large numbers of, Negroes trying on hats, shoes and clothing; or they believe Negroes with capacity to buy will read their advertisement in the daily. New automobiles are missing because the industry does not believe that the Negroes are able to buy a new car. Other advertisers do not use any weekly paper whatever and see no difference between the white weekly and the Negro paper. In still other instances there are some dailies which so thoroughly cover the Negro community that advertisers can be convinced that advertising in the Negro paper is a needless duplication." (*Op. cit.*, p. VI:2).

[b] The economic weakness of Negro newspapers is partly reflected in their large death rate. Detweiler (Frederick G. Detweiler, *The Negro Press in the United States* [1922], p. 24) points out that of 288 periodicals existing in 1910, only 163 remained in 1921, and only 59 of these went back to 1900.

As no studies of the finances and controls of the Negro press have been made, it is impossible to present a factual statement on this point. One important thing seems clear, however: the financial controls do not concern its stand on the racial question. In this main issue of the Negro press, it is free. Few white business enterprises have any interest in toning down the Negro protest.[a] It may be expected that, on the contrary, a white firm which bribed a Negro paper to favor its interest in some particular respect would rather want the paper's expression of the Negro protest to be accentuated in order to preserve confidence on the part of its readers.[27] The same holds true, on the whole, of political parties in the North and a few places in the South which pay in cash for support from the Negro papers before elections.[28]

As Negro newspapers specialize in Negro news, they become dependent upon the agencies which provide such news. A Negro newspaper covers its own locality. Some few can afford to send staff writers to places where important national events are occurring and to have regular correspondents in certain main centers. But for the rest, all Negro papers must depend for their news on syndicate and organizational releases. There are a number of Negro news agencies: some giving their services for nothing, some exchanging news for free advertising space, and some asking a small fee.[29] Before every election they tend to increase in number and efficiency. The main agency is the Associated Negro Press, in existence since 1919.[30] The N.A.A.C.P. sends out its own news releases every week, and they are important for the Negro press.

5. OUTLOOK

The importance of the Negro press for the formation of Negro opinion, for the functioning of all other Negro institutions, for Negro leadership and concerted action generally, is enormous. The Negro press is an educational agency and a power agency. Together with the church and the school—and in the field of interracial and civic opinions, more than those two institutions—it determines the special direction of the process through which the Negroes are becoming acculturated. The Negro press causes, on the one hand, an intense realization on the part of the Negroes of American ideals. On the other hand, it makes them realize to how small a degree white Americans live up to them.

As the educational level of the Negro masses rises, as those masses become less dissimilar in culture from other Americans, as the isolation between the two groups increases under voluntary withdrawal on the part of the Negroes, as race consciousness and race solidarity are intensified, as the Negro protest is strengthened, and disseminated even among the lower

[a] Negro businesses will rarely have such an interest, either, and few Negro businesses could afford to spend money on it, anyhow.

classes—as all these closely interrelated processes are proceeding, partly under the influence of the Negro press itself, the Negro press will continue to grow. With larger circulation, there will be increased possibilities of getting advertising. With a fortified economic basis the Negro press will be able not only to buy better equipment but also to engage better-trained journalists and to organize a better national news service. When the Negro press can produce a better product than now, it will sell even better. The Negro newspaper will probably remain a weekly, though perhaps in some regions it will become possible to launch Negro dailies. This is the prospect we see for the Negro press. It will flourish and become more conspicuous when the foreign-language papers die out. We are assuming that American society will not rapidly become so thoroughly reformed that it will be of no importance whether a man is black or white. We believe that there is a trend in America away from racial discrimination, and in Chapter 45 we shall summarize the reasons why we believe that this is so. But there is a long way to go before the Negro will be secure in enjoying his full constitutional rights. It will probably not happen in this generation and, perhaps, not in the next. Meanwhile, gradual improvements will only strengthen Negro concerted action as they will seem to prove that the Negro protest is effective. All improvements will give the Negro press more big news and important issues to discuss.

In the South the white press has been undergoing a great change in its treatment of the Negro problem. Most liberal white newspapers are today more generous in reporting favorable news from the Negro world than white newspapers in the North and often open their columns for Negro letters to the editor. Northern newspapers are frequently more liberal in their editorials, especially since the outbreak of the War, but give only scant space to Negro news. This process of change in the white press is continuing. The present war emergency seems only to have speeded it up. But—aside from the Southern "black star" editions—this change does not mean serious competition for the Negro press since the latter serves to give "additional" news on the Negro. No feasible widening of the reporting of Negro activities in the white press will substitute for the Negro press. What happens to Negroes will continue to have a relatively low "news value" to white people, and even the most well-meaning editor will have to stop far short of what Negroes demand if he wants to satisfy his white public. It is likely also that with increased race consciousness among Southern Negroes, the "black star" editions will lose in popularity.

Whether or not this forecast of an increasing circulation for Negro papers comes true, the Negro press is of tremendous importance. It has rightly been characterized as "the greatest single power in the Negro race."[31]

Part X

THE NEGRO COMMUNITY

CHAPTER 43

INSTITUTIONS

1. The Negro Community as a Pathological Form of an American Community

Until now the Negro community has not been the primary object of our study. But we have not been able to avoid dealing with the community and with various, alleged or real, cultural and personality traits of the American Negro. There are a number of problems, however, such as those of the Negro family, crime, insanity, and cultural accomplishments, which have been touched upon only incidentally. We shall now take up these nonpolitical aspects of the Negro community. The treatment will be incomplete and condensed, for three reasons. First, these problems are not focal in our inquiry. Second, many sides of them have already been dealt with in other parts of the book. Third, several of those problems have recently been treated extensively in the scientific literature. It would obviously be impossible to describe and analyze the hundreds of specific communities in which Negroes live. We must content ourselves instead with a general account of the basic community institutions and activities, noting the major contrasts between the white and the Negro pattern of community organization, depicting the salient historical trends, and indicating the most striking divergences between the Northern and Southern and the urban and rural ways of life.

The value premise for this Part is derived from the American Creed. America was settled largely by persons who, for one reason or another, were dissatisfied with conditions in their homelands and sought new opportunities. Until 1921 the nation welcomed immigrants almost unreservedly. They came from everywhere and brought with them a diversity of institutions and cultural patterns. It was natural that the "melting pot," "Americanization"—or, to use a more technical term, "assimilation"—became a central element in the American Creed. To make a homogeneous nation out of diverse ethnic groups, the immigrants were to abandon their cultural "peculiarities"—or to contribute them to American culture as a whole, as some would have it—and to take on the cultural forms of America. There could be diversity, to be sure, but this diversity was not to have a strictly ethnic basis; individuals should be free to be part of any community they

wished. Ideally, Americanization was to take place immediately, or, rather, in the five years required to achieve citizenship. But it was realistically recognized that in some cases it might require two or three generations.

Negroes have been living here for over three hundred years, and practically all of the ancestors of present-day Negroes came to this country more than a hundred years ago. It is probable that, on the average, Negroes have been Americans longer than any immigrant group except the British. They should be well assimilated by now. Negroes, however, together with the Orientals and, to some extent, Indians and Mexicans, have not been allowed to assimilate as have European immigrants. There is intense resistance on the part of the white majority group to biological amalgamation; and the lower caste status of Negroes is rationalized to prevent miscegenation.[a] Negroes have been segregated, and they have developed, or there have been provided for them, separate institutions in many spheres of life, as, for instance, in religion and education. Segregation and discrimination have also in other ways hampered assimilation. Particularly they have steered acculturation so that the Negroes have acquired the norms of lower class people in America.

Negro institutions are, nevertheless, similar to those of the white man. They show little similarity to African institutions. In his cultural traits, the Negro is akin to other Americans. Some peculiarities are even to be characterized as "exaggerations" of American traits. Horace Mann Bond has characterized the American Negro as a "quintessential American."[1] Even the "exaggeration" or intensification of general American traits in American Negro culture is explainable by specific caste pressures. In his allegiances the Negro is characteristically an American. He believes in the American Creed and in other ideals held by most Americans, such as getting ahead in the world, individualism, the importance of education and wealth. He imitates the dominant culture as he sees it and in so far as he can adopt it under his conditions of life. For the most part he is not proud of those things in which he differs from the white American.

True, there has developed recently a glorification of things African, especially in music and art, and there was a back-to-Africa movement after the First World War.[b] But this is a reaction to discrimination from white people, on the one hand, and a result of encouragement from white people, on the other hand. Thus, even the positive movement away from American culture has its source in that culture. Negro race pride and race prejudice serve to fortify the Negro against white superiority. *In practically all its divergences, American Negro culture is not something independent of general American culture. It is a distorted development, or a pathological condition, of the general American culture.* The instability of the Negro family, the inadequacy of educational facilities for Negroes,

[a] See Chapters 3 and 28.

[b] See Chapter 35, Sections 7 and 9, and Chapter 38, Section 12.

the emotionalism in the Negro church, the insufficiency and unwholesomeness of Negro recreational activity, the plethora of Negro sociable organizations, the narrowness of interests of the average Negro, the provincialism of his political speculation, the high Negro crime rate, the cultivation of the arts to the neglect of other fields, superstition, personality difficulties, and other characteristic traits are mainly forms of social pathology which, for the most part, are created by the caste pressures.

This can be said positively: *we assume that it is to the advantage of American Negroes as individuals and as a group to become assimilated into American culture, to acquire the traits held in esteem by the dominant white Americans.* This will be the value premise here. We do not imply that white American culture is "higher" than other cultures in an absolute sense. The notion popularized by anthropologists that *all* cultures may be good under the different conditions to which they are adaptations, and that no derogatory association should *a priori* be attached to primitive cultures, is a wholesome antidote to arrogant and erroneous ideas closely bound up with white people's false racial beliefs and their justification of caste. But it does not gainsay our assumption that *here, in America,* American culture is "highest" in the pragmatic sense that adherence to it is practical for any individual or group which is not strong enough to change it.

Also not to be taken in a doctrinal sense is the observation that peculiarities in the Negro community may be characterized as social pathology. As a reaction to adverse and degrading living conditions, the Negroes' culture is taking on some characteristics which are not given a high evaluation in the larger American culture. Occasionally the Negro culture traits are appreciated by the whites. The Negro spirituals—called by James Weldon Johnson, though with some exaggeration, "America's only folk music"—are a case in point.[a]

From the practical point of view, the problem of the historical origin of the divergences of American Negro culture becomes irrelevant. The con-

[a] Similar exceptions can be noticed in every lower class culture. There has been, for instance, in most industrial countries in recent decades, a "proletarian" branch of literature, which draws its themes and its inspiration from life in the lower classes. This literature is often, characteristically enough, appreciated more by members of the higher classes than by the proletarians themselves. Generally pastoral romanticism, which has been a part of urban civilization since the time of the ancient Greeks, has idealized lower class life. The tendency is tainted with sentimentality, and this is frequently displayed by people who show a particular interest in Negro culture. Among the radically inclined, this romanticism serves to express their sympathy for the underdog; among conservatives it serves as a rationalization for continuing the inequalities. To Negroes it serves as an expression of their protest and their "race pride." As usual it appeals much more to upper and middle class Negroes than to lower class Negroes. The sentimentality involved in idealizing lower class traits has, of course, nothing to do with scientific observation. The residuum of truth in the tendency is, however, that even if generally the result of adverse living conditions are bad, exceptionally they may be good—"good" and "bad" defined according to our value premise of placing the general American culture "higher."

troversy on social causation has come to turn on the question of the importance of the African heritage. To a long line of writers, the African heritage has been regarded as a sign of the Negro's lack of capacity for higher civilization. Those writers usually attached their interest to the unfavorable traits they attributed to the Negro: criminality, amorality, lack of ability for organized social life, little talent for inventiveness, and so on. On the other hand, a modern school of anthropologists and historians, trying to appreciate the Negro, shows an equal, though opposite, selectiveness in their interest. They attempt, for instance, to derive Negro music, dancing, and art from Africa and to describe peculiarities in religion and the mother-centered family as an African heritage, while they leave crime and amorality to be explained by white pressure. Melville J. Herskovits and Carter G. Woodson represent this tendency.[a] Others, like E. Franklin Frazier, have regarded the African heritage as insignificant and have sought the explanation in the special circumstances connected with slavery and caste.[2] The latter theory may be said to be predominant in sociological literature. There are certain variations of the latter theory: some would prefer to think of Negro institutions as "accommodations" to slavery and caste conditions; some would prefer to think of them as the results of isolation due to slavery and caste; others would prefer to think of Negro institutions as a case of "cultural lag" because of the existence of slavery and caste.[b]

Here the interest is in the fact that American Negro culture is somewhat different from the general American culture, that this difference is *generally created* by American conditions even if some of the *specific forms* are African in origin, and that the difference is significant for Negroes and for the relations between Negroes and whites.[c]

2. THE NEGRO FAMILY

The recent book by E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), is such an excellent description and analysis of the American

[a] See Chapter 35, Section 9.

[b] It cannot be said that either of these theories, or the theory of a predominant African heritage, is scientifically proved. The historical evidence is usually so incomplete that, with some selectiveness on the part of the particular writer, it can easily be fitted into any theory without proving it. Also, there is no reason why all the theories could not be correct to a certain degree. For example, the practice of baptism is prevalent among American Negroes and is also to be found among African Negroes and American whites: it may have been that the African cult sensitized and predisposed Negroes to like baptism, but the specific pattern was adopted from white Americans. The scientific problem, which is largely unsolved, is to show comprehensively how, in specific respects, present-day Negro culture developed when the Negro slaves—who were certainly not without culture when they reached America—had to live on for generations under the specific circumstances created for them in America.

[c] We do not mean to say that the difference between the two theories is not important in either a theoretical or a practical sense. We have considered the practical significance of Herskovits' theory in Chapter 35, Section 9.

Negro family that it is practically necessary only to relate its conclusions to our context and to refer the reader to it for details.

The uniqueness of the Negro family is a product of slavery. Most slave owners either did not care about the marital state of their slaves or were interested in seeing to it that they did not form strong marital bonds. The slave owners who did not want some of their slaves to marry were: those who had Negro mistresses, those who bred mulattoes or strong slaves, and those who did not want to make it difficult when they sold slaves individually rather than in family units. The internal slave trade broke up many slave families—even those belonging to masters who encouraged stable marriages, when death or economic disaster occurred—and the threat of it hung over all slave families. Certain cultural practices grew up in slavery which retain their influences up to the present day in rural Southern areas: marriages sometimes occur by simple public declaration or with a ceremony conducted by a minister but without a marriage license. Coupled with this was the popular belief that divorce could occur by public declaration or simply by crossing state or county lines.

After slavery there emerged certain new obstacles in the way of marital stability. Mobility was increased, work was not readily available, and there began a migration to cities with an attendant increase in desertion, prostitution and temporary marriage. Yet coincident with these developments the stability of the Negro family grew. Even before the Civil War there had been certain masters who encouraged stable marriages among their slaves, and the freed Negroes, especially in the North, began to develop their own strong family units. The strong hold of religion on the Negro tended to stabilize his family life. At the close of the Civil War, the slave states legalized all existing common-law marriages[a] and, with the disappearance of the master's interests and of forced sale, there was a great increase in family stability. But the starting point was so low that Negroes never caught up. Isolation, poverty and ignorance were again the obstacles to acculturation.

There are two outstanding types of exceptions to the general observation that the average Negro family is more disorganized than the white family. In rural areas of the South, especially in isolated areas, there is a large class of Negro families which is so like the ideal type of the monogamous patriarchal Christian family that Frazier calls them "Black Puritans." The impetus for this family form probably came from the religious slave owner. Much more significant is the upper class Negro family in the towns and cities. Upper class Negroes probably have fewer extra-marital relations and

[a] Some states required that the couple be remarried; others required only that they declare their marriage before a public officer and get a certificate; but the majority of Southern states legalized all Negro common-law marriages without any action on the part of the couple. A few states left it to the courts to recognize legality as cases arose. (Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* [1910], pp. 67-68.)

TABLE 1

NUMBER AND RATE OF ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS, BY NATIVITY, SECTION AND RURAL-URBAN RESIDENCE: 1936

Section	Number					Rate Per 1,000				
	Total Births[a]	Totals	White Mother Native	Mother Foreign	Other Races	Total Births[a]	Totals	White Mother Native	Mother Foreign	Other Races
United States[b]	72,338	31,850	30,597	806	40,488	39.8	20.3	20.6	9.9	162.1
Cities of 10,000 or more	30,461	16,441	15,615	583	14,020	40.5	24.3	25.2	10.2	182.9
Cities of 2,500 to 10,000	5,741	2,969	2,894	44	2,772	28.8	16.1	16.4	6.1	182.1
Rural	36,136	12,440	12,088	179	23,696	41.8	17.6	17.6	10.3	150.5
Southern States[c]	49,353	13,137	12,564	244	36,216	58.6	20.9	20.4	18.4	170.0
Cities of 10,000 or more	15,320	4,752	4,421	176	10,568	67.9	27.0	26.3	23.5	213.8
Cities of 2,500 to 10,000	3,656	1,041	1,006	12	2,615	46.4	16.0	15.8	8.4	191.4
Rural	30,377	7,344	7,137	56	23,033	56.4	18.9	18.6	12.9	153.7
Northern and Western States[b]	22,985	18,713	18,033	562	4,272	23.6	20.0	20.8	8.2	117.6
Cities of 10,000 or more	15,141	11,689	11,194	407	3,452	28.7	23.4	24.9	8.2	126.8
Cities of 2,500 to 10,000	2,085	1,928	1,888	32	157	17.3	16.2	16.7	5.5	100.6
Rural	5,759	5,096	4,951	123	663	17.7	16.0	16.2	9.4	87.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Births, Stillbirths and Infant Mortality Statistics: 1936*, pp. 9–13.

[a] Includes "Country not stated."

[b] Exclusive of California, Massachusetts, and New York. These states do not require a statement concerning legitimacy of child.

[c] Includes: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia.

less divorce than upper class whites.[a] They have reacted against the reputation of lower class Negroes and have not permitted themselves the marital laxness of some upper class whites. This has been more or less a spontaneous trend, developing not so much with a positive model from white society,[a] but more with the negative stimulus of white derisiveness. Whites do not realize that one of the most stable types of urban families is that of the Negro upper class, so in one sense the effort to build a reputation is wasted. But ammunition for white derision is lessened and a model for the Negro lower class is provided. Thus the efforts of the small Negro upper class may yet have an important effect.

There are no perfect indices of family disorganization, since there are no official statistics on extra-marital relations, on "temporary" marriages without benefit of clergy, or on unofficial desertion. Perhaps the best direct index of family stability that is available is that of illegitimacy. There is far from complete reporting of illegitimate births, there is even serious under-reporting of all types of births. But the figures are available for the whole country and are relatively more complete than for any other direct index of family disorganization. Table 1 brings out strikingly the difference between Negro and white illegitimacy.[b] For the United States as a whole, the figures indicate that Negroes have about eight times as much illegitimacy as native whites and about sixteen times as much illegitimacy as the foreign-born whites. Differentials between various groups of Negroes are not so certain, but there would seem to be fewer cases of illegitimacy in the North than in the South (despite lack of regional differences among whites) and fewer in the rural areas than in the urban areas.

There are no nation-wide statistics on divorce by race, and even the scattered statistics available are of limited significance because most Negro couples who separate do so without a divorce and because the states have different legal practices in divorce. The same is true of legal desertion statistics.[4] All census data on this problem are somewhat inaccurate, and the figures cited suggest conditions rather than measure them precisely. The census information on the marital status of Negroes is especially inaccurate, since unmarried couples are inclined to report themselves as married, and women who have never married but who have children are inclined to

[a] The model for the upper class Negro family was, in a sense, the white upper class family of an earlier generation. In this case, as in so many other cases, Negroes were assimilated with a cultural lag.

[b] "Other races" are predominantly Negro and so may be used as an index of Negro. Frazier has data on illegitimacy for selected cities which have better statistics than the rest of the nation and which separate Negroes from whites. These data show roughly the same things as the table presented here. (See E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* [1939], Appendix B, pp. 568-569.) For a summary of studies of Negro illegitimacy in special localities, see Eleanor C. Isbell, "Memorandum on the Negro Family in America," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 63-64 and 84-89.

report themselves as widowed. It is suggestive that the proportion of "widows" among Negro women in 1930 was 15.9 per cent, as compared to 9.7 per cent among native white women of native parentage. If a legal or common-law marriage had broken up, the partners became either unattached individuals (if they had no children or had abandoned them) or members of broken families (if they stayed with their children). Unattached individuals and "one-person families" constituted about 13 per cent of the Negro population in 1930, whereas the corresponding figure for the white population was 9 per cent. Broken families were 30 per cent of all Negro families, but only 20 per cent among native white families, despite the greater concentration of Negroes in rural-farm areas where broken families are least frequent (Table 2).

TABLE 2

PROPORTION BROKEN FAMILIES[a] OF ALL FAMILIES: 1930

	Negro	Native White
All families	29.6	19.5
Rural farm families (South)	20.1	12.8
Rural nonfarm families (South)	34.1	16.8
Urban families (South)	38.4	19.8

Source: Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 50. Sterner computed these figures from unpublished data of the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

[a] Includes married if spouse is not present, widowed, divorced, and single heads of families.

In addition to the direct indices of family disorganization, there are several other signs that Negroes have a larger share of the factors contributing to family disorganization. Lodgers, for example, are often a disruptive factor in family life. In Northern urban areas 29 per cent of the Negro families reported lodgers in their homes in 1930, as compared to 10 per cent of the native white families. In Southern urban areas the proportions were 20 per cent for Negroes and 11 per cent for whites.[4] "Doubling up" of families in a single household is another factor contributory to family disorganization, and Negroes have more of it.[5] Similarly, as we have noted in Chapter 16, Negroes have more over-crowding and less home ownership.

While the Negro masses undoubtedly have much more of all those characteristics which define family disorganization in the traditional American sense, they have certain other cultural traits which tend to reduce the disorganizing effect of those characteristics. Although the census would not bring out the fact, since there is a confusion over common-law marriage and temporary marriage, there are probably significantly fewer unattached Negro adults than unattached white adults. In a small community in rural

[4] Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 55. For the United States as a whole, 15.2 per cent of the Negro families had lodgers, as compared to 9.0 per cent of the native white families.

Alabama, Charles S. Johnson found no spinsters and extremely few older bachelors among the Negroes (612 families).[6] He also found only two divorced persons who had not remarried. Further: common-law marriage and illegitimacy are not seriously condemned within the Negro community —except among the upper classes—and they have, therefore, fewer disorganizing effects on the individual. The Southern Negro community defines divorce in a broad sense—to include most cases of desertion or mutual agreement to separate and also the crossing of state or county lines —so that there is no moral guilt attached to remarriage even if there is legal guilt. The Negro community also has the healthy social custom of attaching no stigma to the illegitimate child and of freely adopting illegitimate children and orphans into established families. A high value is placed on children generally, and those who mate outside of marriage do not have a tendency to prevent the coming of children. There are few unwanted children. Another healthy social attitude found by Charles Johnson is that of regarding a forced marriage as less respectable than desertion after a forced marriage. The erring daughter is forgiven by her parents and is not ostracized by the community.

The existence of these practices does not mean that the Negro community has no moral standards, even in the traditional American sense. "Fast women," philandering men and "fly-by-night" affairs are condemned. In the rural South, the rule is that a person may cohabit with only one other person during a given period: there is little promiscuity.[7] But the important thing is that the Negro lower classes, especially in the rural South, have built up a type of family organization conducive to social health, even though the practices are outside the American tradition. When these practices are brought into closer contact with white norms, as occurs when Negroes go to the cities, they tend to break down partially and to cause the demoralization of some individuals.

3. THE NEGRO CHURCH IN THE NEGRO COMMUNITY[a]

At least 44 per cent of American Negroes were claimed as members of Negro churches in 1936. Actually, the proportion is considerably higher, for several reasons.[8] Although church membership means different things to different people, it is quite obvious—not only from total membership figures, but also from the character of the church service, the religious nature of many of the Negro's songs, the great use to which the church building is put, the diversity of voluntary activities organized around the church—that religion and church play an important role in the Negro

[a] The most useful general sources of information on the Negro church that we have found and the ones we have relied upon for most of our factual data are: B. E. Mays and J. W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (1933); and J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940).

community, probably more important than in the average white community. In this section we shall seek to sketch this role.

Probably the chief "function" of the Negro church has been to buoy up the hopes of its members in the face of adversity and to give them a sense of community. This is, of course, true of any church, but it is especially true of Negroes, who have had a hard lot and to whom so many channels of activity outside the church have been closed. Negroes have had to place their hopes for a better life in religion. As a Negro poet puts it, "Our churches are where we dip our tired bodies in cool springs of hope, where we retain our wholeness and humanity despite the blows of death from the Bosses. . . ."[9] It is this need, perhaps more than anything else, which has attached the Negro so strongly to his church and accounts for his reputation as a religious person. In the colder and more critical words of Mays and Nicholson,[10] "It is not too much to say that if the Negro had experienced a wider range of freedom in social and economic spheres, there would have been fewer Negroes 'called' to preach and fewer Negro churches."

The denominations to which Negroes belong do not tend to have a heavy, formal ritual.[a] It is true that a significant proportion of church-going Negroes belong to the formalized Episcopalian and Catholic churches, but the great majority belong to the Baptist and Methodist churches or to the many little sects that have grown up in recent years. Lower class Negroes more than middle and upper class Negroes adhere to these latter churches. The small upper class of Negroes tends to belong to the Episcopalian, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches, since for them a main function of church membership is to give prestige.[11]

The religious service in Negro churches is often characterized by extreme emotionalism. The old-fashioned preacher employs gestures, intonation of the voice, sobbing, and words calculated to arouse emotion.[12] His audience aids with interjections at certain points and with stamping of the feet. There is a great deal of choir and congregational singing, and use of musical instruments of the percussion type.[b] These "rousements" bring most of the congregation into some degree of "possession."

[a] For the facts concerning the distribution of Negro churches by denominations, see Chapter 40, Section 3.

[b] Allison Davis lists the rituals of Negro churches which arouse emotions as follows:

"1. Narration of 'visions' or 'travels' as public evidence of individual's religious conversion.

"2. Highly dramatized baptism in public setting, in a river, creek, or (usually in Old City and its environment) in a hog-wallow.

"3. Communion service in which members shake hands with one another, and march around minister and church officers in a closely packed circle, while they sing and stamp feet.

"4. Communal participation by members in both sermon and *prayers*, with antiphonal structure in which members reply to preacher or deacon, or interrupt him. Communal singing, of same antiphonal form.

"5. Funeral service in which all congregation views corpse, and participates in both

Whites, in searching for rationalizations to justify the subordination of the Negro, have seized upon the fact of religious emotionalism and ascribed it to "animal nature" and even to "excessive sexuality." Even Northerners —or we could perhaps say, *especially* Northerners—have done this, since the Negro's religion is so different from their own, and they are at a loss to account for this behavior. Southerners, on the other hand, are accustomed to seeing extreme emotionalism in many lower class white churches and revival meetings.

Two things are important in attempting to explain this emotionalism. In the first place, it has been exaggerated. A large minority of Negroes do not attend church, and another large minority do not have emotionalism in their church service. There are wide differences among the various Negro denominations in degree of emotionalism manifested.[13] Emotionalism is uncommon in the upper and middle class Negro churches—which are quite like white churches of the same class level in this respect—and it is uncommon in the Catholic Church and other large, well-established urban churches where there are more lower class Negroes than middle and upper class Negroes. There is a definite trend for Negro youth to avoid the emotional type of church, and the same is true of the social "climbers" of all ages and occupations.[14] Emotionalism is most common in the rural Southern Negro churches and in the "storefront"[a] churches of the cities. These form the great bulk of the Negro churches, but since their congregations are small, they do not include such a large proportion of the Negro churchgoers. But even in the churches of the rural South, emotionalism is declining. According to Mays and Nicholson, revival meetings in the rural South are less successful than they used to be; the professional evangelist is disappearing; and the regular sermons attempt to be more thought-provoking.[15]

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sermon and prayers; a highly communal service with violent demonstrations such as shouting and 'getting happy.'

"6. Marching of usher board of church, or of visiting usher boards, around seated congregation up to chancel, where donation is made by each member of usher board. Repeated several times, while both usher board and congregation sing.

"7. Intoning, or at times the singing, of sermon or prayer by minister. Use by minister of sobbing technique, or of triumphant laugh in preaching; walking into congregation or elaborate physical dramatization of sermon by preacher.

"8. Devotion of a large part of the service to the collection of money.

"To these may be added rituals of the Sanctified, Spiritualist, Holiness, and other esoteric sects found among both Negroes and whites of the lower class positions, such as the practices of 'sacred dancing,' rolling in a sawdust pit in state of ecstasy, tambourine playing, reading of the future, healing of the sick, use of images of saints, foot-washing, use of drum and of jazz music, etc." ("The Negro Church and Associations in the Lower South," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], pp. 83-84.)

[a] The term "storefront" churches is commonly used to include churches in residences as well as in stores.

The second point is that the great periods of Negro conversion to Christianity were periods when the emotional forms of religion were taking hold of the whites too. In the Great Revival of 1800, it was common to see large groups of whites, gathered in a field upon the advertisement of a traveling revival leader, shouting, crying, laughing, "speaking with tongues," barking, dancing, rolling around, and manifesting all the traits associated with extreme "possession." Negroes occasionally participated, but more often just watched from a distance or had their own imitations with the help of white missionaries.[16] Negroes—and lower class whites in isolated communities in the South—have retained these religious practices in a relatively subdued form. Negroes have been losing them, but not as rapidly as have whites. Certain practices of the Negro Baptist and Methodist churches—such as permitting persons to become clergymen without having an education—and the geographical and cultural isolation of Negroes in the rural South, have helped to keep the Negroes behind the whites in the trend toward less emotionalism.

It may be that emotionalism in religion is well suited to take the Negro's mind off his degradation and frustration. It is commonly said that it is religion that "keeps him going." The feeling of "possession" is used the world over to produce euphoria when circumstances are unduly unpleasant —although in most groups, drugs and drink rather than religious excitement produce the effect. Whether or not there is any relation between the decline of emotionalism in religion and the growing resentment and caustic bitterness among Negroes could not be proved, although it is plausible.

Just as emotionalism was borrowed from and sanctioned by religious behavior among whites, so were the smaller religious sects taken over by Negroes after they were started by whites. The generation following 1880 saw the origin of a large number of lower class religious movements, especially among whites in the Middle West.[17] These movements gained most headway, perhaps, among the poor whites and the Negroes of the South. To this group of sects belong the Holiness Church, the Disciples of Christ, the Church of God and twenty-odd others.[18]

The Negro church is a community center *par excellence*. In the South, there are few public buildings for the recreation of Negroes, except some of the schools, upon the use of which many limitations are laid. Negroes are usually too poor to build special community centers. Only in large cities does private enterprise provide halls for Negro meetings and recreation. Negro homes are almost always too small to have more than two or three guests at one time. Only the church is left, and in many ways it is well fitted to serve as a community center. It is usually located in the heart of the community it is meant to serve, often closer to most of the homes than is the school. It is owned by the Negroes themselves, and they can feel

free to do what they please in it. The white man's respect for religion gives it a freedom from intrusion that is not enjoyed even in the Negro home. In the rural churches, often the preacher himself does not participate in the social activities that go on in his church, since he often has three or four other churches to attend to.[a] In fact, the Negro church is such a good community center that it might almost be said that anyone who does not belong to a church in the rural South does not belong to the community.[19]

The school is often located in a church in the rural South. Lodges and clubs frequently hold their meetings in the church, more often in rural areas than in the cities. Lectures and meetings for discussion of civic problems—including political meetings in the North—are probably most often held in churches. The large Negro churches in Northern, and sometimes Southern, cities often have the full gamut of social and recreational activities that is found in large white churches.[20] And, finally, the church, like the barbershop and the pool parlor, is a place to which one wanders when he has nothing else to do.

The denominations to which Negroes predominantly belong—Baptist and Methodist—attempt to exercise a strict control over morals, and have a rather broad definition of morals. For want of a better term, we may say that they have "puritanical" standards of behavior. Negroes have taken over these standards but have modified them somewhat to suit Negro customs and white demands. For example, Negro preachers condemn extra-marital sex relations, but they seldom take any specific steps to stop them because usually so many of their congregation engage in the condemned behavior. Too, they dare not say anything against relations between Negro women and white men in the South for fear of physical punishment. In addition to extra-marital sex relations, the practices of gambling, drinking, drug-taking, smoking, snuff-dipping, card-playing, dancing and other minor "vices" are condemned. Sometimes even ordinary sports and picnics come under a religious ban. These injunctions seem to have effect on middle class Negroes, especially those who are ready to settle down. The upper class among Negroes also tends to avoid some of these practices, but more because they individually want to or because they want to maintain status, rather than because of any specific injunction against them by the church. The bulk of the lower class, and the youth of all classes, seems to pay little attention to them. Females, as greater churchgoers, and as the traditional guardians of morals, obey them more than males.

The Negro church, in respects other than its emotionalism, is like any lower class white Protestant church. In its relation to the Negro community,

[a] The churches may often be scattered over the countryside, and the ministers have difficulty in getting to them. Mays and Nicholson report that, of 159 rural churches studied, only 5.7 per cent of the preachers lived within 10 miles of the church. (*Op. cit.*, p. 251.)

however, the Negro church tends to be different from the white church in relation to its community.

The Negro preacher's stand on problems of caste and on all "political" problems is equivocal. On the one hand, he must preach "race solidarity" because his congregation demands it and because he himself stands to gain if the economic and political situation of his community improves. On the other hand, he is not only a focus of caste pressure, but his position of leadership depends upon the monopoly given him by segregation. Although the Negro preacher is "other-worldly" in his sermons,[a] he has a closer relation to politics than has the white clergyman. In accordance with Baptist and Methodist tenets, he preaches puritanical morals, and yet is often far from exemplary in his own life and sometimes has connections with the underworld. These paradoxes exist because the Negro preacher is not only a clergyman, but also, as Du Bois puts it, "a leader, a politician, an orator, a 'boss,' an intriguer, an idealist."[21] These divergent interests make the Negro preacher shift his actions fairly frequently with respect to controversial questions, so that he appears inconsistent.

Negro preachers usually support Negro business. But at least one case is known where they have received threats from white business competitors for doing so.[22] And there is the fact that the Negro church often receives more money from white businessmen (since there are more of them even in Negro neighborhoods) than from Negro businessmen. In advertising Negro business, preachers use the pulpit as well as written endorsements and the church paper.[23] Some of the Negro businessmen are known racketeers: their legitimate businesses are sometimes a "front" for gambling rackets and even vice. The churches are, of course, officially against such things, but gambling (especially "policy") among the members of the congregation is too widespread to be stamped out, and often the contributions from Negro policy racketeers—especially in the North—are a major source of support for the church. Some Negro ministers in Chicago meet the situation by ignoring the policy playing that goes on; others openly endorse it on the grounds that it provides jobs for Negroes and that "gambling isn't the worst sin." Some Spiritualist churches actually give out lucky numbers to be played.[24]

Where Negroes vote, preachers frequently take a stand and use their influence and their pulpit to swing Negro votes.[25] Although the feeling is prevalent among Negroes, as among whites, that clergymen should have nothing to do with politics, the Negro preacher's position as a community leader, as well as his desire to get money for his church and even for himself, often leads him to have some sort of tie with a political machine or candidate. A minister who has a political tie gains in power, since he can "fix" minor difficulties with the law for members of his congregation and

[a] See Chapter 40, Section 5.

sometimes even has control over a few jobs, political or otherwise. Politicians, both white and Negro, realizing that Negroes are in great need and are easily influenced by any display of friendliness or of power, often make use of the large churches even without the minister's express assent. They make an appearance at a church service and conspicuously donate large sums of money at collection time. Many of the church members interviewed by Gosnell did not resent a white politician even in the pulpit, since they felt that the Negro needs all the white influence he can get, and since they do not have time to attend regular political meetings in which they are interested.[26] The church, as the community's most central public institution, seems to many Negroes to take on political functions, as other non-religious functions, quite naturally.

The Negro community is so poor, and the number of Negro churches so large in relation to the number of churchgoers,[a] that the upkeep of the church is a financial drain. A good portion of the time during an average church service is taken up with the collection, and there is a tendency to emotionalize the collection so as to elicit more money.[27] Both in the South and in the North, there is importuning of white churches, white businessmen, and other white individuals for money to support the churches. Still the average Negro does not get much back from his church in the way of community services.[28] Relatively few of the churches—even the urban churches—offer facilities for recreation, and the amounts spent on charity, education and social service are pitifully small. This is partly due to the fact that there are too many churches, which makes the overhead expense too high.[b] Too, the urban Negro church often gets itself into great debt when it buys or builds a church edifice. In Mays and Nicholson's sample of urban Negro churches in 1930, 71.3 per cent had debts on their buildings.[29] Finally, Negro churches have poor business practices.[c] For all these reasons, and relative to the poverty of the congregation, the Negro church is more expensive to the average Negro than the white man's church is to him. Most Negroes are aware of this fact and are not happy over it.

The Negro church is at once modeled after the white church and yet fitted into the needs and culture of the Negro community. Theology and church service are the same as in white Protestant churches. Emotionalism was borrowed from the whites but has been retained after most whites have abandoned it, and is now considered a Negro "characteristic." Although Negroes do not, on the whole, pay much attention to the moral injunctions of the church, the church has been the major center of community life, and the preacher has been the major leader of the community. But this is

[a] For statistics on the number of members per church, see Chapter 40, Section 3.

[b] For the facts on church expenditures, see footnote 30 of Chapter 40.

[c] See Chapter 40, Section 5.

changing rapidly as the Negro community becomes diversified, as other professionals are becoming more numerous, as upper and middle classes develop among Negroes, as the minister does not advance as rapidly in education and sophistication as do the youth of his community. The Negro church has declined in relative importance since 1880, and the prospects are for a continued decline. Nevertheless, the Negro church means more to the Negro community than the white church means to the white community—in its function as a giver of hope, as an emotional cathartic, as a center of community activity, as a source of leadership, and as a provider of respectability.

4. THE NEGRO SCHOOL AND NEGRO EDUCATION[a]

As we have pointed out in Chapter 41, there were few educational facilities for Negroes before the Civil War. Since then the proportion of Negro children attending school has gone up so rapidly that now it is not far behind the also increasing proportion of white children attending school

TABLE 3

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN THE UNITED STATES, AGES 5–20, BY RACE: 1850–1940

	NEGROES		WHITES
Year	Number	Per cent of Population aged 5–20	Per cent of Population aged 5–20
1850	26,461	1.7	52.9
1860	32,629	1.8	56.0
1870	180,372	9.2	51.2
1880	856,014	32.5	58.2
1890	999,324	32.0	55.4
1900	1,083,516	31.0	53.6
1910	1,644,759	44.7	61.3
1920	2,030,269	53.5	65.7
1930	2,477,311	60.0	71.5
1940	2,698,901	64.4	71.6

Sources: The figures for 1850–1890, inclusive, are from E. George Payne, "Negroes in the Public Elementary School of the North," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1928), p. 224.

The figures for 1900 to 1940, we have calculated from the following sources: (1) U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1790 to 1914*, p. 377; (2) U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1920–1932*, pp. 209–210; (3) *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release, Series P–10, No. 17, Table 2. From the decennial censuses of population of 1850 to 1890, we have corroborated Payne's figures on number of Negroes and whites attending school for every year but 1890 (where we have a discrepancy of some 7,500 in the figure for Negroes), but we have not attempted to get the base figures on the number aged 5 to 20 for these years. For Negroes alone, Bond corroborates Payne's percentages within 1.3 per cent. (Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* [1934,] p. 178.)

[a] The most useful general study of Negro education is that of Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934). Also useful in more specialized problems are: (1) Charles S. Johnson and Associates, "The Negro Public Schools," Section 8 of the *Louisiana Educational Survey* (1942); (2) Buell G. Gallagher, *American Caste and the Negro College* (1938); (3) Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1939); (4) David T. Blose and Ambrose Caliver, *Statistics of the Education of Negroes: 1933-1934 and 1935-1936*, U. S. Office of Education Bulletin No. 13 (1938).

(Table 3). These figures are deceptive, however, since the bulk of Negro children live in the South, and education for Negroes in the South is generally inferior to that for whites. Too, school attendance is something that can be misrepresented to a census-taker. The main reason for the discrepancy still existing is that Negroes do not attend high school and college to the same extent as do whites. As we shall see later in this section, elementary school attendance is about the same for Negroes and whites, except in the rural South.

TABLE 4

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, AGES 7–20, BY RACE AND REGION: 1930

Region[a]	Per cent of Population aged 7–20 attending school April 1, 1930	
	Negroes	Whites
United States	64.4	75.4
Urban	67.0	75.8
Rural	63.0	74.9
North and West	71.1	76.4
Urban	71.2	—
Rural	70.6	—
South	63.2	72.8
Urban	64.5	—
Rural	62.7	—

Sources: Calculated from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States, 1920–1932*, p. 212; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 2, pp. 1099, 1106–1107.

[a] South defined as the three census divisions: South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central; North and West defined as the rest of Continental United States (including Missouri).

Table 4 shows that Negroes are below whites in school attendance to the extent of about 9.6 per cent in the South and 5.3 per cent in the North. Within the South, rural areas have a greater discrepancy (between whites and Negroes) than do urban areas.[80]

While the quantitative, though not qualitative, discrepancy between Negro and white education is disappearing, the lack of schools for Negroes in the past is reflected today in the statistics on educational status of adults (Table 5). The average Negro past the age of 25 years is reported to have had 5.7 years of schooling, as compared to 8.8 years for the average native white person. The education of rural-farm Negroes (practically all Southern) has been least complete: 15 per cent have had no formal education at all, and almost 60 per cent never reached the fifth grade. Only 5.5 per cent of rural-farm Negroes (compared to 28.1 per cent of rural-farm native whites) have received any high school training whatsoever. In the country as a whole only 1.2 per cent of adult Negroes are college graduates (compared to 5.4 per cent of native whites) and only 7.1 per cent can claim to be high school graduates (compared to 28.6 per cent of the native whites). Clearly the formal education of the Negro population is greatly inferior to

TABLE 5

YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED, BY PERSONS 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY RACE, FOR THE UNITED STATES, RURAL AND URBAN AREAS: 1940

	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION							
	United States		Urban		Rural Nonfarm		Rural Farm	
Years Completed	Native White	Negro	Native White	Negro	Native White	Negro	Native White	Negro
Persons 25 years and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No school years completed	1.3	10.0	0.8	6.6	1.7	12.7	2.5	15.0
Grade School:								
1 to 4 years	6.1	31.3	3.7	23.7	7.3	35.5	11.1	44.1
5 and 6 years	9.7	21.5	7.5	21.3	10.8	21.4	14.6	21.9
7 and 8 years	36.0	19.8	33.6	24.8	36.1	16.5	42.7	11.7
High School:								
1 to 3 years	17.3	8.5	18.7	11.5	16.9	6.4	13.7	3.6
4 years	16.6	4.1	20.1	6.2	14.5	2.4	8.9	1.0
College:								
1 to 3 years	6.6	1.8	7.5	2.6	6.5	1.4	4.0	0.6
4 years and more	5.4	1.2	7.0	1.8	4.7	0.9	1.5	0.3
Not reported	1.1	1.8	1.0	1.5	1.4	2.7	1.1	1.8
Median school years completed	8.8	5.7	9.6	6.8	8.6	5.0	8.0	4.1

Source: *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P–10, No. 8

that of the native white population even in number of school years completed—disregarding the still more inferior *quality* of Negro education in the South.

The situation is dynamic: education for Negroes is improving. The percentage of Negro children who remain in school beyond the fourth grade rose from 18 in 1921 to 20 in 1936.[31] At a later point we shall note the striking recent increase in high schools for Negroes. But Negro children

TABLE 6

RATIO OF NEGRO TO WHITE PUPILS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY GRADES IN 18 SOUTHERN STATES: 1933–1934

Grade	Ratio of Negro to White Pupils Enrolled	Grade	Ratio of Negro to White Pupils Enrolled
1	.631	8	.141
2	.396	9	.135
3	.360	10	.112
4	.328	11	.099
5	.288	12	.091
6	.252	Post-Graduate	
7	.200	High School	.013
		Kindergarten	.087

Source: Calculated from data in Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1939) pp. 166-168. Wilkerson takes his data from U.S. Office of Education, *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1932–1934*, Bulletin No. 2 (1935), pp. 56–57 and 96.

still lag far behind white children in education. There is a much stronger tendency for Negroes than for whites to drop out of school at lower grades. While the ratio of Negroes to whites in the first grade in the 18 Southern states (1933-1934) is .631, the ratio drops to .141 in the eighth grade and to .091 in the twelfth grade (Table 6). The "holding power" of the Negro school is low at all levels. The reasons for this are in the whole character of the caste relation in the South. This tendency for Negroes to drop out of school more than do whites stops at the college level. Of all high school graduates over 25 years of age in the country (1940), a slightly greater proportion of Negroes than of whites have gone to college (42.6 per cent compared to 41.9 per cent).[32] Of course, a much smaller proportion of all Negroes than of whites goes to college, but once Negroes have attained high school graduation, they have a slightly better chance of going to college. This reversal is probably due to the tremendous difficulties the Negro child encounters in getting as far as high school graduation, to the relative lack of opportunities for Negro high school graduates, and to the relatively better opportunities for college-trained Negroes.[a]

It is unnecessary to take up the Negro school in the North since it hardly exists as a separate entity. Most of the Negro children in the North are separated from white children because of a small amount of legal segregation, a moderate amount of forced illegal segregation, and a large amount of coercive but not illegal separation (connected with housing segregation and the system of gerrymandered districts and permits).[b] But there is little difference between Negro and white schools in the North either in quality of instruction and facilities or in the content of the courses. What there is, is due to the rapid migration of the Negroes to the North, which has caused an undue over-crowding of schools and an over-burdening of teachers. But this lag in adjusting facilities to increased enrollment would seem to carry with it no discrimination, and would probably disappear shortly after the end of large-scale migration. The teachers of Negro children are as well trained as the teachers of white children, except possibly for the selection which occurs when a white teacher avoids teaching in a school attended almost entirely by Negro students.

There is practically no attention paid to Negro problems or Negro students' needs in the Northern school. Except for a few all-Negro colleges, Negroes in Northern colleges are a small proportion of the student population, and except for a certain amount of social ostracism, they are not

[a] See end of Chapter 13. The explanation is not that college enrollment is so much more common in the North generally. The proportion of those over 25 who have had at least one year of college is the same in the South as in the North (not including the Pacific or Mountain states): 9.2 to 9.5. (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 8.)

[b] See Chapter 29, Section 6.

treated differently than are white students.[a] The main reason why the average Negro gets an education inferior to the average white in the North is that poverty and disease keep him out of school more and force him to leave school at an earlier age. The rising legal minimum age for leaving school—all Northern states having some sort of compulsory attendance law since the Civil War—and the lack of employment opportunities, especially during the depression of the 1930's, have tended to reduce this differential, except at the college level. The school, outside of the activity of educating the young, is not important in the life of the Northern Negro community —a general characteristic of all schools in Northern cities where Negroes live. Only one aspect of Northern education for Negroes requires special attention: like white students, Negro students in the North are inculcated with the American Creed and with the traditional American virtues of efficiency, thrift, ambition, and so on. But employment opportunities—and to a lesser extent, some of the other "good" things of life—are so closed to them that these school-bred attitudes create special conflicts in their minds and cause them to become especially cynical with regard to them.[b] But this cynicism is by way of defense, and their deprivations cause the Northern Negro youth to place the highest value on the American Creed and the American virtues.

The situation in the South, however, is different. While the federal and state constitutions require equal educational facilities for Negroes and whites, and the pretense is kept up that the constitutional requirements are met by "separate but equal" school systems: actually, however, the educational facilities for Negroes are far inferior to those for whites except at a few universities supported by Northern philanthropy or by the federal government. To a great degree this is inevitable where two parallel segregated school systems must be maintained.[c] The richer Northern communities, with a smaller proportion of Negroes, find it a drain on the budget to support a single decent school system, much less two. The insufficient support of Negro schools in the South is reflected in a complete lack of schools in some rural areas, an insufficient number of schools in other areas, a grave lack of equipment, a lack of enforcement of the truancy laws for Negroes, an inferior quality of teacher training, differential payment to teachers, and miserably poor standards all around. The situation has been so bad that Southern Negroes have lost much of the faith in education they once had.

In the rural South the one-room school house for Negroes is fairly typical, with the whole range of elementary grades taught by a single teacher in a

[a] Except at the graduate level, when instructors in the social sciences expect Negro students to study Negro problems.

[b] See Chapter 36.

[c] See Chapter 15, Section 3; and Chapter 41.

single room. Where Negroes are a small element in the population, Negro school houses may be far apart (cases have been reported where an elementary school child has had to travel up to eighteen miles every day). The authorities are very discriminatory in providing bus services for Negro pupils.[a] School buses are generally provided for rural whites, but are rarely provided for Negroes. Some Negro families have to pay for private bus service, and others board their children in town.[33] The alternative is not to go to school at all, an alternative followed by some discouraged Negro families. There is a special need for school bus service in rural areas, since adequate schools cannot be paid for unless they serve many children residing over a wide area. But the "consolidation of schools" movement has hardly begun for rural Negro schools in the South, although it is well-developed for the white schools.

Another handicap of a financial nature is that Negro children must sometimes provide all their own books and other school supplies; white children get these things free. The content of the elementary education in the rural South is almost unbelievably poor in the eyes of the outsider; a poorly trained[b] and poorly paid[c] Negro woman[d] must control and teach a group of children from a poor and uncultured home background, in an overcrowded,[e] dilapidated,[f] one-room[g] school house, where she must perform at least some of the janitorial and administrative duties. She is also subject to unusual outside pressure.[h]

The Negro school in the rural South is kept open only about seven

[a] While Negroes constituted 28 per cent of the pupils enrolled in the public schools of 10 Southern states (1935-1936) and were 34 per cent of the rural-farm population aged 5 to 17 (1930), they received only 3 per cent of the total expenditures for transportation (1935-1936). (Compiled from a variety of government reports by Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 19.)

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 4.

[c] See Chapter 15, Section 3.

[d] Of all teachers in public elementary and secondary schools in the 18 Southern states in 1935-1936, 80.6 per cent were women. (Blose and Caliver, *op. cit.*, p. 12.)

[e] The average pupil load per teacher in 18 Southern states in 1933-1934 was 43 for Negroes and 34 for whites. (*Biennial Survey of Education: 1932-1934*, pp. 64-65, and 93-94 and 99; compiled by Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 21.)

[f] The average value of school property in 10 Southern states in 1935-1936 was $36 per Negro pupil and $183 per white pupil. (Compiled from various government publications by Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 31.)

The literature is replete with descriptions of how dilapidated the rural Negro school houses are: see, for example, *ibid.*, pp. 28-29; Ambrose Caliver, *Rural Elementary Education among Negroes under Jeanes Supervising Teachers*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 5, (1933); John G. Van Deusen, *The Black Man in White America* (1938), pp. 164-166.

[g] Sixty-five per cent of all the Negro public schools in Louisiana are one-teacher schools, and another 27 per cent are two- or three-teacher schools (Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," p. 43).

[h] See Chapter 40, Section 1.

months a year; Negro children must work in the fields in planting and harvesting seasons, and the white planters give the signal for the Negro school to curtail its session, to close or to open. There is a low attendance generally because transportation is so poor for Negroes, because they must help around the house, because they are frequently ill or have insufficient clothing, because there is practically no enforcement of truancy regulations.[a] The white schools, in contrast, operate for eight or nine months a year, with fixed opening and closing dates, and with fairly rigorously applied truancy regulations. The secondary school situation for Negroes in the rural South is much worse, since there are so few secondary schools, and they are so far apart. As a consequence, Negro children come out of their school system—both elementary and secondary—very poorly educated. All studies show them to be far below the national average in scholastic achievement.[84]

Standards of teacher selection are low in the rural South. If a Negro girl knows a white member of the school board or any influential white person, she can be fairly sure of getting a teaching job even though she never completed high school. Sometimes there is the formality of passing an "examination" to get a teacher's certificate. The low standard of selection of the Negro school teacher, her usually inadequate ability to teach, and her extreme dependence on white men, give her a fairly low status in the rural Negro community. To the extent that she has been educated, however, she can attain a higher status. The teacher and the school house are usually integrated into the Negro community, since the teacher's social life is bound up with that of the parents of her pupils, and the school house is usually used for community purposes. Although all rural people probably have a sense of possessiveness for their local school house and use it for a variety of purposes, rural Southern Negroes have a special pride in theirs since they help to collect the money for it and sometimes they actually build and furnish it. Some teachers have succeeded in organizing Parent-

[a] The average number of days in a school year in 18 Southern states in 1935-1936 was 167 for whites and 146 for Negroes. The worst state was Mississippi, where the average school term was 145 for whites and 119 for Negroes. The discrepancy was even greater in Louisiana and South Carolina, although the absolute figures were not so low. In addition, Negro children failed to attend classes quite as frequently as white children so that their average number of days attended was only 113, as compared to 136 for whites. (See Blose and Caliver, *op. cit.*, p. 35.) These figures are so high because no separation is made between rural and urban schools. In Southern cities, Negro and white schools usually have the same length of term, but in rural areas of the Deep South, "terms of three and four months' duration are by no means uncommon . . ." (Bond, *op. cit.*, p. 291.) Further, as one superintendent in Louisiana said, "You can't afford to enforce compulsory school laws for the Negro children. As it is, their schools are too crowded, and we hardly know what to do with the ones we have. If all of them were in school that should be there, we'd have a school problem that the school board just wouldn't know how to handle." (Cited in Charles S Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," p. 125.)

Teacher Associations, and these have been of material advantage to both parents and teachers.[a]

There is a clear tendency to avoid civics and other social sciences in the Southern Negro public schools. They are not taught to any extent in the white schools, but a special effort is made to prevent Negroes from thinking about the duties and privileges of citizenship. In some places there are different school books for Negroes and whites, especially in those fields that border on the social. Where white students are taught the Constitution and the structure of governments, Negroes are given courses in "character building," by which is meant courtesy, humility, self-control, satisfaction with the poorer things of life, and all the traits which mark a "good nigger" in the eyes of the Southern whites. The content of the courses for Negroes throughout the South, except at the colleges with a tradition dating back to the "classical" influence of the New England "carpetbagger," is molded by the caste system at every turn. For example: a leaflet sent out by a privately controlled and privately supported North Carolina "Institute"—something meant to be a cross between a technical high school and a technical college—describes its course of study as follows:

> While the school gives a thorough English Education, it must be remembered that it is strictly moral, religious and industrial. Every boy and girl is taught practical Politeness, Farming, Housekeeping, Laundry, Dressmaking, Printing, Cooking, Brick-masonry, Plastering, and Automobile Mechanics. Students are taught self-reliance, race pride, independent man and womanhood. They are encouraged to remain at their homes in the South, to buy land, assist their fathers and mothers and to educate their fellows.

To repeat: this is the course of study at a privately supported school at almost the college level. It is probably an exceptionally poor school, but it illustrates what does exist. Publicly supported elementary schools for Negroes in the South put out no such statements regarding courses of study.

There is a strong element of the vocational in the education of Southern Negroes. Rural boys are given courses in agriculture; urban boys are given courses in the manual arts; and girls are given courses in home economics. Since little money is made available to teach such courses[b]—and adequate teaching of them requires a good deal of expensive equipment—and since the teachers are often inadequately trained, the courses are usually on a low level. The range of these courses, too, is restricted: for the most part, Negroes are taught only how to be farmers, semi-skilled workers and

[a] While rural Negro teachers are integrated into the community, they are usually not active in it and belong to few civic organizations other than the P.T.A. (Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," pp. 100-101.)

[b] Negroes receive little of the money made available for vocational education by the federal government, since the state legislatures misappropriate the funds. See Chapter 15, Section 3

servants. Negroes who have succeeded in becoming businessmen have usually gone through the regular academic curriculum rather than the vocational schools. Except for the private schools, which train for skilled work, vocational education for Negroes in the South has usually meant training to do more efficiently the traditional menial "Negro job." Little attention has been paid to the fact that a changing economy has created a serious over-population in agriculture and even in domestic service. The teaching of *new* occupations to Negroes is even further from whites' minds than the teaching of the older, but desirable, occupations. Vocational education in the public schools of the South has also served as a means to keep Negroes from getting the general education given to whites, since it is felt —with good reason—that an academic education would make Negroes ambitious and dissatisfied with a low occupation, would "ruin a good field hand." Vocational education for Negroes in the North has had none of these degrading traits, and a larger proportion of Negroes in high schools has been getting vocational training in the North than in the South.[35]

Educational conditions for Southern Negroes are better in the cities than in the rural areas. Negroes live closer together, and the local governments are thus more willing to build more and better schools. There are no problems of having the schools too far apart, of closing down the schools for planting and harvest season, of having all grades under one teacher in one room. The teachers are better trained, in some cases better trained than white teachers in the same cities, since Negro women who go to college have few opportunities outside of the city school systems.[36] They also achieve a measure of independence.[a] While the quality and quantity of education in the city schools is better than in the country schools, the subjects taught and their content are about the same. The Negro school teachers in the Southern cities usually have a high status in the Negro community and often are looked up to as leaders in social life and general activities.[37]

High schools for Negroes in the South have existed in significant numbers for only about twenty years[b] and are still inadequate. In 18 Southern states (1933-1934), only 19 Negro children out of 100 aged 14 to 17 (1930) were attending public high schools, as compared to 55 white children in the same Southern states and to 60 children in the nation as a whole.[c] These low figures are not entirely due to the lack of public high schools for Negroes, but are tied up with the whole educational and social

[a] See Chapter 41, Section 1.

[b] In 1915-1916 there were only 64 *public* high schools for Negroes in the 18 Southern states and more than half of these were in 4 states—Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee and Texas. There were also 216 *private* high schools in that year. In 1935-1936 there were 2,305 *public* high schools in these states, and in 1932-1933, 92 *private* high schools. (Blose and Caliver, *op. cit.*, p. 8.)

[c] The worst state for Negroes was again Mississippi, where 7 Negro children out of 100, as compared to 66 white children out of 100, attended public high school. (Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.)

structure of the South: Negro children tend to drop out of elementary school, partly because the family is poor and they are needed for work, partly because schools are so inaccessible, and partly because instruction is so inferior. But the lack of high schools is also important: Wilkerson points out that there was one white high school teacher for every 11 white seventh grade (elementary school) pupils but only one Negro high school teacher for every 20 Negro seventh grade (elementary) school pupils.[38] Although two-thirds of all Southern Negroes live in rural areas, only 508 of the 1,077 Negro high schools in 18 Southern states (1933-1934) were in rural areas, and they enrolled only 21 per cent of the total number of Negro pupils in public high schools in these states.[39]

The Negro public junior college is practically nonexistent in the South, since there were only 5 of them in 16 Southern states (1933-1934), enrolling only 706 students.[40] In addition, Negroes had 17 private junior colleges, enrolling another 1,344 students. The colleges proper present a comparable situation. Negroes constituted 25 per cent of the population 18 through 21 years of age in 17 Southern states (1930) but only 6 per cent of the public college enrollment (1933-1934).[41]

Of the 117 Negro institutions of higher learning in the United States (1932-1933), only 36 were public. More than half of these public colleges were land-grant institutions—largely stimulated and supported by the federal government; of the 81 private colleges, all but seven were church-affiliated. Most of these colleges did not have the teachers and school facilities to provide an adequate education.[a] Before 1937, only 5 Negro institutions offered instruction at the graduate level.[42] After that year, when the federal courts declared that a state must offer equal educational opportunities to Negroes, several Southern states forced ill-equipped public Negro colleges to assume graduate instruction. For all practical purposes, however, it may still be claimed that only 3 or 4 Negro institutions have real graduate instruction, and none of them offers the Ph.D. degree.

The whole Southern Negro educational structure is in a pathological state. Lack of support, low standards, and extreme dependence on the whites make Negro education inadequate to meet the aims of citizenship, character or vocational preparation. While illiteracy is being eliminated, this is only in a formal sense—since children who are taught to read and write and do arithmetic seldom make use of these abilities. Still there are many educational opportunities for Negroes, and the situation is far better than it was at the close of the Civil War. The concept of education for

[a] By 1939, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools had awarded Class "A" rating to only 18 Negro colleges, and 4 Negro junior colleges. (Fred McCuistion, *Graduate Instruction for Negroes in the United States* [1939], pp. 29-30.) In addition to these, 3 public and 2 private institutions had been accredited in 1938 by the North Central Association and the Middle States Association. In the 11 states under the Southern Association, 46 per cent of the white colleges are accredited but only 22 per cent of the Negro colleges. (Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 70.)

Negroes is hardly questioned any longer. The complete educational ladder is available to practically all Northern Negroes and to most of the Southern Negroes who live in large Southern cities. At least the rudiments of an education are available even to the rural Southern Negroes. There is considerable educational opportunity at the college level, even in the South. The general trend toward improved education is helping the Negro, even if he does not share in the new opportunities as much as do whites.

5. VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

As many foreign observers have pointed out,[43] America has an unusual proliferation of social clubs, recreational organizations, lodges, fraternities and sororities, civic improvement societies, self-improvement societies, occupational associations, and other organizations which may be grouped under the rubric of "voluntary associations." While this is true of Americans generally, Negroes seem to have an even larger relative number of associations. In Chicago in 1937, when the total Negro population of the city was less than 275,000, there were over 4,000 formal associations, the membership of which was wholly or largely Negro.[44] In Natchez, Mississippi, where the total Negro population was about 7,500, there were more than 200 Negro associations discovered in one week in 1935.[45] This characteristic of the Negro community becomes even more striking when it is realized that generally upper and middle class people belong to more associations than do lower class people.[46] Thus, despite the fact that they are predominantly lower class, Negroes are more inclined to join associations than are whites; in this respect again, Negroes are "exaggerated" Americans. Only a small number of the Negro associations had as their primary purpose to protest against caste or to improve the Negro community in some way;[47] these protest and improvement associations were considered in Chapter 39. Here we shall give brief consideration to the many associations which have a "sociable" or "expressive" function. With rare exceptions, these associations have only Negroes as members, and their large number is in some measure a product of the prohibitions against having Negro members in white associations.

Max Weber has sought to explain the numerous social clubs in America as a means of helping people to business, political and social success.[48] This is only partly true for American Negroes. It is undoubtedly the reason why upper and middle class Negroes belong to more voluntary associations than do lower class Negroes.[49] But it does not serve to explain why Negroes have relatively more associations than do whites, or why lower class Negroes are members of as many associations as they are. Membership in their own segregated associations does not help Negroes to success in the larger American society. The situation must be seen as a pathological one: Negroes are active in associations because they are not allowed to be active in much of the other organized life of American society. As Robert R. Moton pointed

out,[50] the tremendous amount of club activity among Negroes is, in one sense, a poor substitute for the political activity they would like to participate in but cannot because of caste. Negroes are largely kept out, not only of politics proper, but of most purposive and creative work in trade unions, businessmen's groups, pressure groups, large-scale civic improvement and charity organizations, and the like.

A second reason why we regard the huge number of voluntary associations among Negroes as pathological is that some of them—especially the lodges—would seem to follow a pattern which is about a generation behind the general American pattern. Whereas in white America the lodges—with their secret rites and elaborate ritual—began to become unpopular at least thirty years ago, the decline of Negro lodges occurred, not because they became unpopular, but because they failed to pay insurance premiums. The most serious decline of Negro lodges has occurred in the last ten years.[51] And when lodge membership did decline among Negroes, the lower class people who left lodges simply joined religious sects, rather than disentangle themselves completely from such old-fashioned groups, as did whites.[52] The content of the meetings of the Negro sociable groups, even outside the old-fashioned lodges, also reveals the lag in their adaptation to modern American standards. The meetings are often heavily formalized, in the manner of white upper class clubs of a generation or two ago. Strict rules of parliamentary procedure are followed in the "business" meetings; the "entertainment" consists, with little variation, of card-playing, lectures, or recitals; a complete roster of officers is elected even if there are less than a dozen members in the entire club; in upper class clubs formal dress is required at certain of the meetings.[a]

Another reason why we regard the great number of Negro voluntary associations as a sign of social pathology is that they accomplish so little in comparison to what their members set out to achieve by means of them. A large number of the associations—including not a few of the "social"

[a] "Behavior at club meetings is rather rigidly stereotyped—(1) business, while visitors wait in another room, (2) card playing, (3) eating, (4) a period of rather general unorganized conversation and hilarity. There are wide variations, however, in the nature of the 'business' discussed and in the amount of formality involved. The bulk of the clubs are very formal in their conduct of business, having a parliamentarian to correct the group on points of order, even when only four or five members are present. Since there is a great deal of inter-club visiting, the clubs are careful about 'doing things in an orderly manner' so that they will not get a 'bad reputation.' Some clubs play whist, but the bulk of them play auction bridge; a few play contract. A few vary the procedure by the use of popular games such as 'Pick-up-sticks,' 'Lexicon,' or 'Pit.'

"Ranking within the club world depends partly upon the elaborateness of the entertaining and the orderliness of meetings. Clubs range from the very formal middle-aged women's groups of upper-middle class to the rather rough behavior of younger upper-lower class (or even middle-aged lower class groups.) On the whole, however, the standards of the club world operate to stereotype the behavior." (Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," pp. 466-467.)

clubs—claim to be "civic-minded" or interested in improving the "race."[a] They collect money and hold dances or card-parties for such purposes, and they drain off a large part of the Negroes' spare time.[b] Even when they do not claim to be engaged in protest or amelioration, the social clubs and lodges divert to themselves a larger part of the Negro people's time and money than do comparable associations among the whites.[58] This is accentuated by their intense rivalry and heavily formalized activity. Since, as we noted, Negro clubs and lodges do not help their members to business, political, or social success in the same way that white clubs do, much of their activity is wasted effort. Many Negroes are aware of this and talk against it. But the pattern of a "heavy" social life is so traditional in the Negro community that even those who do not like it cannot escape it without cutting off much of their relationship with their fellows and without losing some of their prestige. It is probable that the bulk of the Negroes, including those who make no overt protest against the great proliferation of clubs with ritualized social activity, feel frustrated by it at times. The average sociable club has only one or two dozen members; there is an intense rivalry between clubs for status and an equally intense rivalry between members within any given club for office; the club is often short-lived; it seldom aids the individual to achieve success or raises the level of the "race"; it is time-consuming and the activities undertaken are heavily formalized.

Aside from the above-mentioned differences between Negro and white voluntary associations, they are much alike. Negro associations are apparently modelled after white associations, even if those white models are remnants of a past generation[c] and so appear ludicrous to some white people today.

[a] The athletic associations, the occupational associations, and the Parent-Teacher Associations have definite and limited functions, so that much of what is said about the social clubs, church clubs, "welfare" clubs, and lodges in this paragraph does not apply to the former groups.

[b] Much of the money collected for "charity" by the social clubs goes to pay for the heavy expenses of the entertainment and of the club. (See Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," p. 477 and Davis, *op cit.*, p. 163.)

[c] As we noted above, the Negro social clubs are modelled after upper class white social clubs of the period 1880-1910 or the small town social clubs of today. The Negro lodges were modelled after the white lodges as they have been since 1865. The Negro lodges began when the white lodges refused to take in Negro members, and when white insurance companies refused to accept Negroes as insurance policyholders. There was no attempt to hide the fact that they were imitations of the white lodges: the Eighth Annual Report of the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World states:

"Like all other secret and benevolent organizations that have been organized, the white order of Elks will not permit colored persons to become members. But there are colored Elks now. . . . Some may try to deprecate the colored Elks but we have the same ritual that the white Elks have. . . . The difference between the white and colored Elks is this: The white order is known as the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Ours is known as the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World." (Cited by W. E. B. Du Bois (editor), *Economic Cooperation among Negroes* [1907], p. 126).

The distinctive thing about Negro associations has been the death benefit and sickness insurance features of some Negro lodges and benevolent societies. Even this was not a unique trait of Negro organizations, since white lodges frequently have them too. But it was much more developed among Negroes,[54] and it made the lodges of almost equal importance with the churches in the period around 1890.[55] The insurance features of many lodges elicited the only serious praise that has been bestowed upon Negro sociable organizations. A survey edited by Du Bois in 1898 said that the lodges represented the "saving, banking spirit among the Negroes and are the germ of commercial enterprise of a purer type," but at the same time he castigated their "extravagance and waste in expenditure, an outlay for regalia and tinsel."[56] Booker T. Washington saw the secret society as the Negro's means of creating capital, learning business techniques, and teaching the "masses of people habits of saving and of system which they would not otherwise have been able or disposed to learn."[57] But owing to the frequent failure of the lodges and benevolent societies to pay insurance premiums,[a] which has been noticeable since the beginning of the depression in 1929,[58] the lodges have been declining in popularity.[b] Especially the lower classes have left; the middle classes remain for the prestige, power and recreation that the lodges provide. But even the middle classes, and especially the upper classes, are being attracted away from the lodges and toward the business and professional associations, the college and high school fraternities and sororities. Typical of the highest sort of evaluation of the lodges heard today is the one expressed by the secretary of a local Urban League in a Northern city:

> Not much practical value to the community at large but vastly important to the individual who is thereby associated with a definite group. There are a few visionary optimists in each order who think their group can become "a great force for the political and social betterment of the Negro people," but the rest are there because they like to have a good time with the boys, or the girls, and who like the pomp and ceremony and mumbo-jumbo of the meetings—which is as good a reason for joining as any.[59]

Thus, aside from the fact that all Negro groups are inevitably forced to be "race conscious" and that most of them at least pretend to improve the position of the "race," "there is a pronounced tendency . . . for mutual aid associations and civic groups to become recreational associations."[60] It is, therefore, only as a means of recreation that Negro voluntary associations can be given a high evaluation. To determine whether or not such a high evaluation is justified, we shall have to consider, briefly, the general character of recreation and amusement in the Negro community. This we shall do in the following chapter.

[a] See Chapter 14, Section 3.
[b] See footnote 52 to this chapter.

CHAPTER 44

NON-INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE NEGRO COMMUNITY

1. "Peculiarities" of Negro Culture and Personality

The increasing isolation between Negroes and whites has, as we noted,[a] increased the mutual ignorance of the two groups. Lower class Negroes know much of the private side of the lives of the whites since so many of them are servants to whites; upper and middle class Negroes know very little about either the private or the public life of whites. Whites of all classes know even less about Negroes. Because of their lack of intimate contact with Negroes, whites create and maintain stereotypes about them. Most of the stereotypes have no basis in fact, but even those that are superficially true are not understood by whites in terms of their motivation and cultural origin. Even when they do not mean to be unfriendly to Negroes, whites observe that certain aspects of Negro life are "different" or "peculiar." Some of these cultural peculiarities bother whites; all of them are taken into account—consciously or unconsciously—when whites act in regard to Negroes. Since the whites are the dominant group, it is important for Negroes to determine what whites find peculiar about their culture. In this chapter, we shall not attempt to describe all the ways in which the Negro community differs from the white community, but only those non-institutional differences in Negro culture which whites find most unusual or disturbing. We shall start from our conclusion in Chapter 6 that these differences have no basis in biological heredity, that they are of a purely cultural nature.

In this section, we shall sometimes be writing about Negro culture traits as though they applied to all Negroes. This is, of course, incorrect, and it angers many Negroes. There is a diversity of behavior patterns among Negroes, perhaps as great as in white American society with all its diverse national backgrounds. Negro communities range from the folk societies of isolated rural Southern areas to the highly sophisticated wealthy night club groups of Harlem. Much of the diversity among Negroes arises out of a tendency of upper class Negroes to act in a manner just the opposite of lower

[a] See Chapter 30.

class Negroes, and some of it arises out of diverse historical background. We shall try to take account of the diversity, but we feel we are justified in writing of Negro culture traits because *average* Negro behavior differs from *average* white behavior. From a practical standpoint it is necessary to take account of these differences in averages because white people see them and use them to buttress their prejudices.

Because of the isolation between the two groups and because of the fear and suspicion on the part of Negroes toward the whites, it is practically impossible for any white investigator to get completely into the Negro community. We do not claim that we completely understand the Negro community, and no doubt many Negro readers will find some of our observations about them to be naïve or mistaken. Yet the white investigator has two advantages: First, he knows what white people do *not* know about Negroes. Negroes do not realize how ignorant most white people are about the Negro community, and they do not understand how even their white friends may be unaware of certain things about them. Second, Negroes are so thoroughly isolated from white society that they have little basis for comparing their society with white society. Without the objectivity acquired by stepping outside of their own culture, they often cannot see how the Negro community differs from the white. For these two reasons, it may be that the white investigator can more easily determine what whites find "peculiar" in the Negro community and can more easily interpret these peculiarities to the whites. This is not inevitably so, however, and there is need for Negro scholars, with their greater ability to get inside the Negro community, to understand the white man's point of view when they study and describe the Negro community.

The trait which the whites perhaps associate most with Negroes is a tendency to be aggressive.[a] This tendency is remarked about whenever Negroes commit crimes, whenever they are insulting and even whenever they try to rise out of their "place." The tendency is exaggerated in the minds of the whites, and whites are ambivalent in their beliefs since they also frequently speak of the Negroes as docile, subservient and dull. The tendency is exaggerated partly because white newspapers give relatively little news about Negroes other than crime news,[b] partly because of the

[a] Some of the culture traits frequently associated with Negroes have been discussed at length in other chapters and will not be taken up again at this point. For a consideration of Negro immorality, see Chapter 43, Section 2. For a discussion of Negro religious emotionalism, see Chapter 43, Section 3. For a discussion of Negro aping of white manners, see Chapter 32; Chapter 42, Section 3; and Chapter 43, especially Section 5. For a discussion of Negro laziness, inefficiency, and lack of ambition, see Chapter 9, Seetion 2, and Chapter 10, Section 2. For a consideration of the causes of Negro servility, see Chapter 29, Section 2. For a discussion of racial beliefs in general, see Chapter 4, especially Sections 7 and 8.

[b] See footnote 23 of Chapter 30.

traditional racial stereotypes and partly because many whites do not attribute to Negroes the natural human reactions to insult and deprivation.

Except for the sullen criminal youths found mainly in Northern cities,[a] Negroes seem to be no more aggressive than whites. In view of the fact that they are so frequently discriminated against and insulted, Negroes are remarkably passive and polite toward whites. Negroes have never, since the Civil War, organized to revolt against white domination. They are generally courteous to whites who do not insult them, and even to whites who do. It probably can be generalized that when noncriminal Negroes are called "bumptious," especially in the South, they are merely trying to get their rights as citizens and thus are attempting to rise out of their lower caste status. Another reason why whites, especially Northern whites, find Negroes aggressive or unpleasant is because they have unwittingly insulted them[b] or because they do not understand the Negro's suspicion and fear of whites arising out of the uncertainty of life and property in the South. In the North, too, Negroes may do unpleasant things out of ignorance or appear "bumptious" because they are glad to be free of Southern restrictions.[c]

[a] See Chapter 36, Section 5.

[b] We have noted several times in this book that Negroes are sensitive to insult and that whites, especially Northern whites, insult them unwittingly. When, in November, 1942, Irving Berlin wrote a patriotic song, he used the word "darky" in it and precipitated a storm of protest. He quickly changed the word to Negro and said he had not meant to insult anyone. The following excerpt from a letter to the editor of *Time* magazine is interesting both as an example of unwitting insult and for the list of names by which Negroes like to be described.

"First it was your constant use of the abortive term *Negress*; your farfetched designation of *pickaninnies* in a Chicago department store. . . . Now it is your use of "darky-driven" trucks! . . . Damn!! What is wrong with *Time's* policy toward the American Negro in the last year and a half? It's getting so I can't read an article about the race without being insulted! . . .

"Some terms (adjectives) that might be used in describing Negroes:

"bronzed (conventional but well liked)	coal black (trite)
mighty black	smooth yellow (don't use 'high yaller')
jade black	golden tinted
blue black	mellow (current '38-'40)
huskies	smooth (in place of 'shiny')
Zigaboo (coined by Negroes)	golden brown
Senegambian	chocolate brown (trite)
coffee-colored (used by *Time*)	(*you* add to the list)

Don'ts

"Nigger	darky
Negress	octoroon
pickaninny	quadroon, etc."

(A letter to the editor, *Time* [August 25, 1941], p. 8.)

[c] "If the Negroes in Harlem show at times less courtesy toward white visitors than is required by the canons of good taste, this is bad, but understandable. It was remarked shortly after the first migration that the newcomers on boarding street cars invariably

Next to aggressiveness, probably the most striking trait of Negroes noticed by whites is emotionality and spontaneous good humor. This is given both a high and a low evaluation. On the one hand, the ability to enjoy life is recognized as desirable, and the Negro's music, dancing, literature and art are appreciated by the whites. But on the other hand, lack of self-control and the tendency to act on impulse are deprecated. Negroes have acquired the art of enjoying life more than have whites.[1] Because they have no direct background in puritanism, they have taken sex more as it comes, without all the encumbrances and inhibitions. The relative economic independence of the Negro woman allows her to mate more in the spirit of equality and mutual enjoyment, and less out of a sense of duty or to get economic advantages. Because they have so little money to spend on entertainment and because the white masters in slavery times did not bother to regiment the small amount of free time of the Negroes, the Negroes have learned to enjoy small and inexpensive things and to get as much pleasure as they can out of their free time. The habit of spending a good deal of leisure time out-of-doors, due in part to the over-crowdedness of the Negro home, has contributed to the social pleasantness of Negro life, since being outside involves meeting friends and having no worries about destroying furniture.[a] Negroes also try much harder than do whites to get as much pleasure out of their work as they can.

There is something of the "devil-may-care" attitude in the pleasure-seeking of Negroes. They know that all the striving they may do cannot carry them very high anyway, and they feel the harshness of life—the caste pressures are piled on top of the ordinary woes of the average white man. "So you might as well make the most of it"; "what the hell difference does it make." In this spirit, life becomes cheap and crime not so reprehensible. Thus both the lack of a strong cultural tradition and the caste-fostered trait of cynical bitterness combine to make the Negro less inhibited in a way which may be dangerous to his fellows. They also make him more indolent, less punctual, less careful, and generally less efficient as a functioning member of society.

Because of the false racial belief that Negroes had innate emotional talents to compensate for their low intellectual capacities, whites have seldom hindered the development of the Negro in the artistic fields. In

strode to the front even if there were seats in the rear." (Charles S. Johnson, "New Frontage on American Life," in Alain Locke [editor], *The New Negro* [1925], p. 287.)

[a] Negroes do not hesitate to tell how they enjoy life in spite of caste. Claude McKay, for example, says:

"The prison is vast, there is plenty of space and a little time to sing and dance and laugh and love. There is a little time to dream of the jungle, revel in rare scents and riotous colors, croon a plantation melody, and be a real original Negro in spite of all the crackers. Many a white wretch, baffled and lost in his civilized jungles, is envious of the toiling, easy-living Negro." (*A Long Way from Home* [1937], pp. 145-146.)

fact, whites have enjoyed a paternalistic feeling in fostering this development. Negroes have been able to find an economic market for their artistic achievements, and this has fostered still more their development in this field, especially as opportunities are so closed to them in other fields. The pattern of uninhibited singing and dancing into which the Negro child is brought from his earliest years also gives a superb training for achievement in these fields. This trait of singing and dancing is so deep in the American Negro's culture that he sometimes falls into the white man's error of thinking of it as a racial trait: "white people have no rhythm"; "they can't dance with feeling"; "whites are naturally cold."

The good humor that is associated with the Negro's emotionalism is the outcome, not only of the attempt to enjoy life to its fullest, but of stark fear of the white man. Much of the humor that the Negro displays before the white man in the South is akin to that manufactured satisfaction with their miserable lot which the conquered people of Europe are now forced to display before their German conquerors. The loud high-pitched cackle that is commonly considered as the "Negro laugh" was evolved in slavery times as a means of appeasing the master by debasing oneself before him and making him think that one was contented. Negroes still "put it on" before whites in the South for a similar purpose. They also use it when they are entirely among themselves—in the same way as they use the hated term "nigger."

In a similar manner, the Negro slave developed a cleverness in language which is akin to the "bright sayings" of children. Like the "Negro laugh," he found that a clever remark amused the white man and often staved off punishment or brought rewards.

> No master could be thoroughly comfortable around a sullen slave; and, conversely, a master, unless he was utterly humorless, could not overwork or brutally treat a jolly fellow, one who could make him laugh. The famous black-face minstrels by white performers get their suggestion from the plantation entertainers. The most important use of humor to the Negro, however, was in his personal relations with his white master. The master says to a young slave, "You scoundrel, you ate my turkey," and the slave replies, "Yes, suh, Massa, you got less turkey but you sho' got more nigger." The slave lives to eat another turkey and the master has another entertaining story.[a]

[a] W. D. Weatherford and C. S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 284. Preceding the statement quoted in the text, Johnson gives the following analysis of Negro humor:

"The humor of the Negro has been regarded as one of his native characteristics. It is, indeed, one of the useful contributions of the race to the grim struggle of America for progress and wealth. This humor has enlivened the public and private stage, the joke columns of the press, and countless after-dinner speeches. It has made entertainment without end for the smoking cars of the railroad trains. Since the native African is not a very humorous person, it seems most likely that this quality of humor was developed in slavery, and there is just as good reason for regarding it as a survival trait."

In one other way the Negro's humor has grown out of the caste situation, not out of fear of it but out of contempt for it: the Negro tries, in all sorts of ways, to express his hatred of the prejudiced white man. Such cynical humor travels in the Negro community as do the anti-dictator jokes in the totalitarian countries of Europe:

> "It says in the white folks' newspaper that our women are trying to ruin the white folks' homes by quitting their jobs as maids."
>
> "Yeah. A lot of white women are mad because they have to bring up their own children."

Like the Negro's cackling laugh and appeasing humor, his "dumbness" has been developed as an accommodation to caste. There is no gainsaying the fact that most Negroes are extremely ignorant: they have no tradition of learning; they have had unusually bad schools in a region generally noted for the poverty of its education; their interests are often so closely restricted to the Negro problem that they have not developed knowledge of other things; they are forcibly isolated from white society so that they often cannot know what is expected from them in the way of manners. Yet, in addition to all this actual ignorance, there is a good deal of pretended ignorance on the part of the Negro. To answer certain questions posed to them by white people in the South is a way of getting both themselves and their fellows in trouble. So they feign inability to understand certain questions. To volunteer information is often a sure way of being regarded as "uppity" by whites. So they restrict their conversation to what is necessary or customary. And they act humble, which also gives them an air of "dumbness." The aggressive Negro, the one who talks the most in an effort to impress others with his cleverness, is likely to be more ignorant and less intelligent than most of the humble or reserved Negroes. Actually, Negroes tend to be clever in their petty guilefulness. Some of the falsehoods told by Negroes—and lying is another of the traits in the stereotype of the Negro—have their cause in the fear or suspicion of the white man.[2] In other cases Negroes may lie to whites in resentment against the caste system. Among themselves, Negroes are probably not given to lying, humility, "dumbness" or reservedness any more than whites are. In fact, they are inclined to be talkative and witty. Some of their talk is malicious gossip and detraction of others: there is naturally much jealousy among the members of a suppressed group when one of them rises or gets any privileges. There is intense competition among all those Negroes who feel that they have a chance to rise. The individualism of Negroes, their inability to "hang together," their bitter competition and jealousy are commented upon by white observers and deplored by Negro leaders.[3]

Another trait attributed to the Negro and connected with emotionalism

is a love of the gaudy, the bizarre, the ostentatious.* The lower and middle class Negroes have their lodges with all their pomp and ceremony. If they can afford it, they wear colorful clothing of unusual style. Their social gatherings are made expensive by good food, display and excellent entertainment. The Negro's reputation for conspicuous display is, of course, exaggerated, because most Negroes do not have the money to be ostentatious: so many of them wear the cast-off clothing of white people and live in tiny shacks and flats. White people often generalize about the Negro race from a single observation: a Negro racketeer driving a gaudy, expensive car will cause thousands of white people to remark about the ostentatiousness of Negroes. What there is of color and pomp in their lodges and social gatherings is a sort of lag in acculturation, a misguided attempt to gain status by conspicuous consumption. Negroes have no more of this than do immigrant white groups and even many poor *native* white groups. Some of what appears exotic to whites is simply a result of the development of unique culture traits: a group which is kept so forcibly isolated as are the Negroes is bound to initiate a few such traits even though the great bulk of their behavior patterns are those which are common to all Amer icans. An example of such a trait is that which has come to be known as a "zoot suit": a man's suit with broad-seated and narrow-cuffed trousers and a long suit-coat, usually worn with a wide-brimmed hat. This suit, inci-

* This trait, as well as the connected Negro trait of audaciousness, is characteristic of white Southerners too, and it may be that Negroes have taken on the trait from the whites.

"White southerners employ many of the same defense mechanisms characteristic of the Negro. They often carry a 'chip on the shoulder'; they indulge freely in self-commiseration; they rather typically and in real Negro fashion try to overcome a feeling of inferiority by exhibitionism, raucousness, flashiness in dress, and an exaggerated self-assertion. An air of belligerency, discreetly employed when it can be done without risk, is one means of release for the individual who feels himself the underdog. A casual observation of the conduct of southern law-makers in the chambers of Congress will be sufficient to demonstrate that southern legislators, taken as a group, are more abusive, indulge in personalities and more rough and tumble repartee than the legislators from any other section. What spice there is in the Congressional Record is furnished by the southerners, whether it be a Cole Blease, a Heflin or a 'Cotton Ed' Smith delivering one of the notorious diatribes against the Negro, (including a discourse on how permanent is the odor of the Negro), or a Huey Long giving one of his opponents a 'dressing down' with enough insulting innuendo to have caused gun-play in the old days (and enough even today to have gotten Huey's nose punched now and then, it was rumored). The southerner is proficient too, at conjuring up arguments to show how shabbily the South has been treated. Like the Negro, the white South holds out its hands for alms and special privilege. A Georgia planter, bitterly anti-New Deal, was not at all moved by the assertion that a lot of northern money was being sent South in relief and other New Deal activities. 'We *oughta* be gittin' some of it back; they stole enough from us in the war,' he drawled. It is well-known in the inside circles of some of the national academic societies that southern members put in special claims for representation among the office-holders on the grounds that 'the South is discriminated against,' and they often got recognition." (Ralph J. Bunche, "Memorandum on Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], pp. 71-73.)

dentally, has been borrowed by white youths in America who consider themselves experts on jazz music (also of Negro origin) and by pseudo-sophisticated lower class youths of certain European countries.

There are some special reasons why Negro clothing may look bizarre to white people: first, pieces of cast-off clothing may not go well together even though each piece looked all right when it was worn with its original counterpart. Second, that clothing which looks well on most white people may look foolish or odd on Negroes, because of the different skin color and features. Third, those who try to fit their clothing to their skin color and features may select things that are strange and exotic to conservative whites. Sometimes the adjustment of clothing to physical traits is successful: white clothing on dark skin often achieves a beautiful effect. Another interesting adjustment is the Negro woman's use of red lipstick on the eyelids to make her eyes appear larger, whereas white women use blue, brown, or black eye shadow to achieve the same effect.

Upper class Negroes, in their attempt to avoid the unfavorable traits commonly associated with Negroes, are conservative in their dress and public behavior. They avoid everything that is loud, gaudy and cheap. But they also are driven by a desire for status and so engage in conspicuous consumption of another type. They imitate the staid, old-fashioned patterns of those upper class white people who have not become emancipated. Their clothes are most "respectable" and most expensive; their homes—though small—are furnished in "good taste"; their social gatherings are costly and ceremonial. They even go to extremes of conspicuous consumption in their desire to gain status, as many other channels of gaining status are closed to them.[4] They try to copy the "highest" standards of white people and yet get absolutely no recognition for doing so.

The struggle for status manifests itself frequently in speech and this, too, may become ostentatious. With education valued so highly, and with so little of it available to them, Negroes often try to exhibit an education which they do not have. In speech this takes the form of the misuse of big words. The trait is manifested not only in the pompous oratory of many Negroes but also in their everyday conversations. On other occasions the big words are used properly, but they are out of place in simple conversation. The correct but misplaced use of big words also originates in an attempt to gain status, and is probably a survival of nineteenth century florid oratory.

The eating of chicken, 'possum, watermelon, corn pone, pork chops is part of the stereotype of the Negro, at least in the North. These things are, of course, either common or delicate foods in the South for both whites and Negroes, and there is no special reason why their consumption should be regarded as a "Negro trait." As a matter of fact, the foods generally consumed by Negroes are far from bizarre: they can seldom

afford any but the most prosaic types of foods. And Negroes are at least as cautious as are whites in their distribution of expenditures.[a] The belief that they have so much of the foods they desire seems to have the opportunistic purpose of hiding the fact that Negroes are too poor to buy all the foods they actually need.[b]

Another commonly observed trait of Negroes is their lack of poise, their inability to act in the conventional yet free and easy way expected of adult men and women in America. Much of this is a product of Southern caste etiquette, of course, where Negroes are presumed to be "uppity" if they stand up straight, look into the eyes of the person they are talking to and speak distinctly and to the point. Even in the North, many Southern-born Negroes keep their eyes on the ground, shuffle their feet, wiggle their bodies, and talk in a roundabout manner. Even when they want to get away from the Southern caste etiquette, many Negroes lack poise in their contacts with whites out of a sense of insecurity. Like adolescent youths, many Negroes will either exhibit a startling lack of poise or appear to gain it by putting on a cold front and acting mechanically. The uncertainty of the caste etiquette is another factor making for lack of poise: how a Negro is supposed to act before a white man varies with time, locality and the character of the white man. Among themselves, of course, Negroes are as much at ease as white people are.

At all times, even when they have poise, Negroes are secretive about their community when talking to whites.[5] They are suspicious of questions, and, except for stool pigeons who gain something by telling whites what goes on among Negroes, they are loyal to their group. They will usually protect any Negro from the whites, even when they happen not to like that individual Negro. They do not like to talk to whites about their community or about Negroes in general, for fear that anything they say will be twisted around to disparage Negroes. This is true even of Negro intellectuals when they talk to friendly white intellectuals. Negroes are suspicious of whites, even when there is not the slightest ground for being so, and whites seldom realize this.

The Negro's superstitiousness has been given much attention by whites. It is generally assumed that the Negro's superstitions and magical practices are of African origin. There is probably some truth in this assumption, but it has led whites to search out these superstitions and magical practices and to exaggerate them. As Powdermaker says, in referring to the large litera-

[a] Chapter 16, Sections 3 and 5.

[b] Somewhat like the belief that Negroes are addicted to certain foods is their association with dice-throwing. City Negroes do engage in much dice-throwing, but rural Negroes and upper class Negroes do not often engage in this pastime. Crap-shooting is now so much engaged in by whites that there is some doubt whether Negroes shoot craps any more than whites do.

ture on the subject: "It seems doubtful, however, that this emphasis on superstition is in proportion to its importance in the life of the Negro today."[6] As among white people, superstition among Negroes is a survival of an earlier period, and as such it is disappearing as Negroes assimilate modern American culture traits. Upper class Negroes are about as free from superstition and magical practices as upper class whites are, and Negro youth of the lower classes adhere to them only loosely. It is only in the rural areas of the South that these beliefs and practices have a powerful hold on Negroes. It is there that the "voodoo" doctors are still to be found,[7] who use incantations and charms, but often add advice in love or economic cases, and pills in sickness cases in imitation of real doctors. Quack doctors find Negroes easy prey, even in Northern cities.[8]

To the Northern white man, although seldom to the Southern white man, the speech of the Negro seems unusual. In fact, the "Negro dialect" is an important cause of the Northern whites' unconscious assumption that Negroes are of a different biological type from themselves. The present writer found many Northern whites who were amazed when they learned that Negroes could and did speak perfect English. It is not realized that the so-called "Negro dialect" is simply a variation of the ordinary Southern accent which so many Northerners like so well. It is this accent in lower class slang form, with a very small number of uniquely Negro cultural additions. There is absolutely no biological basis for it; Negroes are as capable of pronouncing English words perfectly as whites are.

Northern whites are also unaware of the reasons why they practically never hear a Negro speaking perfect English: First, at least three-fifths of Negroes living in the North are Southern-born,[8] and Negroes tend to retain the accent of their childhood, just as others do. Second, even most Northern-born Negroes were brought up in households and communities where they heard nothing but the "Negro dialect" spoken. School was the only place to learn good English, and many Negroes did not, or could not, take adequate advantage of it. Third, Negroes seem to be proud of their dialect, and frequently speak it even when they know how to speak perfect English. Some upper class Negroes do this to retain prestige and a following among lower class Negroes. In the South a few educated Negroes do

[8] A recent case of quackery in New York City is reported in the New York *Herald Tribune* of March 13, 1942 (p. 10). A West Indian Negro ". . . complained that he went to Byron [the quack] last October for treatment for recurrent headaches. The treatment consisted of copious draughts of herbs and bites on the neck, and was neither particularly effective nor worth the $59 charge, according to the complainant. . . . Byron also is known as Saibu Sudens. When using that name he wears a fez, on the grounds that he is part Egyptian, and at other times dons a skullcap in token of his claim that the other part is Jewish." Byron gave his age as 99 years.

For a discussion of superstition and occultism among Negroes in Harlem, see Claude McKay, *Harlem* (1940), pp. 82-85; 105-110.

it to avoid appearing "uppity" in the eyes of the whites. Few Negroes seem to realize that the use of the dialect augments white prejudice, at least in the North. Fourth, most of those who know how to speak perfect English are members of the upper classes, and these are so segregated that a large proportion of the whites can go through their entire lives without hearing one of them speak. The high-toned, pleading voice of the Negro is also associated with his speech. This trait was, of course, developed by the demands of the caste etiquette.

There are only a few dozen words and phrases that are uniquely Negro, except possibly in some isolated Southern rural areas.[9] Some of these words refer to things which are unique to the Negro community—such as "peola" and "high yaller" which refer to skin colors found among Negroes but not among whites. Others refer to things or conditions for which there is no adequate English word—such as "dicty" which means trying to put on airs and act upper class without having the basis for doing so. "Muckety-muck" and a few other Negro words have been taken over into general American slang. For the most part, the white American is not aware that there are uniquely Negro words, although he may be vaguely aware that there are some things said when Negroes talk among themselves that he cannot understand.

As more Negroes become educated and urbanized, it may be expected that they will lose their distinctive cultural traits and take over the dominant American patterns. The trend will work slowly, since caste serves to isolate Negroes from American culture and so hampers their assimilation. Still, there is reason to believe that it is more rapid today than it was before. As the trend proceeds, and as there emerges a class of Negroes which is recognized by whites to have the same cultural traits as themselves, the Negro will be thought to be less "peculiar" than he is now. Recognition of increased cultural similarity is not unimportant in the general attitude of whites toward Negroes. Thus cultural assimilation plays a role in the general circular process determining the Negro's status in America.

CRIME[a]

Negro crime has periodically been the subject of serious debate in the United States and, at least since 1890, has often been the object of statistical measurement. Just as the past year has seen an epidemic of reports in New York newspapers of assault and robbery by Negroes, so other periods have seen actual or alleged "crime waves" among Negroes in other areas.

[a] In preparing this section we have relied most heavily on an unpublished manuscript prepared for this study: Guy B. Johnson and Louise K. Kiser, "The Negro and Crime" (1940). A part of this study was incorporated in an article by Guy B. Johnson, "The Negro and Crime," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (September, 1941), pp. 93-104.

At all times the stereotyped notion has prevailed that Negroes have a criminal tendency, which manifests itself in acts ranging all the way from petty thievery by household servants to razor-slashing homicide.

The statistical studies of Negro crime have not been consistent in their findings, and each has evoked much criticism in scientific circles. The census of 1890 contained a criticism of its own crime statistics:

> The increase in the number of prisoners during the last 40 years has been more apparent than real, owing to the very imperfect enumeration of the prison population prior to 1880. Whatever it has been, it is not what it might be supposed to be, if we had no other means of judging of it than by the figures contained in the census volumes.[10]

Since that time, there have been many pertinent criticisms of Negro crime statistics.[11] Johnson and Kiser express the attitude of all honest students of Negro crime toward these statistics:

> The statistical data upon which we are forced to base our knowledge of Negro crime measure only the extent and the nature of the Negro's contact with the law and is of value for that purpose. However, our information relates to apparent crime only and not to the actual amount of crime committed by any one group or by the population in general. There is no consistent and measurable relation between apparent and real criminality and, as a result, it is not possible to estimate from available criminal data the amount and proportion of Negro crime or the extent to which it is increasing or decreasing.[12]

This attitude, as well as the conflict of conclusions, is not difficult to understand when one realizes the nature of the statistics on Negro crimes and the character of the legal process which defines a given act as a crime. Crime statistics are generally inadequate, despite a tremendous improvement within the last decade, and Negro crime statistics are further complicated by discrimination in the application of the law and by certain unique traditions. It may be stated categorically that there are no statistics on crimes *per se*: there are only statistics on "crimes known to the police," on arrests, on convictions, on prisoners. Honest studies based on different sets of statistics will give different findings. Crime is not uniformly defined from state to state and from time to time. Statistics on one area at one time will show different conclusions from statistics on another area at another time. Finally, the conclusions of a given study are largely determined by the "factors" one takes into account in analyzing the statistics.

It is necessary to consider all the weaknesses of the statistics on Negro crime because these statistics have been used to buttress stereotypes of Negro criminality and to justify discriminatory practices. Even capable and honest scientists like Walter Willcox have used the available statistics to "prove" Negro criminality.[13] But Willcox did this in 1899; competent scientists are no longer so uncritical of their data. Incompetent popularizers, how-

ever, continue to misuse the statistics. In this situation it becomes more important to criticize the statistics than it is to present them. To such a criticism we shall now proceed.

Statistics on Negro crime have not only all the weaknesses of crime statistics generally—such as incomplete and inaccurate reporting, variations between states as to definitions and classification of crimes, changes in policy—but also special weaknesses due to the caste situation and to certain characteristics of the Negro population. One of the basic weaknesses arises out of the fact that those who come in contact with the law are generally only a selected sample of those who commit crimes. Breaking the law is more widespread in America than the crime statistics indicate and probably everyone in the country has broken some law at some time. But only a small proportion of the population is arrested, convicted and sent to prison. Some major crimes (such as violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and avoidance of certain tax payments) are even respectable and are committed in the ordinary course of conducting a business;[14] others (such as fraud and racketeering) are not respectable but are committed frequently and often go unpunished. It happens that Negroes are seldom in a position to commit these white collar crimes; they commit the crimes which much more frequently result in apprehension and punishment. This is a chief source of error when attempting to compare statistics on Negro and white crimes.

In the South, inequality of justice seems to be the most important factor in making the statistics on Negro crime and white crime not comparable. As we saw in Part VI,[a] in any crime which remotely affects a white man, Negroes are more likely to be arrested than are whites, more likely to be indicted after arrest, more likely to be convicted in court and punished. Negroes will be arrested on the slightest suspicion, or on no suspicion at all, merely to provide witnesses or to work during a labor shortage in violation of anti-peonage laws. The popular belief that all Negroes are inherently criminal operates to increase arrests, and the Negro's lack of political power prevents a white policeman from worrying about how many Negro arrests he makes. Some white criminals have made use of these prejudices to divert suspicion away from themselves onto Negroes: for example, there are many documented cases of white robbers blackening their faces when committing crimes.[15] In the Southern court, a Negro will seldom be treated seriously, and his testimony against a white man will be ignored, if he is permitted to express it at all. When sentenced he is usually given a heavier punishment and probation or suspended sentence is seldom allowed him.[16] In some Southern communities, there are no special institutions for Negro juvenile delinquents or for Negro criminals who are

[a] Quantitative evidence for this and the following paragraphs may be found not only in Part VI of this book, but also in Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-192.

insane or feeble-minded. Such persons are likely to be committed to the regular jails or prisons, whereas similar white cases are put in a separate institution and so do not swell the prison population.

Some of the "crimes" in the South may *possibly* be committed only by Negroes: only Negroes are arrested for violations of the segregation laws, and sometimes they are even arrested for violation of the extra-legal racial etiquette (the formal charge is "disturbing the peace," "insolence to an officer," "violation of municipal ordinances," and so on). The beating of Negroes by whites in the South is seldom regarded as a crime, but should a Negro lay hands on a white man, he is almost certain to be apprehended and punished severely. As Frazer points out: "In the South, the white man is certainly a greater menace to the Negro's home than the latter is to his."[17] Similarly, when white lawyers, installment collectors, insurance agents, plantation owners, and others, cheat Negroes, they are never regarded as criminals.[18] But stealing by Negroes from whites—beyond that petty stealing which is part of the patriarchal tradition from slavery—is almost always punished as a crime.

In one respect, Southern discrimination against Negroes operates to reduce the Negro's crime record. If a Negro commits a crime against another Negro, and no white man is involved, and if the crime is not a serious one, white policemen will let the criminal off with a warning or a beating, and the court will let him off with a warning or a relatively light sentence. In a way, this over-leniency stimulates greater crimes since it reduces risks and makes law enforcement so arbitrary. Life becomes cheap and property dear in the Negro neighborhood—a situation conducive to crime.

These things occur in the North, too, although in much smaller degree. In the North it is not so much discrimination which distorts the Negro's criminal record, as it is certain characteristics of the Negro population. In the first place, unorganized crime is much more prevalent in the South than in the North, both among whites and among Negroes, and when the Negro migrates North, he brings his high crime rate along with him. Specific cultural practices brought from the South also affect the Negro's crime record in the North: a member of New York's grand jury told the author that part of the high Negro juvenile delinquency and crime rate was due to the Negro practice of fighting with knives instead of with fists, as whites do. "The fights start in the same way among both groups, but the law defines the Negro's manner of fighting as a crime, and the white's manner of fighting as not a crime."[19]

A third impersonal cause of distortion of the Negro's crime record is his poverty: he cannot bribe the policeman to let him off for a petty offense; he cannot have a competent lawyer to defend him in court; and when faced with the alternatives of fine or prison by way of punishment,

he is forced to choose prison. The Negro's ignorance acts in a similar fashion: he does not know his legal rights and he does not know how to present his case; thus even an unprejudiced policeman or judge may unwittingly discriminate against him. Also associated with the Negro lower class status in distorting his crime record is his lack of influential connections: he does not know the important people who can help him out of petty legal troubles. In the North, the fact that an unusually large proportion of Negroes are in the age group 15-40, which is the age group to which most criminals belong, operates to make the Negro crime rate based on total population figures deceptively high. Negro concentration in the cities in the North, where the crime rate is generally higher than in rural areas, acts in the same manner. The Negro crime rate is further inflated by greater recidivism: a given number of Negro criminals are sent to jail more often than are the same number of white criminals.[20] The longer prison sentence meted out to Negroes raises the number of Negroes in prison at any one time beyond what it would be if crime statistics reflected only the total number of criminals.

In general, our attitude toward crime statistics must be that they do not provide a fair index of Negro crime. Even if they did, a higher crime rate would not mean that the Negro was more addicted to crime, either in his heredity or in his culture, for the Negro population has certain external characteristics (such as concentration in the South and in the young adult ages) which give it a spuriously high crime rate. With this attitude in mind, we may examine some of the statistics. The most nearly complete, and the most reliable, set of statistics on crime for the nation are the recent annual reports of the United States Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories*. We shall use the set for 1939, the most recent set available at the time of writing. These statistics have two important weaknesses (in addition to those just reviewed): First, they do not include criminals in local jails, but only those in state and federal prisons and reformatories. For this reason, they do not include most of the petty crimes, and to get a relatively complete picture of types of offense we shall have to turn to other sources. Second, prisoners are a very selected group of criminals: they have been apprehended, arrested, indicted, convicted and committed. Criminologists generally hold that the further the index from the crime, the poorer it is as a measure of crime. This may be true for white prisoners, but it is not nearly so true for Negro prisoners. So many Negroes are arrested on the vaguest suspicion that those who are actually sent to prison may more likely be a representative group of criminals than those who are only arrested.

Table 1 shows that there are about three times as many Negro males in prisons and reformatories as there are native white males, in proportion to the sizes of their respective populations, and that the rate for Negro

TABLE 1

PRISONERS RECEIVED FROM COURTS BY STATE AND FEDERAL PRISONS AND REFORMATORIES BY SEX, RACE AND NATIVITY: 1939

Race and Nativity	Number Received from Courts			Rates per 100,000 Population[a]		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
White	47,971	45,796	2,175	42.3	77.0	3.7
Native	45,280	43,257	2,023	42.4	80.9	3.8
Foreign-born	2,691	2,539	152	23.6	42.2	2.8
Negro	17,324	16,135	1,189	134.7	257.4	18.0
Other Races	729	698	31	123.8	202.9	12.7

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1939* (1941), p. 11; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P–10, No. 6.
[a] The population bases are as of 1940.

women is more than four times as great as that for native white women. Foreign-born whites have rates much lower than native whites and members of races other than white and Negro (that is, Indians, Chinese, Filipinos, and others) have rates almost as high as do Negroes. Table 2 reveals that the difference between Negroes and whites is much larger in the North than in the South. In the South the number of Negro male felony prisoners is only between two and two-and-a-half times as great (in proportion to population) as the number of native white male felony prisoners. In the North, however, the Negro rate is almost five times as large as the white rate. This would seem to be due mainly to the fact that Northern Negroes are concentrated in cities, where social disorganization is greater and law enforcement is more efficient. We shall return to the problem of causes of crime after considering the types of offenses which are most characteristic of Negroes.

TABLE 2

MALE FELONY PRISONERS RECEIVED FROM COURTS BY STATE AND FEDERAL PRISONS AND REFORMATORIES, BY GEOGRAPHIC AREAS AND BY RACE AND NATIVITY: 1939

Race and Nativity	Number		Rate per 100,000 Population[a]	
	Southern States[b]	Northern and Western States	Southern States[b]	Northern and Western States
Total	19,430	28,894	46.6	32.1
Native White	10,659	22,759	34.3	30.0
Foreign-born White	132	1,435	21.1	13.3
Negro	8,548	4,402	86.3	148.7
All Other Races	91	298	88.6	61.3

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1939* (1941), p. 28; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P–10, No. 1.
[a] Population bases are as of 1940.
[b] Southern states include, according to this census publication: Delaware, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas. Georgia and Alabama did not report. All Northern states reported.

Negroes tend to commit certain types of crimes and not others; on the average the distribution of their crimes according to type differs from that of the white population. We have already mentioned that Negroes do not tend to commit "white collar" crimes; they do not have the opportunity to commit these large-scale, almost respectable crimes. Another significant omission is organized crime by gangs; Negro criminals commit their crimes as individuals, often more spontaneously than do white criminals.[a] There are Negro racketeers, of course, but most of the big rackets operating in the Negro community (mainly connected with gambling) are run by whites.[b]

Statistics on offenses by type are faulty because of variations in definition and classification used by different states. But they can be used to give a rough picture of the differences between whites and Negroes according to type of offense. We shall use the *Uniform Crime Reports* of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, since these offer the only available nation-wide information classifying arrests both by race and by specific offenses, including minor offenses. From Table 3, we can see that the Negroes' proportion was particularly high in crimes of homicide, assault, carrying and possessing weapons, robbery, burglary, larceny, receiving and possessing stolen goods, prostitution, disorderly conduct, "suspicion," violation of liquor laws, gambling. On the other hand, the contribution of Negro offenders was noticeably low in cases of embezzlement and fraud, forgery and counterfeiting, auto theft, sex offenses other than prostitution, drunkenness and driving while intoxicated.

In view of the fact that whites generally believe that Negroes are especially responsible for rape and sex crimes, it is important to note that these offenses seem to be relatively unimportant among Negroes (although the rate is higher among Negroes than among whites). All existing studies bear out this point, so that the low rate of sex offenses is not just a quirk of these specific statistics.[21] Like other Negro crime rates, the Negro rape rate is fallaciously high: white women may try to extricate themselves from the consequences of sexual delinquency by blaming or

[a] The following statement refers to the Harlem Negro Community of New York City: "In regard to adult delinquency we find no organized criminal gangs, but a preponderance of such crimes as flourished among poverty stricken and disorganized people. Moreover, the fact should be stressed that the very economic impotence of the community and its subjection to exploitation by outside interests, such as the policy racket and the location of institutions in the community for the pleasure and vices of whites, who seek this means of escape from the censure of their own groups, encourages anti-social behavior and nullifies the efforts of responsible citizens to maintain social control." (The Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem, "The Negro in Harlem: A Report on Social and Economic Conditions Responsible for the Outbreak of March 19, 1935," typescript [1936], p. 115.)

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 10, for a discussion of racketeering, gambling and other "shady" occupations.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF ARRESTS ACCORDING TO RACE AND TYPE OF OFFENSE (EXCLUDING THOSE UNDER FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE): 1940

Offense Charged	Per Cent Negro of Total in Each Offense	Rate per 100,000 Population[a]	
		Negro	White[c]
Criminal homicide	40.1	19.8	3.2
Robbery	30.8	31.7	7.6
Assault	44.0	116.4	15.7
Burglary—breaking or entering	24.5	66.3	22.0
Larceny-theft	28.4	138.1	37.4
Auto-theft	14.8	15.4	9.6
Embezzlement and fraud	11.5	17.1	14.2
Stolen property; buying, receiving, etc.	27.3	7.6	2.2
Arson	17.4	1.5	0.8
Forgery and counterfeiting	9.1	5.0	5.4
Rape	22.1	10.4	3.9
Prostitution and commercialized vice	25.4	17.7	5.6
Other sex offenses	14.9	11.1	6.8
Narcotic drug laws	19.3	7.5	2.9
Weapons, carrying, possessing, etc.	45.8	20.3	2.5
Offenses against family and children	15.6	9.7	5.7
Liquor laws	47.2	36.5	4.4
Driving while intoxicated	6.8	15.3	22.4
Road and driving laws	21.6	10.0	3.9
Parking violations	14.3	[b]	[b]
Other traffic and motor vehicle laws	21.0	15.5	6.2
Disorderly conduct	28.1	64.2	17.6
Drunkenness	12.3	110.3	84.8
Vagrancy	19.5	81.5	36.0
Gambling	41.9	43.2	6.0
Suspicion	27.1	130.6	37.9
Not stated	19.5	6.5	2.9
All other offenses	23.5	69.2	24.1
Total	22.8	1,078.4	391.6

Sources: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports* (Fourth Quarterly Bulletin, 1940), p. 223; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release Series P-10, No. 1.

[a] Population bases taken as of 1940.

[b] Less than one-tenth of one per cent.

[c] White includes both foreign-born and native-born, and it includes Mexicans (who are separated in the original statistics).

framing Negro men; a white woman who has a Negro lover can get rid of him or avoid social ostracism following detection by accusing him of rape; neurotic white women may hysterically interpret an innocent action as an "attack" by a Negro.[22] Real cases of Negro raping of white women probably involve only psychopathic Negroes, at least in the South, for punishment is certain and horrible.

As among whites, most of the crimes committed by Negroes are of a petty type; it is only by comparison with the white crime rates that the Negro crime rates for serious offenses stand out.

> One of the most noticeable features of the Negro offenses is the small number of vicious or serious crimes in the period studied—that is, most of the cases studied were misdemeanors rather than felonies. There were, it is true, a rather considerable number of assault cases but a large proportion of these were in connection with drunkenness. . . . The comparatively large numbers in for possession and selling liquor and for fraud . . . are partly explained by the fact that quite a number of the former merely had in their possession a little liquor which they had not yet drunk, and that most of the fraud cases were instances of jumping small board bills.
>
> There was very little difference noted between the percentages of various crimes of the two races. In general, the crimes which one committed, most frequently, the other also tended to commit frequently.
>
> If any one feature . . . may be thought of as characterizing most of the Negro's crimes, it is not their viciousness or even their immense numbers, but merely their petty qualities. . . .
>
> The relatively small proportion of violent crimes committed by Negroes, and the large proportion of cases of drunkenness, petty larceny, vagrancy, and other lesser offenses, further enhances the conclusion that there is no innate racial criminal tendency.[23]

The study for the Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem, made by E. Franklin Frazier, showed that in the first six months of 1935, 6,540 Negro men and 1,338 Negro women were arrested in Harlem.[24] Of the male arrests, 31.9 per cent were for policy gambling and 30.9 per cent were for disorderly conduct. Only 7 per cent were for burglary, robbery, grand larceny, assault and robbery, and pickpocketry combined; 5.0 per cent were for felonious assault; and only 0.5 were for homicide. About 80 per cent of the Negro women arrested were charged with immoral sex behavior. Another study showed that 54 per cent of the arrests of all women for prostitution in New York City were of Negro women, and that the rate for Negro women was 10 times that for white women.[25]

Theft, burglary, and other property offenses are committed mainly against whites; assault, murder, and other crimes against persons are committed mainly against other Negroes. "Premeditated crimes or those requiring education and cunning do not seem to be so prominent among colored offenders as do those crimes likely to involve some emotional flare-up, or some immediate desire or economic necessity."[26]

Explanations of Negro crime have usually started out from the statistical finding that Negroes commit more crimes than do whites. If this is done, the first group of "causes" of Negro crime to be considered are the discriminations in justice which we summarized at the beginning of this section. Because the criminal statistics reflect police and court practices as much as they do crime, it is impossible to prove whether or not the Negro crime rate would be higher than the white crime rate if there were no discrimination. In the same way, the general characteristics of the Negro population—poverty, ignorance of the law, lack of influential connections,

Southern patterns of illegality and use of weapons in fights, concentration in the cities and in young adult ages in the North—operate to make the Negro crime rate higher than the white crime rate, and so may be thought of as another group of causes of Negro crime. Existing data are insufficient to hold these factors constant in order to determine whether Negroes would still have a higher crime rate if they did not have these general characteristics in any greater degree than does the white population.

A third group of causes of Negro crime is connected with the slavery tradition and the caste situation. It has always been expected of Negro servants in the South that they should pilfer small things—usually food but sometimes also clothing and money. In fact, their money wages are extremely low partly because the white employers expect them to take part of their earnings in kind. Something of the same custom prevails between all white employers and Negro employees in the South. This custom has had two effects which operate to raise the Negro's criminal record: First, it has developed in the Negro a disrespect for the property of others, which sometimes leads him to pilfer things from people to whom he does not stand in the relationship of indulged servant. If he may take a pair of socks from one employer, why may he not take a screw driver from another employer? This feeling is strengthened by the fact that Negroes know that their white employers are exploiting them. If they cannot get decent regular wages, they feel they should be allowed to get what they can by pilfering.[27] The second way in which this Southern custom gets the Negro in trouble is when he moves North. In the North any type of taking of property without express permission is regarded as stealing and it may sometimes lead to arrest: Negro servant women in the North have a bad reputation for petty pilfering, and this adds to bad interracial feeling.

Much more deeply based in the caste situation than this custom is the Negro's hatred of whites. A not insignificant number of crimes of Negroes against whites are motivated by revenge for discriminatory or insulting treatment. Such a crime may be emotional, as when a Negro suddenly feels that he has stood enough in the way of deprivation and insults and that he only desires to make white people suffer too, even at the cost of his own punishment by law or by a mob. Negro literature is filled with stories of Negroes suddenly breaking out in such a manner. The revenge motive may also lead to a cold and calculating crime: it is said by many Negro social scientists that "mugging"—the robbing and beating of a victim in a certain way by a group of three or four petty professional criminals—was originally practiced only in Negro neighborhoods on white men who were thought to be searching for Negro prostitutes. The revenge motive is seen in the unnecessary and cruel way in which the victim is beaten.

The Negro's reaction to caste is much more general than can be expressed by calling it a revenge motive. Caste, especially when it operates to cause

legal injustice and insecurity of life and property, prevents the Negro from identifying himself with society and the law. Because the white man regards him as apart from society, it is natural for a Negro to regard himself as apart. He does not participate in making the laws in the South, and he has little chance to enforce them. To the average lower class Negro, at least in the South, the police, the courts, and even the law are arbitrary and hostile to Negroes, and thus are to be avoided or fought against. The ever-present hostility to the law and law-enforcement agencies on the part of all Southern Negroes and many Northern Negroes does not often manifest itself in an outbreak against them because the risks are too great. But occasionally this hostility does express itself, and then there is crime. The Negro community tends to be sympathetic toward an individual Negro who commits a crime against whites, since he is only expressing a hostility which is felt generally. Sometimes the hostility toward the white community is expressed in crimes against Negroes who turn traitor to their group and work with the whites.[a]

The slavery tradition and the caste situation are also reflected in the low regard for human life that characterizes lower class Southerners generally, and especially Negroes. A slave's life had only a money price, not a legal or ethical price. After Emancipation, the use of violence to support the caste system and the general Southern pattern of illegality maintained this low regard for human life. Negroes have taken over the white man's attitude and have even exaggerated it. Assault and murder are relatively more common among Negroes. Such crimes are rarely premeditated; they are the result of a moment's anger when it is not inhibited by a developed respect for life and law. The fact that the law is arbitrary, in the South, further depreciates the value of a Negro's life and property. For crimes committed against other Negroes, Negro criminals often go unpunished or are lightly punished, especially if they can get white men to act as "character" witnesses. Sometimes even a white man will not insist on having a Negro who steals from him arrested, usually because he needs this Negro as a worker.[28]

Certain traits, present everywhere, but more developed in the Negro as a consequence of his slavery background and his subordinate caste status, have also been conducive to a high Negro crime rate. Sexual looseness, weak family bonds, and poverty have made prostitution more common among Negro women than among white women. Carelessness and idleness have caused the Negro to be the source of a disproportionate amount of accidental crimes and of vagrancy. Negroes also have a high record in crimes connected with gambling and the use of liquor, although it is not certain whether their record is higher than that of other lower class groups.

Social organization is generally at a low level among Southern Negroes,

[a] This includes "stool pigeons," "Uncle Toms" and petty racketeers looking for immunity.

but disorganization only reaches its extreme when Negroes migrate to cities and to the North.[a] The controls of the rural community are removed; and the ignorant Negro does not know how to adjust to a radically new type of life. Like the European immigrant, he comes to the slums of the Northern cities and learns the criminal ways already widely practiced in such areas. The high crime rates in the Northern cities that successively characterized the slum dwellers of German, Scandinavian, Irish, Polish, and Italian descent, are now characteristic of Negroes and Mexicans as the most recent of a series.[29] Negroes are especially prone to take over the criminal patterns of the urban slums since they have such difficulty in getting regular and decent jobs. More Negro mothers than white mothers have to work for a living and so cannot have the time to take care of their children properly. Negro children, more than white children, are forced to engage in street trades, where they can easily pick up the arts of robbing and prostitution. The over-crowdedness of the homes and the consequent lack of privacy prevent the growth of ideals of chastity and are one element in encouraging girls to become prostitutes. The friction that is bound to develop in a poverty-stricken household, especially where there are no strong family traditions, weakens still further the family controls over the children, and the children then become more subject to the influences of the streets. Poverty is thus an important breeder of crime among Negroes.

Partly because Negro neighborhoods are slum areas and partly because Negroes are supposed to be masters of sensuous pleasure, Negro neighborhoods are frequented by whites who wish to do something illicit or immoral. White criminal gangs in Northern cities often have their headquarters in Negro neighborhoods. White men come to Negro neighborhoods to find both white and Negro prostitutes. Gambling dens and cabarets (during the Prohibition era, elaborate speakeasies) are often concentrated in Negro neighborhoods. All sorts of tastes, including those which are regarded as immoral and perverted, are catered to in Negro sections. Illegal selling of narcotics is much simpler in Negro neighborhoods. The owners of these enterprises are practically all whites, although the "entertainers" and subordinates are often Negroes. The police do not stand on the law so much in Negro neighborhoods; what goes on is too much for them to handle, and they come to expect graft for "protection." In such a neighborhood Negroes, especially children,[b] develop a distorted sense of values. Much of

[a] The prison system of the South—bad for whites and especially bad for Negroes—acts like migration in fostering criminality among Negroes. Negroes have a higher recidivism rate than do whites, which means that Negro criminals have become more addicted to crime and less corrigible. (See Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 364-367 and 258-263.)

[b] Recently Northern cities have become especially concerned about juvenile delinquency among Negroes. In New York City in the autumn of 1941, for example, there were a large number of newspaper reports about a serious new delinquency wave in Harlem. In addition to the daily newspaper stories, there were statements and speeches by public officials, meetings

the crime and vice among Negroes in cities, and sometimes even in smaller towns, exists because the white man brings his own crime, vice and disrespect for law to the Negroes.[a]

The intense competition between Negroes and the relatively unfixed moral standards serve to encourage crimes inflicted by Negroes on other Negroes. With so few opportunities available to them Negroes are willing to take greater risks to obtain some of them. With uncertain sex mores and a great deal of family disorganization, Negroes are more likely to act with motives of sexual jealousy. The over-crowdedness of the home and the lack of recreational facilities augment the effect of all these disorganizing and crime-breeding influences.

We know that Negroes are not biologically more criminal than whites. We do not know definitely that Negroes are culturally more criminal, although we do know that they come up against law-enforcement agencies more often. We suspect that the "true" crime rate—when extraneous influences are held constant—is higher among Negroes. This is true at least for such crimes as involve personal violence, petty robbery, and sexual delinquency—because of the caste system and the slavery tradition. The great bulk of the crime among Negroes has the same causes as that among whites. It is only the differences between the two rates for which we have had to seek special explanation. There are the same variations in

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of Negro and white civic groups, special investigating committees, and other means of arousing the public to the high Negro delinquency rate. The Negro rate had always been considerably higher than the white rate, and now it seemed that the Negro rate was increasing while the white rate was steady and even declining. According to a Report of the Sub-Committee on Crime and Delinquency of the City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, there were "five times as many Negro juvenile delinquents arraigned in Children's Court as white delinquents in proportion to their respective numbers in the population, and 1941 saw an increase of 23 per cent in Negro juvenile delinquency in the city." ([August, 1942] p. 2. The Negro rate had risen steadily before 1941, too, because of continuing immigration from the South [*Ibid.*, p. 3].) This public agitation apparently had some effect, for the Negro delinquency rate fell while the white rate rose following the entrance of the United States into the War. (*Ibid.*, p. 3.) Newspaper interest in Negro delinquency has continued and efforts to diminish it have not slackened. New job opportunities for Negroes, as a consequence of the war boom, may also be a factor in lowering the juvenile delinquency rate.

[a] In their positions as servants to whites, Negroes see further into the seamy side of the white man's life.

"Many of the moral Negroes have a very low opinion of white sexual and family standards. In their positions as butlers, maids, waiters, and bellhops, they have had exceptional opportunity to view the seamy intimacies of high life. Since servants are supposed not to see or hear, their presence is no deterrent, and they tell among themselves lurid tales of drunkenness and promiscuity, some of which are undoubtedly true. There is a saying among male Negroes of the better class that all white girls are loose and many diseased. But caste resentment enters into their judgment just as race prejudice is likely to color similar generalizations about Negro morality by white men." (Robert A. Warner, *New Haven Negroes* [1940], p. 218.)

the crime rate between social classes among Negroes as among whites: The upper and middle classes among Negroes are at least as law-abiding as the corresponding classes among whites; much of the differential in gross crime rate lies in the fact that the proportion of lower class Negroes is so much greater. Upper and middle class Negroes make a special effort to be law-abiding just as they try to avoid most of the typical and stereotyped patterns of behavior associated with the Negro lower classes. But, like the lower class, they meet prejudiced treatment from the police and the courts and so add to the crime rate.

3. MENTAL DISORDERS AND SUICIDE

As we observed in Chapter 6, there is no indication that Negroes are innately more susceptible than are whites to mental disorder generally or to certain specific types of mental disorder. The circumstances under which Negroes live, however, have a definite influence on their mental health. We shall be able to give only a limited demonstration of this influence, since the data we are forced to use are extremely poor.[a]

There is no proof that there was an increase in mental disease among Negroes after Emancipation, but if there was—as is likely—it may simply have been a manifestation of the general trend toward increased mental disease that was characteristic of whites also.[30] Even if the increase was unusually sharp, this may be regarded as an instance of how Negroes started to "catch up" to whites after Emancipation, rather than as a proof that Negroes "could not take" freedom.

Until 1933, there was a greater proportion of whites than of Negroes in *state* hospitals[b] for the insane, in the country as a whole, though in most of the Northern states the reverse was true for at least a decade previously.[31] The Census of 1933 showed that the proportion of Negroes in state hospitals was higher than the proportion of whites in state hospitals in the country as a whole). This also was true in all but four of the Southern states, despite discrimination against Negroes in admitting them to state hospitals. Because whites made some use of private hospitals and because state hospitals discriminated against Negroes, it cannot be inferred from these figures

[a] Statistics on mental disorder in the United States refer to cases in institutions, not to all cases or even to all cases known to doctors. Since institutional policy varies more with time and place than with mental disease itself, the statistics must be used with extreme caution. It is impossible, for example, to present meaningful figures comparing Negroes and whites in the whole country (or in the South alone), Southern Negroes with Northern Negroes, or rates at present with rates a few decades ago.

[b] Throughout this section we shall use statistics for state hospitals only. Private hospitals not only have a differential policy by race and region, but require a fee that prohibits most Negroes from using them. Fortunately for comparative purposes, most whites also use the state hospitals. But the mere fact that whites use private hospitals to a certain extent makes the comparison of Negroes and whites in state hospitals of limited usefulness.

that Negroes now have a higher true rate of mental disease than do whites in the South. But the discrimination, if any, is so minor in the North, and the discrepancy in the rates between Negroes and whites is so great, that it is practically certain that Negroes have more mental disease in the North than do whites.

The only detailed and comprehensive study of the mental disease of Negroes is that by Benjamin Malzberg for New York State in 1929-1931.[32] He found the Negro rate of first admissions to state hospitals to be 151 per 100,000 population, as compared to 74 for whites. Even for New York City alone, Negroes had a much higher rate than did whites.[33] These great discrepancies existed in spite of the fact that the Negroes were a younger population and the young generally have less insanity. The Negro rate in New York State, standardized to hold age constant, was 225 per 100,000 population, as compared to 97 for whites. The Negro rates exceeded the white rates at every age.

It is clear that the great discrepancy between Negroes and whites in New York State is due to migration. There was practically no difference in the rate of Negroes and whites born in New York State (40 as compared to 45).[a] Also there was only a relatively small difference between Negroes and whites born in states other than New York (186 as compared to 151), and this difference was probably due to the greater divergence in the places that Negroes came from. Conditions of life in the South, from which most Negroes in the North have come, are the most important reason for the higher mental disease rate of Negroes, as we shall see when we come to consider specific types of mental diseases. Also it is disorganizing to have to change one's home, job, friends, manner of living, especially if that change is as great as that from the rural South to the urban North. Too, the people who make these moves are generally the least satisfied and least secure; otherwise they would not be making the change.[b]

The conditions under which Negroes live are reflected in the types of mental diseases predominant among them. There are two types of mental disease which are 3 or 4 times as prevalent among Negroes as among whites (New York State, 1929-1931):[34] general paresis, which is a consequence of syphilis, and the psychoses that sometimes follow too great indulgence in alcohol. Clearly the high syphilis rate among Negroes—and the family disorganization and poor health facilities in the South, which are behind it—is a major cause of the high mental disease rate of Negroes in the North. The poverty of Negroes in both South and North, and the disorganization

[a] The slightly higher rate for whites is undoubtedly due to the fact that the white population was 8 years older, on the average, than the Negro population.

[b] It is not necessary to claim that migrants are least successful or most successful. For purposes of explaining the correlation between migration and mental disorder, it is enough to claim that migrants are least satisfied, irrespective of their degree of success.

associated with migration, would seem to be behind the greater indulgence in alcohol. In New York State the standardized rates were also significantly greater for Negroes than for whites in the following mental diseases: psychosis with cerebral arteriosclerosis (ratio: 2.9 to 1), dementia praecox (ratio: 2.0 to 1), senile psychoses (ratio: 1.9 to 1), manic-depressive psychoses (ratio: 1.5 to 1).[a] Dementia praecox and manic-depressive phychoses, at least, would seem to be due in part to migration and urbanization.[35]

According to a preliminary report of a study in progress, by Mandel Sherman and Irene C. Sherman, the specific symptoms of mental disease also are related to social background.[36] Delusions of psychotic Negroes tend to center around the topics of religion, possession of great wealth (often used to help other Negroes), attainment of superiority in the literary and educational fields, and outstanding assistance to the race. Delusions of whites, on the other hand, center around possession of great wealth (usually for personal benefit only) and somatic reactions (for example, false belief that one has a serious physical illness). In this connection it is interesting to note that Negroes have much less paranoia (the "disease of egotism") than do whites. Another significant trait of the delusions is that those of Negro men and women are much less divergent than are those of white men and women. Negroes are also reported to have more hallucinations (errors in perception) than do whites, probably because they are less well educated and more superstitious.

This presentation of a few selected facts regarding the distribution and differential character of mental disease is a sketchy reflection of a whole trend in psychiatric research. Experts are far from unanimous regarding the causation of mental disease or of the specific forms which it takes, but there is a growing feeling among them that the tensions and crises of life, as well as more objective social conditions, such as the presence of syphilis and the excessive use of hard liquor, are directly connected with mental disease. Negroes and whites lead different sorts of lives, to a certain extent and on the average, and this may be expected to reflect itself in differentials in the incidence of mental disease and of its specific manifestations. The average lower class Negro has, on the one hand, a more carefree life and fewer inhibitions, as so little is expected of him by the whites, by other Negroes, and by his own conscience. On the other hand, he meets the most severe frustrations along the caste line. The situation is different in different social classes: upper and middle class Negroes may feel the latter frustrations more intensively at the same time as they are not allowed the com-

[a] Institutionalization is an even poorer index of feeble-mindedness than it is of mental disease. The rate of first admissions is much higher for whites than for Negroes in the country as a whole, but this is clearly due to discrimination against Negroes in the South. In New York and New Jersey, where there is something like impartiality in institutional policy, Negroes have a higher rate than do whites.

pensation of carelessness in personal behavior. If these and other group experiences are reflected in the incidence of mental disease, it may be possible to learn about Negro culture and personality through a study of characteristic mental aberrations of Negro individuals.

In contrast to the high mental disease rate, Negroes apparently have a very low suicide rate. It is only 4.0 per 100,000 population (1940), as compared to 15.5 for whites, 8.4 for Indians, 45.2 for Chinese and 26.0 for Japanese.[37] One of the reasons for the low suicide rate for Negroes is a younger age composition, since suicide rises rapidly with age. But it also seems that Negroes are actually less prone to escape their problems by taking their lives.[a]

4. Recreation

Negro recreation is conditioned by three factors: First, Negroes are barred from using public recreational and amusement facilities in many places even in the North, and are inadequately supplied with private facilities.[b] Second, their geographical concentration in the South means that many of their recreational patterns follow those of the rural South. These are carried over to the urban North by the migrants from the South and are further shaped by the fact that the great bulk of the Negro population is of low economic status and lives in slum areas. Third, because recreation and amusement must be carried on almost entirely within the isolated Negro community, Negro recreation has developed peculiar traits of its own, different from those that characterize recreation in the white community. One of the most striking characteristics of Negro amusements and recreation is their tendency to be informal, intimate and sociable.

Life in rural areas is generally dull and uneventful.[38] There is little to do during a large part of the year; at other times farm work takes up all the time.[39] Recreation may become the means of filling up empty, dull days or serve as relief from long, hard, monotonous labor. Because of the lack of facilities, recreation tends to be informal and unorganized. Besides swimming, hunting, and fishing,[40] a considerable amount of time is spent in loafing, talking, boasting, telling tall stories, singing. Everybody participates, and the behavior is free, easy, and spontaneous. Loud good-natured "banter" is part of it; it often deteriorates, however, into aggression and obscenity.[41] The laughing, boisterous groups, frequently seen by the whites, give them the idea that Negroes have a wonderfully happy time. While it is true that the Negroes' recreational behavior is relatively unrestrained

[a] This is especially striking in view of the fact that few Negroes are Catholics, and Catholics have a low rate because of religious injunctions.

[b] See Chapter 15, Section 5. For a full discussion of the inadequate recreational facilities provided for Negroes, see E. Franklin Frazier, "Recreation and Amusement among American Negroes," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940).

and uninhibited, it is not a constructive form of amusement; it is monotonous and offers no chance to develop skills, physical or mental. Whenever commercial amusements invade the rural areas, no matter how cheap and sordid, the young people flock to them, thankful for any brightly lighted, stimulating place to meet people and to dance.

One of the chief amusements in rural areas is "going to town" which may be to the nearest town, to the general store, to the "ice-cream parlor" (for the young people), or to the railroad station, either in the evenings or on Saturdays.[42] The time is spent in shopping, meeting acquaintances, sitting around the stove in the general store, or standing on the street corners laughing and joking.[a] The men and young people participate in these activities, but the older women rarely do.

For the older women, church activity is usually the only form of recreation.[43] They go to church to meet friends, display their new clothes when they have them, and enjoy the rivalries and strivings for prestige and position in the church. If the church is at all primitive in its service and music, it offers the additional experience of emotional catharsis. For the most part, rural women lead an even more monotonous and isolated life than do men.

One would expect that in the absence of other recreational facilities there would be many radios, but this does not seem to be so.[44] More use is made of the phonograph.[45] Even the limited use of radios and phonographs, however, is healthy in that it helps to break down the isolation of these communities; and, since many of the successful, popular musicians are Negroes, it stimulates the ambition of Negro youth. Rural Negroes see few movies. Where there are movie houses in rural areas, they do not provide accommodations for Negroes. Although movies offer a limited type of experience (and not always a wholesome one) to urban youth, they do give them some idea of other ways of living, other sections of the country and other historical periods. Even this minor broadening experience is absent from rural experience.

The informal gatherings to talk and joke and meet one's friends are carried over from the rural areas to the city. There the barbershop, the street corner, and most frequently, the poolroom become the gathering places for the lower class men and boys. In the cities, the men and boys who have the time for such activity are usually unemployed, and the atmosphere is much less wholesome and innocent than that which surrounds the same sort of loafing and talking in the country. The proprietor of the poolroom is often a petty criminal engaged in gambling and commercial vice, and the

[a] Again we may point out that the gaiety of these informal groups may be deceiving, since much of the conversation is bitter and angry about incidents that have happened in town or on the plantations. The whites never hear this, as it ceases when they approach. The boisterousness and unrestrainedness of conversation is customary in uneducated people; and the laughter may be at the expense of the whites and bitter rather than humorous.

young people become involved in criminal activities through his influence. The banter, loafing, wrestling, and working off of animal spirits, natural and harmless in wide country spaces, become stealing and gang activity in the city. Too, the free and easy sex contacts of the rural areas are classified as juvenile delinquency in the city.[46] On the other hand, Y.M.C.A.'s, settlement houses, city playgrounds, and athletic clubs in the North do provide organized and wholesome recreation, although not enough of it. Since Joe Louis' rise to fame and fortune, any place that provides gymnasium facilities attracts boys.

Negro people in the city, even of the respectable middle class, spend much of their time on the streets, partly because of their rural background, partly because of the crowdedness and unattractiveness of their homes. One of the favorite Negro pastimes is "strolling." James Weldon Johnson describes it in Harlem:

> The masses of Harlem get a good deal of pleasure out of things far too simple for most other folks. In the evenings of summer and on Sundays they get lots of enjoyment out of strolling. . . . Strolling in Harlem does not mean merely walking along Lenox or upper Seventh Avenue; . . . it means that those streets are places for socializing. One puts on one's best clothes and fares forth to pass the time pleasantly with the friends and acquaintances and, most important of all, the strangers he is sure of meeting. One saunters along, he hails this one, exchanges a word or two with that one, stops for a short chat with the other one. He comes up to a laughing, chattering group, in which he may have only one friend or acquaintance, but that gives him the privilege of joining in. He does join in and takes part in the joking, the small talk and gossip, and makes new acquaintances. He passes on and arrives in front of one of the theatres, studies the bill for a while, undecided about going in. He finally moves on a few steps farther and joins another group and is introduced to two or three pretty girls who have just come to Harlem, perhaps only for a visit; and finds a reason to be glad that he postponed going into the theatre. The hours of a summer evening run by rapidly. This is not simply going out for a walk; it is more like going out for adventure.[47]

There is also much casual visiting back and forth in the respectable lower and middle class community, especially among the women.

Urban Negroes find most of their amusement and recreation in the social clubs, athletic clubs, churches and lodges.[a] Sports, dancing, card-playing and other games, petty civic improvement activities, and, in the churches, singing and dramatics[48] are the chief forms of amusement. In the large Northern (but not the Southern) cities, movies, theaters, concert halls, night clubs, and restaurants are generally available to Negroes (if they can afford them); but there is always the possibility of insult or unpleasantness, and no Negro section, even in New York or Chicago, can support a complete set of recreational facilities. The voluntary organizations, therefore, continue

[a] For a discussion of these voluntary associations, see Chapter 43, Section 5.

to be a chief source of Negro recreational life. Clubs support each other by buying tickets to the other's dances, style shows, plays, and so on; consequently, a full (sometimes too full) social and recreational life is provided the club members.[a] Since the same small group of people with the same interests constantly intermingles socially; since these people participate little in other activities; and since clubs frequently meet in private homes, a highly personalized and socialized recreational life is the result. This feeling of intimacy and "at homeness" pervades all the sociable and recreational life that is peculiarly Negro and is what the whites see and remark about when they say that Negroes have a good time. Negroes among themselves act as if they were in a small family group, often even in commercial places. They know everybody and have a personal interest in everybody; they feel that they are part of a small community. This looks cozy and cheerful and intimate to whites accustomed to impersonal, formalized, over-organized social relations.

A few other characteristics of Negro recreation may be noted. One of the main forms of recreation among lower class Negroes is gambling. Besides playing the numbers,[b] Negroes are traditionally expert poker players and crap-shooters.[c] The excitement of gambling coupled with the chance of gain is easily understandable in the light of the monotony of rural life and of the unemployment in cities. These games, also, can be played anywhere with little equipment and with anybody who happens to be around. It should be noted, further, that crap-shooting is the invariable accompaniment of traditional "Negro jobs," those of waiter, bell-boy, porter, jobs where the over-all hours are long and where the men must be on call at all times, but where there is much unoccupied time.

Among the urban youth and lately among rural youth, dancing is a favorite pastime. Dancing is one of the favorite forms of recreation among the upper class and in the clubs and equally so in the commercialized dance halls frequented by lower class young people. Negroes have developed most of the modern jazz dances which are now popular in the white world.

Most Negroes do not follow the usual American pattern of taking a vacation. The great majority of them are too poor.[49] The upper classes who can afford to are usually barred from those vacation resorts which meet their standards.

Before the World War Negroes were developing summer resorts for their exclusive use on a relatively large scale. There is an excellent Negro summer resort in

[a] See Chapter 43, Section 5; also see J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 473-475.

[b] See Chapter 14, Section 10.

[c] Whites now play these gambling games extensively, also; see the footnote on crap shooting in Section 1 of this chapter.

Michigan, and another in Mississippi. Several colored seaside resorts flourish along the Atlantic coast. On the whole, however, these can be patronized only by the few who have the time and money to spend a good portion of the year away from home on vacation. While there are some Negro resorts which can be enjoyed by poor Negroes, the number of this class actually able to patronize them is small. A pseudo-vacation is obtained by many of the working colored people by securing jobs at seashore or other resorts where they can earn their living and still have vacation in off hours and through a change of scene. In Philadelphia, for illustration, it is common for colored cooks and maids to go to Atlantic City and other nearby resorts for summer work, thus breaking the monotony of their routine and obtaining some semblance of a real vacation away from the home city and without starving. This is no doubt better than no vacation at all but the problem has not been faced. The majority of this group must continue to think of vacation as a short period free from work but otherwise no different from the rest of the year.[50]

One of the most wholesome aspects of Negro recreation and amusement is that it is not a separate part of their lives, but is well integrated into the daily routine. Part of this seems to be that Negroes, having little time free from hard work, devised relaxing accompaniments to their work. Singing, for example, accompanies all work, even on the chain gang; gambling while working is another example. Part of it is that so many of the usual recreational forms were denied them that they learned to enjoy the everyday things they did.[51] Whatever the cause, this integration of fun and work has undoubtedly made life possible for many Negroes under the difficult situations they face.

5. NEGRO ACHIEVEMENTS*

Opportunity is a most important prerequisite for achievement; and since the Negro's opportunities in America have been kept low, his achievements are also small. In 1929-1930, there were only 98 Negroes listed in *Who's Who in America*.[52] No Negro is outstanding in national, state or local politics. Few Negroes have been outstanding in business, and these have become successful usually by catering to special needs of the Negro group. At present, when the federal government is asking capable and wealthy businessmen to work for it as "dollar-a-year" men, only one Negro has been included in the group. There have been but one or two outstanding Negro military leaders. No Negro has been an outstanding jurist, although a few Negro lawyers deserve fame for the way they have handled cases involving Negro rights. Since scientific achievement requires not only a superior education but also a secure position and facilities in a university or large

* We shall not attempt to give a systematic survey of Negro achievements in this section. Rather we shall single out the main fields in which Negroes have made notable achievements and give examples of the achievements and the achievers. In order to be concrete, we shall mention names. The persons named are merely outstanding examples; they do *not* include all Negroes who have made notable achievements.

industrial concern, there have been only half a dozen outstanding Negro natural scientists, and perhaps a dozen or so outstanding Negro social scientists.[a] And so it goes, down the list of fields in which superior performance is regarded as noteworthy. Most of the fields in which Negroes commonly attain superior performance are regarded as lowly—such as agriculture and personal service—and so no attention is paid to the high performance, and it is not recognized as an achievement. The esteemed fields in which Negroes have made many achievements are those of the arts, of the sports and of entertainment.

Before we go on to these, we call attention to the high performance of Negroes in a field that is often overlooked by whites. We refer to the fighting for the Negro cause—the field of race leadership. If we include this field with politics, we can honestly say that some of the most capable statesmen in the United States are Negroes, whatever we may think of their policies. If these men, with their training in practical politics, were white, they would no doubt be national leaders just as they are now race leaders. This was almost recognized of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, but the two other Negro statesmen of equal stature—W. E. B. Du Bois and James Weldon Johnson—have been virtually ignored by whites. On a second level, still high when compared with most white national leaders, are such men as Elmer Carter, Lester Granger, Charles Johnson, A. Philip Randolph, and Walter White. A woman, Mary McLeod Bethune, belongs on this level. Younger men, with no small achievement and still greater promise, are Earl Dickerson, Adam Clayton Powell and Roy Wilkins. In addition to these, there are wise Negro politicians all over the country, in the national offices of the betterment and protest organizations, and in the federal government in Washington. Working on the Negro problem gives one a set of practical ideals, a training in strategy, and a respect for courage, patience, and loyalty, that are necessary to a first-rate politician.

It is in the field of entertainment that the Negro's achievements are most widely recognized, and the opportunities made available to him there have made it possible for him to develop excellence in the economically subsidiary fields of arts and sports. The Negro has not only provided entertainment and art but also material for entertainment and art by whites: the Negro folk tales of Uncle Remus were set in writing by Joel Chandler Harris; many of the rhythmic songs of the Negro have provided the basic themes for white composers (Stephen Foster, for example); the greatest popularizers of ragtime music were Al Jolson and Irving Berlin; some of the best dramas of Negro life are by Du Bose Heyward; the Negro's

[a] It may be remarked, in passing, that in sociology, which is the branch of science under which most of the studies of Negro life and problems have gone on, Negroes have occasionally made first-rank achievements in the field.

abstract painting and sculpture have been one of the sources of modern cubism and surrealism.[53] But Negroes themselves do not take second rank in these fields. Joe Louis is now the world's champion heavyweight prize-fighter, and Jack Johnson held this title a generation ago. Negroes have held several of the lesser boxing championships (notably Henry Armstrong and John Henry Lewis) and have achieved first rank in running (notably Jesse Owens), football (notably Paul Robeson), and some of the other sports. Among the ten highest paid concert artists of the year 1941, three were Negroes: Marian Anderson, Dorothy Maynor and Paul Robeson.[54] Roland Hayes ranked not far below the first ten. The stage has long witnessed front-rank Negro actors, and it is now graced with such figures as Todd Duncan, Canada Lee, Paul Robeson and Ethel Waters. On the dance stage there are such masters of their respective talents as Katherine Dunham and Bill (Bojangles) Robinson. Negroes have invented a whole series of dance steps, including the fox trot, cake walk, Charleston, black bottom, turkey trot, the shag, jitterbugging; and Latin American Negroes have contributed the tango, rhumba, samba, conga. The screen and radio are practically closed to serious Negro actors—there being only three or four pictures in the entire history of film-making that have portrayed Negroes, even as minor characters, in roles other than those of buffoons or criminals.[a] But some Negroes have achieved huge success in the role of buffoon—notably Hattie McDaniels and Rochester. Negro musicians of various types are also popular on the radio. Negro jazz band leaders are among the most popular—Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Jimmie Lunceford, King Oliver and Fats Waller.

[a] There is a definite improvement, in the last year or so, in the treatment of Negroes in movies. Before 1940, there had been, in addition to the movies in which Negroes were portrayed as clowns, criminals, or incidental servants, only such special movies and shorts as were meant for purely Negro consumption. (For a history of these all-Negro pictures, see James Asendio, "History of Negro Motion Pictures," *International Photographer* [January, 1940], p. 16.) There had been only one or two full-length movies in which Negroes were portrayed in more favorable or more human roles and which were meant for general white consumption. Ignorance on the part of film producers and fear of offending white Southerners were the main reasons for this treatment. After 1940, patriotic motives, stimulated by the growing war spirit, as well as definite pressure from the federal government, moved Hollywood to treat Negroes a little more favorably in the movies. In 1940 and 1942 there were produced: *Syncopation*, showing the role of the Negro in the creation of jazz music; *In This Our Life*, an Ellen Glasgow story in which a Negro youth incidentally tells his ambition to be a lawyer and in which he is almost executed for a crime committed by one of the white heroines; *Tales of Manhattan*, which shows Negroes as superstitious peasants but withal some cleverness and human emotion. In the week of July 31, 1942, some Negro leaders held a conference with "70 top executives of the screen world" to try to get them to assign to Negroes "roles in motion pictures more in keeping with their status and contribution to American life and culture." (*N.A.A.C.P. Press Service* [July 31, 1942], p. 4.) It is likely that such efforts, if continued, will have some effect, especially when further pressure comes from war agencies of the federal government.

Negroes have contributed such popular musical forms as ragtime, jazz, the blues, swing and boogie-woogie.

Negroes have been greatly hampered in more serious music, but in the past year Dean Dixon has emerged as a symphony orchestra conductor under the sponsorship of the white music critic, Samuel Chotzinoff. Negroes have achieved moderate success in composing serious music (for example, William Grant Still) and much greater success in composing lighter music (for example, Will Marion Cook, Duke Ellington, James Reese Europe, W. C. Handy and Rosamund Johnson). In art, Negroes have had most influence as subjects for and influences on white artists, but there have been a few front-rank American Negro painters and sculptors (Richmond Barthé, Aaron Douglas, Augusta Savage, Henry O. Tanner). In literature, Negroes have a forte, and in all branches of literature Negroes have made really outstanding achievements. The names of Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, Sterling Brown, and Richard Wright (and in the past Paul Lawrence Dunbar and James Weldon Johnson) are well known to the white reading public, and there are at least a score of other Negro writers of equal merit but little known to the white reading public.

To understand why Negroes have made outstanding achievements in these fields, it is necessary to go into their history. We find that there are two distinct lines of development, which have begun to converge only in the last twenty years. One is the buffoonery practiced for the entertainment of whites; the other is the great variety of expressive activity practiced for the artists' own enjoyment.

Under slavery, the chief form of entertainment in the large, isolated plantation was the slave show. The Negro was the court jester, who pleased his master by singing, dancing, telling jokes and generally "acting up." James Weldon Johnson describes the earliest Negro entertainment:

> Every plantation had its talented band that could crack Negro jokes, and sing and dance to the accompaniment of the banjo and the bones, the bones being the actual ribs of a sheep or some other small animal, cut the proper length, scraped clean and bleached in the sun. When the wealthy plantation owner wished to entertain his guests, he needed only to call his troupe of black minstrels.[55]

Even during slavery, but especially after it, there developed the "nigger minstrel show" which had the same features as the entertainment furnished by slaves. Practically all these shows which were successful had white actors who put burnt cork on their faces and spoke with a Negro accent; only Bert Williams among the Negroes achieved success as a minstrel comedian.[56] These shows, which still exist in a modified form,[57] appealed to the crudest tastes and accentuated all the Negro stereotypes. Their heyday lasted from 1875 to 1900, and during this period Negro musicians, song and play writers, and dancers stooped low to appeal to the popular taste.[58] Only

the songs developed into something better. These songs—known as "coon songs" because they were funny at the expense of Negroes, stressing their supposed chicken-eating, wife-beating, razor-slashing traits—had a rhythm which made them popular. Later they developed into ragtime. After receiving a further influence from Negro secular folk-music—especially that kind fostered by vagrant Negro troubadours along the Mississippi River—ragtime was to have a meteoric career culminating in Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band" (1911), and it ultimately developed into jazz.[59] After the turn of the century, Negro entertainment began to improve in quality: the minstrel show gradually gave way to the musical comedy. Musical comedies written and acted by whites were popular in the period just before the First World War; and under the stimulus of the general popularity, shows written and acted by Negroes were successful. A high level of achievement was reached at this time by the writing and acting team of Cole and Johnson. These shows were still funny, but they also contained some serious art and appealed to a more cultivated audience.

After the War, Negro entertainment began to climb to new heights of popularity and quality. The jazz fad was on, and Negro singers, dancers and orchestras were much in demand. There was a great opportunity for Negro composers and musicians to supply jazz and blues music, and sometimes more classical variations. The African theme in art was suddenly the object of great admiration. *Opportunity* and *Crisis* magazines offered prizes for the best poetry and prose writing by Negroes, and the successful candidates found themselves swept up in adulation by thrill-seeking whites. To the Negroes, it was the period of the "New Negro," when their capacities and achievements were beginning to be recognized by the whites. To most of the whites who were giving this recognition to the Negroes, it was the period of the "gay 'twenties": the patronage they gave to Negro artists and performers was only part of the general seeking, on the one hand, after thrills and novelties and, on the other hand, after really good art, music and literature. They sponsored artists with little ability along with artists of great ability. They encouraged Negroes to develop African and pseudo-African themes because they were so exotic and bizarre. They also encouraged the noisy, the sexy and the perverted. When the Great Depression ended the "gay 'twenties," the patronage of the Negroes was greatly diminished, and the Negro arts were left with certain traits that they could not easily change.

Negro entertainment and the arts were, however, far from stopped completely during the 1930's. There were still many serious white devotees, and the Negroes themselves formed an increasingly appreciative audience. The "swing" and "boogie-woogie" period came into popular music, and the blues enjoyed a new burst of popularity. Negro stage comedians were still popular, although there was less money available to pay for them. It was the

serious arts of poetry, the drama, painting and sculpture which were most affected by the depression. During the 1920's they had been supported by the intellectuals and the pseudo-intellectuals; during the 1930's these people either had little money left or no longer cared for the Negro arts. The fad of adulating things Negro was definitely over, and Negro performers and artists had to compete with others without any special advantage. The best held on and strengthened their popularity; the mediocre dropped out and were soon forgotten. The Negro artists themselves developed higher standards and sought to base their art on something more secure than the white man's demand for the exotic and the bizarre. General anti-Negro prejudice makes it somewhat harder for a Negro artist or performer to get a position than for a white person of equal talent, but on the whole there is less prejudice in this field than in practically any other field.[a] Some whites are inclined to have a double standard in judging Negro achievements; they applaud mediocrity and thereby foster it.

The federal government provided special opportunity between 1935 and 1939, when the Federal Theater aided unemployed Negroes by putting on all-Negro shows: there was a chance not only for Negro actors, but also for Negro writers, musicians and producers. The shows were successful and they strengthened both white and Negro recognition of Negro talent. The Negro painter was also given his chance when the W.P.A. and the N.Y.A. required the designing and decoration of such public works as schools, libraries, hospitals and parks. These federal agencies also offered art classes of various sorts, mostly in practical arts, and many Negroes participated.[60] The Federal Writers' Project provided further opportunities for Negro writers.

Today Negroes have a high record of performance and popularity in both serious and comic entertainment. Negro dancers, singers, orchestras, comedians, strip-teasers, and acrobats are used in theater stage shows and night club floor shows in all the large Northern cities. There are all-Negro shows and shows with both white and Negro performers (in the last 6 or 7 years Negroes have even been permitted to play in predominantly white orchestras).[61] Negro sections of cities often contain a few entertainment places which are popular with white audiences. In the South Negro performers are much more restricted, but are sometimes used if strictly segre-

[a] Negroes cannot get on the opera stage, and they are occasionally restricted on the concert stage (witness the famous incident in 1939 when the Daughters of the American Revolution prevented Marian Anderson from singing in Constitution Hall in Washington, D. C.). More serious restrictions against the Negro occur in the field of sports. Negroes cannot get into big league baseball and rarely have they been allowed into competitive tennis or golf games. They are generally kept out of competitive sports which require teams. Even in boxing, the sport in which they have achieved such notable success, they have been seriously restricted (for example, Jack Dempsey, when champion, consistently refused to let Harry Wills battle for his crown).

gated. Negro minstrel shows are still found, and the Negro buffoon is often part of vaudeville shows. Negro tap-dancers are in fairly wide demand, as are Negro burlesque dancers. Serious Negro artists and writers have a reasonably wide audience: one of the most popular novels of the past five years has been Richard Wright's *Native Son.*

Although most of the contemporary Negro literature received its stimulation from white sponsorship beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century and greatly increased during the 1920's, it has in addition a purely Negro history. Since 1760, when Jupiter Hammon, a slave in Long Island, New York, published "An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ, with Penitential Cries," there has hardly been a decade when some Negro has not published something. The early writing by Negroes was perhaps not so good, but few white Americans then were accomplishing anything of note. Frederick Douglass, however, attained a high level of prose writing in some of his Abolitionist oratory. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, a Negro poet, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, was recognized as on a level with the best white American poets of the century.

Another serious strain in Negro art was that of folk-music. In this, Negroes have probably surpassed white Americans. The folk-songs are generally classified into two types: the spirituals and the secular songs. After some early experimentation, the spirituals emerged as the distinctively Negro religious music after 1830.[62] Negroes sang them practically only for their own benefit until the Fisk Jubilee Singers sang them around the country to get money for their school. By the 1890's they were recognized by whites as an outstanding form of music. This recognition was no doubt helped by Dvořák, the great Bohemian composer, in his use of some of them as main themes in his New World Symphony (1895). Since then, they have been favorite songs with all levels of white society, and many an outstanding Negro singer has got his start by fulfilling the demand of whites for spirituals.

The secular folk-songs began mainly as work-songs or leisure-time songs. There were no musical instruments, of course, and the people kept time by clapping or stamping, or if they were working, they kept time by the movements needed in their work. Thus there developed an emphasis on rhythm, and Negroes became masters of the possibilities in rhythm. The songs were begun by whole groups of people: usually some song leader would start off with a likely line; if it caught, the rest of the group would take it up and it became a theme for the chorus; other individuals would chime in with a rhyming line to keep the song going.[63] Some of the songs are more individualized in character—especially the love songs, the blues and the clever satires. Each song had many variations and was continually in the process of change until someone wrote it down. Sometimes the words did not make sense, or the consecutive lines would not follow each other

logically. But they were cheerful, rhythmical songs which expressed much of the Negro's interests, problems and attitudes. These songs are still being created. They have achieved a great popularity in the white world: sometimes they are "jazzed up" or "swung" and become popular songs; sometimes they became popular in their original form (for example, most of the blues); sometimes they are sung as semi-popular folk-songs; sometimes they are mistakenly grouped with the spirituals because they have a few religious words. It was a white man, Stephen Foster, who was the chief popularizer of the secular Negro folk-songs.

Until recently, the puritanical spirit has been a powerful influence on entertainment and the arts in America. To a large degree white Americans have considered it somewhat immoral to be an entertainer, and white American men have considered it beneath their dignity and their capacity to cultivate the arts. Nevertheless, practically all Americans have enjoyed stage entertainment, and many Americans show "appreciation of the arts." Since whites stereotype the Negroes as immoral and somewhat bestial, they have been willing to let Negroes entertain them. They could enjoy the bawdy and frivolous songs, dances and jokes without "sinning" themselves.[64] White men have also been willing to let their women and their Negroes cultivate the arts.[a]

Negroes, on their side, have developed entertainment and the arts because they were relatively free of puritanical traditions and because there they were offered relatively attractive economic opportunities. Also without the means of paying for entertainment, they have learned how to entertain themselves. They have been so successful at this that they have taken over the whites' false racial belief that Negroes are innately superior in emotional expression. This has, however, helped to provide a tradition of success which has spurred them on. Further, novels, poetry, songs, and even painting and sculpture have proven excellent media for expressing the Negro protest or rationalizing the Negro's accommodation to caste.[65] Even the spirituals often have these themes, sometimes under the guise of religious words to avoid censure from the whites ("Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel, and why not every man?" "Let My People Go"). The race issue is often a source of inspiration, and it provides a limitless set of high ideals. Whether all these influences make Negroes superior to whites in the arts we are not in a position to judge. We are merely interested in explaining why Negro achievements in this field are so much greater than in other fields, and why they have been so popular among whites. There are

[a] At first, whites may have thought it a little presumptuous of Negroes to go into the arts, but even under slavery, "Negro craftsmen were well-known as cabinet-makers, marquetry setters, wood carvers and iron-smiths as the workmanship of many colonial mansions in Charleston, New Orleans and other colonial centers of wealth and luxury will attest." (Alain Locke, *Negro Art: Past and Present* [1936], pp. 1 and 3.)

many negative factors to be considered in judging relative excellence: Negroes can seldom get the training usually considered necessary to highest achievement in the arts; their segregated schools are usually inadequate; they are restricted in their contacts and, much more than whites, lack the atmosphere congenial to creative work; they are seldom allowed to get far from the race problem; many white critics have a double standard—more indulgent to Negroes—when comparing the products of Negro and white artists; there are still some restrictions against Negro artists, especially in the South.

Whatever the reason for the success of Negroes in the fields of entertainment and the arts, the success has had predominantly beneficial effects for the Negroes. It has enabled them to get a measure of self-confidence, even though it may have had the secondary effect of stimulating a false pride in race. It has made the whites more friendly, and sometimes it has made them have a measure of respect for Negroes.[a] It has opened a significant number of excellent economic opportunities for Negroes, and is thus the economic basis for a sizable portion of the Negro upper and middle class. Interest in the arts may have improved the taste and poise of Negroes; but interest in entertainment may have degraded their tastes. In a number of ways, never analyzed by students of Negro social life, entertainment and the arts have had a pervasive influence on practically all Negroes.

When white support of Negro literature and art was partially withdrawn after 1929, Negroes tended to react away from doing the things whites wanted them to do. Paul Robeson, for example, declared:

> I believe where the Afro-American made his mistake was when he began trying to mimic the West instead of developing the really great tendencies he inherited from the East. I believe the Negro can achieve his former greatness only if he learns to follow his natural tendencies, and ceases trying to master the greatness of the West. My own instincts are Asiatic.[66]

This is only petulance, of course, but many Negro writers and artists have come to believe that they can develop an art quite distinct from the white American's art and from what the white American is willing to pay for. But, as George S. Schuyler wrote in 1926, "Negro art there has been, is, and will be among the numerous black natives of Africa; but to suggest the possibility of any such development among the ten million colored people in this republic is self-evident foolishness."[67] Negro art will continue to be American because its creators are American and American influences continually mold it. Whether Negro artists will turn out products which differ from those of white artists will depend on those individual artists, and on the audiences willing to pay for the art.

[a] See Chapter 30, Section 3.

Part XI

AN AMERICAN DILEMMA

CHAPTER 45

AMERICA AGAIN AT THE CROSSROADS

1. The Negro Problem and the War

The three great wars of this country have been fought for the ideals of liberty and equality to which the nation was pledged. As a consequence of all of them, the American Negro made great strides toward freedom and opportunity.[1] The Revolutionary War started a development which ultimately ended slavery in all Northern states, made new import of slaves illegal and nearly accomplished abolition even in the South—though there the tide soon turned in a reaction toward fortification of the plantation system and of Negro slavery. The Civil War gave the Negro Emancipation and Reconstruction in the South—though it was soon followed by Restoration of white supremacy. The First World War provided the Negro his first real opportunity as a worker in Northern industry, started the Great Migration out of the South, and began the "New Negro" movement —though the end of the War saw numerous race riots and the beginning of a serious decline in employment opportunities. After the advances on all three occasions there were reactions, but not as much ground was lost as had been won. Even taking the subsequent reactions into account, each of the three great wars in the history of America helped the Negro take a permanent step forward.

Now America is again in a life-and-death struggle for liberty and equality, and the American Negro is again watching for signs of what war and victory will mean in terms of opportunity and rights for him in his native land. To the white American, too, the Negro problem has taken on a significance greater than it has ever had since the Civil War. This War is crucial for the future of the Negro, and the Negro problem is crucial in the War. There is bound to be a redefinition of the Negro's status in America as a result of this War.

The exact nature of this structural change in American society cannot yet be foreseen. History is not the result of a predetermined Fate. Nothing is irredeemable until it is past.[a] The outcome will depend upon decisions and actions yet to be taken by whites and Negroes. What we can know definitely, however, are the trends as they developed up to the War and

[a] See Appendix 1, Section 3.

the changes so far during the War. On the basis of this knowledge, we can discern the gamut of possibilities for the future. If, in addition, we have some insight into the temper and inclination of the people who are both the actors and the spectators of the drama being staged, we can estimate which are the most probable developments.

2. Social Trends

Looking back over the ground we have mapped in our inquiry, we can make two general observations. One is the following: *What we usually call "social trends" have their main significance for the Negro's status because of what is in white people's minds.* It is true, for instance, that the decreasing relative demand for unskilled work, compared with skilled and semi-skilled work, and the change of much dirty and heavy labor to clean and easy labor, have dangerous implications for the Negro's employment opportunities. But if these technological and economic trends have disastrous effects on the Negro, the cause of this is the persistency with which white people want to keep him out of skilled and pleasant work. It is also true that the trend toward mass unemployment in America tends to turn Negro labor into a relief burden. But, again, the concentration of unemployment upon the Negro people is explainable only as the direct and indirect effects of discrimination. The restricted immigration of white Europeans to America and other population changes are reversing the century-old trend, in which the Negro was becoming a smaller portion of the total population of the United States, into a trend in which the Negro is becoming a slightly increasing proportion of the population. But if this change of trend will disappoint some white Americans and perhaps tend to increase racial friction, the cause is again race discrimination.

The second observation is this: *The important changes in the Negro problem do not consist of, or have close relations with, "social trends" in the narrower meaning of the term but are made up of changes in people's beliefs and valuations.* We started by stating the hypothesis that the Negro problem has its existence in the American's mind. There the decisive struggle goes on. It is there that the changes occur. Our investigation has amply confirmed our basic assumption, as an abbreviated summary of some of our main findings regarding recent trends will demonstrate.

In the field of "*social*" relations we traced a slow but visible decrease of discrimination in the South during recent decades up until the outbreak of the present War. The racial etiquette was gradually loosening. White people were beginning to take cognizance of distinctions in education and class within the Negro community and becoming prepared to treat Negroes somewhat differently according to their individual worth. The "no social equality" theory was not quite so rigid as in earlier generations. The entire Jim Crow apparatus was maintained, but its motivation was no longer so

self-evident. Southern liberals were demanding with increasing courage and determination that the doctrine "separate, but equal" should be followed out in its "equality" aspect as well as in its "separateness" aspect—that segregation should not be utilized as a means of discrimination.

The separation of the two groups in the South was, meanwhile, becoming more and more perfected as the frequency of personal master-servant relations was decreasing and as the segregated Negro institutions and Negro professions were being built up. There even seemed to be a growing mental isolation between whites and Negroes. Behind this potentially most dangerous development was not only the exclusionist policy of the whites, but also the sullen dissatisfaction and bitter race pride of the Negroes themselves. They were "withdrawing" themselves as a reaction to the segregation and discrimination enforced by the whites.

In the North the sudden influx of Southern Negroes during the Great Migration caused a temporary rise in social discrimination. Since, in spite of this, there was much less of it in the North than in the South, the migration meant a decrease of social segregation and discrimination for the Negro people as a whole. It also seemed that, despite the sharp temporary rise on account of the migration, the trend in the North, too, was toward decreasing race prejudice.

In the administration of *justice* there was a definite improvement in the South, even if Negroes in that region are still far from enjoying equality before the law. There was a slow rise in the quality of the police and the courts. Lynching, peonage, and other conspicuous aberrations of justice were becoming stamped out. This development was spurred by the increasing interest and interference in the judicial order of the region, shown by the federal courts and other federal agencies, and also by the state governments. The activity of such private organizations as the N.A.A.C.P. and the Interracial Commission were also of paramount importance for this development. More fundamentally the prestige of law was rising in the South and people were becoming more law-abiding. These changes were related to a general rise in education of the Southerners and to their fuller participation in the larger American culture.

In the North the Negro continued to enjoy full equality before the law. There was some strain in the North during the Great Migration, sometimes mounting to race riots during which the arm of the law was not always just and impartial. But on the whole the judicial order of the region was upheld, and equality in justice was not a major problem.

In the *political* sphere, the South continued to disfranchise the Negro, contrary to the clear precept of the American Creed and the Constitution. The masses of whites were also kept from political participation. Real issues were kept out of politics and there was a great amount of corruption. But these things proved increasingly difficult to keep up. Economic and

ideological changes, related to the region's rapid industrialization, urbanization, and labor unionization, stepped up by the Great Depression and the New Deal, caused political splits in the Southern Democratic party machines. The splits usually remained latent, but here and there, now and then, they forced themselves into the open. The "Solid South" seemed definitely endangered. The poll tax was under fierce attack in all Southern states, and some had already abolished it.

Meanwhile such things as the rise of the price level since the 'nineties and the improved educational level of Southern Negroes made the statutory devices to keep Negroes from the polls—by property and literacy requirements as well as by the poll tax—less and less effective. Negro disfranchisement came increasingly to depend upon extra-legal and illegal sanctions. We viewed this situation as extremely unstable for several reasons: the legal culture of the South was rising; there were no more loopholes left for legalizing Negro disfranchisement; the Solid South was showing signs of breaking up; the liberal forces in the North were getting increasingly exasperated with the South; and the Supreme Court was starting to enforce the Constitution as it applied to voting in the South. Southern liberals were standing up, not only against the poll tax, but often also against the one-party system and the exclusion of Negro voters from the primaries. Even conservative Southerners were occasionally found to hold the opinion that sometime in the future the Negro was going to vote in the South. While the Negro was almost as effectively disfranchised in the South in the years before the outbreak of the present War as he has ever been, our judgment, when taking all these changes into account, thus was that his political position was potentially much stronger and that his gradual enfranchisement was bound to come.

In the North the Negro enjoyed uninfringed his right to vote, and the steadily continuing migration to the North meant that the Negro vote was growing.

In the enjoyment of *public services* the Negro was discriminated against severely in the South in blunt repudiation of the Constitution and the state laws. But even in this sphere we saw a slow improvement of his status as a result of the rising legal culture of the region; the pressures from the Negroes, from public opinion in the North, from the federal courts and administration as well as from the white Southerners' own better conscience. It was becoming somewhat less unusual that a playground or even a little park was arranged for Negroes in some cities. The Negro schools were greatly improved even if they usually still remained inferior. Without question the New Deal was of tremendous importance for the Negro in respect to the share he received of public services. It is true that the Washington administration did not dare and, in any case, did not succeed in stamping out discrimination in relief, agricultural policies, or anything else

in the South, but it definitely decreased it. It also brought a new kind of public servant to the South, educated and zealous officials who were not primarily interested in "keeping the Negro in his place" but in encouraging and advancing him. This introduced a new and wholesome type of public contact for the Negro people in the South, and Negroes got a feeling that public authority could be other than arbitrary and suppressive.

In the North public services were, on the whole, granted to Negroes as to other citizens in similar circumstances.

While in all these spheres the trends at the outbreak of the present War were definitely in the direction of a rise in the status of the Negro in America,[a] the same cannot be said about those relating to his occupational status. In Southern agriculture the Negro's plight had been becoming continually worse and showed no prospects for a brighter future. His low place on the occupational ladder usually as a plantation tenant—the increase of Negro landownership had stopped 40 years earlier—his dependence on cotton, his lack of education, and the intense race prejudice in the blighted rural regions of the South made him the main sufferer of the boll weevil, of Southern over-population and "white infiltration," of mechanization and, during the 'thirties, of the collapsing world market and the contractionist national agricultural policy. Yet there were no wholehearted attempts on a mass scale, either by the federal government or by any other agency, to reeducate rural Southern Negroes to take up new occupations in other areas. America was under the spell of economic defeatism so far as a belief in continued rapid industrialization was concerned, and there was no hope of placing the dislocated Negro sharecropper in the industrial cities.

Some rural Negroes moved to Northern and Southern cities, increasing unemployment there. Monopoly of jobs by the whites increased during the Great Depression, and Negroes did not find any new employment openings. Various national policies, such as the Wages and Hours Law, instituted to stamp out sweatshop conditions, could not avoid hurting the employment opportunities of Negroes since they were marginal workers. Under these conditions it is a wonder that Negroes were able to retain as many of their jobs as they did. But Negro unemployment mounted in all cities, particularly in the North, and the Negro workers increasingly became a relief burden. The whole country, and particularly the North, was much more generous toward the Negro in doling out relief to him than in allowing him to work and earn his bread by his own labor.

Meanwhile, the new unions in the mass production industries gave Negro workers hope by organizing them together with whites in fields in which

[a] Coming back to South Carolina after an absence of twenty years, John Andrew Rice noted as one of the outstanding changes: "The Southerner's attitude toward the Negro is incredibly more humane than it was in the South I knew as a child." (*I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century* [1942], p. 195.)

Negroes were already working. But, with few exceptions, they did not open up new industries for Negro employment during the 'thirties, neither did they pave the way for Negroes to rise by promotion from the level of unskilled workers to that of the semi-skilled and skilled. Negro business did not flourish either, and the small gains made in a few professions were quantitatively insignificant. There is no question but that the development in the economic sphere was grave. But as discrimination was slowly decreasing in all other spheres, as there were good prospects that national politics would remain liberal and progressive, as Negro defense organizations and the Negro advisors in the federal administration were hammering on the inequalities, and as the new unions were pledged to nondiscrimination, there seemed to be good prospects that even the threatening trends respecting the Negro's economic status could have been turned, if the country had got out of the long stagnation in a normal way and had entered a new era of continued industrialization. Some of the economic policies of the New Deal were poorly thought out and badly integrated; in some respects they were damaging to the Negro. But administrators and experts were eager to learn from their mistakes and could be expected to accomplish better economic planning and direction when they were relieved of the pressure of emergency and improvisation.

3. The Decay of the Caste Theory

The problem of what would have occurred if there had been no war is now purely academic. The Second World War is bound to change all trends. But before we analyze the implications of the War for the Negro problem, we need to take a still broader perspective and ask: what has happened to white opinions on the Negro problem in the span of three generations since Emancipation?

In the South three generations ago white people had for their defense a consistent and respectable theory, endorsed by the church and by all sciences, printed in learned books and periodicals, and expounded by the South's great statesmen in the Capitol at Washington. The Negro's subordinate status was a principle integrated into a whole philosophy of society and of human life. The Negro was a completely different species of mankind: undeveloped, "child like," amoral, and much less endowed with intellectual capacities than the white man; he was meant by the Creator to be a servant forever; if kept in his "place" he was useful or at least tolerable, and there he was also happy; "social equality" was unthinkable as it implied intermarriage which would destroy the white race and Anglo-Saxon civilization. Much of this theory—which acquired an elaborate structure to satisfy the specific needs to justify discrimination in various spheres of life—remained through Reconstruction, and it was again hailed in the Restoration of white supremacy. Indeed, much of it remained until

a couple of decades ago. But now it is almost destroyed for upper class and educated people. Its maintenance among lower class and uneducated people meets increasing difficulties. *The gradual destruction of the popular theory behind race prejudice is the most important of all social trends in the field of interracial relations.*

It is significant that today even the white man who defends discrimination frequently describes his motive as "prejudice" and says that it is "irrational." The popular beliefs rationalizing caste in America are no longer intellectually respectable. They can no longer, therefore, be found in current books, newspapers or public speeches. They live a surreptitious life in thoughts and private remarks. There we have had to hunt them when studying the matter in this inquiry. When they were thus drawn out into the open they looked shabby and ashamed of themselves. Everybody who has acquired a higher education knows that they are wrong. Most white people with a little education also have a hunch that they are wrong. There is today a queer feeling of *credo quia absurdum* hovering over the whole complex of popular beliefs sustaining racial discrimination. This makes the prejudiced white man nearly as pathetic as his Negro victim.

The white man is thus in the process of losing confidence in the theory which gave reason and meaning to his way of life. And since he has not changed his life much, he is in a dilemma. This change is probably irreversible and cumulative. It is backed by the American Creed. The trend of psychology, education, anthropology, and social science is toward environmentalism in the explanation of group differences, which means that the racial beliefs which defended caste are being torn away. It also means, by implication, that the white majority group in power is accused of being the cause of the Negro's deficiencies and unhappiness. Authority and respectability are no longer supporting the popular beliefs. The beliefs are no longer nourished from above. Instead they are increasingly fought. There is a considerable time-lag between what is thought in the higher and in the lower social classes. But as time passes the lower social strata also will change their beliefs. These ideas are spread by the advance of education.

All of this is important. People want to be rational, and they want to feel that they are good and righteous. They want to have the society they live in, and their behavior in this society, explained and justified to their conscience. And now their theory is being torn to pieces; its expression is becoming recognized as a mark of ignorance.

On the other side of the caste gulf the development leads to increased bitterness. To the Negro the white man's trouble with his conscience cannot but seem to be insincerity or something worse. The Negro protest is rising, spurred by the improvement in education. The Negro group is being permeated by the democratic and equalitarian values of the American culture. Since at the same time there has been increasing separation between the two

groups, Negroes are beginning to form a self-conscious "nation within the nation," defining ever more clearly their fundamental grievances against white America.

America can never more regard its Negroes as a patient, submissive minority. Negroes will continually become less well "accommodated." They will organize for defense and offense. They will be more and more vociferous. They will watch their opportunities ever more keenly. They will have a powerful tool in the caste struggle against white America: the glorious American ideals of democracy, liberty, and equality to which America is pledged not only by its political Constitution but also by the sincere devotion of its citizens. The Negroes are a minority, and they are poor and suppressed, but they have the advantage that they can fight wholeheartedly. The whites have all the power, but they are split in their moral personality. Their better selves are with the insurgents. The Negroes do not need any other allies.

This moral process had proceeded far when the Second World War broke out

4. NEGROES IN THE WAR CRISIS

This War is an ideological war fought in defense of democracy. The totalitarian dictatorships in the enemy countries had even made the ideological issue much sharper in this War than it was in the First World War. Moreover, in this War the principle of democracy had to be applied more explicitly to race. Fascism and nazism are based on a racial superiority dogma—not unlike the old hackneyed American caste theory—and they came to power by means of racial persecution and oppression. In fighting fascism and nazism, America had to stand before the whole world in favor of racial tolerance and cooperation and of racial equality. It had to denounce German racialism as a reversion to barbarism. It had to proclaim universal brotherhood and the inalienable human freedoms. The fact that the Japanese utilize anti-white feelings in Asia and elsewhere made it even more necessary to stress the racial equality principle.

In the internal political struggle before America became involved in the War, the isolationists had worked up the idea that there was much to improve at home without trying to improve the rest of the world. They did not disdain even to point to the injustices inflicted upon the Negro; many isolationists to the left put the Negro cause to the forefront. A Georgia senator who had made a lengthy talk about the danger to democracy abroad was challenged by an isolationist co-senator with the question whether the fight for democracy should not begin in Georgia. The plight of the Negro sharecropper and the presence of peonage and lynching were brought up to stress the unsolved tasks at home and to win Negro sympathies for the isolationist cause.[2] One permanent result of this pre-war

discussion was that, in this War, the promises to establish the full democratic liberties, not only abroad but also in America, played an even more prominent role than in the First World War.

For the Negroes this new War carried unpleasant reminiscences of the earlier one. The situation looked bitterly ironical. This time, too, the Negro had to fight desperately to get the right to fight for his country. In the armed forces Negroes were discriminated against in the usual ways and to almost the same extent. Mobs had attacked Negro soldiers and war workers, and a Southern senator had requested the Army to keep Negro soldiers out of the South. Negroes also had to fight to get into the war industries and had only partial success. In the First World War they actually made considerable advances in industrial employment, and the Great Migration was a welcome consequence. But this time the nation was well stocked with unemployed whites at the beginning of the defense boom. A technological development had also intervened, decreasing the industrial demand for unskilled labor—the type of jobs for which Negroes are least unwelcome. Up to the time when this is being written (August, 1942), the Negro has been almost excluded from the great bulk of the war industries. Discrimination is the rule practically everywhere.

Under the threat of a Negro march on Washington, skillfully staged by A. Philip Randolph, the President made a solemn proclamation against discrimination in the defense industries and government agencies and appointed a committee, having both Negro and white members, to see that it was observed. Other branches of the Administration made declarations and issued orders against discrimination: some of these statements were apparently sincere in their intention, some were face-saving moves, and most had their locus somewhere in the wide range between. The Republican National Committee resolved that racial discriminations are "wrongs under the Constitution" and pledged the opposition party to work to correct them. The national labor unions also lined up for nondiscrimination. The Negroes heard and read the kindly promises. They again noted the public acceptance of their own reading of the Constitution and the American Creed. But they knew the grim reality.

In the twenty years between the two World Wars the general level of education of the American Negroes had become considerably higher, and so had their capacity for democracy. The Negro press had become better equipped, and it reached farther. The Negro organizations had grown in strength. The national Negro leaders had become firmer, and they were more resentful. This time they were not willing cheerfully to postpone their complaints until the War was over. The elderly Du Bois renounced with bitterness the credulous advice he once gave his people in the First World War to "close ranks." In this new War the Negro leaders advertised

freely—and sometimes provocatively—the danger of a low morale among Negroes.

In this War there was a "colored" nation on the other side—Japan. And that nation started out by beating the white Anglo-Saxons on their own ground. The smoldering revolt in India against British rule had significance for the American Negroes, and so had other "color" incidents in the world conflict: the wavering sympathies of several native populations in the Dutch and British possessions in the Pacific, the mistrust against Great Britain among the Arab peoples, the first abandonment of Ethiopia, and the ambiguity of the plans for the colonial chessboard of Africa. Even unsophisticated Negroes began to see vaguely a color scheme in world events, although their thoughts are usually not yet organized in a definite pattern.[3] In a "letter to the editor" by a Negro, which crept into a liberal white paper in the Upper South, the concluding sentences read:

> The Negro races on earth are very suspicious of the white man's good intentions. This is very likely to be the last war that the white man will be able to lead humanity to wage for plausible platitudes.[4]

And this low-toned threat from a single Southern Negro became occasionally more shrill in the North: all colored people should be united in their interests against the whites, and the aim should not be "national unity" but a real color war which would definitely end white imperialism and exploitation.

But this was exceptional. World politics and the color issue are, in the final analysis, of secondary importance to American Negroes, except as avenues for the expression of dissatisfaction. The American Negro is thoroughly Americanized; his complaint is merely that he is not accepted. What really matters to him is his treatment at home, in his own country. A Negro journalist, explaining the feeling of the Negro to the white public, has this to say:

> Because he must fight discrimination to fight for his country and to earn a living, the Negro to-day is angry, resentful, and utterly apathetic about the war. "Fight for what?" he is asking. "This war doesn't mean a thing to me. If we win I lose, so what?"[5]

Reading the Negro press and hearing all the reports from observers who have been out among common Negroes in the South and the North convince me that there is much sullen skepticism, and even cynicism, and vague, tired, angry dissatisfaction among American Negroes today. The general bitterness is reflected in the stories that are circulating in the Negro communities: A young Negro, about to be inducted into the Army, said, "Just carve on my tombstone, 'Here lies a black man killed fighting a yellow man for the protection of a white man.'" Another Negro boy

expressed the same feeling when he said he was going to get his eyes slanted so that the next time a white man shoved him around he could fight back.[6] Their caste status being what it is in America, Negroes would, indeed, not be ordinary human beings if such dissatisfaction and bitterness were not their reaction to all the morale talk about democracy, the four freedoms, the American way of life, all the violent denunciations of Nazi race hatred and the lack of freedom under totalitarian rule. We should also remember, however, that, even if Negroes are still mainly excluded from work in the manufacturing industries and from employment offering much future prospect, the war boom has created a lot of secondary employment for Negroes, too. There is more money in circulation and some trickles down to the Negroes. With a little money in his pocket even the poor Negro day laborer or domestic worker feels that he can afford to stiffen himself. Many white housewives notice strange thoughts and behavior on the part of their Negro servants these days.

The loyalty of the American Negro in war and peace is, however, proverbial. The only thing Negroes ask for is to be accepted as Americans. The American Constitution is even dearer to them than to their white compatriots. They are more unreservedly anti-fascist. Few American Negroes want the Axis powers to win the War. But this is not much of an issue to Negroes, as they, about as much as white Americans, are convinced of the invincibility of their country. Negroes have never doubted the strength and resourcefulness of the whites. Even more, they know that America offers more possibility of democracy, even for themselves, than do the Axis nations. In one of the most thoughtful statements on the question of Negro loyalties since the beginning of the war crisis, Ralph Bunche says:

> There should be no illusions about the nature of this struggle. . . . The fight now is not to save democracy, for that which does not exist cannot be saved. But the fight is to maintain those conditions under which people may continue to strive for realization of the democratic ideals. This is the inexorable logic of the nation's position as dictated by the world anti-democratic revolution and Hitler's projected new world order.[7]

But it is quite common that Negroes feel a satisfaction in the temporary adversities and want the War to become as serious a matter as possible to the white people in power. There have been reports that poor Negro sharecroppers in the South sometimes indulge in dreams of a Japanese army marching through the South and killing off a number of "crackers." They do not want them to land in the North, though, and they certainly do not want them to stay. But much more common is a glowing ill-concealed satisfaction over the war adversities on various fronts. Practically every issue of any Negro newspaper gives proof of this attitude. It must be conceded that Negroes have also some good rational reasons for this feeling. They know, of course, that, as a Northern Negro social scientist explains:

> . . . the graver the outside danger to the safety of this country, the more abundant the gains will be likely to be [for the Negroes]. But until such time as this country is actually in grave danger most of the attention given to the problem of [Negro] morale will be that of conjuring up the right type of propaganda to allay their discontent.[8]

A white commentator complained some months ago that the Negro press is something of a fifth column. He received the unanimous and angry answer in all Negro papers that this is exactly contrary to the truth. Negroes are standing only for the democratic principles, to defend which America is waging war. They are dissatisfied because these principles are ignored in America itself. They are just the opposite of war dodgers and traitors: they pray to have the right to fight and die for their country and to work in the war industries, but they are excluded. They can, with new reason, point to the inconsistency between American ideals and practices, as does one of their wisest editors, Elmer A. Carter: ". . . this strange and curious picture, this spectacle of America at war to preserve the ideal of government by free men, yet clinging to the social vestiges of the slave system."[9] This ideological attack is so clear-cut and simple and so obviously to the point that it appeals even to the least educated Negro. The cause of the American Negro has supreme logical strength. And the Negro is better prepared than ever before in his history to fight for it.

5. THE WAR AND THE WHITES

This simple logic is, of course, apparent to white Americans, too. And the whites were on the way, even before the War, to lose their caste theory and their complacency in the face of obvious abuses of the American Creed. They are also stirred up by the War and the great cause of human liberties at stake. In the North the question can be publicly approached in only one spirit, that of the American Creed. A newspaper editorial reads like this:

> If the United Nations win this war the principle of the world-wide legal equality of races will have to be recognized. Since this is largely a war of ideas, and since racial equality before the law has become one of the central ideas on the democratic side, we can almost say that this principle, in itself, may be the deciding factor. The Chinese, the East Indians, the numerous African peoples and many other groups are on our side, or would be so if they were completely convinced that we mean what we say by equality just as unreservedly as the Nazis mean what they say by inequality. But we Americans cannot very well talk convincingly in these terms unless we prove our sincerity in our own country. Our largest recognizable racial minority is the Negro.[10]

The titular leader of the Republican party, Wendell Willkie, speaking in July, 1942, at the annual conference of the N.A.A.C.P. in Los Angeles, California, had this to say:

> Today it is becoming increasingly apparent to thoughtful Americans that we cannot fight the forces and ideas of imperialism abroad and maintain a form of imperialism at home. The war has done this to our thinking. . . . So we are finding under the pressures of this present conflict that long-standing barriers and prejudices are breaking down. The defense of our democracy against the forces that threaten it from without has made some of its failures to function at home glaringly apparent. Our very proclamations of what we are fighting for have rendered our own inequities self-evident. When we talk of freedom and opportunity for all nations the mocking paradoxes in our own society become so clear they can no longer be ignored.[11]

The world conflict and America's exposed position as the defender of the democratic faith is thus accelerating an ideological process which was well under way. In this dramatic stage of the American caste struggle a strategic fact of utmost importance is this, that the entire caste order is extra-legal if not actually illegal and unconstitutional. The legal order of the land does not sanction caste but, on the contrary, is framed to guarantee equality and to suppress caste. The only important exceptions are the Jim Crow laws in the Southern states. But even they are written upon the fiction of equality, although, if equality were enforced, they would not only lose in efficacy as means of expressing caste subordination, but also become tremendously burdensome economically for society and, consequently, the whites would be robbed of one of their main interests in upholding them.

The whites are aware of the tremendous social costs of keeping up the present irrational and illegal caste system. Among other things, this anomaly is one of the main factors keeping the respect for law and order and the administration of laws at such a low level in America. The whites investigate these irrationalities and the consequent social wastage; they build scientific systems to explain their social causation, in fact, they know all about it and deplore it. They have the political power to make caste legal and orderly, whether with Negro consent or without it. But practically never will whites be heard making such proposals, and still less will they seriously discuss and plan for such a change. They cannot afford to compromise the American Creed.

Caste may exist, but it cannot be recognized. Instead, the stamp of public disapproval is set upon it, and this undermines still more the caste theory by which the whites have to try to explain and justify their behavior. And *the Negroes are awarded the law as a weapon in the caste struggle.* Here we see in high relief how the Negroes in their fight for equality have their allies in the white man's own conscience. The white man can humiliate the Negro; he can thwart his ambitions; he can starve him; he can press him down into vice and crime; he can occasionally beat him and even kill him; but he does not have the moral stamina to make the Negro's subjugation legal and approved by society. Against that stands not only the Consti-

tution and the laws which could be changed, but also the American Creed which is firmly rooted in the Americans' hearts.

6. The North Moves Toward Equality

In the North the Creed was strong enough long before the War to secure for the Negro practically unabridged civic equality in all his relations with public authority, whether it was in voting, before the courts, in the school system or as a relief recipient. But he is discriminated against ruthlessly in private relations, as when looking for a job or seeking a home to live in. The white Northerner, in his private dealings with people to whom he does not feel akin, has dangerous traditions derived from the exploitation of new immigrants. But even in those nonpublic spheres, and particularly in the problem of breadwinning, the white Northerner is becoming prepared, as a citizen, to give the Negro his just opportunity. But apparently, as a private individual, he is less prepared to feel that he himself is the man to give the Negro a better chance: in his own occupation, trade union, office or workshop, in his own residential neighborhood or in his church. The social paradox in the North is exactly this, that almost everybody is against discrimination in general but, at the same time, almost everybody practices discrimination in his own personal affairs.

It is the cumulation of all these personal discriminations which creates the color bar in the North and for the Negro causes unusually severe unemployment, crowded housing conditions, crime and vice. About this social process the ordinary white Northerner keeps sublimely ignorant and unconcerned. This aloofness is, of course, partly opportunistic but it can be fought by education. When now, in the war emergency, the Negro is increasingly given sympathetic publicity by newspapers, periodicals, and the radio, and by administrators and public personalities of all kinds, one result is that the white Northerner is gradually waking up and seeing what he is doing to the Negro and is seeing also the consequences of his democratic Creed for his relations with Negroes. We have become convinced in the course of this inquiry that the North is getting prepared for a fundamental redefinition of the Negro's status in America. The North will accept it if the change is pushed by courageous leadership. And the North has much more power than the South. The white South is itself a minority and a national problem.

Also working in favor of the Negro is another trend, namely, the concentration of responsibility. Particularly in the crucial economic sphere this trend is rapid. Labor relations are coming increasingly to be planned and regulated by broad union policies and by national legislation and administration. The War will force this change forward step by step. After the War, in the great crisis of demobilization and liquidation, mass unemployment will be a main problem. Large-scale public intervention will be

a necessity. In this endeavor no national administration will dare to allow unemployment to be too much concentrated upon the Negro.

The average white Northerner will probably agree with a policy which holds open employment opportunities for Negroes, because, as we said, he is against economic discrimination as a general proposition. There is also—together with all opportunistic ignorance and unconcernedness—a bit of rational defense for the distance he preserves between his political and his private opinion. In the individual shop where he works or the residential section where he lives, he sees the danger in admitting a few Negroes, since this will bring an avalanche of Negroes on his shop or his neighborhood. This danger is, of course, due to the fact of the Negro's general exclusion. It is part of the vicious circle holding the Negro down.

If government policy prevents general discrimination, however, there will be no avalanche of Negroes on any one white employer or group of employers. The Negroes, who comprise less than 10 per cent of the population, must be given their chance in private enterprise or be supported by public funds. "Buck-passing" is no longer possible when the problem comes to be viewed nationally. And the planning and directing agencies will be compelled to make the white public see the problem nationally in order to get public support for the policy they must pursue. As private relations are increasingly becoming public relations, the white Northerner will be willing to give the Negro equality.

These are the reasons why we foresee that the trend of unionization, social legislation, and national planning will tend to break down economic discrimination, the only type of discrimination which is both important and strong in the North. Other types of discrimination will then tend to decrease according to the law of cumulative causation which has been frequently referred to in this book.

7. TENSION IN THE SOUTH

The situation in the South is different. Unlike the white Northerner, who is most inclined to give the Negro equality in public relations and least inclined to do so in private relations, the white Southerner does not differentiate between public and private relations—the former as well as the latter have significance for prestige and social equality. Moreover, he is traditionally and consistently opposed to Negro equality for its own sake, which the Northerner is not. He may be privately indulgent much more than the white Northerner, but he is not as willing to give the Negro equal treatment by public authority. This is one of the romantic principles behind the legal inequity in the South. But the Southerner is a good American, too, and the region has been becoming rapidly "Americanized" during the last generation.

The ordinary conservative white Southerner has, therefore, a deeper

split in his moral personality than does the white Northerner. The War is stirring up the conflict in his soul. The air is filled with reminders of the great cause of democracy and the equality of peoples, which is the main issue in the War America is waging against nazism, fascism, and Japanese imperialism. His "own Negroes" are making some money, reading the Negro press and getting restless. The N.A.A.C.P. and other protest organizations are fighting ever more daringly in his own cities. In his newspapers he reads how the national leaders, from the President down, come out with blunt denunciations of racial discrimination. He is finding that Northern leaders are increasingly getting interested in the poll tax, the white primary, Negro disfranchisement, injustices against Negroes, and other peculiar institutions of the South which he guards behind the doctrine of "states' rights."

What is he supposed to do? Give up Jim Crow and so perhaps allow a Negro to marry his daughters; build good schools for Negroes, though the schools are not too good for his own children; punish white invaders of Negro rights, though they otherwise may be perfectly good and upright citizens; relinquish white supremacy? Is he supposed to retreat from all "Southern traditions"? He sees "outside aggression" wherever he turns.

This is an old story and a phase of a mental cycle through which the unfortunate South has often passed before. The fact that this time the white Southerner's caste theory is weaker than ever and does not inspire much of his own intellectual confidence makes his dilemma worse. His emotions on the color issue are less stable also because his personal ties to the Negro group have been decreasing, and racial isolation has been intensified during the last generation. He "knows the Negro" less well than did his father and grandfather, though he continues to pretend that he knows him well, because to "know the Negro" is also a Southern tradition. Having fewer personal contacts with Negroes he is likely to exaggerate the signs of opposition from the Negroes, for he feels that the Negroes have good reason to develop opposition. The presence in Southern communities of Negro soldiers, many from the North, increases his uneasiness. Du Bois, writing about the First World War, talks about:

> . . . the deep resentment mixed with the pale ghost of fear which Negro soldiers call up in the breast of the white South. It is not so much that they fear that the Negro will strike if he gets a chance, but rather that they assume with curious unanimity that he has *reason* to strike, that any other persons in his circumstances, or treated as he is would rebel. Instead of seeking to relieve the cause of such a possible feeling, most of them strain every effort to bottle up the black man's resentment.[12]

In the present crisis, Guion G. Johnson, a liberal Southern white historian, could already in July, 1941, report from the South that

> . . . there has been some uneasiness that "our Negroes" are being tampered with, and white advocates of racial goodwill have occasionally found it more difficult

within the last year to speak out boldly. White persons who have for decades been working toward interracial cooperation may now find themselves charged with fifth column activity and Negro leaders may be denounced as communists or nazis.[13]

Another prominent white Southern liberal describes in a letter to the author the mental state of the white South as of summer, 1942:

. . . we are in the midst of a situation in the South where we seem to have been thrown back with great losses where we had expected great gains: and . . . the situation in the South may be of the proportions of a crisis greater than we have had in many years. For the first time in my experience the situation is so complex that we do not know how to proceed to next steps. Just a few years ago we almost had unanimity in plans for cooperative arrangements, in which Negroes and whites were enthusiastic and in which representatives of nearly all phases of the South were participants. We had worked into entirely new patterns of fellowship and participation, and there were many evidences that the South was beginning to be proud of this progress. Today, as far as I know, there is practically none of this left. The South is becoming almost unanimous in a pattern of unity that refers to white unity. The thousands of incidents and accidents in the South are being integrated into the old pattern of Southern determination against an outside aggression.[14]

In the approaching conflict between the Negro and the South, this writer sees that

. . . a South which was just coming into its own, getting ready for an enriched agriculture, a more balanced economy, a more liberal viewpoint will sacrifice all this in a pathetic blood and sweat episode reminiscent of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Similar to this deeply concerned statement of a liberal white Southerner, we may cite the equally troubled view of a Negro clergyman, Dr. J. S. Nathaniel Tross:

I am afraid for my people. They have grown restless. They are not happy. They no longer laugh. There is a new policy among them—something strange, perhaps terrible.[15]

The situation is so critical in the South today that fifty Southern Negro leaders have seen fit to gather together, deliberately excluding Northern Negroes, and to plead for racial amity. They accept social segregation, but request the elimination of all other inequalities. This development was made necessary by the fearful backing away of some Southern liberals—notably Mark Ethridge, John Temple Graves, and Virginius Dabney—from the social segregation issue. The meeting of the Southern Negroes serves both as an attempt to prevent the racial lines from being drawn more sharply and as a disclaimer of responsibility for future violence.

An important element in the situation is that the Southern Negroes, if they are attacked, are more prepared to fight this time than they have ever

been before. A competent Negro social scientist, who has recently been studying conditions in the Upper South, confirms this view and, in May, 1943, confides that he expects the outbreak of serious race riots in the South within the next year.

The situation is grave, and the years to come will provide a serious test of the political resourcefulness of white public authorities and of other white and Negro leaders. But regardless of what happens, we do not believe that this is a turn for the worse in race relations in the South. Even if there are going to be serious clashes and even if their short-run effects will be devastating to the Negroes involved and, perhaps, to Negroes in the whole region, we believe that the long-run effect of the present opinion crisis in the South, because it is a catharsis for the whites, will be a change toward increased equality for the Negro. When we make this judgment, we recall a remark once made in a conversation by a prominent and conservative Negro social scientist in the South. He stated as his considered opinion that tensions are not necessarily bad and that under certain conditions even race riots may have wholesome effects in the long run. He continued in about the following way: "They stir up people's conscience. People will have to think matters over. They prevent things from becoming settled. If the race situation should ever become fixed, if the Negro were really accommodated, then, and only then, would I despair about a continued great improvement for Negroes. As long as there is friction and fighting, there is hope."

At this juncture the white North is moving in a direction contrary to the South. The white South is becoming increasingly isolated. There has not been such a great distance in the views of the Negro problem between the white majority groups in the two regions since Reconstruction. Though it is seldom expressed clearly, the outside observer feels convinced that an increasing number of white Northerners mean business this time. It is true, as James Weldon Johnson once observed, that "essentially the status of the Negro in all other sections will depend upon what it is in the South,"[16] but the North will find it increasingly necessary to have its say about the Negroes' status in the South. The North cannot well afford any longer to let the white Southerners have their own way with the Negroes as completely as they have had.

The national compromise has lasted for two generations; it may now be approaching its end, at least relatively. Ten years from now this period in the history of interracial relations in America may come to look as a temporary *interregnum*. The compromise was not a stable power equilibrium. Signs of its end have been frequent during the 'thirties: a whole set of Supreme Court decisions, the New Deal in the South, the increasing activity of federal agencies to stamp out peonage, the agitation for a federal lynching law and for an abolition of the poll tax by Congress, the repeal

of the two-thirds majority rule for the nomination of the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, and so on.

The Negro problem is becoming national in scope in a different sense than was meant when white Southerners expressed a belief that the Negro migration to the North would give the North more of a share in the trouble of having Negroes as neighbors and that then the North would understand the racial philosophy of the South better. The Negro vote and the labor vote in the North also have considerable weight in checking Southern conservatism and have increasing power to do so. But aside from all that, national planning cannot leave out the South or humor too much its irrationality. As a matter of fact the South, particularly its agriculture and its population pressure, will continue to remain one of the main national worries.

Because of this development, spurred by the war crisis and the coming peace crisis, it seems justifiable to predict a growing tension between the two regions, one which will not be restricted to the Negro issue. There is not going to be a civil war, of course. The South is this time relatively much weaker in all respects. The North will probably not become more considerate if the interracial tension in the South gets out of hand and results in bloody clashes. As recourse to civil war is out of the question and as things thus have to be settled by political means, the fact becomes of importance that the white South is not united against a redefinition of the Negro's status. The South has been, and is, changing rapidly, and Southern liberalism has been coming to be a force though it was practically nowhere in political power and today is fearfully timid on the Negro issue. Even the ordinary conservative white Southerner has a deeply split personality. In the short run this can be suppressed, and the tension can lead to violent reactions. But in the long run it means that the conservative white Southerner himself can be won over to equalitarian reforms in line with the American Creed.

8. INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

What has actually happened within the last few years is not only that the Negro problem has become national in scope after having been mainly a Southern worry. It has also acquired tremendous international implications, and this is another and decisive reason why the white North is prevented from compromising with the white South regarding the Negro. The situation is actually such that any and all concessions to Negro rights in this phase of the history of the world will repay the nation many times, while any and all injustices inflicted upon him will be extremely costly. This is not yet seen clearly by most Americans, but it will become increasingly apparent as the War goes on.

We mentioned in passing that the American Negro cannot help observing

the color angle to this War. He is obviously getting vicarious satisfaction out of this perspective, and he is also testing some vague feelings of solidarity and allegiance to the cause of other colored peoples involved in the world conflagration. But this is a minor part of the international implications. The American Negro is thoroughly American in his culture and whole outlook on the world. He is also loyal to America, and there is no danger that he will betray it. This is at least certain in the short-range view, which covers this War and the coming peace. How the Negro would react if he were left dissatisfied and if later a new war were to be fought more definitely along color lines is more difficult to predict.

The main international implication is, instead, that America, for its international prestige, power, and future security, needs to demonstrate to the world that American Negroes can be satisfactorily integrated into its democracy. In a sense, this War marks the end of American isolation. America has had security behind the two protecting oceans. When now this isolation has been definitely broken, the historians will begin to see how it has always greatly determined the development of America. Statesmen will have to take cognizance of the changed geopolitical situation of the nation and carry out important adaptations of the American way of life to new necessities. A main adaptation is bound to be a redefinition of the Negro's status in American democracy.

It is commonly observed that the mistrust of, or open hostility against, the white man by colored people everywhere in the world has greatly increased the difficulties for the United Nations to win this War.[a] Many old sins and stupidities are today staring back upon the white man, and he continues to commit them, though he now knows better. The treatment of the Negro in America has not made good propaganda for America abroad and particularly not among colored nations. That good American who has acquired such a rare understanding for the Asiatic people's mind, Pearl S. Buck, comments:

> Japan . . . is declaring in the Philippines, in China, in India, Malaya, and even Russia that there is no basis for hope that colored peoples can expect any justice from the people who rule in the United States, namely, the white people. For specific proof the Japanese point to our treatment of our own colored people, citizens of generations in the United States. Every lynching, every race riot, gives joy to Japan. The discriminations of the American army and navy and the air forces against colored soldiers and sailors, the exclusion of colored labor in our defense industries and trade unions, all our social discriminations, are of the greatest aid today to our enemy in Asia, Japan. "Look at America," Japan is saying to millions of listening ears. "Will white Americans give you equality?"[17]

[a] Not only colored peoples have been disturbed by America's treatment of her Negroes. The German radio often mentions America's harsh treatment of Negroes in its propaganda broadcasts to European peoples. (New York *Times* [September 2, 1942], p. 3.)

And she assures her compatriots:

> We cannot . . . win this war without convincing our colored allies—who are most of our allies—that we are not fighting for ourselves as continuing superior over colored peoples. The deep patience of colored peoples is at an end. Everywhere among them there is the same resolve for freedom and equality that white Americans and British have, but it is a grimmer resolve, for it includes the determination to be rid of white rule and exploitation and white race prejudice, and nothing will weaken this will.[18]

This is perhaps an exaggeration. Perhaps the War can this time be won even without the colored people's confidence. But the absence of their full cooperation, and still more their obstructive activities, will be tremendously costly in time, men and materials. Caste is becoming an expensive luxury of white men.

It seems more definitely certain that it will be impossible to make and preserve a good peace without having built up the fullest trust and goodwill among the colored peoples. They will be strong after the War, and they are bound to become even stronger as time passes. For one thing, this is certain in so far as numbers are concerned. During the short span of the last three centuries, which include almost the entire epoch of white power expansion, the peoples of European stock increased sevenfold, while the others increased only threefold. The whites grew from a bare 100 millions, or a fifth of the globe's total, to over 700 millions, or a third of all mankind. The increase for the whites was fastest during the last century when they gradually became able to control deaths but had not as yet brought births under control. The whites are, however, now in the second phase of this dynamic sequence: the white birth rate is falling so fast that it is catching up with the relatively stable death rate. The population expansion of the whites is now slowing down, absolutely and relatively. Many of the Western nations, including America and all those other peoples on the highest level of industrial civilization, will probably start to shrink in population numbers within a few decades. The colored nations, on the other hand, are just entering the first stage where expansion is likely to be pushed by an increasingly improved control over death, and it is unlikely that the increase in birth control will keep pace with the improvement of the control over death. The whites will, therefore, from now on become a progressively smaller portion of the total world population. If we except the Russian peoples, who are still rapidly increasing, the rapid change in proportion stands out still more dramatically.

Another broad trend is almost as certain, namely, that the "backward" countries, where most colored people live, are going to become somewhat industrialized. The examples of Japan and, more recently, of Russia and China give support to the view that in the future we shall see many backward countries industrialized at a tremendously more rapid rate than were

the pioneer Western countries, who had to find out everything for themselves. The same examples illustrate also how such backward nations can advantageously use the newly created industrial apparatus for producing war materials, and they illustrate, too, how they can fight with them.

Particularly as Russia cannot be reckoned on to adhere to white supremacy, it is evident from these facts—though nobody in our countries seems to take it seriously—that within a short period the shrinking minority of white people in our Western lands will either have to succumb or to find ways of living on peaceful terms with colored people. If white people, for their own preservation, attempt to reach a state in which they will be tolerated by their colored neighbors, equality will be the most they will be strong enough to demand.

History is never irredeemable, and there is still time to come to good terms with colored peoples. Their race pride and race prejudice is still mostly a defensive mental device, a secondary reaction built up to meet the humiliations of white supremacy. This is apparent in the case of the American Negro. It probably holds true even for other colored people who have not yet had a taste of power. A Chinese propaganda leaflet assures the Americans:

> Chinese nationalism or race-consciousness is essentially defensive in character. It has developed out of continuous fight for freedom, and has never been offensive.[19]

It should be apparent that the time to come to an understanding on the basis of equality is rapidly running out. When colored nations have once acquired power but still sense the scorn of white superiority and racial discrimination, they are likely to become indoctrinated by a race prejudice much more akin to that of the whites—a race prejudice which can be satisfied only by the whites' humiliation and subjugation.

9. MAKING THE PEACE

Americans in general are concerned with the task of making a constructive peace after the War. It is commonly understood that this task is fraught with immense and unprecedented difficulties and, particularly, that the flagrant mismanagement of international affairs by the great democracies in the period between the two World Wars, the devastation caused by the Second World War, the breaking up of the state structures of Europe, and the approaching liquidation of colonial imperialism in the Far East have created a psychological state in mankind which, aside from all physical and economic deficiencies, raises almost insurmountable obstacles for the peacemakers. Americans generally recognize also that the protection of the two oceans is gone forever, that American isolationism will never more be possible, that America is in world politics for better or for worse, and that

this time it has to stick to the making and upholding of the peace which is yet to be written.

Americans also recognize that America has to take world leadership. The coming difficult decades will be America's turn in the endless sequence of main actors on the world stage. America then will have the major responsibility for the manner in which humanity approaches the long era during which the white peoples will have to adjust to shrinkage while the colored are bound to expand in numbers, in level of industrial civilization and in political power. For perhaps several decades, the whites will still hold the lead, and America will be the most powerful white nation.

America goes to this task with the best of intentions. Declarations of inalienable human rights for people all over the world are now emanating from America. Wilson's fourteen points were a rehearsal; Roosevelt's four freedoms are more general and more focused on the rights of the individual. The national leaders proclaim that the coming peace will open an age of human liberty and equality everywhere. This was so in the First World War, too. This time something must be done to give reality to the glittering generalities, because otherwise the world will become entirely demoralized. It will probably be impossible to excite people with empty promises a third time. It is commonly agreed, and taken as proved by the coming of this War, that peace cannot be preserved if the development of a democratic life in every nation is not internationally guaranteed and the possibility of oppression is not checked. It is anticipated that international agencies will be created to sanction such a development.

In view of the clarity and unanimity in America on these fundamental points, few white Americans fully realize all the obvious implications. I have, for instance, met few white Americans who have ever thought of the fact that, if America had joined the League of Nations, American Negroes could, and certainly would, have taken their cases before international tribunal back in the 'twenties. Some versatile Negro protest leaders are, however, familiar with the thought. After this War there is bound to be an international apparatus for appeal by oppressed minority groups. In America, Negro organizations like the N.A.A.C.P. are excellently equipped for such conspicuous litigation. It is, indeed, possible that such implications of the coming democratic peace, when they become better seen and publicly discussed, will act as deterrents and as a motive for isolationism in some American circles. But there is no way back. America is irredeemably in world politics.

Behind her two protecting oceans America has until now lived an exuberant and carefree life without having to bother much about its international reputation. Probably no other modern people has cared less about what impression it makes on other nations. The ordinary American might have been interested to know, but has not bothered much about, the fact

that lynchings and race riots are headlines in Bombay; that Huey Long and Father Coughlin, the wave of organized crime during and after Prohibition, the fiscal bankruptcy of Chicago some years ago, the corrupt political machines in Philadelphia, the Dayton trial of Darwinism, provided stories for the Sunday papers in Oslo; that many men and women in democratic countries around the entire world have had their first and decisive impression of American public life from the defense of Sacco and Vanzetti and the Scottsboro boys. Friends of America abroad have tried to make the picture of American life more balanced and more accurate by fixing public attention on the numerous good sides, on American accomplishments, on all the good intentions and on the favorable trends. But they have been only partly successful, and America itself has—until this War—never cared to advertise America abroad.

This—like America's openness to criticism, which is the positive side of this unconcernedness—is a sign of great strength, but it was the strength of a departed isolation. There was also ignorance behind the attitude. Aware of all the good things in his country and rightly convinced that, on the whole, they greatly outweigh all the imperfections, the ordinary American takes it for granted that America is liked and trusted abroad.

The loss of American isolation makes all this most serious. America has now joined the world and is tremendously dependent upon the support and good-will of other countries. Its rise to leadership brings this to a climax. None is watched so suspiciously as the one who is rising. None has so little license, none needs all his virtue so much as the leader. And America, for its own security, cannot retreat from leadership.

There is, of course, another possible solution besides good-will, and that is power. In some quarters in America the observer finds exaggerated notions about the power which America's financial strength after the War will allow her. Americans have not commonly taken to heart what was conclusively proved by experience in the period between the two World Wars, namely, that, after the loans are given, the power belongs to the debtor and not to the creditor.

Military power, however, can be substituted for good-will. But America does not have the will or stamina for real imperialism. The farmer, the laborer, the merchant, the intellectual, in one word, the common man who ultimately makes political decisions is against suppression abroad. In the international field the Southerner is not unlike his Northern compatriot. All American adventures in imperialism give abundant proofs of half-heartedness and show again the power over the Americans of the American Creed. If America does not go fascist, American militarism will not be an adequate substitute for good-will.

The treatment of the Negro is America's greatest and most conspicuous scandal. It is tremendously publicized, and democratic America will con-

tinue to publicize it itself. For the colored peoples all over the world, whose rising influence is axiomatic, this scandal is salt in their wounds. In all white nations which, because of the accident of ethnic homogeneity or for other causes, have not been inculcated with race prejudice, the color of the victim does not provide any excuse for white solidarity. That this is so in Russia is well known and advertised. It holds true also in many other white nations.

10. AMERICA'S OPPORTUNITY

But these consequences of the present course of America's and the world's history should not be recorded only in terms of compelling forces. The bright side is that the conquering of color caste in America is America's own innermost desire. This nation early laid down as the moral basis for its existence the principles of equality and liberty. However much Americans have dodged this conviction, they have refused to adjust their laws to their own license. Today, more than ever, they refuse to discuss systematizing their caste order to mutual advantage, apparently because they most seriously mean that caste is wrong and should not be given recognition. They stand warmheartedly against oppression in all the world. When they are reluctantly forced into war, they are compelled to justify their participation to their own conscience by insisting that they are fighting against aggression and for liberty and equality.

America feels itself to be humanity in miniature. When in this crucial time the international leadership passes to America, the great reason for hope is that this country has a national experience of uniting racial and cultural diversities and a national theory, if not a consistent practice, of freedom and equality for all. What America is constantly reaching for is democracy at home and abroad. The main trend in its history is the gradual realization of the American Creed.

In this sense the Negro problem is not only America's greatest failure but also America's incomparably great opportunity for the future. If America should follow its own deepest convictions, its well-being at home would be increased directly. At the same time America's prestige and power abroad would rise immensely. The century-old dream of American patriots, that America should give to the entire world its own freedoms and its own faith, would come true. America can demonstrate that justice, equality and cooperation are possible between white and colored people.

In the present phase of history this is what the world needs to believe. Mankind is sick of fear and disbelief, of pessimism and cynicism. It needs the youthful moralistic optimism of America. But empty declarations only deepen cynicism. Deeds are called for. If America in actual practice could show the world a progressive trend by which the Negro became finally integrated into modern democracy, all mankind would be given faith

again—it would have reason to believe that peace, progress and order are feasible. And America would have a spiritual power many times stronger than all her financial and military resources—the power of the trust and support of all good people on earth. *America is free to choose whether the Negro shall remain her liability or become her opportunity.*

The development of the American Negro problem during the years to come is, therefore, fateful not only for America itself but for all mankind. If America wants to make the second choice, she cannot wait and see. She has to do something big and do it soon. For two generations after the national compromise of the 1870's between the North and the South on the Negro problem, the caste status of the Negro was allowed to remain almost unchanged. It was believed by most well-meaning people that self-healing would work, that the Negro problem would come to solve itself by the lapse of time. George Washington Cable wrote in the 'eighties:

> There is a vague hope, much commoner in the North than in the South, that somehow, if everybody will sit still, "*time*" will bring these changes.[20]

Two decades later, Ray Stannard Baker reported from the South:

> All such relationships will work themselves out gradually, naturally, quietly, in the long course of the years: and the less they are talked about the better.[21]

Most of the literature on the Negro problem continues to this day to be written upon this same static assumption.

We have given the reasons why we believe that the *interregnum,* during which the forces balanced each other fairly well, is now at an end. The equilibrium, contrary to common belief, was unstable and temporary. As American Negroes became educated and culturally assimilated, but still found themselves excluded, they grew bitter. Meanwhile the whites were in the process of losing their caste theory. The international upheavals connected with the two World Wars and the world depression brought these developments to a crisis. American isolation was lost. Technical developments brought all nations to be close neighbors even though they were not trained to live together.

We are now in a deeply unbalanced world situation. Many human relations will be readjusted in the present world revolution, and among them race relations are bound to change considerably. As always in a revolutionary situation when society's moorings are temporarily loosened, there is, on the one hand, an opportunity to direct the changes into organized reforms and, on the other hand, a corresponding risk involved in letting the changes remain uncontrolled and lead into disorganization. To do nothing is to accept defeat.

From the point of view of social science, this means, among other things, that social engineering will increasingly be demanded. Many things that for a long period have been predominantly a matter of individual adjust-

ment will become more and more determined by political decision and public regulation. We are entering an era where fact-finding and scientific theories of causal relations will be seen as instrumental in planning controlled social change. The peace will bring nothing but problems, one mounting upon another, and consequently, new urgent tasks for social engineering. The American social scientist, because of the New Deal and the War, is already acquiring familiarity with planning and practical action. He will never again be given the opportunity to build up so "disinterested" a social science.

The social sciences in America are equipped to meet the demands of the post-war world. In social engineering they will retain the old American faith in human beings which is all the time becoming fortified by research as the trend continues toward environmentalism in the search for social causation. In a sense, the social engineering of the coming epoch will be nothing but the drawing of practical conclusions from the teaching of social science that "human nature" is changeable and that human deficiencies and unhappiness are, in large degree, preventable.

In this spirit, so intrinsically in harmony with the great tradition of the Enlightenment and the American Revolution, the author may be allowed to close with a personal note. Studying human beings and their behavior is not discouraging. When the author recalls the long gallery of persons whom, in the course of this inquiry, he has come to know with the impetuous but temporary intimacy of the stranger—sharecroppers and plantation owners, workers and employers, merchants and bankers, intellectuals, preachers, organization leaders, political bosses, gangsters, black and white, men and women, young and old, Southerners and Northerners—the general observation retained is the following: Behind all outward dissimilarities, behind their contradictory valuations, rationalizations, vested interests, group allegiances and animosities, behind fears and defense constructions, behind the role they play in life and the mask they wear, people are all much alike on a fundamental level. And they are all good people. They want to be rational and just. They all plead to their conscience that they meant well even when things went wrong.

Social study is concerned with explaining why all these potentially and intentionally good people so often make life a hell for themselves and each other when they live together, whether in a family, a community, a nation or a world. The fault is certainly not with becoming organized *per se*. In their formal organizations, as we have seen, people invest their highest ideals. These institutions regularly direct the individual toward more cooperation and justice than he would be inclined to observe as an isolated private person. The fault is, rather, that our structures of organizations are too imperfect, each by itself, and badly integrated into a social whole.

The rationalism and moralism which is the driving force behind social study, whether we admit it or not, is the faith that institutions can be improved and strengthened and that people are good enough to live a happier life. With all we know today, there should be the possibility to build a nation and a world where people's great propensities for sympathy and cooperation would not be so thwarted.

To find the practical formulas for this never-ending reconstruction of society is the supreme task of social science. The world catastrophe places tremendous difficulties in our way and may shake our confidence to the depths. Yet we have today in social science a greater trust in the improvability of man and society than we have ever had since the Enlightenment.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE ON VALUATIONS AND BELIEFS

1. The Mechanism of Rationalization

People have ideas about how reality actually is, or was, and they have ideas about how it ought to be, or ought to have been. The former we call "*beliefs*." The latter we call "*valuations*." A person's beliefs, that is, his knowledge, can be objectively judged to be true or false and more or less complete. His valuations—that a social situation or relation is, or was, "just," "right," "fair," "desirable," or the opposite, in some degree of intensity or other—cannot be judged by such objective standards as science provides. In their "*opinions*" people express both their beliefs and their valuations. Usually people do not distinguish between what they think they know and what they like or dislike.

There is a close psychological interrelation between the two types of ideas. In our civilization people want to be rational and objective in their beliefs. We have faith in science and are, in principle, prepared to change our beliefs according to its results. People also want to have "reasons" for the valuations they hold, and they usually express only those valuations for which they think they have "reasons." To serve as opinions, specific valuations are selected, are formulated in words and are motivated by acceptable "reasons." With the help of certain beliefs about reality, valuations are posited as parts of a general value order from which they are taken to be logical inferences. This value hierarchy has a simple or elaborate architecture, depending mainly upon the cultural level of a person. But independently of this, most persons want to present to their fellows—and to themselves—a trimmed and polished sphere of valuations, where honesty, logic, and consistency rule. For reasons which we shall discuss, most people's advertised opinions are, however, actually illogical and contain conflicting valuations bridged by skewed beliefs about social reality. In addition, they indicate very inadequately the behavior which can be expected, and they usually misrepresent its actual motivation.

The basic difficulty in the attempt to present a logical order of valuations is, of course, that those valuations actually are conflicting. When studying the way in which the valuations clash, and the personal and social results brought about by the conflicts, we shall, morover, have to observe that the valuations simply cannot be treated as if they existed on the same plane. They refer to different levels of the moral personality.[a] The moral precepts contained in the respective valuations correspond to

[a] This hypothesis is presented more fully in the Introduction to this volume (Sections 1 and 2).

different degrees of generality of moral judgment. Some valuations concern human beings in general; others concern Negroes or women or foreigners; still others concern a particular group of Negroes or an individual Negro. Some valuations have general and eternal validity; others have validity only for certain situations. In the Western culture people assume, as an abstract proposition, that the more general and timeless valuations are morally higher. We can, therefore, see that the motivation of valuations, already referred to, generally follows the pattern of trying to present the more specific valuations as inferences from the more general.

In the course of actual day-to-day living a person will be found to focus attention on the valuations of one particular plane of his moral personality and leave in the shadow, for the time being, the other planes with their often contradicting valuations. Most of the time the selection of this focus of evaluation is plainly opportunistic. The expressed valuations and beliefs brought forward as motives for specific action or inaction are selected in relation to the expediencies of the occasion. They are the "good" reasons rather than the "true" reasons; in short, they are "rationalizations."

The whole "sphere of valuations"—by which we mean the entire aggregate of a person's numerous and conflicting valuations, as well as their expressions in thought, speech, and behavior—is thus never present in conscious apperception. Some parts of it may even be constantly suppressed from awareness. But it would be a gross mistake to believe that the valuations temporarily kept in the shadow of subjective inattention—and the deeper-seated psychic inclinations and loyalties represented by them—are permanently silenced. Most of them rise to consciousness now and then as the focus of apperception changes in reaction to the flow of experiences and impulses. Even when submerged, they are not without influence on actual behavior. They ordinarily bend behavior somewhat in their direction; the reason for suppressing them from conscious attention is that, if obeyed, they would affect behavior even more. In this treatise, therefore, behavior is conceived of as being typically the outcome of a moral compromise of heterogeneous valuations, operating on various planes of generality and rising in varying degrees and at different occasions to the level of consciousness. To assume the existence of homogeneous "attitudes" behind behavior would violate the facts, as we must well know from everyday introspection and from observation and reflection. It tends to conceal the moral conflicts which are the ultimate object of our study in this book.

The individual or the group whose behavior we are studying, moreover, does not act in moral isolation. He is not left alone to manage his rationalizations as he pleases, without interference from outside. His valuations will, instead, be questioned and disputed. Democracy is a "government by discussion," and so, in fact, are other forms of government, though to a lesser degree. Moral discussion goes on in all groups from the intimate family circle to the international conference table. Modern means of intellectual communication have increased the volume and the intensity of such moral interrelations.

When discussion takes the form of moral criticism by one person or group or another, it is not that the one claims to have certain valuations that the other does not have. It is rather an appeal to valuations which the other keeps in the shadow of inattention, but which are assumed, nevertheless, to be actually held in common. This assumption, that those with opposing opinions have valuations in common, is ordinarily

correct. As we observed in the Introduction,[8] cultural unity in America consists in the fact that most Americans have most valuations in common, though they are differently arranged and bear different intensity coefficients for different individuals and groups. This makes discussion possible and secures an understanding of, and a response to, criticism.

In this process of moral criticism which men make upon each other, the valuations on the higher and more general planes—referring to *all* human beings and *not* to specific small groups—are regularly invoked by one party or the other, simply because they are held in common among all groups in society, and also because of the supreme prestige they are traditionally awarded. By this democratic process of open discussion there is started a tendency which constantly forces a larger and larger part of the valuation sphere into conscious attention. More is made conscious than any single person or group would on his own initiative find it advantageous to bring forward at the particular moment. In passing, we might be allowed to remark that this effect—and in addition our common trust that the more general valuations actually represent a "higher" morality—is the principal reason why we, who are convinced democrats, hold that public discussion is purifying and that democracy itself provides a moral education of the people.

When thus even the momentarily inopportune valuations are brought to attention, an element of indecision and complication is inserted. A need will be felt by the person or group, whose inconsistencies in valuations are publicly exposed, to find a means of reconciling the inconsistencies. This can be accomplished by adjusting one of the conflicting pairs of valuations. If the valuation to be modified is on the less general plane, a greater moral harmony in the larger group is brought about. Specific attitudes and forms of behavior are then reconciled to the more general moral principles. If, on the other hand, an attempt is made to change or reinterpret valuations which are more general in scope and most of the time consciously shared with all other groups in society, the deviant group will see its moral conflict with other groups becoming increasingly explicit (that is, if the other groups are not themselves prepared to change their general valuations toward a moral compromise). This process might go on until discussion no longer becomes feasible. In the extreme case such a moral isolation, if the dissenting group is powerful enough, may break the peace and order of society and plunge a nation into civil war.

In the short-run day-to-day conflicts, usually no abrupt changes of valuations will occur. The need for reconciling conflicting valuations brought into the open through public discussion will, for the time being, only result in quasi-logical constructions. In the very nature of things, these constructions must be fantastic, as they represent an attempt to reconcile the illogicalities by logical reasoning.

The temptation will be strong to deny the very existence of a valuation conflict. This will sometimes bring in its wake grossly distorted notions about social reality. There is a sort of social ignorance which is most adequately explained as an attempt to avoid the twinges of conscience. It is, for instance, an experience of every social scientist, who has been working on problems of social policy and has taken some interest in people's reactions, that the strongest psychic resistance is aroused when an attempt is made to teach the better situated classes in a society about actual lower

[8] Section 2.

class standards of living and what causes them. This particular type of moral escapism works, sometimes with extraordinary effectiveness, in the American Negro problem.

The feeling of need for logical consistency within the hierarchy of moral valuations—and the embarrassed and sometimes distressed feeling that the moral order is shaky—is, in its modern intensity, a rather new phenomenon. With less mobility, less intellectual communication, and less public discussion, there was in previous generations less exposure of one another's valuation conflicts. The leeway for false beliefs, which makes rationalizations of valuations more perfect for their purpose, was also greater in an age when science was less developed and education less extensive. These historical differentials can be observed today within our own society among the different social layers with varying degrees of education and communication with the larger society, stretching all the way from the tradition-bound, inarticulate, quasi-folk-societies in isolated backward regions to the intellectuals of the cultural centers. When one moves from the former groups to the latter, the sphere of moral valuations becomes less rigid, more ambiguous and also more translucent. At the same time, the more general valuations increasingly gain power over the ones bound to traditional peculiarities of regions, classes, or other smaller groups. One of the surest generalizations is that society, in its entirety, is rapidly moving in the direction of the more general valuations. The speed stands in some relation to, and can be gauged by, geographical mobility, the development of intellectual communication, the decrease of illiteracy and the funds spent on education.

During this process of growing intellectualization, people's awareness of inconsistencies in their own spheres of valuations tends to be enhanced. At the same time—if moral cynicism does not spread, a possibility which we shall consider presently—they are increasingly reconditioned to demand consistency in their own valuations and, particularly, in those of other people. They learn to recognize and to avoid the use of illogicalities and misconceptions of social reality for overcoming the incongruities in their valuations. The impatient humanitarian might find this process exasperatingly slow, and the results meager. The perspective of decades and generations, however—providing moral catastrophes do not interrupt the growth process—yields a more optimistic impression.

We have already hinted at the fact that valuations are seldom overtly expressed except when they emerge in the course of a person's attempts to formulate his beliefs concerning the facts and their implication in relation to some section of social reality. Beliefs concerning the facts are the very building stones for the logical hierarchies of valuations into which a person tries to shape his opinions. When the valuations are conflicting, as they normally are, beliefs serve the rationalization function of bridging illogicalities. The beliefs are thus not only determined by available scientific knowledge in society and the efficacy of the means of its communication to various population groups but are regularly "biased," by which we mean that they are systematically twisted in the one direction which fits them best for purposes of rationalization.

There are in the Negro problem whole systems of popular beliefs concerning the Negro and his relations to the larger society which are crudely false and can only be understood in this light. These "popular theories," or ideologies, are themselves important data in our study, as they represent strategic social facts in the practical and political problems of race relations. A legitimate task of education is

to attempt to correct popular beliefs by subjecting them to rigorous examination in the light of the factual evidence. This educational objective must be achieved in the face of the psychic resistance mobilized by the people who feel an urgent need to retain their biased beliefs in order to justify their way of life.

If this educational effort meets with success, the illogicalities involving valuations become exposed to the people who hold them. They are then pressed to change their valuations to some degree or other. For if popular beliefs depend upon valuations, as we have shown, the valuations also depend upon the beliefs in our civilization bent upon rationalism. When supporting beliefs are drawn away, people will have to readjust their value hierarchies and, eventually, their behavior. As the more general norms in our culture are given supreme moral sanction, this means—if we assume that this "valuation of the valuations" is upheld, and moral cynicism counteracted—that the valuations on a more specific level (often called "prejudices") will yield to them. This is the reason, and the only reason, why we generally assume that improved knowledge will make for "better" citizens. Facts by themselves do not improve anything.

There is a question of terminology which should be touched upon, as it is not without importance for our scheme of thinking. The term "value" has, in its prevalent usage, a loose meaning. When tightened it is generally taken to refer to the object of valuations, rather than to the valuations themselves. Unfortunately it has a connotation of something solid and homogeneous while our hypothesis is that the valuations are conflicting. We shall avoid using the term "value." The term "attitude" has the same connotation of solidity. Too, it is often used to denote beliefs as well as valuations. When used in this book "attitude" should be understood as simply a convenient synonym for valuation.[a]

2. THEORETICAL CRITIQUE OF THE CONCEPT "MORES"

We must voice our grave skepticism toward the simple explanatory scheme concerning the role of valuations in social life typified by William Graham Sumner's concepts, "folkways" and "mores."[b] Since his time these concepts—or one of their several synonyms—have been widely used by social scientists and have, in particular, determined the approach to the Negro problem. The formula will be found to be invoked with some regularity whenever an author expresses his attitude that changes will be slow, or, more particularly, that nothing practical can be done about a matter. It is closely related to a bias in social science against induced changes, and especially against all attempts to intervene in the social process by legislation. The concept of mores actually implies a whole social theory and an entire *laissez-faire* ("do-nothing") metaphysics,[c] and is so utilized.

Leaving aside for the present the political connotations of Sumner's construction, and focusing our interest only on its usefulness as a scientific tool, our main criticism

[a] This paragraph will, perhaps, explain why the author has not been able to avoid the term "valuation" though knowing well that it is not widely used in America. The term has been used, however, by John Dewey in several of his works, by Charles H. Cooley in his *Social Process* (1918), by Robert M. MacIver in his *Social Causation* (1942), and probably by others.

[b] William Graham Sumner, *Folkways* (1911, first edition 1906).

[c] See Appendix 2, Section 3, and Chapter 1, Section 11.

is the following: By stowing the commonly held valuations into the system of mores, conceived of as a homogeneous, unproblematic, fairly static,[a] social entity, the investigator is likely to underestimate the actual difference between individuals and groups and the actual fluctuations and changes in time. He is also likely to lose sight entirely of the important facts, that even within a single individual valuations are operative on different planes of generality, that they are typically conflicting, and that behavior is regularly the outcome of a moral compromise.

It might be that Sumner's construction contains a valid generalization and offers a useful methodological tool for studying primitive cultures and isolated, stationary folk-communities under the spell of magic and sacred tradition. It might even be that the most convenient definition of such a folk-culture is the applicability of the theory of folkways and mores. The theory is, however, crude and misleading when applied to a modern Western society in process of rapid industrialization, moving in swift trends rippled by indeterminate cyclical waves: a society characterized by national and international mobility, by unceasing changes and differentiations of all valuations and institutions, by spreading intellectualization, by widening intellectual communication and secularization, by ever more daring discussion even of fundamentals and intimacies, and by a consequent virtually universal expectation of change and a firm belief in progress. If Sumner's construction is applied to such a society, except as a contrast conception to mark off some remaining backward cultural isolates which are merely dragged along and do not themselves contain the active factors of social dynamics, it is likely to conceal more than to expose. It conceals what is most important in our society: the changes, the conflicts, the absence of static equilibria, the lability in all relations even when they are temporarily, though perhaps for decades, held at a standstill. The valuation spheres, in such a society as the American, more nearly resemble powder-magazines than they do Sumner's concept of mores.

3. Valuation Dynamics

In our view, changes in valuations—of the type known as "revolutions," "mutations," or "explosions"—are likely to occur continuously in modern society. "Stability," or rather lack of change, when it reigns, is the thing which requires explanation. Individual persons in modern society are in the same sort of labile equilibrium as the molecules of explosives. Their valuations are inconsistent, and they are constantly reminded of the inconsistency. Occasionally the moral personalities of individuals burst, and a modification and rearrangement of the valuations in the direction of a more stable equilibrium is accomplished.

Since similar influences work upon all individuals in the society, the cumulative results include continuous changes of "public opinion." Such changes are "intentional," in a sense, and part of a democratic development. The trend of opinions and changes in institutions in a democracy—the "reforms"—usually have their core in the cumulation of such valuation explosions in the minds of people. When the inconsistency between people's valuations is large and has effectively been exposed, the change might occasionally be sudden and quite big, and we speak then of a social

[a] Summer recognized a "strain toward consistency" within the mores because of conflicting principles, but his main emphasis—and the same is true when the concept is used by contemporary writers—is always upon stability, inertia, and resistance against induced change. Compare Appendix 2, Section 3.

revolution. But the more evolutionary social changes, if they are dissected into their elements, are not very different except in magnitude.

The history of every nation and of every community, in fact, of every group, is, in one sense, the record of the successive waves of such opinion explosions. Even societies have their catharses and, like individuals, they have them almost all the time. It is the weakness, not only of the static and fatalistic traditions in social science attached to the great names of Marx and Sumner, but of our common tendency to look for explanations in terms only of natural forces and material trends,[a] that we blind ourselves to the dynamics of opinion as it develops from day to day; or, in any case, we become inclined to deal with human opinions more as the result of social change than as part of the cause of it.

By stressing that opinions are not passive elements in the social process, we have, of course, not meant to make them altogether independent of material forces. The very fact that opinions to an extent are opportunistic implies that they will change as a result of every other change in social environment. Changes in the technique of production, of communication and of consumption force individual and group revaluations. But so, also, does spread of knowledge, as well as moral discussion and political propaganda. Ideas have a momentum of their own; they are partly primary causes in the social process; or rather, they are integral factors in an interdependent system of causation.

In an opinion catharsis—of an individual or a group—a new, temporary, and labile equilibrium of conflicting valuations is established. The direction in a normal and peaceful process of popular education is toward decreasing inconsistency. We said that ordinarily the new balance gives greater weight to the more general valuations. But our reason for the conclusion was that those valuations were generally agreed to be morally "higher" and have supreme social sanction, and we added the reservation that our conclusion assumes that moral cynicism does not spread. If moral cynicism should spread, however—that is, if people become willing to throw aside even their most cherished general valuations, such as their faith in democratic liberty, equality, and Christian brotherhood—the situation permits almost any type of reconstruction. Instead of a rebirth of democracy and Christianity such that those terms acquire new personal meanings for every individual, there may be a revulsion to fascism and pagan gods.

When a sudden and great opinion catharsis occurs in society, customs and social trends seem to the participants to be suspended or radically changed, as they actually are to a certain extent. In this sense history is undecided; it can take several courses. Ideological forces take on a greater importance. Leaders—whom we call either "statesmen," "thinkers" and "prophets" or "demagogues" and "charlatans," depending upon our valuation of their aims and means—capture the attention of the masses and manage to steer the upheaval in one direction or the other. On a smaller scale the same occurs in every group at all times, and the "leaders" are legion; in a sense we are all "leaders." In the explanation of this type of process, where ideological factors, together with all other factors, are active forces within an interdependent system of causation, the materialistic conception of history breaks down. Indeed, any mechanical philosophy of human dynamics is inadequate—except when looking

[a] See Appendix 2, Section 3.

backward, because in looking backwards, *any* development can be organized into *any* scheme, if it is general enough.

Before leaving the subject of social dynamics, we must qualify our remarks to recognize the existence of social statics. By stressing the instability of valuations we do not deny that there is an enormous amount of resistance to change. There *is* a great deal of practically mechanistic causation in human life, almost completely divorced from valuations. People do strive to keep their valuation conflicts under control. They want to keep them off their minds, and they are trained to overlook them. Conventions, stereotypes, and convenient blind spots in knowledge about social reality do succeed in preserving a relative peace in people's conscience. Even more important, perhaps, is the fact that there are only a few hours a day free from the business of living, and that there are so many "pleasant" things to do during these few hours. Most people, most of the time, live a routine life from day to day and do not worry too much. If it could be measured, the amount of both simple and opportune ignorance and unconcernedness about social affairs would undoubtedly be greater than the amount of knowledge and concern.

But to stress these things is not to invalidate the dynamic theory we have presented. Modern people *do* have conflicting valuations, and the spread of knowledge and the increase of interrelations *are* more and more exposing them. Changes in the material environment also keep minds from becoming settled. If we call the relative absence of change in modern society "stability," we must recognize that it is not such as is envisaged in the theory of the folkways and mores. There is *instability* at bottom, a *balancing of forces in conflict with each other*, and there is continuously the possibility of rapid, and even induced, change, the direction of which is not altogether predetermined by trends and natural forces.

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APPENDIX 2

A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE ON FACTS AND VALUATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

1. Biases in the Research on the American Negro Problem

The biases in popular beliefs about social reality and the deeper conflicts of valuations rationalized by these popular theories can be made apparent through comparison with "objective" truth as this is revealed by scientific research.[a] But the scientist himself is not necessarily immune to biases. In the light of the history of scientific writings on the American Negro problem, the biased notions held in previous times and the opportunistic tendencies steering them stand out in high relief against the better controlled scientific views of today. Our steadily increasing stock of observations and inferences is not merely subjected to continuous cross-checking and critical discussion but is deliberately scrutinized to discover and correct hidden preconceptions and biases. Full objectivity, however, is an ideal toward which we are constantly striving, but which we can never reach. The social scientist, too, is part of the culture in which he lives, and he never succeeds in freeing himself entirely from dependence on the dominant preconceptions and biases of his environment.

Race problems, generally, and the Negro problem in America, particularly, are to an extraordinary degree affected by conflicting valuations of high emotional tension. Keeping in mind the actual power situation in the American nation and observing the prevalent opinions in the dominant white group, we are led, even by a superficial examination, to expect that even the scientific biases will run against the Negroes most of the time. This expectation has been confirmed in the course of our study.[b]

The underlying psychology of bias in science is simple. Every individual student is himself more or less entangled, both as a private person and as a responsible citizen, in the web of conflicting valuations, which we discussed in Appendix 1. Like the layman, though probably to a lesser extent, the scientist becomes influenced by the need for rationalizations. The same is true of every executive responsible for other people's research and of the popular and scientific public before which the scholar performs, and whose reactions he must respect. Against the most honest determination

[a] See Appendix 1, Section 1.

[b] The fact that most of the literature on the Negro problem is biased one way or the other is commonly understood in America and often stated; see, for example, E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1938; first edition, 1927), pp. 17 and 27; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 33-41.

to be open-minded on the part of all concerned and, primarily, on the part of the scientists themselves, the need for rationalization will tend to influence the objects chosen for research, the selection of relevant data, the recording of observations, the theoretical and practical inferences drawn and the manner of presentation of results.

The method of detecting bias also is simple. As the unstated premises are kept hidden, the inferences drawn from them and from the factual data contain logical flaws. The general method of detecting biases is, therefore, to confront conclusions with premises and find the *non sequitur* which must be present if inferences are biased. If all premises are not stated explicitly, the inferences must be inconclusive. This method works as long as the biases are restricted to the plane of inferences. If the biases have influenced the very observations, so that the observed data are wrongly perceived and recorded, the method is to repeat the observations. If they have influenced the selection of data collected, the viewpoints and hypotheses applied, or the demarcation of the field of study, the check consists in the application of alternative hypotheses and the widening of the scope of research to embrace the neglected fields. The awareness of the problem of bias is a most important general protection.

Certain tendencies toward scientific bias are apparent on the surface.[a] These biases may be classified into groups, each of which may be regarded as a continuum along which the specific biases fall.[b]

(a) *The Scale of "Friendliness" to the Negro.* Various authors show a different degree of "friendliness" to the Negro people and to the Negro cause. It will often be visible in the very style of presentation, but its more important locus is, of course, in approaches and conclusions. This applies not only to general books on the Negro problem but to special researches and to researches primarily centered on other topics but involving some aspect of the Negro problem.

White scholars until the last two or three decades worked more or less consistently in the interests of the dominant white group's need for rationalization or justification of the system of color caste. Even the friends of the Negro people were moved by the dominant public opinion to assume, without much questioning, views which were unduly unfavorable to the Negroes. They were, in other words, "friendly" to the Negroes only when compared with the very unfriendly general public opinion, but not when compared with what disinterested scholarship should have demanded. This general bias is most easily detected in the question of the Negro's racial traits, but it also operated in other fields, for instance in the writing of history.

In the course of a general movement in the American social sciences toward increasing emphasis upon the "environment" as a cause of differences between social groups the scientific treatment of the Negro problem has, during the last few decades, become vastly more friendly to the Negroes. Without any doubt many white

[a] Under a more penetrating analysis all tendencies to bias will be found to have involved relations among themselves and with deeper ideological tendencies which have even shaped our main conceptual tools in social science; see Section 3 of this Appendix. These ideological tendencies are biased in a static and do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) conservative direction, which, in the main, works against a disfavored group like the American Negroes.

[b] The statements made in the following paragraphs grew out of the author's reflections upon the literature on the Negro problem. For further explanation and substantiation the reader is referred to the specific chapters of our inquiry.

scientists in the field, perhaps the majority, have attached their research interests to the Negro problem or to various aspects of it because of a primary reform interest. In the national *ethos* there is traditionally, as we often have occasion to point out, a strong demand for "fair play" and for consideration toward "the underdog." Since Negroes are severely suppressed, even today, and since by virtue of that fact they often fall below the mark in conduct and accomplishments, and since public opinion is still prejudiced against the Negroes, even a friendliness which stands out as exceptional may allow views which are rather on the unfriendly side of true objectivity. The range of scientific opinions, therefore, does not even today necessarily include the unbiased opinion.

Negro social scientists can be assumed, naturally, to have been biased in the friendly direction. Generally speaking, they have most of the time reached results more favorable to their group. Public and academic opinion in the dominant majority group, the Negro scientists' desire to lean backwards and be strictly scientific, and other reasons, may often cause even the Negro scientist to interpret the facts in a way which is actually biased against his own people.

(b) *The Scale of "Friendliness" to the South.* Most Negroes still live in the South, and, what is more important, all economic, social, and political problems of this region are connected with the Negro problem to a degree without comparison in other regions. The historical tradition through slavery, Civil War, Reconstruction, and Restoration also ties together the judgments on the South and on the Negro. The same is true of the caste restrictions to which the Negro in the South is subjected. In general, a friendly attitude toward the South carries with it unfavorable views toward Negroes or at least a tendency to minimize the fact that they are a substantial proportion of the South's people. Conversely, a sympathetic attitude toward Negroes, their shortcomings, their grievances, and their problems, and especially the attempt to explain them on any basis other than racial inferiority, will be taken as a criticism of the social and moral order of the South.

The first tendency is conspicuous in practically all writings on the Negro problem by Southern writers—at least until recently. The natural interest to defend the white South will be reflected in adverse biases in the discussion about the Negro. Because of the present trend in social sciences toward fewer adverse biases against the Negro, Southern social scientists have increasingly taken a critical attitude toward Southern institutions and morals. This second tendency runs parallel to, and supports, Southern liberalism.[a]

A pro-Southern bias, is, however, not restricted to Southern writers. Ever since the great national compromise of the 1870's, when Reconstruction was liquidated, the need for rationalization of the anomalous position and treatment of the Negro has been national in scope. Contrary to the belief commonly held in the South, the present writer has reached the conviction that not only the general public in the North but also Northern social scientists are rather pro-Southern in their biases.[b]

[a] Southern liberalism is discussed in Chapter 21, Section 5.

[b] This impression is based upon the writer's comparative studies of the literature on the Negro problem. The more precise significance of the statement is the belief that if a statistically reliable sample from Northern scientific literature were made of statements which twisted truth somewhat in one direction or the other, there would be a considerable preponderance of twists in favor of the South. Usually those twists are in the nature of avoid-

Because the existence of the Negro problem is so widely held to be a blot upon Southern civilization, this common tendency in favor of excusing or explaining the South gives rise to biases adverse to the Negro. The recent trend toward increased friendliness to the Negro has been connected with rising criticism against the South.

Negro writers have naturally never shared much in the pro-Southern bias.

(c) *The Scale of Radicalism-Conservatism.* The place of the individual scientist in the scale of radicalism-conservatism has always had, and still has, strong influences upon both the selection of research problems and the conclusions drawn from research. *In a sense it is the master scale of biases in the social sciences.* It can be broken up into several scales, mutually closely integrated: equalitarianism-aristocratism, environmentalism-biological determinism, reformism—*laissez-faire*, and so forth. There is a high degree of correlation between a person's degree of liberalism in different social problems. Usually the more radical a scientist is in his political views, the more friendly to the Negro cause he will feel and, consequently, the more inclined he will be to undertake and carry out studies which favor the Negro cause. The radical will be likely to take an interest in refuting the doctrine of Negro racial inferiority and to demonstrate the disadvantages and injustices inflicted upon the Negro people.

The tendency toward increased friendliness to the Negro people, already referred to, is undoubtedly related to a general tendency during the last few decades, in American society and its social science, toward greater liberalism. In a particular problem where public opinion in the dominant white group is traditionally as heavily prejudiced in the conservative direction as in the Negro problem, even a radical tendency might fail to reach an unprejudiced judgment; whereas under other circumstances or in other problems the objective truth might lie beyond the most extreme conservative position actually held. The prevalent opinion that a "middle-of-the-road" attitude always gives the best assurance of objectivity is, thus, entirely unfounded.

(d) *The Scale of Optimism-Pessimism.* Without doubt most social scientists are under the influence of the general tendency of any man or any public not to want to be disturbed by deeply discouraging statements about the social situation and impending trends or by demands for fundamental changes of policy.[a] In the Negro problem, which has extremely disturbing prospects, indeed, this tendency to defend the "happy end-

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ance of facts and conclusions which would be embarrassing to the South; sometimes the avoidance takes the form of understatements, euphemistic expressions or concealment of such data and conclusion in unduly abstract and complicated formulations. Pro-Southern biases in the studies of Southerners, when they occur, take the same expression; in addition, their presentations of facts will often be softened by tributes to the regional romanticism. This bias is more prevalent in the fields of history and sociology than in the other social sciences.

[a] This tendency can be illustrated from many other fields. When an economic depression turns into a prolonged stagnation of industry as in America during the 'thirties, economists are likely to begin to talk about "maturity" of the economy, and to direct their interests to minor waves of ups and downs within the stagnation. When the industrialization process is checked for a time, some agricultural economists will always be found to give themselves and the general public consolation in a new enthusiasm for self-sustaining farming or even an American peasantry. When sound forecasts of the reproduction trend point to a cumulatively declining future population, the statisticians in all countries turn out for a time to talk about the approach of a "constant population."

ing," for white America and the Negro people will generally make for a soft-pedaling of such adverse facts in the interracial situations as offer little prospect of becoming changed within a reasonable time. This minimization or suppression of discouraging facts may occur when they refer to either the white or the Negro group. At the same time encouraging signs will be unduly played up. Practically the whole literature on the Negro, as on all other social problems, is influenced by this tendency.[a]

This optimistic bias may work against the Negro or for him. It may be connected with a radical or a conservative inclination. In some respects this tendency will gain strength as people's interest in reforms increases; they do want to believe in them. A skeptical conservative is, sometimes, more likely to face facts as they are, than is a fervent liberal. On the other hand, a conservative is interested in presenting actual conditions in a favorable light, while the reformer takes his very start in revealing unfavorable facts. The tendencies here cross each other in a most complicated pattern.

The majority of people do resist having matters which they regard as unfortunate depicted as hopelessly closed. They usually do not want, either, to be confronted with demands for fundamental reforms in deeply ingrained social usages. The reluctance on the part of many Negro and white social scientists to accept the term "caste" to describe the white-Negro relationship—and the remarkable charge of emotion invested in this minor terminological question—apparently has part of its explanation in the common dislike of a term which carries associations of permanency to an institution incompatible with the American Creed and in the unwillingness to face a demand for fundamental reforms.

The optimistic bias becomes strengthened, paradoxically enough, by the scientist's own critical sense and his demand for foolproof evidence. The burden of proof is upon those who assert that things are bad in our society; it is not the other way around. Unfortunate facts are usually more difficult to observe and ascertain, as so many of the persons in control have strong interests in hiding them. The scientist in his struggle to detect truth will be on his guard against making statements which are unwarranted. His very urge to objectivity will thus induce him to picture reality as more pleasant than it is.

(e) *The Scale of Isolation-Integration.* In the Introduction we pointed out the opportune interests and factual circumstances which must make both white and Negro scientists inclined to treat the Negro problem in isolation from the total complex of problems in American civilization.[b] The maximum integration represents absence from bias along this line. Objectivity is reached the more completely an investigator is able to interrelate the Negro problem with the total economic, social, political, judicial and broadly cultural life of the nation.

[a] An illustration on a high level of an adjustment to the general demand for a "happy end" is Lord Bryce's famous study of American local and national politics, *The American Commonwealth,* published in 1893 and republished in 1910 and 1919. Bryce had to engage in a close investigation of many deeply disturbing phases of American public life, and the greatness of his work is due largely to his successful effort never to shun the facts and never to present his conclusions in uncertain terms. But in short paragraphs sprinkled throughout his text he played up the reform tendencies somewhat. This became visible when, in later editions, he could retain most of his text unchanged—including the optimistic forecasts about "impending" reforms.

[b] Introduction, Section 4.

(f) *The Scale of Scientific Integrity.* The degree to which a scientist is prepared to study unpopular subjects and to state plainly and clearly unpopular conclusions derived from his findings depends, naturally, on his own political inclinations, his personal courage and the relative freedom awarded him by society. These factors, however, are not independent of each other. In communities where academic freedom is low, the scientist normally will, in adjustment to the environment where he works, develop, on the one hand, a dislike for controversial matters and for clear and bluntly scientific statements concerning them, and, on the other hand, an unduly high valuation of agreement and conformity as such. Quite independent of the favorable or unfavorable judgment society passes upon such an attitude, it is, of course, detrimental to scientific clarity and objectivity and to scientific progress.

It is apparent that the social and political situation in the South, and particularly in the Deep South, is still not very favorable to a disinterested and objective study of the Negro problem. Until recently this problem, in spite of its supreme importance to the region, was avoided as an object for research. Even at present, and even at the academic fortresses where a considerable amount of academic freedom has been realized, it requires personal courage on the part of a scientist to investigate objectively such aspects of the Negro problem as are heavily loaded with emotions; for example, those connected with sex or religion. Similar influences work upon the Negro scientist in the South. He will often have to become an artist in interracial diplomacy, which, on the whole, will tend to make him rather diplomatic even in his scientific research. The interracial situation in the South will thus tend to lay political inhibitions on both white and Negro scientists.

In the North, and particularly at the great and famous institutions, such inhibitions are not found. Where there are remnants of inhibitions in social research they will rather be applied to other fields—economic and political—more important to the social forces in control of universities and other research institutions, than to the Negro problem.

Quite generally it must be remembered, however, that the Negro problem is something of a skeleton in the American closet. Objective studies are liable to show up situations which are scandalous, not only to the community but also to the nation. A certain apprehension is natural. On the whole, *however, the American public is remarkably scandal-proof.*[a] But it seems as if the closet has first to be opened, and the scandal, so to speak, be publicly "established." Certain scandals are public, as a matter of tradition and convention, and investigations of them do not meet with violent protest. Lynching, for example, is such a public scandal in connection with the Negro problem. The phenomenon can be investigated and written about rather freely everywhere, even in the South. The same is true, to a great extent, of the seamy sides of politics. These scandals have become notorious and recognized. The national conscience has dissociated itself from them, even if it has not been possible to stamp them out of existence. There are, however, other scandals which are not, at least not as yet, "established." It seems to be rather accidental and, to some extent, a result of private initiative on the part of an investigator who originally opens the issue, which scandals

[a] The extraordinary high degree of openness to criticism which characterizes American culture above every other national culture in the Western world is discussed in Chapter 1.

are, and which are not, established enough to move the national conscience and leave the scientists free for their work.[a]

2. METHODS OF MITIGATING BIASES IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

Since Benjamin Franklin's day, American science has quite distinctly leaned toward a healthy trust in "hard facts." The inclination to stress empirical "fact-finding" has characterized the magnificent rise of American social sciences. As a trend it has become accentuated during the last generation by the huge funds made available for research, the unprecedentedly rapid growth of universities and research institutions, the equally rapid increase of the number of persons engaged in scientific pursuits, and the specialization thereby made possible.

By subjecting popular beliefs and scientific assumptions to the test of facts, specific biases in the research on the Negro have time and again been unmasked. The recent history of research on racial differences offers excellent examples. Incidentally, it also gives a clue as to the direction in which the biases in the Negro problem would tend to go if unchecked. Generally speaking, our attempts to eradicate biases by stress on factual research have been the more fruitful, the simpler the problems involved are from a methodological point of view and the more successfully we have been able to utilize controlled research methods such as have been developed in the natural sciences.

It must be maintained, however, that *biases in social science cannot be erased simply by "keeping to the facts" and by refined methods of statistical treatment of the data.* Facts, and the handling of data, sometimes show themselves even more pervious to tendencies toward bias than does "pure thought." The chaos of possible data for research does not organize itself into systematic knowledge by mere observation. Hypotheses are necessary. We must raise questions before we can expect answers from the facts, and the questions must be "significant." The questions, furthermore, usually have to be complicated before they reach down to the facts. Even apparently simple concepts presume elaborate theories. These theories—or systems of hypotheses—contain, of necessity, no matter how scrupulously the statements of them are presented, elements of *a priori* speculation. When, in an attempt to be factual, the statements of theory are reduced to a minimum, biases are left a freer leeway than if they were more explicitly set forth and discussed.

Neither can biases be avoided by the scientists' stopping short of drawing practical conclusions. *Science becomes no better protected against biases by the entirely negative device of refusing to arrange its result for practical and political utilization.* As we shall point out, there are, rather, reasons why the opposite is true.

When perhaps a majority of the foremost social scientists in America have an ambition toward, and take pride in, keeping entirely free from attempting to reach practical and political conclusions from their research, part of the explanation is their high professional standards. The quest for scientific objectivity is, I believe, more lively, and kept more explicit, in America than elsewhere. The position is also more understandable when considered from an historical perspective. Social science in America in its modern form developed as a conscious reaction to an earlier highly normative and teleological doctrine. Monumental theories were built without resort to the observa-

[a] There are other scales along which biased views fall, such as the scales of dogmatism—eclecticism, long-run—short-run perspective, practicality—impracticality. They have been incidentally taken up in the various chapters.

tion of social facts, and radical changes in social life were demanded without due consideration of the actual forces and processes through which social life exists and changes. The reaction against reformism and philosophical system-building has been particularly violent in American sociology where a concerted drive to build a social science on the model of the natural sciences is clearly apparent. This tremendous reaction is so recent that many of the older generation of present-day sociologists took part in it.[a] Among the less influential social scientists, the old-fashioned "practical" doctrine is actually still alive.

In seeking to explain why American social science avoids conclusions that are practical, we must also recall its high degree of specialization. Practical conclusions must always draw on a much more comprehensive range of insights into many fields than is necessary for good work in most specialties. Many excellent social scientists honestly feel incompetent before the broader practical tasks.[b] Finally, there has been in America, until the New Deal at least, a great personal and institutional isolation between the scholars and the political agencies of the nation. In America the general public has not developed a strong tradition of looking to its academicians for leadership of national thought in the broader issues. It has not given them the ear and prestige—and especially in the earlier period, not even the freedom—which was due them.[c]

This attempt at explanation of the fact that most outstanding social scientists want to keep strictly to the principle of avoiding practical conclusions does not weaken

[a] In a significant sense this advance in social science knowledge was part of the general modern trend toward secularization of thought. Many of the earlier sociologists—against whose teachings contemporary sociologists are still reacting—were clergymen, as were the fathers of some of our outstanding contemporary sociologists. The recent trend toward facts and naturalistic explanations is, therefore, a movement toward emancipation. In both the radical wing of previous social speculation—represented by such reform movements as Perfectionism, Positivism, and Telesis—and the conservative do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) wing—Utilitarianism, Malthusianism, and Social Darwinism—there was an assumption of the freedom and rationality of the individual. The reaction of modern sociologists has been against this assumption as well as against the similar "freedom of the will" doctrine of their clerical predecessors. Such a reaction alone would tend to make social science less interested in the practical sphere of its subject matter.

[b] Specialization and the handling of the large research funds and of the correspondingly large personnel resources also make cooperative work more possible and more necessary. Serving on committees of all sorts usually belongs to the responsibilities of the best men in every field. American social scientists have broken new paths and carried out huge tasks, which earlier could not have been dreamt of, by successfully applying cooperation to research. But in committee work it is always the easier to reach agreement on factual aspects of research, whereas the more practical aspects—particularly when the matter is controversial—are kept out of vision or left open.

[c] In this light one also better understands the high emotions contained in such denunciations of "pulpit orators," "well-meaning theorists," "arm-chair philosophers," "ardent evangelists," "artists," "social reformers," "religionists," "journalists," "promoters," "advertisers," "advocates," "flag-wavers," "day-dreamers" and "idealists," as are frequently used by social scientists when they assert that they are going to be strictly factual and avoid practical conclusions.

The strong anti-practical inclination to which such denunciations testify is also to be understood as a reaction against the particularly "practical" and moralistic culture in which the social scientists are living—the reaction itself thereby becoming moralistic.

the present author's conviction that the principle is arbitrary as a methodological rule and is detrimental to true scientific objectivity in its application. The main reasons for this conviction are the following:

Although the social scientist attempts to make his initial observation of a phenomenon as factual as possible, he finds it difficult to adhere strictly to this principle. Our whole literature is permeated by value judgments despite prefatory statements to the contrary. To the knowledge of the present writer, there is no piece of research on the Negro problem which does not contain valuations, explicit or implicit. Even when an author writing on, let us say, Negro education, politics, business, or labor attempts to give us only the data he has collected and the analysis he has made, he can rarely refrain from value judgments on them.

These practical judgments are usually relatively simple. They are not presented as inferences from explicit value premises plus the data, but rather, in the age-old fashion, as being evident from the nature of things: *actually as part of the objective data.* They are not marked off properly from theoretical knowledge of truth, but are most often introduced by loading part of the terminology with valuations, valuations which are kept vague and undefined. Sometimes the reader is told what is right or what is wrong, desirable or undesirable, only by implication. It should be stressed that this criticism often applies even to the most ostentatiously "pure" fact-finding research. Man is, as Aristotle told us, a political animal, and social science is a political science, in this sense. Valuations are present in our problems even if we pretend to expel them. The attempt to eradicate biases by trying to keep out the valuations themselves is a hopeless and misdirected venture.

Attaching importance to the presence or absence of practical conclusions also fosters a dangerously superficial view of what biases really are. I have often observed that social scientists who are responsible for the publications of other author's works or who utilize them in their own writings, when they apprehend biases, believe that these can be "edited away," by modifying certain expressions used or cutting out or revising certain practical conclusions drawn. Similarly, a general tendency toward understatement is observable in most social science literature. When an author has set down something which he feels to be unfavorable about a social class or a region, he looks for something favorable to say in order to "balance the picture." A "balanced view," a colorless drawing, is considered to be more "scientific." Particularly in governmental investigations great care is usually taken to spare the readers. The deliberate attempt that is made in such reports not to offend anyone will often make them difficult to use for scientific purposes. This tendency is, of course, not only ineffective in mitigating biases, but, even worse, it is itself one of the main types of bias in research.

Biases in research are much deeper seated than in the formulation of avowedly practical conclusions. They are not valuations *attached* to research but rather they *permeate* research. They are the unfortunate results of *concealed* valuations that insinuate themselves into research in all stages, from its planning to its final presentation.

The valuations will, when driven underground, hinder observation and inference from becoming truly objective. This can be avoided only by making the valuations explicit. *There is no other device for excluding biases in social sciences than to face the valuations and to introduce them as explicitly stated, specific, and sufficiently concretized value premises.* If this is done, it will be possible to determine in a rational

way, and openly to account for, the direction of theoretical research. It will further be possible to cleanse the scientific work shop from concealed, but ever resurgent, distorting valuations. Practical conclusions may thus be reached by rational inferences from the data and the value premises. Only in this way does social engineering, as an advanced branch of social research, become a rational discipline under full scientific control.

The method of working with explicit value premises has a very evident advantage in this last respect of laying a rational foundation for practical research. There are only two means by which social scientists today avoid practical and political conclusions: (1) neglecting to state the value premises which, nevertheless, are implied in the conclusions reached; (2) avoiding any rational and penetrating analysis of the practical problems in terms of social engineering (which would too visibly distract from the announced principles of being only factual). By the first restraint the doors are left wide open for hidden biases. The second inhibition prevents the social scientist from rendering to practical and political life the services of which he is capable.

Regarding the last point, social scientists have become accustomed to answer that "very much more detailed factual research is necessary before wise action can be planned upon the basis of scientific knowledge." This statement, which, with few verbal variations, will be found so often in our literature, is an expression of scientific modesty. But it also expresses escape. From the point of view of the practical man and of society, the rejoinder must be made: first, that practical action or inaction must be decided from day to day and cannot wait until eventually a lagging social science has collected enough detailed data for shouldering its part of the responsibility for social action; second, that, even with much more money and exertion spent on research, social science will, in this complicated and rapidly changing world, probably always be able to present this same alibi; and, third, that the scientist—even if his knowledge is only conjectural in certain respects—is in a position to assist in achieving a much wiser judgment than the one which is actually allowed to guide public policy.

The third point is the decisive one. Without doubt we know quite enough in most social problems to avoid a great number of wasteful mistakes in practical life and, consequently, to have a better world. Even in science, although we may strive toward the absolute, we must always be prepared to deliver the incomplete knowledge we have on hand. We cannot plead that we must wait "until all the facts are in," because we know full well that *all* the facts will never be in. Nor can we argue that "the facts speak for themselves" and leave it "to the politician and the citizen to draw the practical conclusions." We know even better than the politician and the ordinary citizen that the facts are much too complicated to speak an intelligible language by themselves. They must be organized for practical purposes, that is, under relevant value premises. And no one can do this more adequately than we ourselves.

There is a common belief that the type of practical research which involves rational planning—what we have ventured to call "social engineering"—is likely to be emotional. This is a mistake. If the value premises are sufficiently, fully, and rationally introduced, the planning of induced social change is no more emotional by itself than the planning of a bridge or the taking of a census. Even prior to the stage of social engineering proper, the research technique of accounting openly for one's value premises actually de-emotionalizes research. Emotion and irrationality in science, on the contrary, acquire their high potency precisely when valuations are kept suppressed or remain concealed in the so-called "facts."

The primary task in the present inquiry on the Negro problem has been to ascertain relevant facts and to establish the causal relations between facts. The viewpoints and, consequently, the principle of selection in regard to both direction and intensity of analysis, however, have been determined by certain value premises. In the practical sphere it has been our main task to ascertain how situations and trends, institutions and policies, have to be judged when a given set of value premises is applied.

The question of the selection of value premises remains to be settled. Values do not emerge automatically from the attempt to establish and collect the facts. Neither can we allow the individual investigator to choose his value premises arbitrarily. *The value premises should be selected by the criterion of relevance and significance to the culture under study.* Alternative sets of value premises would be most appropriate. If for reasons of practicability only one set of value premises is utilized, it is the more important that the reservation is always kept conscious: *that the practical conclusions—and, to an extent, the direction of research—have only hypothetical validity* and that the selection of another set of value premises might change both.

The formulation of specific valuations to be utilized as instrumental norms in a scientific investigation is likely to emphasize the tremendous moral responsibility placed upon social scientists. A number of points already made should, however, be borne in mind. First, the same responsibility is actually carried by every student, whether he chooses to make his value premises explicit or not. Second, if he makes his value premises explicit, his responsibility is, in fact, smaller, as he then fixes his readers' attention on the matter and thus aids them to criticize his value premises and conclusions. Third, the research part of the work is mainly dependent on the value premises as to viewpoints and direction. Fourth, his method means that he has taken precautions to avoid hidden valuations, that is, biases.

3. THE HISTORY AND LOGIC OF THE HIDDEN VALUATIONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE

In the preceding section we have given our main reasons why social science is essentially a "political" science; why practical conclusions should not be avoided, but rather be considered as a main task in social research; why explicit value premises should be found and stated; and how, by this technique, we can expect both to mitigate biases and to lay a rational basis for the statement of the theoretical problems and the practical conclusions. The remainder of this note brings together under one head what is virtually a series of footnotes to the previous section. It contains arguments which are in the nature of digressions from the main argument in the text as technical qualifications.

Probably everyone with mastery of the writings in any large field of social science will agree with the description we have given of the present situation. We emphatically denounce valuations in social science, but they are constantly creeping into our work. Most of us declare just as emphatically that we want to abstain from any practical conclusions and to direct our effort wholly to the discovery of the truth of the matter, but in spite of this intention we make value judgments in a general, vague, hidden and unwitting manner. We have briefly hinted at certain facts in the social situation of science and scientists in America which make this situation more understandable.[a]

[a] Professor Robert S. Lynd has discussed the other-worldliness of social science in a suggestive manner from a somewhat different viewpoint in his challenging book, *Knowledge for What?* (1939).

In various degrees this tendency has characterized social research in all Western countries since its beginning in the eighteenth century. Leaving the question open for a moment as to how to cure this methodological confusion, we might point to some of its major historical determinants. In this short note we shall have to be inconclusive.[a] The problems of doctrinal history and the sociology and psychology of science involved are, in addition, so complex that we prefer to have our remarks considered as suggestions.

Basic to the eagerness in trying to drive valuations underground is the rationalism of our Western culture. Even the man in the street, when he wants to appear enlightened, will attempt to avoid expressing primary and personal valuations. He wants to be "objective" and to avoid arbitrariness. He will, therefore, give "reasons" for his desires, and he tries to make the reasons appear purely "factual" so that they will be acceptable to any "rational" man.[b] He wants, in other words, to suppress his valuations *as valuations* and to present them as systems of rational beliefs concerning reality. The same tendency has for centuries driven the philosophers in their scholarly exertions to base systems of morals and politics upon "the nature of things" and, later, upon the "sensations," that is, in this context, upon empirical observations and rational inferences. The difference between the various moral philosophies which fought and superseded each other is—on this central point—not great. The philosophies of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries—and, in particular, the then perfected systems of Natural Rights and Utilitarianism—became the foundations, not only of our later moral and political thinking as it has developed in America among other countries, but also of the modern social sciences. The latter have, indeed, been a chief expression for the rationalistic desire in our culture to eradicate valuations and lay the basis for a factual and objective view of social problems.

The social sciences thus developed as branches of the philosophies of Enlightenment. New philosophical ideas have later been inserted; for instance, the ideas of social development attached to the names of Darwin, Hegel, Marx and Spencer. But certain central normative and teleological ideas of the philosophies of Natural Rights and Utilitarianism have been preserved. One such idea is the thought that there is a *communum bonum*, a "general" or "common welfare," and that it can be ascertained by scientific investigation. Another one is the thought that basically human interests are in harmony.

The idea that there is such a thing as a "common welfare," an "interest of society," which can be known, has followed us up to present times. It is seldom discussed but rather taken for granted. When during the 'twenties the criticism of classical economics in America asserted itself, and the so-called institutionalists apparently followed a tendency to find as many faults as possible with the old school of economists, the most central concept of classical economics, the "general welfare," was practically never challenged. Most work done in economics even today assumes tacitly the existence of such an entity. The availability of this concept makes it easy and natural for the economist, and also for other social scientists, to apply a concealed valuation, cov-

[a] For a fuller treatment of some of the problems dealt with in this section, we refer to the present author's *Das Politische Element in der Nationalökonomischen Doktrinbildung* (1932), and "Das Zweck-Mitteldenken in der Nationalökonomie" in *Zeitschrift für Nationalökonomie* (1932), pp. 305 ff.

[b] See Appendix 1.

ered only by this vague phrase, directly to his material or factual data. Statements that something is, or is not, desirable from the viewpoint of "society" will surprisingly often appear even in statistical work without any conclusive argument about how such a value judgment has been reached and precisely what it means.

From the beginning of social science the idea of a "harmony of interests" was closely associated with the idea of "common welfare." "Social value" was originally conceived of as a value common to all participants in a society. The harmony doctrine, obviously, made the calculation of the social value out of individual interests so much easier, and this fact, undoubtedly, has been an advantage in its use which has given it much of its survival strength.[a] We want to believe that what we hold to be desirable for society is desirable for all its members.

The harmony doctrine is essential to "liberalism" as it has historically developed out of the philosophies of Enlightenment (the term "liberalism" is here used in its most inclusive sense). From the very beginning liberalism was split into two wings, a radical one and a conservative one. The radical wing upheld the opinion that a harmony of interests would exist only in a society where the institutions—and primarily the distribution of property—were changed so as to accord with the precepts of these philosophies. The "natural order" studied by the radical liberals was, therefore, a hypothetical society where the "natural laws" functioned undisturbed by "corrupted institutions": where, thus, for example, all "natural" titles to property—with Locke the "fruits of labor"—were retained, but society was purified of all monopolies and privileges and, consequently, from "exploitation." The conservative wing, on the other hand, proceeded to apply the harmony doctrine directly to the unreformed society (which, incidentally, was a corruption of thought, as they all usually adhered to a philosophy which reserved the concepts "natural order" and "social harmony" for a society purged as severely as the radicals wanted it). The radical wing became the reformers, the visionaries, and the utopians: it gave birth to various schools of communism, socialism, syndicalism and anarchism. The conservative wing profited from its "realism." In its practical work it abstained from speculating about a "natural order" other than the one that existed; it studied society *as it was* and actually came to lay the foundations for modern social science. For this we have to be grateful to conservative liberals. But they perpetuated in modern social science, also, their static and fatalistic political bias, a do-nothing liberalism. The harmony doctrine in this setting was, of course, even less well founded than the radical liberals' idea that only in a very different "natural order" would human interests be mutually compatible.

Economics—or "political economy," to use the old-fashioned but much more adequate term (the attribute "political" has been dropped for convenience and as a tribute to the purity of science)—is the oldest branch of social science in the sense that it was the earliest to develop into a system of observations and inferences organized under the principle of social laws.[b] In economics we can most conveniently study the influence of the static and fatalistic general bias upon the development of a social science discipline. From natural science it early borrowed the concept of "equilibrium." This concept, as well as the derived concepts of "balance," "stability," "normal," are all often heavily loaded with the static and fatalistic valuations. To an extent these

[a] Myrdal, *Das Politische Element in der Nationalökonomischen Doktrinbildung.*

[b] History and political science are, of course, older, but they never reached agreement upon a system of causation.

concepts have taken over the role of the conservative variant of the old harmony doctrine. It is, of course, possible to utilize them in a purely instrumental manner and the success of generations of economists in gradually perfecting our knowledge of economic relations is due to such a utilization of the various notions of social equilibrium and disequilibrium. The "assumptions" of economic theory have been useful. But their load of inherited static and fatalistic valuations is heavy, and they will often turn into convenient covers for biases in this direction.

The direction is loose and general, however. Like "welfare" and "harmony of interest," those concepts can be bent considerably. Their role for the underhand presentation of practical conclusions is rather the formal one of providing objective-sounding, technical terms for the subjective valuations which are actually pressing for expression. They thus permit entrance of the biases of a time, a social setting or a personality. These biases may be conservative or "radical" (radical in the sense of being Marxian). The relation between, on the one hand, the specific biases in research and, on the other hand, these value-metaphysical thought-structures forming the frame for economic theory and research, is primarily this: that the arbitrariness inherent in the structures allows the specific biases room for play which, under the rules of scientific strictness, they should not have had. But it is equally important to remember that they do not give absolutely free leeway. They are headed in one definite direction. As long as economics keeps its valuations implicit and hidden, the utilization of those concepts will tend to insert in scientific work a do-nothing bias.

The younger social sciences have followed much the same track. A few remarks, mainly by way of illustration, will be made concerning American sociology, particularly as it has influenced the study of the Negro problem.

Few have had more influence on contemporary American social science thinking than William Graham Sumner. He was a political economist of strong *laissez-faire* leanings before he became a sociologist, and he continued to indoctrinate generations of Yale undergraduates with the economic doctrines of Manchester-liberalism.[a] Sumner is usually believed to have had two sides: on the political side he advocated Social Darwinism[b] and was a conservative; on the scientific side he was the great observer of "folkways and mores." These two sides were closer than is commonly thought. His observations that there were folkways and mores which gave societies a static stability buttressed his belief that social change was difficult to achieve. His desires to maintain the *status quo* led him to conclude that there should be no attempt to change the folkways and mores. The unification of the two streams in Sumner's thinking gives us an example of the fallacious attempt to draw practical conclusions from purely factual premises:

> The great stream of time and earthly things will sweep on just the same in spite of us . . . Everyone of us is a child of his age and cannot get out of it. He is in the stream and is swept along with it. All his science and philosophy come to him out of it. Therefore the tide will not be changed by us. It will swallow up both us and our experiments

[a] Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*, Vol. II, (1927), pp. 236-237, 429 and 430.

[b] Social Darwinism refers to that continuation of the *laissez-faire* movement after it took on the Darwinian terminology of "struggle for existence" and "survival of the fittest." The ideological father of Sumner was the founder of Social Darwinism—namely, Herbert Spencer.

> . . . That is why it is the greatest folly of which a man can be capable, to sit down with a slate and pencil to plan out a new social world.[a]

Sumner could not fail to have a particularly strong influence on social science thinking about the problems of the South and, specifically, about the Negro problem. The theory of folkways and mores has diffused from the scientists and has in the educated classes of the South become a sort of regional political *credo*. The characterization of something as "folkways" or "mores" or the stereotype that "stateways cannot change folkways"—which under no circumstances can be more than a relative truth—is used in the literature on the South and on the Negro as a general formula of mystical significance. It is expressed whenever one wants to state one's opinion that "what is, must be" without caring to give full factual reasons. To a large extent the formula has also been taken over by the Negro writers. We may note a recent example of the same sort of reasoning on the part of a writer, who, if he had not been influenced by Sumner, is in perfect agreement with him. The example is the more striking because it is taken from the pages of the radical Negro periodical, *The Crisis*, and is part of a review of a book whose author is trying to improve the lot of the Negro—though perhaps in a naïve manner.

> It is the belief, on the other hand, of our author and a considerable group of educators, largely members of the "social frontier group" at Teachers' College, that education can lead in social reform instead of following in the wake of social trends. This belief is a form of wish-fulfillment thinking based upon the assumption that social life can be rationalized and that the *processus social* can be rid of its irrational elements and brought under the control of a previously established plan. *Res est ridicula et nimis iocosa.* Such a belief is not a product of scientific observation, but of the educator's *faith*, and one as naive as any ever inherited by man. If the researches of science have established anything, it is that man is at bottom a most irrational animal; a rationalizing rather than a reasoning creature.[b]

Much less conservative than Sumner but still bound by a similar fatalism have been Robert E. Park and some of his followers. Park's influence on the research on the Negro problem has been great and direct, as so many of the contemporary students of this problem are his pupils or recognize his guidance as their most important inspiration. Park is not, as was Sumner, moved by any deeply felt desire to maintain the *status quo*. But his keen observation of social conditions—and, perhaps, also some disillusions from his reform activities—have made him realize the tremendous force exerted by "natural" influences.[c] Not observing much in the way of conscious and organized planning in his

[a] William Graham Sumner, "The Absurd Attempt to Make the World Over," *Essays of William Graham Sumner*. Edited by A. G. Keller and Maurice R. Davie (1934), Vol. I, pp. 105-106.

[b] James W. Ivy, review of *An Analysis of the Specific References to Negroes in Selected Curricula for the Education of Teachers* by Edna Meade Colson, in *The Crisis* (October, 1941), p. 331.

[c] Park, of course, recognizes the possibility of rapid and radical social change. His theory concerning such change is centered around the concept of "crisis." This theory was first developed by W. I. Thomas, *Source Book for Social Origins* (1909), pp. 17-22. The theory, simply stated, is that under certain circumstances habits, mores, and folkways are recognized by people to be no longer useful as ways of meeting situations and needs, and, after a brief period of amoral disorganization, people come together to build up a new type of "socially acceptable" behavior, or such a new folkway develops naturally "without

contemporary America except that which was bungling and ineffective because it did not take due account of the natural forces, he built up a sociological system in terms of "natural" causation and sequence. Probably because he has no intentional conservative bias, it is difficult to find simple statements in Park's writing which exemplify the fallacy of drawing practical conclusions from factual premises alone. What we do find is a systematic tendency to ignore practically all possibilities of modifying—by conscious effort—the social effects of the natural forces.[a] Occasionally the do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) implications of Park's assumptions are revealed:

> The races of high visibility, to speak in naval parlance, are the natural and inevitable objects of race prejudice.[b]

> Accommodation, on the other hand, is the process by which the individuals and groups make the *necessary* internal *adjustments* to social situations which have been created by competition and conflict. . . . Eventually the new order gets itself fixed in habit and custom and is then transmitted as part of the established social order to succeeding generations. Neither the physical nor the social world is made to satisfy at once all the wishes of the natural man. The rights of property, vested interests of every sort, the family organization, slavery, caste and class, the whole social organization, in fact, represent accommodations, that is to say, limitations of the natural wishes of the individual. These socially inherited accommodations have presumably grown up in the pains and struggles of previous generations, but they have been transmitted to and accepted by succeeding generations as part of the natural, inevitable social order. All of these are forms of control in which competition is limited by status.[c]

> . . . the political process can only proceed in a relatively orderly way in so far as it generates a political power and authority capable of enforcing a certain degree of order and discipline until a new equilibrium has been achieved and the changes which the new programs initiated have been assimilated, digested and incorporated with the folkways of the original and historic society.[d]

> Race relations . . . might comprise . . . all those situations in which some relatively stable equilibrium between competing races has been achieved and in which the resulting social order has become fixed in custom and tradition.
>
> Under such circumstances the intensity of the race consciousness which a struggle for status inevitably arouses, where it did not altogether disappear, would be greatly diminished. The biracial organizations of certain social institutions that have come into existence in Southern states since emancipation exhibit the form which such racial accommodations sometimes take.[e]

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discussion and organization." The whole period is called a "crisis." This theory is not very clearly presented in Park's published writings, but the nearest thing to a complete statement of it may be found in the article on "Collective Behavior" in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1935), Vol. 3, pp. 631-633.

[a] With the same qualifications for the "crisis" theory of social change, it can be said that William I. Thomas, who has had a great influence on practically all contemporary American sociologists, shows the same lack of interest for problems of induced change.

[b] "Behind Our Masks," *The Survey* (May 1, 1926), p. 136.

[c] Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (1921), pp. 510-511. (Italics ours.)

[d] Robert E. Park, "Social Planning and Human Nature," *Publications of the American Sociological Society* (August, 1935), p. 28.

[e] Robert E. Park, "The Nature of Race Relations," in Edgar T. Thompson (editor), *Race Relations and the Race Problem* (1939), pp. 4-5.

Park's naturalistic and, therefore, fatalistic philosophy has been transmitted to some of his students who have been working on the Negro problem. Throughout the writings of Edward B. Reuter, for example, we find statements similar to the following taken from a recent consideration of race relations:

> It is in the nature of a competitive order, and every natural and social order is competitive, to place groups and individuals in the position where they can survive, and it is in the nature of individuals and groups to develop the characters essential or conducive to survival in the natural and cultural area in which they are placed and in which they struggle to exist. Whether we consider plants, animals, or human beings we find that, in the large, they are in those areas where each is best fitted to thrive and prosper, and that each is somewhat nicely adapted in its structures and in its habit system to the special conditions of existence in the habitat . . . Adaptation is the price of survival.[a]

What has been said of Park could be said also of William F. Ogburn. The tremendous social influence of inventions and changes in economic organization and the march of social trends have convinced him that man's intentional efforts to do something about the world are futile.[b]

> . . . much of our difficulty is due to the fact that the different parts of our highly interrelated civilization are changing at unequal rates of speed, bringing maladjustments and social problems that would not occur in a stationary society or in one where the different parts moved along simultaneously. When one part of our culture, as for instance, the technological-economic organization, changes rapidly while another part, as for instance, government, changes more slowly, there comes a time when the maladjustment is sufficiently serious to occasion a whole series of rapid changes in the lagging institutions. In such times and for such changes the word "Revolution" is often used.
>
> For the future, there is no particular reason to think that the technological inventions and scientific discoveries will slow up. Indeed, they are likely to come faster. However, we may, perhaps, be able to speed up the changes in other institutions slightly more quickly, by greater use of the communication inventions. But on the other hand, the process of keeping up with the pace set by technology may be slowed up because of the increasing heterogeneity of society and the possible greater number of institutional lags to be caught up. Therefore, no prospective integration of state and industry is expected to deliver us in the future from grave social disturbances.[c]

[a] E. B. Reuter, "Competition and the Racial Division of Labor," in Thompson, *Race Relations and the Race Problem*, pp. 46-47.

[b] It should be noted in passing that the Marxian teleology implied in the materialistic conception of history is, from our point of view (however catastrophic the trends are pictured) of the do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) variety; that is, it is biased in the static and fatalistic direction as we have used these terms in this note. In his principal writings Marx shows—contrary to what is often popularly assumed—no interest whatsoever in social planning. He expected "the reign of freedom" in the classless communistic society to arise full-fledged by natural force out of a political revolution caused by trends in technology and production. The interest in social reforms which he showed particularly in later days were a result of an ideological compromise. Modern social engineering has actually had practically no inspiration from Marx's "scientific" socialism, actually less than from the early French and English socialists whom Marx repudiated as dilettantes and utopians.

The liberalistic character of Marxism is easily understood when its ideological roots are scrutinized. (It explains why elements of Marxian teleology have had such an easy access into modern American sociology and history.)

[c] William F. Ogburn, "Man and His Institutions," *Publications of the American Sociological Society* (August, 1935), pp. 39-40.

> The materials of social planning may, in general, be summed up in the phrase "social forces." They are what social planners have to deal with. What social forces may consist of does not concern us at the moment, but the effect of social forces is to produce motion. In the case of the above illustration the motion is in population growth. In fact, motion is the principal characteristic of our age, for we call it the "age of change." Social planning deals with changes, either with changes already started, or in planning new changes. It is difficult to name a single phase of our contemporary civilization that is not undergoing change. Some parts are changing more rapidly than others. It is this fact that we are living in a changing world which is the justification for asking the question: What is likely to happen? . . .
>
> Technology enters the analysis at this point because these changes which are taking place are in large part instigated by invention. Thus many of the changes in international relations are affected by the airplane, just as in an earlier generation changes taking place in the relations of warring peoples were affected by gunpowder. Hence the knowledge of inventions supplies us partly with the answer to the question of what is going to happen. The wishes of human beings are relatively stable from age to age insofar as heredity or the physiological foundations are concerned. They take different expressions, however, because of the different social conditions in which men live. New inventions start changes in the behavior of mankind. They are new stimuli to which human beings respond.[a]

The social scientists we have cited could not have reached their negative views on planned and induced social change unless guided by a set of general assumptions in their selection and interpretation of the empirical data. This implies that they have introduced valuations along with facts in deriving conclusions relative to what can be and should be the nature of man's practical efforts. We all claim that our factual or theoretical studies alone cannot logically lead to a practical recommendation. A practical or valuational conclusion can be derived only when there is at least one valuation among the premises. When our premises consist exclusively of facts, only a factual conclusion can result. If we proceed otherwise, and if we, further, denounce valuations, we are thus constantly attempting the logically impossible: From certain observations concerning the causation of a social phenomenon we jump to the valuational conclusion that we can do nothing to change this phenomenon because it has such and such a causation. To illustrate this common fallacy we have chosen examples from the writings of only a few leading sociologists. The specific error that is common to these three men—Sumner, Park, and Ogburn—has been with social science from the beginning and is still quite general in contemporary social science. This specific error is not that of observing a deep-rooted and all-pervasive social causation. The observations of such causation made by the particular authors chosen for exemplification are rather monumental contributions to knowledge of a most significant nature. The specific logical error is that of inferring from the facts that men can and should make no effort to change the "natural" outcome of the specific forces observed. This is the old do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) bias of "realistic" social science.

To bring out the nature of this bias and demonstrate the arbitrariness thereby inserted into research, we may consider the same facts that have been observed by Sumner, Park, and Ogburn and add to them an explicit and dynamic value premise

[a] William F. Ogburn, "Technology and Planning," in George B. Galloway and Associates, *Planning for America* (1941), pp. 179-180.

(instead of the implicit fatalistic and static one) and from these deduce a quite different practical conclusion. Recognizing the folkways and mores,[a] for example, and having a desire to *change some of them* in one direction or another, we should be interested in studying the range and degree of inertia; all the exceptions to the folkways; the specialization of groups; the conflicts (between persons and within persons); the changes, the flexibilities, and the manageability of some factors in the social system; instead of, as Sumner usually[b] does, stressing and exemplifying the great over-all inertia. On the practical plane we should make not only the negative inference that a plan for social change should expect to be time-consuming and to meet strong resistance, but also the positive inference that it has to direct its attack on certain points where the mores are weakest and where people are already beginning to question them (or have a divided conscience with respect to them). We should also infer that it should not attack them directly but should create situations where the people themselves will strain the mores. Similarly, if we recognize the tremendous force of certain processes and sequences we might, with a dynamic value premise, deduce that strategy demands a redirection or stoppage of processes which contain within themselves a motive power in a certain direction, and an effort *against* individuals coming to "adjust" themselves to the processes. Finally, a recognition of the sweep of social trends and of the basic role of invention and economic organization in social causation, coupled with a dynamic instead of static valuation, would lead one to facilitate the perfection and adoption of those inventions which have the greatest promise of moving the society in a desired direction and to seek *social* inventions which would modify economic organization and the effects of mechanical inventions. Social scientists are so habituated to using static and fatalistic value premises with such facts as the mores, social processes, and social trends, and they are so prone to associate radical valuation premises with a complete disregard of the facts, that they often do not realize that it is quite possible to couple dynamic value premises with factual knowledge of mores, social processes or social trends. The static and fatalistic value premises have actually imbedded themselves into the data.[c] And it should not surprise us that the great development of social sciences in recent decades in America has not been accompanied by any correspondingly important development of social engineering.

In the theory of folkways and mores the heavy load of do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) valuation becomes particularly apparent when Sumner and his many followers[d] set

[a] We stand in critical opposition to these concepts on theoretical grounds, as they tend to give an impression of a homogeneous and unproblematic valuational background for behavior, which we think is mistaken (see Appendix 1, Section 3), but this does not deeply concern our present argument.

[b] See Appendix 1, Section 2.

[c] The fact of static and fatalistic valuations in social science research may be accepted even though the analysis of its historical causation, presented on previous pages, may be questioned by some.

[d] Many other sociologists outside the Sumner tradition considered man-made legislation as ineffectual and dangerous. Franklin H. Giddings, the leader of the Columbia School, for example, had this to say about "stateways":

"Because the folkway is adaptive it is variable, and folkways, therefore, become various, not only because new ways from time to time arise out of new circumstances and demands, but also through differentiation. One has only to call to mind the fluctuations of fashion, the changing forms of address and ceremony, the rise and fall of recreations, the fleeting

out with the purpose of proving the inefficacy of legislation. With reference to race relations in the South after the Civil War, Sumner said:

> The two races have not yet made new mores. Vain attempts have been made to control the new order by legislation. The only result is the proof that legislation cannot make mores. . . . It is only just now that the new society seems to be taking shape. There is a trend in the mores now as they begin to form under the new state of things. It is not at all what the humanitarians hoped and expected. . . . Some are anxious to interfere and try to control. They take their stand on ethical views of what is going on. It is evidently impossible for any one to interfere. We are like spectators at a great natural convulsion. The results will be such as the facts and forces call for. We cannot foresee them. They do not depend on ethical views any more than the volcanic eruption on Martinique contained an ethical element.[a]

It should be noted that—in spite of its psychologism, its ethical relativism, its modernized terminology, and the abundant anthropological illustrations—this theory is nothing else than a reformulation and slight modification of the old *laissez-faire* doctrine of the "natural order" as it was more naïvely set forth in the Enlightenment period: human relations are governed by "natural laws"; "natural laws" are not only the right laws but are also, in the main, and in spite of all the interferences of foolish governments, actually permeating real life; they do not need to be legalized—if legislation adheres to the "natural laws," it is not exactly damaging but useless; if legislation conflicts with the "natural laws" it will be inefficacious though slightly damaging

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fads in games and sports, to realize the enormous flexibility of folkways. Stateways tend toward uniformity. Governments attempt to standardize not only rights at law but also legal procedure, administrative rules, and the conduct of citizens. Legislators are intolerant of exceptions, bureaucrats abominate them, and courts, while finding precedents for them when moral justice or the rule of reason requires, do not otherwise make them. Trial by jury, however, which mediates between folkways and stateways, is a venerable if not always a venerated defense against the governmentalists, who would dictate and ration our food and drink, write our medical prescriptions, cut our clothes, tell us what we may read and look at, and send us to bed at curfew.

"Stateways are instituted by command, backed up by physical force. They are formal, as machine-like as they can be made, and relentless. Folkways exert pressure which may be resistless, but it is indefinite, elastic, and automatically variable." (*Studies in the Theory of Human Society* [1922], p. 193.)

[a] William Graham Sumner, *Folkways* (1906), pp. 77-78. Other statements by Sumner, in his least opinionated book, revealing his attitude toward legislation, are the following:

"Acts of legislation come out of the mores. . . . Legislation, however, has to seek standing ground on the existing mores, and it soon becomes apparent that legislation, to be strong, must be consistent with the mores. Things which have been in the mores are put under police regulation and later under positive law. It is sometimes said that 'public opinion' must ratify and approve police regulations, but this statement rests on an imperfect analysis. The regulations must conform to the mores, so that the public will not think them too lax or too strict." (*Ibid.*, p. 55.)

"[The mores] never contain any provision for their own amendment." (*Ibid.*, p. 79.)

"The combination in the mores of persistency and variability determines the extent to which it is possible to modify them by arbitrary action. It is not possible to change them, by any artifice or device, to a great extent, or suddenly, or in any essential element; it is possible to modify them by slow and long-continued effort if the ritual is changed by minute variations." (*Ibid.*, p. 87.)

as it will disturb somewhat the smooth operation of the "natural laws." This is, for instance, the doctrine back of Adam Smith's well-known dictum that trade barriers, though, of course, irrational and cumbersome, will, in the broad overview, not amount to much, as the smugglers will pierce them, acting here as the agents of the "natural laws" with the same immutability as water seeking its level. The "invisible hand" will inevitably guide human activity. On this central point, which apparently is much of the political purpose of the whole theory of folkways and mores, Sumner simply expresses a common American prejudice against legislation which we have discussed in Chapter 1, Section 5, and in other places.

The presence of this same static and fatalistic valuation in the hidden *ethos* of contemporary social science is suggested by some of the terminology found throughout the writings of many sociologists, such as "balance," "harmony," "equilibrium," "adjustment," "maladjustment," "organization," "disorganization," "accommodation," "function," "social process" and "cultural lag." While they all—as the corresponding concepts in economics, mentioned above—have been used advantageously to *describe* empirically observable situations, they carry within them the tendency to give a do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) valuation of those situations. How the slip occurs is easily understandable: When we speak of a social situation being in harmony, or having equilibrium, or its forces organized, accommodated, or adjusted to each other, there is the almost inevitable implication that some sort of ideal has been attained, whether in terms of "individual happiness" or the "common welfare." Such a situation is, therefore, evaluated as "good" and a movement in the direction is "desirable." [a] The negative terms—disharmony, disequilibrium, maladjustment, disorganization—correspondingly describe an undesirable

[a] There is practically no discussion in the literature on the value connotation in the terms exemplified in the text. When raising the question with representative social scientists, I have often met the following reaction: first, an acknowledgment that many authors in speaking of adjustment, accommodation, disorganization, and so forth, imply valuations of "good" or "bad" and that this is unscientific, but, second, that sometimes—even when a valuation is implied—this is so general that it is self-evident. "Accommodation, for example," it is said, "is a process whereby people are able to cooperate and thereby maintain some social order; accommodation grows out of a conflict of interest and is only established after each party to the conflict has accepted a place in the social order and developed appropriate or reciprocal attitudes; but there always remains a latent conflict. The only 'goodness' implied in accommodation is that thereby cooperation under social order is maintained." Against this argument there are several criticisms to be raised: (1) the value given to cooperation and social order should be given explicitly rather than implicitly in the connotation of a term; (2) this valuation is certainly not under *all* conditions self-evident from the viewpoint of every party involved (to one party a continued conflict can under circumstances be preferable, if only for reaching another and more favorable status of accommodation); (3) this valuation is not, just because it is so general, precise enough to serve a scientific purpose even if it were made explicit (the status to which conflicting parties are actually brought to "accommodate" is not given *a priori* but is the outcome of a social process, the actual result of which becomes condoned because "accommodation" in general is condoned; this result could have been different not only because of a prolonged conflict but also because of a different type of accommodation behavior by one person or the other). In the Negro problem practically every situation, except where a race riot is on, can be, and is often actually in the literature, described as an "accommodation," and *status quo* in every aspect can thus be, and is, implicitly justified because it preserves cooperation and the social order.

situation, as indicated by the etymological connection of their prefixes to the word "bad." A great arbitrariness—allowing for the more specific biases of a personality and a cultural setting—is present in deciding upon just *what* shall be considered as equilibrium and *what* disequilibrium in a process of social change. The following quotation has been chosen to illustrate the working of a political bias through the vehicle of such terms, not only because the bias—directed against the Negro as his interests are commonly conceived—is expressed in a particularly blunt form, but also because it happens to be from the pen of a Negro sociologist:

> In the face of these opposing views, then, conclusions concerning the effect of education upon Negroes during this period may be reserved. If education brought disorganization among the former slaves, it may be counted as a liability. If, on the other hand, it served as an outlet for feelings that might otherwise have been directed into politics, where discord might have resulted, it may be counted on as an asset. The situation doubtless varied in different places at different times—assisting or retarding adjustment in areas where the one effect or the other, already mentioned, preponderated.[a]

Similarly, if a thing has a "function" it is good or at least essential.[b] The term "function" can have a meaning only in terms of a presumed purpose; if that purpose is left undefined or implied to be the "interest of society" which is no further defined, a considerable leeway for arbitrariness in practical implication is allowed but the main direction is given: a description of social institutions in terms of their functions must lead to a conservative teleology. If there is a "cultural lag," there is likewise a presumption that the elimination of the lag is desirable. While social processes and mores may not be good, in terms of certain arbitrary standards, they are believed to exist or develop with an inevitability that defies all efforts directed toward their modification.

These and similar static terms constitute much of the basic descriptive and theoretical terminology in all the social sciences. It is certainly an important task of self-scrutiny for social science to determine why such terms and not more dynamic ones have been given such a strategic position in social science thinking. The present author has suggested above that the origin of social science out of the philosophies of Enlightenment and the greater "realism" of the *laissez-faire* wing of early liberalism is of central importance. The very fact that the evaluative nature of these terms has gone almost unnoticed suggests that the explanation of their choice must go deep into the roots of Western culture. Whatever the reason for their predominance, the fact that such terms —without much care to preserve for them a strictly theoretical meaning—are widely used to describe much of social life and serve as keystones in theoretical explanations of social structure and change, inserts into social science an implicit static and fatalistic value premise. The use of such terms makes it appear that a given situation is desirable or inevitable without the explicit specification by the social scientist of what he considers desirable or of the possibilities of the modification of "inevitability."

There is nothing to be criticized when a scientist explicitly states that he hopes a certain situation will develop, that such a situation is a good one according to certain standards which he sets up, or that a certain situation or development is inevitable beyond

[a] Bertram W. Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* (1937), p. 127.

[b] How easily even a radical social scientist may slip over to the expression of approval of something that he says has a function is illustrated by Durkheim's discussion of crime and punishment: Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1938; first edition, 1895), translated by Sarah A. Solovay and John H. Mueller, pp. 66-70.

all possibility of modification by any contingency or directed effort whatsoever. What is to be criticized is the use of terms to hide the fact that there is a value premise in a value judgment. The observation of the facts of a given existing situation alone will never permit the conclusion that such a situation is good or desirable or even that this situation is inevitable in the future. In other words, we are making a plea for explicit value premises. We are also making a plea for unbiased research. The relation between these two *desiderata* is this, that it is the hidden valuations which give entrance to biases in social science.

The author is well aware that some of his criticisms and suggestions in the preceding pages on the history and logic of the hidden valuations in social science are controversial and would ask the reader to note that the following remarks on a positive methodology for social science as well as Sections 1 and 2 of this Appendix do not depend on the correctness of Section 3.

It should also be reiterated as a concluding remark that when we have illustrated our thesis by citing prominent American sociologists, this is only because American sociology has provided the main scientific frame for the scientific study of the Negro problem which is our particular concern in this book. The tendencies criticized are, however, common in all social sciences in the entire Western world. Too, not all American sociologists have a do-nothing (*laissez-faire*) bias. In earlier generations Lester F. Ward, Simon Patten, and many others were reformers, and Ward thought of social science as social engineering. Their methodological principles were not clear, however. In the present generation Louis Wirth, to mention only one prominent representative of a growing group holding a dissenting view, has expressed opinions in fundamental agreement with this appendix.[a]

4. THE POINTS OF VIEW ADOPTED IN THIS BOOK

Scientific facts do not exist *per se*, waiting for scientists to discover them. A scientific fact is a construction abstracted out of a complex and interwoven reality by means of arbitrary definitions and classifications. The processes of selecting a problem and a basic hypothesis, of limiting the scope of study, and of defining and classifying data relevant to such a setting of the problem, involve a choice on the part of the investigator. The choice is made from an indefinite number of possibilities. The same is true when drawing inferences from organized data. Everything in the world is connected with everything else: when shall one stop, and in what direction shall one proceed when establishing causal relations? Scientific conventions usually give guidance. But, first, convention itself is a valuation, usually a biased one, and it is the more dangerous as it is usually hidden in tacit preconceptions which are not discussed or even known; second, progress in science is made by those who are most capable of freeing themselves from the conventions in their science and of seeking guidance from other sciences and nonscientific endeavors.

[a] Louis Wirth, "Preface" in Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (1936), pp. xiii-xxxi and his article "Ideological Aspects of Social Disorganization," *American Sociological Review* (August, 1940), pp. 472-482. John Dollard's *Criteria for the Life History* (1935) and *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937) also exemplify a conscious interest in making biases explicit even if they do not reach a methodology centered on explicit value premises. Robert MacIver's *Social Causation* (1942) and Robert Lynd's *Knowledge For What?* (1939) are other sociological books which are free of implicit value premises.

Prior to research, therefore, are complicated theories. The architecture of these theories is arbitrary except when they are intentionally founded upon a definition of relevant interests. This is true no matter how much effort is invested in selecting terms of low valuational content and no matter how remote from public interest the causal analysis is. When one is out to determine such a simple thing as the level of "real wages" in a community, for example, he has to rack his soul to decide whether to base his calculations on hourly rates or on annual wages: whether to consider articles outside of the staple commodities as necessities of consumption, whether to consider certain items, the consumption of which is not "customary," as necessities because all dieticians think so, and generally speaking, how to decide the weights in the consumption budgets used for constructing a cost of living index. In a world of change and variation there can be no such thing as an "ideal index"; in the final analysis, the weights have always to be *chosen* upon the basis of what one's interest in a study is. In comparing Negroes and whites, decisions must be taken in such problems as: is it more proper to make the comparison directly or to take into account the fact that Negroes are concentrated in the lower occupational brackets, in poorer and more backward regions of the country, and that they have been discriminated against in education and in other respects? [a]

These considerations sound trite to any scientist who is at all aware of his methodology. What we wish to point out, however, is that every choice involves valuations. One does not escape valuations by restricting his research to the discovery of "facts." The very attempt, so prevalent in recent years, to avoid valuations by doing research that is simply factual and without use for practical or political efforts involves in itself a valuation. We hasten to explain that we are not criticizing pure fact-finding. Fact-finding is indispensable for the solution of most of the problems—both practical and theoretical—that we encounter. The criticism is directed against fact-seeking that is done without a problem. The full statement of a problem, including the decision of scope, direction, hypothesis, classification principles, and the definition of all terms used, renders explicit the valuations necessary in fact-finding research. The author can, of course, explicitly disavow any practical interest and declare that he personally finds that the topic and the hypothesis appeal to him esthetically—or that he has made all his choices at random. If, however, practical usefulness is an aim in science, even the direction of research becomes dependent upon much wider valuations concerning society.

It should be stressed that this complication of a science which is not mere "art for art's sake" does *not* in the least decrease the demands upon objectivity in research. On the contrary, specification of valuations aids in reaching objectivity since it makes explicit what otherwise would be only implicit. Facts may be scientifically recorded and analyzed with explicit value premises as well as without them, and this can actually be accomplished the better in the former case since the explicit value premises focus the investigator's attention upon the valuations which, if hidden, are the roots of biases, since they generally set a standard of relevance and significance. This is true also when the analysis proceeds to draw practical conclusions. The conclusions must simply be remembered to be only as valid as the premises, which is true in all science. In fact, only when the premises are stated explicitly is it possible to determine how valid the conclusions are.

[a] See Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share* (1943), prepared for this study; pp. 3-9.

1. *Theoretical and Practical Research.* Our entire discussion is based upon a distinction between two aspects, or stages, of social science research: the "theoretical" and the "practical." By "theoretical" research we mean here all the research which is directed purely and exclusively toward ascertaining facts and causal relations between facts. By "practical" research we mean the logical procedure of relating value judgments to factual situations and to actual trends of change and, from their combination, deriving scientific plans for policies aimed at inducing alterations of the anticipated social trends ("social engineering").

The relations established in theoretical research are simply *causal.* In practical research the causal relations are transposed into *purposeful* relations. The sequence in theoretical research—from cause to effect—is in social engineering turned into the reverse order from ends to means. In practical research the causal relations established by theoretical research are taken as facts.

Theoretical research is primarily concerned with the *present* situation and the *past* development. It attempts to establish, out of systematized experience of the present and the past, a rational knowledge, in as general terms as possible, of the causal relations between elementary factors in the social process. Its final goal is to be able on this basis to forecast the *future* by rational prognoses.

Practical research is exclusively concerned with the *future.* Its principal viewpoint is that the future represents a set of alternatively possible trends of development. What future development will actually occur is, from the practical point of view, a matter of choice, in so far as decisions and actions on the part of the citizen and society can determine this development. Its final goal, therefore, is the scientific planning of "induced changes."

Between the two aspects, or stages, of social research there exist the following main relations:

(a) The direction of theoretical research is determined by the practical purposes held in view. In a study of the American Negro problem which is as predominantly practical in its intentions as ours, the frame for all our theoretical research thus consists of certain practical questions concerning the future status of the Negro and the future of race relations in America.

(b) Practical problems can, on the other hand, be approached only on the basis of the theoretical analysis of actual facts and their causal interrelations.

(c) On theoretical grounds some practical goals can be shown to be futile—that is, impossible of execution. Theoretical research thus sets the scope of practical research by determining what is feasible.

(d) Knowledge of facts is never enough for posing the practical problems concerning what is right, just, desirable and advisable. Practical conclusions are, by logical necessity, inferences from value premises as well as from factual premises.

In our study it is our ambition, first, to keep this distinction between theoretical and practical research clear throughout the various specific problems we are dealing with; and, third, to treat the practical problems as problems of scientific research. We shall, second, not to shun the practical problems but rather make them central in our work; therefore, have to devote the closest attention to value premises.

2. *Value Premises.* Value premises in research have to satisfy the following criteria:

(a) They must be *explicitly stated* and not hidden as tacit assumptions.

(b) They must be as *specific* and *concretized* as the valuation of reality in terms of factual knowledge requires.

(c) They cannot be derived directly from factual research but they will have to be *purposively selected.*

(d) They cannot be *a priori,* self-evident, or generally valid; they can have only an *hypothetical* character.

(e) Since incompatible valuations are held in society, the value premises should ideally be given as a number of sets of *alternative* hypotheses. The value judgments reached as conclusions from factual data and from these value hypotheses consist of a corresponding number of alternative plans for practical policy.

(f) In a scientific treatment of the practical aspects of social problems, the alternative sets of hypothetical value premises should not be chosen arbitrarily. The principle of selection should be their *relevance.* Relevance is determined by the interests and ideals of actual persons and groups of persons. There is thus no need of introducing value premises which are not actually held by anybody.[a]

(g) Within the circle of relevance so determined a still more narrow circle of *significance* may be taken to denote such valuations which are held by substantial groups of people or by small groups with substantial social power. Realistic research on practical problems will have to concentrate its attention upon value premises corresponding to valuations which have high social significance or are likely to gain in social significance. On the other hand, it is certainly not necessary to adopt only those valuation premises which are held by a majority of the population or by a politically dominant group.

(h) The goals set by the value premises must also be *feasible.* Some courses of future development might be proved—by theoretical investigation of relevant data—to be impossible or highly improbable. Valuations bent upon the impossible should, of course, not be chosen as valuation premises but be theoretically criticized as unfeasible. This theoretical criticism in terms of feasibility of people's actual valuations is, indeed, one of the most important tasks of social science.

(i) The set of value premises selected must not include mutually incompatible ones but must be *consistent.* In this context we must observe that sometimes a balance or a compromise in the set of value premises must be worked out and defined (to take an over-simplified example, progress may mean a sacrifice of stability and order). Some value premises are more inclusive than others and subsume others under them. Some value premises stand in a proximate relationship to others (as means to ends).

If these rules could be observed, the analysis of social problems in theoretical terms would become released from arbitrariness in the setting of problems and protected from the unconscious effect of biases. The analysis in practical terms would be elevated to the rational plane and made specific and realistic. *The aim of practical research*—starting out from the data revealed by theoretical research and from sets of explicitly stated, concretely specified, alternatively assumed, hypothetical value premises which are relevant, significant, and attainable—*is,* in general terms, *to show precisely what should be the practical and political opinions and plans for action from the point of view of*

[a] This is a rule of economy. There are, of course, no logical reasons why we might not anticipate combinations, syntheses, mutual modifications of existing value premises or even conjure up new ones and thus enlarge still more our perspective. Certainly we could go outside the culture and epoch under study and use the value premises operating there and see what would happen if they were in the culture and epoch.

the various valuations if their holders also had the more correct and comprehensive factual knowledge which science provides.

3. *Prognoses and Programs.* A study of valuations as they, in the form of interests and ideals, are actually held in various racial, regional, economic, and social groups of American society is, naturally, an important task in itself in the theoretical exploration of social reality. As the future social development will, in part, depend upon the reactions of the various groups and upon their relative power, the *prognoses* of future trends —which represent the ultimate goal for theoretical research—must include an investigation of the valuations and of the power behind valuations.

Prognoses and programs are in this scheme of thinking naturally interdependent: (a) the prognoses will partly depend on the actually conceived programs of various individuals and groups with diverse valuations and with various amounts of power; (b) rational programs must, on the other hand, be built upon the prognoses of trends which these various groups and individuals intend to bend in one way or the other; (c) even the existing programs of individuals and groups are, of course, founded upon ideas about future trends; (d) practical research tries to rationalize the existing programs by connecting the valuations basic to those programs with available scientific knowledge; (e) to the degree that practical research is successful in this, and to the extent that the educational agencies in society are effective in disseminating knowledge, it will influence trends and, consequently, be a cause of change of programs to be considered in theoretical prognoses.

Existing programs are multiple and conflicting, at least in a democratic society where no one group has all the power.[a] Practical research cannot, therefore, proceed on the old liberalistic doctrine that there is a "harmony of interest" and that there is only one program which is directed toward all the good in the world. Theoretical analysis reveals that there is actual struggle and competition between individuals and between groups, and that social trends take their form as an outcome of this struggle and competition. For practical analysis, therefore, there must be alternative programs.

4. *The Selection of Value Premises.* The scheme of principles for selecting value premises and introducing them into scientific research, presented in the last two sections, represents an ideal for social science. The possibilities of approaching it, however, are severely restricted by a number of circumstances:

(a) The scientific basis for constructing our "field of valuations" is poor. Public opinion with respect to the Negro problem has not been studied much, and the studies made do not meet our requirements.[b] For the most part we have been forced to base our generalizations on impressionistic observations of the values held by different groups and individuals.

(b) Many of the valuations held with respect to the Negro problem have much

[a] The more "normal" conditions are, the greater is the number of conflicting programs. In a crisis situation—economic, social, or political—there really is an approximation to "interest harmony" in society because interests have, for the time being, been taken away from long-range objectives and concentrated upon one, mutually shared, short-range objective. In a depression both employers and employees can be shown to have a common interest in economic expansion, raising volume of credit, demand, prices, production, employment and wage-earnings. In war the common interest rising above all other goals is to win victory. In a crisis the methodological problem for practical research is, therefore, relatively simple.

[b] See Appendix 10, Section 2.

broader application than this problem, and consequently cannot be completely restricted to a uni-linear pro- and anti-Negro scale of valuations. They branch out into the whole complex of economic, social, and political problems where the Negro has a stake in contemporary American civilization. Valuations which can be observed in behavior and opinions are not formed with respect to the Negro in abstraction, but to the Negro in specific social relations. This difficulty is, however, somewhat relieved, as there apparently is a high degree of correlation between the valuations along various scales.

(c) Valuations concern not only goals or "ends" in the treatment of the Negro, but also the "means" of achieving these goals and the "by-effects" of the achievement.

(d) We cannot assume that the conflicts of valuation are raging only *between* individuals and *between* groups. It is too significant to overlook that these conflicts are actually housed *within* single individuals.[a] This makes both the observation of valuations and the imputation of power to various valuations a most delicate problem.

(e) Partly because a single individual may hold several logically incompatible valuations, a set of valuations is seldom systematized and made self-consistent.

(f) Another difficulty in extracting value premises arises out of the fact that they are bound up with beliefs.[b] People's beliefs represent not only their volitional attitudes to social problems but also their incomplete and incorrect views as to the facts of social reality. Beliefs may influence valuations, just as valuations influence beliefs. Because we can get at only expressed opinions, which are themselves a much modified form of complexes of beliefs and valuations, it is a complicated task to detect valuations. From behavior and expressed opinions we must infer back to those complexes. From them we must infer back to basic valuations. This latter step includes the speculation as to what people's valuations would be if they were juxtaposed with correct knowledge instead of incorrect knowledge. The tracing out of a set of existing valuations, and a determination of their relevance and significance, is—for this reason alone—a difficult undertaking.

(g) Aside from all this, the very multiplicity of relevant and significant sets of valuations will, of course, raise great operational difficulties in research. The number of sets of value premises applied will have to be reduced much by way of abstraction. As there is a high correlation between valuations along different scales, some main composite axes can be defined. On each axis not every point need be represented but only a few, so that one can see what difference it makes in scientific approach and practical conclusions when one moves to the one extreme or the other. But even after a reduction of the sets of value premises to a few, the analysis will tend to be complicated.

5. *The "Instrumental Norm."* With these complications and difficulties in view, it becomes evident that to try to consider all the existing, relevant, and significant sets of valuations with respect to the Negro problem, to relate them to relevant facts, and to draw up various sets of practical programs is a task which cannot be accomplished within the confines of present research resources. The ideal should, however, be held clearly and uncompromisingly before our eyes as the goal for research.

In this situation we have seen fit to adopt the following solution: *that one single set of relevant and significant value premises be selected for utilization in a preliminary analysis* and *that other significant sets of value premises be introduced at a later stage*

[a] See the Introduction and Appendix 1.

[b] See Appendix 1, Section 1.

of the investigation to make possible judgments in terms of alternative valuations and policies.

The purely *technical and instrumental character* of the preliminary set of value premises must be borne in mind constantly. The valuations of situations and trends, institutions and policies reached in terms of the instrumental value premises also are only preliminary.

But we must not deceive ourselves on this point: the selection of the instrumental norm *has* material significance. The whole direction of our theoretical research actually becomes determined by this norm. We have given one particular set of valuations a *strategically favorable position* in the study. This is not a characteristic of our study in particular but of all research working under the same limits of research resources. It is not a bias, as the direction of research has been determined under conscious control and by help of explicit valuations. But measured by the standards of our ideal for research and keeping in mind all other possible sets of value premises, it is a one-sidedness in approach, and we should be fully aware of it. In the present volume time and space have, further, prevented the subsequent complementation of our results by applying alternative sets of value premises, except at a few points.[a]

Under these circumstances the utmost importance must be attached to the choice of the instrumental norm. In Chapter 1, Section 13, we have given the reasons why we have organized this book around a set of valuations which we have called the "American Creed."

6. *The Value-Loaded Terms.* This very set of dynamic valuations contained in the American Creed has actually, to a great extent and despite compromises with the inherited static valuations of social science, determined the object and direction of previous research on the Negro problem. We are thus keeping to the tradition, only attempting to clarify what we are doing. The scientific work on the Negro in politics has been centered upon disfranchisement. This means that the interest has been defined out of the notion that the extraordinary thing to be studied is the fact that often in America the Negro is not given the right to suffrage as other citizens. In the same vein the work on the Negro's legal status has been focused upon the specific disabilities of the Negro under the law. Negro education has likewise been studied under the main viewpoint of discrimination. The same is true of the research on the Negro as a breadwinner. Negro standards of living have been compared with those of the whites. His share in social welfare policy has been measured by the standards of equality. *Discrimination* has been the key word for most studies on the Negro problem. This very term—and all its synonyms and specifications—and the theoretical approach which it signifies are derived out of the precepts of the American Creed.

It has often been observed that these terms, and a great many other terms of more general import for social research, as, for instance, class and caste, are all value-loaded. Many scientists attempt to avoid what they rightly (as they are not specifying the value premises involved) conceive of as biases by choosing new terms for the same things which do not carry such apparent connotations of valuation. This attempt is in our view misdirected. Biases are not so easily eradicated. And in this case they signify—though in a concealed and therefore uncontrollable way—valuations necessary for the setting of scientific problems. "Without valuations," Professor Louis Wirth writes,

[a] See, for example, Chapter 23, Section 6.

"we have no interest, no sense of relevance or of significance, and, consequently, no object." [a]

The value-loaded terms have a meaning and represent a theoretical approach because the theoretical approach itself is determined by the valuations inherent in the governing *ethos* of a society. When this is seen clearly, and when those valuations are made explicit and, consequently, *the terms are defined in relation to the valuations*, then, and only then, are we in the position to use the terms freely without constantly endangering the theoretical analysis by permitting biases to slip in. There is thus no sense in inventing new scientific terms for the purpose. New terms for old things can only give a false security to ourselves and bewilder the general public. In the degree that the new terms would actually cover the facts we discussed in the old familiar terms—the facts which we *want* to discuss, because we *are interested* in them—they would soon become equally value-loaded in a society permeated by the same ideals and interests. Scientific terms become value-loaded because society is made up of human beings following purposes. A "disinterested social science" is, from this viewpoint, pure nonsense. It never existed, and it never will exist. We can make our thinking strictly rational in spite of this, but only by facing the valuations, not by evading them.

[a] In a letter to the author, September 29, 1939.

APPENDIX 3

A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE ON THE PRINCIPLE OF CUMULATION

In social science we have been drawing heavily on the notions and theories of the much farther developed natural sciences, particularly physics. The notion of equilibrium, for instance, has been in all our reasoning for centuries. Actually it is present in most research of the present day, even when it is not formally introduced. In most social research we have restricted our utilization of the equilibrium notion to that simple and static variant of it, the *stable equilibrium.* It is this equilibrium notion which is implicit in the sociological constructions of "maladjustment" and "adjustment" and all their several synonyms or near-synonyms, where equilibrium is thought of as having a virtual reality in determining the direction of change.[a] We propose the utilization of *other equilibrium notions* besides this simplest one. For dynamic analysis of the process of change in social relations, it is highly desirable that we disengage our minds from the stable equilibrium scheme of thinking. The other types of equilibrium notions are often better descriptions of social reality than the stable one.

If we succeed in placing a pencil upright on its end, it is also in equilibrium, but an unstable one, a "labile status" of balancing forces, as we easily find if we touch it. No "adjustment," "adaptation," or "accommodation" toward the original position will follow the application of a push, but only an accelerated movement away from the original state of balance. A third type of equilibrium is present when a pencil is rolling on a plane surface: it may come to rest anywhere. A fourth type is what we might call "created equilibrium," that is, arranging a disordered pile of pencils into a box by intelligent social engineering.

The most important need is to give place in our hypothetical explanatory scheme to a rational recognition of the cumulation of forces. In one branch of social science, economics, these various types of equilibrium notions have lately been used with great advantage. The principle of cumulation has given us, for the first time, something which approaches a real theory of economic dynamics.[b] In Chapter 3, Section 7, we referred to the theory of the "vicious circle" as a main explanatory scheme for this inquiry into the Negro problem; the scheme reappears in every part of our book. The following

[a] These equilibrium concepts have been used also as vehicles for introducing hidden valuations—i.e., bias—into research; see Appendix 2. Our interest in this appendix is directed only upon their usefulness as theoretical tools. To explain these other notions it is convenient to think in terms of analogies. The stable equilibrium is like a hanging pendulum, unmoving, and with no tendency to move unless jolted.

[b] For a simplified model of cumulative economic causation, see Gunnar Myrdal, *Monetary Equilibrium* (1939), pp. 24 ff.

brief notes are intended to give an abstract clarification of the theory and a perspective on some of its future potentialities as a method of social research.

In considering the Negro problem in its most abstract aspect, let us construct a much simplified mental model of dynamic social causation. We assume in this model society of our imagination a white majority and a Negro minority. We assume, further, that the interrelation between the two groups is in part determined by a specific degree of "race prejudice" on the side of the whites, directed against the Negroes. We assume the "plane of living" of the Negroes to be considerably lower than that of the whites. We take, as given, a mutual relationship between our two variables, and we assume this relationship to be of such a type that, on the one hand, the Negroes' plane of living is kept down by discrimination from the side of the whites while, on the other hand, the whites' reason for discrimination is partly dependent upon the Negroes' plane of living. The Negroes' poverty, ignorance, superstition, slum dwellings, health deficiencies, dirty appearance, disorderly conduct, bad odor and criminality stimulate and feed the antipathy of the whites for them. We assume, for the sake of simplicity, that society, in our abstract model, is in "balance" initially. By this we mean that conditions are static, that our two variables are exactly checking each other: there is—under these static conditions—just enough prejudice on the part of the whites to keep down the Negro plane of living to that level which maintains the specific degree of prejudice, or the other way around.

If now, in this hypothetically balanced state, for some reason or other, the Negro plane of living should be lowered, this will—other things being equal—in its turn increase white prejudice. Such an increase in white prejudice has the effect of pressing down still further the Negro plane of living, which again will increase prejudice, and so on, by way of mutual interaction between the two variables, *ad infinitum*. A cumulative process is thus set in motion which can have final effects quite out of proportion to the magnitude of the original push. The push might even be withdrawn after a time, and still a permanent change will remain or even the process of change will continue without a new balance in sight. If, instead, the initial change had been such a thing as a gift from a philanthropist to raise the Negro plane of living, a cumulative movement would have started in the other direction, having exactly the same causal mechanism. The vicious circle works both ways.

The Negroes' "plane of living" is, however, a composite entity. Let us, while retaining our major assumptions, approach a more realistic conception by splitting up this quantity into components, assuming that the cumulative principle works also in their causative interrelations. Besides "relative absense of race prejudice on the side of whites," we introduce a number of variables: levels of "Negro employment," "wages," "housing," "nutrition," "clothing," "health," "education," "stability in family relations," "manners," "cleanliness," "orderliness," "trustworthiness," "law observance," "loyalty to society at large," "absence of criminality" and so on. All these variables—according to our hypotheses—cumulate. In other words, we assume that a movement in any of the Negro variables in the direction toward the corresponding white levels will tend to decrease white prejudice. At the same time white prejudice is assumed to be, directly or indirectly, one of the causative factors effective in keeping the levels low for the several Negro variables. It is also our hypothesis that, on the whole, a rise in any single one of the Negro variables will tend to raise all the other Negro variables and thus, indirectly as well as directly, result in a cumulatively enforced effect upon white

prejudice. A rise in employment will tend to increase earnings; raise standards of living; and improve health, education, manners and law observance and *vice versa*; a better education is assumed to raise the chances of a higher salaried job, and *vice versa*; and so all the way through our whole system of variables. Each of the secondary changes has its effect on white prejudice.

If, in actual social life, the dynamics of the causal relations between the various factors in the Negro problem should correspond to our hypotheses, then—assuming again, for the sake of simplicity, an initially static state of balanced forces—*any change in any one of these factors, independent of the way in which it is brought about, will, by the aggregate weight of the cumulative effects running back and forth between them all, start the whole system moving* in one direction or the other as the case may be, with a speed depending upon the original push and the functions of causal interrelation within the system.

Our point is not simply that many forces are "working in the same direction." Originally we assumed that there was a balance between these forces, and that the system was static, until we introduced one push coming in at one point or the other. When the system starts rolling, it is true that *the changes in the forces*—though not all the forces themselves—work in one direction; but this is because the variables are assumed to be interlocked in such a causal mechanism that a change of any one causes the others to change *in the same direction*, with a secondary effect upon the first variable, and so on.

We may further notice that the "balance" assumed as initial status was not a stable equilibrium at all—of the type which is tacitly assumed in the notions of "maladjustment," "adjustment," "accommodation," "social lag"—and, further, that in our scheme of hypotheses there is not necessarily assumed to exist any new "balance," or "equilibrium," or "harmony," toward which the factors of the system "adjust" or "accommodate." In the utilization of this theoretical model on problems of actual social reality, the initial state of labile balance, which we assumed for simplicity in our demonstration, will, of course, never be found. What we shall have to study are *processes of systems actually rolling* in the one direction or the other, systems which are constantly subjected to all sorts of pushes from outside through all the variables, and which are moving because of the cumulative effect of all these pushes and the interaction between the variables.

The individual factors into which we split the Negroes' plane of living can, of course, be split again, and it is the purpose of scientific analysis to do so. The causal relations between the sub-factors, and between them and all other factors, will be assumed to be ruled by the same cumulative principle. White race prejudice, here assumed as the "cause" of discrimination, is not a solid and static factor. To begin with, it depends upon discrimination itself. If, for some reason—for example, the demand of the employer during a war emergency, or the ruling of a trade union—white workers actually come to work with Negroes as fellow workers, it has been experienced that prejudice will often adjust to the changed amount of discrimination. White prejudice itself can be split into a great number of beliefs and valuations; to a degree, both of these two types of factors are dependent upon each other, as we hinted at in Appendix 1, and, consequently, are under the rule of the cumulative principle.

Throughout this treatise on the Negro problem the model of dynamic causation—and the implied skepticism toward the idea of stable equilibrium—is kept steadily

in the back of our mind. A main viewpoint in our study of every single factor in the Negro problem is thus its interrelation with all other factors and their cumulative effect upon the status of the Negro. The principle of cumulation allows us to see that there is sense in the general notion of the "status of the Negro." We should, indeed, have liked to present in our study a general *index*, year by year or at least decade by decade, as a quantitative expression of the movement of the entire system we are studying: the status of the Negro in America. Such an index would have about the same significance as the general indices of production or prices or any other complex systems of interdependent variables. The index is an average. It should, for the same principal reasons, have to be broken down for regions, classes, and items, and this breaking down would have the same scientific function in an analysis. It would give quantitative precision to the concept of the general status of the Negro—a concept which, because of the cumulative principle, we cannot escape. And it always clarifies our reasoning to be compelled to calculate a quantitative value for a notion we use. Materials for such an index of (relative and absolute) Negro status are, to a great extent, available, and the general theory of the index offers a methodological basis for its construction. But the work of constructing and analyzing a general index of Negro status in America amounts to a major investigation in itself, and we must leave the matter as a proposal for further research.

Our chief task is to analyze the causal interrelation within the system itself as it works under the influence of outside pushes and the momentum of on-going processes within. The system is much more complicated than appears from our abstract representation. To begin with, all factors must be broken down by region, social class, age, sex and so on. As what we are studying is a race relation, the number of combinations increases by multiples for each classification applied. White prejudice, for instance, varies not only with the status of the white man, but also with the Negro's social class and the field of Negro behavior in relation to which race prejudice is active. There are also Negro prejudices in the system.

Each factor has its peculiarities and irregularities. White prejudice, for instance, changes not only as a reaction to actual changes in Negro plane of living, but also to expectations of such changes. The latter reaction may be totally different from the former: a higher plane of living among Negroes, when it is actually achieved, may be expected to effect a *decrease* of white prejudice, but the *expectation* of it for the future might *increase* prejudice, particularly in the South (even if its long-run effects—when it actually comes—will be, as we have assumed, a decrease of prejudice). It is possible, finally, that certain social classes of whites—say poor whites in the South—even in the fairly long-range perspective will react with increased prejudice against the Negro's approaching the white man's status.

The system thus becomes complicated, but the fundamental principle of cumulative causation remains. The scientific ideal is not only to define and analyze the factors, but to give for each one of them a measure of their actual quantitative strength in influencing the other factors, as well as a measure of their ability to be influenced themselves by outside forces. The time element becomes of paramount importance in these formulas. As we have exemplified for the factor of white prejudice, the effects might have different signs in the short and in the long run. Even when this is not the case, the effects will be spread differently along the time axis. A rise of employment, for instance, will almost immediately raise some standards of living, but a change in levels

of education or health are slow to be achieved, and their effects back on the other factors are in turn delayed, which slows up the whole process of cumulation. The system regularly develops under a great multitude of different outside pushes, primarily directed against almost every single factor. The actual pushes go in both directions, thus often *turning the system around on its axis as it is rolling*. Ideally, the scientific solution of the Negro problem should thus be given in the form of an interconnected series of quantitative equations, describing the movement of the actual system under various influences. That this complete, quantitative and truly scientific solution is far beyond the horizon does not need to be pointed out. But in principle it is possible to execute, and it remains as the scientific ideal steering our endeavors.

This conception of a great number of interdependent factors, mutually cumulative in their effects, disposes of the idea that there is *one* predominant factor, a "basic factor." This idea—mainly in the form of a vague conception of economic determinism—has been widely accepted in the writings on the Negro problem during the last decade. As we see the methodological problem, this one-factor hypothesis is not only theoretically unclear but is contradicted by easily ascertainable facts and factual relations. As a scientific approach it is narrow.[a]

The theoretical system of dynamic social causation we have selected corresponds more closely to the practical man's common-sense ideas about things than it does to the apprehension of reality met in many scientific writings on the Negro problem. The social scientist tends to rely too much on static notions and *a priori* to give too dominant a role to a "basic factor." The professional philanthropist, the Negro educator, the Negro trade unionist, the leaders of Negro defense organizations like the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League, or the Interracial Commission, and, indeed, the average well-meaning citizen of both colors, pragmatically applies this same hypothesis.[b] To use once more

[a] The usual economic one-factor theory is available in two extreme versions, depending upon the type of political teleology involved: (1) a radical Marxist version, where the expectation is an economic revolution which will change everything and even eradicate race prejudice; (2) a liberalistic version which does not expect an economic revolution and which—as the assumption is that no significant change can be brought about except by tackling the "basic factor," the economic system—is pessimistic about any type of induced change. There are all sorts of intermediary positions and also compromises toward recognizing that factors other than the economic one have some influence. But the one-factor theory always implies a fatalistic tendency and prevents a rational conception of interdependence and cumulative dynamic causation. See Appendix 2, Section 3.

[b] The best formulation of our hypothesis available in the literature is, thus, to be found in a book by a practical man writing without scientific pretensions but out of lifelong experiences: "There is a vicious circle in caste. At the outset, the despised group is usually inferior in certain of the accepted standards of the controlling class. Being inferior, members of the degraded caste are denied the privileges and opportunities of their fellows and so are pushed still further down and then are regarded with that much less respect, and therefore are more rigorously denied advantages, and so around and around the vicious circle. Even when the movement starts to reverse itself—as it most certainly has in the case of the Negro—there is a desperately long unwinding as a slight increase in good will gives a little greater chance and this leads to a little higher accomplishment and that to increased respect and so slowly upward toward equality of opportunity, of regard, and of status." (Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* [1931], p. 200.) To this it should only be added that even if the unwinding process is working with time lags so is the opposite movement. In spite of the time lags, the theory of the vicious circle is a cause rather for optimism than for pessimism. The cumulative principle works both ways.

our parallel from modern economic theory: when the economists during the last two decades abandoned the classical static equilibrium approach and went ahead to construct a dynamic theory of causal interrelations in a process of change, what they actually did was to apply the pragmatic notions of bankers, businessmen, and labor leaders and try to systematize them. This revolutionized economic theory and had great importance for the scientific planning of economic policy. A rational strategy in the Negro problem also assumes a theory of dynamic causation.[a]

[a] Some remarks on this problem are made in Chapter 3, Section 7.

APPENDIX 4

NOTE ON THE MEANING OF REGIONAL TERMS AS USED IN THIS BOOK

The word *America* is used as a synonym for continental United States.

The word *South* is not used consistently throughout the whole book, since various investigators upon whose work we have drawn have had variant definitions. In each case we have tried to make the definition clear by context or footnotes. In a sense the geographical boundaries of the South are "ideal-typical," and it is in this sense that we shall speak of the South when we are not using statistics. Some have stressed that there are many Souths, but in the Negro problem there are also reasons for speaking about one South.

> . . . if it can be said there are many Souths, the fact remains that there is also one South. That is to say, it is easy to trace throughout the region (roughly delimited by the boundaries of the former Confederate States of America, but shading over into some of the border states, notably Kentucky, also) a fairly definite mental pattern, associated with a fairly definite social pattern—a complex of established relationships and habits of thought, sentiments, prejudices, standards and values, and associations of ideas, which, if it is not common strictly to every group of white people in the South, is still common in one appreciable measure or another, and in some part or another, to all but relatively negligible ones.[a]

The roughness of these ideal-typical boundaries for the South is suggested when we examine various criteria for defining the South, as in Table 1. When we use statistics, we refer either to the census definition of the South (16 states and the District of Columbia) or to the school-segregation-law definition (17 states and the District of Columbia). These definitions differ solely by the inclusion of Missouri in the latter. Sometimes statistics for all these states are not available, and we are forced to use an artificially abbreviated definition but without pretense that this includes all of the South.

The *North* is a residual term, comprising all states not in the South: it thus includes all Western states in the historical period being discussed. Sometimes, in order to call special attention to the Western states, we speak of the "North and West." When we wish to restrict our discussion to the northeastern quadrant of the country, we speak of "the Northern states east of the Mississippi River."

Many authors have defined different regions *within* the South. When we cite them we use their definitions. When we use regional terms on our own authority, we follow these definitions unless necessity forces us to specify other definitions: *Lower South*, or

[a] W. F. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941), p. viii.

Deep South, includes Florida, Texas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and South Carolina; *Upper South* includes North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia; *Border states* include Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia and sometimes Missouri.

TABLE 1

VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF THE SOUTH

State	Seceded in Civil War	Slave States, 1860	Laws prohibiting intermarriage (excluding Western States)	School segregation laws	Legal and illegal forced school segregation (excluding Western States)	Jim Crow railways	Jim Crow street cars	South of Mason-Dixon Line 39°43'26.3"	Census	White Primary
Oklahoma	Choctaw Nation	Not a State	x	x	x	x	x		x	
Texas	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	part
Louisiana	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Arkansas	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Mississippi	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Alabama	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Tennessee	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	part
Florida	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Georgia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
South Carolina	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
North Carolina	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	part
Virginia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
West Virginia		Not a State	x	x	x				x	
Maryland		x	x	x	x	x			x	
Kentucky		x	x	x	x	x			x	
Delaware		x	x	x	x	optional			x	
Missouri		x	x	x	x					
District of Columbia		x		x	x				x	
New Jersey					part					
Indiana			x		part					
Kansas					part					
Illinois					part					
Ohio					part					
Pennsylvania					part					

Equivalent to Slave States east of Ohio. Boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland.

APPENDIX 5

A PARALLEL TO THE NEGRO PROBLEM

In every society there are at least two groups of people, besides the Negroes, who are characterized by high social visibility expressed in physical appearance, dress, and patterns of behavior, and who have been "suppressed." We refer to women and children. Their present status, as well as their history and their problems in society, reveal striking similarities to those of the Negroes. In studying a special problem like the Negro problem, there is always a danger that one will develop a quite incorrect idea of its uniqueness. It will, therefore, give perspective to the Negro problem and prevent faulty interpretations to sketch some of the important similarities between the Negro problem and the women's problem.

In the historical development of these problem groups in America there have been much closer relations than is now ordinarily recorded. In the earlier common law, women and children were placed under the jurisdiction of the paternal power. When a legal status had to be found for the imported Negro servants in the seventeenth century, the nearest and most natural analogy was the status of women and children. The ninth commandment—linking together women, servants, mules, and other property—could be invoked, as well as a great number of other passages of Holy Scripture. We do not intend to follow here the interesting developments of the institution of slavery in America through the centuries, but merely wish to point out the paternalistic idea which held the slave to be a sort of family member and in some way—in spite of all differences—placed him beside women and children under the power of the *paterfamilias*.

There was, of course, even in the beginning, a tremendous difference both in actual status of these different groups and in the tone of sentiment in the respective relations. In the decades before the Civil War, in the conservative and increasingly antiquarian ideology of the American South, woman was elevated as an ornament and looked upon with pride, while the Negro slave became increasingly a chattel and a ward. The paternalistic construction came, however, to good service when the South had to build up a moral defense for slavery, and it is found everywhere in the apologetic literature up to the beginning of the Civil War. For illustration, some passages from George Fitzhugh's *Sociology for the South*, published in 1854, may be quoted as typical:

> The kind of slavery is adapted to the men enslaved. Wives and apprentices are slaves; not in theory only, but often in fact. Children are slaves to their parents, guardians and teachers. Imprisoned culprits are slaves. Lunatics and idiots are slaves also.[a]

A beautiful example and illustration of this kind of communism, is found in the

[a] P. 86.

instance of the Patriarch Abraham. His wives and his children, his men servants and his maid servants, his camels and his cattle, were all equally his property. He could sacrifice Isaac or a ram, just as he pleased. He loved and protected all, and all shared, if not equally, at least fairly, in the products of their light labour. Who would not desire to have been a slave of that old Patriarch, stern and despotic as he was? . . . Pride, affection, self-interest, moved Abraham to protect, love and take care of his slaves. The same motives operate on all masters, and secure comfort, competency and protection to the slave. A man's wife and children are his slaves, and do they not enjoy, in common with himself, his property?[a]

Other protagonists of slavery resort to the some argument:

In this country we believe that the general good requires us to deprive the whole female sex of the right of self-government. They have no voice in the formation of the laws which dispose of their persons and property. . . . We treat all minors much in the same way. . . . Our plea for all this is, that the good of the whole is thereby most effectually promoted. . . .[b]

Significant manifestations of the result of this disposition [on the part of the Abolitionists] to consider their own light a surer guide than the word of God, are visible in the anarchical opinions about human governments, civil and ecclesiastical, and on the rights of women, which have found appropriate advocates in the abolition publications. . . . If our women are to be emancipated from subjection to the law which God has imposed upon them, if they are to quit the retirement of domestic life, where they preside in stillness over the character and destiny of society; . . . if, in studied insult to the authority of God, we are to renounce in the marriage contract all claim to obedience, we shall soon have a country over which the genius of Mary Wolstonecraft would delight to preside, but from which all order and all virtue would speedily be banished. There is no form of human excellence before which we bow with profounder deference than that which appears in a delicate woman, . . . and there is no deformity of human character from which we turn with deeper loathing than from a woman forgetful of her nature, and clamourous for the vocation and rights of men.[c]

. . . Hence her [Miss Martineau's] wild chapter about the "Rights of Women," her groans and invectives because of their exclusion from the offices of the state, the right of suffrage, the exercise of political authority. In all this, the error of the declaimer consists in the very first movement of the mind. "The Rights of *Women*" may all be conceded to the sex, yet the rights of *men* withheld from them.[d]

The parallel goes, however, considerably deeper than being only a structural part in the defense ideology built up around slavery. Women at that time lacked a number of rights otherwise belonging to all free white citizens of full age.

So chivalrous, indeed, was the ante-bellum South that its women were granted scarcely any rights at all. Everywhere they were subjected to political, legal, educational, and social and economic restrictions. They took no part in governmental affairs, were without

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 297.

[b] Charles Hodge, "The Bible Argument on Slavery," in E. N. Elliott (editor), *Cotton Is King*, and *Pro-Slavery Arguments* (1860), pp. 859-860.

[c] Albert T. Bledsoe, *An Essay on Liberty and Slavery* (1857), pp. 223-225.

[d] W. Gilmore Simms, "The Morals of Slavery," in *The Pro-Slavery Argument* (1853), p. 248. See also Simms' "Address on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the Spartanburg Female College," August 12, 1855.

legal rights over their property or the guardianship of their children, were denied adequate educational facilities, and were excluded from business and the professions.[a]

The same was very much true of the rest of the country and of the rest of the world. But there was an especially close relation in the South between the subordination of women and that of Negroes. This is perhaps best expressed in a comment attributed to Dolly Madison, that the Southern wife was "the chief slave of the harem."[b]

From the very beginning, the fight in America for the liberation of the Negro slaves was, therefore, closely coordinated with the fight for women's emancipation. It is interesting to note that the Southern states, in the early beginning of the political emancipation of women during the first decades of the nineteenth century, had led in the granting of legal rights to women. This was the time when the South was still the stronghold of liberal thinking in the period leading up to and following the Revolution. During the same period the South was also the region where Abolitionist societies flourished, while the North was uninterested in the Negro problem. Thereafter the two movements developed in close interrelation and were both gradually driven out of the South.

The women suffragists received their political education from the Abolitionist movement. Women like Angelina Grimke, Sarah Grimke, and Abby Kelly began their public careers by speaking for Negro emancipation and only gradually came to fight for women's rights. The three great suffragists of the nineteenth century—Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony—first attracted attention as ardent campaigners for the emancipation of the Negro and the prohibition of liquor. The women's movement got much of its public support by reason of its affiliation with the Abolitionist movement: the leading male advocates of woman suffrage before the Civil War were such Abolitionists as William Lloyd Garrison, Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, Horace Greeley and Frederick Douglass. The women had nearly achieved their aims, when the Civil War induced them to suppress all tendencies distracting the federal government from the prosecution of the War. They were apparently fully convinced that victory would bring the suffrage to them as well as to the Negroes.[c]

The Union's victory, however, brought disappointment to the women suffragists. The arguments "the Negro's hour" and "a political necessity" met and swept aside all their arguments for leaving the word "male" out of the 14th Amendment and putting "sex" alongside "race" and "color" in the 15th Amendment.[d] Even their Abolitionist friends

[a] Virginius Dabney, *Liberalism in the South* (1932), p. 361.

[b] Cited in Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (1842, first edition 1837), Vol. II, p. 81.

[c] Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler, *Woman Suffrage and Politics* (1923), pp. 32 ff.

[d] The relevant sections of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution are (underlining ours):

14th Amendment

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the *male* inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion

turned on them, and the Republican party shied away from them. A few Democrats, really not in favor of the extension of the suffrage to anyone, sought to make political capital out of the women's demands, and said with Senator Cowan of Pennsylvania, "If I have no reason to offer why a Negro man shall not vote, I have no reason why a white woman shall not vote." Charges of being Democrats and traitors were heaped on the women leaders. Even a few Negroes, invited to the women's convention of January, 1869, denounced the women for jeopardizing the black man's chances for the vote. The War and Reconstruction Amendments had thus sharply divided the women's problem from the Negro problem in actual politics.[a] The deeper relation between the two will, however, be recognized up till this day. Du Bois' famous ideological manifesto *The Souls of Black Folk*[b] is, to mention only one example, an ardent appeal on behalf of women's interests as well as those of the Negro.

This close relation is no accident. The ideological and economic forces behind the two movements—the emancipation of women and children and the emancipation of

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which the number of such *male* citizens shall bear to the whole number of *male* citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

15th Amendment

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of *race, color or previous condition of servitude.*

[a] While there was a definite affinity between the Abolitionist movement and the woman suffrage movement, there was also competition and, perhaps, antipathy, between them that widened with the years. As early as 1833, when Oberlin College opened its doors to women —the first college to do so—the Negro men students joined other men students in protesting (Catt and Shuler, *op. cit.*, p. 13). The Anti-Slavery Convention held in London in 1840 refused to seat the women delegates from America, and it was on this instigation that the first women's rights convention was called (*ibid.*, p. 17). After the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which gave legal rights to Negroes but not to women, the women's movement split off completely from the Negroes' movement, except for such a thing as the support of both movements by the rare old liberal, Frederick Douglass. An expression of how far the two movements had separated by 1903 was given by one of the leaders of the women's movement at that time, Anna Howard Shaw, in answer to a question posed to her at a convention in New Orleans:

"'What is your purpose in bringing your convention to the South? Is it the desire of suffragists to force upon us the social equality of black and white women? Political equality lays the foundation for social equality. If you give the ballot to women, won't you make the black and white woman equal politically and therefore lay the foundation for a future claim of social equality?' . . .

"I read the question aloud. Then the audience called for the answer, and I gave it in these words, quoted as accurately as I can remember them·

"'If political equality is the basis of social equality, and if by granting political equality you lay the foundation for a claim of social equality, I can only answer that you have already laid that claim. You did not wait for woman suffrage, but disfranchised both your black and white women, thus making them politically equal. But you have done more than that. You have put the ballot into the hands of your black men, thus making them the political superiors of your white women. Never before in the history of the world have men made former slaves the political masters of their former mistresses!'" (*The Story of a Pioneer* [1915], pp. 311-312.)

[b] 1903.

Negroes—have much in common and are closely interrelated. Paternalism was a pre-industrial scheme of life, and was gradually becoming broken in the nineteenth century. Negroes and women, both of whom had been under the yoke of the paternalistic system, were both strongly and fatefully influenced by the Industrial Revolution. For neither group is the readjustment process yet consummated. Both are still problem groups. The women's problem is the center of the whole complex of problems of how to reorganize the institution of the family to fit the new economic and ideological basis, a problem which is not solved in any part of the Western world unless it be in the Soviet Union or Palestine. The family problem in the Negro group, as we find when analyzing the Negro family, has its special complications, centering in the tension and conflict between the external patriarchal system in which the Negro was confined as a slave and his own family structure.

As in the Negro problem, most men have accepted as self-evident, until recently, the doctrine that women had inferior endowments in most of those respects which carry prestige, power, and advantages in society, but that they were, at the same time, superior in some other respects. The arguments, when arguments were used, have been about the same: smaller brains, scarcity of geniuses and so on. The study of women's intelligence and personality has had broadly the same history as the one we record for Negroes. As in the case of the Negro, women themselves have often been brought to believe in their inferiority of endowment. As the Negro was awarded his "place" in society, so there was a "woman's place." In both cases the rationalization was strongly believed that men, in confining them to this place, did not act against the true interest of the subordinate groups. The myth of the "contented women," who did not want to have suffrage or other civil rights and equal opportunities, had the same social function as the myth of the "contented Negro." In both cases there was probably—in a static sense—often some truth behind the myth.

As to the character of the deprivations, upheld by law or by social conventions and the pressure of public opinion, no elaboration will here be made. As important and illustrative in the comparison, we shall, however, stress the conventions governing woman's education. There was a time when the most common idea was that she was better off with little education. Later the doctrine developed that she should not be denied education, but that her education should be of a special type, fitting her for her "place" in society and usually directed more on training her hands than her brains.

Political franchise was not granted to women until recently. Even now there are, in all countries, great difficulties for a woman to attain public office. The most important disabilities still affecting her status are those barring her attempt to earn a living and to attain promotion in her work. As in the Negro's case, there are certain "women's jobs," traditionally monopolized by women. They are regularly in the low salary bracket and do not offer much of a career. All over the world men have used the trade unions to keep women out of competition. Woman's competition has, like the Negro's, been particularly obnoxious and dreaded by men because of the low wages women, with their few earning outlets, are prepared to work for. Men often dislike the very idea of having women on an equal plane as co-workers and competitors, and usually they find it even more "unnatural" to work under women. White people generally hold similar attitudes toward Negroes. On the other hand, it is said about women that they prefer men as bosses and do not want to work under another woman. Negroes often feel the same way about working under other Negroes.

In personal relations with both women and Negroes, white men generally prefer a less professional and more human relation, actually a more paternalistic and protective position—somewhat in the nature of patron to client in Roman times, and like the corresponding strongly paternalistic relation of later feudalism. As in Germany it is said that every gentile has his pet Jew, so it is said in the South that every white has his "pet nigger," or—in the upper strata—several of them. We sometimes marry the pet woman, carrying out the paternalistic scheme. But even if we do not, we tend to deal kindly with her as a client and a ward, not as a competitor and an equal.

In drawing a parallel between the position of, and feeling toward, women and Negroes we are uncovering a fundamental basis of our culture. Although it is changing, atavistic elements sometimes unexpectedly break through even in the most emancipated individuals. The similarities in the women's and the Negroes' problems are not accidental. They were, as we have pointed out, originally determined in a paternalistic order of society. The problems remain, even though paternalism is gradually declining as an ideal and is losing its economic basis. In the final analysis, women are still hindered in their competition by the function of procreation; Negroes are laboring under the yoke of the doctrine of unassimilability which has remained although slavery is abolished. The second barrier is actually much stronger than the first in America today. But the first is more eternally inexorable.[a]

[a] Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941), Chapter 22, "One Sex a Social Problem," pp. 398-426.

APPENDIX 6

PRE-WAR CONDITIONS OF THE NEGRO WAGE EARNER IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS[a]

1. General Characteristics of Negro Jobs

Many of the generalizations made in Chapter 13 will be corroborated in this Appendix by data on conditions in particular lines of work. The selection of industries and occupations that we shall use may be somewhat arbitrary. The reason is that we do not intend to give anything like an exhaustive description; our purpose is rather to emphasize the fact that general industrial trends, race prejudice, and other factors have worked out somewhat differently for different industries and occupations. For that reason, we need include only examples on how the Negro has fared in different types of cases.[b] On the one hand, there are the so-called "Negro jobs," i.e., those industries in which, as far as the South is concerned, most of the workers are Negro. On the other hand, there are those industries which, even in the South, have only a minority of Negro workers. Finally, there are industries which are exclusively or almost exclusively for whites.[c]

[a] The subsequent "case studies" are based, mainly, on a previously cited series of unpublished research memoranda on "Negro Labor and Its Problems," prepared by and under the direction of Paul H. Norgren. He was assisted by Lloyd H. Bailer (automobiles), James Healy (lumber), Herbert R. Northrup (tobacco and longshore work) and Arnold M. Rose (service industries exclusive of domestic service and slaughtering and meat packing). Most of the data on the Negro in domestic service have been drawn from a memorandum by Gladys L. Palmer ("A Memorandum Report on Negroes in Domestic Service") which was worked out in conjunction with this series. For more recent information, we have depended in part on an unpublished doctor's thesis by Herbert R. Northrup, "Negro Labor and Union Policies in the South" (Harvard University), in which certain parts of Dr. Norgren's materials have been supplemented and brought forward to the beginning of 1942.

(Editor's Note: Since Dr. Myrdal's book went to press, Dr. Northrup has rewritten his thesis for publication by Harper & Brothers under the title, *Organized Labor and the Negro.*)

[b] The length of each section, for the same reason, is not determined by the actual importance to the Negro of the various lines of work.

[c] Obviously there are no distinct borderlines between these various groups. There are no Negro jobs in the sense that the Negro, at least in the South, has a complete job monopoly in certain occupations. On the other hand, when Negroes do compete with white workers in "non-Negro jobs," there is usually some concentration of Negroes in certain specific occupations. Even industries excluding Negroes may use Negroes exclusively for work carrying a social stigma (charwomen, toilet attendants). The question of what occupations should be considered as Negro jobs is to be answered somewhat differently depending upon what kind of occupational or industrial classification is used for the analysis. An enumeration of "Negro jobs," for these reasons, must be arbitrary to some extent.

Even those should be considered, for it is just as important to find out why the Negro has failed to gain a foothold in a particular industry as it is to describe his condition in occupations where he has been allowed to work.

Table 1 shows the industries in which significant numbers of Negroes are employed. A reference to it, as each of the specific industries is taken up, will serve to give basic facts relevant to the discussion and to place the industry under consideration in perspective.

We intend to begin with the "Negro jobs," in which the bulk of the Negro workers are concentrated. Those segregated or semi-segregated occupations in which, as far as the South is concerned, one-half or more of the workers are Negro, include the following principal groups: domestic service; home laundering; certain other service occupations; home sewing; lumber milling; turpentine farming and distilling; fertilizer manufacturing; unskilled work in building construction; maintenance-of-way work on railroads; longshore work; delivery and messenger work; work as helpers and laborers in stores; unskilled work in blast furnaces and steel rolling mills; tobacco rehandling and other unskilled work in tobacco factories.[a] To this list could be added two traditionally Negro jobs which have been expanding rapidly since 1910, but in such a way that the Negroes have gained less than the whites, so that their share in the employment has been cut to less than one-half. These are unskilled work in building, repairing, and maintenance of roads, streets, and sewers; and work as teamsters, truck drivers and so forth. In the South, the proportion of Negro workers in these occupations, by 1930, was 42 and 32 per cent, respectively.[b] It is apparent that motorization was the cause both of the increase in total numbers thus occupied and of its growing attractiveness to white labor. As we shall find, there is a similar development under way in some of the other "Negro job" industries as well. In other such industries, Negroes have been able to maintain their traditional position, at least up until 1930.

Virtually all these "Negro job" industries have the common feature that they are regarded as undesirable from one or several viewpoints. Many of them carry a social stigma, particularly in the South, where they tend to be despised not only because they are located at the bottom of the occupational ladder, but also because of the very fact that they are traditionally "Negro jobs." The average wage level is low; in the South it tends to be even lower in relation to what is paid for skilled work than it is in the North. Most of the male Negro jobs call for outdoor work. They are usually

> . . . characterized by a much greater degree of intermittency in employment than most white jobs in the South. . . . Thus, all of the outdoor occupations are subject to frequent "layoffs" in rainy weather. Winter cold curtails employment in turpentine extraction and, to some extent, also in building work; and seasonal variations in demand seriously affect work opportunities in lumber and fertilizer production. Business depressions infringe far more heavily on the lumber and construction industries than on textiles, garment-making, and most of the other southern industry-sectors where whites hold the bulk of the jobs.

Moreover, several of the Negro jobs are characterized

> . . . by a high degree of physical and psychological disutility. Practically all of the occupations are "day labor" jobs, involving long and strenuous muscular exertion,

[a] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population*, Vol. 4; Table 11 of state tables. See also *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4; pp. 434-534.

[b] *Idem.*

TABLE 1

NONAGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIES AND SERVICE GROUPS HAVING 15,000 NEGRO WORKERS OR MORE: 1930

Industry and Service Group[a]	Number of Negro Workers, 1930 (in thousands)			Negro Workers as per-cent of All Workers, 1930	Per cent Females Among Negro Workers, 1930	Number of Workers in 1930 to Number of Workers in 1910 ×100	
	United States	The South	The North and West			All Workers	Negro Workers
Forestry	26	25	1	13.3	1.2	109	100
Coal mines	58	46	12	8.4	.1	103	143
Building industry	181	97	84	7.0	.1	101	77
Chemical and allied industries	48	34	14	7.7	1.9	270	241
Fertilizer factories	17	b	b	60.4	.7	201	220
Cigar and tobacco factories	34	31	3	22.9	54.0	77	135
Clay, glass and stone industries	29	15	14	7.8	2.6	101	101
Clothing industries	35	11	24	4.4	48.0	116	303
Suit, coat, and overall factories	15	b	b	4.8	16.7	82	158
Food and allied industries	57	31	26	6.2	20.8	169	278
Slaughter and packing houses	18	5	13	11.2	7.6	187	349
Iron, steel, vehicle and machinery industries	177	69	108	5.4	1.0	183	368
Automobile factories	26	3	23	4.0	1.1	606	4,551
Blast furnaces and steel rolling mills	53	15	38	8.5	.6	155	291
Car and railroad shops	16	b	b	7.2	.8	174	368
Lumber and furniture industries	139	132	7	16.1	2.4	108	110
Saw and planing mills	114	112	2	25.1	1.4	97	102
Paper, printing and allied industries	17	8	9	2.2	12.3	161	302
Textile industries	26	21	5	2.1	24.4	132	231
Cotton mills	16	15	1	3.9	18.0	118	226
Miscellaneous manufacturing industries	141	100	41	6.7	22.4	120	114
Independent hand trades	28	19	9	7.8	76.2	42	53
Turpentine farms and distilleries	33	b	b	75.2	.9	111	103
Construction and maintenance of roads, streets, sewers and bridges	64	48	16	14.1	.5	191	174
Garages, greasing stations and automobile laundries	44	19	25	10.4	.4	b	b
Postal service	18	6	12	6.3	3.3	167	301
Steam railroads	163	105	58	10.3	1.1	102	175
Truck transfer and cab companies	41	b	b	8.5	.6	131	98
Water transportation[d]	45	b	b	15.0	.7	135	139
Wholesale and retail trades, except automobiles[e]	192	121	71	3.6	8.4	150	158
Public service (not elsewhere classified)[f]	62	38	24	5.9	5.6	197	238
Recreation and amusement	35	16	19	7.9	16.0	b	b
Other professional and semi-professional services[g]	138	103	35	4.7	48.1	b	c
Hotels, restaurants, boarding houses	228	124	104	16.8	46.4	b	b
Laundries and cleaning, dyeing and pressing shops	78	43	35	18.6	65.3	h	h
Other domestic and personal service[i]	1,174	806	368	38.6	83.6	b	b

Sources: Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. 3, Part 1, p. 23, and Vol. 5, pp. 408–587. *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 302–433.

[a] Heterogeneous sub-groups, such as "other iron and steel and machinery factories," are not listed, even when they had more than 15,000 Negro workers in 1930.

[b] Data not available.

[c] Includes 20,000 Negro seamstresses.

[d] Largest group of Negro workers were longshoremen and stevedores (25,000).

[e] Includes truck drivers, delivery men, laborers, porters, and helpers in stores (100,000 Negro workers)

[f] Largest group of Negro workers was 32,000 "other laborers."

[g] Includes 25,000 Negro clergymen and 54,000 Negro school teachers.

[h] Figures available only for laundries: all workers—199; Negro workers—395.

[i] Largest groups of Negro workers were: cooks (206,000); other servants (494,000); home launderers and laundresses (270,000).

usually in the form of "identical motions," continuously repeated. The high subjective undesirability of such work, as compared with even the most monotonous factory production-machine job, is universally acknowledged. In addition, there are other "disagreeableness factors" attached to the conditions of work in particular Negro jobs which push them even farther down in the utility scale. In logging it is chiefly risk of accident and disease; in sawmills, accident risk and noise; in fertilizer plants, dust and disagreeable odors; in road construction, excessive exposure to the elements, and so on.[a]

Before we go further in our description of the male "Negro jobs" we should consider the one occupation which is most important of all to the nonfarm female Negro: domestic service.

2. Domestic Service

The range of job opportunities, as previously stated, is more limited for Negro women than for Negro men. There is a similar sex differential in the white population, but the hardship worked on Negro women is much more pronounced. We have already emphasized the fact that, in 1930, as many as 1,150,000 Negro women earned their living as workers in domestic service and other service industries. This means that only one in seven of all Negro female workers gainfully occupied in nonagricultural pursuits worked in manufacturing, commerce, trade or any other nonservice occupation. The largest group among the female Negro service workers consisted of those employed by private households. They numbered 690,000 and thus constituted somewhat more than half of all Negro female workers in nonagricultural pursuits. Including males, there were about 750,000 Negroes working as servants of private families, which means that almost 40 per cent of all workers in this field were Negro.[b] It was much lower, however, for certain groups of higher and "intermediate" servants like "housekeepers and stewards" (8 per cent) and "nurses, not trained" (11 per cent) than for cooks and other household servants, of which almost half were Negro.

About two-thirds of the Negro servants reside in the South and one-third in the North and West.[c] The South had shown an increase of over 40 per cent from 1910 to 1930, but outside the South there were between two and three times more Negro servants in 1930 than in 1910. Indeed, more than half the total increase occurred in the North and the West.[d] There were seven Northern states, where one-fourth or more of the

[a] Paul H. Norgren and Associates, "Negro Labor and its Problems," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Part 1, pp. 6-7.

[b] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 303 and 325-326. See also *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 5; pp. 412-587. It is somewhat difficult to ascertain which service workers can be considered as employees of private households. The following groups were included in the figure cited in the text: cooks, other servants, housekeepers, and stewards which were not employed by hotels, restaurants, etc., and nurses (not trained).

[c] The census definitions of North, South and West are used throughout this Appendix.

[d] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 4, State Table 11; *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 303-309; and *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 434-534. The comparison is not quite exact. In the first place the Census designation "servants" includes not only employees in private families but also cooks, maids, etc. (but not waiters and waitresses), in hotels, restaurants, eating places and lodging houses; housekeepers and nurses, on the other hand, are not included. Second, data for 1910 and 1930 are not quite comparable.

servants were Negro. The percentage of Negroes was still higher in the South; in ten states it was 85 per cent or more, and there were four Southern states where only one servant out of twenty was a white person.

The gain in employment of Negro servants in private families, which may have amounted to more than 300,000 new jobs, was due to several factors. One was the enlargement of the market for the Negro domestic servant brought about by the northward migration of Negroes, and the simultaneous decline in the number of young immigrant girls in the North. A second was a general expansion in the field. It has been estimated that the total number of domestic workers in private families has increased by about one-third from 1910 to 1930.[a] It seems that but a small part of this increase was for white workers; most of the expansion was a Negro gain.[b]

It should be noted, however, that this general expansion was only half as great, proportionally, as the increase in number of nonfarm families.[c] This circumstance should be considered, for it may serve as a warning against any exaggerated hopes that the Negroes, even if they fail to get a real place in other parts of the nonagricultural economy, can always be assured of having an increasing number of job opportunities as servants to private families. True, we have reason to assume that the increase in the number of nonfarm families will continue for a long time and that there will be a smaller number of white girls willing to work as domestics. If the Negro population becomes more dispersed over the entire North and West—which probably will happen gradually, but only in so far as some jobs can be found also for Negro men—this, too, will increase the opportunities for Negro domestics. Yet, it should never be overlooked that the proportion of families having full-time servants is probably shrinking, owing to a number of factors: smaller number of children; higher wages for domestics; mechanization of home work and increased use of processed foods; transfer of service work from homes to specialized service establishments. These trends will limit the job opportunities for Negro women particularly where they now have a near-monopoly on this kind of work. As for the North and the West, we should not take it for granted that the chances of Negro domestics will increase in exact proportion to the difficulties of finding white workers. Many housewives outside the South have a prejudice against using Negro women in their homes, partly because they believe them to be less dependable, partly because they shun the contact with an alien race. It is quite probable that the opening up of a public discussion on venereal diseases during recent years has increased the reluctance of many white women to have colored help. Those who do use Negro domestics are increasingly insisting on "health cards." The prevalence of such attitudes has never been adequately studied, but we have reason to assume that such attitudes con

[a] David Weintraub and Harry Magdoff, "The Service Industries in Relation to Employment Trends," *Econometrica* (October, 1940), p. 304. These authors made these computations from data in Daniel Carson, assisted by Henriette Liebman, *Labor Supply and Employment, Preliminary Statement of Estimates Prepared and Methods Used*, W.P.A. National Research Project (November, 1939).

[b] At this writing there are no data on household servants available from the 1940 Census which could be compared with those in the 1930 Census. It seems, however, that the proportion of Negroes among the domestic workers in the South has been declining (see Chapter 13, Table 3).

[c] There were about 14,000,000 nonfarm families in 1910 and over 23,000,000 in 1930. (*Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 6; p. 11.)

stitute a factor of some significance. The depression of the 'thirties seems to have brought about a great decline in household employment. A survey of subscribers to *Fortune* magazine revealed that half the families who had had a servant in 1933 had none in 1938.[a]

It must be considered that the market for domestic service is much more restricted in the North and West than it is in the South. According to the Study of Consumer Purchases for 1935-1936, no less than 61 per cent of the nonrelief white families in a sample of Southeastern villages had some expenditure for household help. For a sample of small cities in the North Central region, on the other hand, the corresponding proportion was only 22 per cent, and it was but 17 per cent for a group of villages in the Middle Atlantic and North Central areas.[b] Large cities also show a similar differential between the South and the rest of the country. It is particularly interesting to find that, in the South, among families with an income of less than $1,000, or even less than $500, there is a significant number who have domestics (Table 2). Among well-to-do

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF NONRELIEF WHITE FAMILIES, IN SELECTED INCOME GROUPS, WHO HAD EXPENDITURE FOR HOUSEHOLD HELP: 1935-1936

Income group	Atlanta	New York	Chicago	South-eastern villages	North Central small cities	Middle Atlantic and North Central villages
$ 500– 749	8	..	..	23	4	8
750– 999	20	..	..	39	7	9
1,000–1,249	17	3	5	57	10	11
.....						
2,000–2,499	51[a]	22	15[a]	80	34	29
.....						
5,000–7,499[b]	99	89	78	100	89	70

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases*, "Family Expenditure in Chicago, 1935–36" (1939), Bulletin No. 642, Vol. 2, p. 35; "Family Expenditure in New York City, 1935–36" (1939), Bulletin No. 643, Vol. 2, p. 36; "Family Expenditure in Three Southeastern Cities, 1935–36" (1940), Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 2, p. 39, and United States Department of Agriculture, *Family Expenditure for Housing and Household Operation*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 432, Urban and Village Series (1941), pp. 50–51.

[a] Approximate figure.

[b] For the three last columns: $5,000–9,999.

families in the South, the practice of having hired help is almost universal. In the North and West, on the other hand, there are quite a few households in the higher income brackets which get along without any servants, and it is extremely rare that low income families have any expenditures for outside assistance in their homes. Moreover, it seems that in the South, oftener than elsewhere, servants are hired on a full-time basis. According to the samples for small cities and villages, half the Northern families having

[a] "The Servant Problem," *Fortune*, March, 1938, p. 114 This figure and other references in this section to the *Fortune* article are quoted by permission of *Fortune* magazine.

[b] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Family Expenditure for Housing and Household Operation*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 432, Urban and Village Series (1941), pp. 50-51.

servants hired them for only a few hours a day, or a few days a week, but in the South more than two-thirds of these families had full-time domestics.[a]

These findings are highly significant. They confirm the impression that there is a limit to further increases in the employment of Negro domestics. In the South, where such a large part of the demand comes from families in the middle, or even lower, income groups, the situation must be characterized as unstable. Any decline in family income or any improvement in working conditions that add to the expense of having a servant may actually bring about a curtailment of the job opportunities for servants. And it is particularly in the South that the working conditions for domestics need to be improved. According to the previously quoted village and small city samples from the Consumer Purchases Study, cash wages for domestics showed a marked tendency to be low when the income of the family they worked for was low.[b]

By and large, domestic work is a low wage industry. The estimates of the state employment offices, for instance (Table 3), indicate that wages as low as $3-5 per week occur even in the North. Some of the largest Northern cities, however, have "typical" wage rates of $15-20, but these figures do not indicate a uniform level. Even in New York

TABLE 3

RANGE BETWEEN LOCAL WAGE RATES FOR DOMESTIC WORK, IN SELECTED STATES, ACCORDING TO ESTIMATES BY STATE EMPLOYMENT OFFICES: JANUARY, 1939

State	Cooks		General Maids	
	Resident	Board Only	Resident	Board Only
New York	$5.00–21.00	$5.00–20.00	$4.00–12.00	$4.00–15.00
Illinois	4.00–15.00	4.00–15.00	4.00–12.00	4.00–13.00
Minnesota	5.00–10.00	[a]	3.00– 6.00	3.00– 5.50
North Carolina	3.00– 7.00	3.00– 6.50	3.00– 5.00	3.00– 8.00
Georgia	1.75– 5.00	2.50– 5.00	2.75– 5.00	2.75– 6.00
Alabama	2.00– 7.00	3.00– 5.00	2.50– 6.00	2.50– 5.00

Source: Gladys L. Palmer, "A MemorandumReport on Negroes in Domestic Service," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study, (1940), pp. 249–251. Based on reports to U.S. Employment Service. The State Employment Offices had indicated the wage rate most typical in about 6 to 12 different places in each state which were considered as representative of the various labor market situations existing within the State

[a] Complete data not available.

wages are often low. It is a well-known fact that the wages at the "slave-markets" for Negro domestics in the Bronx and other places[c] are frequently far below what is considered to be typical for the better organized part of the domestic service market in New York. In the South, however, wages are low much more generally, and there are even localities where the usual wage is scarcely $2 per week.

There are few data on wages for Negro and white domestics separately. Nevertheless, since Negroes are largely concentrated in the South, there is no question but that on the average they receive lower wages than whites. They do have some representation, how-

[a] *Idem.*

[b] *Idem.*

[c] Carl Offord, "Slave Markets in the Bronx," *The Nation* (June 29, 1940), pp. 780-781.

ever, among the better paid servants, but as Dr. Palmer finds, partly on the basis of the same survey, they do not get their proportionate share of the more worth-while jobs.[a]

The fact that wages are seldom higher, and are sometimes lower, for servants who live in their own homes than for domestics who get living quarters in addition to the cash wage and meals makes the real wage of the Negro household employees lower than that of their average white colleagues. Negroes seldom have "live-in" jobs. This may be due, in some measure, to race prejudice on the part of their employers. One major reason for it is the fact that only a minority of the Negro servants are single. In 1930 no less than 70 per cent of the Negro servants were married, widowed, or divorced, whereas the corresponding figure for native white servants was 46 per cent.[b] The fact that Negro domestics seldom leave their occupation after having married explains why their average age is so much higher than that of white domestics. About one-fourth of the Negro domestics were under 25 years of age, as compared to almost half the native white domestics. This means that the average Negro servant should have more experience than most white domestics. It means, further, that they are in greater need of adequate wages, since they more often have to contribute to the family income. Yet their average wages are lower rather than higher than those of the young white girls.

It is a well-known fact that hours of work often tend to be long in domestic service —something which is of particular importance when the servant has a family of her own. Dr. Palmer quotes a study covering many sections of the country, according to which the general average would be around "72 hours a week, with many instances of 80 or more weekly hours."[c] *Fortune's* study of upper class servants gave somewhat lower averages, but several other studies cited by Dr. Palmer tend to confirm the higher estimates.[d] It is evident, particularly from the *Fortune* study, that hours of work tend to be particularly long in the South, which means that Negroes, by and large, have a longer working week than white servants. According to the *Fortune* sample, twice as many Negroes as whites work long hours. "On the other hand, it is held by some persons that the two o'clock dinner hour, usual in small towns throughout the South, shortens the day for servants. Cooks may come at the 'crack of dawn' but they are free to leave after that early dinner."[e] The fact that Negro servants seldom live with their employers means that they do not have to be "on call" after ordinary working hours.

Domestic service is an unorganized industry. The elimination of exploitative conditions of work has lagged in this occupation compared with the development in manufacturing industries. Adequately performed, domestic work requires a rare combination of various skills and social talents. Yet it has a social stigma which places it far below most unskilled occupations in people's appreciation. For this reason, it cannot offer any appeal to the ambition of those who want to make a career, and this affects the quality

[a] "A Memorandum Report on Negroes in Domestic Service," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 194-204.

[b] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 334. *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 5, p. 299.

[c] Dorothy P. Wells, article in *Occupations*, February, 1938, quoted in Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[d] Palmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-212.

[e] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

of the workers and their performance in a way which perpetuates the low status of the occupation. Domestic service is not covered by any federal laws about social security, minimum wages and maximum hours. The Employment Service sometimes sets unofficial wage minima by refusing to refer registrants to employers who pay salaries below a certain scale. Relief agencies often consider the value of a job offer before deciding whether or not a client should be offered the alternative of either accepting it or being taken off the relief rolls. Several of the Northern states have made some efforts to improve the situation by introducing protective legislation, but this legislation is not extensive and it has not been adequately enforced.[a] In the South there is still less legal or administrative protection. Because so many middle income and low income families in the South have domestic servants, the problem of improving the conditions of work in this occupation without endangering the work opportunities is much more difficult in the South than anywhere else.

Among the most constructive efforts are the attempts to give adequate vocational training to an increased number of white and colored girls. The Work Projects Administration has been training thousands of girls every year. Local organizations, such as the Y.W.C.A., have sponsored a number of training centers. Negro vocational institutions have done their bit. So far these attempts are minimal compared with the size of the market. Also, there is no guarantee that the best trained students will work as domestics; they may prefer such jobs as cooking in restaurants. Even at best, the chances to improve the conditions of workers and the status of the occupation appear rather slim; it goes without saying that only in those families which are able and willing to pay adequate wages can domestic work become "professionalized" in this way. The number of such families may increase, particularly because of the rising proportion of gainfully occupied married women in the white population. This trend cannot fail to increase both the need for reliable and competent domestic workers and the ability to pay high salaries to such workers. Some of the underlying forces—such as the higher employment rates of the housewives—will precipitate the trend toward greater dependence on specialized service industries such as commercial laundries, cleaning and dyeing shops, processed food production, child nurseries, hotels and restaurants. And this change, as we shall see, may tend to put the Negro in a still more disadvantageous position.

3. OTHER SERVICE OCCUPATIONS

The most significant example of how the Negro has lost out through the "industrialization" of service work is the displacement of the Negro home laundress by commercial laundries. This group of Negro service workers, the second largest among all groups, has declined from 368,000 in 1910 to 271,000 in 1930.[b] Since in 1930 not much more than one-tenth of these workers resided in the North and West, where there had been about as many in 1910, it is evident that the northward migration failed to give the Negro laundress any new job opportunities which could compensate for the displacement in the South. The main reason for this is probably that commercial laundries are particularly well developed in the large Northern centers; the competition of the

[a] *Ibid*, pp. 225-232.

[b] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 326. *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 430-431. Some of the Negro home laundresses may work as employees of private households. It is probable, however, that the majority of them did the laundering in their own homes.

Chinese laundryman and the home washing machine may have been an additional factor; the pattern of Negro residential segregation in cities like New York and Chicago, finally, may have made it more difficult for the Negro home laundress to solicit patrons. The commercial laundries, on the other hand, have increased their Negro labor forces from 15,000 in 1910 to 60,000 in 1930. Compared to this four-fold increase for Negroes, the number of white workers only doubled. Yet even this gain was small compared with the loss.

Dressmakers and seamstresses (not in factories)[a] constitute a similar case. The number of Negro workers in this group declined from 38,000 in 1910 to 20,000 in 1930.

It is extremely difficult to get an idea of the development in most of the other service industries, since the census statistics are seldom quite comparable from one decade to another, and few adequate studies have been made. In 1930, 228,000 Negro workers, constituting 17 per cent of all workers in the industry, were employed in hotels, restaurants, and boarding houses, the majority of them as porters, waiters, cooks and other servants.[b] All these occupations have experienced a rather rapid growth during the last few decades, but the Negroes have had but a small share in these gains.[c] The consequence, in the case of waiters and waitresses, is that the proportion of Negroes has declined from 22 per cent in 1910 to 15 per cent in 1930. What little part the Negro had in the general increase was mainly in the North, where, by 1930, there were more Negro waiters than in the South. Negro waitresses made somewhat more progress than the waiters but were nevertheless much fewer than their male counterparts by 1930. In the white group, too, it was the women who made the largest gains. Thus, the loss of the Negro male waiters was largely the gain of the white waitresses. During the 'thirties Negroes continued to lose in relative position. In the South, in 1930, 40 per cent of the workers in hotels, restaurants, and similar places were Negroes, but in 1940 only 32 per cent were Negroes.[d] Negro bell-boys, too, have lost out, at least relatively. Travelers in the South often have occasion to observe that, nowadays, the most modern and busiest hotels and restaurants tend to have white bell-boys and white waitresses, whereas the old-fashioned places tend to have Negro servants. In hotels and restaurants, generally, it seems that workers behind the scenes—cooks, porters, and so forth—are often Negro, even when those who come into direct contact with the customers are white.

The barbershop and hairdressing occupations have undergone a tremendous development since 1910, particularly in the female branch, the beauty shop business. The total number of workers in the whole group of occupations almost doubled between 1910 and 1930, but the Negro gain was only about 50 per cent. The Negro barber has lost most of his white business in the South. His gains have been restricted to the segregated Negro neighborhoods, where the beauty shops have experienced a faint counterpart to

[a] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 310; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 312 and 313. Most of these Negro seamstresses usually work in their own homes. Some may work in homes of white families where they are temporarily employed.

[b] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 358.

[c] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 430-433; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 5, pp. 412-587.

[d] See Chapter 13, Table 3.

the boom in white areas. Under such circumstances, there is nothing surprising in the fact that almost half the Negro workers are in the North.

The most important group among other service occupations from the viewpoint of Negro employment were the janitors and sextons. No less than 78,000 Negro workers were enumerated under this heading in 1930. It appears that there had been a big increase in this work since 1910, and slightly more so for Negroes than for whites. Among elevator tenders, on the other hand, there was a decreasing proportion of Negroes. Among charwomen and cleaners the Negro maintained his relative position pretty well; and among bootblacks he improved it.

Such is the story we can read in the census reports. It is not encouraging. By and large, the displacement of work from homes to service and manufacturing industries brings a definite loss to the Negro. The main reason for this seems to be that it makes the work more pleasant, and thus more attractive to the white worker. When there is an expansion, the Negro usually fails to get his full share of it, except in particularly lowly occupations. Sometimes there is an actual decline in the number of Negro workers. Had more complete data from the 1940 Census been available at this writing, we should probably have been able to document these conclusions even more convincingly. For, because of the unemployment among white workers during the 'thirties, these trends, if anything, must have become more pronounced.

4. TURPENTINE FARMS

Turpentine farms and distilleries are not a large industry, but they have the highest proportion of Negroes in the whole nonservice group. Of the total labor force of 43,000 in 1930, no less than 75 per cent was Negro. It is almost entirely a Southern industry, mainly located in Georgia and Florida. At present it is experiencing a pronounced war boom. Otherwise it has been almost stationary for several decades. Turpentine, which is used mainly for making paint, has been increasingly substituted for by petroleum products. There is, however, a growing demand for rosin, formerly considered only as a by-product of turpentine manufacture, so that it has become more valuable than the turpentine itself.[a] Certain technical innovations have made the existence of the ordinary turpentine farms rather difficult. Norgren points out that:

> There has been developed in recent years a new method of producing turpentine, known as the wood distillation process. This process consists in removing and pulping the stumps of pine trees in "logged-over" areas, and distilling the pulp in large centrally-located stills. Since modern labor-saving devices are used throughout, the number of man-hours required to produce a given quantity of product by this method is only a small fraction of what it is in the average gum-turpentine establishment; and it is consequently not surprising to learn that wood turpentine has become a serious competitor of the gum-distilled product.[b]

There are obvious reasons why the turpentine industry employs predominantly Negro workers. It is located in rather isolated rural areas. The work is strenuous. The main part of it is "chipping," which means cutting of V-shaped gashes through the bark with a heavy knife. A normal day's work may mean cutting some 1,000 to 1,500 trees in this way during 8 to 12 hours. Other chores are performed by children. Wages are

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 106.
[b] *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 108.

low. On the basis of field work and various spot studies,[a] Norgren estimated the normal wage at between 90 cents and $1.25 per day; the annual wage income, because of slack work during the winter and during rainy days, is probably little more than $200. Housing facilities in the camps are often extremely unsatisfactory. The commissary system is widely used, just as on Southern plantations. Prices are kept high, and workers easily become indebted to the employers. Not even Negroes are easy to get under such conditions. There is a general complaint among employers that labor is scarce. Such a situation must tempt employers to indulge in practices of peonage, and there are definite reports to the effect that these temptations have not always been resisted. It has even happened that workers have been induced to come to the camps under false pretenses and then forced into contracts and debts and thereby retained as workers.

> Labor is recruited for these camps by a man, usually a Negro, who makes glowing speeches of high wages and easy hours. But soon the unsuspecting Negro youth, who thought he was getting on a truck headed for a distant city, finds he is headed toward a turpentine or lumber camp. Once there he gets into debt and can leave only upon threat of a six months' chain gang sentence. For, according to the law, jumping a debt is defined as "intent to injure and defraud."[b]

The claim that the Florida peonage law was sponsored by turpentine farm interests sounds plausible.[c]

The turpentine farm workers have no protection from any federal labor legislation, as the turpentine industry, except for the distilleries, is considered part of agriculture. Employers receive, for the same reason, certain benefits under the new agricultural programs. Indirectly, the workers may have received some part of these benefits. Yet, by and large, the gum industry is characterized by extraordinarily exploitative conditions of work, and it has an uncertain future. The implications of the situation are especially serious for Negroes because this industry employs mostly Negroes.

5. LUMBER

Next to building construction and the iron and steel industries, lumber is the most important of all manufacturing industries from the point of view of the number of Negroes employed. The lumber industry proper had in 1930 almost 140,000 Negro workers. In addition, there were about 26,000 Negro forest workers, most of whom were registered as "lumbermen, raftsmen and woodchoppers."[d] A large part of these were employed by the rapidly growing Southern paper and pulp industry. In this work, however, it is only the wood-cutting activity which is a Negro occupation. In the paper and pulp mills themselves there were less than 8,000 Negro workers in 1930.[e] These

[a] See, for example, Work Projects Administration, *Part-Time Farming in the Southeast*, Research Monograph 9 (1937), pp. 212-213.

[b] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 186.

[c] Arthur Raper (*idem*) quotes an article by Orland K. Armstrong (New York *World*, November 26, 1929), according to which the man, who was president of the Florida Senate when the peonage bill was passed, acknowledged that "the influence behind the passage of this law was the naval stores and lumber operators of this state."

[d] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 337-359. According to the 1940 figures, which are not quite comparable, there were in the South 156,000 Negro workers employed in logging, sawmills and planing mills, manufacturing of furniture, store fixtures and miscellaneous wooden goods. (Chapter 13, Table 3.)

[e] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States*: 1920-1932, p. 348.

were mainly in laboring jobs, at wages which were lower, compared with the pay of skilled and semi-skilled workers, than was true in other parts of the country.[a] The wage level is still lower for wood cutters; prior to 1938, the average was less than $1 for a day of 10 to 14 hours. It is not clear whether the Wages and Hours Law has brought any significant improvement. The employers have succeeded fairly well in postponing its enforcement. An industry committee, set up in 1940 for the purpose of regulating labor conditions under the law, even excluded production of pulpwood from the paper and pulp industry, which means that the wood cutters cannot get any benefit from the minimum wage of 40 cents an hour decided upon by the committee.[b]

Only a small minority of the 140,000 Negroes in the lumber and woodworking industry proper were in processing work. Furniture and piano factories had few Negro workers (8,000), but box factories and miscellaneous plants had a somewhat greater number (17,000). The bulk of the Negro workers, or 114,000, were employed by saw and planing mills, where they constituted one-fourth of the national, and one-half of the Southern, labor force.

This situation, of course, is rather unfortunate for the Negroes. The saw and planing mills have been a stationary, sometimes even a regressive, industry since about 1910. The expansion in the Pacific, and particularly in the Northwestern areas, has made it still more difficult for the Southern mills. Moreover, Southern pine timber stands have been exploited in a rather shortsighted manner, causing serious denudation. The increased use of iron, steel, cement, and bricks in building construction, the substitution of barbed wire for wood in farm fencing, of fiber for wood in boxes and crates, the use of mesh-bags instead of boxes for packing of fruits, as well as other similar changes, have brought about serious limitations in the demand. Nevertheless, there may be some hope for the future. Timber stands in other parts of the country may become so exhausted that the rapid growth in the Southern climate will give the Southern industry a competitive advantage. New uses for the product (e.g., plywood-built airplanes) may bring about an increased demand.

During the early 'thirties lumber production in the South was reduced by almost two-thirds, and the recovery was very slow.[c] Owing to the present war emergency, the production is large for the time being, but this boom, of course, is not going to last. The insecurity in the situation is further enhanced by the fact that mechanization, which has proceeded rather far in other areas, has been less pronounced in the South, mainly because low wages prevailed until recently. For this reason, and also because of the denudation of many Southern timber stands, the productivity of the worker in the Northwestern region has been estimated to be about 60 per cent higher than that of the Southern worker.[d] Mechanization has not always caused displacement of labor; in some cases, it is claimed, mechanization has increased job opportunities by making it possible

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, pp. 100-101. The section on the lumber industry in Norgren's manuscript was written by James Healy.

[b] *Ibid.*, Part 1, pp. 102-104. Information on prevailing wages based on an interview, May 30, 1940, with Mr. Richter, Field Investigator in the Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor.

[c] *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 26; based on data from the *Biennial Census of Manufactures*. Also pp. 31-32 and letter from Paul H. Norgren, August 16, 1942.

[d] *Ibid.*, pp. 60-63. Information based on brief submitted to Office of National Recovery Administration, Division of Review, Yost *et al*, "Economic Problems of the Lumber and Timber Products Industry" (March, 1936), Work Materials #79, p. 151.

to utilize stands of timber which otherwise would have been economically inaccessible. Still, the regional differential in this regard constitutes a constant threat to the job opportunities for Negroes. It is hard to see how an equalization of labor conditions could fail to encourage such technological changes as would curtail employment in the South.[a]

The insecurity of the individual worker is made still greater because of the loose structure of the Southern lumber industry. A large part of the production comes from small, marginal mills with a high bankruptcy rate. They employ a somewhat greater proportion of Negroes than do the large mills, partly because they have to depend on cheap labor, but also because they cannot always afford to segregate white and Negro workers in the mill towns.[b] These conditions contribute to the extremely high labor turnover; the separation rate in 1934 was as high as 88 per cent.[c] The rapid labor turnover must also be seen in conjunction with the fact that the number of working days per year ranges around 200 days, according to a survey for 1939.[d] The lumber industry is really nothing but an outgrowth of agriculture. Labor flows continually back and forth between these two industries.

The wage structure has long been characterized by a great differential between skilled workers, such as sawyers, who are predominantly white, and unskilled laborers, most of whom, in the South, are Negroes. Various studies quoted by Norgren and Associates indicate that, in the South, sawyers (head, band) during the 'twenties and early 'thirties, earned more than three times and sometimes almost four times as much per hour, on the average, as did laborers. In the Far West, on the other hand, sawyers earned somewhat more than twice the average wage of laborers.[e] The wage level, further, has been particularly low and unstable in the South. The average hourly earnings for all workers in Southern logging camps and sawmills, according to certain sample studies, seem to have decreased from roughly 30 cents in 1928 to 18 cents in 1932. It was about twice as high in the Northwest in 1928, and the regional differential was even greater in 1932 in that the relative decrease was more pronounced in the South than in the Northwest.[f]

The Wages and Hours Law, in conjunction with the business recovery, had brought about a great improvement by 1939-1940. The whole wage structure in the Southern lumber mills seems to have become somewhat more concentrated; sawyers (head, band) earned "only" about two-and-a-half times more than the low wage labor groups.[g] Even

[a] See Work Progress Administration, National Research Project, "Mechanization in Lumber" (March, 1940), Report No. M-5, pp. 79-93.

[b] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, pp. 21-26 and 69.

[c] *Ibid.*, p. 47, and *Monthly Labor Review* (May, 1935), pp. 1285-1287.

[d] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 46.

[e] A. Berglund, *et al.*, *Labor in the Industrial South* (1930), p. 41. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Wages and Hours of Labor in the Lumber Industry in the United States: 1932" (1932), Bulletin #586, pp. 24-33. Quoted in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 59.

[f] See Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Wages and Hours of Labor in the Lumber Industry in the United States: 1928" (1928), Bulletin #497, and "Wages and Hours of Labor in the Lumber Industry in the United States: 1932" (1932), Bulletin #586. Several other studies quoted by Norgren (*op. cit.*, Part I, p. 64) confirm the impression of the low wage level in the South; some averages are even lower than those quoted in the text.

[g] Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations, September 16, 1941. The writer is indebted to Acting Commissioner of Labor Statistics, A. F. Hinrichs, for permission to use these data, and to Dr. Norgren for certain suggestions concerning their interpretation.

TABLE 4

AVERAGE EARNINGS AND HOURS OF WORK FOR LUMBER WORKERS IN THE SOUTH BY TYPE AND BRANCH OF INDUSTRY AND BY COLOR: 1939-1940

Type and Branch of Industry	Number of Workers		Average Hourly Earnings		Average Weekly Hours		Average Weekly Earnings	
	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	White
Establishments with 20 or more employees:								
Logging branch	3,835	2,766	$0.32	$0.37	35.8	39.3	$11.33	$14.5
Sawmill branch	10,356	4,325	0.30	0.39	38.4	41.1	11.66	16.0
Maintenance and service occupations	2,366	3,872	0.30	0.41	42.2	45.0	12.80	18.4
Establishments (small logging camps) with fewer than 20 employees	555	415	0.24	0.28	37.6	38.8	9.02	10.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations, September, 1941. (Permission t publish tables obtained from Acting Commissioner A. F. Hinrichs.)

more important is the fact that the average wage level had been brought up above th pre-depression level (Table 4). The high proportion of workers earning exactly 3 cents an hour (Table 5) indicates that this improvement is due to a great extent to th Wages and Hours Law. At the same time it is evident that the law was still evade frequently, particularly by small mills and in the case of Negroes.[a] This evasion is no always illegal, however; many small mills have simply withdrawn from interstate com merce. But other small mill owners fail to comply, pointing to their inability to pa higher wages. The Wages and Hours officials have found it practical to abstain fron

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF LOGGING AND SAWMILL WORKERS BY AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS, BY TYPE AND BRANCH OF INDUSTRY AND BY COLOR, IN THE SOUTH: 1939-1940

Hourly Earnings	Establishments with 20 or More Employees				Establishments with fewer than 20 Employees			
	Logging		Sawmilling		Logging		Sawmilling	
	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	White	Negro	Whit
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.
Under 20.0 cents	3.2	1.2	4.3	1.8	27.6	11.4	34.2	18.
20.0-29.9 cents	2.8	3.4	4.0	4.4	24.1	26.3	17.8	24.
Exactly 30.0 cents	52.8	25.9	64.0	32.5	40.2	40.4	44.1	36.
30.0-39.9 cents	32.5	41.4	23.8	31.6	7.2	14.7	3.4	10
40 cents and over	8.7	28.1	3.9	29.7	0.9	7.2	0.5	9.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations, September, 1941. (Permission t publish table obtained from Acting Commissioner A. F. Hinrichs.)

[a] The problem has been stated succinctly in a memorandum of a Wages and Hours inspec tor in the Southern area: "The lumber industry in this area is perhaps our biggest headach *as an industry*. . . . Wages in the southern branch of the industry have been traditionally sub standard and 25 and 30 cents an hour minus the privilege of gettting 15 cents of it bac through the commissary devices, necessitated greater adjustments than in many other industrie . . . Also, . . . the scene of operation is more or less isolated, which condition doesn't con tribute towards cooperation in working out of problems that confront the industry. (Memorandum prepared by Robert K. Miller, Inspector, Atlanta, Georgia [May 10, 1940] p. 1. Quoted by Norgren, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 81.)

using forceful means against such financially weak operators[a] and have, for the most part, concentrated their efforts on the larger mills—with great success, as we see from the statistics.

There is no evidence concerning the extent to which there has been any displacement of labor because of the wage increase. Owing to the present war boom, employment has so far increased rather than decreased. What is going to happen after the war, however, is a different matter entirely. Unless this wage increase is wiped out by inflation—which may well happen—it is hard to visualize how it could fail to bring about, eventually, considerable mechanization as well as elimination of financially weak establishments.

The hourly earnings tended to be somewhat lower for Negro than for white lumber workers. Such a difference usually appears even when Negroes and whites in the same occupational sub-group are compared (Table 6). This does not prove, however, that

TABLE 6

OCCUPATIONS IN LUMBER MILLS (Sawmills, Logging, Maintenance and Service Branches) BY AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS OF WHITE WORKERS, AND DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AVERAGE EARNINGS OF WHITE AND NEGRO WORKERS, IN THE SOUTH: 1939-1940

(The original data are based on establishments with 20 or more employees.)

Average hourly earnings of white workers by occupation	All occupations[a]	Number of occupations which average hourly earnings for Negroes were: Higher than for whites	Equal to earnings of whites	Lower than earnings of whites by specified amounts: 0.5–1.9 cents	2.0–3.9 cents	4.0–5.9 cents	6.0–7.9 cents	8.0 cents & over
Total	60	5	3	21	11	6	4	10
Under 35.0 cents	38	5	3	19	10	1	.	..
35.0-39.9 cents	12	..	..	2	1	5	3	1
40.0-44.9 cents	5	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
45 cents or more	5	..	..	..	..		..	5

Source: Adapted from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations, September, 1941. (Permission to publish table obtained from Acting Commissioner A. F. Hinrichs.)

[a] Only occupations which had 25 or more Negro and 25 or more white representatives in the sample were included

Negroes are paid less on an hourly basis when performing the same duties as white workers in the same establishments. It is possible that these wage differentials in specified occupational groups are caused by the tendency of low wage establishments to hire a greater proportion of Negroes than do high wage establishments. Besides, in most of the cases, these differences are rather small, except—and this is rather significant—in occupations where wages are far above the general average. The only chance for a Negro to get into a high wage occupation usually is to accept a wage considerably lower than that paid to white employees for the same kind of work. Yet, the main reason why Negroes, by and large, have lower pay than whites is that they are relatively more concentrated in low wage work.[b] The proportion of Negroes is particularly low in

[a] *Ibid.*, Part 1, pp. 84-85.

[b] In part, there is a reversed causation. The wage differential between "high" and "low" occupations, as we have seen, is more pronounced in the South than elsewhere. In other words, the wages for unskilled work are particularly low in the South *because* most of the unskilled workers are Negroes.

maintenance and service occupations, which include such groups as electricians, machinists, mechanics, millwrights and sawfilers. If we classify all the occupations by the average hourly wages for all workers, we find that the proportion of Negroes diminishes regularly as the average earnings increase, from 69 per cent in occupations paying less than 35 cents an hour to 6 per cent in work paying 50 cents or more.[a]

Earnings per week differ more than wages per hour, due to the fact that the working week is somewhat shorter for Negro than for white workers. Even so, it must be said that the $9-13 earned per week by Negro lumber workers—as against the $11-18 earned by whites—is not so bad compared to what they have been used to before. The main problem is how much work they will have when the war boom is over.

Lumber mills located in isolated areas have to provide housing for their workers. In these "mill villages" Negroes are usually segregated, and the accommodation for them tends to be inferior to that offered to whites. Most of the workers have to pay rent for their housing facilities. There is a commissary system, but nowadays it does not seem to be used for the purpose of exploiting the workers, except in unusual cases. Peonage, by the same token, is reported to be rare.[b] Increases in rents and commissary prices, however, have been used, in some instances, as one of the devices for evasion of the Wages and Hours Law, but Wages and Hours officials are gradually wiping out practices of this kind.[c]

There have been several attempts to unionize the Southern lumber mill workers, but, so far, unions have little power in this field. There are four principal reasons for this: The pronounced anti-union attitudes of most Southern employers, together with the political impotency of the workers; the great number of small establishments, many of which have an isolated location; the high labor turnover and the constant interchange of labor between agriculture and lumber camps; and the presence of the Negro. The Brotherhood of Timber Workers, organized in 1910 and soon affiliated with the International Workers of the World, worked among both Negroes and whites in Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas. The employers defeated it, capitalizing on the race issue.[d] The International Timber Workers' Union, an A.F. of L. affiliate, entered the

[a] The complete series was:

Occupations classified by average hourly earnings	*Percentage of Negro workers*
Under 35.0 cents	69.3
35.0-39.9 "	36.1
40.0-44.9 "	18.3
45.0-49.9 "	12.6
50.0-cents & over	5.8
All occupations	59.9

Adapted from: U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished tabulations for sawmill and logging workers in establishments having 20 or more employees. Figures made available through the courtesy of Acting Commissioner A. F. Hinrichs.

[b] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, pp. 69-72.

[c] *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 86, and *Wage and Hour Reporter* (May 27, 1940), p. 223.

[d] That Southern employers have long been aware of the value of the race issue in the fight against unions is suggested by the following statement:

"'. . . if the labor organizations pursue their policy of injustice and disturbance, the time will come when the industries of the South . . . will be filled with Negroes.' In Negro

field in 1919, organizing both Negroes and whites, but this union, too, had no success in spite of an offer of the white leaders to "sell the Negroes out." During the N.R.A. period, the A.F. of L. made some new attempts to organize Southern lumber workers. A C.I.O. union, the International Wood Workers of America, which has come into existence during recent years, seems to have been more successful. It has several locals in many Southern states and has even obtained some contracts. Yet it is safe to say that the overwhelming majority of the Southern lumber workers are still unorganized.[a]

6. The Fertilizer Industry

The fertilizer industry differs from the turpentine and lumber industries in that it is a comparatively new industry which has been expanding during recent decades. The number of Negro workers more than doubled between 1910 and 1930, whereas the white labor force increased to a somewhat smaller extent. The reason for this difference is that the expansion was particularly pronounced in the South, which has the bulk of all fertilizer factories in the country.[b] In 1930 about 60 per cent of all workers and 81 per cent of the unskilled workers were Negro; in the South, of course, only a small minority of the workers were white.[c] Even the North has a large proportion of Negro workers.[d]

The Negro's predominant position in the Southern branch of the industry is probably due to the unpleasantness of the work. The odors are bad, the atmosphere dusty and, in all likelihood, unhealthy. Employment for most workers is seasonal, the period of highest activity occurring prior to the planting in the spring. Then, too, it is a low wage industry, at least in the South, and especially for Negroes. According to a sample study for 1938,[e] the average hourly earnings for Negro workers in the South were 25 cents, as against 37 cents for white workers. In the North, on the other hand, there was but a small wage differential and a much higher general level (49 and 52 cents, respectively). Even in specific occupations the earnings of Negro workers in the South were markedly lower than those of white workers. Skilled workers earned twice as much as unskilled workers in the South, whereas the corresponding difference in the North was not much over 50 per cent. Whereas in the North virtually all workers received wages in excess of the legal minimum, 2 per cent of those in the Upper South and no less than 43 per cent of those in the Lower South received wages lower than 25 cents an hour, which was the minimum wage at that time according to the Wages and

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labor lies the panacea for the wrongs frequently committed by organized labor, and a reserve force from which can be supplied any needed number of workers when the time shall come that they will be needed '. . . [The Negro] is absolutely loyal to his employer; he is not given to strikes; he does his work faithfully, and can be depended on.' He [Mr. Coffin] believes that labor agitation can be largely kept out of the South because the Southern manufacturers will 'Negroize' their industries rather than submit to unjust domination by the unions." *U. S. Industrial Commission Reports* (1900), Vol. 7, statement of Mr. Coffin, p. 62.

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, pp. 50-54.

[b] According to the 1937 *Census of Manufacturers*, 73 per cent of all workers in the fertilizer industry were in the South.

[c] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 4, pp. 27-28.

[d] Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Wages and Hours in the Fertilizer Industry 1938," *Monthly Labor Review* (March, 1939), pp. 666-681.

[e] *Idem.*

Hours Law. This figure, however, does not necessarily indicate widespread noncompliance; since the fertilizer factories work for local markets to a great extent, it is probable that many of them seldom enter interstate trade. In spite of this condition, it seems most likely that the subsequent rise in the legal minimum, as well as the enforcement work of the Wages and Hours Division in the Department of Labor, has brought about a certain increase in the average Southern wage since 1938.[a]

7. LONGSHORE WORK

The Negro longshoreman has a somewhat different position from that of the workers in most other Negro jobs.[b] His wages are comparatively high, although much less so on an annual than on an hourly basis. There is an old union tradition in this trade which includes racial collaboration. While such collaboration is by no means perfect, it is far superior to anything that can be found in most other typical Negro jobs. The Negro has even managed to get an increased proportion of these jobs. In those South Atlantic ports of Virginia, South Carolina, and Florida where he has traditionally had at least nine out of every ten jobs, he has maintained that proportion. He has even improved his position as indicated by the following figures:

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE OF NEGROES AMONG LONGSHOREMEN AND STEVEDORES IN SELECTED STATES: 1910 AND 1930

State	1910	1930	State	1910	1930
New York	6.0	15.2	Alabama	80.5	95.8
New Jersey	2.7	22.2	Louisiana	59.8	74.3
Pennsylvania	40.5	51.8	Texas	35.3	69.8
Maryland	65.0	68.6			

Sources: *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, State Table 7.
Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population, Vol. 4, State Table 11.

The total number of Negro longshoremen and stevedores increased from 16,000 in 1910 to over 25,000 in 1930, or from one-fourth to one-third of the total national labor force in the occupation. All of this increase occurred between 1910 and 1920 when there was a general boom in port activities. During the 'twenties, on the other hand, there was a decline in employment which hurt the white workers more than the Negroes. There was a decline during the 'thirties, of course, and both racial groups must have suffered heavily from it, but Northrup, during his fieldwork, gained the definite impression that the relative position of the Negro workers had not been impaired, at least not in the South. The only possible exception would be New Orleans.[c]

There are definite reasons why the Negro does not have his usual inferior position in water-front work. No great differences exist between various skilled groups. All that

[a] All data in this paragraph have been drawn from Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1.

[b] This section is based on Herbert R. Northrup, "Negro Labor and Union Policies in the South," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University (1942). Some preliminary work for this thesis was done for our study.

[c] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

counts is physical strength and endurance as well as certain training in the art of applying it. The popular beliefs in Negro inferiority never refer to his physical condition, so it is quite natural that they have hampered him less in this field than in most others. In only a few cases have white workers been able, for a time, to monopolize higher jobs; this happened with respect to cotton screwmen in New Orleans, but the white monopoly was broken at the beginning of this century, and the whole craft was eventually eliminated through technological development.[a] Racial competition, in the main, has been a question of sharing jobs of the same type or, at least, of about the same general status. In the South the Negro had from the outset such a numerical superiority that it soon proved difficult not to treat him as an equal or near-equal. Then, too, the big expansion during the First World War was accompanied by a scarcity of white labor. There was no way of stopping the Negro from making gains.

There are disagreeable aspects of this occupation which have made it unattractive to white workers. The work is extremely strenuous. There is little chance for the older worker. Accident risks are high. Job opportunities are irregular and subject to severe business cycle fluctuations. Periods of idleness are broken by hours and days of rush work. Those who have a job try to keep it in order to make full use of it. This, at times, makes them work as much as 36 hours at a stretch, which increases the accident risk.

Moreover, most ports have the so-called "shape-up" system of hiring[b] which means that there is no even distribution of work opportunities. The workers become entirely dependent on the hiring agents and foremen. This leads to favoritism. It opens the way to discrimination against the Negroes, who, for the most part, work in separate gangs and often have been segregated in separate positions when working on the same ship with whites.[c] It also leads to "kick-backs" to hiring agents and foremen and to other forms of corruption, graft and sometimes plain racketeering on the water front. Some of the labor unions have become undemocratic because of the power of the foremen.

The trade union history of the longshoremen is long and turbulent, full of racial strife, with whites attempting to exclude Negroes or Negroes breaking the strikes of whites. But almost from the very beginning there were some successful attempts to organize racial cooperation on a basis of mutual solidarity and equality. There was a strong Negro union in Charleston, South Carolina, in the 1860's, and during the 1870's at least two noteworthy Negro unions were formed, one in New Orleans and one in Baltimore. In 1865 Negro and white longshoremen collaborated in a strike in New Orleans,[d] and there was a much bigger strike in the 1880's in which workers of both races participated. About that time a noted foreign observer commented on how "despite occasional outbreak of racial antipathy," the unions in New Orleans had been able to "harmonize the opposing factors, and have undertaken, through the recognition of black labor, a problem in civilization whose solution they will probably not live to see."[e]

The International Longshoremen's Association (I.L.A.), organized during the 1890's,

[a] Sterling Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker* (1931), pp. 185-187.

[b] In this system of hiring, the worker must find out for himself where work is available each day and there is no assurance that the foreman will select him.

[c] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

[d] *Ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

[e] A. S. von Waltershausen, *Die Nordamerikanischen Gewerkschaften unter dem Einfluss der fortschreitenden Produktionstechnik* (1886), p. 94; quoted in Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

has dominated the field during the last decades and is still the most important organization, except on the West Coast where the longshoremen's locals have joined the C.I.O. Negroes and whites are usually organized in separate locals. It is asserted that even Negroes like it better this way, in that it gives them the opportunity to work under foremen of their own race and also to bring organized pressure against the white part of the unions.[a] Negroes are heavily represented in the national leadership of the union. This does not mean, however, that discrimination and racial antagonism have been eliminated. It is frequently charged that the white workers get more and better work opportunities than Negro workers. Writing about present-day conditions in New Orleans, Northrup states that the 800 members of the white local get more steady work than the 2,100 members of the Negro local.[b] In Houston the work is divided evenly between the white and the Negro locals, in spite of the fact that they are of different size (300 and 400 members, respectively). Similar arrangements with similar results exist also in other ports. Negroes have been hampered by the fact that unions in most Southern ports were more or less crushed during the early 'twenties and remained comparatively powerless until the New Deal. Some Southern Negro locals are still suffering from internal strife, graft, and corruption, even sometimes from the embezzling of union funds by unfaithful leaders. The national union directed by a powerful machine has taken a clear position on the race issue but has done little to tackle the basic problem of work distribution. The main reason is probably that a rotation system would necessitate a limitation in the number of workers and, hence, in the dues-paying membership; also, it would hurt the vested interests of those now favored. Only in a few of the Negro-dominated ports, like those in Texas (where the unions managed to remain strong throughout the 'twenties), on the West Coast, and, to a certain extent, in Baltimore, have rotation systems been introduced. The C.I.O. unions on the Pacific Coast seem to be the only ones which have gone the whole way on the race issue. Negroes are completely unsegregated, and the unions support them in every way, even going so far as to make water-front restaurants accept Negro union members as patrons. Only a handful of Negro longshoremen, however, work on the Pacific Coast.[c]

The ordinary hourly wage rate in work for deep-sea traffic, as of April, 1942, was $1.20 in the Northern ports and in Norfolk, $.70 in Charleston and Savannah, $.95 in Mobile, and $1.10 in New Orleans and Galveston. The North-South differential is due to the weakness of most Southern unions during the 'twenties and early 'thirties.[d] The employment opportunities certainly must be good at the present time; we have no data on the extent to which the Negro longshoreman has been able to improve even his relative position because of the war boom. The future prospects, however, must be extremely doubtful in this work with its pronounced booms and depressions.

8. BUILDING WORKERS

Except for agriculture and domestic service, there is no industry which gives employment to as many Negroes as does building construction and related work, such as con-

[a] *Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.

[b] *Op. cit.*, pp. 175 and 178.

[c] Interviews with union leaders in San Francisco made by Gunnar Myrdal, March, 1940.

[d] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 129. The data for 1942 are based on information from the International Longshoremen's Association (letter from John R. Owens, Secretary-Treasurer, January 30, 1942).

struction and maintenance of highways, streets, railroads. In 1930 there were 181,000 Negro workers in building construction alone, almost half of them in the North and the West. In construction and maintenance of roads, streets, sewers, and bridges, there were 64,000 Negro workers, four-fifths of whom lived in the South. Finally, there were 98,000 Negro laborers employed by steam railroads, most of them in the maintenance-of-way departments.[a] This last group will be discussed in the next section.

It has been pointed out already that the Negro, in spite of migration to the North, has lost in relative position both in ordinary building construction (which had about the same total number of workers in 1930 as in 1910) and in construction and maintenance of streets, highways, and so forth, which is an expanding industry. The almost complete cessation of residential and factory construction during the 'thirties has hastened the elimination of the Negro building worker in that white competitors became still more eager to monopolize whatever job opportunities were left. In the South less than one-fifth of all persons employed in construction work in 1940 were Negroes.[b]

The situation is somewhat different in skilled and unskilled building trades. In the laboring jobs the Negro workers are still in the majority in the South, even if their numbers have been decreasing for a long time. In 1910 almost three-fourths of the building laborers and helpers in ten Southern states were Negro, but this proportion had declined to less than two-thirds by 1930. Among Southern street and highway workers the proportion of Negroes decreased from over three-fourths in 1910 to somewhat more than one-half in 1930,[c] although in this case there was a considerable increase in actual numbers even for Negroes. It seems that Negroes have smaller chances than whites to secure employment with municipalities. Unpublished data from the United States Bureau of Employment Security, quoted by Norgren, indicate that while 73 per cent of "private" placements of building and construction laborers in six Southern states during the period from mid-1937 to mid-1938 were of Negroes, the corresponding proportion for "public" placements was considerably lower—60 per cent.[d] Yet, there is no doubt but that this is still a "Negro job" in the South.

There are many Negroes in skilled building occupations as well. Indeed, in 1930 there were some 80,000 of them, which means that about half of all Negro skilled workers are in the building trades. But not even in the South did they dominate these skilled occupations. On the contrary, most of them had by 1930 become predominantly "white jobs" even in the South; in only one of them did the Negro have more than half the work opportunities.[e] We can take it for granted that the situation has further deteriorated since that time.

This condition is the result of a long development. Although occupational census data were not tabulated by race until 1890, it is generally believed that "in the *ante-*

[a] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 4, State Table 11.

[b] Chapter 13, Table 3.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 5. Based on the decennial censuses.

[d] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

[e] *Ibid.*, Part 3, p. 289, based on census data. It should be emphasized that the Negro's share in employment in the skilled building trades was certainly smaller than this information indicates, in that the proportion of skilled workers who were either unemployed or had to accept unskilled work was greater among Negroes than among whites.

bellum South the bulk of the building work was . . . performed by Negroes." [a] The South was even more rural then than now. Plantations were self-sufficient economic entities, and the only way to get construction work done was to train a few slaves for it. Even in the cities the white building workers suffered from competition with free Negroes and Negro slaves who were hired out by their owners or allowed to work independently on the condition that they give the owners part of their earnings. It goes without saying that the white workers protested against this state of affairs, but as long as the politically most powerful class had a considerable interest in letting Negroes have a large share of the work, there was no way for the white worker to drive the Negro out. A survey for 1865, made under the auspices of the federal government, indicated that 80 per cent of all skilled mechanics (including building tradesmen) in the South were Negroes.[b]

The end of slavery meant the end of this protection of the Negro worker. It also meant that plantation owners and other employers lost much of their interest in giving training to Negroes,[c] for they were no longer assured of retaining the services of Negro workers whom they had trained. The change, of course, was not completed in one stroke. The Black Codes, and particularly the laws about apprenticeship, still gave employers a vested interest in Negro labor for a long time.[d] This only cushioned the effects of Emancipation. Negroes moved about as they had never done before, and the old master-servant relationship meant much less than it had during slavery.

Already by 1890 the white workers were in the majority in the skilled building occupations in the South.[e] Only one-fourth of the carpenters, for example, were Negro at that time, and among the painters the proportion of Negroes was even lower. The corresponding proportion for 1930 for these two groups had declined to 17 per cent. The Negro has never had a chance to enter the ranks of the electricians, a comparatively new occupation; by 1930, less than 2 per cent of the electricians in the South were Negroes. Plumbing, which has been a rapidly expanding trade, has likewise given but few opportunities to Negroes; in 1930 only 12 per cent of all plumbers in the South were Negroes. Negroes also managed to maintain their relative position in plastering and bricklaying jobs, at least until 1930; no less than 44 per cent of the bricklayers and 61 per cent of the plasterers in the South in 1930 were Negro. Yet if we add the number of workers for all these six trades together, we find that the Negro's relative position in the South had become much worse during the period 1910-1930, in that the whites had got almost all the benefit of the big general expansion which occurred during this period. That the Negroes received a smaller share than did whites of the dwindling job opportunities during the 'thirties is indicated by several studies. Analyzing data from the United States Employment Service for five Southern states in

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 285. See also Lorenzo J. Greene and Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Wage Earner* (1930), pp. 14-17; Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-10; Raymond B. Pinchbeck, *The Virginia Negro Artisan and Tradesman* (1926), pp. 17-54.

[b] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, p. 286. Norgren's main sources are: Charles H. Wesley, *Negro Labor in the United States, 1850-1925* (1927), p. 142; *The Freedmen's Record* (July, 1868), pp. 108-109; and *The New Era* (January 13, 1870).

[c] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[d] See Chapter 10.

[e] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 289 and Northrup, *op. cit.* See also Walter F. Willcox, "Negro Criminality," *Journal of Social Science* (December, 1899), pp. 85-86.

1937-1938, Norgren found that the proportion of Negroes among the "placements" was invariably much lower than the corresponding proportion among those registering for work. For carpenters, they were 5 and 10 per cent, respectively; for bricklayers, 35 and 44 per cent; for painters, 9 and 12 per cent; for plumbers, 8 and 20 per cent; and for plasterers, 53 and 75 per cent.[a] The same data show that the skilled Negro building worker has great difficulty in getting employment in the increasingly important public building projects.[b] It is believed that plasterers, who have allowed Negroes a better position than has any other building craft, are threatened, more than the rest, by competition from pre-fabricated materials, such as plasterboard.[c]

There is no doubt that the decline in the relative position of the skilled Negro building worker is due largely to the attitude of white workers.

> The intense anti-Negro sentiment which arose in the South during and immediately after the Reconstruction Period was . . . undoubtedly the most significant factor in displacing Negroes from the building crafts.[d]

Many employers have come up from the ranks of the white workers and share their views. Trade unions, however, had little to do with the big displacement of Negro skilled workers which occurred between the end of the Civil War and the 'nineties, for until that time they remained rather powerless in the South. They are largely responsible, on the other hand, for the fact that the Negro has been kept from sharing in the expansion of the building trades which occurred in the South during this century. The discriminatory attitude of the organized building crafts is the more significant at the present time, since they dominate the American Federation of Labor—a circumstance which is behind the reluctance of this organization to take any definite action against exclusionist and segregational practices.

All building crafts are not equally bad. The leaders of the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union as well as the Operative Plasterers' and Cement Finishers' International Association have fought discriminatory practices in a rather consistent way.[e] This, no doubt, is the principal reason why Negroes have fared much better in these crafts than in other skilled building trades. We can also, in all probability, assume that the basic reason for the favorable behavior in the organized trowel trades toward the Negro was the fact that the Negro had managed to maintain a substantial position in these occupations before the time when the unions started to become powerful in the South. Consequently, it was difficult to disregard him.[f] However that might be, it remains a fact that it was in the 1890's that the national leadership of the bricklayers' union started to take strong action against locals which excluded Negroes. Sometimes it uses the separate Negro local, but, according to Northrup, mainly "as a club with which to force local unions to admit colored bricklayers." Out of 28 Southern and

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, p. 293. The five states were Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina and South Carolina

[b] *Ibid.*, Part 3, p. 325.

[c] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

[d] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 287-288.

[e] *Ibid.*, Part 3, p. 321, and Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-96.

[f] "The extent of the opposition of the labor unions toward the black mechanics . . . varied in inverse proportion to the numerous strength of the Negroes in the trades." (Greene and Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-189; see also Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-98.)

Border cities studied by Norgren, Northrup, and others, in 1940-1941, 22 had mixed locals, 3 (Atlanta, Richmond, and Charleston, South Carolina) had separate Negro and white locals, and 3 (St. Louis, Baltimore, and Tampa) had white locals indulging in various degrees of exclusionist policies. It is said that the race relations are usually good in the mixed Southern locals.[a] The plasterers' union shows similar conditions. Of 26 Southern and Border cities surveyed by Northrup in 1940-1941, only 2 (Birmingham and St. Louis) had separate locals for Negroes and whites; 2 had exclusively white locals; whereas the remaining 22 cities had unsegregated local unions (in 12 of these unions Negroes were in the majority). Discriminatory tendencies appear here and there, but the national leadership takes strong action against them.[b]

These examples show that there is nothing inherently "natural" in the exclusionist and segregational attitudes dominating other organized building crafts, except that the Negro worker was so powerless to begin with in these other trades that it was comparatively easy to keep him out. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, for over forty years representing the most important of all the building crafts, usually organizes Negroes and whites into separate locals—that is, in so far as Negroes are allowed to belong to the union. In the South there seems to be no exception to this rule, and it is often practiced in Northern cities as well. This segregation works considerable hardship on the Negro worker, for there seems to be little attempt to divide the work evenly between the Negro and the white locals. In the South, white locals are often allied with the municipal political machines, and this is one of the reasons why it is so much easier for white workers to secure employment on public construction projects; the political bosses know, of course, that white workers can vote, and that Negroes cannot. Also, it is easier for white than for the colored locals to be in constant contact with private contractors. It even happens that white locals import white workers from other cities rather than allow Negroes to get a share of especially attractive work opportunities. Sometimes they have excluded Negroes altogether from work in white neighborhoods, which means that Negro carpenters are restricted to maintenance and repair work and the building of small unpretentious homes; they seldom get any share of the work on larger projects. It is extremely hard for the colored workers, under such circumstances, to maintain their skills. There are Southern cities where few, if any, Negro craftsmen are competent to use newer techniques and newer materials. During the 'thirties a great number of Negro locals disappeared, whereas the white locals usually managed to survive. As a consequence, in many Southern cities colored workers are completely excluded. During the latter part of the 'thirties and the present war boom, a reversal in this trend has been brought about, thanks to the efforts of the federal government.[c] In spite of these efforts, Northrup did not find more than 18 colored locals in 33 Southern and Border cities in 1940-1941, and most of those seemed to depend entirely on the protection of the federal government.[d]

The Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paper-hangers seems to be even worse than the Carpenters. Negro workers are not often organized even in separate locals.

[a] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-85.

[b] *Ibid.*, pp. 94-96.

[c] All data in this paragraph are based on Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-57. Concerning the efforts of the federal government, see Chapter 19, Section 3. Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 314-316, and ff.

[d] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

When Negroes tend to undercut the going union rate, the white locals sometimes allow Negroes to organize a local of their own; but they then make contracts with the former employers of Negro labor, thereby depriving Negroes of many of the work opportunities they formerly had. Recently, certain changes have been adopted in the constitution of the union which give the greater power to the national leadership; this may facilitate the setting up of more auxiliary Negro locals, but it may not mean that Negroes will get a larger share of the work.[a]

Yet even the Painters are relatively liberal when compared with the Electricians and the Plumbers, which exclude Negroes almost completely. Norgren, writing in 1940, had not found any single Negro local in the South, whereas a few of the Northern cities had a handful of colored members in white locals. Moreover, these unions, particularly the Plumbers, have backed state and municipal legislation establishing public licensing boards. Since the unions are usually represented on these boards, they have been able to restrict the granting of licenses almost exclusively to white plumbers and electricians in all localities where this set-up is functioning.[b] We have seen the results of these exclusionist practices: Negroes have never been able to get any significant representation among the electricians; even in the South Negro plumbers are a very small and decreasing minority.

According to the general rule that Negroes are less discriminated against where they had a substantial portion of the work at the time when union activities began, the union for building laborers treats Negroes rather well. The International Hod Carriers', Building and Common Laborers' Union had a total membership in 1941 of 250,000, of which some 70,000 were Negroes.[c] With few exceptions, Negroes and whites are organized in the same locals. There are certain complaints that many locals are administrated by the national union rather than by the members themselves, but there seems to be no evidence that this state of affairs would work any particular hardship on Negro members. Negroes are represented in the national leadership.[d]

The federal government, as mentioned earlier, has, during recent years, attempted to secure for Negroes a share of the work on public housing projects for Negroes. During 1933-1937 these projects were built by the Public Works Administration; and from 1937 to 1942 they were built under the auspices of the United States Housing Authority. The proportion of Negroes employed is the same as the proportion of Negroes in the population of the locality where the project is built, and it applies to workers of all kinds. The contractors have not had any difficulty in filling their "Negro quota" of unskilled workers and of such skilled workers as bricklayers, plasterers, and so forth, but when it comes to the other skilled workers, either they usually declare themselves unable to find enough competent Negro skilled workers; or the opposition of the white unions was so strong that the U.S.H.A. had to permit the application of a "blanket" quota for the whole project rather than of a specific quota for each occupation. Even if the claims about the nonexistence of competent Negro craftsmen were exaggerated, they were probably well founded in many instances; we have to remember that Negro craftsmen

[a] *Ibid.*, pp. 67-79.

[b] Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60; Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 312-313; Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

[c] *Ibid.*, p. 111. Information based on American Federation of Labor, *Report of Proceedings, 1941*, p. 492.

[d] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

had been rather systematically kept out of the larger construction projects where they could have learned newer techniques. Until the end of 1940 Negroes received 13 per cent of the total payroll on the U.S.H.A. projects, but only 5 per cent of the payroll for skilled work.[a] Even so, it helped Negro workers in the South to maintain unions which otherwise would have disappeared and even to revive some unions which had disappeared during the previous depressions.

9. RAILROAD WORKERS

In 1930 there were 163,000 Negro workers employed by steam railroads, constituting slightly more than 10 per cent of the total labor force in the industry. About 98,000 of these Negroes were designated as laborers; 37,000 were porters, waiters, and cooks; less than 11,000 were firemen, brakemen, switchmen, and flagmen; and most of the rest belonged to minor categories of unskilled workers. Less than 200 were conductors or locomotive engineers.[b]

Railway service expanded during the First World War but declined afterward, owing to competition with motor traffic. The end result, by 1930, was that the total number of employees was about the same as in 1910. The number of Negro workers had increased by 25 per cent, but this was due to their inroads in the North. The number of laborers, for instance, increased from about 8,000 to 24,000 in the North and West, but declined from 78,000 to 73,000 in the South.[c] Most other categories, such as locomotive firemen and brakemen, had fewer Negro workers in 1930 than in 1910. In the South, particularly, the decline in the proportion of Negroes employed in such occupations was very noticeable. The development during the 'thirties meant that the Negro's opportunities for advancement became still more insignificant than before; also, the groups in which Negroes were concentrated were severely hit by the depression and by competition with motor traffic. The total number of maintenance-of-way employees in the South declined by more than 50 per cent from 1928 to 1938,[d] and since Negroes constituted about three-fourths of this labor force in the South, it must have meant a tremendous loss in Negro employment. The census data show that in the South Negroes constituted only 21 per cent of the railroad workers in 1940, as compared with 25 per cent in 1930.[e] This decrease is, of course, in addition to the decrease in actual numbers of Negro railroad workers.

Most of the railroad brotherhoods are among the leaders in Negro exclusionism. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and the Order of Railway Conductors have been almost completely successful in keeping the Negro out. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen is equally exclusionistic. Until the beginning of this century, however, the fireman's job was generally considered too dirty for a white man in the

[a] Robert C. Weaver, "Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," *Phylon* (Fourth Quarter, 1941), p. 347. See also Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 331-335.

[b] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 353-354; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 4, State Table 11.

[c] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 303-309; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Statistics*, Vol. 4, pp. 434-534. These figures do not include female workers, who numbered only about 1,000 in 1930.

[d] Interstate Commerce Commission, *Annual Statistical Report* for 1928 and 1938. Quoted by Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, p. 129.

[e] See Chapter 13, Table 3.

South, but technical developments soon made it more attractive.[a] The removal of racial wage differentials in 1918 made the employers lose their interest in having Negro firemen, which, of course, hastened the elimination of Negroes.[b] Few, if any, Negroes are getting into such occupations at the present time. It is possible, however, that the present war boom has brought about a temporary change in this situation. Some Negroes are even being driven out, and the probability is that the Negro, before long, will have but a handful of representatives in these groups. This process of elimination has been accompanied by physical intimidation and even murder. Charles S. Johnson has found trustworthy accounts and records of no less than 21 shootings and murders of firemen and brakemen during the short period 1931-1934.[c]

The Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees (A.F. of L.), which formerly excluded Negroes, changed its policy in 1940 by accepting segregated Negro "auxiliaries," directed by white officers.[d] Even more unfavorable to Negroes is the fact that a similar policy is followed by the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (A.F. of L.), which represents the occupation including the bulk of the Negro railroad workers. This union was orginally started by the foremen who are still dominating it. Since the foremen are always white, the Negro workers feel that the organization serves the purpose of keeping them subjugated under their white bosses.[e] This condition is the more deplorable since maintenance-of-way workers are the largest low wage group in the railway industry.[f] In 1935 over two-thirds of them earned 35 cents per hour or less in the South and almost one-fifth received 20 cents or less.[g] Thanks to the Wages and Hours Act, there have been improvements since then, at least for those lowest down on the wage scale. The average in 1939 for 15 Southern states was 33 cents, as against 47 cents in the "Eastern district."[h] The application of the Wages and Hours Law has been delayed, in some cases, because of evasion. At least one great Southern road used the device of charging their workers undue amounts for rent and other expenses, but was forced, through court action, to refrain from such practices.[i] The wage increases, on the other hand, are encouraging mechanization, particularly in the South where, so far, there has been comparatively little mechanization and where the rise in wage cost counts most.[j] After the present war boom the Negro railroad worker, more likely than not, will have even less employment than he had before this emergency.

[a] Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 2," *Phylon* (Second Quarter, 1942), p. 204.

[b] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 348-349.

[c] "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 2."

[d] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

[e] *Ibid.*, pp. 357-358.

[f] Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 1," p. 6.

[g] Federal Coordinator of Transportation, *The Extent of Low Wages and Long Hours in the Railroad Industry* (November, 1936), quoted in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 1, pp. 140-142.

[h] *Ibid.*, p. 141. Information secured from Wages and Hours Division, Department of Labor. The "Eastern District" encompasses New England, the Great Lakes region and the Central East.

[i] *Ibid.*, pp. 141-143.

[j] *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145, and Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 2," pp. 196-198.

One group of Negro railroad workers stands somewhat apart: the Pullman porters, dining car waiters, redcaps, and other railroad service workers. In spite of the fact that total railroad employment was no larger in 1930 than in 1910, the number of Negro railroad service workers doubled during this period, and the absolute number of Negro workers in the group (37,000) was larger than is to be found in most manufacturing industries. The reason is that Negroes have a near-monopoly on these jobs, even though there has been some competition from Mexicans and Filipinos during recent years, and even from whites in certain cities.[a]

This has been the field of the most successful independent Negro unionism. After trying in vain for more than a decade to institute an efficient organization, the Pullman porters, under the leadership of A. Philip Randolph, finally succeeded in 1925 in organizing the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, which now has about 10,000 members. In 1936 it got an international A.F. of L. charter, and after great difficulties, because of the unwillingness of the Pullman Company to recognize it as bargaining agent for the porters, it succeeded in 1937 in making the company sign a contract in which certain improvements in the conditions of work were granted. The wage rates for Pullman porters now vary between $89.50 and $114 per month, depending on years of service and type of work. Extra pay is received when the working time exceeds 240 hours a month. In addition, porters receive tips.[b] Another powerful Negro union is the United Transport Workers of America which includes redcaps, dining car waiters and others.[c]

10. TOBACCO WORKERS

There have been two opposing trends affecting the Negro's position in the tobacco industry. From a national viewpoint, he has often gained, but only for the reason that Southern manufacturing, both absolutely and relatively, has become more important. On the other hand, in those Southern states where the majority of the Negro tobacco workers are occupied, white workers have, at times, made substantial gains at the expense of the Negro.

Let us consider, first, the national trend during the last decades. The tobacco industry underwent a rapid expansion during the First World War, but during the 'twenties there was a tremendous decline in employment due, largely, to mechanization. The net effect was that the total number of workers dropped 23 per cent between 1910 and 1930.[d] The depression in the 'thirties, of course, brought about further declines. According to the *Census of Manufacturers*, the tobacco industry had 25 per cent fewer workers in 1939 than in 1929.

In 1930 there were 34,000 Negroes in the industry, only one-tenth of whom resided outside the South. The Negro had had a larger share in the employment gains during the First World War and a smaller share in the subsequent losses than the white worker. By 1930 there were 35 per cent more Negro workers in the industry than in 1910, and

[a] Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 2," p. 202. Interview by Gunnar Myrdal with white "redcap" Kansas City, Kansas, March 20, 1940.

[b] "A Brief History of the Organizing of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, an International Union," undated typescript issued by the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters See also, Charles S. Johnson, "Negroes in the Railway Industry, Part 2," pp. 203-204.

[c] Florence Murray (editor), *The Negro Handbook* (1942), p. 136.

[d] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, p. 396.

the proportion of Negroes in the industry had increased from 13 per cent to 23 per cent.[a] This difference, however, was entirely due to the condition that those states where the Negro is predominant in the tobacco industry (principally North Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky) have fared much better than most of the others. The Negro has but few representatives among the cigar makers in Florida, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and elsewhere, a group which constituted more than half of all tobacco workers in 1939, and has suffered more than most other groups, partly because of the mechanization, but also because of the declining relative importance of cigar consumption. Moreover, part of the Northern tobacco industry has migrated to the South—a trend which, of course, would tend to improve the Negro's relative position.[b]

Let us now turn our attention to the Southern scene. It is believed that originally almost all the tobacco workers in the South were Negro slaves, but from 1850 on there is evidence of Negroes being displaced by whites. This trend was precipitated, after the Civil War, by the development of a new type of production which did not have the tradition of being a "Negro job" industry: cigarette manufacturing. The introduction of machinery was another factor encouraging the hiring of white workers, in that it made the work less strenuous, less dirty and, generally, more attractive. Negroes were retained as tobacco stemmers, however, and in all sorts of common labor jobs, whereas most other processing work was handled by white operatives.[c] Yet, by 1890, the first year for which census data on occupations by race are available, about two-thirds of all tobacco workers in Virginia, Kentucky and North Carolina were Negro. It seems, also, that a certain stabilization in the apportionment of jobs between the two races had been attained at that time, for the same two-thirds ratio was maintained until 1930.[d] The number of Negro workers almost doubled between 1910 and 1920. There was a decrease by one-fourth between 1920 and 1930.

Concerning the development during the 'thirties, it may be noted that the total number of tobacco workers in Virginia and North Carolina was more than one-tenth higher in 1939 than in 1929.[e] The fact that the development was so much more favorable in these states than for the nation as a whole should, of course, make for a further improvement of the Negro's relative position in the tobacco industry. It is possible, however, that the proportion of Negro workers has declined in Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky; for, during the 'thirties, there has been a definite tendency to mechanize tobacco stemming, which previously has been much less affected by

[a] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 5, p. 440.

[b] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-195. Information based on J. P. Troxell, "Labor in the Tobacco Industry," unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Wisconsin (1931); and U.S. Women's Bureau, *The Effect on Women of Changing Conditions in the Cigar and Cigarette Industries*, Bulletin No. 100, p. 20.

[c] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-186. See also, Pinchbeck, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-59; and Joseph C. Robert, *The Tobacco Kingdom* (1938).

[d] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 190. Information based on the decennial censuses. It is possible that the data for 1900 and 1910 are not quite comparable with those for 1920 and 1930, but the possible error in the comparison seems not to be significant.

[e] *Sixteenth Census of the United States, Census of Manufactures, 1939, Tobacco Manufacturers Group*, p. 3; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States, Census of Manufactures, 1929*, Vol. 2, pp. 388 and 537. The figures for 1939 include cigarette workers only; those for 1929 include both cigar and cigarette workers. Parallel data for Kentucky are not yet available.

mechanization than have other operations. The main reason for this is the wage increase which has been brought about under the N.R.A., the Fair Labor Standards Act, and through the efforts of trade unions.[a]

A trend in this direction has been under way, but there seems to be little statistical evidence available at this writing on how far it had proceeded before it became submerged in the present war boom. So far, the main effect seems to have been that the Negro has received a somewhat smaller share than the white workers in the employment gains brought about through an increased demand. The number of colored workers in Virginia tobacco manufacturing increased by 27 per cent between 1931 and 1938; the corresponding figure for whites was somewhat higher, or 33 per cent.[b] There is reason to believe that the trend became more pronounced after 1938.[c] Prior to that year, the independent stemmeries which during the peak season of 1939 gave employment to an estimated 40,000 workers, predominantly Negroes (whereas the average for the whole year was less than 19,000) had been exempt from all minimum wage regulations.[d] The failure of these independent stemmeries to be excluded from the wages and hours regulations brought about a considerable increase in the earnings of their workers; the average for 11 stemmeries was 16 cents in 1935 and 33 cents in 1940-1941.[e] A similar wage increase had already occurred in the stemmery departments of the cigarette factories between 1933 and 1935, because of N.R.A. regulations, and there are several cases known when this has caused such plants to mechanize their stemmery departments.[f]

In spite of these wage increases, Negroes still receive much lower wages than whites. Worse than that, the work season is much shorter in rehandling work, where almost all the workers are Negro, than in other operations. In Virginia rehandling plants it averaged only 153 days (1939) whereas it was 234 days in cigar and cigarette manufacturing where two-thirds of the labor force was white. Although both labor groups were of about the same size during the time of operation, the rehandling workers received a total annual payroll less than half as large as that received by cigar and cigarette workers.[g] It is a well-known fact that female Negro tobacco workers have to supplement their factory earnings by doing domestic work during off seasons.

The Tobacco Workers' International Union was organized in the 1890's. It was a weak union most of the time until the late 1930's. Except for short periods, such as the First World War, it has seldom, until lately, taken a strong stand against employers, nor made any rigorous efforts to organize more than limited sections of the industry.

[a] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-207.

[b] Manuscript table based on the annual reports by the Virginia State Department of Labor and Industry. Courtesy, Dr. Lorin A. Thompson, Virginia Population Study.

[c] From 1938 to 1939 the number of white tobacco workers in Virginia increased by 8 per cent and the number of Negro tobacco workers by 3 per cent. (*Ibid.*, and Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Virginia, *Labor and Industry in Virginia*, 43rd Annual Report, year ending September 30, 1940 [1941], p. 31.)

[d] U.S. Department of Labor, Wages and Hours Division, "The Tobacco Industry" (mimeographed, 1941) p. 11. Quoted in Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

[e] "Hours and Earnings of Employees of Independent Leaf-Tobacco Dealers," *Monthly Labor Review* (July, 1941), p. 7. Quoted in Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[f] *Ibid.*, pp. 200-201. Wage data based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings in Cigarettes, Snuff, and Chewing- and Smoking-Tobacco Plants, 1933-1935," *Monthly Labor Review* (May, 1936), pp. 1322 and 1331.

[g] Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Virginia, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

Its main strategy seems to have been to sell the right of using the union label to a few employers, who did not have to pay a high price for getting their conditions of work accepted by the union. Then, too, it has been one of the most consistently undemocratic of all American organized labor groups. Between the years 1900 and 1939 there was not a single national convention, and the leadership was fundamentally the same during this whole time. The leaders would not retire even because of old age; the rank-and-file membership had to institute prolonged legal proceedings to reintroduce democracy and establish a new, more liberal and more efficient leadership. Before this certain significant successes had been won in the form of increased membership and contracts with large employers, particularly after the Supreme Court had upheld the National Labor Relations Act in 1937. The change in leadership strengthened this trend still further.[a]

It is evident that the Negro could not expect any great advantages from the union as it functioned before this reorganization. Where Negroes were organized, they were, and still are, for the most part kept in segregated locals. This system, of course, may appear as much more "natural" in the tobacco industry than in many other lines of work, since there is a strict occupational race segregation in tobacco, but it has made racial cooperation more difficult. The new regime has been much more friendly to Negroes than the old one. For the first time since 1900 a Negro has been elected vice-president. Negroes and whites are to be organized in the same locals "whenever possible" and, in actual practice, this policy has been followed in at least one case (Memphis). In the Virginia-North Carolina area there is a "joint shop committee" representing white and colored locals. These beginning interracial efforts may promise something for the future, but so far there has not been any complete understanding, nor grounds for the hope that the union will help the Negro in breaking up the occupational pattern of segregation in the tobacco industry. In some places, particularly in Richmond, it has been difficult to make the white local leaders interest themselves in the Negro. Few attempts were made to get Negroes organized, and this made Negro workers at some of the local stemmeries start a series of successful strikes on their own in 1937-1938. They were encouraged by the C.I.O., which helped them organize themselves independently. A group of white workers, members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (C.I.O.), at one time joined their picket line. The C.I.O. has competed with the T.W.I.U. in other places, and this threat has helped to make the local leadership of the A.F. of L. union more aware of the necessity of admitting the Negro to membership.[b]

11. Textile Workers

We shall consider the textile industry, not because it is a major "Negro industry," but—quite the opposite—because it is the main Southern industry excluding Negroes. It is the largest of all manufacturing branches in the South, yet it fails to use any Negro labor, except for limited menial purposes, such as sweeping, cleaning and yard labor. The Southern textile industry underwent a continued expansion during the 'thirties but Negroes derived little, if any, gain from it. The proportion of Negro workers in

[a] Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-235. Northrup has brought together his material on the tobacco workers union in an article, "The Tobacco Workers International Union," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (August, 1942), pp. 606-626. The references here, however, are to the thesis.

[b] *Idem.*, and Federal Writers' Project, *The Negro in Virginia* (1940), pp. 308-311.

Southern textile mills and clothing factories declined from 7 per cent in 1920 to 4 per cent in 1940. The absolute number of employed Negro workers in the South was 26,000 in 1940.[a]

Before the Civil War the textile industry in the South was unimportant. It was largely manned by Negroes, and often owned by planters who used their own slaves. It was not until about a decade after the Civil War that the real growth began. This growth, however, was not a matter of an expansion of the old plants. Instead, there were new plants built, mainly in the upper Piedmont area, where there is a big supply of white labor. Yet around many of the new textile mills there was a large potential Negro labor force as well. Norgren, on the basis of the 1880 Census, finds that Negroes constituted about one-third of the population in the upland counties of Georgia, Alabama and the two Carolinas. Yet no appreciable share of the jobs was given to the Negro.[b]

The explanation of this phenomenon seems to be that the origin of the cotton industry in the South was not a matter of individualistic enterprise alone. Regular "cotton mill campaigns" were organized by "citizens' committees" which often raised funds for the purpose. The entrepreneurs depended on the moral and financial backing of their white fellow citizens and had to consider their viewpoints, which were colored by the anti-Negro sentiments bred during the Reconstruction period.[c] The very fact that the industry was a new one and not a descendant of the pre-war textile plants was enough to leave the Negro out. Only in rare instances has the Negro had a chance in any Southern industry where he had not become entrenched before or just after the Civil War, when the moneyed whites had a direct financial interest in him.

As soon as this exclusionist pattern was established, the white working population acquired a vested interest in it which was difficult to remove. That the majority of the white workers are women, while the majority of the Negro workers are men, may have contributed to the resistance. There is an even greater reluctance against allowing Negroes of either sex to work with white women than there is against letting Negro men work with white men. Some employers have tried to employ more Negroes, but have met with such vigorous protests that they have had to abandon the idea.[d] The Negro, thus, has been unable to share in the benefits of the spectacular rise of the Southern textile industry. Although it has hurt the working population in the New England and Middle Atlantic states, it has not helped the Southern Negro to any appreciable extent.

An energetic unionization campaign in the South was inaugurated in 1937 by the Textile Workers' Union. Like other C.I.O. unions, it admits Negroes on a basis of equality, and membership in this union often protects the Negro from losing the few jobs that he now has in the Southern textile mills. It is not likely, however, that the union will ever do anything positive in order to help the Negro get a share in the ordinary production jobs. Even if unionism in Southern textile mills is based on a working class

[a] Chapter 13, Table 3.

[b] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 254-261. Norgren's description of the historical development of the Southern textile industry is largely based on Broadus Mitchell, *The Rise of Cotton Mills in the South* (1921); and Broadus Mitchell and George S. Mitchell, *The Industrial Revolution in the South* (1930).

[c] *Ibid.*, Part 3, pp. 262-265.

[d] *Ibid.*, Part 3, p. 269, and Greene and Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-148.

ideology, one can scarcely expect the membership to accept major sacrifices in order to help the Negro.[a]

12. Coal Miners

Bituminous coal mining,[b] except for a temporary recovery during the present war boom, has been a declining industry for the past few decades. This is due to over-expansion during the First World War, mechanization, and increased use of fuel substitutes, particularly oil and electricity. Nevertheless, the Negro is better off in this occupation than in most others. Writing before the present war boom, Norgren says:

> Considered as a source of employment, bituminous coal mining is decidedly a declining industry. During the past two decades, the number of persons earning their livelihood in this branch of economic activity has decreased by more than 200,000 or approximately one third*; and there is little prospect of any reversal of the trend in the near future.
>
> Despite this fact, there are good grounds for the contention that Negro coal miners constitute one of the more favorably situated groups in the colored working-class world. In the first place, while total employment has shrunk drastically, employment of Negroes has decreased only to a minor extent. Secondly, the occupational status of the Negro coal mine worker has always been, and still is, practically on par with that of the white worker—a state of affairs almost unknown outside of this industry. And, finally, as we have already intimated, he is afforded the protection of a union organization which proclaims, and adheres to, a policy of full racial equality.[c]

In 1930 there were 58,000 Negro coal miners,[d] or 43 per cent more than in 1910, whereas the number of white workers was about the same as in 1910. The bulk of the Negro workers was in West Virginia, Alabama, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. Most of the Negro miners in Pennsylvania had come there after 1910, often as strike-breakers, and since total employment in the Pennsylvania mines decreased between 1910 and 1930, they had actually displaced some white workers. In spite of this northward migration, the number of Negro miners remained insignificant in the North. In no Northern state did they constitute as much as 3 per cent of the labor force in the coal mines, and about four-fifths of them were still in the South in 1930. Negroes had been able to better their relative position because the Southern fields had gained much at the expense of Northern mines (even to the extent of having more mine workers in 1930 than in 1920, whereas the country as a whole showed a loss in employment during this period). The Southern mines had been unimportant around 1900, but by 1927 the coal production in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Virginia alone temporarily surpassed that of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. These gains were partly due to improvements in the transportation facilities in the South and to technical factors.

A third and very significant reason was the regional wage differential. The South, most of the time, had nonunion labor, whereas Northern operators had to pay higher union rates. As a result, the number of days worked per year was usually higher in the South than in the North, where it dwindled to 130-140 days during the depressions of the

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 3, pp. 270-271.

[b] There are but few Negroes employed in anthracite coal mining.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 396. Norgren's reference (*) is to: National Labor Relations Board, *The Effect of Labor Relations in the Bituminous Coal Industry upon Interstate Commerce* (1938), Bulletin No. 2, p. 59.

[d] Anthracite coal mining included.

early 'twenties and 'thirties. In 1927, the Northern employers managed to get rid of the union contract and were able to cut their wage costs so that they regained a large part of their previous losses to the Southern fields. They have been able to maintain this position. When the New Deal brought about new wage minima and gave new power to the unions, the regional wage differential was kept small [a] and, in 1941, it was virtually eliminated.

By and large, the Negroes failed to get their proportionate share of the employment gains in the South. Therefore, the proportion of Negroes among the Southern coal mine workers declined from 35 per cent in 1910 to 19 per cent in 1930, whereas the Northern coal fields accepted a somewhat increased proportion of Negro workers. During the 'thirties there was a continual loss in relative position for Negro miners in the South. About 46,000 Negro workers (including unemployed persons) were registered as coal miners in the 1930 Census, and they constituted 19 per cent of the total. In 1930 there were 35,000 employed Negro coal miners in the South, making up 16 per cent of the total. There was only a small difference between the corresponding absolute numbers for white workers.[b]

The outlook for the Negro is doubtful. It is possible that the general long employment trends will not go as steeply downward as they did during most of the period 1920-1940. On the other hand, the South has lost the competitive advantage of a nonunion wage scale. Since the increase in wages has been greater in the South than elsewhere, it is likely that mechanization will be particularly pronounced in the South. Norgren and Northrup have noticed a tendency to mechanize the loading operations in Southern coal fields. It will probably hurt Negroes more than whites for several reasons: first, because Negroes are concentrated both in the South and in the hand-loading jobs; second, because whites are usually selected as operators of mechanical loaders. (One factor in this selectivity is that mechanical loading is crew work while hand loading is a highly individualized occupation.) The United Mine Workers Union, which otherwise protects Negroes, has been reluctant to resist such favoritism.[c] The present war boom may

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 406-417.

The wage level in West Virginia, Kentucky and Virginia declined from an average of 82 cents an hour in 1921-22 to 70 cents in 1924, whereas the Northern fields (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois) almost maintained their level of 1921-1922 (89 cents) up until about 1927, when union conditions were abolished in most of them. The average wage, by 1933, hit a low of 37 cents in the Upper South, as against 46 cents in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Then followed an increase under the New Deal. By 1936 the averages were 77 cents in the North and 74 cents in the Upper South. In 1941 a basic daily wage rate of $7 was adopted for both Northern and Southern Appalachian area. The rate in Alabama, however, is lower ($5), partly because this state does not compete with the others, but probably also because it has the highest proportion of Negro workers in the coal mines. (See: F. E. Berquist and Associates, *Economic Survey of the Bituminous Coal Industry under Free Competition and Code Regulation* [mimeographed], National Recovery Administration, Work Materials No. 69 [1936], 2 vols. Also, Table 4 in Norgren, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 436, and Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 290.)

[b] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 3, Part 1, p. 23; *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 Population*, Second Series, State Tables 18a and 18b.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 417-419, and letter from Paul H. Norgren, August 16, 1942. See also Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-301.

counteract this trend temporarily; it is possible that the scarcity of white labor will give the Negroes an increased share of the jobs. On the other hand, there is the danger of overexpansion which will increase the general post-war unemployment. It is impossible to say anything definite on these important matters.

As previously mentioned, unionism, until the New Deal era, was much weaker in the South than in the North. Yet there have been determined attempts since the 1880's to unionize the Southern coal industry. These attempts were sometimes successful, but only for short periods. Time and again the union was defeated by employers, who utilized all sorts of brutal tactics. In this they were usually supported by groups of white citizens who were incited by the race issue.[a] These defeats, as well as the subsequent abolishment of union contracts in the northern Appalachian area, could not fail to weaken the United Mine Workers, but the organization was by no means crushed. It had been fighting hard and from the very beginning had developed a technique of equalitarian collaboration between white and black labor which turned out to be highly useful. The continued wage cuts during the Great Depression of the 'thirties, the unemployment which eventually brought great numbers of mine workers to starvation, as well as memories of the previous fight, all prepared the ground for a determined comeback. The opportunity came with the New Deal. With the institution of the N.R.A. a big organizing campaign was launched, North as well as South. The response was impressive. Within a few months the overwhelming majority of mine workers was unionized. The employers tried to play up the race issue, and they spread rumors to the effect that either Negroes or whites would lose everything by putting the union into power. This time it failed. Then, too, the mine operators were weak. Many of them were impoverished, and some had come to realize the futility of using the wage-cut method as a competitive instrument. Pressure from the government aided the union. Almost the whole field is now covered by contracts. Negroes and whites are organized in the same locals, often with a white president and a Negro vice-president—an arrangement which has been adopted in order to have a white representative to contact employers and yet give the Negroes a voice in the decisions whenever they constitute an appreciable proportion of the workers. There may still be a small amount of bad racial feeling, but the leadership takes energetic action against any local which does not recognize the principle of racial equality and collaboration. The policy of "gradualism" adopted by the union has given results. At the beginning, when employers had to get used to the idea of discussing work problems with representatives of labor, the unions were sometimes reluctant to include Negroes among their representatives at these discussions. Today, even in Alabama, Negroes take part in all such discussions and argue quite as freely as whites. They probably have gained more than whites through the collective settlement of all sorts of petty grievances, since they were formerly more easily subjected to arbitrary treatment by foremen. Then, too, more than whites, they are concentrated in piece-rate work, where there is need for constant adjustments because of the variation in yield of different work places. These policies seem to have brought about an increased mutual understanding between the two racial groups. Speaking of the conditions in Birmingham, Norgren says:

> Informants among both leaders and rank-and-file members testify that social intercourse between workers of the two races is much more common to-day than it was prior to the

[a] Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 357-375.

advent of organization. Colored unionists contribute freely to discussions at union business meetings; white delegates shake hands with Negro delegates at district council assemblages without displaying repugnance or embarrassment; Negroes and whites ride together in the mine cages. Only in social gatherings is the "jim crow" custom retained unchanged.[a]

Perhaps still more important is the fact that seniority rules—regardless of race—have been adopted in both the dismissal and the rehiring of workers.[b]

13. IRON AND STEEL WORKERS

The iron, steel, vehicle, machinery, and other metal industries had, in 1930, 177,000 Negro workers, over 60 per cent of whom resided outside the South. Except for the building industry, no other manufacturing branch had as many Negro workers. The increase since 1910 was tremendous; the number of Negro workers was between three and four times greater in 1930 than two decades earlier; whereas the number of white workers had not even doubled. Still, Negroes constituted but 5 per cent of the total labor force in the iron, steel and vehicle industries.[c]

The largest industries in the group, from the point of view of Negro employment, were blast furnaces and steel rolling mills, which had 53,000 Negro workers in 1930; automobile factories (26,000); and car and railroad shops (16,000).[d] In this section, we focus our attention on the first group, and we shall consider the second one in a following section.

The condition of the Negro in the basic steel industry is rather similar to that in the coal mining industry. Both are "heavy" industries, in need of great numbers of unskilled workers and subject to pronounced business cycle variations. Of great practical importance for the Negro is the somewhat accidental fact that the present union leaders have been recruited from United Mine Workers officials and, therefore, are more likely to adhere to a philosophy of racial cooperation. There are also striking dissimilarities: whereas most Negro mine workers are in the South, no less than 72 per cent of the Negro steel mill workers were employed in the North and West in 1930. More important is the fact that the occupational pattern in the steel mills is much more heterogeneous than in the mine fields. There are marked wage differentials between various skilled groups. This made it more difficult to organize white and black labor on the basis of equalitarianism. This fact, in conjunction with the great power of the large concerns dominating the production of steel, has made it difficult to organize any union at all.[e]

Steel production, except for cyclical fluctuations, is an expanding industry. Therefore, to achieve equality in the steel industry would be worth more to the Negro than the progress he has made as a mine worker. By 1910 there were almost as many Negro workers in basic steel plants in the North as in the South, where the steel industry was unimportant. The number of Negro workers in Northern steel plants was between four

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 445.

[b] The last three paragraphs are based on *ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 441-448, and Northrup, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-301.

[c] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 5, pp. 408-411.

[d] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 3, Part 1, p. 23; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 343-346.

[e] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 451-452.

and five times greater in 1920 than in 1910, largely because of the expansion of the steel industry during the First World War. In the South, Negroes gained much less, or about 80 per cent, although the general expansion in blast furnaces and steel rolling mills was much more pronounced than in the North. Negroes, however, got somewhat more than their proportionate share of the new jobs in Southern mills. The 'twenties brought a general decline in the basic steel industry. Again, Negroes fared better in the North, where they had almost the same number of steel workers in 1930 as in 1920. In the South, the decrease was somewhat more pronounced for Negro than for white workers. During the 'thirties, also, the Negro lost in relative position in the South. If we add together the figures for both basic steel production and manufacturing of machinery and transportation equipment (except automobiles), we find that, in 1940, the number of *employed* white workers in the South was almost as high as the number of *both employed and unemployed* white workers in 1930; for Negroes there was a substantial difference between the two figures. The 40,000 Negro employed workers in 1940 constituted only 15 per cent of the total in the South; whereas the proportion of Negroes among those registered as gainful workers in steel and machinery production in 1930 had amounted to 19 per cent.[a]

More than three out of every four Negro workers in blast furnaces and steel rolling mills were classified as unskilled in 1930. One in seven was a semi-skilled worker, and one in fourteen a skilled worker. On the other hand, about one-half of the native whites and one-fourth of the foreign-born whites were skilled, clerical or managerial workers. The Negroes had a higher representation in the skilled crafts than they had in most other industries, but this was largely a result of the composition of the labor force in this industry. In relation to other groups, their position was about as unfavorable as in most other industries. The skilled Negro workers are largely concentrated in hot and disagreeable work, such as furnace jobs. There is reluctance to use Negroes in such skilled work as machinists do; little more than 1 per cent of those workers were Negroes. The situation, if anything, seems to have deteriorated rather than improved. There had been a slightly greater proportion of skilled craftsmen among Negro steel workers in 1910 and a lower proportion of semi-skilled workers. The proportion that Negro workers constituted of all workers had more than doubled in the unskilled and semi-skilled categories from 1910 to 1930, but increased only to a small extent for skilled and higher groups. Indeed, the major part of the increased need for common laborers had been met by hiring more Negro workers. But the general expansion in unskilled occupations was much smaller than that in higher categories, so that the habit of using Negroes predominantly in the lower jobs put a limit to their chance of increasing their share in the total employment.[b]

The wage level in the steel industry, as previously noted, is characterized by great differences in earnings between skilled and unskilled workers. This is particularly true in the South, where the general level is comparatively low, especially for common

[a] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 3, Part 1, p. 23. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, State Tables 18a and 18b. Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 456.

[b] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States, 1930* (1938), pp. 100 and 130. *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. 4, Table 6. Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 471 and 473.

laborers. There has been some equalization of both the regional and the occupational wage differentials; at the same time the general level has been raised considerably.[a] Most of the traditional characteristics of the wage structure still persist, however, and they are behind the racial wage differentials mirrored in the following figures for April, 1938:

	Negro	White	Differential
North	$.74	$.86	$.12
South	.54	.75	.21

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings of Negro Workers in the Iron and Steel Industry April, 1938", *Monthly Labor Review*, (November, 1940), p. 1140.

Comparing these figures with an earlier sample study for 1935, one finds that there has been a general increase in wages for both Negro and white workers. The Negro-white differential seems to have become somewhat smaller in the South even in terms of cents per hour but has remained almost unchanged in the North.[b] The main impression conveyed by these data, however, is that, in spite of all racial injustice in the apportionment of jobs, the Negro steel worker, particularly in the North, enjoys relatively high wages compared with other Negro wage earners. It should be kept in mind that the increase in cost for unskilled labor may influence mechanization trends in a way which may be unfavorable to the Negro. He cannot be assured of any real future in the steel industry unless allowed the benefit of a wider range of occupational opportunities.

Behind the wage increases during the 'thirties were the new federal minimum wage regulations and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (S.W.O.C.)—later called The United Steel Workers of America. This union has been the first which has consistently given real protection to the Negro. There was a long and hard struggle to organize this union, and during the early stages Negroes were excluded. The only time before the 'thirties when the Negro was shown any real consideration was in 1918, when the first noteworthy attempt was made to organize unskilled steel workers in Alabama; employers, playing up the race issue and using violence and intimidation, managed to defeat the unions completely.[c] In 1919 an attempt was made to organize the whole steel industry on a broad basis under the leadership of a joint committee representing several unions in the field. The unions were disastrously defeated in this year, and thereafter the Amalgamated was completely inactive. Negroes were frequently

[a] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings and Hours in Bar, Puddling, Sheet-Bar, Rod, Wire, and Sheet Mills, 1933 and 1935," *Monthly Labor Review* (July, 1936), p. 117; "Earnings and Hours in the Iron and Steel Industry, April, 1938," *Monthly Labor Review* (August, 1940), pp. 421-442; "Earnings and Hours in the Iron and Steel Industry," Part 2, *Monthly Labor Review* (September, 1940), pp. 709-726; "Annual Earnings in the Iron and Steel Industry, 1937," *Monthly Labor Review* (October, 1940), pp. 823-833; "Earnings of Negro Workers in the Iron and Steel Industry, April, 1938," *Monthly Labor Review* (November, 1940), pp. 1139-1149.

[b] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings of Negroes in the Iron and Steel Industry," *Monthly Labor Review* (March, 1937), p. 566. Quoted in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 476.

[c] Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-252.

used in strike-breaking in the steel industry. It is said that the employers used some 30,000 Negro strike-breakers in the 1919 strike, and although the union gave some attention to obtaining Negro support, no considerable number of Negroes was ever organized.

The N.R.A. brought about an extremely rapid increase in unionism, but the leadership of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (A.F. of L.) failed to give this movement much encouragement and even showed some hostility to it. A decision of the A.F. of L. convention of 1934 to organize the iron and steel industry was sabotaged by the A.F. of L. leadership, which permitted craft unions to "raid" newly organized units dividing the workers among the various crafts. In 1936 the C.I.O. organized the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (S.W.O.C.), which started an energetic and successful membership drive. In 1937 it won its most spectacular victory when the United States Steel Corporation signed a contract.[a] Now nearly all major steel plants are covered by union contracts.

This new unionism in steel meant a change in the position of the Negro. He had been taken in as an equal by many of the company unions during the N.R.A. period, and also by communist and independent local leaders. The fact that the leadership of the S.W.O.C. was largely recruited from the Mine Workers meant that his position became even more secure. Negroes in most cases responded enthusiastically to unionization efforts. Wherever Negroes constitute a large part of the workers they get some representation in the local leadership, often, as in the Alabama district, a vice-presidency. The employers in the South have tried to play up the race issue and they encouraged some municipalities to pass city ordinances forbidding joint meetings of white and Negro workers; this time it availed little.[b]

The standard S.W.O.C. contract stipulates that seniority shall be followed for dismissals and in rehiring.[c] It is doubtful whether a similar principle will be adhered to in the case of promotions even though the contract contains a clause to that effect. Norgren points to the heterogeneous occupational pattern in the steel industry which makes it difficult to induce the white workers to go the whole way in racial equalitarianism. He adds:

> If this problem [abolishment of racial discrimination in promotion] does not iron itself out in the local unions—and it is hardly probable that it will—it would seem to fall to the national union leaders to lead the way in solving it. As far as the writer has been able to learn, the heads of the S.W.O.C. have not, up to now, given the question serious consideration. This neglect is probably justified to a considerable extent, since the steel union has as yet scarcely developed beyond the organization stage. There is little doubt, however, that sooner or later the problem will come to the fore. And the manner in which it is handled should provide an acid test of the workability of the racial equality idea in the union movement.[d]

In 1940 an A.F. of L. union succeeded in winning an election at a Birmingham plant by promising the Negro workers help in getting promoted.[e] This seems to indicate

[a] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 490-502.

[b] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 505, and Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, *Black Workers and the New Unions* (1939), pp. 202-212.

[d] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 506.

[e] Northrup, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

that the problem has made itself felt rather severely in some places. Even if the union's present policy of "gradualism" in this matter [a] can easily be understood, there is no doubt that the issue will soon have to be faced. It is obvious that Negro workers need a larger share of the semi-skilled and skilled jobs to minimize their risk of technological displacement.

14. AUTOMOBILE WORKERS [b]

In 1930 there were 26,000 Negro workers in the automobile industry, constituting 4 per cent of the total number of workers. The automobile industry does not, therefore, constitute a major source of Negro employment. It is, however, one of the few industries in which the Negro has managed to get a foothold since the Civil War. Even if the Negro's gains in the automobile industry are not spectacular, it is remarkable that he has done as well in this Northern industry as he has in the Southern textile mills.

The explanation of this phenomenon is not difficult to find. It was during the First World War, with its accompanying scarcity of labor, that the automobile industry started to become of major importance in American manufacturing. Recruiting of labor was a major problem, particularly in Detroit where there was no large local labor supply to begin with. That almost 60 per cent of all Negro automobile workers were employed in Michigan in 1930 and that some concerns which have plants in several places give no employment to Negroes except in or around Detroit confirms the contention that it was because of an initial shortage of labor in Detroit that the Negro was able to make so much headway in the automobile industry. It should not be overlooked that Southern whites have come in even greater numbers to Detroit.

> It is common today for automobile factory employment officials to estimate that anywhere from 20 to 60 per cent of their employees are Southern whites while Negroes seldom exceed more than 10 per cent except in individual foundry establishments.[c]

Not only are the Negro automobile workers distributed geographically in an uneven way but also the distribution among various concerns and plants is anything but proportionate. This, of course, suggests that the Negro gains may be accidental. Negroes constitute a rather high proportion among the employees of the parts manufacturers which are subject to severe price competition and cannot afford to pay high wages. The leading employer of Negroes among the main manufacturers is the Ford Motor Company which, at the beginning of 1940, had almost 10,000 Negro workers in Michigan. Almost all of them were employed in the River Rouge plant, where they constituted almost 12 per cent of the labor force. Next came the Briggs Manufacturing Corporation which had 3,000 Negro workers in the Detroit area, where they constituted more than one-fifth of the total labor force. General Motors Corporation, on the other hand, had a much smaller proportion of Negro workers, about 2,500, or 2.5 per cent of

[a] Herbert R. Northrup has certain scattered and impressionistic evidence to the effect that the union actually has helped Negroes get promoted in several Northern plants (*ibid.*, p. 344).

[b] The extensive material on the Negro in the automobile industry contained in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 513-642, was collected by Lloyd H. Bailer, who, under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Norgren, conducted an extensive series of interviews in Detroit, and wrote the main part of the chapter.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op, cit.*, Part 4, p. 534. See, also, pp. 533, 541-544.

all its workers in Michigan and Indiana. Chrysler had 2,000 Negroes, making up 4 per cent of its Detroit labor force.[a]

Nearly three-fourths of all Negro workers in the automobile industry in 1930 were in unskilled occupations; the corresponding proportion for white workers was less than one-fifth. One-eighth of the Negro workers, but almost one-half of the white workers, were in skilled and clerical occupations. The range of job opportunities for Negro automobile workers is usually narrower than these figures suggest. Negroes are invariably concentrated in service jobs, foundries and paint departments.[b] Some of the Negro foundry workers and painters are in skilled jobs, but Norgren and Bailer say:

> Negro operatives and skilled workers in these departments . . . are almost invariably employed in such hazardous occupations as shear operators, heaters, spraymen, chippers, rough snag grinders and sand blasters and in other operations undesirable because they are dirty, dusty, extremely hot, or are accompanied by fumes.[c]

An inquiry among company officials and workers suggested that the main reason for this condition was the opposition of the white workers—many of whom are Southerners—to collaboration with Negroes. Concerning the attitudes of employers' representatives, there are certain data assembled by Norgren and Bailer. Most employers' representatives who had any appreciable experience with Negro workers seemed inclined to think that Negroes were about as efficient as whites, although some added qualifications to the effect that Negroes compared "favorably with whites on the work they perform."[d] Several officials believed, of course, in the general stereotype that Negroes are particularly able to stand hot work.[e] One employers' representative pointed to the difficulty of Negroes' getting training as skilled workers. He believed, in addition, that it was possible to secure a higher percentage of skilled workers from a group of white workers than from a group of Negro workers; for this reason, he explained, employers preferred to get their craftsmen from the whites, although there are individual Negroes who are potentially just as good. Another informant gave this very interesting viewpoint:

> It seems to me the average colored worker is more loyal to his boss than to his job. If he likes his boss, he will work himself to death, but if he doesn't like him he won't do a thing. The white worker is different. I've known white workers who simply hated their foremen but they did good work out of loyalty to the job itself.[f]

The River Rouge plant of the Ford Motor Company, which has the largest proportion of Negroes of all major Detroit automobile factories, differs in other respects from the general pattern. The Negro has a share of the jobs in almost all departments. He

[a] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 526 and 539-545.

[b] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States, 1930* (1938), pp. 98-99.

[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 549. The statement is backed up by a detailed analysis of job specifications in several of the major Detroit plants (*ibid.*, pp. 552-559 and 649-652).

[d] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 572-589.

[e] Such a capacity has been attributed to all marginal groups of workers such as South Europeans, Negroes, and Mexicans who have had to content themselves with such jobs as appeared unattractive to the dominant group. (Glen E. Carlson, "The Negro in the Industries of Detroit," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan (1929). Quoted in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 573.)

[f] *Ibid.*, Part 4, p. 574.

does not, however, have full equality of opportunities; the occupational status of the Negro worker at the Ford plant differs only in degree from that of Negro workers in other plants. In 1937 about half the Negro workers were in the foundry of the River Rouge plant, where they constituted 47 per cent of all the workers. In the tool rooms scarcely 1 per cent of the workers were Negro. Still, the Negroes have a better chance to advance in this factory than they have almost anywhere else.[a]

This difference between the River Rouge plant and other major automobile factories is not accidental. In 1921, when layoffs occurred because of the post-war depression, some Negro leaders approached Henry Ford asking him not to dismiss Negroes in any discriminatory manner. Ford then set down the policy that Negroes should make up the same proportion of the workers as corresponded to their proportion in the population of Detroit, and that they should be represented in all departments of his company. He has appointed some Negro officials in his personnel department who do the hiring of Negroes and have the right to interfere should any discriminatory practices occur. It is claimed that these Negro personnel officials have put pressure on the workers in political matters and, until Ford gave in to the union in 1941, in matters of labor organization. Although conditions even in other respects are not ideal, they are far better than in other automobile plants, and Negro leaders generally characterize them in this way.[b] Negro and white Ford workers are not segregated in the work rooms, which sometimes happens in other factories. White workers may object to this condition, but the opposition is not nearly as widespread nowadays as it used to be in the early 'twenties when Negroes started to become a prominent part of the Ford labor force. The fact that the company's policy on this issue is well known makes the white workers realize that opposition would be of little avail. The Ford training school was, until about 1940, the only major automobile trade school in Detroit which admitted Negro workers.[c]

Daily wage rates are comparatively high in the automobile industry, but work has been insecure. There are seasonal variations in the need for labor. Since the beginning of the 'thirties, the cyclical variations have been worse. The drive for efficiency has put a premium on youth. It is frequently claimed that new workers are being hired while good, well-trained workers are walking the streets.[d]

The automobile industry was not well organized until the C.I.O. organized the United Automobile Workers' Union in 1936-1937. The United Automobile Workers' Union (now the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implements Workers' Union) includes the Negro on a basis of equality. Negroes have been represented in the leadership from the beginning. Yet for a long time the Negro was a poor union member. Bailer, when making a survey of all U.A.W. locals in Detroit in 1940, found that more than three-fourths of the white workers, but not much more than one-half of the Negroes, in plants under the jurisdiction of these locals were organized by that time. Moreover, there were general complaints about Negroes showing less interest than whites in union work. Some Negroes served as strike-breakers at a Dodge walk-out in 1939, and the same thing happened in the Ford factories in 1941. The reasons for this condition are obvious. Negroes have been unaccustomed to union work. As long as Ford

[a] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 559-570 and 649-652.
[b] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 589 and 599-652.
[c] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 589 and 599-624.
[d] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 527-531.

held out against unionism, it is quite understandable that many Negroes were reluctant to join in the fight. The high proportion of white Southerners in the Detroit labor force made the union members disinclined to accept the equalitarian philosophy of the leaders. Segregation in social affairs of workers had been customary. It could not be abolished immediately, partly because real estate and restaurant owners who catered to union social affairs often supported segregational practices. Bailer found, however, in 1940 and again in 1942, that conditions were constantly improving. Ford's surrender to the unions has probably precipitated this development.[a]

The problem of promotion remains a major difficulty. White workers would probably not object to the granting of departmental seniority rights to the Negro. In order to get full equality of opportunity the Negro must have a chance for promotion not only within departments, but also from one department to another. In 1940, according to Bailer, the white workers objected so much to the granting of such rights to Negroes that it seemed impossible that they would get them in the near future.[b] Definite progress has been made during the present war boom. It is reported that Negroes have been moved from foundry shop in one establishment to skilled work in other departments of other establishments.[c]

This description of the conditions in the automobile industry is largely historical. The conversion to war use has brought about an entirely new situation, which, at the present time, is rather difficult to survey. Elsewhere we have assembled some scattered information on this development.[d]

15. The Slaughtering and Meat-Packing Industry

The slaughtering and meat-packing industry had 18,000 Negro employees in 1930, constituting 11 per cent of its total labor force. It is not of great importance as a source of employment to Negroes, and yet it is the only food industry which has any appreciable number of Negro workers. The story of labor in the slaughter and packing houses is full of racial strife. It is a good illustration of how race prejudice, while usually limiting opportunities for the Negro, sometimes helps him.[e]

About three-fourths of the Negro workers in 1930 were employed outside the South, and one-third of the Northern workers were in Illinois, where they constituted roughly 30 per cent of the total unskilled and semi-skilled labor force. The proportion of Negroes among such workers was as high or almost as high in some of the secondary Northern slaughtering centers located in Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska. Among the skilled workers, Negroes generally had few representatives, and at each occupational level they tended to be more concentrated in heavy or distasteful work than were white employees.[f]

This, however, is less surprising than is the fact that the Negro makes up such a large

[a] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 626-639. Interview with Lloyd H. Bailer, August 3, 1942.
[b] *Idem.*
[c] Interview with Lloyd H. Bailer, August 3, 1942.
[d] See Chapter 19.
[e] The chapter on the slaughtering and meat-packing industry in Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 653-698, was written by Arnold M. Rose. The basic sources were census reports, Alma Herbst, *The Negro in the Slaughtering and Meat-Packing Industry in Chicago* (1932), and Cayton and Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-279.
[f] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, pp. 659-671.

part of the labor force in some of the Northern centers. This was not so originally. Kansas and Missouri had an appreciable proportion of Negro workers in 1910, but the increase during the First World War was such that by 1920 this proportion had become two or three times higher. Even more spectacular was the development in Chicago. Negroes had been used as strike-breakers in 1894 and, particularly, in 1904. Few of these Negro strike-breakers were allowed to stay, and by 1910 there were only about 500 Negro workers in the Chicago stockyards. The subsequent increase was due to three factors: (1) the scarcity of labor during the First World War; (2) the interest the packers had in keeping the labor force heterogeneous when a unionization drive was started in 1916 and 1917 by the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, and the Stockyards Labor Council; and (3) the fact that, while some unions did accept Negroes, there were several others which "drew the color line sharply" or discriminated against them in other ways, and this alienated many Negro workers.[a] In other words, the packers made a definite policy of increasing the proportion of Negro workers, and the equivocal stand of the unions on the race issue ensured them of success. The unions could not fail to see this danger, and an energetic attempt was made to win the Negro workers over. It met with some response from the Negroes, but the race riot of 1919, due in part to the increase in the proportion of Negro workers in the stockyards and to "the conflict between union workers and packing house employers for the allegiance of Negro workers," made these attempts fail.[b] During a strike in December, 1921, and January, 1922, Negroes were used as strike-breakers. The workers were completely defeated, and unionism in the Chicago stockyards was practically eliminated for a decade.[c]

During the 'twenties Negroes lost in relative position in some of the secondary Northern meat-packing centers. In Chicago, on the other hand, they continued to gain, in that the actual number of Negro workers was slightly increased between 1920 and 1930, although the total labor force in the stockyards showed some decrease.[d] When unionism returned to the Chicago packing houses during the New Deal, Negroes continued to be rather "poor union material." There was a three-cornered battle among company unions, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen (A.F. of L.) and the Packing House Workers' Industrial Union (C.I.O.) The Amalgamated was still unable to go the whole way on the Negro issue; often there was racial segregation in social affairs, and the representation of Negroes among the leaders was not high enough to appeal to the Negroes. The Packing House Workers are said to have been dominated (at least formerly) by communist leaders. Employers continued to intimidate union members to such an extent that Negroes, who had always gained more by siding with the employers, were reluctant to join the independent unions in large numbers.[e] Recently, there have been reports that the C.I.O. union has become a dominant influence in the major Chicago plants,[f] and this may have increased the prospects for a final victory for the kind of unionism which will appeal to Negro workers.

[a] Cayton and Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-246.
[b] *Ibid.*, p. 247.
[c] Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 4, p. 676.
[d] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 661-665.
[e] *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 689-694. Cayton and Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-279.
[f] Information from Howard D. Gould of the Chicago Urban League (letter of May 21, 1942).

Concerning the wage level, we may refer to the following average figures contained in a study in 1937 by the Department of Labor.

Section and Race	Males				Females
	Total	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled	
The North					
Negroes	$.71	$.84	$.71	$.63	$.53
Whites	.69	.82	.67	.60	.51
The South					
Negroes	.46	.54	.49	.40	[a]
Whites	.53	.67	.50	.45	.38

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings and Hours in the Meat-Packing Industry, December 1937," *Monthly Labor Review* (October, 1939), p. 953.

[a] Number of workers in sample too small for computing of average.

We find that the wage structure is characterized by a rather large differential between North and South. In Northern states there is the rather exceptional phenomenon that Negroes at each occupational level and also in general, earned slightly more per hour than did whites. This is probably due to the fact that Negro workers, more than whites, are concentrated in some of the largest plants. In the South, on the other hand, Negroes usually earned less than whites, not only generally but also at each occupational level.

APPENDIX 7

DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO RESIDENCES IN SELECTED CITIES

This description of the distribution of Negro residences in selected cities should be read in connection with the description of residential segregation in Chapter 29, Section 3.

There have been Negroes in New York for hundreds of years.[a] At first they tended to live in close proximity to the homes of the wealthy whites in whose residences they were employed as servants. This caused them to live in little concentrations in several sections of the city. Some of these nests still persist, but the new migrants to New York tended to live together in a section which moved northward on Manhattan Island in the wake of the upper class whites. About 1900 the main Negro center was in the vicinity of West Fifty-third Street and was no longer a satellite community to that of the rich whites. It contained "three rather well-appointed hotels" [b] and was as much an independent community as can be found among any ethnic group in New York except the Chinese. At the same time, the large Brooklyn Negro community also was developing. The last and biggest shift was from the middle of Manhattan to Harlem. Commerce and industry were moving uptown, and new residential opportunities opened to Negroes in Harlem after 1900:

> Harlem had been overbuilt with large, new-law apartment houses, but rapid transportation to that section was very inadequate—the Lenox Avenue Subway had not yet been built—and landlords were finding difficulty in keeping houses on the east side of the section filled. Residents along and near Seventh Avenue were fairly well served by the Eighth Avenue Elevated. A colored man, in the real estate business at this time, Philip A. Payton, approached several of these landlords with the proposition that he would fill their empty or partially empty houses with steady colored tenants. The suggestion was accepted, and one or two houses on One Hundred and Thirty-fourth Street east of Lenox Avenue were taken over. Gradually other houses were filled. The whites paid little attention to the movement until it began to spread west of Lenox Avenue; they then took steps to check it. They proposed through a financial organization, the Hudson Realty Company, to buy in all properties occupied by colored people and evict the tenants. The Negroes countered by similar methods. . . .

[a] This description of the distribution of Negroes in New York is taken largely from the following two sources:

James Weldon Johnson, "Harlem: the Culture Capital," in Alain Locke (editor), *The New Negro* (1925), pp. 301-311.

E. Franklin Frazier, "Negro Harlem: An Ecological Study," *American Journal of Sociology* (July, 1937), pp. 72-88.

[b] James Weldon Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

> The situation now resolved itself into an actual contest. Negroes not only continued to occupy available apartment houses, but began to purchase private dwellings between Lenox and Seventh Avenues. Then the whole movement, in the eyes of the whites, took on the aspect of an "invasion"; they became panic-stricken and began fleeing as from a plague. The presence of one colored family in a block, no matter how well bred and orderly, was sufficient to precipitate a flight. House after house and block after block was actually deserted. It was a great demonstration of human beings running amuck. None of them stopped to reason why they were doing it or what would happen if they didn't. The banks and lending companies holding mortgages on these deserted houses were compelled to take them over. For some time they held these houses vacant, preferring to do that and carry the charges than to rent or sell them to colored people. But values dropped and continued to drop until at the outbreak of the war in Europe property in the northern part of Harlem had reached the nadir.
>
> In the meantime the Negro colony was becoming more stable; the churches were being moved from the lower part of the city; social and civic centers were being formed; and gradually a community was being evolved. Following the outbreak of the war in Europe Negro Harlem received a new and tremendous impetus.[a]

The Great Migration from the South greatly expanded [b] and stabilized the Harlem area. To a limited extent, Negroes bought houses—often fine old mansions—as well as rented them, and opened their own stores as well as traded with local white storekeepers. With the continuing migration of Negroes into New York, Harlem is still expanding, but not in proportion to the increase in its population. Outside pressures and the growth of a well-to-do Negro class has forced and permitted the building of large structures containing many small apartments.

It is difficult and hazardous to make predictions. If, as is generally assumed, New York's commerce and industry do not expand to any considerable extent in the future, Negroes are not likely to be pushed out of Harlem. Harlem can grow spatially also. Harlem has a glamour of its own which will continue to attract Negroes from all over the country even if employment opportunities are not too bright, and they might become better off than they were during the 'thirties, particularly if the New York Negroes can more effectively use their political power to break down economic discrimination. The newcomers will, as usual, be forced to seek residence in established Negro communities. The Brooklyn settlement is growing, but so is Harlem, and it is likely that Harlem will remain the center of New York's Negro population and, in a sense, the cultural capital of all American Negroes. Aside from the couple of other large Negro communities in the metropolis, and the half dozen small communities which have developed in vacant land at the outskirts of the city,[c] the few Negroes who live in scattered sections of New York represent the older pattern which prevailed when Negroes were few in number and engaged in serving wealthy whites.

Negroes have been living in Chicago [d] since the city was incorporated in the 1830's.

[a] James Weldon Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 303-305.

[b] The center of Harlem was 135th Street and 7th Avenue. The expansion was outward from this center. See Frazier, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

[c] There is, for example, the Jamaica area of Queens, and three or four small Negro areas in the Bronx.

[d] This description of the Negro community in Chicago is based on personal observation by Arnold Rose and on a large number of historical sources, including a collection of unpublished interviews with old residents (in possession of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago).

They were few in number until the meat-packing industries brought them up from the South during the stockyards strikes of 1894 and 1904, and even then they formed an insignificant proportion of the population until the war industries' boom, beginning in 1915. Before 1915 Chicago Negroes lived in practically every section of the city, usually in small concentrations at the edge of areas inhabited by wealthy whites. It is interesting to observe that, except for a few settlements at the very outskirts of the city, the Negroes have not been able to get into any new areas in the rapidly growing city since 1910, despite a more than six-fold increase in the Negro population since that time. The South Side area—largest in 1910—has expanded enormously in a thin strip, which has come to be known as Chicago's "Black Belt," and the other areas also have expanded slightly, but no new areas within the city proper have been opened to Negroes. As in the case of New York, segregation has been increasing: even the upper class Negroes whose ancestors lived in Chicago on terms of almost complete social equality with their white neighbors are now forced into the Negro ghettos and are hardly differentiated from the impoverished Negro just arrived from the South.

The history of the expansion of the Chicago South Side Black Belt has exhibited the full gamut of Negro housing problems. The constant immigration of Southern Negroes into this segregated area caused doubling-up of families, the taking in of lodgers, the conversion of once spacious homes and apartments into tiny flats, the crowding of an entire family into a single room, the rapid raising of rents, the use of buildings which should be condemned. The careless attitude of the health and sanitary inspection authorities toward Negroes and toward poor people generally is especially serious where an ignorant population took over the homes abandoned by another population group. Light industry, wholesale commercial establishments, gambling and vice resorts have been pressing the poorer Negroes southward from the direction of the downtown area. The holding of land for speculation, the high cost of building, the lack of capital have left huge gaps of vacant land in the midst of the most over-crowded Negro areas in the northern half of the Black Belt. The west boundary of the section is sharply delineated by a series of railroad tracks which cut off the Negroes from their poorer white neighbors. The southward expansion has been marked by bitter conflict between the dispossessed whites and the harassed Negroes. Organizations have been set up to prevent any white owners from selling or renting to Negroes; Negroes who succeeded in getting a foothold, or whites who seemed inclined to give them one for large sums of money, were terrorized and physically maltreated; bitter fear and hatred has marked many of the other contacts between whites and Negroes because of the whites' beliefs that the Negroes were dangerous to their persons and property. There has been practically no expansion to the east despite all Negro pressures and needs. The housing difficulties of the Negroes in Chicago are apparent at every point, and yet neither the City Council nor any other white group has been willing to do anything about it.

Southern cities usually have such a large Negro population that when the Negro community grows, it is near enough to the outskirts of the city that it can expand into vacant land and not simply inherit white areas. Many Southern cities have traditionally had their Negro communities at the edge of town. This is not true of Washington, D.C., however, for this rapidly expanding city has many of the segregation patterns and problems of the typical Northern cities with large Negro populations, though in Washington the locations of the Negro districts are more scattered. Nor is it true of the old Southern cities, like Charleston, South Carolina, or Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where

Negro residences are so interspersed among white residences that it is difficult to find a large Negro community as a spatial unit.[a]

While Birmingham, Alabama, has received the major part of its Negro population since the Civil War, the Negro population of the city is not concentrated in a few areas.[b] Negroes, however, are not distributed at random throughout the city either, but rather are to be found in a large number of small segregated areas. This may be simply explained by the fact that the city developed out of twelve originally separate towns, each of which had its one or two Negro areas, with some scattering of Negro families throughout.

In Nashville, Tennessee,[c] Negroes are concentrated in a half dozen or so communities adjacent to white lower class or lower middle class areas. In upper class areas, a few Negro servants occupy quarters provided by their employers. There are practically no Negroes in the white upper middle class areas of West End, Hillsboro and Belle Meade. In the white lower middle class area east of the Cumberland River there are two adjacent but distinctly defined Negro communities. In the white lower class area of South Nashville, there are large Negro communities with poorly defined boundaries. North Nashville, too, has a large Negro community surrounded by white lower class areas. According to Johnson, Negroes in Nashville (unlike Negroes in Northern cities) do not separate themselves into economic groups.

[a] While 45 per cent of Charleston's population is Negro, only 5 per cent of the Negroes there live in blocks with 100 per cent Negro occupancy, and nearly 40 per cent live in blocks with less than 50 per cent colored occupancy. See Federal Housing Administration, *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities* (1939), pp. 66-67.

[b] For the facts of the distribution of Negroes in Birmingham, see Mabel L. Walker, *Urban Blight and Slums* (1938), pp. 43-44.

[c] For the facts of the distribution of Negroes in Nashville, see Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, prepared for this study (1943), Chapters 1 and 2. Also see materials on Nashville gathered for this book (available in Schomburg Collection).

APPENDIX 8

RESEARCH ON CASTE AND CLASS IN A NEGRO COMMUNITY

We have presented only the barest outlines of the Negro class structure. Like all outlines, and like all descriptions in terms of "the average" and "the typical," the description is somewhat distorted. There are exceptions to every statement. For fuller descriptions, the reader is referred to the community studies made in recent years.[a] While these studies are excellent, further research is necessary to get an adequate picture of the Negro class system. We shall append a few suggestions for further research.

"What constitutes the race problem," observes Charles S. Johnson, "is not the fixed character of the relations, but their dynamic character. There would be no race problem if the Negro group uniformly accepted the status assumed for it. The present patterns of these relations are, in the large, different from what they were fifty years ago or even twenty years ago. They vary with localities and backgrounds and with social classes within the Negro and white groups." [b] Moreover, in this process of social change *the class and caste structures are themselves changing*. The studies of the Negro class structure so far have been, on the whole, of a static type and have contributed little to our knowledge of the social dynamics actually involved. Even when viewed as cross-sectional investigations, a general weakness of those studies has been that the correlation between the factors giving status—occupation, income and wealth, education, family background, complexion and so on—have been observed and recorded only in a vague and general way and, in any case, no attempt has been made to weight them quantitatively. From the point of view of social dynamics, this is serious since we do not have a basis for forecasting trends in social mobility, and we cannot properly make certain practical proposals we should like to make.[c]

[a] See footnote 9 in Chapter 30, and footnote 5 in Chapter 31.

[b] *Growing up in the Black Belt* (1941), p. 276.

[c] Charles S. Johnson gives the broad outline of the dynamic problem as it appears to the *individual:*

"In the present situation of the Negro in the South, the two values within control of an individual which can do most to facilitate class mobility are wealth and education. Ancestry and color, which are sometimes associated with social status, are factors beyond the control of living individuals struggling for status. Wealth is theoretically possible of control, but actually a remote possibility. Education is within reach and, consequently, it is invested with almost magical properties by both the ambitious parents and the youth." (*Ibid.*, p. 77.)

What we want to know in some detail is how this causal mechanism actually functions, and how it determines change in the social class system. In a sense the things mentioned by Johnson represent the "causes and conditions" of social stratification.

The ideal community study should start out from a careful *statistical analysis* of vital, social, and economic data concerning the individuals and families making up the community being studied. The less measurable data on attitudes, cultural traits, behavior patterns in which social stratification is expressed, and the "feeling" of social status or toward social status on the part of members of the various groups, should then be observed and the results *integrated into the framework of statistical knowledge.* Only when so treated do they reveal their full meaning. The entire analysis should be dominated by the recognition that the Negro class structure is rapidly changing. The dynamics of the problem do not consist merely in the tensions, frictions and movements *within* the class structure. Even more important is the resultant *movement of the whole class structure* and, incidentally, the actual import of a position in this structure for Negroes in various social classes.

In such an approach it is of importance to keep clear at the outset that our class concepts have no other reality than as a conceptual framework. They should, therefore, be given *instrumental* definitions (*in relation* to the questions asked and the instruments used for observations). Fundamentally we are studying a series of continua—on the one side, incomes, occupations, educational levels, complexions, and so on; on the other side, family organization, ambition, moral standards, regard for respectability, social prestige, class and caste attitudes, and so on. We know that there are monopolistic elements in the social situation. Because of a causal mechanism—which constitutes the very problem of class dynamics to be investigated—there is a specific, but changing, correlation between all these various series, and we attempt to observe the result of this correlation in terms of social classes. But neither the particular series themselves nor the integration of the series into a composite "social status" reveal any gaps from which we can infer "natural" classes.[a] If there are gaps in some of the series, they can be assumed, in a rapidly changing society, to vary from community to community and from one time to another. We must choose our class lines arbitrarily to answer certain specific questions.

Further, as usual, we must observe *the differences in social stratification* between South and North, rural and urban districts, and city communities of varying size and age. It is true that every Negro community—no matter how small, and no matter how insignificant are the apparent differences in wealth, education, and color—has its social cleavages. But the differences between different Negro communities are so great that

[a] The authors of the Warner group—to whom American social science is indebted, not only for much of the recently acquired detailed knowledge about the Negro class structure, but also for the impetus to overcome the popular American theory of the absence of class in this country—often give the reader the impression that they believe that there are *in reality* clearly demarcated social classes: ". . . well-defined upper, middle, and lower social classes exist within each caste. Each of these classes has its distinctive pattern of familial, recreational, and general social behavior." (Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* [1941], p. 49, footnote.)

Because of this misconception—which is sometimes called reification—these authors became tempted to give us a somewhat oversimplified idea about social stratification in the Negro community. The fault is not the simplification, which is an almost necessary method when dealing with complicated social relations, but the reluctance to admit it and to make adequate reservations. What they are actually presenting is an ideal-typical—and, therefore, over-typical—description, based on much detailed observation which is all organized under the conceptual scheme applied. By unduly insisting upon the realism of this analysis, however, they come to imply a rigidity in the class structure which is not really there.

the application of a too hard and fast conceptual frame of class structure will do violence to the facts. When only a single community can be studied, it should not be assumed to be typical nor should the question of its uniqueness or typicality be ignored. Rather, the investigator must attempt to place it in the Southern scene, or in the American scene, or even in the whole Western civilization scene, by comparing it with the average and range in many significant respects. This he will be enabled to do by his general knowledge and—more important—by the great volume of census and other existing bodies of statistical data. In the same way he should make use of the often great volume of historical, descriptive, and statistical material, so that he can place the community in time and see its dynamics. A community is in constant flux, and a cross-sectional picture involves a distortion.

Caste and class are never the only bases for cleavage in a community. A community is a complex thing. Social life occurs in the form of human experience and is not neatly boxed according to the criterion in which the social scientist studies it. No two persons are alike, and the range of variation in many respects is great. Except for a few things like sexual differentiation, human beings do not divide themselves into "natural" classes. Not only must the social scientist abstract from social reality, note variation in his abstractions, and classify within the variations before he can begin to draw conclusions, but he must also make a decision as to what abstractions, variations and classifications are significant. All these actions of the scientist are ultimately arbitrary. When we choose "caste" and "class" as tools to organize our observations and conclusions about American communities, we must be on our guard lest we put blinders on our observations.

While we do believe the concepts of caste and class are important tools for the study of American communities, there are *other* ordering concepts which are significant and which must be related to caste or class to make even *their* role clear. Such traits as age, sex, "personality," "race philosophy," rural or urban background, and perhaps others, are important to the study of any Negro community. For the purposes of illustration, we may indicate briefly how "age" is an important concept for the study of such a community. The continuous advancement of education and related factors of change make the younger Negroes different from the older ones. Age differentials are a basis of solidarity and create tension within the class structure. As time passes, the young become the old and move the entire class structure. Taking a cross-sectional view, the constellation of caste, class and age may give a configuration like the one which Hortense Powdermaker compresses in the following statement:

> The White aristocrats are the least, and the Poor Whites are the most, hostile toward the other race. Among the Negroes the upper class is the most, and the lower class the least, antagonistic toward the Whites. Again, the older generation of Whites are the ones in whom most affect is aroused by the inter-racial situation, while the younger generation is inclined to view the problem more casually. The reverse is true for the Negroes: the older generation shows the tolerance and calmness traditionally associated with age, while the young people are the ones who feel most intensely on racial issues.[a]

Such a situation is, of course, fraught with impending changes for the fundamental class and caste relations. Taking a long-range view, the Negro class structure of today is only the passing arrangement of a society in transition.

[a] *After Freedom* (1939), p. 334.

We cannot close this description of what a study of a Negro community should be without calling attention to the study which best meets our requirements, a study which is now all but forgotten. We refer to W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, published in 1899.

APPENDIX 9

RESEARCH ON NEGRO LEADERSHIP

The study of leadership and followership should not start out from an attempt to define on *a priori* grounds the two principal concepts involved. In this tangled and uncultivated field of study such an attempt would almost inevitably land the investigator in hollow and doctrinal squabbles on the meaning of words. We have only to settle that *we are discussing the role and importance of individual persons in the sphere of social and political power and—as a power basis for these individuals as well as a concept for contrast—the role of the masses.* This statement of the problem has to be made more definite by a realistic conception of the general pattern of leadership and followership in American culture as a whole.

The general American pattern has to be assumed to be modified considerably in the Negro people because of caste. In this problem, caste particularly implies two things: First, that the identification on the part of Negroes with the American nation as a whole and with national groups of various types, as, for instance, the workers, becomes abnormally weak or totally lacking.[a] Second, that Negroes, because of their subordinate caste position, find all their power relations confined to the narrow orbit of accommodation or protest, or to a compromise between accommodation and protest. Besides this realistic axis of behavior in power relations, there are unrealistic outlets in extrovert or introvert aggression and in psychological and ideological escapism. As we saw in Chapter 38, Negro popular theories generally, because of caste, become fixated, negatively or positively, on white theories on the Negro; outside the Negro problem these popular theories become amorphous and unstable.

The primary effect of the caste situation on Negro leadership—compared with a "normal" American situation—is to enhance tremendously the importance of Negro leaders as liaison agents between the two groups. Negro leaders have a "function" to fulfill for both castes. As the Negro class structure is also closely determined by caste, there is a relation to be investigated between class and leadership. The Negro leaders should be viewed from the standpoints of the two castes and their interests. The white caste has an interest in supporting those Negro leaders who can transfer their influence upon the lower caste. The Negro caste has two interests: one, to express the Negro protest as far as it does not damage its immediate welfare; two, to get as much as possible from the whites. The partly contradictory interests of the Negro community can be taken care of by the same individual leaders or by several different leaders in a division of responsibility.

A most important problem, which, to be solved, would require much more factual research, concerns the operation of the selective social mechanism by which Negro

[a] The chapter on Negro ideologies enlarges upon this topic (Chapter 38).

leaders are chosen and permitted to exercise influence. It is apparent to the observer that the white caste controls the appointment and eventual dismissal of a number of Negro leaders and greatly promotes or hinders the rise of most of the others. This is partly a matter of tradition, but to a greater extent it corresponds to real interests of the whites. There are also, of course, other forces in action: partly "objective" ones, such as individual merit, Negro class monopolies, and the factor of change, and partly subjective attitudes held by the Negro masses.

The way to study this important aspect of our problem is to analyze—against the background of a survey of the entire social *milieu* in which Negro leaders develop and operate—the factors actually responsible for the elevation of a selected sample of Negroes to prominence in church, education, business, politics, and also in vice and racketeering. This would, incidentally, because of the close relation between class and leadership in the Negro community, also reveal much of the internal dynamics of the Negro class structure.

We might be allowed to illustrate the type of study suggested by formulating a number of questions, some of which have been given a conjectural answer in Chapters 34 to 37. How does the selective mechanism operate differently in the various fields of social activities? in rural and urban districts? in the South and the North? on the local and the national plane? What are the trends of change?

To what extent, specifically, and by what means, do white caste interests interfere? What are the specific interests in Negro leadership of white politicians, planters, merchants, bankers, manufacturers, philanthropists, in a given community? What rewards do they hold out for Negro leaders and what effective demands do they make upon them? How tractable must those leaders be in order to become successful? What demands upon the Negro leaders, and with what effectiveness, are raised by the Negro community? How is a compromise struck between submission and aggression, accommodation and protest? What are the chances under various circumstances for a really independent Negro leadership? In other words, we should want a full analysis of the social controls operating on the individual Negro who is attempting to rise to prominence.

What effect do the various influences on the selective social mechanism determining the rise of Negro leaders have on the racial, social and political attitudes of the Negro masses? What is the effect of the masses—through their partial influence on the selective mechanism and as the object for leadership influence—on the behavior and the popular theories of the leaders? How far down in the Negro class structure do various Negro leaders reach by their influence and from how far down in the masses do influences emanate upon the leaders? What influence do Negro leaders have on white leaders with whom they are in immediate contact?

These questions open up the problems of the interrelations between functioning Negro leaders and the white community leaders, on the one hand, and between Negro leaders and Negro followers, on the other hand. More specifically we want to know, how much influence and what sort of influence do those prominent Negroes have? In what circles of the white and the Negro population is the influence exerted? What deliveries to the whites and to the Negroes do they promise, and which do they actually make?

How does the Negro leader operate? To what extent and how does he utilize the white and the Negro press, the Negro organizations and the various "fronts"? To what

extent does the Negro leader become pressed into a dual standard of behavior in order to serve his two constituencies: the white leaders and the Negro community? How does he make a choice among necessary compromises, advantageous compromises and plain selling out of the Negro interests? How does he strike a balance between personal and group opportunism? What techniques of adaptive manipulation does he develop?

To what extent does the peculiar situation of the Negro leader in the American caste system further corruption and destructive personal rivalry? What does the Negro community think of its leaders? How does that influence the Negro leaders?

These problems are hardly touched upon in our tentative analysis in the text. They lend themselves well to a treatment in terms of "leadership types."

APPENDIX 10

QUANTITATIVE STUDIES OF RACE ATTITUDES

1. Existing Studies of Race Attitudes

Quantitative studies of race attitudes are summarized in a monograph prepared for this study by Eugene L. Horowitz.[a] In this Appendix we shall briefly indicate the direction of work that has been done and offer a few suggestions as to the type of attitude studies which would be in accord with the methodological principles presented in Appendix 1.

One of the early classic efforts to measure race attitudes was that of Emory S. Bogardus.[b] His questionnaire offered a list of races and nationalities and a list of seven degrees of social intimacy (e.g., proximity of residence, marriage). The interviewee was to check off the degree of social intimacy to which he would be willing to admit a member of each race or nationality. By this means Bogardus could present a rank order of races and nationalities according to the degree of preference for them by a given group of Americans. The problem of degree of friendliness toward the Negro and of comparative friendliness toward various races and nationalities became a major concern for those interested in the quantitative approach to the study of attitudes, especially after L. L. Thurstone[c] introduced a series of major technical improvements into the measuring process. In 1929, E. D. Hinckley devised a scale of attitudes toward the Negro which presumably could be administered to any group of whites.[d]

With techniques developed for measuring the degree of friendliness or social distance toward the Negro, students began to investigate differences in attitudes as measured by the scales. There have been studies correlating the scores on these scales with region, rural-urban residence, age, sex, church affiliation, social class, intelligence, general education, general social and political outlook. The scales have also been used to measure the effect of experiments: students were given courses in race relations or were brought into social contact with Negroes, and the change in their performance on the attitude test was noted.[e]

[a] " 'Race' Attitudes" in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study, to be published.

[b] "Race Friendliness and Social Distance," *Journal of Applied Sociology* (January-February, 1927), pp. 272-287.

[c] The first article in the series on race attitudes by Thurstone was "An Experimental Study of Nationality Preferences," *The Journal of General Psychology* (July-October, 1928), pp. 405-425.

[d] E. D. Hinckley, "The Influence of Individual Opinion on the Construction of an Attitude Scale," *The Journal of Social Psychology* (August, 1932), pp. 283-295.

[e] On this point, see, in addition to Horowitz (*op. cit.*, manuscript pages 214-218), Mapheus Smith, "A Study of Change of Attitudes toward the Negro," *Journal of Negro Education* (January, 1939), pp. 64-70.

The studies correlating friendliness toward the Negro with educational status and with experience regarding Negroes do in a general way what certain other studies do in a more specific way. These latter studies attempt to find out whether the possession of certain information or misinformation about Negroes in a given situation affects a white person's attitudes toward Negroes in that situation. There are relatively few studies of this type. Related to these studies are those which attempt to find out whether race prejudice is a general attitude which applies to most situations or whether it is a group of attitudes each of which applies only to a specific situation. An interesting study of this sort was that by Bolton in which the conclusion was drawn that a "group of Southern students are much more liberal toward the economic, the political and the educational rights of the Negro than towards social intermixture with the race," and, therefore, that the latter should be measured as a distinct attitude.[a]

2. THE EMPIRICAL STUDY OF VALUATIONS AND BELIEFS

The paramount importance attached to observing and measuring valuations and beliefs in the Negro problem by means of scientifically controlled research must be clear from the Introduction and Appendix 1 of this book. Unfortunately the results of quantitative studies of opinions and attitudes regarding this aspect of the Negro problem are meager. The most general conclusion from a survey of the existing studies regarding the relation between valuations and beliefs is that they have not added anything significant to our knowledge.[b] They have not yet succeeded in quantifying our general common-sense notions on the subject. The main explanation is undoubtedly that, until now, not much work has been done in this particular field.[c]

Another general defect is that the studies which have been made usually have been planned in isolation from both the general social study of the Negro and the political battle about his status. They have, therefore, not had a perspective which gives relevance to the questions asked, and they have not been prepared by the working out of consistent schemes of scientific hypotheses. This is the more natural and, indeed, the more defensible, since the studies carried out have usually had an experimental character and have been more concerned with perfecting the tools of measurement than with the conclusions to be obtained. In the main this holds true also of the mass public opinion polls. Particularly when asking Negroes for their opinions—but also when asking whites for theirs on the Negro problem—there are a number of purely technical difficulties which as yet have not been overcome.

Instead of indulging in further negative criticism, we shall develop briefly certain positive suggestions for opinion research as they have arisen in our study of the Negro problem. At the outset it should be remembered that an average opinion in regard to the Negro problem, as does every other opinion, contains two elements which are of different character: (1) beliefs concerning reality which can be true or untrue, com-

[a] Euri Relle Bolton, "Measuring Specific Attitudes towards the Social Rights of the Negro," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (January-March, 1937), p. 396.

[b] A summary and evaluation of these studies has been made for our study by Horowitz *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 115, 123-148.

[c] It should be clear that our statement does *not* apply to the whole range of attitude and public opinion measurement, but solely to this activity regarding the Negro problem. The measurement of attitudes and public opinion has contributed much both to scientific and to practical knowledge outside the Negro problem, and is now showing amazingly rapid advancement in present achievement and tremendous possibilities for future achievement.

plete or incomplete; (2) valuations of an actual or hypothetical reality which can vary in intensity, clarity, and homogeneity but in themselves are neither complete nor incomplete, neither true nor untrue. There are, of course, opinions, which are only beliefs or only valuations. But more usually, opinions are combinations of both: on the one hand, beliefs are, as we have seen, nearly always influenced by the valuations for which they serve as rationalizations (which in logical terms means that they are "biased"), and, on the other hand, beliefs influence valuations.

Reacting to the earlier schools of rationalistic psychology, we became several decades ago so impressed by the fact that people did not act and think rationally that something of a tradition became established not to split opinions into two components relating to the cognitive and to the volitional sides of mental processes. This is part of the background for the present loose usage of the word "attitude" as a scientific term.[a] In many questionnaires one finds questions concerning knowledge, concerning almost pure valuations, and concerning both combined—all these three types mixed together without much distinction. And the subsequent analysis does not take into account the difference between them. Such a differentiation is of great importance, however, since a study of people's beliefs throws light not only on what they know or do not know but, in addition, on the structure of their entire valuation sphere.

The fact that people's beliefs, unlike their valuations, can be directly judged by the objective criteria of correctness and completeness offers us a clue for analyzing scientifically the complexes of struggling valuations that exist in the minds of people. It is a sound hypothesis that, since the beliefs of men serve an opportunistic function, both the direction and the degree of their deviation from "objective" knowledge will tell us how people are trying to reconcile their valuations on a lower plane, implicit in their daily behavior, with the more general valuations which are recognized as morally higher in our society. From this point of view, it becomes of great importance to chart quantitatively people's knowledge and ignorance on controversial subjects. For this purpose the questions to be utilized in certain types of opinion studies should be purged as far as possible of all valuations; they should only test the respondent's conception of this particular part of reality. It is fairly easy to prepare a standard norm of what represents objective knowledge; in the many problems where we are still ignorant or hesitant, consciousness of our ignorance constitutes true knowledge. For testing knowledge as to its degree of completeness, some sort of graduated scale can be worked out with the help of available techniques.

If properly carried out, such a study of factual knowledge regarding the Negro problem—differentiated in relation to certain main axes: white-Negro, North-South, urban-rural, social class, education, sex, age—would be revealing. Its practical importance for education is obvious. It will also have great theoretical importance in explaining white people's behavior with respect to Negroes. The hypothesis is that we are not facing a question merely of more or less meager and incorrect knowledge. There is an emotional load of valuation conflicts pressing for rationalization, creating certain blind spots—and also creating a desire for knowledge in other spots—and in general causing conceptions of reality to deviate from truth in determined directions. If such an analysis of the degree of knowledge and ignorance and also of their localization and

[a] As used by Thomas and Znaniecki in *The Polish Peasant*, the term "attitude" was a part of the reaction to the complete irrationalism emphasized by the instinctivist and behaviorist schools.

concrete character is carried out, the valuations and their conflicts can be recorded, indirectly but quantitatively—just as the heat of distant stars is measured by observing their spectra. From our inquiry of the Negro problem we are convinced that ignorance is *not* always simple; it is often opportune.[a]

But the valuations should, of course, also be studied directly. For this purpose questions should be selected which relate to opinions that do not contain any reference to reality. A main consideration in the analysis of answers to such questions should be that valuations are complex and ordinarily conflicting, and that an individual's focusing of attention in the valuation sphere may be opportune. In most cases the indirect analysis of the valuation sphere, through the study of the deviations of beliefs from true knowledge, is likely to reach deeper than does the direct analysis. An individual continually tends to arrange his valuations so that they may be presented in an acceptable form. But in his beliefs concerning social reality—which are shaped to give the appearance of rational organization to his morals—he reveals himself.

3. "PERSONAL" AND "POLITICAL" OPINIONS

When studying valuations there is another distinction the observance of which is of utmost significance in the Negro problem as in other problems where human valuations are sharply conflicting, namely, the distinction between a person's "private," or "personal," opinion and his "public," or "political," opinion on the same question.[b] They do not need to agree; in fact they seldom agree. This, in itself, is a reason for a clear distinction to be upheld, since otherwise a major source of systematic error is contained in the observations. A further reason is that the very registration and measuring of this difference is an important part of an opinion analysis.

A man's opinion as to the desirable size of a normal family might be totally different,

[a] As examples of how opportune ignorance and knowledge may be, it might be pointed out that Negroes are amazingly sophisticated with respect to the incidence of indirect taxation and the environmental influences on intelligence test scores. Even ordinary Negroes with little formal schooling can explain to the satisfaction of the economist just how taxes on real estate are passed on to the tenant, and can often do better than the trained psychologist in revealing just how lack of incentive and intellectual stimulation can keep intelligence tests from revealing "innate ability." It is apparent that the reason Negroes know these things is that they have been victimized by indirect taxation and the intelligence tests—that is, it is claimed that Negroes pay practically no taxes, because they pay practically no *direct* taxes, and that they are biologically inferior because their I.Q. scores are lower. It is apparent, too, that whites—especially the dominant ones, the ones who pay direct taxes and who have, or think they have, high I.Q. scores—have an opportune ignorance with respect to these things. Even when simple facts are presented to ruffle their ignorance, they reject them.

[b] There has been much discussion about the distinction between "opinion" and "attitude," with the assumptions that the former is measurable while the latter is not and that the former is a mere verbalization while the latter directs action. Our distinction between personal and political opinions is different, and should not be confused with the distinction between opinion and attitude. It is no easier to measure political opinions than personal opinions; both direct action—although different kinds of action; and one is not more a mere verbalization than is the other.

Schanck has attempted to investigate statistically the distinction between public and private attitudes, although without relation to the Negro. (R. L. Schanck, "A Study of a Community and Its Groups and Institutions Conceived of as Behaviors of Individuals," *Psychological Monographs* [1932].)

on the one hand, when he faces the problem as a citizen taking a stand on the population issue if this is brought to the political forefront and, on the other hand, when he faces his own family limitation problem.[a] Exactly this same thing is true in the Negro problem. Many white people would be prepared to stand for and practice changed relations to Negroes *if* they were made the common rule in society, while they are not prepared to practice them as exceptions to the rule. Some of the apparent confusion and contradiction in nearly every individual's attitude to the Negro problem becomes explainable by applying this distinction.[b]

Part of the actual differences between personal and political attitudes is *rational.* The very aim of a person's political opinion is to ask for and, eventually, to cause such institutional changes in society that the circumstances under which he lives and forms his personal opinions are modified, and, consequently, to change his personal behavior and attitudes also. A positive stand on the political population question—say a demand that the average nonsterile marriage produce four children—may be the center of a complex of political opinions demanding legal and economic changes in the family institution. There is no contradiction between a four-child norm in one's political opinion and, say, a two-child norm in one's personal opinion and actual family limitation behavior.

Similarly in the Negro problem. In numerous conversations with white Americans in the North and in the South, the observer is informed by the man he talks to that he himself would be prepared to act in such and such a way different from his ordinary behavior *if* society, the local community, or "public opinion" would not react in such and such a way; and, second, that he would favor this and this social change implying such and such alterations of the caste relations in society, although he is not prepared to live up to those alterations as an individual *unless* the social changes are first carried out. It should be noticed that political opinions are thus regularly of a conditional character and that they usually refer to a more distant future. There are few white

[a] See Gunnar Myrdal, *Population: A Problem for Democracy* (1940), Chapter 5, "People's Opinions," particularly pp. 106 ff. and 115 ff.

[b] The distinction between public and private attitudes also comes out with regard to what one will or will not admit with respect to the Negro. Baker tells a story which illustrates this aspect of the distinction. It is from ". . . the discussions of the Alabama legislature then in session. A compulsory education bill had been introduced; the problem was to pass a law that would apply to white people, not to Negroes. In this connection I heard a significant discussion in the state senate. I use the report of it, for accuracy, as given the next morning in the *Advertiser:*

" 'Senator Thomas said . . . he would oppose any bills that would compel Negroes to educate their children, for it had come to his knowledge that Negroes would give the clothing off their backs to send their children to school, while too often the white man, secure in his supremacy, would be indifferent to his duty.

" 'At this point Senator Lusk arose excitedly to his feet and said:

" ' "Does the Senator from Barbour mean to say that the Negro race is more ambitious and has more aspirations than the white race?"

" ' "The question of the gentleman . . . is an insult to the senate of Alabama," replied Senator Thomas deliberately. "It is an insult to the great Caucasian race, the father of all the arts and sciences, to compare it to that black and kinky race which lived in a state of black and ignorant savagery until the white race seized it and lifted it to its present position." ' " (Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 248.)

Americans even in the South who do not declare themselves in favor of much more equality for the Negro in politics, education, and everything else—but they want them far in the future when certain conditions are changed. (The inconsistency in their attitudes often consists only in their being unwilling to do anything—not even in the political sphere and often least of all there—to change those conditions.) Generally, it can be assumed that being able to keep more of a rational and conscious distinction and relation between one's personal and political opinions is a function (1) of education and intelligence on the part of the individual, (2) of his identification with society (being a "good citizen"), and (3) of his training to think of himself as a would-be legislator, that is, as a participant in inducing the social change.

But part of this difference between personal and political opinions is *irrational*, and there is then inadequate intellectual connection between the two. In many countries, again to use an illustration from the population problem, it is possible to prove statistically that a large number of people, who publicly condemn birth control as immoral and who back legislative measures to prohibit it, must practice it privately. In the Negro problem there are equally flagrant contradictions between people's opinions about how society ought to be and the opinions whereby they defend their own daily behavior.

4. THE PRACTICAL STUDY OF RACE PREJUDICE

In a footnote on page 52, in Chapter 3, we indicated that we preferred to use the word "discrimination" rather than "race prejudice."[a] Discrimination is generally considered to be the objective aspect of prejudice, and in many areas of life we could objectively observe discrimination. Race prejudice is a much more controversial subject; many persons who practice discrimination, consciously or unconsciously, claim they have no race prejudice. We have not neglected, however, the subjective aspect of discrimination, even though we have not associated our analysis with the term "race prejudice." In Chapter 28, for example, we presented the theory of "no social equality" which, in a sense, is a theory of a certain type of race prejudice.

In this section we shall use the term "race prejudice" as a conceptual tool for analysis of the motivation of white people's negative attitudes toward Negroes. We believe it necessary to continue the practice followed in most attitude measurement studies, of measuring variations in race prejudice and relating this variation to variations in other significant variables. We should like to suggest an innovation in these studies: that the assumption be made that there are several types of race prejudice, types which are differentiated from each other for practical reasons. It may be discovered that two white persons, having an equal degree of race prejudice according to an attitude scale, have different motivations for this prejudice, in such a manner that a given program of action will reduce the prejudice of one but not of the other. If such be discovered, we may claim to have a pragmatic classification of race prejudice. Presumably a judicious choice of questions on an attitude measurement scale would classify white people according to the type of prejudice they hold toward Negroes.

Many psychological theories of race prejudices have been advanced.[b] Implicit throughout our book has been the theory that it is useful to consider race prejudice as

[a] We have occasionally used the term "race prejudice" in a common-sense way, not in an analytic way.

[b] For an excellent brief summary of these theories, see Henry A. Davidson, "The Anatomy of Prejudice," *Common Ground* (Winter, 1941), pp. 3-12.

of three types, which we have described as that of the white Southerner, that of the white Northerner, that of the Negro. In holding this theory, we do not claim that other theories are incorrect or that no other classification of race prejudice is useful. It is merely that we happen to find this theory and this classification most useful, and we have organized our book around them. Our description and classification are, of course, based on impression and need to be verified and modified by further research. Further, we do not claim that all white Southerners have the kind of prejudice which we characterize as being typical of prejudiced white Southerners, or that no Northerners have this kind of prejudice. It is merely that we find the race prejudice characteristic of most prejudiced Southern whites different, on the average, from that characteristic of most prejudiced Northern whites. Similarly, we believe that the prejudice of most Negroes is to be analyzed in different terms.

The prejudice of the white Southerner has a complex basis. The Southerner holds that all Negroes are inferior to all whites, and he has a great variety of racial and social beliefs to support this valuation. The character of his prejudice is revealed in his "rank order of discriminations":[a] It is surely significant that the white Southerner is much less willing to permit intermarriage or to grant "social equality" than he is to allow equality in the political, judicial and economic spheres.[b] The violence of the Southerner's reaction to equality in each of the spheres rises with the degree of its relation to the sexual and the personal, which suggests that his prejudice is based upon fundamental attitudes toward sex and personality. An attempt to reduce race prejudice of this sort requires a profound strategy. Attitude measurement devices could not only get at the specific character of the race attitudes but could also help to test various experimental devices used in attempting to modify these attitudes.

The race prejudice of the typical Northerner seems to be of a much simpler character. It is based mainly on ignorance, both simple and opportune, and is much less bound up with fundamental conceptions of society and self. The Northerner seldom gets a chance to see the Negro's good points, and he does not understand the social background of the Negro's bad points. The Southerner's prejudice also has much of ignorance in it, but the Southerner's ignorance is more opportune because it is tied to fundamental motives. The Northerner has little of the Southerner's rank order of discriminations: he favors equality in justice and politics, and he finds the etiquette of race relations obnoxious. The Northerner is against intermarriage and equality in the economic sphere. But even here his motives seem to be largely different from those of the Southerner: he avoids intermarriage mainly for reasons of social status and personal antipathy, not because he believes that intermarriage will disrupt society;[c] he is against

[a] See Chapter 3, Section 4.

[b] See Chapters 28 and 29.

[c] "Potential equality is of the essence of democracy. Extirpate 'race prejudice' in a democracy and social communion and intermarriage are bound to follow. One of the reasons why Northerners fail to understand this is their aesthetic antipathy to the negro. Most Southerners like individual negroes that 'keep their place'—and I daresay that the negroes, like all more or less primitive folk, are likable. The Northerner is protected from social communion and intermarriage by his feelings; the Southerner is protected by what he calls his principles —the superiority of the whites, and the like." (Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* [1914], p. 63.)

economic equality largely out of ignorance of the Negro's capacities.[a] These hypotheses need to be tested by attitude questionnaires. If we are correct in judging the Northerner's prejudice to be based so largely on ignorance, and if a distinction is made between questions of belief and questions of valuation,[b] the attitude measuring process can itself serve as an experiment. If two similar groups of Northerners are presented with the same set of valuation questions, and one group is also given relevant factual information, there should be a noticeable difference in their performance.[c]

The Negro's prejudice toward whites or toward other Negroes seems to be a secondary reaction. Because he has taken over American culture, the average Negro has also taken over something of the white American's attitude toward the Negro.[d] There is nothing of the "rank order" in the Negro's prejudice but something of ignorance. There is also much in it of considerations of personal social status. It may also be that some of the hostility felt toward the whites is deflected from them to the Negro group.

The Negro's negative attitude toward the white man may better be described as hatred or fear rather than prejudice. It is the hatred or fear toward those who humiliate him and deprive him of many of the good things of life. If the deprivation or humiliation were to cease, the hatred and fear also would cease. This is even true of the anti-Semitism found among Negroes: It happens that Jews are the leading retail merchants in many Negro neighborhoods and are the leading employers of Negro servants in Northern cities. The natural dislike of the dominant person by the subordinate person in an unequal economic bargain thus seems to be the cause of any striking anti-Semitism that appears in certain Negro groups. Negroes practically never feel that whites are inferior, and they do not connect racial equality with sexual and personality fears. Negro prejudice toward whites is based partly on ignorance, but it is much more a matter of fear and hatred of the oppressor. This secondary character of the Negro's race prejudice could be tested by wisely administered questionnaires.

[a] Probably both the Northern employer and the Southern employer are ignorant of the Negro's economic potentialities. But where the Northern employer would like to know of them, the Southerner employer would not.

[b] See Section 2 of this Appendix.

[c] Our distinction between the Southerner's and the Northerner's prejudices implies that two similar groups of Southerners would not manifest such a difference in performance due merely to the administration of simple, direct, factual information.

[d] Du Bois describes the prejudice of Negroes toward other Negroes:

"Negroes, particularly the better class Negroes, are brought up like other Americans despite the various separations and segregations. They share, therefore, average American culture and current American prejudices. It is almost impossible for a Negro boy trained in a white Northern high school and a white college to come out with any high idea of his own people or any abiding faith in what they can do: or for a Negro trained in the segregated schools of the South wholly to escape the deadening environment of insult and caste, even if he happens to have the good teachers and teaching facilities, which poverty almost invariably denies him. He may rationalize his own individual status as exceptional. He . . . cannot ordinarily believe that the mass of Negro people have possibilities equal to the whites." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* [1940], p. 191.)

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FOOTNOTES

Introduction

[1] (1939), p. 172.

[2] William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918).

[3] One such exception is E. Franklin Frazier's book, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939). As Ernest W. Burgess hints at in his Preface, the importance of this work is in no small measure dependent upon Frazier's ability to look at the development of the Negro family in its relation to the trend of changes in the total environmental setting.

[4] *The American Commonwealth* (1911; first edition, 1893), Vol. 1, p. 7.

[5] For a popular but comprehensive attempt at a cultural overview of present-day America, where lights and shadows are distributed in a very different way than in this study concentrated on a problem sector of American civilization, the author can refer to Alva and Gunnar Myrdal, *Kontakt Med Amerika* (1941).

Chapter 1. *American Ideals and the American Conscience*

[1] *Alien Americans* (1936), p. 149.

[2] "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 4.

[3] "Memorial Address on the Life and Character of Abraham Lincoln" (1866), pp. 4 and 6.

[4] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (1921), pp. 281-282.

[5] *Epic of America* (1931), p. 405.

[6] *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vol. 3, "The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920" (1930), pp. 285 ff.

[7] 1913.

[8] Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vol. 3, "The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America, 1860-1920," p. 410.

[9] After a careful survey of American heroes, Dixon Wecter concludes that only Washington could be placed on the side of conservatism, and even he occasionally went over to the liberal side and is popularly identified with liberalism. (Dixon Wecter, *The Hero in America* [1941], pp. 486-487.)

[10] Vernon L. Parrington, *Main Currents in American Thought*, Vol. 1, "The Colonial Mind, 1620-1800" (1927), p. 179.

[11] Charles E. Merriam, "The Meaning of Democracy," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1941), p. 309.

[12] It has become customary in the writing of the early history of American ideas

to associate the two fundamental concepts of the Creed and the two conflicting tendencies in American social history: (1) to French eighteenth century humanitarianism and equalitarianism, represented by Rousseau and (2) to English seventeenth century liberalism, represented by Locke.

The difference between the two schools—and the two European influences conditioning the American mind—should, however, not be overemphasized. Both branches of the Enlightenment philosophy believed in "inalienable rights of man," both assumed a harmony between equality of opportunity and liberty. It should not be forgotten that Locke—and *in principle* also the later English liberals—justified only those titles to property which derived from labor as the single "factor of production"; other property titles were "monopolies" and "special privileges." (*In practice* the English school was, however, more conservative than in its principles, particularly in regard to property.) When Jefferson changed "property" to "pursuit of happiness," he followed the more inclusive French idealism, and stuck a radical tone. But as Jefferson and his party did not come out for a state interference in the interest of the poor, and as economic protection of the interests of the rich could not be defended on the grounds of English liberalism, the change was not of great importance for the time being. Both schools had their interests focused on political and civil rights. Both schools thought in terms of *defending* the individual, primarily against the state, not *procuring* for him something by means of the state. The contemporary conservatives were actually more interventionist; they wanted, however, to interfere *against* equality. But they did not have philosophical support from either the French or the English school.

In one single direction Jefferson wanted to extend the scope of government—popular education. And there he could also claim the support of both the English and the French philosophical schools of liberalism; both believed in environment as the chief explanation of human differences and, consequently, the chief means of improving mankind. The French interest was, of course, less platonic. But all *liberalism of the Enlightenment was for intervention in this one field of education.* Belief in education became a part of the American Creed and has since then retained its hold upon the mind of the nation. In this field America early assumed world leadership and has held it up to the present time.

[18] Cited by Ernest S. Bates, *American Faith* (1940), pp. 275 ff.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[15] Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (1940), p. 37.

[16] Guion G. Johnson, "History of Racial Ideologies," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 1, p. 67.

[17] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, (1911; first edition, 1893), Vol. 2, pp. 289 ff.

[18] "The Price of Free World Victory," mimeographed press release from the Office of the Vice-President.

[19] Lord Bryce, for example, wrote: "The Americans are a good-natured people, kindly, helpful to one another, disposed to take a charitable view even of wrongdoers. Their anger sometimes flames up, but the fire is soon extinct." (*Op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 285.)

[20] Gabriel, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

[21] "Popular impatience of restraint is aggravated in the United States by political and legal theories of 'natural law.' As a political doctrine, they lead individuals to put into action a conviction that conformity to the dictates of the individual conscience is a test

of the validity of a law. Accordingly, jurors will disregard statutes in perfect good faith, as in the Sunday-closing prosecutions in Chicago in 1908. In the same spirit a well-known preacher wrote not long since that a prime cause of lawlessness was enactment of legislation at variance with the law of nature. In the same spirit a sincere and, as he believed, a law-abiding labor leader declared in a Labor Day address that he would not obey mandates of the courts which deprived him of his natural 'rights.' In the same spirit the business man may regard evasion of statutes which interfere with his carrying on business as he chooses as something entirely legitimate. In the same spirit public officials in recent addresses have commended administrative violation of the legal rights of certain obnoxious persons, and one of the law officers of the federal government has publicly approved of mob violence toward such persons." (Roscoe Pound, *Criminal Justice in the American City—A Summary* [1922], p. 15.)

[22] When the young Thoreau, for example, wrote his *Civil Disobedience* (1849), he only gave an extreme expression for the common American anti-state attitude: the citizen must not "resign his conscience to the legislator"; "law never made men a whit more just."

[23] "The desire to expunge or cure the visible evils of the world is strong. Nowhere are so many philanthropic and reformatory agencies at work. Zeal outruns discretion, outruns the possibilities of the case, in not a few of the efforts made, as well by legislation as by voluntary action, to suppress vice, to prevent intemperance, to purify popular literature." (Bryce, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 290.)

[24] One example is the establishment of federal income taxation which touches individual interests directly. It is my opinion that the income tax legislation in America is nearly as effective as, for example, it is in Great Britain, and more effective than it was in France. Many of the New Deal measures belong to the same category of fairly successful legislation. The A.A.A. crop restriction and subsidy program as it has been developed has, on the whole, been carried out successfully (whatever one thinks about its value), in spite of the fact that it would have been a strong local interest everywhere to connive in cheating the government.

[25] Pound, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[26] Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932), p. 224.

[27] Bryce, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 371.

[28] Quoted from Guion G. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[29] *Race Questions, Provincialism and other American Problems* (1908), p. 111.

[30] Gabriel, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

[31] *Freedom and Culture* (1939), p. 55. Dewey is here referring to the theory of human freedom that was developed in the writings of the philosophers of the American Revolution, particularly in Jefferson's writings.

[32] *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), pp. 134-135.

Chapter 2. *Encountering the Negro Problem*

[1] It is interesting to note that the first books having the term "sociology" in their titles were almost exclusively concerned with the Negro problem: (1) George Fitzhugh, *Sociology for the South* (1854); (2) Henry Hughes, *Treatise on Sociology: Theoretical and Practical* (1854).

[2] Possible exceptions are a few natural scientists, such as Ernest E. Just, and a few celebrities, such as Joe Louis. But even they, when they reach national top standards, and probably before that, are forced to become representatives of their "race."

George S. Schuyler, a prominent columnist gives the Negro point of view in his recent criticism of the white press for its "sinister policy of identifying Negro individuals as such":

"This is a subtle form of discrimination designed to segregate these individuals in the mind of the public and thus bolster the national polity of bi-racialism. Thus, Paul Robeson is not a great baritone, he is a great 'Negro' baritone. Dr. Carver is not just a great scientist, he is a great 'Negro' scientist. Anne Brown is not merely a great soprano, she is a great 'Negro' soprano. Langston Hughes is not a poet merely, he is a 'Negro' poet. Augusta Savage is a 'Negro' sculptor, C. C. Spaulding is a 'Negro' insurance executive, R. R. Wright, Sr., is a 'Negro' banker, J. A. Rogers is a 'Negro' historian, Willard Townsend is a 'Negro' labor leader, *etc., etc., ad infinitum*. . . . No other group in this country is so singled out for racial identification, and no one can tell me that there is not a very definite reason for it. No daily newspaper refers to Mr. Morgenthau as 'Jewish' Secretary of the Treasury, or New York's Herbert H. Lehman as the 'Jewish' governor, or Isador Lubin as a 'Jewish' New Dealer. Mayor Rossi is never identified as the 'Italian-American' executive of San Francisco, nor is the millionaire Giannini called an 'Italian' banker. There would be considerable uproar if Senator Robert F. Wagner were termed 'New York's able German-American solon,' or Representative Tenerowicz dubbed 'Detroit's prominent Pole.' When has a Utah legislator in Washington been labeled 'Mormon'?

"One could go on and on, but the point is that 'our' daily newspapers carefully avoid such designations except in the case of so-called Negroes. I cannot recall when I have seen a criminal referred to as a Jew, an Italian, a German or a Catholic, but it is commonplace for colored lawbreakers or suspects to be labeled 'Negro.'

"Personally, I shall not be convinced of the sincerity of these white editors and columnists who shape America's thinking unless and until they begin treating the Negro in the news as they do other Americans. Those who continue this type of journalism are the worst sort of hypocrites when they write about democracy and national unity." (Pittsburgh *Courier*, June 13, 1942.)

Schuyler's point is perfectly clear and his description of the situation correct—except that he does not care to mention that Negro newspapers are, if possible, more unfailing in giving prominent Negroes their "race label."

[3] E. R. Embree, *Brown America* (1931), p. 205.

[4] James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1927; first edition, 1912), p. 21.

[5] See Edgar G. Murphy, *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904), especially pp. 188 ff. and Chapter 8; also Jonathan Daniels, *A Southerner Discovers the South* (1938), Chapter 35; and Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), especially pp. 341 ff., pp. 368 ff. and p. 380, also William Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South* (1935), pp. vii-viii.

[6] *Darker Phases of the South* (1924), pp. 157 ff.

[7] *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 55.

[8] *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 26.

[9] The important problem of opportune distortion of knowledge has been dealt with

by some outstanding writers in American literature. See, for example, William James' two essays: "The Will to Believe" in *The New World: A Quarterly Review of Religion, Ethics, and Theology* (June, 1896), pp. 327-347, and "On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings" in *On Some of Life's Ideals* (1912), pp. 3-46.

[10] *The Souls of Black Folk* (1924; first edition, 1903), p. 186.

[11] *The Story of the Negro*, Vol. I (1909), p. 180.

[12] *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*, p. 166. Johnson goes on to draw too optimistic conclusions from this statement when he continues:

". . . and a mental attitude, especially one not based on truth, can be changed more easily than actual conditions. That is to say, the burden of the question is not that the whites are struggling to save ten million despondent and moribund people from sinking into a hopeless slough of ignorance, poverty, and barbarity in their very midst, but that they are unwilling to open certain doors of opportunity and to accord certain treatment to ten million aspiring, education-and-property-acquiring people. In a word, the difficulty of the problem is not so much due to the facts presented as to the hypothesis assumed for its solution." (*idem.*)

He overlooks here that the "actual conditions" of the Negroes actually fortify "a mental attitude" on the part of the whites to form a vicious circle, which will constitute the main viewpoint in this book (see Chapter 3, Section 7).

[13] James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* (1934), p. 318.

[14] *Op. Cit.*, p. 65.

[15] *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), pp. 37 and 347.

[16] *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 65.

[17] *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), p. 101.

[18] *Along This Way*, p. 142.

[19] *America's Tragedy* (1934), p. 72.

[20] The New York *Times* (May 26, 1942), p. 20.

[21] Murphy, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[22] *American Minority Peoples* (1932), pp. 205-206. The author, thereafter, describes the subsequent disfranchisement, condones the Southern election laws—without any explicit value premises—criticizes the white primary and generally the unfair administration of the laws, leaving the reader, however, with the impression that measures to enforce the Constitution and the state laws are out of the discussion. There is no other interpretation than that such interferences would mean making the Negro "a ward of the nation."

Chapter 3. *Facets of the Negro Problem*

[1] More recently, Donald R. Young has been most outstanding in arguing this restatement of the Negro problem. We quote from him:

"The view here presented is that the problems and principles of race relations are remarkably similar, regardless of what groups are involved; and that only by an integrated study of all minority peoples in the United States can a real understanding and sociological analysis of the involved social phenomena be achieved." (*American Minority Peoples* [1932], pp. xiii-1.)

In explaining the similarities of the deprivations imposed upon different minority groups, Donald R. Young points out that:

"It is . . . to be expected that dominating majorities in various regions, when faced with the problem of what to think and do about minorities, will fail to be sufficiently inventive to create unique schemes of relationships and action. Variations in intensity of restriction and oppression, special techniques in maintaining superior status and other adaptations to the local scene will always be found, but the choice of fundamental patterns of dominance in majority-minority relations is limited by the nature of man and his circumstances." (*Research Memorandum on Minority Peoples in the Depression*, Social Science Research Council, Bulletin No. 31 [1937], pp. 9-10.)

[2] Even a prominent leader of the Ku Klux Klan, whose conservative attitudes on "racial" questions cannot be doubted, expressed to the writer the considered opinion that, in time, not only the Poles, Italians, Russians, Greeks, and Armenians, but also the Turks, Hindus, Jews, and Mexicans would come to be engulfed in the great American nation and disappear as separate, socially visible population segments. But it would take a very, very long time. I have heard this view affirmed by Americans in all social classes and regions of the country.

[3] Young, *Research Memorandum on Minority Peoples in the Depression*, pp. 18-19.

[4] It is the present writer's impression that anti-Semitism, as he observed it in America during the last years before the Second World War, probably was somewhat stronger than in Germany before the Nazi regime.

[5] See Eugene L. Horowitz, "Race Attitudes" in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study, to be published; manuscript pages 115-123 *et passim*.

[6] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 219.

[7] This is much to be regretted. Indeed, it is urgently desirable that such impressionistic generalizations be critically examined and replaced by statistically verified and precise knowledge. Meanwhile, because of the lack of such studies, the author has simply been compelled to proceed by building up a system of preliminary hypotheses. The defense is that otherwise intelligent questions cannot be raised in those sectors of the Negro problem where statistics or other kinds of substantiated knowledge are not available.

Some attitude studies and public opinion polls have been made which touch on some of the statements presented in hypothetical form in the text. But they were designed to answer other questions and are practically never comprehensive, and so they cannot be used as conclusive proof of our hypotheses. We shall cite some of the relevant ones in footnotes at certain points. For a summary of all the attitude studies (up to 1940) dealing with the Negro, see the monograph prepared for this study by Eugene L. Horowitz, "Race Attitudes" in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*.

[8] There are some studies, however, which provide evidence for the hypothesis of the "rank order of discriminations," even if they are not comprehensive enough to serve as conclusive proof. There are a host of attitude studies showing how whites have different attitudes toward Negroes in different spheres of life. Probably the earliest of these studies was that of Emory S. Bogardus, "Race Friendliness and Social Distance," *Journal of Applied Sociology* (1927), pp. 272-287. As an example of such studies which apply solely to Negro issues, we may cite the study by Euri Relle Bolton, "Measuring Specific Attitudes towards the Social Rights of the Negro," *The Journal of Abnormal*

and Social Psychology (January-March, 1937), pp. 384-397. For a summary of other such studies, see Horowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-148.

[9] Such studies should not only break the rank order into finer distinctions, but also develop a measure of the distance between the ranks in the order. It would, further, be desirable to ascertain individual differences in the apprehension of this rank order, and to relate these differences to age, sex, social class, educational level and region.

[10] This goes far back. Frederick Douglass nearly endangered his position among Negroes by marrying a white woman. About Douglass, Kelly Miller observed: ". . . he has a hold upon the affection of his race, not on account of his second marriage but in spite of it. He seriously affected his standing with his people by that marriage." (Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment—Essays on the Negro in America* [1908], p. 50.) And W. E. B. Du Bois tells us in his autobiography: "I resented the assumption that we desired it [racial amalgamation]. I frankly refused the possibility while in Germany and even in America gave up courtship with one 'colored' girl because she looked quite white, and I should resent the inference on the street that I had married outside my race." (*Dusk of Dawn* [1940], p. 101.) See also Chapter 30, Section 2.

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

[13] An exception, which by its uniqueness, and by the angry reception it received from the Negroes, rather proves our thesis, is the remarkable book by William H. Thomas, *The American Negro* (1901). The fact that Negroes privately often enjoy indulging in derogatory statements about Negroes in general is not overlooked. It is, however, a suppression phenomenon of quite another order. See Chapter 36, Section 2.

[14] "The rape which your gentlemen have done against helpless black women in defiance of your own laws is written on the foreheads of two millions of mulattoes, and written in ineffaceable blood." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* [1924; first edition, 1903], p. 106.)

[15] *Op. cit.*, pp. 208-209.

[16] *Race Adjustment*, p. 48.

[17] *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), p. 45.

[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

[19] Editorial, *The Crisis* (January, 1920), p. 106.

[20] *Up from Slavery* (1915; first edition, 1900), pp. 221-222.

[21] "The South, after the war, presented the greatest opportunity for a real national labor movement which the nation ever saw or is likely to see for many decades." (*Black Reconstruction* [1935], p. 353 *passim.*)

Chapter 4. *Racial Beliefs*

[1] See, for example: John H. Russell, *The Free Negro in Virginia, 1619-1865* (1913); J. C. Ballagh, *A History of Slavery in Virginia* (1902); John C. Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States* (1858-1862).

[2] A weak variation of this popular theory—weak because it looked forward only to temporary subordination of backward peoples—was that in making the Negroes slaves, white men were educating and Christianizing them. This variation is known as the "white man's burden" doctrine and played an especially important role in nineteenth

century exploitation. For some statements of this doctrine, see W. O. Brown, "Rationalization of Race Prejudice," *The International Journal of Ethics* (April, 1933), pp. 299-301.

[8] H. A. Washington (editor), *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (1859), Vol. 1, p. 49.

[4] Letter to Robert Morris, dated April 12, 1786. Jonas Viles (editor), *Letters and Addresses of George Washington* (1908), p. 285.

[5] "Government and the Negro," *Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1928), p. 99.

[6] This materialistic explanation is not a new idea. It was already seen clearly by some in the *ante-bellum* South. George Fitzhugh, for example, writes:

"Our Southern patriots, at the time of the Revolution, finding negroes expensive and useless, became warm anti-slavery men. We, their wiser sons, having learned to make cotton and sugar, find slavery very useful and profitable, and think it a most excellent institution. We of the South advocate slavery, no doubt, from just as selfish motives as induce the Yankees and English to deprecate it."

The rationalization comes immediately, however:

"We have, however, almost all human and divine authority on our side of the argument. The Bible nowhere condemns, and throughout recognises slavery." (*Sociology for the South* [1854], p. 269.)

[7] Chancellor William Harper, "Memoir on Slavery," paper read before the Society for the Advancement of Learning of South Carolina, annual meeting at Columbia, South Carolina, 1837 (1838), pp. 6-8.

[8] This stress on moral equality has not been lost through the ages. T. J. Woofter, Jr., a representative of modern Southern liberalism, writes:

"It is desirable frankly to recognize the differences as they actually exist, but there is absolutely no ethical justification for the assumption that an advantaged group has an inherent right to exploit and oppress, and the prejudice based upon the assumptions is the most vicious enemy to human peace and cooperation." (*Basis of Racial Adjustment* [1925], p. 11.)

Vance, another Southern liberal, writes:

"In a field where doubts abound, let us make one sweeping statement. If biological inferiority of the whole Negro group were a proved fact, it would, nevertheless, be to the benefit of both white and black to behave as though it did not exist. Only in this way can the Section be sure of securing, in the economic sphere, the best of which both races are capable." (Rupert B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South* [1932], p. 463.)

[9] "Prejudice of any sort, racial or otherwise, is regarded as derogatory to intellectual integrity, incompatible with good taste, and perhaps morally reprehensible. Hence the prejudiced in order to be secure in their illusions of rationality, impeccable taste, and moral correctness find rationalizations essential. The rationalization inoculates against insights as to the real nature of one's reactions. It secures the individual in his moral universe. It satisfies his impulse to rationality. The mind thus becomes an instrument, a hand-maiden, of the emotions, supplying good reasons for prejudiced reactions in the realm of racial, class, or sectarian contacts." (Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 294.)

[10] In this connection it is interesting to note, as an example of how political reaction fosters racialism, that in the *ante-bellum* South racial thinking also turned toward beliefs in biological differences between whites. The legend was spread that the white

Southerners were a "master race" of Norman blood while New England was settled by descendants of the ancient British and Saxon serfs. The Northerners and Southerners, it was said, "are the same men who cut each other's throats in England, under the name of Roundheads and Cavaliers." The Southerners were a Nordic race with greater capacity to rule. (See James Truslow Adams, *America's Tragedy* [1934], pp. 95 ff, 121, and 128 ff.) A late example of this ideology will be found in a chapter entitled "The Tropic Nordics," of H. J. Eckenrode, *Jefferson Davis, President of the South* (1923). The present writer has on several occasions in conversation with Southerners met vague reminiscences of this popular theory, usually related to the myth that the South, unlike the North, was settled mainly by English aristocrats. The more common theory of Southern racial superiority nowadays is, however, simply the assertion that the white Southerners belong predominantly to "the pure Anglo-Saxon race," as the South has received so few immigrants in recent decades when these were recruited from other European countries. In addition, one often meets the idea that "the poor whites" and generally the lower classes of whites are racially inferior, as they descend from indentured servants.

[11] Guion G. Johnson, "History of Racial Ideologies," unpublished manuscript written for this study (1940). Vol. 1, pp. 149, *passim*; Vol. 2, pp. 331, *passim*.

[12] The same principle operates also outside the Negro problem. The American Creed, in its demand for equality, has strong support from the very composition of the new nation. As immigrants, or the descendants of immigrants with diverse national origins, Americans have an interest—outside of the Negro problem—in emphasizing the importance of environment and in discounting inheritance. In order to give a human and not only political meaning to the legend *e pluribus unum*, they feel the need to believe in the possibility of shaping a new homogeneous nation out of the disparate elements thrown into the melting pot. This interest plays on a high level of valuations where the individual identifies himself with the destiny of the nation. In daily life, however, the actual and obvious heterogeneity in origin, appearance, and culture of the American people acts as a constant stimulus toward prejudiced racial beliefs.

Thus—even outside the Negro problem—there is in America a considerable ambivalence in people's thoughts on race. On a lower valuational level, there appears to be in America an extreme belief in and preoccupation with all sorts of racial differences, while on a higher level a contrary ideology rules, equally extreme when compared with more homogeneous nations. The former side of the American personality is responsible for much friction and racial snobbishness in social life. The latter side finds its expression not only in empty speeches—what the Americans call "lip-service"—but also in national legislation and in actual social trends.

[13] H. A. Washington (editor), *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (1854), Vol. 8, pp. 380-381.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 380 ff.

[15] 1915.

[16] Concerning this literature, see G. G. Johnson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 149, *passim*; Vol. 2, pp. 250-258 and 311-338.

[17] Much of the earliest literature of this sort is summarized in W. I. Thomas (editor), *Sourcebook for Social Origins* (1909).

[18] The change toward environmentalism in American psychology has been most

radical in child psychology, psychiatry and educational psychology, applied psychology, "social psychology," and other branches which are in close relation to social practice and social science. Undoubtedly the biologistic approach has still a stronghold in academic psychology proper. But even there a change is under way which can be registered by comparing the present situation with the one prevalent two or three decades ago. An indication is the almost complete abandonment of the "instinct" psychology.

[19] This connection between biology and conservatism will have to be remembered when explaining why, with some outstanding exceptions, the medical profession has, on the whole, in all countries, taken a rather reactionary stand on questions of social and health reforms.

[20] Perhaps the most influential of the popular racialistic writers were: Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916); Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color* (1920); Charles W. Gould, *America, A Family Matter* (1920).

[21] The acts restricting immigration not only cut down the total number of immigrants admitted to the country, but also provided that those allowed entrance should be predominantly from Western and Northern Europe. The 1921 act permitted an immigration from each country equal to 3 per cent of the number of foreign-born from that country resident in the United States in 1910. The 1924 act reduced the quota to 2 per cent and set the determining date back to 1890. Immigration from the Orient was completely prohibited, but that from independent countries in the Americas and from Canada was not restricted at all.

[22] As examples we may cite the following: Carl C. Brigham, an outstanding psychologist who has since repudiated his book (*A Study of American Intelligence* [1923]); William McDougall, the father of many trends in psychology (*The Group Mind* [1920], and *Is America Safe for Democracy?* [1921]); Albert Bushnell Hart and H. H. Bancroft, the eminent historians (*The Southern South* [1910], and *Retrospection, Political and Personal* [1912]).

[23] William H. Thomas, a Northern mulatto who went down to the South during Reconstruction and became disillusioned, is an exception. His vitriolic but well-written book, *The American Negro* (1901), has, indeed, its best counterparts in some of the extreme expressions of anti-Semitism which, as is well known, are to be found in occasional writings by Jews.

[24] Kelly Miller, *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), pp. 221-222.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221.

[26] Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment—Essays on the Negro in America* (1908), pp. 38-39.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[31] Frederick Douglass, one of the first Negro leaders, thus argued the case against the race inferiority doctrine:

"It is not necessary, in order to establish the manhood of any one making the claim, to prove that such an one equals Clay in eloquence, or Webster and Calhoun in logical force and directness; for, tried by such standards of mental power as these, it is apprehended that very few could claim the high designation of *man*. Yet something like this folly is seen in the arguments directed against the humanity of the negro. His faculties

and powers, uneducated and unimproved, have been contrasted with those of the highest cultivation; and the world has then been called upon to behold the immense and amazing difference between the man admitted, and the man disputed. The fact that these intellects, so powerful and so controlling, are almost, if not quite, as exceptional to the general rule of humanity, in one direction, as the specimen negroes are in the other, is quite overlooked." ("The Claims of the Negro," an Address before the Literary Societies of Western Reserve College at Commencement, July 12, 1854 [1854], pp. 7-8.)

And again:

"We all know, at any rate, that now, what constitutes the very heart of the civilized world—(I allude to England)—has only risen from barbarism to its present lofty eminence, through successive invasions and alliances with her people." (*Ibid.*, p. 33.)

Booker T. Washington pointed out that:

"The Negro is behind the white man because he has not had the same chances, and not from any inherent difference in his nature or desires." (*The Future of the American Negro* [1902], p. 26.)

One of the most brilliant of the early discussions of the biological equality of whites and Negroes is that of a Negro doctor, C. V. Roman (*American Civilization and the Negro* [1916], especially pp. 42-45 and pp. 321-351).

For a similar statement from one of the older leaders, see the answer of T. Thomas Fortune, editor of the New York *Age*, to the speech of W. H. Baldwin, "The Present Problems of Negro Education" (*Proceedings of the American Social Science Association* in *The Journal of Social Science* [1900], pp. 65-66.)

[32] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), Foreword.

[33] For some evidence on this point, see Charles H. Wesley, "The Concept of Negro Inferiority in American Thought," *The Journal of Negro History* (October, 1940), pp. 540-560.

[34] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, University of Pennsylvania series in Political Economy and Public Law, No. 14 (1899).

[35] Howard W. Odum, *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro* (1910). For a discussion of Odum's retraction, see Buell G. Gallagher, *American Caste and the Negro College* (1938), pp. 178-179. Brigham repudiated his book (*A Study of American Intelligence* [1923]) in a later article. ("Intelligence Tests of Immigrant Groups," *Psychological Review* [March, 1930], pp. 158-165.) See also Chapter 6, Section 3.

[36] The reader may, for instance, compare the tone in Professor E. B. Reuter's first book, *The Mulatto in the United States* (1918), and particularly its last chapter, with the liberal and nearly warm treatment of the Negro people in his last book, *The American Race Problem* (1938; first edition, 1927).

[37] Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States*, pp. 99-100.

[38] Edward K. Strong, *The Second-Generation Japanese Problem* (1934), p. 100. The classic statement on the difference between categoric and sympathetic contacts is that of Nathaniel S. Shaler, *The Neighbor* (1904), pp. 207-227.

[39] The tendencies of unsophisticated thinking to be "theoretical" are worthy of much more study than they have been given hitherto. They can be illustrated from all spheres of human life. To give an example outside our problem: The most human concept, *bona fide*, in jurisprudence is a late juristical development in all civilizations; originally legal systems are formalistic and behavioristic (they do not consider people's

intentions); *bona fide* is even today only the trained lawyer's way of thinking and has, as yet, never and nowhere really been understood by the mass of laymen whose thinking on legal matters always seems formalistic to the lawyer. Similarly the simple "economic laws" are thought-forms adhered to by business people when they speculate in this strange field, while the economic theorists, instead, devote their labor to criticising, demolishing, and complicating economic theory. It is the common man, *and not the statistician who* "thinks in averages," or, rather, in pairs of *contrasting types:* good-bad, healthy-sick, man-woman, white-black. And the common man is likely to handle averages and types as if they applied to the individuals. He will confidently tell you something about "all Negroes," in the same breath as he observes an exception.

He is, further, likely to construct his types without a thought as to sampling difficulties. He has a tendency to forget about range and spread. He has, of course, a pragmatic understanding that things and happenings have their causes. Otherwise he would not be able to get on with his several pursuits in a rational way. But particularly when it comes to social questions, causation becomes to the untrained mind divested of complications. Social causation is to him mostly monistic, direct, apparent and simple. The very idea of causal interrelations within a mutually dependent system of a great many factors is usually entirely absent. In his thoughts on social causation he mingles his ideas about what is right and wrong. The unsophisticated mind is not questioning; it answers questions before they are stated.

Generally speaking, it is a fact that "to think in concrete terms" when reaching for generalizations is the endeavor of theoretical training and a mark of the highest intelligence, while "theoretical," abstract and formalistic thinking is the common man's philosophy.

[40] Stoddard, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102.

[42] Lewis C. Copeland, "The Negro as a Contrast Conception" in Edgar T. Thompson (editor), *Race Relations and the Race Problem* (1939), pp. 152-179.

[43] Like other beliefs of the white man, this one, too, is to some extent taken over by the Negro group, particularly by the mulattoes. (See Chapter 32, Section 6.)

"All the stigmas of the Negro group, as previously mentioned, are associated with physical appearance; and it is the black Negro who is regarded as mean, ignorant, primitive, and animal-like. The light-colored Negro, however, is conceived of as 'smarter,' more intelligent, more 'civilized' (more 'like the whites' in behavior and ability). These beliefs are not restricted to either group but are frequently expressed by both Negroes and whites. Sometimes the comment of Negroes is very extreme, as in the case of two Negroes overheard discussing 'blackness.' One of them said: 'A black nigguh is the meanes' rascal God evah made! I mean it. A black nigguh is jes' natchally mean. He always suspects you of trying to beat him out of something or take something from him.' His companion corroborated his opinion: '. . . My grandmother wuz uh little black woman, an' she wuz one of the evilest black women God evah made! Dat's de truth. He's right about dat. Dey really evil!' Cases were known where light-skinned grandparents trained their children to condemn a black parent, the child saying of her mother: 'Oh, she's black!'" (Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* [1941], pp. 40-41.)

[44] The following brief autobiography, describing the growth of racial beliefs and their relation to segregation, is taken, in full, from the Preface to a master's thesis by

a white Southerner. The author has unusual insight, even for one who has abandoned his racial beliefs. "It was less than a year ago when I saw for the first time in my life a Negro newspaper. Before that time I had not known that Negroes had papers of their own. They were not to be seen in the places I frequented, though I often went as a boy into the homes of Negro tenants. I do not believe I ever heard one of the Negroes that I then knew say, I read thus and so in the newspaper. If they read at all, it was not of their reading that they talked to white folks.

"I was in college before I read a book written by a Negro. I had been to Negro churches and heard their preachers. Probably the first singing I ever heard was that of Negroes. But I had never associated them with writing, or very much with reading. Those were things, like our Boy Scout troop and school picnics, in which they had no part. I remember the surprise I felt at finding DuBois' *Soul of the Black Folk*, my first contact with Negro writing, not different in outward respects from other books I had read. I don't know what I expected Negro writing to look like; certainly I knew that it would not be white ink on black paper. But I did feel that there would be something physical to show that *this* was done by a Negro. The Negroes that I knew worked in the cotton fields. Around the towns they did all kinds of odd jobs, for small pay. The women washed and cooked and kept house for the white folks. None of them wrote anything that I knew of.

"There must have been more Negroes in the little South Georgia community in which I grew up than whites, for though there were only three or four white boys in the group with which I used to play, there were a half dozen or more Negroes. We did chores together there on the farm, and went ' 'possum huntin' ' and to the swimming hole down on the creek and played ball and did all of those things that boys do in rural Georgia.

"We did them together, and yet the Negroes were always a little apart. If we were swimming, they kept downstream. If we were playing ball, they were in the outfield and we did the batting. If we were gathering plums, the Negroes always left us the best bushes. There was no ill feeling in this. Negroes were different. They knew it, and we knew it. In the fields we all drank from the same jug, but at the pump the Negroes cupped their hands and drank from them and would never have dared to use the cup hanging there. I never knew a Negro to come to the front door of my home, and I am sure that if one had done so, someone would have asked him if he minded stepping around to the back. At the age of ten I understood full well that the Negro had to be kept in his place, and I was resigned to my part in that general responsibility.

"As we grew to adolescence, the relationship with Negro boys became less intimate. We began then to talk of things which the Negro could not understand—of what we were going to do in life, of our little love affairs, of school life, of our hopes for the future. In such things the Negro had no part, and gradually we played together less and less. We were more often with grown Negroes, and I think now that we were always closer to the men than we were to the boys of our own age. They knew where rabbits were, how to tell when a dog had treed, when the wind was too high for squirrels to stir, where it was best to set a trap. I don't know how Southern white boys on the farm would learn anything without Negroes. And they sang a lot too and strummed guitars and were almost always in good humor. They never talked very much about their own affairs, and they never told things on other Negroes. I have never known a Negro to lead a white boy into anything vicious. I knew some of these

old Negroes well, after a fashion, and they were in their way good people. They were friends of mine, and still are; and when I go back into my home community, I always look up those whom I knew best. I call them by their first names, as I always have; and they call me 'Mister,' as they always have; and I know that they are glad to see me.

"But they were not like white people. There was a difference that we all recognized. It was to be expected that a Negro would steal a little now and then, not anything of consequence, of course, but petty things: watermelons, sugar cane, fresh meat, and things like that, and now and then a little corn for his shoat. It was a common saying with us that a Negro who wouldn't steal had gold toe-nails. An old Negro cobbler in my home town once said to me: 'That boy workin' for me just ain't no good. I treats him well and gives him a chance to steal a little, and he just don't do nothin' but trifle.' I think all of us must have figured that a little stealing was a part of the wage. Eight dollars a month was considered a fair price for farm help, with a house and some food furnished. Good Negroes were those who knew what not to steal. Stealing food and stealing money may be the same crime in that great chart of the good and the bad, but I have known Negroes who would lift a gallon of syrup without a scruple, and yet they could be trusted implicitly in the house with money and personal effects lying around.

"Their moral codes were different from ours. I don't know that it ever occurred to any of us that a Negro girl was capable of virtue. White men had no hesitation in approaching Negro women. I do not know how often they met with refusal, but I do know that an intimate relationship between white men and Negro women was not uncommon. It is my belief that practically no children and very little disease resulted from this relationship, owing to the general knowledge of preventives that has penetrated even into rural Georgia. The better whites were much opposed to this intimacy, though white boys talked freely with one another of their experiences. Those who did not discontinue the practice when they were older, and they were few, became more reticent. Many Negroes keenly resented this intercourse with whites. An old Negro man once offered this as an explanation of the Negroes leaving the farm in such numbers and going to the city. 'Our women,' he said, 'have no protection against low-down white men in the country and in small towns.'

"I have always understood that a Negro who touches a white woman must die. It is something that we learn in the South without knowing how or when or where. I have heard the statement made by men in the community who were models of right living. Somewhere out of the past this idea came, born of pride in our own culture and possibly of an unrecognized fear that it might not persist. It was intensified by the chivalric ideal of womanhood which has been traditional in the South. In the aftermath of the Civil War the motto of those who rode with the Ku Klux Klan was the protection of Southern womanhood. Whatever might be the law, however courts might rule, whatever amendments might be added to the constitution, the Negro must be kept in his place. It might have been seen even then that most of those Negroes who were lynched were not charged with attempts to assault white women, and that many of those who were so charged were not clearly proved to be guilty. It might have been seen that what claimed to be a defense of white womanhood was more often than not merely a riot of race antagonism, brought into existence by rumors and swept along by a kind of fear. We used to talk a great deal of that race war which was coming, when black and yellows would unite and meet the scorn of whites with violence. It was one of our favorite topics of conversation. It may have been no more than bovish prattling, and now that I

can see how foolish is the thought, I wonder that we talked of it at all. But we had it from our elders. They taught us early to keep the Negro in his place, whatever the cost might be.

"I'll never forget one of my first lessons. It was on a very quiet Sunday afternoon, and a group of white boys were lying on the grass beside the road eating peaches. One of the boys was a good deal older than the rest of us, and we looked to him as a leader. I think it was he who made some suggestive remarks to a Negro girl who passed along the road, and certainly it was he who stood up to answer a young Negro man who came to protest when the girl told him what had happened. I think the girl would have been more flattered than annoyed had the remarks been addressed to her privately, for she was a bad sort; but there on the road in the presence of us all, she resented it. The Negro man was mad, and he said more than I have ever heard a Negro say in defense of his women, or for any other cause. We all knew him, and it was not the first time that he had shown a disposition to argue with white folks. Our leader said nothing for a few minutes, and then he walked slowly up to my house, which was not far away, and came back with a shotgun. The Negro went away, and as the white boy lay down beside us and began eating peaches again, he remarked, 'You have to know how to handle Negroes.' I knew then, on that quiet Sunday afternoon almost twenty years ago, and I know now, that he was ready to use that gun, if it were necessary, to keep a Negro in his place. Such incidents were not common, and few white boys would have done a thing like that. But still that was one way.

"I am looking back to the things that I knew. In cities perhaps it was different. It may be a little different in the country now, though I don't think there has been much change. I have known Negroes who were happy, despite poverty and squalid surroundings. I have known whites who were miserable, despite wealth and culture of a kind. Old Negroes have told me, most any kind of Negro gets more out of life any day than a real, high-class white man; and I believe them. We say here in the South that we know the Negro. We believe that we have found for him a place in our culture. Education and the passing of years may change everything, but I know that there are in my community now many white people who will die perpetuating the order as they found it, the scheme of things to which they belong." (Rollin Chambliss, *What Negro Newspapers of Georgia Say about Some Social Problems, 1933*, published thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for Master's Degree, University of Georgia [1934], pp. 4-8.)

[45] The independent role of the author should not be exaggerated. James Weldon Johnson writes:

"The greater part of white America thinks of us in stereotypes; most of these stereotypes coming to them second-hand by way of the representation of Negro life and character on the stage and in certain books. In the main they are exaggerated, false, and entirely unlike our real selves." (*Negro Americans, What Now?* [1934], p. 52.)

Against this opinion, which is common among intellectual Negroes, it should be pointed out that ordinarily the stereotypes are already in the white society, and that their appearance in the literature is derived rather than *vice versa*. But the latter fix and sometimes magnify the former. This is true in the South. In the North, and particularly in those regions where personal relations to Negroes are scarce or totally absent, Johnson is probably more right: there the literary representations build up the stereotypes. And in the *practical* problem of strategy it is possible to think of fiction as a

destroyer of racial stereotypes. The fiction writers are intellectuals, and it is more possible to expose them to modern scientific knowledge than the average reading public. Their resistance is, however, rooted in their interest in keeping their market. People want to meet their stereotyped beliefs in the books they buy.

[46] Sterling A. Brown is the author of a paper "Negro Character as Seen by White Authors," from which we quote:

"The Negro has met with as great injustice in American literature as he has in American life. The majority of books about Negroes merely stereotype Negro character. . . . Those considered important enough for separate classification, although overlappings *do* occur, are seven in number: (1) The Contented Slave, (2) The Wretched Freeman, (3) The Comic Negro, (4) The Brute Negro, (5) The Tragic Mulatto, (6) The Local Color Negro, and (7) The Exotic Primitive.

"A detailed evaluation of each of these is impracticable because of limitations of space. It can be said, however, that all of these stereotypes are marked either by exaggeration or omissions; that they all agree in stressing the Negro's divergence from an Anglo-Saxon norm to the flattery of the latter; they could all be used, as they probably are, as justification of racial proscription; they all illustrate dangerous specious generalizing from a few particulars recorded by a single observer from a restricted point of view—which is itself generally dictated by the desire to perpetuate a stereotype.

"All of these stereotypes are abundantly to be found in American literature, and are generally accepted as contributions to true racial understanding. Thus one critic, setting out imposingly to discuss 'The Negro character' in American literature, can still say, unabashedly, that '*the whole range of the Negro character is revealed thoroughly*' in one twenty-six line sketch by Joel Chandler Harris of Br'er Fox and Br'er Mud Turtle." (*Journal of Negro Education* [April, 1933], p. 180.) Sterling Brown's reference is to John H. Nelson, *The Negro Character in American Literature* (1926), p. 118. This article was expanded by Brown and published in pamphlet form: *The Negro in American Fiction* (1937).

Just to exemplify the type of prejudice transferred by good nonmalicious fiction, a few paragraphs may be quoted from Booth Tarkington's *Penrod*, first published serially in various magazines and later as a book, in several editions from 1913 on (italics ours). The book has been read by a great proportion of all American boys year after year. Its hero is a twelve-year-old middle class white boy living in a middle-sized Midwestern town. The Negro boys in the story, Herman and Verman (the names themselves are significant), live in an alley near Penrod's home. They are having a fight with a white man, Rupe Collins.

"Expressing vocally his indignation and the extremity of his pained surprise, Mr. Collins stepped backward, holding his left hand over his nose, and striking at Herman with his right. Then Verman hit him with the rake.

"Verman struck from behind. He struck as hard as he could. *And he struck with the tines down. For in his simple, direct African way he wished to kill his enemy, and he wished to kill him as soon as possible. That was his single, earnest purpose.*

"On this account, Rupe Collins was peculiarly unfortunate. He was plucky and he enjoyed conflict, but neither his ambitions nor his anticipations had ever included murder. *He had not learned that an habitually aggressive person runs the danger of colliding with beings in one of those lower stages of evolution wherein theories about 'hitting below the belt' have not yet made their appearance. . . .*

"*The struggle increased in primitive simplicity:* Time and again the howling Rupe got to his knees only to go down again as the earnest brothers, in their own way, assisted him to a more reclining position. *Primal forces operated here, and the two blanched, slightly higher products of evolution,* Sam and Penrod, no more thought of interfering than they would have thought of interfering with an earthquake."

[47] *Op. cit.,* pp. 52-53.

[48] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), p. 89.

[49] Quoted from Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 235. See, also, James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 244-245.

[50] "A careful observation of negro schools, churches and miscellaneous gatherings in all parts of the country convinces the writer that fully three-fourths of the rising generation of the race have some traceable measure of white blood in their veins." (Miller, *Out of the House of Bondage,* p. 58.)

[51] Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States.*

[52] "One thing is certain: where defense is needed as a result of actions unethical in the light of a personally accepted standard, defensive beliefs will arise." (John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* [1937], p. 388.)

[53] Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932), p. 401.

[54] Ruth Benedict, *Race: Science and Politics* (1940), p. 237.

[55] There have been many studies of the type of racial beliefs held and of the extent to which they are held, but few attempts to show their relation to the functioning of society. An example of a study of the types of racial beliefs is: Bertram Wilbur Doyle, "Racial Traits of the Negro as Negroes Assign Them to Themselves," unpublished master's thesis, University of Chicago (1924). An example of a study of the extent to which racial beliefs are held is: Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly, "Racial Stereotypes of One Hundred College Students," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (1933), pp. 280-290. Much of the attitude measurement research comes under this rubric. An example of functional studies of beliefs—though not racial beliefs and so outside the scope of the present chapter—is Samuel M. Strong, "The Social Type Method: Social Types in the Negro Community of Chicago," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago (1940). W. O. Brown's and Copeland's previously cited studies also belong in this category.

[56] Some recent community studies carried out with a primary psychological interest in people's beliefs have given a vision of the field to be mapped. Dollard's *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* is particularly suggestive of what might be done.

[57] Among the things we want to know are: What do people mean by "race" in reference to the Negro people? To what extent do they allow for influence of environmental factors? How do they relate those factors to the race and to the individual, respectively? What is their idea about the manner in which education, better housing conditions, better nutrition, and so forth, "improve"—or "spoil"—the Negroes. To what extent and how do people allow for individual exceptions from their racial beliefs? Do they believe that all Negroes are worse than all whites, and, if so, in what specific sense? How, more specifically, do they "think in averages"? and in contrast types? What are people's ideas as to the effect of cross-breeding upon the offspring? What specific beliefs are held concerning diverse bodily, intellectual, and moral Negro traits? How are they coordinated in systems of beliefs? How are they coordinated with people's religious faith

and the American Creed? What evidence do people find for their beliefs? How do people feel their own beliefs related to tradition and community consensus? Do people recognize an irrational element in their beliefs, and how do they account for this element? Do people ever sense the opportunistic character of their beliefs? Do people know anything about results of recent research rejecting the racial beliefs or showing that they are without substantiation? What is their reaction to these endeavors of scientific research? What is their reaction to attempts to spread scientific knowledge on racial matters? In all these respects, we want to have the spheres of beliefs recorded for white individuals in different regions of the country, different social and economic classes, on different levels of education, in different age groups, and in the two sexes. We also want to know the beliefs among the Negro people.

Chapter 5. *Race and Ancestry*

[1] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*, Vol. 2 (1910; first edition, 1893), p. 555.

[2] Laws defining a Negro vary from state to state and even differ within a single state depending upon the purpose of the law. The most common of these laws are those which define a Negro for the purpose of excluding him from marriage with whites and from going to white schools. Since Northern states east of the Mississippi River do not prohibit intermarriage (except Indiana) and since they have no enforced segregation in public institutions, they have no definition of a Negro in law. Before and during the Civil War such laws existed in some of these Northern states so that the present situation represents a liberal trend in the law. The opposite trend has occurred in the West and South. The West has no Jim Crow laws, but it has enacted vigorous prohibitions against intermarriage. Among all the non-Southern states west of the Mississippi River, only Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, New Mexico, and Washington now have no such law. Many of the Western states with prohibitions against intermarriage define a Negro as anyone known to have any Negro ancestry whatsoever and have a heavy punishment for violations of the law. Since Southern states have a whole series of legal prohibitions for Negroes, it is common for them to have conflicting definitions of Negroes. (See George S. Schuyler, "Who is 'Negro'? Who is 'White'?" *Common Ground* [Autumn, 1940], pp. 54-55.) It would seem as though the Jim Crow laws were the most drastic since they prohibit persons with the slightest amount of Negro ancestry from using facilities and institutions for whites. The laws against intermarriage are often more liberal, since they permit a person with up to one-eighth Negro blood to be called "white." It is probable, however, that in practice the liberality of these two types of legal restrictions is reversed. Too, there has been a definite trend since Reconstruction to increase the number of situations where Negroes are so defined in law and to broaden the definition of a Negro: states that were formerly content to adopt a rule of one-quarter, one-eighth, or one-sixteenth Negro blood have increasingly tended to diminish the amount of Negro blood that will define a person as a Negro. There is little, if any, differential in law between states of the Deep South and Border, although there may be some differential in practice.

For collections of laws defining Negroes see: (1) Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), Chapter 1; (2) Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer,

"The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation" in Otto Klineberg, (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published; manuscript pages 160-162.

[3] A white person, particularly if he has a high status in society, may, in some places and under certain circumstances, be known to have a small amount of Negro blood and yet not lose caste. It must not be made notorious, however; it must not be put on record. And even to this last statement the observer of the American caste system finds curious exceptions, particularly in the old Mother Colony of Virginia and in Louisiana. These and other minor filigree-works on the dominant social pattern are here left out of account.

[4] Sir Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World* (1910) p. 413.

[5] Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1924; first edition, 1916), pp. 17-18.

[6] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), p. 31.

[7] The primary scientific meaning of "race" seems to be ethnological and to refer to a common and distinct ancestry. When population groups live in isolation from each other, the cumulated effects of mutations, combinations, and natural selections in adaptation to the environment produce different genetic constitutions in the groups, expressing themselves in different traits which are more or less common to all the members of each group and which are transmitted by heredity. These traits can then be used for classifying the groups. Such model conditions have rarely existed on earth. If we give up the demand that a racial group should be homogeneous, however, there seems to be a rather common agreement among ethnologists that nearly all mankind can be classified into three major stocks: the Caucasoid, the Mongoloid, and the Negroid peoples. These correspond roughly to the popular division of mankind into White, Yellow, and Brown. The three groups

". . . represent some considerable degree of adaptation to the conditions of the environment. The dark skin, which characterizes most of the peoples living near the tropics, is almost certainly the result of the elimination by natural selection of the fairer types of pigmentation less fitted to afford protection against the actinic rays of the sun. The greater number of sweat glands in the Negro and the reduction of their number among the yellow-skinned peoples, are probably adaptations to hot and to dry conditions respectively. Similarly the striking variations in the breadth of the nose according to latitude may be adaptively perpetuated through natural selection. A white skin is a disadvantage in the Tropics and a wide nostril in the Arctic." (Julian S. Huxley and A. C. Haddon, *We Europeans* [1935], p. 58.)

The major criteria of race mean that two average Caucasoids have more ancestors in common than a Caucasoid and a Negroid, and also that a typical white man is very different from a typical Chinese or a typical Negro. But all variations exist within and between the typical representatives of each group. The isolation has not been complete, and crossing has been widespread through history and pre-history. If it is thus difficult to draw sharp lines of distinction between the major groups, it is still more so within these groups. Migration and hybridization have been going on all the time through the ages and all the national "races" within the three major stocks are the result of extensive hybridization.

[8] If we use Herskovits' sample, and if we further assume that a person who said he was of mixed blood but was more Negro than white is, on the average, 75 per cent Negro, that a person who said he was about half Negro and half white is, on the average,

50 per cent Negro, and that a person who said he was more white than Negro is, on the average, 25 per cent Negro—if we make all these assumptions—the proportion of African Negro ancestors of all ancestors back to any given time is roughly two-thirds. The computations are based on the figures presented on p. 177 of Melville J. Herskovits' *The Anthropometry of the American Negro* (1930).

Of	342 N*	persons,	100	per cent of the ancestors, or in proportion to the total persons	342.00	are assumed to be pure Negro
"	97 NI	"	100	"	97.00	"
"	384 NNW	"	75	"	288.00	"
"	106 NNW(I)	"	75	"	79.50	"
"	260 NW	"	50	"	130.00	"
"	133 NW(I)	"	50	"	66.50	"
"	154 NWW	"	25	"	38.50	"
"	75 NWW(I)	"	25	"	18.75	"
Total	1551				1060.25	

* In the table, N stands for Negro, W for white, I for Indian. Two N's indicate a preponderance of Negro ancestry; two W's indicate a preponderance of white ancestry; an I in parentheses indicates an unknown amount of Indian ancestry.

Since the proportion $\frac{1060}{1551}$ neglects the unknown proportion of Caucasoid blood inserted before the Negroes came to the United States, we may reduce the proportion Negro to 2/3. However, in spite of Herskovits' valiant efforts to test the representativeness of his sample, it undoubtedly contains too many upper class Negroes who have more white ancestry than the average Negro. (See footnote 41 in this chapter.) On the other hand, the persons interviewed by Herskovits may not have known about some of their white ancestry, and, in addition, Indian ancestry is not accounted for in our calculation. These counteracting errors must, to some extent, neutralize each other and the proportion of African ancestors is perhaps not too far away from 2/3. As we do not know the magnitude of the errors, the figure should not be taken to be more than our best guess based upon significantly inadequate data.

[9] Most states, including the Southern ones, had laws prohibiting slave importations before 1808, but little attempt was made to enforce them—except in the North where slavery itself was prohibited during and after the Revolutionary War. For the laws, see John Codman Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States*, Vol. 2 (1858-1862), p. 2, *passim*.

[10] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth in the United States: 1790-1900*, p. 91.

[11] Melville J. Herskovits, "Social History of the Negro," in C. Murchison (editor), *A Handbook of Social Psychology* (1935), p. 236.

[12] Louis I. Dublin, *Health and Wealth* (1928), p. 256.

[13] The facts in this paragraph on the distribution of the peoples of Africa have been taken from Herskovits, "Social History of the Negro" in *op. cit.*, pp. 207-267.

[14] This sentence should not be taken to imply that the population of Africa is any more homogeneous today.

[15] Evidence as to the geographic homelands of the slaves is summarized in Melville J. Herskovits, "On the Provenience of the New World Negroes," *Social Forces* (Decem-

ber, 1933), pp. 247-262. In addition to this source, we have relied for this paragraph of the text on three memoranda prepared for this study: Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941); Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 6-16; and M. F. Ashley Montagu, "The Origin, Composition, and Physical Characteristics of the American Negro Population," unpublished manuscript (1940), pp. 8-20.

[16] Herskovits (*The Myth of the Negro Past*, pp. 43-53) summarizes the statistical evidence to date on the geographical location in Africa from which the slaves came. His chief sources are two publications by Elizabeth Donnan: "The Slave Trade into South Carolina before the Revolution," *American Historical Review* (1927-1928), pp. 804-828, and "Documents Illustrative of the Slave Trade to America," *Carnegie Institution Publication*, No. 409, Vols. 1-4 (1930-1935). There is a wealth of material in these sources and in others cited by Herskovits, but the statistical proportions cannot be accepted as exact because data are available for only a sample of slaves whose representativeness is not known. The verbal statement in the text, which agrees substantially with Herskovits' conclusion, is, therefore, not more reliable but also not less accurate than the detailed statistical data given.

[17] When the high reproduction rate is taken into account—always increasing the relative importance for genetic composition of a population element in some proportion to its length of domicile in this country—the fact that there was an even greater preponderance of West African slave stock in earlier importation must raise its importance even above its simple aggregate numerical weight.

[18] For discussions of race intermixture in the West Indies see: Matthew G. Lewis, *Journal of a West India Proprietor 1815-17* (1929), pp. 73 and 144; Edward B. Underhill, *The West Indies* (1862), p. 225; W. J. Gardner, *A History of Jamaica* (revised edition, 1909), p. 165; George Pinckard, *Notes on the West Indies* (1816), Vol. 1, pp. 114-118, Vol. 2, pp. 136-137, 328, and 531; Robert T. Hill, *Cuba and Porto Rico with the Other Islands of the West Indies* (1898), pp. 164-169, 226-227, 290 and 311; J. Stewart, *A View of the Past and Present State of the Island of Jamaica* (1823), Chapter 15; E. Goulburn Sinckler, *The Barbados Handbook* (1914), p. 44; Ludwell Lee Montague, *Haiti and the United States 1714-1938* (1940), pp. 4-6; Zora Neale Hurston, *Tell My Horse* (1938), pp. 16-21; *Puerto Rico, American Guide Series* (1940), p. 110; J. Antonio Jarvis, *Brief History of the Virgin Islands* (1938), pp. 44-45, 49, 188-189, and 200-201; George Milton Fowles, *Down in Porto Rico* (1910; first edition, 1906), pp. 60-61 and 96; George Mannington, *The West Indies* (1930; first edition, 1925), pp. 71, 129 and 239-241; James G. Leyburn, *The Haitian People* (1941), pp. 3, 16, 177-179 and 189.

[19] Clyde V. Kiser, "Fertility of Harlem Negroes," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* (July, 1935), pp. 273-284.

[20] The evidence on the subjects discussed in this paragraph is summarized in Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past*, pp. 293-294. For a discussion of the extent to which slaves sought to escape into free territory, see: Henrietta Buckmaster, *Let My People Go* (1941).

[21] Citations may be made to illustrate these two extreme positions on the extent of mortality during passage. Evidence cited by Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson (*Race Relations* [1934], pp. 274-275) supports the position of high mortality:

"The physical effects of slavery are often overlooked or understressed because, in certain significant respects, they are more closely related to the commercial than to the

social aspects of the slavery system. Nevertheless, if there is any value in physical selection and survival, there is perhaps no more sensitive example of this in history than the cold and almost organic selection for which the slave trade was responsible. For every slave introduced into the routine of the American slave system, from two to five died or were killed on the way. Thomas F. Buxton estimates that for every slave landed safely on a plantation five were lost, and he is supported in this estimate by Normal Leys.

"The African slave trade was aided by the intertribal warfare which kept numerous slaves in the possession of tribes. As the trade became widespread and highly profitable, there were deliberate slave raids which entailed great loss of life. The march to the coast, hunger, the harsh measures of the slave drivers, the exposure to contagion in the close quarters of the slave barracoons, and the horrors of the notorious middle passage, the long ocean voyage on which the victims were packed close in the foul and unsanitary holds of the slave ships, resulted in an excessively high toll. It has been estimated that the mortality on the journey from the interior to the coast amounted to five-twelfths of the entire number captured. Since no careful records were kept, this may be an extreme figure, but it is known that this mortality was extremely high.

"There are better estimates for the mortality of the middle passage. A journey required about fifty days. Slaves were cheap in Africa but high in America, and this fact encouraged overcrowding. The records of the English African Company, for the period 1680 to 1688, show 60,783 Negro slaves shipped, of which number 14,387 were lost in the middle passage. This is 23.7 per cent of the number. Altogether, this was an experience calculated to eliminate weaklings. Says Le Fevre: 'From the standpoint of the American slaves, the most significant aspect of the slave-trade was its frightful efficiency in weeding out feeble bodies and easily depressed minds. Every Negro who survived proved by the mere fact of being alive, his physical and mental capacity for endurance.'" Herskovits (*The Myth of the Negro Past*, p. 43) cites evidence of low mortality. He relies on Père Dieudonné Rinchon. (*Le Trafic Négrier, d'après les livres de commerce du capitaine Gantois Pierre-Ignace Liévin Van Alstein* [1938], pp. 304 ff.):

"For he [Rinchon] shows that, between 1748 and 1782, 541 slavers bought 146,799 slaves, and disposed of 127,133. The difference, 19,666, or 13 per cent, would indicate that the losses from all causes during shipment—and it by no means follows that these were deaths—were much smaller than has been thought."

[22] Frederick Olmsted quotes a slaveholder to this effect: "In the States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, as much attention is paid to the breeding and growth of Negroes as to that of horses and mules." (*The Cotton Kingdom*, Vol. I [1862], p. 57.)

[23] Franz Boas, *Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants* (1910) and various other papers. A critical and appreciative evaluation of Boas' work has been expressed by F. H. Hankins, *The Racial Basis of Civilization* (1926), pp. 355-356:

"The famous study by Boas already referred to purported to show that the European immigrant 'changes his type even in the first generation almost entirely'; children born a few years after the arrival of their parents in this country 'differ essentially from their foreign-born parents.' Elsewhere Boas contends that 'These observations seem to indicate a decided plasticity of human types.' In view of the fact that the differences between parents and offspring as shown in his original data for such a trait as head-form were not always either positive or negative but frequently conflicting, and in view of the fact that the general average differences were not always significant when compared with

the probable errors of the measurements, Boas's claims ('entirely,' 'essentially') appear much exaggerated. It is, nevertheless, not necessary to deny that he found some real differences between the ancestral and the American-born generations. Whether the total change, whatever it was, should be attributed to the American climate, food, drink or mores, is open to doubt. It is indeed quite probable that these had nothing whatever to do with the change in head-form assuming such a change to have occurred, whether as a mutation, a recombination of genetic factors, or as a purely somatic modification. One cannot be certain."

Other investigators have followed Boas in studying the physical changes accompanying immigration. For example: Leslie Spier, "Growth of Japanese Children Born in America and Japan," *University of Washington Publications in Anthropology* (July, 1929); H. L. Shapiro, *Migration and Environment* (1939). For a summary of such studies see Maurice H. Krout, "Race and Culture: A Study in Mobility, Segregation, and Selection," *American Journal of Sociology* (September, 1931), pp. 175-189.

[24] There is some inconclusive evidence that the average stature of American Negroes has been increasing since the Civil War. (Stature has been used by anthropologists as a characteristic of race.) The average stature of Civil War Negro troops was 168.99 cm. (reported by Baxter); while that of World War Negro troops, less selected, if anything, was 171.99 cm. (reported by Davenport and Love); and that of Herskovits' more representative sample of 887 male Negroes was 170.49. (See Herskovits, *The Anthropometry of the American Negro*, p. 43.)

[25] L. P. Jackson "Elizabethan Seamen and the African Slave Trade," *The Journal of Negro History* (January, 1924), p. 2.

[26] Most of the evidence on the basis of which this paragraph was written is brought together in Ashley-Montagu, *op. cit.*

[27] "The conversion of new negroes into plantation laborers, a process called 'breaking in,' required always a mingling of delicacy and firmness. Some planters distributed their new purchases among the seasoned households . . ." (Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* [1918], p. 53.)

James G. Leyburn reports that families were separated to prevent their conspiring and planning revolts. (*The Haitian People* [1941], p. 179.)

[28] See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Folk Then and Now* (1939); also, "Africa" *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (eleventh edition), Vol. 1, pp. 325-330.

[29] There have been few attempts by legislation to hinder Negro-Indian intermarriage. Only three states (Louisiana, Oklahoma, and North Carolina) have laws forbidding such intermarriage, and these were never seriously enforced. (See Hurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 295, and Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-254.)

[30] E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), Chapter 11, "Racial Islands."

[31] K. W. Porter, "Relations between Negroes and Indians Within the Present Limits of the United States," *The Journal of Negro History* (July, 1932), pp. 287-367, and K. W. Porter, "Notes Supplementary to 'Relations between Negroes and Indians,'" *The Journal of Negro History* (July, 1933), pp. 282-321, especially pp. 320-321. These important studies are referred to, and the rest of the evidence on Negro-Indian miscegenation is summarized in Ashley-Montagu, *op. cit.*

[32] Melville J. Herskovits, *The American Negro* (1928), p. 10.

[33] The first census of 1790 showed a white sex ratio of 104 for the United States and 106 for the South. Earlier years would probably show a higher sex ratio, but the data for them are incomplete and otherwise inadequate.

[34] Marcus W. Jernegan, *Laboring and Dependent Classes in Colonial America: 1607-1783* (1931). Also Carter G. Woodson, "The Beginnings of the Miscegenation of the Whites and Blacks," *The Journal of Negro History* (October, 1918), pp. 335-353.

[35] Jernegan, *op. cit.*, p. 55. Also, Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-340.

[36] Reuter thus states that the miscegenation between Negro slaves and the growing group of poor whites "very greatly decreased as the institution of slavery developed."[a] He summarizes his arguments, which are representative of one vein of scientific opinion on this very controversial question, in the following way:

"As the status of the slave became better defined and a social difference was made, the friendly relation between the Negroes and the white servants gave place to a feeling of hatred between the Negroes and the poor white class. This, together with the more strict discipline over the slaves, generally prevented much intermixture of these classes during the period that slavery existed as a national institution."[b]

And even taking into account the relations between men of the master class and the slave women, he draws the conclusion that "mixture of the races probably went on more slowly during the period that slavery existed as a national institution, than in the period before or the period since."[c]

Reuter's reasoning on this point does not seem quite convincing. It is, first, doubtful to what extent the growing racial antipathies really prevented the type of exploitative sexual intercourse which we are here discussing. Second, only a part of the Negro slaves were employed on great plantations where the type of isolation and regimentation prevailed which would best support Reuter's hypothesis. While the proportion of slaves on the large plantations grew during the period, it never passed 53 per cent.[d] Third, and most important, the slaveholders had no interest at all in directing "the slave system as a working and developed institution" so that it "regulated strictly the conduct of the slaves and thereby restricted, in a measure, irregular relations between them and the general white population."[e] They had rather the opposite interest. The higher sales value of mulatto slaves, especially in the case of women, gave the slaveholders an economic interest in favoring race mixture, and contemporary observers even record

[a] Edward B. Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States* (1918), p. 158.

[b] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

[c] Reuter is not consistent on this point, since he elsewhere says that there was a decline in mixture after Reconstruction. Compare: E. B. Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States* (1918), pp. 158-159 *passim*; E. B. Reuter, *Race Mixture* (1931), p. 47 *passim*; E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1927), pp. 138-139 *passim*.

[d] The figure of 53 per cent represents the number of slaves owned by persons who held 20 or more slaves each in 1860, in the fifteen slave states. If we reduce the criterion of a "large holding" to 15 slaves, the proportion rises to 62 per cent. If we raise the criterion of a "large holding" to 30 slaves, the proportion falls to 40 per cent. Masters who held 20 or more slaves were 12 per cent of all masters. (Source: U. S. Census Office, *Agriculture of the United States in 1860; Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* [1864], p. 247.)

[e] Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States*, pp. 158-159.

cases where rewards were given to white males who consented to be the fathers of mulattoes.[a]

[37] Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 24-25. Wirth does not here refer to trends, of course.

[38] Concerning the miscegenation between Northern soldiers and Negro women during the period in which the Northern Army occupied the South, Professor E. Franklin Frazier writes (in a communication to the author, July 1, 1942):

"In the genealogies which I have collected, few of the white ancestors were Northern men. It is possible, of course, that the mulatto offspring of Northern soldiers and Southern Negroes do not belong to the upper and middle class in the Negro population as do the offspring of the Southern upper class whites and Negroes. It is possible that the relations between the Northern soldiers and Southern Negroes were more casual than sex relations between Southern whites and Negroes, and the mulatto offspring did not know their white ancestors as well as did the mulatto offspring of Southern whites. Moreover, there is another factor which should be taken into account, namely: Northern soldiers had an aversion to close intimate contacts with the blacks, an attitude which was lacking among the Southern whites."

[39] *Race Mixture*, p. 49.

[40] See, for instance, T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), pp. 42-44. Reuter expressed himself more guardedly. (See Reuter, *Race Mixture*, pp. 49-50.) See Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 33-35.

[41] The main evidences are the following:

(a) In his samples of mulattoes drawn from various sections of the country, Herskovits found fewer white parents than white grandparents, who in turn were fewer than white great-grandparents, and so on. For his college group, 2 per cent reported white parentage, while about 10 per cent knew of white grandparents. (*The Anthropometry of the American Negro*, pp. 240-241. Also see *The American Negro*, p. 30.) Herskovits seems to forget that one has more grandparents than parents so that, all other things equal, the probabilities, naturally, increase in geometric fashion—as one goes back through the generations. He also neglects the fact that contraception is more prevalent in recent years—probably especially in sex relations which defy convention—so that the number of offspring cannot be used as an index of the number of sex contacts in time series. Finally, he neglects the possibility of socio-economic differentials—which affect the sample of college students—between white parental and white grandparental groups.

(b) In Mrs. Day's sample of 1,152 persons born before the Civil War, 243 were known to have been partners in interracial unions, while this was true of only 3 out of 1,385 persons born since the Civil War. (Caroline Bond Day, *A Study of Some Negro-White Families in the United States* [1932], p. 108.) Day's sample is not intended to be representative of the general Negro population, and her information is admittedly not complete in this aspect of the study.

(c) Frazier records that of 920 known grandparents of 311 persons listed in *Who's Who in Colored America: 1928-1929*, 137, or 14.9 per cent, were white. (Frazier, *op. cit.*, p. 247.) There is no corresponding sample of recent Negro births for comparison, but this high proportion is undoubtedly not obtained today. The sample is, of course, not representative, and births are no perfect index of sex contacts in time series.

[a] See Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript page 20.

(d) There are a number of observations in the literature to the same effect. Kelly Miller writes in *Out of the House of Bondage*: "As an illustration of the infrequency of the direct mulatto progeny, the student body of Howard University, about fifteen hundred in number, is composed largely of the mixed element. There are probably not a half dozen children of white parents in this entire number. On the other hand, the first pupils in this institution, a generation ago, were very largely the offspring of such parentage." ([1914], p. 55.)

[42] Reuter, who has specialized upon the problem of race mixture, wrote two books on the subject: *The Mulatto in the United States* in 1918 and *Race Mixture* in 1931 and discussed present and future trends without even mentioning contraception and birth control. In his last book, *The American Race Problem* (1927), although Reuter discusses birth control among Negroes in regard to several other problems, he fails to consider the effect of contraception on the number of mixed offspring. More remarkable is, perhaps, that Herskovits in his path-breaking book, *The American Negro*, also is able to discuss the present and future trend of miscegenation and amount of mixed offspring without touching the question of contraception.

[43] John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), p. 141.

[44] In June, 1932, *The Birth Control Review* devoted its entire issue to a discussion of birth control among Negroes. In this issue, in an article entitled "The Negro Birth Rate," S. J. Holmes states: "There is every reason to believe that the same causes which have led to a decreased birth rate among the whites have occasioned the declining birth rate among the Negroes. As most students of this subject agree, birth control is one of the most potent of these causes" (p. 172).

A social worker gives further evidence: ". . . they [the clients] ask often where they may obtain *bona fide* and scientific information concerning this [contraception]. . . . The Negro client is feeling less and less guilty about asking for and receiving information on birth control and is expressing himself freely as having wanted such guidance for a long time. . . . There are still a great many who have not lost their sense of sinning in seeking such help. . . . Yet there are increasing numbers who seek birth control." (Constance Fisher, "The Negro Social Worker Evaluates Birth Control," *The Birth Control Review*, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.)

Confirming evidence is given by Carolyn Bryant: "As far as teachability goes we find that the Negro women seem to learn and accept the method of contraception used in this clinic as easily or more so than the white patients. We have no definite figures to prove this statement." ("The Cincinnati Clinic," *The Birth Control Review*, *op. cit.*, p. 177.)

Norman Himes reports that ". . . at Cleveland, Cincinnati and Detroit the Negro rate of clinic attendance is *approximately three times* the rate in which Negroes exist in the respective city populations." ("Clinical Service for the Negro," *The Birth Control Review*, *op. cit.*, p. 176.)

George S. Schuyler, a Negro journalist, makes the following comments: "There is no great opposition to birth control among the twelve million brown Americans. Certainly none has been expressed in writing. On the contrary one encounters everywhere a profound interest in and desire for information on contraceptive methods among them. . . . Negroes are perhaps more receptive to this information than white folk. Despite their vaunted superiority, the white brethren have a full quota of illusions and, one might say, hypocrisies, especially about anything dealing with sex. Brown Americans are somewhat different because they have been forced to face more frankly the hard

facts of life. . . . No wonder one sometimes hears a colored woman say 'it's a sin to bring a black child into the world.'. . . If anyone should doubt the desire on the part of Negro women and men to limit their families, it is only necessary to note the large scale of 'preventive devices' sold in every drug store in the various Black Belts, and the great number of abortions performed by medical men and quacks." ("Quantity or Quality," *The Birth Control Review, op. cit.*, pp. 165-166.)

Further indirect evidence of the desire for family limitation among Negroes can be presented. "There is reason to believe . . . if one is willing to accept the almost universal testimony of Negro physicians, that . . . birth control of a sort is being attempted on a wide scale among the lower classes of Negroes. . . . Negro women in formidable numbers, without the advantage of contraceptive information, seek relief through abortions performed under highly dangerous conditions. . . ." (Elmer A. Carter, "Eugenics for the Negro," *The Birth Control Review, op. cit.*, p. 169.)

Raymond Pearl's study, however, indicates that Negro women practice contraception less than do white women. (See *The Natural History of Population* [1939], pp. 193-194, and table, p. 231.)

[45] In the only recent study showing quantitative trends in intermarriage, Wirth and Goldhamer state that intermarriage in Boston and New York State (outside of New York City) has been decreasing, but the fact that there are now a larger proportion of Negroes in the North where intermarriage is not illegal may have counterbalanced this trend. (*Op. cit.*, manuscript, pages 37-50.) Recent studies of Southern communities suggest that concubinage hardly exists in the present-day South in the form which it took before the Civil War, or at least if it exists, is more effectively concealed. (See Dollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142; Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], pp. 195-196.)

[46] ". . . In recent years a new type of contact between the two races has been developing in Northern cities. White collar workers of the two races have been associating more freely and are having, of course, sex relations. Contraceptives are generally used in such contacts." (Communication from E. Franklin Frazier, July 1, 1942.)

[47] Wirth and Goldhamer discuss all these types of passing. (*Op. cit.*, manuscript pages 72-99.)

[48] One of the reasons often overlooked for the ability to pass of persons who still have large proportions of Negro blood is the fact that not all Africans had the black color of the "true Negro." (See Day, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.)

[49] Day seems to be the only one who has made an approach to the use of the first method—and that only incidentally in the course of following up other interests. (See Day, *op. cit.*, p. 11.) Her samples of the families were known to have differing amounts of Negro blood in them, but were not intended to be representative of the general Negro population. Out of her 346 families, 35 included one or more individuals who had completely lost their racial identity. Her average family contained about 7.3 persons over 14 years of age, living or dead, so her statement would allow one to estimate that, at the very minimum, 15 out of every 1,000 Negroes passed. This conclusion is worthless, however, in view of the fact that Mrs. Day's sample was not, and was not intended to be, representative since her families were selected as containing some white blood even though individual members in them were full-blooded Negroes.

The second method was employed by Hart—also in following up another interest. (Hornell Hart, *Selective Migration as a Factor in Child Welfare in the United States*,

with Special Reference to Iowa [1921], pp. 28-29.) Between 1900 and 1910 he estimated that 25,000 Negroes passed each year into the white community. If the average length of life after the passing be assumed as 20 to 30 years beyond childhood, and if the rate of passing between 1900 and 1910 be assumed to be the average for the years just before 1900 and since 1910, one could estimate that between 4 and 6 per cent of all those with some Negro blood have passed. It is known, however, that census data and vital statistics do not approach the accuracy required to make such refined estimates as are necessary in judging the extent of passing, since the entire error is contained in the relatively small margin used to measure the amount of passing.

The third method of estimating the extent of passing—that of noting discrepancies in sex ratio—was used by Charles S. Johnson ("The Vanishing Mulatto," *Opportunity* [October, 1925], p. 291) and by Everett V. Stonequist (*The Marginal Man* [1937], pp. 190-191.) The application of this technique has not only all the weaknesses of the original census data, but it also could only reveal the extent to which men pass more than women and not the total amount of passing.

[50] The above statement that passing cannot make the population darker refers to the average—since the traits, including skin color, of mixed offspring are usually a blend of the traits of their parents, on the average. The question as to whether passing will create *individual* cases of children with pronounced Negroid traits being born to ostensibly white parents is still a subject of controversy. It seems to be agreed by everyone that the offspring of two passable (or passed) mulattoes may have a darker skin than either of his parents. The controversy is around the question as to whether the offspring of a passed mulatto and a pure-blooded white person can have a darker skin than either parent. Majority opinion among those who have looked into this question seems to be that it cannot happen. Hooton, for example, says:

"There is no reversion to the Negro type in the offspring of mixed parents which would support the traditional notion of seemingly White couples producing fully Negroid infants, but there is no doubt that by a combination of features from both parents an occasional child may intensify the Negroid appearance not particularly obvious in either of his progenitors. In other words, a Negroid child may look more like a Negro than either of his parents, *if both of them carry Negro blood.* This is theoretically impossible if one parent is pure White, and I do not believe that it occurs. Negroid features seem to be attenuated, rather than intensified, by successive generations of inbreeding of mixed types, even when approximately identical proportions of blood are maintained. White features seem to gain upon Negroid features. I am convinced that some sort of Mendelian inheritance, involving many factors, is concerned in this process." (Earnest A. Hooton, "The Anthropometry of Some Small Samples of American Negroes and Negroids" in Day, *op. cit.*, p. 107.)

East makes a similar statement:

"A favourite short-story plot with which melodramatic artists seek to harrow the feelings of their readers is one where the distinguished scion of an aristocratic family marries the beautiful girl with telltale shadows on the half-moons of her nails, and in due time is presented with a coal-black son. It is a good framework, and carries a thrill. One waits shiveringly, even breathlessly, for the first squeal of the dingy infant. There is only this slight imperfection—or is it an advantage?—it could not possibly happen on the stage as set by the author. The most casual examination of the genetic formulae given above demonstrates its absurdity. If there ever was a basis for the plot in real

life, the explanation lies in a fracture of the seventh commandment, or in a tinge of negro blood in the aristocrat as dark as that in his wife." (Edward M. East, *Heredity and Human Affairs* [1927], p. 100.)

Wirth has examined the scientific and popular literature exhaustively and has never come across a documented case of a "black baby" being born to a light mulatto and white person:

"One further aspect of Negro-white miscegenation probably requires some comment in view of the persistent error of at least the lay mind on this particular point, namely, the possibility that a white person mating with an individual who passes for white but has some Negro ancestry may produce a child darker than the mixed blood partner. It should be pointed out in this connection that while two parties with Negro blood may very occasionally have an offspring with somewhat more Negroid features than themselves, it is not possible for a white person and a person with some Negro ancestry to have an offspring more Negroid than the partner with Negro blood." (Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript page 113.)

There is at least one biologist, however, who takes the opposite view, and says the "black baby" can happen, and occasionally does happen. (Huxley and Haddon, *op. cit.*, p. 82.)

"In some extreme cases, the offspring of a cross between a white man and a half-breed coloured woman have been fair and almost black respectively."

In a recent (December, 1941) statement to the author, Professor Huxley indicated that he did not wish the above quotation from his book to be taken as final and beyond question.

The Mendelian mechanism of color inheritance, too, is a subject of debate, so that it cannot be relied upon to settle this controversy, since the "white" partner may have had a distant Negro ancestor about whose existence he was completely unaware. The controversy is not very important practically, since if a dark-skinned baby can be born to a light mulatto and a white person, this happens so extremely rarely that one is still justified in branding as a myth the popular belief that it occurs.

Finally, it should be said that it may be that the "black baby" is not given a chance to appear, since belief in the myth might encourage the use of contraceptives in white-mulatto relations.

[51] Southern scholars now discredit the theory that the origin of the Southern planter class was aristocratic, or that it differed much from that of the lower classes. See, for example: Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Old South* (1942), p. 21; Virginius Dabney, *Below The Potomac* (1942), p. 2; Frank Owsley, "The Irrepressible Conflict" in *I'll Take My Stand* (1930), p. 69.

[52] Reuter, *Race Mixture*, pp. 160-161. Compare Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States*, pp. 396-397, *passim*. The cultural and social causes and effects of this selective mating will be discussed further in Chapter 31. The fact itself is referred to by numerous authors, and is, indeed, obvious to any observer. (See Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 57; Herskovits, *The American Negro*, pp. 63-64; and Donald Young, *American Minority Peoples* [1932], p. 356.)

[53] Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States*. It should also be pointed out that Reuter's estimate of the proportion of mulattoes in the total population—which he uses as a basis for comparison—is much too small in the light of subsequent findings. In his later books, Reuter retains his conclusion, but reverses himself frequently. "No

legitimate inference may be drawn from social prominence to native ability." (*Race Mixture*, p. 110.)

[54] The belief that mulattoes were sterile seems to have been called out when it was desired to discourage miscegenation, and the opposite belief when it was felt necessary to explain the manifest increase in number of mulattoes without admitting the fact of continuing interracial sex relations. In the only careful study of the fecundity of mulattoes, Frazier finds that it is about the same as that of full-blooded Negroes. (E. Franklin Frazier, "Children in Black and Mulatto Families," *The American Journal of Sociology* [July, 1933], pp. 12-29.) This study is not methodologically perfect, but seems to be the best available on the subject. For other literature on the subject, see Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 109-111.

[55] Klineberg has made a painstaking study which tends to show that Negro migrants to Northern cities have not included a disproportionate number of highly intelligent Negroes. (Otto Klineberg, *Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration* [1935].) A similar study done before Klineberg's with data for Washington, D. C. is: Alice S. McAlpin, "Changes in the Intelligence Quotients of Negro Children," *Journal of Negro Education* (April 1, 1932), pp. 44-48.

[56] *The American Negro* and *The Anthropometry of the American Negro.*

[57] *The Anthropometry of the American Negro*, p. 15. Herskovits' full table on p. 177 is reproduced here:

Unmixed Negro	N	342	22.0
Negro, mixed with Indian	N(I)	97	6.3
More Negro than White	NNW	384	24.8
More Negro than White, with Indian	NNW(I)	106	6.9
About the same amount of Negro and White	NW	260	16.7
About the same amount of Negro and White, with Indian	NW(I)	133	8.5
More White than Negro	NWW	154	9.3
More White than Negro, with Indian	NWW(I)	75	5.5
		1551	100.0

These proportions refer to the existing Negro population and do not take into account those hybrids who have passed into the white or Indian populations.

Hrdlička—in searching for full-blooded Negroes on whom he wished to make anthropometric measurements—also reported that over 70 per cent of a group of Negroes in Washington, D. C., had at least one white ancestor.[a] Hrdlička's Washington Negroes were not meant to be considered as representative of the entire population of American Negroes, and undoubtedly contained too many upper class persons who tend to have a relatively large proportion of white blood. The fact that Hrdlička was searching for full-blooded Negroes may, however, have counterbalanced this selective factor. Also Hrdlička says that some of the remaining 30 per cent may have had some white blood.

[58] E. Franklin Frazier writes:

"Many mulattoes in the United States with very little Negro blood consider themselves pure Negroes. I have had mulatto students at Fisk University and Howard University insist that they were pure Negroes. One summer I visited a number of summer

[a] Aleš Hrdlička, "The Full-Blood American Negro," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (July-September, 1928), p. 15.

schools in the South in which I had the student teachers fill out blanks indicating their racial identity or racial mixture of their parents, grandparents, and even more remote ancestors. I was forced to give up the attempt to discover the amount of admixture of white blood because the majority of these elementary school teachers regarded themselves, their parents, and more remote ancestors as of pure Negro descent, despite the fact that they were obviously of mixed blood. Some could almost pass for white." (Communication to the author, June 27, 1942.)

[59] Although Herskovits has made valiant efforts to test the representativeness of *his* sample, there has been no attempt to show that the samples of the other groups—measured by other investigators—are representative. Measurements made by different anthropologists, at different times, on different samples of African Negro, American white, and American Indian groups actually show very conflicting results. In many cases the samples are very small, and the errors are correspondingly large—especially in relation to the small differences that actually separate the means and standard deviations of the groups which are compared. There are no comparisons for many important traits—such as skin color and hair form—and even where there are comparable data for the different races, the American Negroes have more traits which show greater variability than lesser variability.

We have analyzed Herskovits' data and can find no striking evidence of lower American Negro variability. This analysis is partly subjective because of the inadequate nature of the original data, but is presented here for what it is worth.

COMPARISON OF VARIABILITIES[a] OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO POPULATION WITH THE AMERICAN WHITE POPULATION AND WITH THE WEST AFRICAN NEGRO POPULATION IN TWENTY-THREE SELECTED TRAITS

	Number of traits in which the American Negro population is more or less homogeneous than:	
	The American White Population	The African Negro Population
Number of traits in which American Negroes are more homogeneous	6	4
Number of traits in which American Negroes are less homogeneous	7	10
Number of traits in which the evidence is conflicting	5	7
Number of traits in which there are no data	5	2
Total	23	23

Source: Melville J. Herskovits, *The Anthropometry of the American Negro* (1930), Chapter 3 and pp. 249–250.

[a] Variability is measured by the standard deviation in all cases.

The reason that Herskovits offers for the supposed greater homogeneity in the American Negro population is that there is no longer much miscegenation with whites and Indians, and that the Negroes themselves are intermarrying. These reasons are invalid even if the data were not: In the first place, the decrease in Negro-white offspring, even if it should be accepted as established, is a rather new phenomenon, while the

African tribes, and possibly even the Old Americans, have had less out-breeding than the American Negroes for a much longer period of time. Secondly, while Negroes with different physical appearance do marry each other, the predominant tendency is for like to marry like. Mulattoes—having a greater concentration in the cities and in the upper income brackets, and having a higher prestige because of their relative physical similarity to whites—tend to marry each other unless they happen to make a particularly good match in the darker, more Negroid group. Finally, Herskovits has not even considered the possibility that, if Negroes were more homogeneous in certain traits, this homogeneity might be due to greater homogeneity of environment rather than of gene composition. Thus, in view of the fact that his data for this purpose are inadequate; that it would seem—*a priori*—that a recently mixed group would show more variability than a more genetically isolated group; and that common observation of the most visible traits (color, hair form, nose breadth, lip thickness) of American Negroes indicate unequivocally that their range—at least—is greater than the range within the American white population —in view of all these things, the burden of proof of greater physical homogeneity of the American Negroes still lies with Herskovits. As far as we know now, the American Negro population may be becoming a homogeneous brown "race"—and it is to Herskovits' credit that he has opened up discussion as to this possibility—but this is a matter of the speculative future and not of the empirical present.

[60] Although there are no adequate data, apparently, to determine trends in class differentials in fertility among Negroes, it is probable that they have been increasing as a Negro upper class has been rising, and as effective contraceptive devices have come into greater use in this upper class.

Chapter 6. *Racial Characteristics*

[1] C. B. Davenport and A. G. Love, *Army Anthropology* (1921).

[2] For an evaluation of this and other studies of the physical anthropology of the Negro, see W. Montague Cobb, "The Physical Constitution of the American Negro," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1934), pp. 340-388.

[3] Notable among studies comparing Negro and white traits using small samples has been that of T. Wingate Todd and Anna Lindala, "Dimensions of the Body: Whites and American Negroes of Both Sexes," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (July-September, 1928), pp. 35-119. These students had at most 100 cases for each sex-race group. Even less reliable was the study of Aleš Hrdlička, "The Full-Blood American Negro," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (July-September, 1928), pp. 15-33. Hrdlička had only 20 males and 6 females. In fairness to these authors, it should be mentioned that they recognize the great limitations of their data, but other authors have used them without making the same reservations.

[4] Aleš Hrdlička, *The Old Americans* (1925).

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. Hrdlička did include a series of Southern "Engineers" and Appalachian mountaineers in his sample, but he does not say how many.

[6] This summary is based upon M. F. Ashley-Montagu, "The Origin, Composition and Physical Characteristics of the American Negro Population," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), and Cobb, *op. cit.*, pp. 340-388. These authors have relied mainly on the following primary sources: Davenport and Love, *op. cit.*;

Todd and Lindala, *op. cit.*; Hrdlička, "The Full-Blood American Negro," *op. cit.*, pp. 15-34; C. B. Davenport and M. Steggerda *et al.*, *Race Crossing in Jamaica* (1929); M. J. Herskovits, *The Anthropometry of the American Negro* (1930); M. J. Herskovits, V. K. Cameron, and H. Smith, "The Physical Form of Mississippi Negroes," *The American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (October-December, 1931), pp. 193-201; C. B. Day, *A Study of Some Negro-White Families in the United States* (1932). Our list is aimed to include only those traits which have been most frequently measured by anthropologists.

After this chapter was written, two other summary sources on the physical anthropology of the Negro became available and we were able to check our statements by them also: (1) Julian Herman Lewis, *The Biology of the Negro* (1942); (2) W. Montague Cobb, "Physical Anthropology of the American Negro: Status and Desiderata," unpublished manuscript (1942).

[7] In addition a number of investigators have reported minor skeletal differences between Negroes and whites. See Lewis, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-73.

[8] Ashley-Montagu, from his experiences in anatomical laboratories, testifies that he "has never had any occasion to remark any appreciable difference of the Negro genitalia as compared with those of whites." (*Op. cit.*, p. 62.) In regard to body odor it should be pointed out that Negroes do have a larger number of sweat glands than do whites. But this does not prove that their body odor is different. Many white authors refer, however, to such a difference as an established fact. (E.g., Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* [1932], p. 406; E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* [1938; first edition, 1927], p. 61; Robert E. Park, "The Bases of Race Prejudice," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [November, 1928], p. 17.) Some few authors are careful to advance the hypothesis that, if the Negro has a peculiar odor, it might be explained as due to diet and lack of cleanliness (Otto Klineberg, *Race Differences* [1935], p. 131.) William Archer writes (in *Through Afro-America* [1910], p. 144): "Let me take this opportunity of saying that to the best of my belief the 'body odour' of which we hear so much is mainly a superstition. The fact probably is that the negro ought to be at least as scrupulous in his ablutions as the white man—but often is not." Ashley-Montagu (*op. cit.*, pp. 58-59) records "the fact that in his own experience of African and American Negroes he has never observed any particular or general difference in body odor between Negroes and whites." During the course of this study, I have not been able to find that Negro Americans have a different odor than white Americans of similar social and economic status.

Klineberg refers to a suggestive experiment made by Lawrence "who collected in test tubes a little of the perspiration of White and Colored students who had just been exercising violently in the gymnasium. These test tubes were then given to a number of White subjects with instructions to rank them in order of pleasantness. The results showed no consistent preference for the White samples; the test tube considered the most pleasant and the one considered the most unpleasant were both taken from Whites." (Klineberg, *Race Differences*, pp. 130-131.) Such experiments should be repeated on larger and more representative groups of whites, and the question should be asked whether the Negro sweat is identifiable, rather than whether it is pleasant.

Even if it were established that Negroes had a different odor, it would not explain why this odor is considered offensive. Likes and dislikes in smells of this sort are a matter of personal taste and cultural conditioning.

[9] Earnest A. Hooton, "The Anthropometry of Some Small Samples of American Negroes and Negroids," in Day, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-106, and Herskovits, *The Anthropometry of the American Negro*, pp. 177-227.

[10] Some anthropologists believe that certain unique Negro traits are exceptions to this rule; some disappear rapidly when even a small admixture of white ancestry is present, and others are tenacious despite large admixtures of white blood.[a] There is great disagreement even among these few observers, but we may note some of those traits which have been studied: hair form and low hair level are said to have a high degree of "yieldingness," while ear height, interpupillary distance, and hair color are said to be "entrenched." The nature of the inheritance of skin color is still a matter of debate, but the majority opinion seems to be that, on the average, the color of the offspring tends to be a blend of the colors of his parents.

[11] Cobb, "Physical Anthropology of the American Negro: Status and Desiderata," pp. 55-56. Cobb points out that even though Negroes may have continued to hold a certain championship, a white man of today is often better than the Negro champion of twenty years ago. See also Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 73, and compare Cobb's findings.

[12] See Section 3 of this chapter. A few of the earlier beliefs about Negro susceptibility to disease are cited in Young, *op. cit.*, p. 339; in Harry Bakwin, M.D., "The Negro Infant," *Human Biology* (February, 1932), pp. 1-33; and in Charles S. Johnson and Horace M. Bond, "The Investigation of Racial Differences Prior to 1910," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1934), pp. 335-337.

For some of the earlier beliefs about Negro susceptibility to *mental* disease—which generally tried to show that Negroes had little mental disease under the secure condition of slavery—see Lewis, *op. cit.*, pp. 266-267.

[13] Concretely, this experiment should be made by selecting two groups of children—Negro and white—carefully matched in all essentials, keeping them in a controlled laboratory situation for at least a month to test and increase their comparability, and then inoculating them with certain disease germs (just as in ordinary inoculations to develop immunity). Large differentials in reaction ought to suggest, though not measure, differences in racial susceptibility or immunity.

After writing the statement in the text, our attention was called by Lewis' book to the only approach to such an experiment that Lewis notes in his careful survey of the field. Its weaknesses—in terms of inadequate controls and insufficient cases—make its findings completely inconclusive, but its methodology is interesting.

"In order to find the difference between colored and white people in their reactions to tubercle bacilli under controlled conditions, Levine (*American Journal of Diseases of Children* [1936], p. 1052) inoculated 74 white, 38 Negro, and 24 Puerto Rican children with identical amounts of living attenuated bovine tubercle bacilli (BCG). Necrosis of the local lesion on the thigh occurred more rapidly in Negro children than in white. Inguinal abscesses developed in more children and more rapidly among Negroes and Puerto Ricans than among whites. When the effect of such variables as age, previous exposure to tubercle bacilli, economic status, and nutrition were taken into account, there still remained a racial factor that is related to the more severe reaction in Negroes and Puerto Ricans." (Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 140.)

[a] T. W. Todd, "Entrenched Negro Physical Features," *Human Biology* (January, 1929), pp. 57-69. Also Hooton, "The Anthropometry of Some Small Samples of American Negroes and Negroids" in Day, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-106, and Herskovits, *The Anthropometry of the American Negro*, pp. 177-227.

[14] Good summaries of research on disease differentials may be found in Bakwin, *op. cit.*, and Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1942).

After this chapter was completed the best summary of disease differentials became available, and we had the opportunity of checking our statements by it: Lewis, *op. cit.*

[15] See Bakwin's summary, *op. cit.*, and Lewis' summary, *op. cit.*

[16] Official death registration statistics underestimate the Negro death rates more than the white rates. Thus the reporting of a slightly higher Negro death rate usually means that the cause of death is more important among Negroes than the statistics show. Studies which are based on a sample instead of the total population, however, are likely to be biased in the other direction—since they miss no cases and may get a poorer selection of Negroes than of whites.

[17] In Charleston, South Carolina, the white rate of tuberculosis in the period 1841-1848 was 268 per 100,000 as compared to 266 for Negroes. Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 375, and E. R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), p. 49.

[18] *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro* (1896), p. 69. Also see S. J. Holmes, *The Negro's Struggle for Survival* (1937), p. 39. S. A. Cartwright, a Southern doctor, writing before the Civil War, expressed this opinion:

"To the question, 'Is not Phthisis very common among the slaves of the slave States and unknown among the native Africans at home?' I reply in the negative, that Phthisis, so far from being common among the slaves of the slave States, is very seldom met with. As to the native Africans at home, little or nothing is known of their diseases. . . . Negroes, however, are sometimes, though rarely, afflicted with tubercula pulmonum, or Phthisis, properly so called, which has some peculiarities. . . . Phthisis is, par excellence, a disease of the sanguineous temperament, fair complexion, red or flaxen hair, blue eyes, large blood vessels, and a bony encasement too small to admit the full and free expansion of the lungs, enlarged by the superabundant blood, which is determined to those organs during that first half-score of years immediately succeeding puberty. . . . Hence it is most apt to occur precisely at, and immediately following, that period of life known as matureness. . . . With negroes, the sanguineous never gains the mastery over the lymphatic and nervous systems." ("Slavery in the Light of Ethnology," in E. N. Elliott (editor), *Cotton Is King, and Pro-Slavery Arguments* [1860], pp. 692-693.)

[19] Cited in Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro," *American Journal of Sociology* (May, 1942), p. 863.

[20] Dorn, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

[21] Embree, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[22] A. G. Love and C. B. Davenport, "A Comparison of White and Colored Troops in Respect to Incidence of Disease," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (March, 1919), pp. 58-67.

[23] H. M. Pollock, "Frequency of Dementia Praecox in Relation to Sex, Age, Environment, Nativity, and Race," *Mental Hygiene* (July, 1926), pp. 596-611. Pollock's figures are the numbers of first admissions in 1924 per 100,000 population. A criticism of this study may be found in Solomon P. Rosenthal, "Racial Differences in the Incidence of Mental Disease," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1934), p. 490.

[24] Even in 1924, the New York rates were 16.9 and 48.6 for whites and Negroes,

respectively. In 1929-1931, Malzberg found the difference even less: 19.2 for whites and 44.4 for Negroes. See Benjamin Malzberg, "Mental Disease among American Negroes" in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, manuscript page 10.

[25] It is interesting to observe that, almost from the beginning of those studies showing race differences, there has been a minority of scholars who have remained skeptical and have ably contested the findings. In 1897, Charles Horton Cooley beautifully demonstrated the complete invalidity of the findings of Francis Galton, in the famous essay, "Genius, Fame and the Comparison of Races" (*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [May, 1897], pp. 317-358). Other early critics of the use of the doctrine of innate differences included: Franz Boas, "The Mind of Primitive Man," *The Journal of American Folk-lore* (January-March, 1911), pp. 1-11; and *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911); William I. Thomas, *Sex and Society* (1907), John Dewey, "Interpretation of Savage Mind," *The Psychological Review* (May, 1902), pp. 217-230.

[26] G. O. Ferguson, "The Psychology of the Negro," *Archives of Psychology*, No. 36 (April, 1916). See also, W. H. Pyle, "The Learning Capacity of Negro Children," *Psychological Bulletin* (1916), pp. 82-83.

[27] Ferguson's example, as well as others cited in this section, have been taken from the summary prepared for this project by Klineberg, "Racial Differences as Shown by Tests and Measurements" in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*.

[28] Albert L. Crane, "Race Differences in Inhibition," *Archives of Psychology*, No. 63 (March, 1923).

[29] Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (1911), pp. 114-115.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 271-272. Boas later changed his position on these points. In the 1938 edition of *The Mind of Primitive Man*, the above statements are not to be found, and there is a new emphasis on "variability of function" accompanying any given structure.

[31] Julian S. Huxley and A. C. Haddon, *We Europeans* (1936), p. 69.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

[33] A history of these trends in psychological research, with special reference to the Negro is contained in two research memoranda written for this study by Otto Klineberg, "Experimental Studies of Negro Personality" and "Tests of Negro Intelligence," to be published in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*.

[34] While some authors report Negro-white differences in memory, others say they cannot find any. For a discussion of this subject, see Klineberg, "Tests of Negro Intelligence," in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, manuscript pages 16 and 118.

[35] No one has sought a representative sample of either white or Negro children to determine what proportions were very superior, but the only investigators who have sought superior Negro children had no special trouble in finding them. Witty and Jenkins studied 26 Negro children with I.Q.'s of 140 and above, who came from grades 3-8 in 7 Chicago public schools. (Paul A. Witty and Martin A. Jenkins, "The Educational Achievement of a Group of Gifted Negro Children," *The Journal of Educational Psychology* (November, 1934), pp. 585-597.) The same authors report on one nine-year old Negro girl with a Stanford-Binet I.Q. of 200. "The Case of 'B'--

A Gifted Negro Girl," *The Journal of Social Psychology* (February, 1935), pp. 117-124.)

[36] See Klineberg, "Tests of Negro Intelligence" in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, manuscript pages 13-14 and 106-109. Even Ferguson, who has been cited on a previous page as an example of a biased investigator, did not find that Negroes reached their maximum intelligence at an earlier age than did whites. He found, rather, that they continued their mental growth longer than whites, even though they never reached the levels attained by the whites. We need not accept this conclusion either, for the same reasons that his main findings are to be criticized.

[37] See Klineberg, "Experimental Studies of Negro Personality" in Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, manuscript page 65.

[38] Subsequent studies have not been able to corroborate Ferguson's finding cited on a previous page—that there is a correlation between Intelligence Quotient and the possession of Negroid traits. See summary by Paul A. Witty and Martin A. Jenkins, "Intra-Race Testing and Negro Intelligence," *The Journal of Psychology* (1935-1936), pp. 179-192. Even if a correlation were found, it would not prove that the high intelligence was caused by white ancestry, since socio-economic differences between mulattoes and full-blooded Negroes would first have to be held constant, and since it would first have to be proved that the inheritance of intelligence does not involve dominant or recessive genes and that the parent population were representative samples of the total Negro and white populations (which they were not) and that passing and differential reproductivity did not bias the sample of mulattoes.

[39] In their study, "Dimensions of the Body: Whites and American Negroes of Both Sexes," p. 48, Todd and Lindala make the point that "it is also irrelevant to suggest that our series are too small. They are quite representative of the series possible to most workers and in numbers they compare favorably with series of other races and stocks which will have to be anthropologically compared."

[40] One of the earliest of the modern physical anthropological studies reported all its findings in frequency polygons. For presentation alone, if not in other respects, few recent studies have approached the excellence of this early study. We refer to Franz Boas, "The Half-Blood Indian," *The Popular Science Monthly* (October, 1894), pp. 761-770.

[41] Franz Boas, *Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants* (1910).

[42] See, Walter H. Eddy and Gessner G. Hawley, *We Need Vitamins* (1931), pp. 36-37.

[43] Social anthropologists have been using the psychologist's devices for some years to quantify culture differences in personality traits. A selection of these studies is summarized in Klineberg, *Characteristics of the American Negro*. There is, for example, the classic experiment of W. H. R. Rivers ("Observations on the Senses of the Todas," *The British Journal of Psychology* [December, 1905], pp. 321-396), which showed the Todas to have a higher pain threshold than his English subjects because they regarded the experiment as a test of their endurance. Another famous example is Margaret Mead's (*Coming of Age in Samoa* [1928]) experiences with the administration of the "ball-and-field" questions in the Binet tests, where she found that Samoan children were much more interested in producing an esthetically satisfying design than in devising a rational means for finding the ball.

[44] An example of the use of intelligence tests to measure cultural differences between

various groups of Negroes may be found in Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (1941), pp. 334-335.

[45] A recent evaluative summary of such research has been made by Robert S. Woodworth, *Heredity and Environment* (1941).

[46] Klineberg, *Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration.*

[47] H. G. Canady, "The Effect of 'Rapport' on the I.Q.: A New Approach to the Problem of Racial Psychology," *Journal of Negro Education* (April, 1936), p. 217.

[48] The present War may provide some data to do some of these dynamic studies. In the first place, measurements are being made of the psychic traits of a large number of individuals with diverse backgrounds. In the second place, these individuals are being subjected to experiences which are drastically different from any they have known before. To get the fullest use out of the data being brought up by the War, it would be necessary to test the members of the armed forces after the War is over, and to compare the later measurements with the earlier ones.

[49] Paul Horst and Associates, *The Prediction of Personal Adjustment* (1941), p. 14.

[50] Another revolutionary development in psychological measurement is the trend away from the concept of "general intelligence." Mainly under the leadership of Thurstone, contemporary psychologists are trying to get at the "factors" in intelligence, and to arrive at an "intelligence profile" of an individual rather than a general I.Q. An allied development is that toward "item analysis"—the analysis of responses to specific questions and tasks in a personality inventory or battery. To go into these developments is beyond the scope of this book, but when they are applied to measurements of Negro-white differences, they may become important to our problem.

Chapter 7. *Population*

[1] Under the 1924 law, the President is permitted to reduce the quota. President Hoover did so on March 26, 1931. See Niles Carpenter, "The New American Immigration Law and the Labor Market," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (August, 1931), pp. 720-723.

[2] American population statisticians have long known how inaccurate the *birth* registration statistics are, but not until recently have we come across any specific information regarding the inadequacy of *death* registration data. Harold F. Dorn cites a study by Isabella C. Wilson which indicates that about 50 per cent of the deaths of Negroes in Chicot County, Arkansas, were unreported. (Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940; revised, 1942], Appendix; Isabella C. Wilson, "Sickness and Medical Care among the Negro Population in a Delta Area of Arkansas," University of Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 372 [1939]). Other discussions of under-registration of deaths are cited by Dorn and by Lyonel C. Florant, "Critique of the Census of the United States," unpublished manscript prepared for this study (1939).

[3] Despite these inadequacies, as well as the difficulty of having special registrations for voting, social insurance, unemployment, army draft, consumption goods' rationing, observation of aliens and other purposes, America has avoided the far more efficient and less expensive system of a continuous registration of population. Such a system would

not only substitute one registration for all these and make available more accurate statistics, but it would reduce the possibility of error and fraud in voting, facilitate the substitution of direct taxation for indirect, aid in the detection of criminals, reduce the use of the oath (the notary public is an inconvenient and inefficient institution). The main reason why Americans do not seem to like continuous registration is that they are afraid it will lead to regimentation. But large sectors of the American public are already under continuous government registration (all who come under the Social Security Act, all who have postal savings accounts, and so forth) and the democratic nations of Northern Europe have it for their entire populations. There are other reasons why Americans do not have this system: most Americans do not realize its advantages, those experts who do realize its advantages have a strong tendency to avoid the political battle necessary to institute it, and many politicians do not want to lose the petty patronage involved in census-taking. If continuous registration were to be instituted in the United States, probably the post office would be the best organization to administer it; since practically every community has a post office; since its employees usually are reasonably well-educated and have a respected status, and since it has the necessary office facilities.

[4] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-5, No. 13. Nonwhites include Chinese, Japanese, and a few other colored peoples as well as Negroes, but non-Negroes are eclipsed by Negroes in the computation of nonwhite rates. Estimates made by Kirk on the basis of registered births and deaths show a similar picture: the net reproduction rate for Negroes in 1933-1937 was 104, while that for whites in 1933-1935 was 98. (Dudley Kirk, "The Fertility of the Negroes," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 14.)

[5] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-5, No. 13. Kirk's computations show both whites and Negroes to have a net reproduction rate of 108 in 1930 (*op. cit.*, p. 14).

[6] Thompson and Whelpton's various estimates of future trends in population place the Negro proportion in the American population in 1980 between 10.8 per cent and 12.0 per cent as compared to 9.7 per cent in 1930. (Warren S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, "Estimates of the Future Population of the United States—1940 to 1980," *Population Statistics.* 1. National Data. National Resources Committee [1937].) The lowest proportion of 10.8 was calculated assuming a medium fertility, high mortality, and net annual immigration of 100,000. The highest proportion of 12.0 was calculated assuming a high fertility, medium mortality, and no net migration. The terms "high," "medium," and "low" are used with reference to the period 1930-1934: "high fertility" is the actual birth rate of that period; "high mortality" is a declining death rate after that period at a greatly decreasing rate. Different assumptions are made for native whites, foreign-born whites, and colored peoples. For a detailed description of the assumptions used see: P. K. Whelpton, "An Empirical Method of Calculating Future Population," *Journal of the American Statistical Association* (September, 1936), pp. 457-473. See also: National Resources Board, *The Problems of a Changing Population* (1938), p. 128.

[7] These figures were calculated by A. J. Jaffe, "Population Growth and Fertility Trends in the United States," *Journal of Heredity* (December, 1941), p. 444. The rates here are standardized for rural-urban residence only and not for region. Since practically all Negroes living in the North and West are urban, and since there is

practically no difference in the urban rates for the whites and nonwhites, this is practically equivalent to standardizing for regions as well as for rural-urban residence.

It is not yet possible to standardize for both region and rural-urban residence at the same time, since the necessary breakdowns have not yet been made available by the Census Bureau and since Negro net reproduction rates were not calculated for rural areas in the North or for rural or urban areas in the West. It is possible, however, to standardize for region alone just as Jaffe standardized for urban-rural alone. The white rate then becomes 95 and the Negro rate 96. The Negro rate is below the white rate, of course, since—as we have just said—region and urban-rural residence are comparable.

[8] The net reproduction rate we have used is more reliable than the birth and death rates which compose it because it is calculated from the decennial census statistics rather than from the annual registration statistics, and the former are generally more reliable than the latter. Even when annual registration statistics are used, however, the net reproduction rate is usually more reliable since the under-registration of births and the under-registration of deaths tend to cancel each other out, even when their exact magnitude is unknown.

[9] Kirk, *op. cit.*, p. 7 and Figure 1. Since birth registration statistics have become available for a significant number of states only since 1915, Kirk was forced to use the number of children under 5 years per 1,000 women aged 15-44 as an index of the birth rate. In 1880 this was about 760 for Negroes, and in 1930 about 390.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

The changes in the uncorrected crude birth rates were as follows:

	1930	1940
White	18.7	17.5
Negro	21.7	21.7

These figures are, of course, subject to many errors, but they can be relied on for the following two conclusions: (1) The white birth rate is lower than the Negro birth rate. (2) The fall in the white birth rate between 1930 and 1940 was probably greater than the fall in the Negro birth rate. The figures fail to show what is likely—that the Negro birth rate fell between 1930 and 1940. (Texas—with a high birth rate—was not included in the 1930 figures, but was included in the 1940 ones.) These figures were calculated from: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9. The population bases were taken from the *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-10, No. 1.

[11] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9.

[12] Dorn, *op. cit.* (1942, first draft, 1940), Figures 17 and 18.

[13] The number of still-births per 1,000 live births, according to the inadequate official figures, was 2.76 for the whites and 5.81 for the Negroes during 1930. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9.)

[14] Dorn, *op. cit.* (1942; first draft, 1940), p. 3. By 1939 the expectation of life at birth had increased to 55.4 for *nonwhite* females and to 52.4 for *nonwhite* males. The corresponding expectations for white infants were 66.8 and 62.6, or 11.4 and 10.2 years greater, respectively. (*Idem*)

[15] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9.

[16] Kirk reports the following corrected gross reproduction rates:

Negro		*White*	
1928-32	136	1930	122
1933-37	130	1931-35	109

See *op. cit.*, p. 14, and footnote on p. 161 of this chapter. Other evidence of the greater fall in the white birth rate may be had from the net reproduction rates reported in Table 1 and from the crude birth rates in footnote 10 of this chapter.

[17] Dorn reports the trends in the following manner: "Although it is impossible to state definitely the amount of change in the average length of life of the Negro population, the available data indicate that, except for the first few years of life, there has been very little improvement since the beginning of the century. The only series of data covering the entire period are for Negroes living in the original registration states of 1900, the New England States, New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Indiana and the District of Columbia. In 1900, the Negro population of these states comprised 3.9 per cent of the total; by 1930, it had increased to 9.5 per cent of the total. Although the trend in mortality among Negroes in these states is probably representative of the trend among Negroes living in the North there is no way of determining the closeness with which it represents the trend of mortality among Negroes living in the South.

"As shown in Figure 21, the expectation of life among Negroes living in the North actually decreased during the first three decades of this century except for persons 20 years of age and younger. The increase in expectation of life at birth was greater both absolutely and relatively among Negroes than among whites, but at other ages it was much less. (Figure 22.)

"Better representation of the entire Negro population can be obtained by considering the trend of mortality in the death registration states of 1920. This group of states included about 65 per cent of the Negro population in 1920 and nearly 70 per cent in 1930. The trend of mortality among Negroes in these states presents an even more unfavorable picture than the trend in the original registration states. (Figure 23.) The expectation of life for Negro males decreased at every age including birth; the decrease among Negro females occurred at ages 20 and over. The only increase in expectation of life during the decade was for females under 20 years of age.

"The trend in the expectation of life among Negroes in the general population agrees in general with that among the colored policy-holders of the Industrial Department of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (Louis I. Dublin and Alfred J. Lotka, *Twenty-five Years of Health Progress* [1937]). From 1921 to 1931 the expectation of life for both males and females from 10 to 60 years of age either decreased or failed to increase. However, from 1911 to 1921 the expectation of life definitely increased at the same ages. Since 1931 the downward trend in the expectation of life has been stopped and slight increases have occurred at most ages. But even so, in 1938 the expectation of life for colored males was less than in 1921 at 40 years of age and over and among colored females it was less at 50 years of age and over." (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *Statistical Bulletin* [June, 1939]. Dorn, *op. cit.* [1942; first draft, 1940], pp. 36-37a). (Figures referred to are in Dorn's manuscript.)

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 4c.

[19] For the death registration states at each of the years, the white death rate was 10.8 per 1,000 population in 1930, and 10.4 in 1940. The corresponding drop in the

Negro death rate was from 16.5 to 13.9. These figures are subject to several types of error, but the comparative drops in the two rates are fairly reliable. Calculated from data in: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9. Population bases for 1940 taken from: *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary release: Series P-10, No. 1.

See also the quotation from Dorn in the preceding footnote.

[20] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-5, No. 3.

[21] A. J. Jaffe, "Urbanization and Fertility," *American Journal of Sociology* (July, 1942).

[22] If we use the net reproduction rate as an index of birth rate, and recognize the general deficiencies of the data, it is something of a measure of the truth of this statement that the relevant net reproduction rates were as follows in 1940.

	Rural Farm	*Urban*
Nonwhite	154	76
White	132	76

Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population. Preliminary Release: Series P-5, No. 4.

[23] "In 19 counties most of which immediately adjoin the lower Mississippi River in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, the fertility of the Negro rural-farm population drops to comparatively low levels. In the year 1930, the ratio of children under 5 per 1,000 women 20-44 among rural-farm Negroes was 885 in the entire United States, 725 in Mississippi, 768 in Louisiana, and 718 in Arkansas, but only 518 in this group of counties. In some counties the ratio of children to women, even after correction for under-enumeration, was approximately at replacement levels (491) or even below." (Conrad and Irene B. Taeuber, "Negro Rural Fertility Ratios in the Mississippi Delta," *The Southwestern Social Science Quarterly* [December, 1940], p. 210.) This study was made from unpublished tables of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

[24] If we use net reproduction rates to give us an index of birth rates, Series P-5a of the preliminary 1940 census releases (Nos. 14, 15, 16) permits a rough comparison of the Negro-white net reproduction rates in the urban South and of eastern and western urban areas within the South:

NET REPRODUCTION RATES IN SOUTHERN REGIONS: 1940

	Urban		Rural Nonfarm		Rural Farm	
Census Division	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
South Atlantic	71	73	119	118	144	159
East South Central	79	70	128	101	150	163
West South Central	81	68	115	109	142	158

[25] See, for example, E. R. Groves and W. F. Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relations* (1928), pp. 447-448.

[26] Registration statistics indicate a higher death rate for Negroes in the North than

in the South, but there is notorious under-registration of deaths in the South and expert opinion seems to hold to a lower specific death rate in the North. While there are influences which tend to raise the death rate for Negroes in the North—such as novel climate, novel diet, and perhaps greater exposure to venereal disease—the influences which work to make the Negro death rate lower in the North than in the South seem—*a priori*—to be more important. In the North there is much easier access to modern medical facilities; the standard of living is higher; and Negroes are better educated. The death rate of infants and children is unequivocally lower in the North, even if that for adults is not.

[27] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-5, No. 4. Because of deficiencies in census enumeration, these figures are not perfect. Also the nonwhite rate covers colored persons other than Negroes. A large difference in the declines, however, is certain.

[28] Studies showing the relation between income and vital rates among Negroes are: Philip M. Hauser, "Differential Fertility, Mortality, and Net Reproduction in Chicago, 1930," unpublished Ph.D. thesis. The University of Chicago (1938). Frank W. Notestein, "Differential Fertility in the East North Central States," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* (April, 1938). Clyde V. Kiser, "Birth Rates and Socio-Economic Attributes in 1935," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* (April, 1939).

[29] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Second Series, State Table 4.

[30] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *A Century of Population Growth in the United States: 1790-1900,* p. 86, and U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932,* p. 21.

[31] Clyde V. Kiser, "Fertility of Harlem Negroes," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* (July, 1935), p. 275.

[32] For a short review of this discussion, see Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyonel C. Florant, "Negro Population and Negro Population Movements, 1860 to 1940, in Relation to Social and Economic Factors," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940); (revised by Lyonel C. Florant under title, "Negro Migration—1860-1940" [1942]) Chapter III, pp. 15-25.

[33] There are several other factors to take into account when explaining the general inarticulateness of practical thinking on population in America; see Gunnar Myrdal, *Population: A Problem for Democracy* (1940), pp. 24-30 and 66-72, and Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941), pp. 9-10. General statements on American population policy may be found in Frank Lorimer, Ellen Winston, and Louise K. Kiser, *Foundations of American Population Policy* (1940); and Frederick Osborn, *Preface to Eugenics* (1940).

It is a public secret that the National Resources Committee before publishing its report, *The Problems of a Changing Population* (1938), found itself obliged to take out the discussion of birth control contained in the original draft.

[34] Compare Alva Myrdal, *op. cit.*, Chapters VII and VIII.

[35] W. Montague Cobb, "The Negro as a Biological Element in the American Population," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1939), p. 347.

[36] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Black Folk and Birth Control," *Birth Control Review* (June, 1932), p. 167. George S. Schuyler takes a position similar to that of Du Bois in the following statement:

"The question for Negroes is this: Shall they go in for quantity or quality in children?

Shall they bring children into the world to enrich the undertakers, the physicians and furnish work for social workers and jailers, or shall they produce children who are going to be an asset to the group and to American society. Most Negroes, especially the women, would go in for quality production if they only knew how." ("Quantity or Quality," *Birth Control Review* [June, 1932], p. 166.)

Another indication that Negroes favor quality even at the expense of quantity is the fact that 34 of the most eminent Negro leaders have endorsed the work of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and have lent their names to the letterhead of its Division of Negro Service.

[37] This point has been made in detail by Osborn, *op. cit.*

[38] Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, "Hospitals and Medical Care in Mississippi," *Journal of the American Medical Association* (June 3, 1939), p. 2319.

[39] The Duke Endowment, *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Hospital Section* (1939), p. 6.

[40] H. M. Green, "Hospitals and Public Health Facilities for Negroes," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work* (1928), pp. 178-180. In 1942, Edwin R. Embree reports that, for the United States as a whole, there are now "110 Negro hospitals in the United States, of which some 25 have been accredited, 13 of them approved for the full training of internes by the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Hospital Association. . . . While there are today 10,000 hospital beds for Negroes in the country, in some areas where the population is heavily Negro there are as few as 75 beds set aside for over one million of this group." (Julius Rosenwald Fund, *Review for the Two-Year Period 1940-1942* [1942], pp. 13-14).

[41] Dorn, *op. cit.* (1940), p. 97.

[42] Compared to a proportion of 21.3 per cent of all Negroes, 55.0 per cent of the Negro dentists, 42.6 per cent of the Negro physicians and surgeons and 36.3 per cent of the Negro nurses were outside the South in 1930. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 293.)

[43] For a description of how Negro folk practices are dangerous to health, see Newbell N. Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro* (1926).

[44] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9. The infant mortality rate was 43.2 for 1,000 live births for whites and 72.9 for Negroes.

[45] *Idem.* The maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live births was 3.2 for whites and 7.8 for Negroes.

[46] Vance has calculated that for the Southeastern states in 1930, 27 per cent of Negro women have no births as compared to 19 per cent of white women, while 29 per cent of Negroes have one birth as compared to 18 per cent of white women. (Rupert B. Vance, "The Regional Approach to the Study of High Fertility," *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* [*October*, 1941], pp. 356-374.)

In 1930, the following proportions of families had no children under 10 years of age.

	Negro	*Native White*
North: Urban	68.1	62.6
South: Urban	67.1	58.1
Rural farm	46.7	44.2
Rural nonfarm	59.0	47.9

Calculated from census data by Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), Appendix Table 17. Also see Notestein, *op. cit.*, and Kirk, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-65.

[47] Raymond Pearl, "Fertility and Contraception in Urban Whites and Negroes," *Science* (May, 1936), pp. 503-506. Also see by the same author, *The Natural History of Population* (1939), p. 113, *passim*.

[48] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports: 1940*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 9.

[49] Dorn, *op. cit.*, (1942; first draft, 1940), pp. 35-44.

[50] "Sterilization laws have been passed by 29 states, and over 1,000 operations have been performed in each of 7 states, namely, California, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Oregon, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The total number of sterilizations performed in the United States up to January 1, 1940, was approximately 33,000 of which 17,212 were on insane cases and 15,231 on feeble-minded; 592 were sterilized for other reasons." (Publications of the Human Betterment Foundation, Pasadena, California [1940]. Cited by Osborn, *op. cit.*, p. 31.)

[51] Practically every modern discussion of birth control in every scientific book and every propaganda pamphlet contains a list of such reasons.

[52] Official mortality statistics of the death registration states of 1930 which are defective, not only in revealing total numbers of deaths, but also in classifying these deaths by causes, show a syphilis rate of 42.5 for Negroes and 5.2 for whites (per 100,000 population, 1929-1931). Death rates may not accurately reflect the relative incidence of syphilis, but Dorn summarizes sample studies which also show the Negro rate to be between 3 and 9 times as great as the white rate in various communities. (Dorn, *op. cit.* [1940], p. 71.)

Recently some excellent data have become available on syphilis. Examination of the first million draft registrants—who are a selected sample of the population but a significant sample—showed that the syphilis rate was 18.5 per thousand for whites and 241.2 for Negroes. That is, Negroes had 13 times as much syphilis as whites. (See: New York *Herald Tribune* [October 16, 1941], p. 5; and *PM* [February 10, 1942], p. 20.)

Since much less is known about gonorrhea, and since it does not seem to be much more prevalent among Negroes than among whites, it will not be discussed here.

[53] H. Poindexter, "Special Health Problems of Negroes in Rural Areas," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1937), p. 407.

[54] On January 1, 1940, there were 2,527 such clinics. Dorn, *op. cit.* (1940), p. 155.

[55] The LaFollette-Bulwinkle Act (1938) authorized federal grants-in-aid to the various states for venereal disease control.

[56] Dorn, *op. cit.*, (1940), p. 114-b-3.

[57] "For the most part, the only time that a doctor may legally interrupt pregnancy in the United States is when its continuance threatens the life of a mother. Six states—Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey—overlook even this contingency, having no specific provision for therapeutic abortion. Seven states—Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin expressly require medical advice prior to the act, while thirty-one states, including New York, sanction abortion to save the life of the mother, with no provision for medical counsel. Only three states—Colorado, Maryland, and New Mexico—and the District

of Columbia countenance the interruption of pregnancy not only to save the life of the mother but also to preserve her health. The Mississippi law forbids abortions but adds the cryptic provision, 'unless the same shall have been advised by a physician to be necessary for such purpose.'" (B. B. Tolnai, "Abortions and the Law," *Nation* [April 15, 1939], p. 425.)

[58] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Births, Stillbirths and Infant Mortality Statistics: 1936*, p. 9.

[59] Alva Myrdal, *op. cit.*

[60] For the dramatic history of the movement see: Margaret Sanger, *My Fight for Birth Control* (1931) or *Autobiography* (1938).

[61] The legal fight began in 1873 when the anti-birth control forces led by Anthony Comstock secured a federal law prohibiting the use of the mails for the dissemination of birth control information and prohibiting the importation of contraceptives. Many of the state governments before or after this year took steps to stop the sale of contraceptives and the encouragement of their use. The scope of the federal law was somewhat narrowed by a series of court decisions, but a major setback to this law did not come until 1936, when the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit declared that birth control devices and information could be imported and sent through the mails by *doctors* "for the purpose of saving life or promoting the well-being of their patients." In the meantime some states have repealed or nullified their laws.

In July, 1942, 19 states make no mention of the prevention of conception in their statutes; 13 states have statutes which restrict the distribution and dissemination of information regarding the prevention of conception, but expressly exempt medical practice; 14 states have statutes aimed at the advertising and distribution of information regarding the prevention of conception, but exempt medical practice by implication or construction; only two states—Massachusetts and Connecticut—have laws which penalize even physicians for giving information. (See: "The Legal Status of Contraception," mimeographed leaflet distributed by the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, July, 1942.) Three states actually sponsor birth control clinics. But the fight is far from won: the federal law remains on the books for all nonmedical persons and even for medical persons in the Territories and the District of Columbia; in 1937 a private clinic was closed in Massachusetts and the personnel subjected to criminal prosecution (there was a similar occurrence in Connecticut); 45 states do not give the birth control movement the active support it needs to be really effective.

[62] E. Mae McCarroll, "A Report on the Two-Year Negro Demonstration Health Program of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc." A talk delivered at the annual convention of the National Medical Association, Cleveland, August 17, 1942. Of the 803 birth control centers, 225 were located in hospitals, 265 in health department quarters, and 313 in settlement houses, churches and similar institutions.

[63] The only three states with birth control officially incorporated into the general public health program—North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama—are in the South. Several other Southern states are expected to join this group shortly, but no Northern ones. By July, 1942, there were, in the United States, 345 contraceptive centers deriving all or part of their support from taxes. North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama had 47 per cent of these. Over 24 per cent more were found in 13 other Southern states (among Southern states only Louisiana and Mississippi had none). Twenty-one Northern and Western states had the remaining 29 per cent (almost half

of these were in California). Clearly the South leads in the public acceptance of birth control. ("Distribution of Birth Control Centers and Services," mimeographed sheet, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc. [July, 1942].)

[64] The facts for this paragraph have been generously provided by Miss Florence Rose of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (interview, August 21, 1942). Also see:

1. Claude C. Pierce, "State Programs for Planned Parenthood," address read at the Conference of State and Provincial Health Authorities of North America, Washington, D.C., March 23-24, 1942.
2. G. M. Cooper, F. R. Pratt, and M. J. Hagood, "Four Years of Contraception as a Public Health Service in North Carolina," *American Journal of Public Health* (December 1941), p. 2.
3. George M. Cooper, "Birth Control in the North Carolina Health Department," *North Carolina Medical Journal* (September, 1940), p. 463.
4. Robert Seibels, "The Integration of Pregnancy Spacing into a State Maternal Welfare Program," *Southern Medicine and Surgery* (May, 1940), pp. 230-233.
5. J. N. Baker, Director, Alabama State Department of Health, "Alabama's Program for Planned Parenthood," address delivered at the Third Southern Conference on Tomorrow's Children, Nashville, Tennessee, October 31, 1941.

[65] Address by Dorothy Boulding Ferebee at the Annual Meeting of the Birth Control Federation of America, January 29, 1942.

[66] Information made available by Miss Florence Rose of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (interview, August 21, 1942).

[67] For a discussion of these prejudices among Negroes, see an address given by Dr. Dorothy Boulding Ferebee, "Planned Parenthood as a Public Health Measure for the Negro Race," delivered at the annual meeting of the Birth Control Federation of America, January 29, 1942. Dr. Ferebee lists the popular objections as:

1. the concept that when birth control is proposed to them, it is motivated by a clever bit of machination to persuade them to commit race suicide;
2. the so-called "husband-objection" which Dr. Robert E. Seibels of the South Carolina rural project observes "is often blamed on physical reactions to the material, but apparently is related more to superstitious fear of impairment of function through interference with a vital process."
3. the fact that birth control is confused with abortion, and,
4. the belief that it is inherently immoral.

[68] *Ibid.*, for a study showing the greater inefficiency of Negro women in using contraceptives, see Pearl, *The Natural History of Population*, pp. 113-114. 193. On the other hand, the Planned Parenthood Federation's experiment in Berkeley County, South Carolina, led to the conclusion that "80 per cent of the contacted population of Negroes of low income and low intelligence level will use pregnancy spacing methods when this is properly presented to them." (Robert E. Seibels, "A Rural Project in Negro Maternal Health," *Human Fertility* [April, 1941], p. 44.) After two years of the Federation's project at Nashville, 58 per cent of the 610 patients instructed used the method prescribed "consistently" and successfully (McCarroll, *op. cit.*, p. 8.)

[69] The following discussion is largely based on a similar one regarding Sweden, by Alva Myrdal, *op. cit.*, p. 200 ff.

[70] There are several controversial issues involved in the above suggestion that an

educational campaign be instigated to reach the masses with specific birth control advice. The first is a legal question: The Comstock Law still stands on the federal statutes books for all nonmedical people and would probably be involved if general advice—not directed to specific cases investigated by a doctor—were distributed through the mails. Twenty-nine states also still have laws which prohibit nonmedical people from giving birth control advice. But the birth control organizations are no longer fighting the Comstock Law or the state laws (outside of those in Massachusetts and Connecticut, which apply to doctors). They are content to let them stand since they no longer apply to doctors. The second problem is one of quackery: if nonmedical people were allowed to give advice, there would be all sorts of dangerous or useless contraceptives put on the market and advertised. But this is already happening, except that the mails are not used, even in those states where it is illegal. People know that physicians can give contraceptive information; to overcome quackery it is necessary to disseminate correct information on a mass scale without waiting for people to consult physicians. Too, it is possible to have laws which practically eliminate quackery. A third issue is the question of what the popular reaction might be: birth control organizations are afraid of losing the support of doctors and others of the "best people" and of being called "immoral." This is probably the decisive issue which prevents the birth control organizations from giving concrete information to the masses of the people. But the question remains as to whether there would be such a popular reaction, whether this reaction would nullify all the small but positive gains that have been made, and whether an extensive publicity campaign would not counterbalance any reaction.

[71] Because of the tendency to work through physicians, even greater emphasis than is necessitated by facts has been laid on the contraceptive techniques which require a doctor's advice; the pessary and the foam-and-sponge techniques. The simple methods of the condom and *coitus interruptus* are deplored. Yet the leading medical authorities, Dickinson and Morris, in a manual issued by the Birth Control Federation itself, have the following to say about the condom:

"Properly tested, the condom provides protection as efficient as any method, and, skillfully used, *furnishes security*. . . . It ought to enjoy a much more favorable attitude on the part of the clinician." (Robert L. Dickinson and Woodbridge E. Morris, *Techniques of Conception Control* [1941], p. 34.)

It may be that when all people know about birth control, and when the task is to get its methods perfected and individualized, it will be wise to shift emphasis back again from the condom to the pessary, since the latter is supposed to be the most efficient and least annoying method. Since it happens that the condom and *coitus interruptus* methods are for men, the pessary and other methods available to women should be spread so that women, too, should have opportunity to control conception.

[72] The public clinics now in existence disseminate information about birth control solely by mentioning it to women who have come into the public health office for other purposes, especially to women who have just had a child. Only indigent women use the public clinic; others are referred to a private physician.

The demonstration projects sponsored by the Planned Parenthood Federation have a similarly slow method of reaching the public. During two years of the project at Nashville, only 638 patients were advised, and during 21 months of the project in Berkeley County, South Carolina, only 1,008 patients were advised. (McCarroll, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 11.) It should be recognized, however, that completeness and not extensive

coverage was the aim of these projects. Still, the achievements were small in view of the large amount of money spent. Not even the governments could afford to maintain permanent birth control clinics all over if they were as expensive as these two, and yet far from all persons needing contraceptive information in the two areas were reached. Despite the excellent work of the projects with those women contacted, the small number of women contacted shows how limited such clinics are.

Chapter 8. *Migration*

[1] The primary census data are somewhat unreliable, particularly for the South, and especially for Negroes. They are, furthermore, unreliable in a different degree from one census to another. Apart from this, such data as exist can only account for the composite *result* of migration together with all other factors of population change during a preceding decade, or the extent to which all persons living at the time of a census resided elsewhere than in their states of birth. We cannot, therefore, expect to gain any intensive and accurate knowledge of the movement of the population. All short-distance mobility is out of the picture. So also are stages and steps in migration, and all moves in one direction which are compensated for by the same persons' (or other persons') migration in the opposite direction (within the decade between two censuses). All yearly fluctuations are canceled out in the aggregate figures. Only a suggestion of stages of migration may be had by comparing different states as to the character of their populations born outside the state. Only to a limited extent are there studies available for small parts of the population, allowing us to make valid inferences in these several respects. Perhaps the most useful of these is the information that may be had from the question asked of all farmers for the 1935 Census of Agriculture, "Where were you living five years ago?"

The 1940 Census attempts to correct many of the earlier deficiencies by supplying information from all persons in the United States on the same question: "Where were you living five years ago?" This does not meet all requirements for knowledge about migration, but it will offer a body of information vastly superior to anything that now exists. Unfortunately the information is not yet available at the time of writing (summer, 1942).

[2] U.S. Census Office, *Statistics of the United States in 1860*, pp. 337-338.

[3] There are no data available to determine the exact size of the net migration of Negroes from South to North between 1910 and 1940. The figure of one and three-quarters million presented in the text is simply the difference between the Northern Negro population for 1940 and that for 1910. To use this figure as an index of net migration involves making two assumptions: (1) The net reproduction rate of Negroes in the North during this period was 1.00, on the average. Actually it probably averaged less than 1.00. (2) The age distribution of the Northern Negro population was, on the average, that of a life table population. Actually there was probably a greater proportion of persons in the child-bearing ages. The errors in our two assumptions affect our estimate of net migration in opposite ways. We have, therefore, only one assumption—that these two errors cancel each other.

Du Bois estimated that two million Negroes migrated North by 1930. But his

estimate is of total migration and does not exclude those who returned South. (W. E. B. Du Bois, "A Negro Nation within the Nation," *Current History* [June, 1935], p. 265.)

[4] Stouffer and Florant, *op. cit.*, p. 36. According to W. D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson (*Race Relations* [1934], p. 257) most of the Negroes who went to Liberia at first were ex-slaves who were freed on the condition that they emigrate.

[5] The Negro population of Kansas increased from 627 to 43,107 between 1860 and 1880 according to the census. Part of this was natural increase, of course, and only some of the increase occurred during the period when there was agitation for Negro migration to Kansas. But there was also some return migration to the South.

[6] James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* (1934), pp. 206-207 and 208.

[7] This reclassification was prepared by the Bureau of the Census with the aid of O. E. Baker of the United States Department of Agriculture. The computation of the Negro population of these areas back to 1860 was done by Stouffer and Wyant.

[8] Stouffer and Florant, *op cit.* (1940), pp. 1-58 and technical appendix prepared by Rowena Wyant.

[9] Stouffer and Florant, *op. cit.* (1940), p. 5.

[10] As the National Resources Committee points out, part of the migration northward was by stages and part of it was direct from the Deep South.

"Much of the Negro migration has been a State-to-State displacement. By 1930, for example, 72,000 Negroes had moved into North Carolina from South Carolina, but 47,000 had moved out of North Carolina to Virginia and Maryland. More than 50 per cent of the Negroes leaving South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana have settled in other Southern states, while about 90 per cent of those leaving Kentucky and 65 per cent of those leaving Virginia and Tennessee have settled in the North. At the same time there has been considerable migration directly from the deep South to the North." (National Resources Committee, *The Problems of a Changing Population* [1938], p. 99.)

[11] Stouffer and Florant, *op. cit.* (1942), pp. 54-58.

[12] These calculations are taken from Stouffer and Florant, *op. cit.* (1940), Chapter 1, pp. 17-18. These authors include Missouri in the Border states, and their definition of the North, as noted in the text, is confined to the Northern states east of the Mississippi River.

[13] U. S. Bureau of Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 22.

[14] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. 2, pp. 158-162.

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 163-167.

[16] The literature on Negro migration is too large to be surveyed, even too large to be sampled for purposes of this section. In 1934, F. A. Ross and L. V. Kennedy prepared a whole book entitled *A Bibliography of Negro Migration*, and since then many other titles would have to be added to their list. In the monograph prepared for this study by Stouffer and Florant, a large and selected sample of this tremendous literature was integrated. For this section we have relied largely on this monograph and on a few of the better-known books on the subject, such as those by C. G. Woodson (*A Century of Negro Migration* [1918]), The Chicago Commission on Race Relations (*The Negro in Chicago* [1922]), L. V. Kennedy (*The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward* [1930]), C. V. Kiser (*Sea Island to City* [1932]). The general literature on the Negro also has much on migration. Because of the size of this literature we have felt that it would be best to make this section rather abstract. The conditions which are

referred to here in passing are usually taken up in greater detail in other parts of this book.

[17] Woodson, *op. cit.*, Chapter 8. Also see Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 110.

[18] Some experts on the problem hold a single-cause theory of Negro migration. They believe that migration is a result only of new economic opportunities in cities. Negroes went North because the cities were in the North, and if the cities had been in the South, Negroes should never have left the South in spite of its traditional prejudice and discrimination against them. (See, for example, Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* [1932], pp. 46 ff; and T. J. Woofter, Jr., *Races and Ethnic Groups in American Life* [1933], p. 113.)

The incorrectness of this theory can be judged by speculating what would happen if the situation were to be reversed. If suddenly there should be a new development of industry in the South which would open many new jobs of the unskilled and service type to Negroes, at the same time as there was economic stagnation and unemployment in the North, it is not likely that Northern Negroes would migrate South in such numbers as Southern Negroes migrated North under comparable circumstances after 1915.

[19] In other words, the real "causes" of migration were as numerous as the Negroes who migrated and as complex as the entire life-experiences of these Negroes. These real causes were not simply a series of "conditions" or "factors" impinging on the individual, but they were complexes of factors actively interpreted, weighed, and integrated in the conscious and unconscious minds of individuals. What the analyst must do, however, is to resolve into elements the complex structure of the motivations of individuals, group these elements, and determine which are the important ones—the ones without which the migration would have involved significantly fewer numbers than it did. Such important classes of elements in the motivation of the migrants are usually termed "causes" of the migration, but they must be recognized to be causes in only a special sense—neither inevitable in their influence nor all-inclusive as explanations for the migration of all those who migrated. Unfortunately, due to the complexity of migration and the fact that it is always an event in the past and to the poorness of the data, the relative importance of the factors cannot be measured. The significance assigned to them is a function of the observer's judgment, based upon his knowledge of the history of the migration.

[20] The returning migrants probably mounted up to the thousands in the early days of the depression of the 1930's when jobs were no longer available and the relief machinery was not yet set up. Some local Urban Leagues and certain city governments sponsored plans to send Negroes back to the South.

[21] Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share.* Prepared for this study (1943), p. 40.

[22] Unpublished estimates by Stouffer and Florant indicate that the net migration of Negroes from the South was 317,000 between 1930 and 1940 as compared to 716,000 between 1920 and 1930. As the authors recognize, there is a considerable margin of error in both figures. (*Op. cit.*, [1940], p. 124.)

[23] Two recent incidents are illustrative of this point.

1. A California law prohibiting the entry of indigents from other states was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States (No. 17, October

term 1941; Fred F. Edwards, Appellant *vs.* The People of the State of California; November 24, 1941).

2. In attempting to build a labor camp for Southern Negroes near Burlington, New Jersey, in May, 1942, the Farm Security Administration met the opposition of the nearby township government. Nevertheless the F.S.A. went right ahead with its plans and there was no opposition from Congress (including the local congressman). The F.S.A. was supported by the local farmers who needed the labor which the camp would provide.

[24] Between 1930 and 1940, the Negro population of California increased 53 per cent.

[25] There are some new agricultural job opportunities on the West Coast—such as in cotton planting and commercial fruit growing in California—but these are likely to go to whites now migrating from the West Plains and from the South, and to Mexicans.

[26] Tannenbaum, for instance, says:

"The South, in a search for solutions, must turn to the gradual migration of the negro and his replacement by foreign labor. These two factors are the only available means at hand for the breaking up of emotional concentration upon the negro, the gradual achievement of objectivity in attitude towards him, the slow softening of the burden of fear and hate that has seared and seared the South to this very day." (Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* [1924], p. 182.)

[27] See Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 198; John Temple Graves, "The Southern Negro and the War Crisis," *Virginia Quarterly Review* (Autumn, 1942), pp. 512-513.

[28] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-186; W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Hosts of Black Labor," *Nation* (May 9, 1923), pp. 539-541; and James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), p. 152.

Chapter 9. *Economic Inequality*

[1] Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree, and W. W. Alexander, *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy* (1935), pp. 14-15 and 21-22.

[2] National Resources Planning Board, *National Resources Development, Report for 1942* (1942), p. 3. Points 6-8 are omitted here as irrelevant to our present discussion.

[3] This is a world-wide trend; for a discussion of the basic principles involved, see Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941).

[4] See *The Public Opinion Quarterly* (October, 1939), pp. 586-587 and (Fall, 1941), p. 475.

[5] See *The Public Opinion Quarterly* (October, 1939), p. 592; (March, 1940), p. 91; (September, 1940), p. 547; and (Fall, 1941), p. 477.

[6] *Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky*, "A Salary Study for the Lexington Public Schools" (March, 1935), p. 26.

[7] For an excellent example of how a wide variety of these arguments are marshaled one after the other, we may quote in full a letter to the editor of the Richmond *News Leader* concerning differential salaries for school teachers:

"ARGUES NEGRO TEACHERS SHOULD RECEIVE LESS

"Fditor of the News Leader:

"Sir,—There is a sort of soft-soap piety floating around in our part of the world that is like the will-o-the-wisp that rises from miasmic swampland. It floats majestically over the 'Negro question,' but when analyzed there is nothing to it. The special point about which it is bobbing now is 'equalization of teachers' salaries.' Let's cast the light of reality (or, should I say, the sunlight of truth?) over the shadowed point and present it as many of us vitally interested really see it.

"Should Negro teachers receive the same salary that white teachers receive? Emphatically, No! Why not?

"(1) Less than 10 per cent. of our taxes is paid by Negroes. Of course, destitute white children attend the same schools that wealthy ones attend, but they are of the same race, an identical social unit, with co-ordinating future obligations.

"(2) Negroes do not teach the same type of future citizens that white teachers instruct. God made the two races different and exacts of them their own best contributions. White people have and will continue to have responsibility 'the brothers in black' cannot assume.

"(3) Negroes do not teach the same things in reality and in the same way that white instructors do. The average Negro has an honorable service to render outside the academic field.

"(4) White people owe Negroes no especial debt, save to 'love one another' in a Christian way. The Negro race has gained far more from the civic contact with the white than can be here portrayed—and Negro people generally know this and appreciate it, the 'soft-soap piety' generally bubbling from the caucasian mouth . . . Why do these people bubble and babble? Perhaps because it is a psychological truth that everyone wants to make a 'splash' in life's 'mud-puddle!'

"(5) If Negro people are paid the same salaries the white teachers receive, salaries will not be equalized, but Negro teachers will have more, as their living expenses are less. This economic fact should have weight. Compare rent lists in good sections for white and Negro, for instance.

"Let's not 'fly in the face of God' and His great plan. While He made all men of one blood, He gave them gifts differing. Let not the white girl's salary for service in the schoolroom be lessened, as it has already been markedly in a few cases, for her financial responsibilities, as well as her pedagogical efforts, must be greater than her Negro sister's. And above all, don't confuse piety with bubbles!

Montrose."[a]

[8] "A Salary Study for the Lexington Public Schools," *op. cit.*, p. 25. See Chapter 14, Section 4.

Chapter 10. *The Tradition of Slavery*

[1] Rupert B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South* (1932), p. 467.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 474.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 467.

[4] John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), p. 55.

[5] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), p. 13.

[a] "The News Leader Forum," Richmond *News Leader* (December 6, 1941).

[6] Sir George Campbell, traveling in the South in the 'seventies, listened to many old slave breeders who told him about the same story:

". . . the slaves were not worked out like omnibus horses; in fact, the capital sunk in slaves was so heavy, and produce had become so cheap, that the principal source of profit was what was called the 'increase' of the slaves—the breeding them for the market or for new plantations opened in the more Western States. As in breeding-farms for other kinds of stock, the human stock was carefully, and, on the whole, kindly treated; and although the selling off the young stock as it became fit for the market was a barbarous process, still, the family relations being so weak, as I have described, those who remained did not feel it so much as we should; and I think it may be said that the relations between the masters and the slaves were generally not unkindly. One old gentlemen in Carolina dwelt much on the kindness and success with which he had treated his slaves, adding as the proof and the moral that they had doubled in twenty years." (*White and Black in the United States* [1879], pp. 140-141.)

[7] Large numbers of ex-slaves lapsed into temporary vagrancy at the end of the Civil War. They, naturally, wanted to test their new freedom. Not without reason, they also feared re-enslavement. The general upheaval and the curtailment of production during and after the War were also responsible for the vagrancy. The hope which was never fulfilled, that the federal government would provide them with land of their own, also contributed to the unrest. "This belief is seriously interfering with the willingness of the freedmen to make contracts for the coming year," reported General Grant to the President in 1865.[a] Many of them regarded steady employment with a white plantation owner as slavery. Heavy work and slavery then appeared to them as pretty synonymous concepts:

Mammy don't you cook no mo',
You's free! You's free!
Rooster don't you crow no mo',
You's free! You's free!
Ol' hen, don't you lay no mo' eggs,
You's free! You's free!
Ol' pig, don't you grunt no mo',
You's free! You's free!
Ol' cow, don't you give no mo' milk,
You's free! You's free!
Ain't got to slave no mo',
We's free! We's free![b]

Such a reaction was by no means general. The accounts of it probably have been exaggerated considerably,[c] because of the need to rationalize the system which was then being built up to keep the Negro worker in his place. In comparison with Southern whites, especially upper class whites and white women of all classes, Negroes were probably never characterized by unusual laziness. It was only by comparison with the continuous labor under slavery, and aided by forced unemployment, that Negroes suddenly appeared lazy. If Negroes ever manifested an unusual unwillingness to work,

[a] Cited by Hilary A. Herbert, *Why the Solid South?* (1890), p. 17.
[b] Cited by Federal Writers' Project, *The Negro in Virginia* (1940), p. 210.
[c] *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224.

it was only in the first year or two after the end of the War. In so far as it did appear during this period of general disorganization, it was just plain human. The institution of slavery to a great extent had debased ordinary work in the appreciation of black and white alike. It was psychologically inescapable that slavery should backfire in this way, particularly during the initial period of freedom.

[8] Rupert B. Vance gives this concentrated account of how the system of share tenancy came into being and how it became fixed upon the region:

"A stricken upper class possessing nothing but lands met a servile population possessed of nought except the labor of their hands. In what must have been an era of primitive barter, a system was arrived at whereby labor was secured without money wages and land without money rent. Up and down the Cotton Belt southern states after 1865 vied with one another in passing crop lien laws. Accepted as the temporary salvation of a wrecked economic structure, the system has increasingly set the mode for southern agriculture. Under the crop lien system the unpropertied farmer mortgages his ungrown crop for the supplies necessary to grow it. He also pledges a portion, third, fourth, or half of his crop, for use of the land. The most outstanding commentary one can make on the South is to point out the fact that from that day to this the percentage of those who must secure their year's livelihood by crop liens has steadily increased. Many of the enfeebled aristocracy saw their once proud acres go on the block for ridiculously low prices; but the hopes for the rise of a vigorous yeomanry to take their places never materialized. The crop lien system was developed to readjust the Negro to cotton production on terms more fitting a modern economy than slavery. Its success was so great as to be disastrous. Congregated on its original fringes the unpropertied poor white farmers poured into the new scheme and helped to make temporary expediency a permanent arrangement." [a]

And so the stage was set for human tragedy. From the Negro angle Du Bois explains:

"Now it happens that both master and men have just enough argument on their respective sides to make it difficult for them to understand each other. The Negro dimly personifies in the white man all his ills and misfortunes; if he is poor, it is because the white man seizes the fruit of his toil; if he is ignorant, it is because the white man gives him neither time nor facilities to learn; and, indeed, if any misfortune happens to him, it is because of some hidden machinations of 'white folks.' On the other hand, the masters and the masters' sons have never been able to see why the Negro, instead of settling down to be day-laborers for bread and clothes, are infected with a silly desire to rise in the world, and why they are sulky, dissatisfied, and careless, where their fathers were happy and dumb and faithful. 'Why, you niggers have an easier time than I do,' said a puzzled Albany merchant to his black customer. 'Yes,' he replied, 'and so does yo' hogs.' "[b]

[9] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 368. Others who saw the need for basic economic reform were Carl Schurz, congressman from Wisconsin (*The Condition of the South, Report to the President* [1865] and "For the Great Empire of Liberty, Forward." Speech delivered at Concert Hall, Philadelphia [September 16, 1864]), and Hinton Helper (*The Impending Crisis of the South* [1860], especially Chapters 1 and 2 and pp. 180-186.)

[10] Paul S. Peirce, *The Freedmen's Bureau* (1904), pp. 44, 74 and 110.

[11] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 602.

[a] Vance, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

[b] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), pp. 155-156.

[12] See Federal Writers' Project, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-225.

[13] Josephus Daniels, *Tar Heel Editor* (1939), pp. 171-172.

[14] Woofter only expresses the common sense and the actual experience of social tenant legislation when he points out:

"It is to the advantage both of the tenant and the landlord that the tenant treat the land as if it were his own; that he build the necessary fences and terraces, improve the farm buildings, and drain the swampy places."[a]

Without legal claims on improvements he may make, the tenant is robbed of interest in conserving or improving the land or the buildings:

"On the contrary, just as it is to his advantage to rob the soil of its fertility, so he is tempted to burn the fire wood rails from any nearby fence or planks from the porch floor or from an out-house—if the place happens to be distinguished by having any movable materials that have not already succumbed to the ravages of time and tenants. The tenant is not likely to trouble to make any repairs that are not absolutely necessary, and these few will be so made as not to outlast his stay on the place." [b]

[15] Stipulations to this effect were, however, included in some of the Black Codes, which also set up some requirements for the protection of the freedmen; see Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* (1910), pp. 62-63.

[16] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 27.

[17] Prior to Reconstruction some of the Northern free states had similar laws; see, for instance, Frank U. Quillin, *The Color Line in Ohio* (1913), pp. 21-34 and 88-92.

[18] In some states the lien applies not only to the crop but also to livestock, or even to all the tenant's property; in a number of states the cropper—in spite of sharing in the risk—has no legal title to the crop at all but is legally classified as a laborer.

[19] This may be exemplified by the following recent Georgia statute:

"PROCURING MONEY ON CONTRACT FOR SERVICES FRAUDULENTLY

"Any person who shall contract with another to perform for him services of any kind with intent to procure money or other things of value thereby, and not perform the service contracted for, to the loss and damage of the hirer, or after having so contracted, shall procure from the hirer money, or other things of value, with intent not to perform such service, to the loss and damage of the hirer, shall be deemed a common cheat and a swindler, and upon conviction shall be punished as for a misdemeanor."[c]

[20] Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-170. The Georgia law was a formulation which the Southern legislators had hoped would pass the test. Yet it failed. By a United States Supreme Court decision of January 12, 1942, it was declared unconstitutional. The case involved a Negro whose employer claimed to have paid the cost for the Negro's release from a previous debt charge. The Negro in return had promised to work the debt off ($19.50) but failed to do so (New York *Times*, [January 13, 1942]).

[21] Baker gives the following picture of a typical situation one generation ago:

"If he attempts to leave he is arrested and taken before a friendly justice of the peace, and fined or threatened with imprisonment. If he is not in debt, it sometimes happens

[a] T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), p. 89.

[b] Charles S Johnson, Edwin R. Embree, and W. W. Alexander, *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy* (1935), p. 20.

[c] Georgia Code of 1933, 26-7048. Quoted by Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 184.

that the landlord will have him arrested on the charge of stealing a bridle or a few potatoes (for it is easy to find something against almost any Negro), and he is brought into court. In several cases I know of the escaping Negro has even been chased down with bloodhounds. On appearing in court the Negro is naturally badly frightened. The white man is there and offers as a special favour to take him back and let him work out the fine —which sometimes requires six months—often a whole year. In this way Negroes are kept in debt—so called debt-slavery or peonage—year after year, they and their whole family. One of the things that I couldn't at first understand in some of the courts I visited was the presence of so many white men to stand sponsor for Negroes who had committed various offences. Often this grows out of the feudal protective instinct which the landlord feels for the tenant or servant of whom he is fond; but often it is merely the desire of the white man to get another Negro worker."[a]

For a discussion of these practices today, see Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188, and Chapter 26, Section 2. For a recent report of a case of peonage see the New York *Sun* (November 5, 1942), p. 9.

Chapter 11. *The Southern Plantation Economy and the Negro Farmer*

[1] Hinton R. Helper, *The Impending Crisis* (1857), pp. 57-58.

[2] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release: Series P-5a, Nos. 14-16; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture,* United States Summary, First Series, Table VI.

[3] T. J. Woofter, Jr., "The Negro and Agricultural Policy," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 30.

[4] T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation* (1936), p. 11.

[5] Herman Clarence Nixon, *Forty Acres and Steel Mules* (1938), p. 13.

[6] Carter Goodrich and Others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity* (1936), pp. 125-126. A similar reconnaissance survey for 1934 indicated that conditions were even worse in Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, Oklahoma, and Kentucky where more than half of the land was believed to be eroded, at least "moderately."[b] In a third source, 53 per cent of the land in the East South Central Division (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi) is reckoned as "moderately eroded," 23 per cent is "severely eroded," and 7 per cent is "essentially destroyed for tillage."[c] This has contributed to make the Southeast contain the largest contiguous area in the country characterized by a low per capita value of farm land.[d] For the whole South, in 1940, the average value of land and buildings amounted to $596 per capita of the rural farm population. The corresponding national figure was $1,116.[e]

[a] Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 98.

[b] Letter with manuscript table, July 12, 1939, from Dr. E. A. Norton, Head, Physical Surveys Division, Soil Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, to Dr. T. C. McCormick.

[c] Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of Agriculture* (1938), p. 90.

[d] See map published by the National Resources Committee in *The Problems of a Changing Population* (1938), p. 57.

[e] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture. United States Summary,* First Series, Table VI.

[7] Gunnar Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 23 ff.

[8] Woofter, "The Negro and Agricultural Policy," p. 31.

[9] Lange, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[10] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. III, Part 2, p. 62.

[11] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1930-1932*, pp. 587-588, and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. III, p. 12.

[12] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. IV, p. 510.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 891.

[14] Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* (1924), pp. 117-118.

[15] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics, 1940*, pp. 108-109.

[16] Planters and other cotton farmers, it is sometimes claimed, have shown that they know how to diversify their crops whenever the cotton price is low.[a] Indeed, it has been statistically ascertained that the cotton acreage—before the A.A.A.—varied with the price to a much greater extent than is true about most other crops.[b] But this means, on the other hand, that Southern farmers, in spite of their poverty and their need for a stabilized economy, have been unable to resist the temptation of making large temporary profits whenever the price exceeds a certain point.

[17] See, for instance, Rupert B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South* (1932), pp. 198-199; and Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, pp. 49-64.

[18] See, for instance, Goodrich and Others, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-138.

[19] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, pp. 23 and 39.

[20] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. II, Part 2, Table 46; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, Vol. V, p. 681.

[21] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics, 1940*, pp. 108-109.

"The average annual loss from insect ravages during the period 1910 to 1928 has been estimated to be about 15 percent, whereof the boll weevil is held responsible for 12 percent." (Lange, *op. cit.*, p. 30.)

[22] In 1929, on the basis of crop value, cotton had the first place in eight Southern states and held second place in North Carolina, where it was next to tobacco, and in Tennessee, where corn was more important. In seven of the states (South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas) it accounted for half or more (in Mississippi, three-fourths) of the total crop value. Of the Southern states outside the Border only Virginia (corn, tobacco, potatoes) and Florida (citrus fruits) failed to have cotton among their principal crops. Corn, in most of the states, had second place. Rice came third in Louisiana, just before sugar cane, and fourth in Arkansas.[c]

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 657, 892-893.

[24] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, First Series, Table VI.

[25] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 10. See also Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-288.

[26] *White and Black in the United States* (1879), p. 160.

[a] Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), pp. 272-273.

[b] Rupert B. Vance, *Human Factors in Cotton Culture* (1929), pp. 118-119.

[c] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. IV, pp. 715-716.

[27] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population in the United States: 1790-1915*, p. 461. The number of owned farm homes is approximately the same as the number of owned farms. It is possible, however, that the *proportion* of owned homes was somewhat lower than the statistics indicate, for 1890, 1900, and 1910; the total number of farm homes for these years was scarcely higher than the number of farm operators (owners and tenants), whereas there was a large difference in 1930—indicating a substantial number of farm homes occupied by wage laborers.

[28] The number of owner-occupied Negro farm homes in the whole United States was almost exactly the same (221,000).

[29] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 257 and 577; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, Firsf Series, Table VI.

[30] See J. C. Folsom and O. E. Baker, *A Graphic Summary of Farm Labor and Population*, United States Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 265 (1937), p. 10.

[31] The degree of extension of credit itself, as well as the organization of the credit market, is a factor relevant to Negro landownership. But this factor works in a complicated way, and a discussion of it is beyond the scope of this book.

[32] Folsom and Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[33] Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 19.

[34] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, First Series, Table VI.

[35] Similar interpretations are given by Rupert B. Vance, "Racial Competition for the Land," in *Race Relations and the Race Problem*, edited by Edgar C. Thompson (1939), pp. 102-103.

[36] There are no complete statistics on the extent to which large holdings have or have not maintained their relative position in Southern agriculture. Plantations do not even exist in ordinary census statistics; a farm is defined in such a way that even a sharecropper's plot is regarded as an independent unit. This procedure has often been criticized. See, for example, Karl Brandt, "Fallacious Census Terminology and Its Consequences in Agriculture" *Social Research* (March, 1938). However, there was a special enumeration of plantations in 325 counties in the Census of 1910 (*Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, Vol. V, Chapter 12, "Plantations in the South," pp. 877-889). A similar enumeration was planned for the Census of 1940, but the results have, at this writing, not yet been published. Tax digest data for certain plantation areas in the Southeast indicate, however, that there has been a decline in the number of large holdings (over 500 acres) and a large increase in the number of small- and middle-sized holdings. These comparisons cover in one case (20 Georgia counties) the whole period 1873-1934, and in other cases the period 1911-1934 or 1922-1934 (Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, pp. 18, 197). This trend does not seem to be quite general, however; another study indicates an opposite trend in 20 Louisiana parishes (T. Lynn Smith, *The Sociology of Rural Life* (1940), pp. 305-307).

[37] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 296-297.

[38] Arthur F. Raper, *Preface to Peasantry* (1936), pp. 121-122.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 129. Dr. Raper cites the following example of how an attempt by acceptable Negroes to buy land in a more desirable neighborhood of Greene County, Georgia,

was turned down. An old plantation was for sale by public auction in lots of sixty to ninety acres. Two Negroes wanted to buy two of the lots for a price nearly double the market value, but were discouraged by both the owner and the auction company.

"The Negroes then went to a local white friend and asked him if he would bid in the two lots for them at the auction, whereupon he advised; 'Now, I am going to help you get some land, for you fellows ought to have some; but I don't believe I could try to buy any of those lots—you know there aren't any Negro owners right in there, and besides that land is right on the main road. Now understand, I want to help you—you just keep in touch with me and I will help you to locate some land in the neighborhood where you will like it better.' "[a]

[40] Vance, "Racial Competition for the Land," p. 107.

[41] White landlords in the South have even been accused of "selling" land to Negroes without letting them have the proper title to it. An outsider cannot have any opinion about the prevalence of such practices, but all available information about the legal status of the rural Negro in the South makes it seem probable that such cases occur and that Negroes, more often than whites, are the victims in such transactions. See for example, Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 294; Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

[42] *Farm Tenancy*. Report of the President's Committee, prepared under the auspices of the National Resources Committee (1937), p. 39.

[43] *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900, Agriculture*, Vol.V, Part I, pp. xcviii, civ; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 35.

[44] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 96-152; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population in the United States: 1790-1915*, pp. 506-508 and Table 1. It is somewhat difficult to follow this trend, for few of the Southern wage earners in agriculture have steady employment, and this makes it difficult to enumerate them. Too, there have been certain changes in the census classifications. The conditions of the Negro wage laborers in the Southern states, on the whole, have been studied far less extensively than have those of the Negro tenants. Therefore it will not be possible for us to pay as much attention to them as their numerical significance would warrant.

[45] A similar enumeration was planned for the 1940 Census, but the results, at this writing, are not yet available.

[46] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Agriculture*, Vol. V, Chapter 12, "The Plantations in the South." A plantation was defined as a continuous holding with five or more tenants. It is probable that there were some plantation tenants also in "non-plantation counties," but even so the majority of the tenants certainly resided on small holdings.

[47] *Farm Tenancy*, Report of the President's Committee, pp. 91-95.

[48] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 15. In nonplantation counties in 1930 only one-fourth of the tenants were Negroes.

[50] The proportion of all tenants who rented from their own or their wives' parents, grandparents, brothers, or sisters was, in 1930, not quite 30 per cent in the North, 17

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 128

per cent in the West, and 15 per cent in the South.[a] The figure for the South, however, includes Negroes; for white tenants alone, it must be considerably higher.

[51] In counties designated as plantation counties in 1910, almost 60 per cent of the tenants were colored in 1930.[b] Woofter's sample study of plantations in 1934 indicates that 53 per cent of the plantations had Negro tenants only; 42 per cent had both Negro and white tenants, and 5 per cent had white tenants only.[c]

[52] Of 289 Southern counties which were designated as plantation counties in the Census of 1910, more than half, or 165, showed increase in number of both white and colored tenants between 1900 and 1930. In most of the cases these increases were proportionally greater for white than for colored tenants. In 50 counties there was a decline in number of tenants in both racial groups. When changes went in opposite directions, it was most often the white tenants who gained at the expense of the colored tenants (65 counties). The reverse was true in but a few cases (9 counties). This information was based on a special adaptation of the census material[d] made by Richard Sterner, "Standard of Living of the Negro and Social Welfare Policies," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940).

[53] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture: 1935*, Vol. III, pp. 204-205; and Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[54] As early as 1879 Sir George Campbell observed about the constant movement from one plantation to another:

"It is a form of strike as a counter-move against ill-treatment; and under the circumstances the move may be a bold and effective measure."[e] Compare in modern literature, for instance, Lawrence W. Neff, *Race Relations at Close Range* (1911), p. 22; and John Dollard, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 445-497.

[55] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 200.

[56] It will be recalled that there is but scant information on the conditions of the non-plantation tenants, who are quite numerous even in the Negro group (although Negroes, much more than whites, are concentrated on large holdings).

[57] Some of the best works on the subject are: T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation* (1937); William C. Holley, Ellen Winston, T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Plantation South, 1934-1937*, Works Projects Administration Research Bulletin No. 22 (1940); *Farm Tenancy*, Report of the President's Committee (1937); Arthur Raper, *Preface to Peasantry* (1936), particularly pp. 157-180; Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), pp. 255-421; E. L. Langsford and B. H. Thibodeaux, *Plantation Organization and Operation in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Area*, United States Department of Agriculture Technical Bulletin No. 682 (1939); Edgar T. Thompson, "Population Expansion and the Plantation System," *American Journal of Sociology* (November, 1935), pp. 314-326.

[58] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 329-332.

[a] *Farm Tenancy*, Report of the President's Committee, p. 47.

[b] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[c] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 196.

[d] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. II, Part 2, County table 1, Supplemental for Southern States, and *Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900, Agriculture*, Vol. V, Part 1, pp. 58-141.

[e] *Op. cit.*, pp. ix-x.

[59] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 181.

[60] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 11.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[62] Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 180.

[63] Rupert B. Vance observes:

"For the tenant to seek to keep his own accounts within the credit system is often regarded as a personal insult to the landlord or credit merchant."[a]

[64] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, for instance, have this to say on the problem:

"One large planter in Rural County attributed the existence of a large number of landlords who stole from their tenants to the difficulty of raising cotton profitably otherwise, under the present economy.

" 'The only way a man can make money from farming is by stealing it from the Negroes, or by living close. Some people get ahead by living close and saving every cent, and then there are lots that steal from the Negroes. Some of them will take everything a Negro has, down to his last chicken and hog.'

"A businessman, in one of the counties, whose business furnished him with a close knowledge of the credit dealings of most landlords and tenants in the county, stated that 'practically all landlords' cheated their tenants 'in one way or another.' "[b]

[65] Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 183.

[66] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing up in the Black Belt* (1941), p. 309. Italics ours.

[67] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 59.

[68] Langsford and Thibodeaux, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[69] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 63.

[70] Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

[71] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

[72] Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 60.

[73] Information from officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, at conference in Memphis, January 31, 1939.

[74] There is probably not so much debt-peonage left, however, as is suggested by the following statement, taken from the resolution of the Georgia Baptist Convention's Social Service Commission meeting in Augusta, November, 1939:

"Peonage or debt slavery has by no means disappeared from our land. There are more white people affected by this diabolical practice than there were slave owners. There are more Negroes held by these debt slavers than were actually owned as slaves. . . . The method is the only thing which has changed."[c]

Davis, Gardner, and Gardner quoted the following statement made by a Negro landlord in the middle of the 'thirties:

" 'You don't get any more by being a good tenant! Grosvenor still takes it all and charges them besides! . . . They all do it. I do it myself—some of these things. . . . How can the tenant get his share? Most of them can't read or write. They can't sell

[a] "Cotton and Tenancy" in *Problems of the Cotton Economy*, Proceedings of the Southern Social Science Research Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana (March, 1935), p. 19. See also Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 181, and Federal Writers' Project, *These Are Our Lives* (1939), pp. 21-22.

[b] *Op. cit.*, p. 351.

[c] Cited by Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 198.

their own cotton. . . . They can't dispute the landlord's word, if he is white, and they can't move if they owe him. Even if they don't owe him, another landlord won't take them unless the one they're renting from is willing for him to go.' "[a]

[75] For example, see Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," pp. 178-180.

[76] Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 79.

[77] See Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

Mangum informs us:

There is a common-law rule that one can recover damages from anyone who entices away one's servant. Moreover, an Arkansas enticement statute, applying to the luring of renters as well as laborers, has been held not to be in conflict with the Thirteenth Amendment or the peonage statutes."[b]

[78] Raper tells a story about a case in Warren County, Georgia, where almost two-thirds of the population are Negro. Adjoining Glasscock County, where the population includes a relatively large proportion of small white farmers, had an unusually good cotton crop in 1937 and sent to Warren County for pickers, bidding a higher price than planters in that county wanted to give. The result was a series of rather violent demonstrations and intimidations by organized vigilantes. The trucks from Glasscock County had to turn back without any pickers, and the enraged Warren farmers forced all Negroes they could get hold of to work for them, entering their homes in order to find them, scarcely even leaving the domestics employed by other white families in peace.[c]

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 179.

[80] "Where the system flourishes, ignorance, prejudice, and cruelty are the rule, not the exception. The arrangement has behind it the weight of tradition and public opinion, tainted by fear and hate. The white owners know no other order. The Negro tenant is poor, illiterate, and intimidated. There are few better landlords to whom he could transfer his allegiance if he tried."[d]

Chapter 12. *New Blows to Southern Agriculture During the Thirties: Trends and Policies*

[1] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, pp. 108-111; Gunnar Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 17 ff. and Table A5.

[2] Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," p. 18.

[3] The situation was aggravated by the depression after 1929. Domestic and foreign demand for textiles dropped sharply with increased unemployment and reduced industrial income. As a result the demand for cotton lint fell off rapidly, and prices dropped to half the pre-war level. The textile industries in the main cotton manufacturing countries abroad began to place more of their purchasing contracts with producers elsewhere than in the United States. England and France took larger shares of their cotton import from their dominions and from Egypt and Brazil. In Brazil cotton production

[a] *Op. cit.*, p. 356.

[b] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 170.

[c] "Race and Class Pressures," pp. 202-203.

[d] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), p. 143.

rose from an average of 492 million bales annually in 1925-1929 to 1,856 million bales in 1933-1937. At the same time a tremendous increase in the production of synthetic fibres occurred. World production of rayon and rayon staple fibres, which in 1920 had been only 33 million pounds, increased from 458 million in 1930 to 1,948 million pounds in 1938. It has been estimated that the production of these fibres was equivalent to 78,000 bales of cotton in 1920 and 4,583,000 bales in 1938.[a]

"These two factors, the upward trend of cotton production abroad and the shift in demand to rayon, are the most responsible for the sharp reduction of the demand for American cotton. It seems to be certain that these factors will continue to influence the situation in the future and the American cotton producers cannot be expected to retain their present markets—much less to regain what they lost, unless some way of expanding domestic consumption can be found. Other innovations—for instance, nylon, recently introduced on a commercial basis—have come into the picture lately and do not brighten the market outlook for cotton." [b]

That the cotton economy has suffered much more during the depression and recovered much less after the depression than American agriculture in general is evident from the following figures: [c]

INDEX NUMBERS FOR GROSS CASH INCOME FROM MARKETINGS

Year	All Products	Cotton and Cotton Seed
1925–1929	100	100
1932	43	31
1939	71	41

Yet, even so, cotton was still in 1939 the leading money-income crop of the whole country, giving the American farmers $609,000,000 in cash as compared to $397,000,000 from wheat, $367,000,000 from truck crops (all vegetables, except dry edible beans, potatoes, and certain garden plot crops), $326,000,000 from corn, and $264,000,000 from tobacco. None of the crops, however, could compete with milk ($1,355,000,000), cattle and calves ($1,274,000,000) or hogs ($821,000,000).[d]

[4] Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," p. 43.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 23 ff.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 11 and 24 ff.

[7] The number of cows and heifers kept mainly for milk production increased by 23 per cent between 1930 and 1940. The national increase (17 per cent) was not much

[a] See: I. W. Duggan, "Cotton Land and People," *Journal of Farm Economics* (February, 1940), p. 197.

[b] Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," pp. 16-17.

[c] Adapted by Lange ("Trends in Southern Agriculture," p. 42) from U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, pp. 544 and 552; and Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Income Parity for Agriculture*, Part I, Section 1. Calendar Years 1910-1937 (Preliminary, 1938). The figure 41, used as the index for cotton and cotton seed for 1939, is only approximate.

[d] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, pp. 544-545.

smaller, however, and the South's share in all milk produced (21 per cent) or sold (12 per cent) was still very small in 1940.[a]

[8] If we exclude the West South Central states, where the raising of beef cattle always has been large but never has provided much employment for Negroes, we find that the rest of the South had an increase between 1930 and 1940 of no less than 69 per cent in number of cows and heifers kept mainly for beef production. The production of hay increased by 53 per cent in the South, whereas the rest of the country showed a small decline. The number of hogs and pigs increased by 41 per cent in the South, as against 4 per cent for the country as a whole. (The last figures are somewhat too low, owing to a change in the enumeration method.)[b]

[9] *Idem.*

[10] M. R. Cooper and Associates, "Defects in Farming System and Tenancy," U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of Agriculture, 1938*, p. 144.

[11] Concerning these present trends, see U. S. Department of Agriculture, *The Agricultural Situation* (particularly the issues for March, April, and August, 1942) and *Crops and Markets* (for instance, the issue for July, 1942).

[12] Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 19. Italics ours.

[13] We shall have to say more about this change later. At this writing it is not yet known how large the increase in number of wage laborers is compared with the decrease in number of tenants. Indeed, it is not even certain whether there was any significant increase at all in number of wage workers between 1930 and 1940.[c] It is certain, however, that the increase in number of Negro day laborers—if it did occur—was much smaller than the decline in number of Negro tenants. For the total Negro rural-farm population in the South declined by 4.5 per cent between 1930 and 1940. This decline was relatively smaller than during the decade 1920-1930 (8.6 per cent), but it is remarkable that it could go on at all in spite of the lack of industrial employment opportunities during the 'thirties. The Southern white rural-farm population, on the other hand, which had been slowly decreasing during the 'twenties (— 3.0 per cent) showed a small gain during the 'thirties (2.1 per cent). The fact that white people have greater opportunities in farm ownership than have Negroes apparently meant more than their greater employment chances in nonfarm areas. The records for this decade show clearly, as we have found, that farm ownership and high tenure status tend to keep the people on the land.[d]

One of the reasons why Negro tenants were losing out seems to be that *the increased population pressure had brought about an intensified racial competition for the land.*

[a] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, First Series, pp. 30-31.

[b] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, First Series, pp. 30-31 and 52.

[c] The number of Negro and white agricultural wage workers in the South, in 1930, was 511,000 and 603,000 respectively (see Table 1 of Chapter 11). These figures include unemployed workers. The number of *employed* wage laborers in 1940 was 471,000 (includes a few nonwhites other than Negroes) and 495,000, respectively (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, State table 18a-b). It is obvious, however, that these two sets of figures are incomparable, so in spite of the two last ones being lower, a certain increase may, nevertheless, have occurred.

[d] See Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-18.

Among 288 counties in six selected Southern states, no less than 199 showed at the same time (between 1930 and 1935) an increase in number of white and a decrease in number of Negro cash and share tenants; the reverse of this happened in only one of the counties studied.[a]

Woofter's plantation study indicates that the proportion of white families on the plantation increased during these years.[b]

[14] W. C. Holley, Ellen Winston, and T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Plantation South, 1934-1937* (1940), p. 49.

[15] The harvested area, because of the depression, had already declined from 43,000,000 acres in 1929 to 36,000,000 in 1932. In 1933, because of the A.A.A., it was down to 29,000,000. There was a further decline to 22,000,000 in 1941.[c]

[16] From a peak of 17,000,000 bales in 1931, it fell to less than 10,000,000 in 1934; but then it started to climb again and reached an all-time peak of 19,000,000 bales in 1937, when the acreage had been allowed, temporarily, to increase to a little more than three-fourths of the 1929 level.[d] In 1940, however, it was down to 12,500,000 bales.[e]

[17] The carry-over, which was almost 10,000,000 bales in 1932, had decreased to less than half of that figure by 1937 but reached a new, even higher peak of 13,000,000 bales in 1939.[f]

Behind this was the huge crop of 1937.

[a] Richard Sterner, "The Standard of Living of the Negro and Social Welfare Policies," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940). These data are based on a special adaptation of census materials for all counties in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas, which had at least 100 colored and 100 white tenants (other than croppers). Corresponding tabulations were made for farm owners (241 counties) and croppers (269 counties). The following table gives a complete summary of the main results:

COUNTIES IN SELECTED SOUTHERN STATES BY INCREASE OR DECREASE IN NUMBER OF COLORED AND WHITE OWNERS, TENANTS (other than croppers), AND CROPPERS: 1930-1935

Counties by Decrease or Increase of *White* Operators	Counties by Decrease or Increase of Colored Operators					
	Owners		Tenants other than Croppers		Croppers	
	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	Increase	Decrease	Increase
Decrease	31	8	15	1	165	25
Increase	57	145	199	73	40	39

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Agriculture; 1935*, Vol. I, County Table 1, Supplemental for Southern States. *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. II, Part 2, County Table 1, Supplemental for Southern States.

[b] T. J. Woofter and Associates, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation* (1936), p. 157.

[c] Bureau of Agricultural Economics, "The Agricultural Situation" (August, 1942), p. 9.

[d] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, p. 109.

[e] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1941*, p. 120. The preliminary figure for 1941 was 11,000,000 bales (The National Industrial Conference Board, *The Economic Almanac for 1942-1943* [1942], p. 266.)

[f] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, p. 119

[18] Carl T. Schmidt, *American Farmers in the World Crisis* (1941), p. 156.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

[20] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Yearbook of Agriculture: 1940*, p. 654.

[21] According to certain estimates (Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 116), the labor requirements for cotton do not at all vary with the acreage, but only with the number of bales produced. It is understandable that this would be true about chopping and picking—but less so about operations which have to do with the soil rather than the plants. It does not seem, therefore, that these estimates would disprove that the acreage cuts have brought about a decrease in the need for year-round labor.

[22] Henry I. Richards, *Cotton and the A.A.A.* (1936), p. 146.

[23] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

[24] Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[25] Edwin G. Nourse, Joseph S. Davis, and John D. Black, *Three Years of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration* (1937), p. 344. See also Allison Davis, B. B. Gardner, and M. R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), pp. 283-284.

[26] Nourse, Davis, and Black, *op. cit.*, p. 344. See also Carl T. Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 265:

"The Act . . . obligates landlords not to reduce the number of their tenants below the average number on their farms during the last three years. The loophole is that the limitation applies only if the county committee finds that the change or reduction is not justified and disapproves such a change or reduction."

[27] Lange, "Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro," p. 37.

[28] Thomas J. Woofter, Jr., "The Negro and Agricultural Policy," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 104 ff. Particularly illuminating is the following statement by a Missouri planter, quoted by Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 265:

"What happens after a landlord decides upon a change [from tenants to wage labor]? He goes to the committee, and thereupon the three harassed men who are trying to run a complicated cotton program find themselves in an impossible position. They know very well that, since 1933, other owners have shifted to day labor and are getting all the payments. Why, therefore, should they discriminate against this late-comer? . . . They get very little credit if they stand firm and try to run a good program."

[29] Concrete examples of how the local administration in the Deep South is dominated by large landlords are given by Davis, Gardner, and Gardner. See, for instance, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.

[30] Lange observes:

"The decentralization of A.A.A. might give the programs a more democratic character. *That so much of the responsibility of promoting the programs has been placed upon the local committees is, however, in many respects to the disadvantage of the Negroes.* The local administration of the A.A.A. in the South has been fitted into the traditional pattern of racial segregation. This segregation prevents the Negro from participating actively in the county associations. . . It is possible that A.A.A. to some extent has contributed to a breakdown of the racial barriers, for the Negroes are allowed to attend A.A.A. meetings together with white farm operators in a few Southern states, as, for example, in North Carolina. But, with rare exceptions, they would not be permitted at those meetings in Alabama or Mississippi . . . although the Negro farm operators actually are in the majority in many counties. The influence of the Negro farm agents over the administration of A.A.A. is, of course, only through the white agents. This brings us to the conclusion that the Negro farmers have very

little influence over the local operation and enforcement of the A.A.A. legislation. This means that complaints from Negroes about acreage allotment and illegal diversion of payment practically always are judged by a committee of white farmers.[a]

[31] About the importance of the literacy factor in this context, see, for instance, Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 419.

[32] *Changes in Technology and Labor Requirements in Crop Production, Cotton.* Work Projects Administration, National Research Project (1938). Cited by Lange, "Trends in Southern Agriculture," p. 33.

NUMBER OF MOTOR TRUCKS AND TRACTORS ON FARMS: 1930 AND 1940

Item and Year	United States	The North and West	The South	Texas and Oklahoma	All other Southern States
Motor trucks					
1930	900,000	663,000	237,000	76,000	161,000
1940	1,047,000	737,000	310,000	85,000	225,000
Per Cent Increase	16%	11%	31%	12%	40%
Tractors					
1930	920,000	774,000	146,000	63,000	83,000
1940	1,567,000	1,296,000	271,000	144,000	127,000
Per Cent Increase	70%	67%	86%	129%	64%

Sources: Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture, Vol. IV, pp. 536, 537. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture,* United States Summary, Second Series, pp. 27–31.

[34] Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

[35] By 1940, Texas and Oklahoma had more than half of all farm tractors in the South. They also showed a more rapid increase during the 'thirties than did the rest of the South or the nation. This, in conjunction with the drought which hit Oklahoma particularly, brought about a more spectacular decline in the rural farm population than in any other Southern state. The white farm population between 1930 and 1940 decreased by 6 per cent in Oklahoma and by 7 per cent in Texas. The corresponding figures for the much smaller Negro farm population, as usual, were higher: 27 and 13 per cent, respectively.[b] Speaking of mechanization trends as affected by the A.A.A. in these parts of the South, Carl T. Schmidt says:

"To be sure, technological changes in cotton cultivation have been accelerated by the A.A.A., not only in the extent that it has given cotton planters cash with which to buy machinery, but also because the substitution of machines for tenants and croppers enables the landlords to double their share of the Government subsidy."[c]

The continuance of the differential in mechanization rates between the two parts of the South must give the Southwest a considerable competitive advantage, re-emphasizing the old shift in cotton culture to the Southwest. And under the pressure of this competition, the Southeast will probably intensify its own efforts to make the change. It seems to be only a question of time until an extensive mechanization of the cotton

[a] Lange, "Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro," pp. 24-25. Italics ours.

[b] *Sixteenth Census of the United States*: 1940, Preliminary Release, Series P-5a, No. 16.

[c] "Power Farming and Labor Displacement," *Monthly Labor Review* (March, 1938). Quoted by Schmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 263-264.

culture in the Delta will occur. An appraisal of what that would mean has been given by Horace C. Hamilton.[a]

"Langsford and Thibodeaux[b] have shown how the mechanization of plantations in the Mississippi Delta area would reduce the plantation labor force per plantation (having 750 acres of crops) from 40 families under the horse-drawn one-row system, to 24 families under a four-row tractor system. This amounts to a decrease of 40 per cent. In this estimate they are quite conservative, because they are assuming that some of the 24 families would be kept there primarily for the purpose of hoeing and picking cotton. If the Delta should come to depend upon transient labor as the Plains and Blacklands of Texas do, then less than 24 families might be kept on the plantation. Already we know of many instances where transient cotton pickers have been transported in trucks from Texas to Mississippi."

It should be added that such transient workers are often Mexicans, who have actually started to compete on a small scale with Negroes even in this stronghold of Negro agricultural labor.[c]

[36] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

[37] ". . . the general history of such machines suggests that the cotton-picker will eventually be perfected, for use in relatively flat country at least—and the greater part of the richer cotton lands of the South are located in just such country . . . it is an ominous machine . . . since it overcomes the last and principal barrier to the mechanization of Southern cotton farming . . . huge mechanized land units are plainly indicated as the easiest way to recovering, so far as it is possible, the foreign market, lost precisely because of the high production costs of the present methods of growing cotton."[d]

[38] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[39] "Many planters throughout the South agree that the cropper's necessity of keeping his second-hand Ford on the road, coupled with his inability to part with any cash for repairs, had made of him a good mechanic. Thus when the plantation comes to mechanize it will find its Negro labor machine conscious and able to make the transition."[e]

[40] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture*, Vol. IV, pp. 530 and 536-537. There were 38,000 tractors on tenant-operated farms in the South, but only 2,000 on farms operated by colored tenants in the whole country. Most tractors used by tenants may have been registered as belonging to the owner-operated parts of the plantations.

[41] "If . . . the mechanical cotton pickers should be applied to half of the 10 million acres of cotton in the Delta Lands, the Gulf Coast Prairie and the Texas Black Waxy Prairie, we might expect a saving . . . of half a million pickers during the cotton picking season. . . . Mechanization of other phases of cotton production should undoubt-

[a] "The Social Effects of Recent Trends in the Mechanization of Agriculture," *Rural Sociology* (March, 1939), p. 11.

[b] E. L. Langsford and B. H. Thibodeaux, *Plantation Organization and Operation in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Area*, U.S. Department of Agriculture Technical Bulletin 682 (1939), p. 80.

[c] Information received by Sterner during interview, Department of Welfare, Clarksdale, Mississippi, January, 1940.

[d] W. F. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941), p. 411. Compare Rupert B. Vance, *Human Geography of the South* (1936), p. 497.

[e] Vance, *op cit.*, p. 497.

edly accompany widespread use of the mechanical picker thereby decreasing the labor required prior to harvest."[a]

[42] Oren Stephens, "Revolt on the Delta," *Harper's Magazine* (November, 1941), p. 664.

[43] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 206.

[44] *Idem.*

[45] Quoted by Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 213. Often even the attempts to organize the tenants in the Southwest met with violence. One woman sympathizer was whipped while studying the activities of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in Arkansas. (See Oren Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 661.) A Negro member, who had received a leaflet from the Union containing an admonition that members take part in the election of the county conservation committee, showed this leaflet in the office of the county agent, while inquiring about the date of the election. He failed to receive the information, but later he was handcuffed, beaten and "run out of the county."[b]

A white attorney in Arkansas, although not particularly progressive,[c] was aroused by the illegal practices in the dealings with tenants and, therefore, used to assist them at court. Because he had helped some members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, his house was once attacked by a group of vigilantes, who, however, left when they found him armed.[d] The police generally take orders from the planters. Lower courts tend to decide against the tenants, but when cases are brought to higher courts, as by this attorney, they are frequently reversed.[e]

[46] Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, "History of S.T.F.U., S.T.F.U. Study Course," mimeographed, pp. 102. See also Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 208.

One of the most spectacular incidents occurred in January, 1939, when a group of displaced sharecroppers and other discontented rural workers of both races, led by persons connected with both the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (S.T.F.U.) and the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (U. C. A. P. A. W. A.), camped near a Missouri highway, thereby demonstrating their plight. After the state health authorities had delivered the somewhat peculiar declaration that their presence at this place constituted "a menace to the public health," they were moved to a less conspicuous location, where they were left stranded for some time, until the Farm Security Administration managed to take care of some of them. The organizers referred to this demonstration as an "organized peaceable protest against unfairness of cotton control to cotton workers" and against the "defeat of labor policy in cotton control."[f]

[a] Roman L. Horne and Eugene G. McKibben, "Changes in Farm Power and Equipment, Mechanical Cotton Picker" (1937), Works Progress Administration, National Research Project, Report A-2, p. 18.

[b] Information received by Sterner from the directors of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union at conference in Memphis, December 31, 1939. A number of similar cases are reported in issues of *The Tenant Farmer*, monthly magazine of the S.T.F.U.

[c] Stephens, *op. cit.*, p. 659.

[d] Interview by Sterner, October, 1938. Story confirmed by Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," pp. 216-217.

[e] *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211 and 217.

[f] Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," pp. 211-213. See also New York *Times* (January 11, 1939) and New York *Post* (January 20, and November 0, 1939).

[47] H. L. Mitchell, "The Southern Tenant Farmers Union in 1941," Report of the Secretary (1942), p. 2.

[48] Cited by Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 286; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture*, United States Summary, First Series, p. 10.

[50] Bertram Schrieke, who, with a background in Dutch colonial policy, surveyed the American Negro problem in the early 'thirties, painted the future for a new American peasantry quite rosy:

"America, and particularly the South, offers a unique opportunity for the development of the new peasant. He will do as the old peasant did, produce his own food and the feed for his stock. With his fruit, maple syrup, cream and butter, home-cured hams, cereals, and vegetables, he will provide himself a healthier and more abundant diet than he has ever known. At the same time, in this age of radios, automobiles, movies, and telephones, he will not be isolated as was the pioneer. The word 'peasant' brings unfavourable associations to the American mind. It suggests feudalism. The agriculturist wishes to be called a 'farmer,' but farming implies the production of commercial crops. However, the peasant is not a serf; he is a hard-working stubborn character, proud of his freedom and independence on his self-owned land."[a]

It should be recalled, however, that this new American peasant, in order to have a decent living standard—and particularly if he were to be provided with those gadgets of modern civilization which Schrieke would give him—would need a substantial cash income. This is not, under present trends in agricultural technique and in world production of agricultural goods, compatible with anything like the present ratio of labor to land in the South.

The so-called "agrarians"—a small group of Southern university professors, journalists, and so on—also have advocated a return to the land. Their reasons are sentimental rather than economic and they seem to have had no influence. See: Twelve Southerners, *I'll Take My Stand* (1930).

[51] *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy* (1935), pp. 68-69.

[52] *Preface to Peasantry* (1936), pp. 6-7. Italics ours.

[53] A tendency in Administration circles to abstain from publicly criticizing government policies has not been without responsibility for allowing the general public to be less well-informed on technical points of such public questions than corresponds to its intelligence and general education. The attitudes toward labor unions, social insurance, and agricultural policy are as a result too often in black and white: one is either for a policy as a whole, or against it. The tendency to extreme loyalty on the part of government experts has to be understood against the background (1) that the technical plans for policy are often originally drawn up without much public discussion; (2) that the Administration seems always to fear that the opposition will make undue use of any admission of unfavorable effects of a policy; (3) that the public expects all members of the Administration to agree, and if they do not agree they are said to be "bickering" or "showing jealousy." This spreads an air of one-mindedness and secretiveness around policy making, and makes the policy adopted partly a matter of accident. One administrator, when discussing certain features of the A.A.A. for which he was not responsible, privately remarked: "You cannot expect me to criticize the policy of the govern-

[a] *Alien Americans* (1936), p. 193.

ment." The whole set-up is much like the often-criticized Russian scheme of having discussion until a policy is voted upon and then a complete stifling of discussion.

[54] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 280. These estimates do not include future losses on commodity loans. Because of the War, such losses perhaps will not be so large.

[55] The full series of estimates for the latter part of this period is given below:

	1929	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Millions of dollars	1651	648	807	1190	1245	1360	1473	1342	1354	1292
Index Nos.	100	39	49	72	75	82	89	81	82	78

Figures are from *Farm Income* (February 19, 1941) and from figures made available through the Division of History and Statistics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, in Lange, "The Agricultural Administration Program and the Negro," p. 39. The nine Southeastern states included in the analysis were: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Kentucky and Tennessee. A.A.A. payments are included for the years 1933-1940.

[56] Computed from Lange, "Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro," p. 39. Lange gets his figures from *Farm Income* (February 19, 1941) and from figures made available through the Division of History and Statistics, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

[57] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Annotated Compilation of Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, as amended* (1938), Section 7a (5). Quoted by Lange, "Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro," p. 9.

[58] Lange, "Agricultural Adjustment Programs and the Negro," p. 7.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

[60] Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 41 and 44.

[61] True, not all planters receive incomes such as these averages indicate. Some even have to suffer losses. This was true of about 7 per cent of the 646 plantations in Woofter's larger plantation sample of 1934. But over one-third of the planters had a net cash income of at least $2,000, and the average for this group was $5,393.[a] On the whole, it seems that the statement, often heard in the South, that not only tenants but planters as well are poor, is greatly exaggerated. Those who want to argue that planters generally are badly off, often taken their recourse to certain computations of percentage returns on plantations; such computations cannot always be accepted without important qualifications.

Woofter estimates that the operator's average "capital investment" (total value of land, buildings, livestock and machinery) for a sample of 632 plantations was $28,694 in 1934. If the operator's salary for his own work is considered to be only $1,000 a year, the residual net return on this capital would be 5.5 per cent.[b] Such a capital return may seem low, but it is questionable whether it is low also for agricultural conditions. The author, who is somewhat familiar with Swedish agricultural economics, can testify that similar calculations for Swedish farms indicate the prevalence of much lower returns. This argument, however, cannot be stressed much, for computations of

[a] Woofter, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 86.

[b] *Ibid.*, p. 218.

this kind are always rather arbitrary and more or less incomparable. The main objection is, rather, that such calculations seldom give any exact and meaningful indices on the economic success of the operations. For the capital value is not an independent unit; it is a reflection of the anticipated net income (as well as of the anticipated returns on competing investment opportunities and of anticipated risks). The A.A.A. payments, for instance, undoubtedly have contributed to an increase in plantation values, and, although they constitute part of an increase in income, it is not certain that they have helped to bring about any rise in the percentage return. If they should have brought about such an increase, this is only because the investor considers them temporary and, consequently, bases his calculation on the assumption that his net income eventually will decline. Indeed, the greater the assurance that a certain increase in income will last, the less likely is it to cause any rise in the percentage return.

[62] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

[63] Woofter, "The Negro and Agricultural Policy," p. 110.

[64] United States Department of Agriculture, "Extension Work with Negroes," mimeographed, p. 5.

[65] Figures made available through the courtesy of Dr. M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Work, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

[66] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, p. 719. In Mississippi, for instance, where in 1942 the majority of the rural farm people are colored, less than one-fourth of the extension workers were Negro. Tennessee had but 20 colored workers in 1942, whereas the total number of extension workers, even in 1939, was fifteen times greater. Among all Southern counties with 500 or more Negro farm families almost two out of five were without any colored extension workers in 1941.[a]

It has already been mentioned that the Extension Service has frequently failed to stand up for the rights of tenants when landlords have appropriated A.A.A. payments intended for them or in other ways have misused the aid given under the A.A.A. program. A somewhat less serious charge is that some county agents, who frequently are the secretaries of local chapters of the Farm Bureau, have helped to force tenants, including Negroes, to become dues-paying members of this organization, which rarely, if ever, represents the interests of the Southern tenant class.[b] The county agents may rarely express an explicit command to the tenants to join the Farm Bureau; but a mere suggestion, often made when benefit checks are distributed, is enough to make a Negro believe that he has not much choice. About similar pressure from the side of landlords, see *PM* (February 23, 1942.)

[67] This system of federally organized credit agencies was begun by the institution of the Federal Land Banks (for mortgage loans) in 1916 and the Federal Intermediate Credit Banks (for certain types of production credit) in 1923. The Farm Credit Act of 1933 provided for the organization of the Farm Credit Administration (F.C.A.) which now includes half a dozen federally sponsored credit agencies working for various purposes, among those the older institutions which were just mentioned, as well as the Production Credit Corporations and Associations (for short-term credit), the Banks for Cooperatives, and the Emergency Crop and Feed Loan Offices (short-term credit for farmers unable to get assistance from other institutions). In addition, certain indepen-

[a] U. S. Department of Agriculture, "Extension Work among Negroes," Table II.

[b] Information from the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, December 31, 1939.

dent new federal agencies give more specialized types of agricultural credit, such as the Farm Security Administration, which will be discussed subsequently, the Commodity Credit Corporation, which is part of the previously mentioned "Ever-Normal Granary Plan" system, and the Rural Electrification Administration.

Even this incomplete list is impressive enough. Possibly it may reflect a certain overlapping between various offices, but in the main it indicates a real effort to solve the problem of agricultural credit in its various phases.

[68] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, p. 599.

[69] The total amount of such credit held by the various F.C.A. agencies and by the Commodity Credit Corporation on January 1, 1940, was not much more than half of that held by one single group of private institutions, the insured commercial banks; it was about the same in the South.[a] Woofter's study of 646 plantations in 1934 shows that a little more than one-fourth of the short-term credit came from government institutions.[b] The follow-up study of 246 plantations showed that less than half of them used any short-term credit at all in 1937; among those who did, over two-thirds used private sources of credit, usually banks, but in a few cases used supply merchants and fertilizer companies. The government institutions, however, had become more important at the expense of the private organizations. They were used somewhat less infrequently than in 1934, and they granted higher average amounts of credit.[c]

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[71] Woofter, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 55.

[72] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

[73] See, for instance, *The Tenant Farmer* (February 15, 1942).

[74] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 305.

[75] Information from field offices in Mississippi, January, 1940. See also Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

[76] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[77] *Monthly Report of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, May 1, through May 31, 1934*, p. 6.

[78] *Report of the Administrator of the Farm Security Administration, 1941*, pp. 28-29.

[79] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-301.

[80] *Ibid.*, pp. 300 and 305.

[81] *Ibid.*, pp. 301, 302, 304, and 308-309.

[82] *Ibid*, Table 125, p. 306.

[83] *Report of the Administrator of the Farm Security Administration, 1941*, p. 10.

[84] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

Chapter 13. *Seeking Jobs Outside Agriculture*

[1] "Whether upon the plantation or in towns, whether in the cruder trades or the artistic crafts, the Negroes played an important role. We find them on the rice or the tobacco plantations, serving their masters as carpenters, coopers, blacksmiths, sawyers,

[a] U. S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics: 1940*, pp. 619, 620, 632, and 633.

[b] Woofter, *Landlord and Tenant*, p. 212.

[c] Holley, Winston, and Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

wheelwrights, shoemakers, painters, etc. We may assume that they were, as a rule, not the most skilled or exact craftsmen, but they were capable of doing satisfactory work in shoeing horses and mules, making hogsheads, repairing barns and slave quarters, making wagons, cutting timber. The slave who had been trained to a craft always commanded a higher price than the ordinary field hand . . .

"In the larger towns in all parts of the South, slaves were trained to various crafts and used in the shops of the larger shipwrights, cabinetmakers, shoemakers, wigmakers, etc. . . .

"The custom of hiring out Negro artisans was common in many parts of the South. When a master craftsman died, his widow often found that she could depend on a fair revenue from the work of her slave helpers.

"This use of Negro craftsmen tended to run white men out of the trades, since it not only lowered wages, but cast a stigma on skilled labor. Slave labor in the rice and tobacco fields had already struck a deadly blow at the yeomanry, now it began to undermine the small but important artisan class. . . . In the old South, after the passing of wigs and elaborate hair dressing for men, the barber business fell largely into the hands of blacks. An old Southern gentleman once told me that on his first visit to the North he experienced a kind of shame for the white man who cut his hair and the white girls who waited on him at table. Thousands in the South were shocked when the first Negro postman delivered mail to their front doors. Thus, when the master craftsmen of the old South began to employ Negroes in large number, it tended to make carpentry, or bricklaying, or wheelmaking, or cooperage, or tanning the profession of slaves. Slave workers not only degraded labor, but cheapened it." (Thomas J. Wertenbaker, *The Old South* [1942], pp. 229-232.)

[2] *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* (1904), p. 127.

[3] *The Negro in Louisiana* (1937), pp. 135-136.

[4] Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 315.

[5] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), p. 151.

[6] Page, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[7] Winfield H. Collins, *The Truth about Lynching and the Negro in the South* (1918), p. 138.

[8] *Eleventh Census of the United States: 1890, Population*, Vol. II, Table 116; *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, Table 7.

[9] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 313-314; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. V, pp. 408-411.

[10] Although the South had 32 per cent of the nation's population in 1940, only about 20 per cent of all wage earners in manufacturing industries in 1939 were in the South. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1938*, Tables 6 and 793; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1941*, Table 868; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 1.)

[11] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 53.

[12] It should be noted that the concept of "labor force" in the 1940 Census, like the concept of "gainful worker" in earlier census enumerations, includes unemployed workers. This circumstance, owing to the increase in unemployment, affects the comparison between 1930 and 1940 to a greater extent than corresponding comparisons between previous census years. There are no reliable data for 1930 which could be compared

with the 1940 figures on employed workers. To be sure, a census of unemployment was taken in 1930 which indicated a much lower unemployment than in 1940, particularly for Negroes (*Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Unemployment*, Vol. II, pp. 232 ff.), but this study probably involves an under-enumeration, especially for Negroes. (There was little indication of unemployment rates being significantly higher for Negroes than for whites.) It is not likely, however, that a comparison based on accurate data for employed workers would have shown any smaller decrease in the proportion of Negroes in the urban labor force than do the figures in Table 2, since this would have presupposed that the race differential in unemployment had become smaller. Rather it was the other way around; in spite of the lack of reliable statistical data, it seems most probable that, between 1930 and 1940, unemployment increased more for Negroes than for whites.

This development is not restricted to the South. The discrepancy between the increase in urban Negro population and the increase in the Negro labor force was even greater in the North than in the South during this period. We shall discuss the causes later.

In both regions the development is to some extent explained by the institution of old age benefits and large-scale relief and by the increase in the numbers of Negro youths who attended schools: these factors caused a certain tendency for Negroes to withdraw from the labor market. (See Chapter 13, Section 9.) However, these withdrawals from the labor market were certainly due, in part, also to the lack of employment opportunities for Negroes which have tended to cause elderly people, particularly, to abstain from seeking jobs and from considering themselves as workers.

[13] See source reference to Table 3. Data available at this writing do not enable us to indicate the exact size of the change in total employment, since the 1940 figures refer to employed workers 14 years of age and over, and those for 1930 to both employed and unemployed workers 10 years of age and over. These circumstances have been considered in the text comment, which refers only to some of the most apparent changes.

[14] The Negroes in New York not only had to bear the pressure of general sentiment against free Negroes, but were called on to stand up under an economic pressure stronger than that endured by any other of the free groups. For generations the New York Negroes had had an almost uncontested field in many of the gainful occupations. They were domestic servants, laborers, boot-blacks, chimney-sweeps, whitewashers, barbers, hotel waiters, cooks, sailors, stevedores, seamstresses, ladies' hairdressers, janitors, caterers, coachmen. (At that time a black coachman was almost as sure a guarantee of aristocracy for a Northern white family as a black mammy for a family of the South.) In a limited way they were engaged in the skilled trades. The United States Census of 1850 lists New York Negroes in fourteen trades. In two occupations—as janitors of business buildings and as caterers—a number of individuals actually grew wealthy. (James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* [1930], pp. 43-44.)

[15] Frederick Douglass, cited by B. Schrieke, *Alien Americans* (1936), p. 122.

[16] There were many exceptions though. Ray Stannard Baker relates from the North:

"And yet, although I expected to find the Negro wholly ostracised by union labour, I discovered that where the Negro becomes numerous or skillful enough, he, like the Italian or the Russian Jew, begins to force his way into the unions. The very first

Negro carpenter I chanced to meet in the North (from whom I had expected a complaint of discrimination) said to me:

" 'I'm all right. I'm a member of the union and get union wages.'

"And I found after inquiry that there are a few Negroes in most of the unions of skilled workers, carpenters, masons, iron-workers, even in the exclusive typographical union and in the railroad organizations a few here and there, mostly mulattoes. They have got in just as the Italians get in, not because they are wanted, or because they are liked, but because by being prepared, skilled, energetic, the unions have had to take them in as a matter of self-protection. In the South the Negro is more readily accepted as a carpenter, blacksmith, or brick-layer than in the North not because he is more highly regarded but because (unlike the North) the South has almost no other labour supply." (*Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 135.)

[17] *The New South* (1890), pp. 249-250.

[18] *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904), pp. 186-187. The thesis that the South provided industrial opportunities for Negroes had a vital role in its defense for abridging their rights as citizens:

"The South has sometimes abridged the Negro's right to vote, but the South has not yet abridged his right, in any direction of human interest or of honest effort, to earn his bread. To the Negro, just now, the opportunity, by honest labor, to earn his bread is very much more important than the opportunity to cast his vote. The one opportunity is secondary, the other is primary; the one is incidental,—the greater number of enlightened peoples have lived happily for centuries without it,—the other is elemental, structural, indispensable; it lies at the very basis of life and integrity—whether individual or social." (*Ibid.*, pp. 187-188.)

[19] *Up From Slavery* (1901; first edition, 1900), pp. 219-220.

[20] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, Table 7.

[21] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, Table 7; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, State Table 11.

[22] The data for the nation as a whole indicate that, between 1910 and 1930, there was a 46 per cent increase of male workers (all races) in nonagricultural pursuits. For unskilled workers the rate of expansion was only 20 per cent. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States in 1930* [1938], p. 7.) Yet it was due, mainly, to this limited expansion in laboring jobs that the Negro was able to make any inroads into industry. Sterner points out:

"There were 1,171,000 more male unskilled workers in 1930 than in 1910; 40 per cent of these [additional] workers were Negroes. Of the 2,121,000 additional semi-skilled workers, 8 per cent were Negroes. The total increase in number of skilled, clerical, managerial, and professional male workers amounted to 5,739,000 persons, of whom only 2 per cent were Negroes." (Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study [1943], p. 27.)

Nevertheless, there had been some improvement in the Negroes' occupational status; the proportion of all Negro workers who were in semi-skilled occupations had increased, at the same time as the proportion of those in unskilled occupations had declined somewhat. Yet in relation to the white workers, the position of the Negro had become worse. (*Idem.*)

[23] Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 47 and 59.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 46-59.

[25] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 4.

[26] The employment rates for white females were comparatively uniform all over the country. In most large cities, North as well as South, from one-fifth to one-third of the white women were reported as employed. The rates for Negro women in large Southern cities usually ranged from one-third to one-half. In the North they were less consistent, and frequently much lower. In some cities, like Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and Pittsburgh, they were even lower than those for white women. (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, State Reports, Table 41.)

[27] In the nine Northern cities having the heaviest Negro population (New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis), the proportion of actually employed persons among Negro men 14 years and over ranged around one-half (from 45 to 56 per cent), whereas the corresponding figure for white males varied between two-thirds and three-fourths (from 63 to 73 per cent). Southern cities showed a somewhat smaller difference, but even there Negroes were worse off than whites. The large cities in the Upper and Lower South showed a rather uniform pattern; in most of them about two-thirds of the Negro men and three-fourths of the white men were registered as being employed. (*Idem.*)

[28] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 8.

[29] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 8. See also Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[30] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 31. At the Census of 1930 no less than 20 per cent of the Negro boys and 12 per cent of the girls, 10 to 15 years of age, were registered as gainful workers. The corresponding figures for white boys and girls were 5 and 2 per cent, respectively. Corresponding data from the 1940 Census are not available at this writing. It is known, however, that the rate for colored boys and girls, 14 years of age, dropped from 23 per cent in 1930 to 11 per cent in 1940; whereas, the corresponding figures for white boys and girls were 5 per cent in 1930 and 3 per cent in 1940. (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 8).

[31] The general rate for Negro women was about stationary for the period 1900-1930, but this was probably due to the migration from rural areas, where but a small proportion of females are registered as gainful workers. Urban areas seem to have shown a slight decline during the period. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.)

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

[33] It should be noted, however, that data for 1930 and 1940 are not quite comparable since the basic census definitions have been changed. Seasonal workers, who were neither working nor seeking work during the time of the census, were not included as members of the "labor force" in 1940; but in 1930 they were reckoned as "gainful workers." Since they may have been particularly numerous among the Negroes, it is possible that this, to some extent, may have made the equalization between Negroes and whites, in regard to proportion of persons in the labor force, appear as somewhat more pronounced than it actually was. This error in the comparison may have been counteracted, to some extent, by another difference in definition: young workers, who had never had any unemployment, are included as members of the "labor force" in 1940;

but they were not considered as gainful workers in 1930. This group, however, is small. (Regarding these problems of definition, see the previously quoted census publications.)

[34] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 8. There were several cities, however, particularly in the North, where the proportion of all workers (employed and unemployed) had become smaller among Negro than among white males (Table 6). Also, there were in the North some large cities where the relative number of female workers and job-seekers was only slightly higher in the Negro than in the white group. In such cases Negro rates usually tended to be even lower than white rates for girls under 25, at the same time as they were higher for other age groups. (*Ibid.*, Series P-4, No. 6.) One sometimes hears that many Negro mothers would rather work than let their daughters lose status in the eyes of possible suitors by accepting positions as domestics. We can take it for granted, at any rate, that the extremely limited range of job opportunities for Negro women is behind this phenomenon; after all, of all Negro women workers in nonagricultural pursuits in 1930, less than one-half were able to find work other than as servants or cooks in private families. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 303 and 358.) There has not been any substantial improvement since then.

[35] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, State Reports, Table 17.

[36] The proportion of old Negro men (75 years of age and over) who were still "in the labor market" declined from 53 per cent in 1930 to 23 per cent in 1940 (the corresponding figures for whites were 31 and 18 per cent, respectively). (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 8.)

[37] The discussion in this section is based, mainly, on the 1940 Census. There are no major studies which would enable us to get an idea about the trends in employment and unemployment rates by race. In addition to the 1940 Census, there are only two general studies reliable enough to be used, viz. the Unemployment Check Census studies of November, 1937 (Calvert L. Dedrick and Morris H. Hansen, *Final Report on Total and Partial Unemployment, 1937* [1938], Vol. 4) and the National Health Survey of 1935-1936 (Bernard D. Karpinos, *The Socio-Economic and Employment Status of the Urban Youth of the United States, 1935-1936* [1941].) Both of these studies give about the same picture of the character of the race differences in regard to the size of the "labor force," employment and unemployment as does the 1940 Census. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-45.) Yet the three sets of data are not comparable to such an extent that any conclusions regarding the trends could be drawn on the basis of them.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45. Italics ours.

Chapter 14. *The Negro in Business, the Professions, Public Service and Other White Collar Occupations*

[1] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States: 1930* (1938), p. 86, Table 31.

[2] Sutherland reports:

"The field studies indicated that there was no better place to study frustration of this

type than in the small northern community. Here the tradition of liberalism in race relations has given Negro youth an expectation of freedom in community life. In their childhood experiences they are accepted in the churches, in the schools, and on the playgrounds. Some are favored by white teachers who, recognizing their traditional handicap, give them special encouragement. Service clubs allocate part of their educational funds to Negro youth. Honors in athletics, in class offices, and in scholastic attainment also come their way. Responding to these incentives, the boy or girl feels no isolation and expects his good fortune to continue. He has already experienced some of the blessings of the American dream.

"Sad, therefore, is the awakening which comes to many of these youth when, upon graduation from high school, they find that the communities did not mean to be really liberal; that, although a service club would help a Negro boy to complete his high school course, its members would not give him a job after his schooling was over. Even before graduation day the lines of participation had been drawn and his social contacts were limited largely to other Negroes in the community, and in many small towns there are too few of them to provide any satisfactory kind of society. Unless he could manage to continue his education in college and settle in a larger community, his prospect of success was exceedingly slight." (Robert L. Sutherland, *Color, Class, and Personality* [1942], pp. 31-32.)

[3] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940*, Preliminary Release, "Retail Trade. Retail Negro Proprietorship—The United States—1939" (August 29, 1941). The description in this section is based both on the Census of Business and on occupational information from the Census of Population. They are not comparable in that the population census is much more complete in regard to very small establishments, but the discrepancy does not affect the main conclusions.

[4] *Idem.*

[5] Ira DeA. Reid, "The Negro in the American Economic System," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. I, pp. 102-103.

[6] Charleston, South Carolina, where Negroes live widely scattered, has little Negro business; Savannah, Georgia, where Negroes are concentrated in one area, has much more Negro business.

[7] This is true, for instance, in Richmond, Virginia, where the principal Negro neighborhood borders Broad Street.

[8] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 105.

[9] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 332-333.

[10] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 358; and U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1938*, p. 66.

[11] Edwards, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[12] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 497.

[13] For a statement of how few of the "Negro entertainment" places in Harlem are owned by Negroes, see Claude McKay, *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (1940), pp. 117-120.

[14] See James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 43-44.

[15] W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), pp. 119-121.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 120.

[17] *New Negro Alliance* v. *Sanitary Grocery Co.*, 303 U.S. 552 (1938).

[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 143.

[19] One or two of the more noteworthy campaigns may be mentioned. Certain Harlem organizations, in the middle of the 'thirties, forced some stores to take on a few Negro clerks. The merchants, however, secured an injunction against them for "restraint of trade" and the new colored workers were dismissed. The great discontent caused by this incident was the major force behind the Harlem race riot of 1935. The fight was continued by an organization called Greater New York Coordinating Committee for Employment which, in 1938, succeeded in getting a written agreement with the Uptown Chamber of Commerce to the effect that all stores in Harlem under the jurisdiction of the Chamber should increase the proportion of Negroes among their white collar workers to at least one-third, as soon as white employees resigned or were dismissed for cause. Negro workers should have the same chance of being promoted as other workers. Another campaign in New York which, according to Reid, has turned out to be "singularly effective," concerns public utilities. In this case there are several possible tactics: to force white telephone operators to make the connections instead of using the mechanical dialing system, to demand out-of-turn inspection of electricity and gas connections, to avoid using electricity, and so on. The St. Louis Urban League has organized "block units," some with 100 per cent membership. These and the Colored Clerk's Circle, as well as other organizations, have succeeded in getting jobs for several hundreds of colored clerks. There are some campaigns, however, which have miscarried, as for instance, one in Atlanta in the middle of the 'thirties. (Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 149-161.)

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 163.

[21] Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119.

[22] Sir George Campbell, *White and Black in the United States* (1879), p. 286. Du Bois comments as follows:

"Morally and practically, the Freedmen's Bank was part of the Freedmen's Bureau, although it had no legal connection with it. With the prestige of the government back of it, and a directing board of unusual respectability and national reputation, this banking institution had made a remarkable start in the development of that thrift among black folk which slavery had kept them from knowing. Then in one sad day came the crash,—all the hard-earned dollars of the freedmen disappeared; but that was the least of the loss,—all the faith in saving went too, and much of the faith in men; and that was a loss that a Nation which to-day sneers at Negro shiftlessness has never yet made good. Not even ten additional years of slavery could have done so much to throttle the thrift of the freedmen as the mismanagement and bankruptcy of the series of savings banks chartered by the Nation for their especial aid." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], pp. 36-37.)

[23] Most data in this and the preceding paragraphs are based on Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 70-83. Some of the main sources used by Reid are: Abram L. Harris, *The Negro as Capitalist* (1936); Jesse B. Blayton, "The Negro in Banking," *The Bankers Magazine* (December, 1936), pp. 511-514; and J. B. Blayton, "Are Negro Banks Safe?" *Opportunity* (May, 1937), pp. 139-141.

[24] All data on Negro insurance, except when otherwise stated, have been drawn from Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 84-92. The main basic source used by Reid was Samuel A. Rosenberg, *Negro Managed Building and Loan Associations in the United States* (1939). Concerning the general problem of Negro housing credit, see Chapter 15, Section 6.

[25] Some Northern states have made attempts to stop discrimination in insurance; the New York act even forbids the refusal of a Negro's application because of his race alone. (See Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* [1940], p. 70.) Most data on Negro life insurance, except when otherwise stated, are based on Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 37-69.

[26] See, for instance, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities: 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 8, "Changes in Assets and Liabilities" (1941), pp. 70-179. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Changes in Assets and Liabilities of Families*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 464 (1941), pp. 50 and 79. Concerning average amounts of premiums, see also, Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 152 and Appendix Table 35.

[27] According to the Consumer Purchases Study it is quite usual that every year as much as 5 or 10 per cent—sometimes up to 15 per cent—of the low income families surrender their insurance policies; the proportion of policies which fail to reach maturity must under such circumstances be extremely high. (U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities: 1935-36*, pp. 70-179.)

[28] A survey of funeral expenses connected with 7,871 "adult deaths" of industrial policyholders in 1927 revealed that the average cost of burial was $363. The average insurance carried was somewhat lower ($309). Another group studied was composed of 3,121 veterans, for whom the average burial cost ranged from $241 in towns with less than 10,000 population to $336 in cities of over 250,000. Funeral expenditures of 319 dependent widows applying for pensions to the New York Board of Child Welfare averaged $247 in the Jewish group, $421 in the Italian group, and $452 in the Irish group. It happened frequently that low income families spent large sums on an extravagant funeral and a few weeks later applied for relief. The high fees apparently had caused an over-expansion in this business; it was ascertained that 92 per cent of the undertakers in New York City made a living on an average of but 25 funerals a year. (John C. Gebhard, *Funeral Costs*, Miscellaneous Contributions on the Costs of Medical Care, Number 3, The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care [1930], pp. 3-7.) Although conditions may have changed since the time of this study, it is a well-known fact that funeral costs are still high.

[29] We have asked Negro insurance officials whether it would not be in the public interest for the insurance companies to develop policies which would set limits to the extraordinary expenses that poor Negro families incur when one of the family dies, and whether they would not start an educational campaign to teach people the importance of keeping insurance for the survivors instead of spending it on funerals. The answers have, in general, been the following: (1) one should not interfere with the desires of people to use their money as they please; (2) the intense desire among even the poorest Negroes to guarantee a decent funeral after death is one of the strongest incentives for keeping up insurance, and the insurance companies should not be expected to demolish the basis for their own business; (3) even granted that the morticians artificially stimulate in an unsocial way conspicuous consumption in luxurious funerals, and that, particularly, they exploit the poor people, one business should not be expected to take a stand against another business; (4) the morticians are so powerful in the Negro community,

and are so entrenched in the churches, that not even the big insurance company dares to take up a fight against them.

[30] A detailed account of these societies is given in Harry J. Walker, "Negro Benevolent Societies in New Orleans," unpublished manuscript, Department of Social Science, Fisk University (1936).

[31] Modern Negro insurance history centers around four institutions: the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company of Durham, the Standard Life Insurance Company of Atlanta, the National Benefit Life Insurance Company of Washington, D. C., and the Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company of Chicago. The history of the North Carolina Mutual goes back to 1898. C. C. Spaulding, still the leading Negro finance official, soon became its most prominent officer. The Standard Life Insurance Company of Atlanta, which was organized in 1913, has had a more turbulent history. Its activities rose rapidly but soon they became too involved, in that investments were made in quite a number of business and real estate projects, many of which were far outside the sphere of ordinary life insurance investment. The company was finally dissolved in the middle of the 'twenties. The National Benefit Life Insurance Company in Washington also was one of those concerns which went too far in its investment policies. It failed in 1931. There are several other Negro life insurance ventures which have been characterized by similar shortcomings, such as unwise spending, high administrative costs, lack of prudent management, excessive investment in real estate, too great a readiness to help Negro business establishments, marginal trading in stock. Irregularities have not been infrequent. The personnel is often underpaid: Premiums, it is claimed, are computed from tables which do not reflect the true mortality of the Negro population. The turnover among those insured is described as high.

Unsuccessful Negro insurance companies have been made the subject of a special study by the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, entitled *Causes of Negro Insurance Company Failures*, Bulletin No. 15 (1937).

[32] Edwards, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 and 13.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 46-49 and 58-61.

[34] It should be noted, in passing, that these data seem to suggest a certain equalization in the educational facilities for Negroes and whites. At the same time as the Negro school system expanded somewhat more than the white school system, there was a great increase in the number of Negro pupils in unsegregated Northern schools.

[35] Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1939), p. 21. Among sources used by Wilkerson are Ambrose Caliver, *Education of Negro Teachers*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 10 (1933); David T. Blose and Ambrose Caliver, *Statistics of the Education of Negroes, 1933-34 and 1935-36*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 13 (1938).

[36] Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-25.

[37] Bond, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265.

[38] Decision of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals of June 18, 1940, in the case of *Melvin Alston* v. *the School Board of Norfolk, Virginia.*

[39] An account of these developments is given in recent issues of the magazines, *The Crisis* and *Opportunity*. A summary of the development until mid-1941 is given in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *Teachers' Salaries in Black and White. A Pamphlet for Teachers and Their Friends* (September, 1941).

[40] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 248; Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-69; Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro College Graduate* (1938), p. 137.

[41] It seems that the majority of the churches give at least moral support to Negro business establishments in one form or another. (Woodson, *op. cit.*, p. 76.)

[42] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 242.

[43] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70. See also Chapter 40 of this book.

[44] Woodson, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

[45] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 182.

[46] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-102. Although Woodson does not say so, it is quite likely that some of this white trade consists of abortion cases.

[47] *Idem.*

[48] The average amount per year for different community groups ranges between $10 and $20 for families with an income of less than $500; they usually run into several hundreds of dollars for families with more than $3,000. Negroes, since they are poorer, often use a somewhat smaller percentage of their income for this purpose than do whites, and the actual amounts they spend are only one-third or one-half of those spent by the average white family.[a]

[49] Woodson, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[51] Harold F. Dorn, "Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 113 a.

[52] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 186-187.

[53] Sterner once interviewed one of the leaders of the National Medical Association (the Negro professional organization for physicians and surgeons) who resides in the Deep South. He complained about how a patient brought to a hospital was always a patient lost to him. He described how he had tried to make Negroes understand that the treatment at the public clinic was not in any real sense free, as the patients had to pay "with their good name." One of the reasons why the Negro private practitioner was losing out, he explained, was that employers send their workers to the public clinic; they are not even allowed to retain jobs at a shirt factory unless they are free from syphilis. The informant seemed to be against any further increase in public health facilities for Negroes, but apparently mainly for the reason that he feared that Negro doctors would never get any chance to work at public clinics and hospitals. His repeated requests to the state government that the Negro doctor be given a real place in the public health service of the state had been in vain. (Interview, January 8, 1940.)

[54] Howard University with 276 candidates had only 33 failures, or 12 per cent. This ranks favorably with other medical schools; Harvard University, at the top, had 1.1 per cent of its 276 candidates failing; Loyola University, at the bottom, had 20.9 per cent of its 254 candidates failing. (Albert E. Casey, "Research Activity and the Quality of Teaching in Medical Schools," *Science* [July 31, 1942], pp. 110-111.)

[55] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 185-187. During the 'thirties, there was a decline in the number of students at Negro medical schools, but this was probably a depression phenomenon. The number of interneships available to Negroes has increased from 68 in 1931 to 168 in 1939.

[56] Charles S. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[a] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-153. Data based on *Study of Consumer Purchases: 1935-36*. Data refer to nonrelief families only.

[57] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-113.

[58] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 215.

[59] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-183.

[60] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 283-290.

[61] Cited in *ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 296.

[62] Sterner once met a white Farm Security supervisor in the Deep South who complained about the restricted possibilities of having Negro assistants and cooperating freely with them. He asserted that Negro workers, in general, gained the confidence of Negro clients much more easily than did white workers. He once had a male Negro assistant who had been forced to leave because of the resentment in the community. According to another informant in the community, a young educated Negro who said that he was the friend of this Negro assistant, the departure had been brought about by a group of whites who had entered the office of the assistant and told him to get out of town before a certain time. There was still a female Negro co-worker, but she had to work outside the town and the daily communications with her had to be made over the telephone—an arrangement which the white Farm Security official described as extremely inconvenient.

[63] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 416-419; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 23; Vol. 5, p. 548.

[64] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. V, p. 83.

[65] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 426-431; *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. V, pp. 572-574.

[66] Laurence J. W. Hayes, *The Negro Federal Government Worker* (1941), pp. 37-56.

[67] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 169.

[68] The total number of Negro federal employees (including custodial workers and laborers), according to the estimates cited by Hayes (*op. cit.*, p. 153), increased regularly —even during the Wilson administration:

	Number	*Per cent*
1892	2,000	1.4
1900	1,000	0.4
1912	20,000	5.0
1918	45,000	4.9
1933	53,000	9.8
1938	82,000	9.9

Only a minority of these workers, however, were officials and clerical employees.

[69] A very light Negro stenographer told Sterner that she had at first worked in the stenographic pool of one large Washington agency. After some time she was sent to work in another building of the same agency where those in charge of assignment did not know her race. Immediately she was put to work as a private secretary to one of the white officials. The white girls associated with her. This situation embarrassed her, for she had not intended to "pass" but feared the expression of resentment from her boss and the white girls if she told them that she was a Negro.

[70] This has happened, for instance, in the Bureau of the Census owing to the activity of the Federal Workers' Union, to which, however, only a minority of the employees

in the Bureau belong. Some time afterwards, a mimeographed sheet denouncing Negro employees was secretly distributed among the employees.

Another incident, as related by the Washington Bureau of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People:

"A suit in criminal court against . . . a guard at the War Department building in Arlington, Va., is expected to be filed by the Bureau within the next few days.

"Trouble came May 18, when James Harold, a War Department draftsman, was struck over the head . . . when Harold and other colored workers in the department attempted to enter the cafeteria in the building.

"Quick action by the Bureau resulted in the removal of the ban against Negroes at the cafeteria." (N.A.A.C.P., *Bulletin*, [June, 1942].)

[71] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. V, pp. 574-576.

[72] Woodson, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-251.

[73] *Thirteenth Census of the United States: 1910, Population*, Vol. IV, Table VII; U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, Table 23; U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1938*, Table 51.

[74] For an enumeration of the white-owned and Negro-owned places of amusement featuring Negro entertainers in New York, see McKay, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-120.

[75] Reid, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 358. Based on unpublished manuscript by William T. Smith (editor), *Silhouette*, Los Angeles, California.

[76] *PM* (June 23, 1942), p. 22.

[77] Frazier describes a district of Louisville in the following words:

"Within the boundaries of this zone the tempo of Negro life in Louisville is most rapid and all forms of illegal and anti-social practices flourish. Throughout the area 'hustlers,' thieves, 'con' men, pimps, policy writers, and race horse bookies ply their trades. Under the guise of legitimate business, traffic is carried on in dope or 'reefers,' liquor, and prostitution. Though the number of legitimate liquor stores is increasing monthly, bootleg liquor known as 'mammy,' 'splo,' and 'derail' is sold in the dens of vice to which men go for all types of sexual pleasures. There are homosexual 'joints' masquerading under the names of clubs and inns. And, as in all cities, there are the 'exclusive' dens of vice where Negro women cater to the perverted as well as normal sexual desires of white men." (E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], p. 16.)

Fortune magazine describes the underworld of Harlem:

"There are reefer pads (marihuana dens), gambling houses, and countless houses of prostitution. Most 'hotels' are brothels, and it is a usual sight to see a dozen street-walkers on every corner in lower Harlem . . .

"Almost every grocery, cigar store, beauty parlor, barbershop, and tavern in Harlem is a numbers 'drop' where the collectors pick up the play for the day . . . Harlem . . . has . . . the city's highest record of . . . dope peddling." (This quotation and others in this section are reprinted through the courtesy of *Fortune* magazine, "Harlem," July, 1939, p. 170.)

[78] See Claude McKay, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-116.

[79] Du Bois mentions this type of gambling as early as 1897. (See *The Philadelphia Negro*, p. 265.)

[80] See J. Saunders Redding, "Playing the Numbers," *The North American Review* (December, 1934), pp. 533-542.

[81] During the prohibition era and afterwards when bootlegging became less profitable, the organized white criminal gangs "muscled in" and not only took control of the numbers racket in the Negro community but introduced it into the white community where it now flourishes all over the United States. The New York investigation into the activities of "Dutch" Schultz, head of the numbers racket, revealed a close tie between his activities and those of the Tammany political machine. (See *Newsweek* [August 1, 1938], pp. 7-8.)

At the present time, although the heads of the national numbers syndicates are whites, Negroes run the number rackets in Negro communities. *Fortune* points out:

". . . the hottest game in Harlem is the numbers game, the policy racket, which is going stronger than ever since the publicity of the Jimmy Hines [Tammany leader] trial. The racket, run by Negroes who have a working agreement with the white bankers of Manhattan and Hoboken, grosses about $20,000,000 a year." (*Fortune, op. cit.*, p. 170.)

For a description of the "numbers" racket in Chicago, see J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1941), pp. 274-277; and J. G. St. Clair Drake, *Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community*, Work Projects Administration Report (1940), pp. 179-182.

[82] See Redding, *op. cit.*, pp. 537 and 540.

[83] Gosnell tells about Daniel M. Jackson, before his death in 1927 the most powerful vice and gambling king in Chicago, that he was noted for his generosity to poor people. He quotes the following statement, made during an interview, by a Negro journalist:

"I don't like to admit it, but an open town is far better for the Negroes than a closed town. . . . Of course, these bosses make a lot of money, but while Jackson was in control he donated thousands to charities, the N.A.A.C.P., working girls' homes and the like. While Jackson was in power the colored people always had a friend to go to. . . . " (Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicans* [1935], pp. 131-132.)

Regarding the reasons for the power of the Negro underworld leaders, Gosnell states:

"In commenting on this situation one prominent Negro said: '. . . Now, if I were to run for a political office, I would have to raise campaign expenses. If I went to every professional man in the town, I would not be able to raise two hundred dollars. But if I went to the vice lords and policy kings, I would get two or three thousand from a couple of them.' . . . In relation to other enterprises run or partly controlled by Negroes the total amount of money involved in the undercover activities is large. The drug stores, the taxi cab companies, the beauty parlors, the bonding houses, the small shops, the criminal lawyers, the real estate companies, and even the bankers in the communities where the 'racketeers' are numerous and well supplied with cash may depend in part for their own prosperity upon the patronage of those engaged in illegal activities." (*Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.)

[84] In addition to the jobs connected directly with the numbers game, there are a whole parallel series of "shady" businesses that exist partly for the purpose of turning up the lucky number; these are the occult enterprises, the astrologers, charm sellers, crystal-ball readers, fortune tellers:

"A subsidiary of the [numbers] game is the dream-book and incense business.

Dream books containing lucky numbers are sold for two bits or half a dollar. The incense sells for a dime and, when it has burned down, three numbers (the right ones, of course) can be seen in the ashes." (*Fortune*, *op. cit.*, p. 170. See also, Redding, *op. cit.*, pp. 539 ff; and John B. Kennedy, "So This is Harlem," *Collier's* [October 28, 1933], pp. 22 and 50-52.)

Many of these enterprises are owned and operated by the policy kings on a syndicated basis, and the employees belong to the shady middle or lower class; they have relatively little power or wealth. Some few of the astrologers, many of them women, however, build up a reputation and clientele and exert considerable influence in the shady upper classes. See McKay, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-81.)

[85] Frazier has some pertinent observations on the mechanism of the tendencies to asociality among Negroes:

"The . . . pathological feature of the Negro community is of a more general character and grows out of the fact that the Negro is kept behind the walls of segregation and is not permitted to compete in the larger community. This produces an artificial situation in which inferior standards of excellence and efficiency are set up. Since the Negro is not required to compete in the larger world and to assume its responsibilities and suffer its penalties, he does not have an opportunity to mature. Moreover, living within a small world with its peculiar valuations and distinctions, he may easily develop on the basis of some superficial distinction a conception of his role and status which may militate against the stability of his own little world. This is manifested not only in the activities of racketeers who are known as such, but also in the behavior of those who because of color, of 'good looks' or education maintain a professional or upper-class 'front' while engaging in antisocial practices." (*Op. cit.*, p. 290.)

[86] Frazier, *op. cit.*, p. 16 *passim*.

[87] One observer reports:

"I have seen colored prostitutes galore, catering to a white clientele who are satisfied to pay fancy prices for novelties offered. It is said that about ninety per cent of these dives are owned and managed by whites . . .; five per cent are owned and managed by whites and negroes jointly, and the balance are managed by colored people. (Hendrik de Leeuw, *Sinful Cities of the Western World* [1934], p. 266.)

Fortune states:

"In recent years white prostitutes have also been imported from downtown." (*Op. cit.*, p. 170.)

[88] Gosnell observes:

"Since it is easier to observe immoral conditions among a poor and unprotected people, colored prostitutes are much more liable to arrest than white prostitutes. White women may use the big hotels or private apartments for their illicit trade, but the colored women are more commonly forced to walk the streets."

And he goes on to explain how officers often tend to arrest Negro girls solely because they find them in company with white men, whereas white women can approach white men without being conspicuous. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.)

[89] The *Nation* reports that prices for Negro prostitutes range from 25 cents to $2 while those for whites are $1 to $5. ("Prostitution in New York City," editorial, *Nation* [March 25, 1936], p. 369.)

[90] Merely as an illustration we quote the following estimates about the Chicago Negro community:

"Protected business is important in the economic life of the community. Some $10,000,000 is spent annually on policy playing alone. The game gives employment to more than 4,000 people and maintains a weekly payroll of $40,000 in salaries and commissions. No other business in the Negro community is so large or so influential." (W. Lloyd Warner, Buford H. Junker, and Walter A. Adams, *Color and Human Nature* [1941], p. 19.)

Chapter 15. *The Negro In The Public Economy*

[1] Clearly regressive indirect taxation, such as property, tobacco, liquor, and sales taxes, and custom duties, made up more than half the total national tax receipts in 1937. (See the Twentieth Century Fund, *Facing the Tax Problem* [1937], pp. 9-25. For a similar estimate for 1936, see Clarence Heer, *Federal Aid and the Tax Problem*, The Advisory Committee on Education, Staff Study No. 4 [1939], p. 34.) Some estimates are presented in this study illustrating the point in the text that taxes were regressive for the lower and middle income groups; see *ibid.*, p. 232.

[2] The Constitution of the United States does not, of course, say anything directly about the distribution of public services, or about the principle of "need." The relevant phrasing is in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment:

"No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

It is to be noted that this requires not only equality but also equality applied to *individuals* and not to groups. Under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court has consistently required the states to provide equal facilities to individual Negroes, and this in effect turns out to be the principle of need. If, for example, a state has an unemployment insurance law, it must apply equally to individual Negroes and individual whites, even though Negroes as a group are more benefited because more of them are unemployed. Similarly, individual Negroes do not have to pay higher gasoline taxes than individual whites, even though the entire group of Negroes pays less gasoline taxes because it buys less gasoline. For this reason we shall refer to the principle of need as the "constitutional" norm, and we shall regard as unconstitutional any attempt to relate the distribution of general public services either to a group or to the amount of taxes paid by an individual or group.

[3] An example of this is presented in T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Associates, *Black Yeomanry* (1930). The total tax levy for an almost all-Negro community during the period 1921-1927 was $16,437, while the total value of services was estimated at $6,837, or 42 per cent of the former amount. (See *ibid.*, pp. 158-185 and 275.)

[4] T. J. Woofter, Jr., for instance, has this to say:

"The democratic theory of public expenditure demands more than common justice. It demands that the money raised from public taxation be spent where it is most needed, regardless of the sums which the needy group have paid in. If the policy of expending money for education in proportion to the amount paid in were adopted, then the rich districts and wards would have magnificent palaces for public schools and the poorer

districts and wards would have schools little better than those provided for the Negroes now. . . .

"Some communities are . . . so far behind the realization of this democratic ideal that it is necessary to hold up before them the amount of money which the Negroes actually contribute in order to emphasize the fact that common justice demands the more liberal support of colored institutions.

"Many communities in the South have never expended a cent of public money for a colored public school building, but have relied on the use of a church or a school building erected by private agencies. In some of these communities bonds have been issued recently to build expensive schools for whites. This means that colored property holders are taxed to build school buildings for white people. . . ." (*The Basis of Racial Adjustment* [1925], pp. 154-155.)

[5] "The universality of the property tax burden is often ignored in current tax discussion. Many members of the community, it is sometimes said, are 'exempt' from taxes, since they are so poor that they pay no income taxes, health duties, or gift taxes, and own no taxable property. They are, however, exempt only in the sense that they have no direct contact with the tax collector." (The Twentieth Century Fund, *op. cit.*, p. 296.)

[6] It is indicative of the opportunism of popular beliefs that, while the observer finds most white people in the South inclined to stress that Negroes pay practically no taxes, Negroes, on the other hand, show themselves quite sophisticated in the theory of the incidence of indirect taxation. In 1873 a Negro Reconstruction politician, the Mississippi State Superintendent of Education, Cardozo, expressed what is the Negro theory in the matter:

"Again it is objected that a general tax compels white men of the State to educate the children of the Negro. But as the Negro forms a majority of the entire population of the State, and in an eminent degree a majority of the producing classes, as such classes of every population—the laborer, tenant, and consumer—indirectly bear the burdens of taxation, it follows that an assessment upon the property of the State would be principally paid by the Negro. . . ." (Quoted in Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* [1934], p. 71.)

[7] The Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee* (1938), pp. 20-22.

[8] The mean family income in 1935-1936, according to the estimates of the National Resources Committee, was $1,622 for the country as a whole and $1,326 for the South. The Mountain and Plains regions, however, which include several states with rather high expenditures per pupil, showed an average family income ($1,363) which was not much higher than that for the South. (National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the United States, Their Distribution in 1935-36* [1938], pp. 21-22.) In the South there were in 1930 about 6 children, 5 to 17 years of age, to every 10 adults, 20 to 64 years of age; in the rest of the country there were about 4 children to every 10 adults. (*Report on Economic Conditions of the South*, prepared for the President by the National Emergency Council [1938], p. 25; The Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee*, p. 25). Additional information on income and on number of children is presented in Chapter 16 of this book.

[9] A calculation made by the Advisory Committee on Education (*The Federal Government and Education* [1938], pp. 8 and 12-13), of the yield of a uniform state tax,

indicates that the state-to-state variations in these yields are much greater than are the differences in actual expenditures for education. In Mississippi the yield per child would be only one-tenth of that in New York State, whereas the actual expenditure per child was one-fifth of the amount expended in New York State.

[10] In Arizona and in the two Dakotas, the expenditure level was even higher than the national average, and in Utah it was not far below this national figure. (Advisory Committee on Education, *The Federal Government and Education*, pp. 8 and 12-13.)

[11] Missouri and Oklahoma even showed somewhat higher per pupil expenditures for Negro schools than they showed for white schools. This is due to the fact that Negroes in these two states, to a greater extent than whites, are concentrated in cities, where school expenses always tend to be higher than they are in the country.

[12] David T. Blose and Ambrose Caliver, *Statistics of the Education of Negroes, 1933-34 and 1935-36* (1939), pp. 14-16.

[13] Doxey Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1938), p. 21.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 9. Also see Chapter 43, Section 4, of this book.

[16] Sixty-five per cent of all the Negro public schools in Louisiana are one-teacher schools, and another 27 per cent are two- or three-teacher schools. (See Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," *Louisiana Educational Survey* [1942], p. 43.)

[17] Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 45, and 60.

[19] The main figures in the tabulation are as follows:

Race	Number of Counties	Median Expenditure for Teachers' Salaries in Counties With Specified Proportion of Negroes in the School Population, Aged 5-19: 1930-1931							
		0 – 12.4%	12.5– 24.9%	25.0– 37.4%	37.5– 49.9%	50.0– 62.4%	62.5– 74.9%	75.0– 87.4%	87.5– 99.9%
Negro Schools	521	$8.62	$5.28	$5.56	$4.46	$3.05	$2.85	$2.12	(only 1
White Schools	526	14.31	16.87	21.25	21.25	22.58	26.25	28.50	county)

Source: Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934), pp. 240-241.

[20] Bond, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-245.

[21] "Experience with a number of Federal funds has demonstrated that when the division of Federal grants between separate white and Negro schools or institutions is left entirely to administrative discretion, it is exceedingly difficult to secure an equitable distribution. Experience with some State distributive funds has also indicated that when such funds are allocated to local jurisdictions for Negro schools, frequently either the funds for Negro schools are diverted in part to white schools or the local support of Negro schools is reduced and the effect of State aid is cancelled in whole or in part." (The Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee*, p. 51.)

[22] See Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), pp. 88, *passim*. Mangum summarizes his discussion as follows:

"The central theme running through the above discussion of the statutes and decisions on this important subject is the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for the children of all races. The fact that such a guarantee of equal facilities exists does not

mean that it is carried out in the southern states. In fact it is the exception and not the rule for the Negro schools in that part of the nation to be anywhere near as efficient as those for the whites. The inequalities are manifest to anyone who has even a cursory knowledge of the present status of education in the South." (*Ibid.*, pp. 129-130; Compare p. 137.)

[23] Charles H. Thompson, "The Status of Education *Of* and *For* the Negro in the American Social Order," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1939), pp. 494-495. See also, Bond, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

[24] Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 79. Where the federal government has left it up to the state legislatures to allocate the funds for agricultural, industrial, or home economics training, Negroes have received little of the benefits. According to Wilkerson, such federal acts include: Hatch Act (1887), Adams Act (1906), Smith-Lever Act (1914), Clarke-McNary Act (1924), Purnell Act (1925), Capper-Ketcham Act (1928), and Bankhead-Jones Act, Sections 1-8 and 21 (1935). But where the federal law stipulates that Negro schools are to receive an equitable share of the funds, Negroes have received benefits. Such laws include: Nelson Amendment (1907) to the Morrill Act (1890) and Bankhead-Jones Act, Section 22 (1935). Negroes have received about half their proportionate share of the Smith-Hughes Act (1917) funds. (*Idem.*)

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[26] Robert M. Lester, "Corporation Grants for Education of the Negro," A Report of the Carnegie Corporation of New York (1941), p. 26.

[27] Advisory Committee on Education, *The Federal Government and Education*, pp. 17-18.

[28] Ira DeA. Reid, *In a Minor Key* (1940), p. 39.

[29] Advisory Committee on Education, *Federal Relations to Education*, two vols. (1931); Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee* (1938), p. 243. More recently the American Youth Commission, headed by Owen D. Young and composed of eight laymen and eight educators, came to a similar conclusion after extensive investigation. (Educational Policies Commission, *Education and Economic Well-Being in American Democracy* [1940].) The conclusion of the former of the two commissions was summarized as follows:

"The facts presented previously in this report indicate that no sound plan of local or state taxation can be devised and instituted that will support in every local community a school system which meets minimum acceptable standards. Unless the Federal Government participates in the financial support of the schools and related services, several millions of the children in the United States will continue to be largely denied the educational opportunities that should be regarded as their birthright." (Advisory Committee on Education, *Report of the Committee*, p. 47; compare Clarence Heer, *op. cit.*, particularly pp. 86-87.)

[30] The subject is touchy, and the Advisory Committee on Education is anything but clear in its pronouncements on this point. On the one hand, it recommends, in its main report, that:

". . . all Federal action should reserve explicitly to State and local auspices the general administration of schools, control over the processes of education, and the determination of the best uses of the allotments of Federal funds within the types of expenditure for which Federal funds may be made available." (*Report of the Committee*, p. 42.)

On the other hand, it advises that:

"All Federal grants for educational purposes to States maintaining separate schools and institutions for Negroes should be conditioned upon an equitable distribution of the Federal funds between facilities for the two races." (*Ibid.*, p. 43.)

In the last statement it does not seem to be implied that federal authorities should make it a condition for federal aid that *state and local* appropriations be equitably distributed between Negro and white schools. It is only said that the proportion of state and local funds spent for Negro schools should "not be reduced" when the federal government gives money. (*Ibid.*, p. 51.)

[31] Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), pp. 152 ff.

[32] According to Elliot H. Pennell, Joseph W. Mountin, Kay Pearson, *Business Census of Hospitals, 1935*, Supplement No. 154 to the Public Health Reports (1939), 47 per cent of the total income came from government funds, 43 per cent from patients and 10 per cent from private endowments and gifts. (Russell Sage Foundation, Russell H. Kurtz (editor), *Social Work Yearbook, 1941* [1941], p. 329.)

[33] Monroe N. Work (editor), *Negro Year Book, 1937-1938* (1937), pp. 290-292.

[34] According to a survey for 1935, none of the states in the Upper and Lower South had as many as 345 beds per 100,000 population in all registered general and special hospitals, and all but three of them (Virginia, Florida, and Louisiana) had less than 264. On the other hand, Maryland, District of Columbia, as well as several Northern and Western states, had rates higher than 445. (Joseph W. Mountin, Elliot H. Pennell, and Evelyn Flook, *Hospital Facilities in the United States*, U.S. Public Health Service Bulletin No. 243 [1938], quoted by Harold F. Dorn, "The Health of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Figure 44.) Conditions have certainly improved since then, however, in part due to increased efforts on the part of the federal government which has rendered assistance, through its program of public works, for the erection of several new hospitals.

[35] According to Charles S. Johnson, the P.W.A. provided, either by direct aid or by loans, 8,000 hospitals beds for Negroes in 17 Southern states. (See "The Negro," *American Journal of Sociology* [May, 1942], p. 857.) Also see: Federal Works Agency, *Second Annual Report* (1941), pp. 116, 191, 315, 460.

[36] *Social Work Yearbook, 1941*, pp. 332-336 and 427-430.

[37] Sterner, when visiting the public health clinic in a Mississippi county in December, 1939, was told how planters brought truckloads of their tenants to the clinic for treatment of syphilis. A prominent Negro doctor in another Mississippi town told him how white manufacturers did not even let Negroes do factory work unless they received treatment for veneral diseases at the public clinic. The public health officer in this city said that about 90 per cent of the clients at the clinic were Negroes.

[38] At the end of 1939, almost two-thirds of the rural counties were still without any complete health departments directed by full-time medical officers, but the increase in number of units where satisfactory public health services are rendered has been extremely rapid during the last decade. In 1940 more than two-thirds of the counties had at least public health nurses. The federal government, under special provisions in the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Venereal Disease Control Act of 1938, has rendered financial assistance on a matching basis to several programs, including general health

clinics as well as maternal and child health services, venereal disease clinics, and so on. (*Social Work Yearbook, 1941*, pp. 324-325 and 432-433.) Considerable extension of this federal assistance was proposed in the National Health Bill.

[39] Michael M. Davis observes:

"Programs have been planned by categories of disease. Tuberculosis, diphtheria, infant and maternal mortality, venereal disease, hookworm, malaria, mental disease, and some others, have each been the objective of specific programs. General sanitation, the disposal of excreta, and the control of epidemics represent other, historically older objectives which are really categorical. The diseases of people have been studied and a series of technical procedures have been discovered for control or prevention. The people have rarely been studied, to determine the health needs they had, the needs they felt, and the relative urgency of those recognized needs—so as to plan a health campaign, which would meet a social situation as well as a series of biological ones.

"In order to be both wise and efficient, public health policy needs to take into account both the social and categorical points of view. The issue is one of balance. If the balance had not been so heavily weighted on the categorical side, the Mexicans in a few states, the whites of the Appalachian highlands in several states, and the Negroes in many states, would have had much more attention from public health departments and voluntary agencies." ("Preface" to Harold F. Dorn, "Health for the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 10.)

[40] *Negro Year Book, 1937-38*, pp. 559-560.

[41] As there are no comprehensive statistics on recreational facilities and their distribution between whites and Negroes, we are restricted to citing examples. Concerning the conditions in small Southern cities, E. Franklin Frazier makes the following statement:

"The dominant white group in these areas simply pay little or no attention to the recreational needs of Negroes. For example, for the white residents of Greenville, South Carolina, there is within thirty miles a state park available but there is no public reservation for Negroes. In the city of Greenville there are two small areas without any equipment in which Negroes are allowed to play. Negroes are denied the use of a tract of land, eighteen acres in area, between two densely populated Negro areas, chiefly because it is used as a playing field for the white baseball team. Even the areas adjacent to the Negro high and elementary schools are too small to provide adequate recreation for the school children." [a]

Yet Greenville is one of the few small cities in the South having a Negro community center. It has been organized by a private agency. Frazier characterizes it by quoting the following statement by the National Recreation Association (April, 1939):

"It is not adequately supported and does not have a budget consistent with its service. The outdoor area is too small to be considered in contemplating even the Negro child school population of nearly 4,000. It does have a side yard with a tennis court and a tot lot." [b]

The large cities in the South, where the need for recreational facilities is greater, also have inadequate provisions. Frazier gives a complete description of the recreational

[a] "Recreation and Amusement among American Negroes," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 36.

[b] Report of the Field Director, Bureau of Colored Work, National Recreation Association (August, 1939); cited in *ibid.*, p. 37.

facilities in North Carolina, where conditions, however, are superior to those in the Deep South. In 1940, Raleigh had three playgrounds, one park with a swimming pool, and one community center for Negroes. Greensboro had one park with a community building, a swimming pool, a golf course, and a playground; it also had three independent supervised playgrounds, one handicraft center and a skating rink. There were similar provisions in Durham and Charlotte. On the other hand, Winston-Salem, which has the largest Negro population in the state (36,000 in 1940), did not have any special recreational facilities for Negroes, except a swimming pool; for the rest, school houses were used as recreational centers, with special recreational leaders.[a]

In respect to the situation in Virginia's urban areas—likewise above the average for the entire South—we may quote the following statement:

". . . Negro children of smaller cities have for their only playgrounds their school yard, vacant lots of outlying regions, or the alleys. The Community Center of Richmond, sponsored by the Colored Recreation Association, a Richmond Community Fund agency, offers courses in vocational arts and crafts and in home-making, music and folk-dancing. The gymnasium and playground affords such recreations as boxing, ten pins, volley ball, basketball, ping pong, baseball, and tennis for young and old. In July, 1938, the Richmond city council approved the purchase of a large plot of ground in North Richmond, upon which is to be erected a playground and recreation center with space and equipment for games, a swimming pool, and modern gymnasium and field house. By means of a P.W.A. grant the outdoor swimming pool was completed for use during the summer of 1939.

"Likewise Lynchburg, Norfolk and Newport News have inadequate recreational facilities for Negroes. Happyland, a private park of Lynchburg, has a lake for swimming and boating, picnic grounds, recreational fields, and what has been described as the 'most beautiful dance floor in Virginia.' The Recreation Center of Newport News was completed in January, 1938, out of funds contributed principally by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company." [b]

Birmingham, Alabama, a city in the lower South, has no Negro parks. In Houston, Texas, there is a ten-acre park for Negroes donated to the city by ex-slaves; the white parks comprise 2,600 acres.[c]

[42] The four states were Virginia, Kentucky, Texas and North Carolina. The remaining nine states were Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Tennessee. It was estimated that only 21 per cent of the Negroes in these 13 states had access to public library services.[d]

In some large cities with public branch libraries, like Atlanta and Birmingham, Negroes can use only books stored in the special Negro branches. In Richmond and Houston, on the other hand, books can be secured through the Negro branches from the main library.[e]

The Virginia State Library in Richmond can be used by Negroes, although they have to sit at segregated tables in the main reading room. On the whole, there may be some-

[a] See *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[b] The Federal Writers' Project, *The Negro in Virginia* (1940), p. 344.

[c] See Frazier, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

[d] Survey made by Eliza Atkins Gleason, *The Southern Negro and the Public Library* (1941), p. 90.

[e] See Frazier, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

what greater freedom in the case of 'higher" library services than there is in respect to the "popular" public libraries.

The Rosenwald Fund has tried to improve the situation by supplying money on a matching basis for the extension of library service. But only 11 counties cooperated between 1930 and 1935 and even they were quite discriminating in the distribution of these funds between Negroes and whites.[a]

[43] Federal Works Agency, *Second Annual Report* (1941), pp. 116, 191, 315 and 460.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 121-125.

[45] Not only do real property taxes increase housing expenses for the consumer in a way which must be particularly burdensome for low income families; even more important, perhaps, is the fact that they must make investments in housing more risky than they otherwise would be. For what they really mean is that states, counties, and municipalities have a first mortgage on all real estate, leaving less room and less security for other mortgages, and making the owner's equity much more likely to fluctuate in value than would have been the case if taxes were on income only.

[46] Suffice it to say that, in 1940, when most of the building construction was of single family homes, 171,440 new small homes, or 40 per cent of all new dwellings in this category, in nonfarm areas were covered by F.H.A. insurance. (U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *Seventh Annual Report* [1941], pp. 6 and 15.) In 1941, 218,035 new small homes, or 41 per cent of new single family homes, were covered by F.H.A. insurance. (U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *Eighth Annual Report* [1942], p. 3.)

[47] U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *Seventh Annual Report* (1941), pp. 15 and 77. See also Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

[48] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 313. See also U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *Successful Subdivisions*, Planning Bulletin No. 1 (1940); and National Association of Housing Officials, *Housing Yearbook* (1940), pp. 161-162.

[49] U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *Underwriting Manual* (1938), par. 935.

[50] *Ibid.*, par. 980.

[51] *Idem.*

[52] Corienne K. Robinson, Federal Public Housing Authority, letter (August 28, 1942). It should be noted, in addition, that a considerable number of projects originally intended for low income families were turned over to defense workers for the duration of the War. Concerning the Negro's share in the war housing program, see Chapter 19.

[53] One New York project, for instance, the South Jamaica Houses, has 1,050 Negro and 459 white residents thus intermingled. The John Jay Homes in Springfield, Illinois, also have about 100 Negro and 400 white families living without any segregation. The experiences, so far, have been good; there have been extremely few expressions of bad interracial feeling. (New York *Herald Tribune*, [June 10, 1942]; William M. Ashby, "No Jim Crow in Springfield Federal Housing," *Opportunity* [June, 1942], pp. 170-171; and Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 320.) This may be due, in part, to the fact that the white inhabitants in such projects are often Italians, Poles, and

[a] Louis R. Wilson and Edward A. Wight, *County Library Service in the South* (1935), pp. 67-96; cited by Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1939), pp. 148-149.

other immigrants, not yet imbued with American race prejudice. Then, too, there is no guarantee that conflicts would be avoided, were this practice to be followed on a larger scale than hitherto. Still it should be tried. Even a partial success would be extremely valuable.

[54] Federal Works Agency, *Second Annual Report*, p. 382.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[56] Anne E. Geddes, *Trends in Relief Expenditures, 1910-1935* (1937), pp. 21 and 92-94.

[57] In 1890 somewhat more than 1 per cent of the total population and somewhat less than 1 per cent of the Negro population was cared for in public almshouses. The difference was due to the fact that almshouse care was less extensive, in proportion, in the South than it was elsewhere. In the South, Negroes and whites had about the same proportions cared for in almshouses; in the North the proportion of Negroes cared for was twice as high as the proportion of whites. Thus, public relief agencies in the North and in the South showed about the same difference in their attitude toward Negroes as has characterized them during recent years. See the following table:

"PAUPERS" IN ALMSHOUSES IN 1890

Race	United States	The North and the West	The South
Numbers			
All Races	73,025	59,896	13,149
Negro	6,467	2,013	4,454
Percentage of total population			
All Races	1.2	1.4	.6
Negro	.9	2.8	.7

Sources: Eleventh Census of the United States: 1890. Report on Crime, "Pauperism and Benevolence in the United States," Part 2, p. 651. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 5.

[58] Grace Abbott, *From Relief to Social Security* (1941), p. 9.

[59] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, Part 2, particularly pp. 219-230.

[60] *Idem.*

[61] *Idem.*

[62] The period 1933-1935 stands somewhat apart in the history of public assistance. We may call this the F.E.R.A. period, since the main welfare agency during these years was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. State and local agencies were being organized, but the federal government carried the main financial responsibility over the whole field and particularly in the South. Eventually a certain specialization among various aspects of the relief work was brought about, and this trend was precipitated around 1935-1936 when the social security program and various special programs were inaugurated; at the same time a strict demarcation line was drawn between, on the one hand, the responsibilities of the federal government and, on the other, those of state and local governments.

In October, 1933, Negro relief rates in urban areas of Northern states with 100,000 or more Negroes varied between 25 and 40 per cent, and they were usually between three and four times higher than the white rates. The corresponding state figures for urban Negroes in the South varied between 10 and 33 per cent and were usually two

or three times higher than those for whites. In the rural South, on the other hand, which, of course, comprises both villages and open country, Negro relief rates were sometimes lower—as, for instance, in Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana—and sometimes higher than the white rates. Both Negro and white rates were quite heterogeneous in the rural South, the lowest one being 2 per cent and the highest 27 per cent.[a]

A special survey of urban workers on relief in May, 1934, indicated a higher general level but about the same differential. Half the Negro families in a sample of cities in the North and in the Border states were receiving public assistance; the corresponding proportion of white families was 10 to 13 per cent. Cities in the Upper and Lower South showed a proportion of Negro relief of one-third, whereas the white figure was about the same as it was in the North.[b] The Census of Workers on Relief in March, 1935, showed a similar pattern for urban areas in the North and the South. There was one state (Mississippi), however, where even the urban rate was slightly higher (17 per cent) for whites than for Negroes (16 per cent). The rural areas in the South, of course, showed an even greater lack of uniformity. The relief incidence was sometimes higher and sometimes lower for Negroes than it was for whites.[c]

The lack of uniformity in the South becomes even more evident when data for individual cities and counties are considered. There were some Southern cities which definitely showed a Northern pattern. Even more pronounced, however, were the divergencies in rural areas. Georgia had two counties, both with an appreciable proportion of Negroes in the population, where there were no Negroes at all on the relief rolls in March, 1935, whereas as much as 12 and 19 per cent, respectively, of the white families were receiving public assistance. Most of the other Georgia counties had lower relief rates for Negroes than they had for whites, but there were a few where the relations were reversed. In Eastern Texas, there were some counties where relief rates for Negroes were less than half those for whites; on the other hand, there were other counties where the Negro relief incidence was four times higher than the white relief incidence.[d]

Since Negroes are always poorer than whites, on the average, this heterogeneity cannot be explained on the basis of "local conditions." In the main, it is just a matter of lack of uniformity in the administration of relief. One can well understand how this came about. On the one hand, there were the federal relief officials demanding equal treatment of Negroes and whites. On the other hand, there were the traditional local attitudes. The dominant group in the South was against racial equality. Public relief was a new thing. The politically and economically most potent among them tended to be against it, except when their attitudes were conditioned by obvious needs during the worst depression years when even they welcomed the assistance in carrying their laborers through the off-seasons. It is frequently said that, in many places, planters even

[a] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Data based on Federal Emergency Relief Administration, *Unemployment Relief Census, October, 1933*, Report No. 2 (1934), pp. 14 and 15.

[b] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 228. Data based on Katherine D. Wood, *Urban Workers on Relief*, Part 2 (1936), pp. 72-73.

[c] See Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 223. Data based on Philip M. Hauser, *Workers on Relief in the United States in March, 1935, A Census of Usual Occupations* (1938), Vol. 1, pp. 102-103.

[d] See Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

took command of public welfare agencies, making them accept their workers on the relief rolls when they were not in need of their services, and making them turn them back to work as soon as there was any work to do.

It seems that in every country where large-scale public relief has been introduced, employers have been against it because of their interest in having an abundant labor supply competing for low wages. It goes without saying that such an attitude has been prevalent in the South, where planters have shown in so many other ways (social sanctions for "tenant stealing," laws against "enticement of labor," remnants of peonage, and so on) how far they can go in order to secure absolute command over the services of "their Negroes." We have run across this several times during our field work in the South.

"The conventional attitude of the landlord was that the tenant, and particularly the share-cropper, was dependent on him for direction and aid. More than nine out of every ten landlords interviewed stated that it was one of the functions of the landlord to maintain his tenants, if possible, in times of distress. At first sight it would seem difficult to reconcile this statement with the fact that approximately 80 per cent of the landlords actually wanted their tenants to get on relief. The contradiction is partially explained, however, by the fact that 50 per cent of the landlords reported financial inability to care for their tenants . . . a considerable number of unscrupulous landlords used government relief as a means of furnishing their tenants with goods which could and should have been furnished by themselves. On the other hand, nearly 40 per cent of the landlords who had tenants on relief were opposed to governmental aid for their tenants on the grounds of its demoralizing effects upon them. . . . Among the landlords who had no tenants on relief, more than 70 per cent stated that they objected to relief because of its demoralizing influence on the tenant."[a]

Caught in the middle were the local social workers. In the beginning, comparatively few of them had much of a professional background, but the proportion of trained workers has gradually increased, and practical experience must have given many others an outlook rather different from the prevalent one. Under such circumstances, almost anything could happen. The treatment of the Negro is a matter of chance. A good social worker, for instance, can treat Negroes and whites on a basis of equality. In the cities, where professional standards are higher than in rural areas, the chances of giving Negroes something approaching their just share is, of course, much greater. Even there, however, it may well happen that welfare workers are hampered by politicians.

In the beginning of November, 1938, Sterner visited the Department of Welfare in Birmingham, Alabama. Negroes and whites were received in segregated parts of the offices. The statistical data revealed the higher relief needs of Negroes, but, nevertheless, a large proportion of the clientele was white. Just after this, there was reported in a local newspaper an interview with a member of the state legislature who claimed that he had found evidence of discrimination against whites; Negroes, he said, could go into the department and get what they asked for, but a white applicant had a hard time getting a fair hearing.

Relief grants, during this period, were much lower in the South than they were elsewhere. In July, 1935, for instance, the national average benefit per case per month

[a] Harold Hoffsommer, *Landlord-Tenant Relations and Relief in Alabama*, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Division of Research, Statistics and Finance, Research Bulletin, Series II, No. 9 (1935), pp. 1 and 4.

was about $30, but all the states in the Upper and Lower South showed lower figures; most of them paid between $10 and $18. Negroes usually received less than did whites, at least in rural areas. In the Eastern cotton area, for instance, the average grant to whites in June, 1935, was $16, whereas Negroes received $13.[a]

[63] This tendency to disregard the Negro in most of the current reporting on relief may often be due, of course, to a desire not to publicize racial discrimination. Some social workers have given Sterner another explanation which, in many cases, may be almost equally feasible: when there are relatively more Negroes on the relief rolls than in the general population, such statistics could bring about pressure from white taxpayers wanting to limit relief appropriations to Negroes. Quite unrealistic, on the other hand, is the following rather usual explanation: "Since we don't discriminate against Negroes, we have no reason to count them separately in the statistics."

[64] Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941), p. 134.

[65] In 1937 over 32,000,000 workers were covered by old age insurance. Of those over 2,240,000, or 6.9 per cent, were Negroes. Together with other nonwhites they constituted still not more than 7.8 per cent of the total coverage. According to the 1940 Census, on the other hand, 10.7 per cent of the total labor force (including unemployed persons and relief workers) was nonwhite.[b]

Those covered by insurance in 1937 constituted over 70 per cent of all workers actually employed in 1940. Three-fourths of the white workers but only one-half of nonwhite workers were covered. There was a great difference, however, between the South and the rest of the country. In the North the overwhelming majority not only of the white but also of the nonwhite workers were within the old age system. In the South, on the other hand, about three-fifths of the Negro workers and almost half the white workers were in uncovered occupations. The old age pension system was particularly inefficient in regard to female nonwhite workers, North as well as South; only about one-fourth of them were covered.[c]

The real race differential is even greater, however, than these figures suggest. Even in covered occupations, low-wage workers are often denied any benefits from the system. Since Negro covered workers had only 3 per cent of the total taxable wage income,[d] it is obvious that such additional restrictions must hit them worse than the whites. In general, in order to qualify for old age benefits, a worker "must have had at least 1 quarter of coverage for each 2 calendar quarters elapsing during his working lifetime."[e] Quarters during which he has had a wage income of less than $50 are not counted as having been "covered." Not less than 42 per cent of the covered Negro

[a] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 227.

[b] Social Security Board, *Old Age and Survivors Insurance Statistics, Employment and Wages of Covered Workers, 1938* (1940), pp. 16-18. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 4.

[c] *Idem*, and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4a, Nos. 14 to 16. It is obvious that these percentages cannot be exact. Not only is there a time differential; there is also the fact that covered workers include unemployed as well as employed persons. The comparison gives some idea, however, about the relative efficiency of the system for various groups.

[d] *Idem.*

[e] Wayne F. Caskey, "Workers with Annual Taxable Wages of less than $200 in 1937-39," *Social Security Bulletin* (October, 1941), pp. 17-24.

workers, as against 22 per cent of the white workers in 1935, had wage incomes of less than $200 per year; more than half the female Negro workers had wages below the limit.[a] This means, of course, that a substantial proportion even of the covered Negro workers are not going to get any old age benefits at all, if present regulations are to be maintained.

The benefits range between $10 and $85, depending upon the number of dependents, the years of coverage and the average previous wage income. The last two stipulations mean that Negro average benefits must be lower than are those for whites. (A large number of covered workers moves between covered and uncovered occupations. Since the field of uncovered occupations is larger for Negroes than it is for whites, they are more likely to have spent considerable time outside the system of old age insurance.) Even persons with fairly low previous wage incomes, however, receive benefits which, at least in the South, must appear high compared to average relief benefits under many other social welfare programs. For instance, a worker who has had an average monthly wage of $50 and a coverage of five years will receive for himself and his wife, when both have reached the age of 65, a monthly benefit of $31.50.[b] There are additional benefits for children under 16 (sometimes 18) years of age. There are benefits, as well, for surviving wives and children.

Unemployment compensation has limitations in coverage similar to those of the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance. In the rural South, of course, Negroes have little help from the unemployment insurance. Although the system is fairly uniform, benefits may vary to some extent.[c] In the South, most clients receive between $5 and $10 per month; in most other states the majority of recipients get benefits in excess of $10.[d]

[66] *Social Work Yearbook, 1941*, op. cit., p. 611.

[67] *Ibid.*, p. 609, and Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* (1942), p. 114.

[68] *Social Work Yearbook, 1941, op. cit.*, p. 612.

[69] Even in Virginia, where conditions are probably better than in many other Southern states, there remains much to be done. The state labor commissioner officially refers to the "inadequacy of the State safety laws" and refers, among other things, to the fact that, for factories and buildings for public use, there are no legal "standards and controls over the width, pitch and general repair of stairways or the condition of floors . . . aisles, passageways, ladders, platforms, and scaffolding." (Department of Labor and Industry, State of Virginia, *Forty-third Annual Report, Industrial Statistics, Calendar Year, 1939* [1941], p. 21.)

[70] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 6.

[71] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-274.

[72] California paid $34 per month in 1939-1940; several Northern states, as well as the District of Columbia, paid between $20 and $30. In the South, on the other hand, there were eight states which paid less than $10.

[73] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

[74] *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283. The last percentage was between one-and-a-half and two

[a] *Idem.*

[b] *Social Work Yearbook, 1941, op. cit.*, p. 384.

[c] *Ibid.*, p. 570.

[d] Social Security Board, "Operation of the Employment Security Board," *Social Security Bulletin* (October, 1941), p. 63.

times higher in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, although in these Northern states Negroes constitute only a small minority of the total population.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 281.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 284.

[77] In April, 1940, for instance, there were in this country 8,000,000 unemployed persons, of whom 2,900,000 were taken care of by the W.P.A., C.C.C., or N.Y.A. (those on the Student Work Program are not included in either of the figures). (See *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4, No. 5.)

[78] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 239-241.

[79] This discrepancy was particularly pronounced in Tennessee, where 23 per cent of all unemployed workers, those on emergency work included, in 1940 were Negroes, whereas the proportion of Negroes among relief workers was but 11 per cent. (*Idem.* and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Second Series, Tennessee, State Table 16.)

[80] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-242. One of the reasons why Negroes are discriminated against to such an extent in rural areas of the South is, of course, that agricultural employers are against seeing Negroes get wages on relief work high enough to compete with those paid on the farms. For similar reasons, in part, there is a pronounced special discrimination against Negro women on W.P.A., as evidenced by the following figures for February, 1939:

Negroes as a Percentage of All W.P.A. Workers in:	*Male*	*Female*
13 Southern states and the District of Columbia	26.2	15.9
All other states	10.2	15.7

(*Ibid.*, p. 244.) Thus, the Southern states gave Negro women a share of the work relief employment which was no greater than that given to them by states in the North and West; and it was only about half as great as the proportion of Negroes among all unemployed women in the South in 1940. (*Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-4a, Nos. 14 to 16.)

This phenomenon is due not only to the popular belief in the South that Negro women always can and should earn their living as domestics. Even more significant, perhaps, are the Southern segregational practices and the rules about local sponsorship of W.P.A. projects. Negro men probably would be even worse off than they are under present conditions had it not been for the fact that most W.P.A. projects for men are outdoor projects. This means that, even according to Southern rules, both Negroes and whites can work on the same project, although in separate gangs. Projects for women, on the other hand, are indoor affairs. Seldom, if ever, is it possible in the South to have a sewing room for Negro women in the same building where there is such a room for white women. The consequence is that separate projects have to be organized for Negro women if they are to have any share in the jobs. Since there are few local agencies which would even think of sponsoring projects especially for Negroes, Negro women, in most places, have to be without them. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.)

It goes without saying that the situation is similar in regard to projects for professional and clerical workers. On the whole, there is a general complaint among Negroes

to the effect that their chances of being assigned to other than the lowest and least well-paid jobs on W.P.A. are much smaller than corresponds to the actual skills of Negro unemployed workers. Certain evidence presented by Sterner, although not quite conclusive, makes it seem probable that such complaints are justified, at least as far as the South is concerned. (*Ibid.*, pp. 249 and 251.)

[81] The C.C.C. organized work projects at rural camps principally for boys aged 17 to 23 who were unemployed and eligible for relief or otherwise came from low income groups. The work consisted of soil conservation, development of forests and parks for recreational use, flood control and so forth. The objectives of the National Youth Administration have been stated as follows:

"(a) to provide funds for the part-time employment of needy school, college, and graduate students between sixteen and twenty-five years of age so that they can continue their education; (b) to provide funds for the part-time employment on work projects of young persons, chiefly from families certified as in need of relief, between eighteen and twenty-five years of age, the projects being designed not only to provide valuable work experience but to benefit youth generally and the communities in which they live; (c) to encourage the establishment of job training and counseling service . . . ; and (d) to encourage the development and extension of constructive leisure-times activities." M. M. Chambers, "Youth Programs" in *Social Work Yearbook, 1941, op. cit.*, p. 614.

[82] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

[83] *Ibid.*, pp. 263-265.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 287.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 291.

Chapter 16. *Income, Consumption and Housing*

[1] A great number of studies on income of farm families have been made, but there are probably none that give an exact picture of the income distribution of all Southern farm families. Owing to the importance of income "in kind" in agricultural areas, it is always difficult to get reliable statistics on farm income. Besides, many samples are biased in either a high or a low direction. By surveying different studies having different characteristics, however, it is possible to arrive at fairly safe general conclusions. Such a survey has been made by Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), pp. 62-70. In this context, we may content ourselves by citing the main results of the two most important studies.

The plantation study made by T. J. Woofter, Jr., in 1934, indicates the average annual income for families of Negro tenants and wage laborers on plantations was but $278, whereas the corresponding figure for whites was $452. Negro wage laborers earned as little as $175 per year. Even the Negro cash renters and share tenants were not far above the $300 mark, being worse off than white sharecroppers, who earned $417.[a]

[a] Unpublished figures made available by Woofter, cited in Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

These figures, however, are probably slightly too low. While the value of home-use production was included, certain other items, such as housing, fuel, relief, and wages earned off the plantation, were not. The sample of farm families of the Consumer Purchases Study for 1935-1936 (see table in this footnote) indicates higher incomes for Negroes and whites alike, but these data are biased upward.[a] The reason is that large groups among the poorest families, such as unemployed workers, wage laborers, broken families, and farmers who had moved within the year, were completely excluded from the sample. Almost half the families approached during the survey turned out to be ineligible for the sample because they were of these types.[b] Since the groups studied must have had much higher average incomes than the excluded groups, the fact that they included such extremely high proportions of destitute families is remarkable. Since wage laborers were excluded, it was, of course, the Negro sharecroppers who were lowest on the scale. A significant number of them had less than $250. White share-

MEDIAN INCOMES[a] FOR NEGRO AND WHITE FARM FAMILIES IN THREE SOUTHEASTERN SAMPLE AREAS: 1935-1936

State	Owners and Tenants Except Croppers		Croppers	
	Negro	White	Negro	White
South Carolina	$599	$1,035	$424	$541
Georgia	491	708	409	544
Mississippi	576	1,091	416	574

Source: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Farm Series, Family Income and Expenditures, Southeast Region,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 462, Part 1, *Family Income* (1941), pp. 5 and 77–80.

[a] These as well as all following median income figures are calculated under the assumption that relief families, for which no complete income data were gathered, had incomes below the median. This assumption is certainly correct, except for some rare cases.

[a] The sample for the eastern part of North Carolina (not used in the table) gave income figures which cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be characterized as typical for the Southeast. The median income varied between $797 for Negro sharecroppers and $1,587 for white operators (other tenants and owners). Negro operators and white croppers, as usual, had about the same position; they earned $1,046 and $1,023, respectively. Another sample for North Carolina which included only white operators in the western part of the state indicated an opposite extreme. The median income was but $611, which is lower than that for any other group of white operators sampled in the Southeast. (U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Farm Series, Family Income and Expenditures, Southeast Region,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 462, Part 1, *Family Income* [1941], p. 5.) The figure cited for white operators in eastern North Carolina ($1,587) is higher than that for any of the states sampled in farm regions of the Northeast and of the Middle West; the latter varied between $936 (Iowa) and $1,503 (Illinois). (See U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Farm Series, Family Income and Expenditures, Middle Atlantic, North Central and New England Regions,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 383, Part 1, *Family Income* [1940], p. 19.)

[b] U. S. Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Publication No. 462, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

croppers were somewhat better off. They had about the same position as the combined group of Negro owners, cash tenants and share tenants. Highest on the scale was the corresponding group of white operators.

[2] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 71. Data based on U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Southeast Region,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 375, Part 1, *Family Income* (1941), p. 92.

[3] In this case the only low income group excluded from the sample was broken families. This is probably the main reason why Negro incomes in villages appear so low compared with the income data for farm families contained in the same study. In addition, it is probable that the great number of displaced Negro farm families in Southern villages helps to drag the income level down. White village families in these 34 villages earned between three and four times as much as did Negro families. Their median income was $1,220. For nonrelief families alone, it was $1,410. These figures compare very well with those for the 8 groups of villages studied in other parts of the country, which—if relief families are included—showed a range in median incomes of from $737 (Illinois and Iowa) to $1,355 (California). In fact, only 3 of these 8 non-Southern village groups had income levels higher than those for white families in Southern villages.[a]

[4] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[5] *Idem.* Data based on U.S. Public Health Service, *National Health Survey: 1935-1936,* Preliminary Reports, Population Series, Bulletins A and C (1938). An additional confirmation, based on data for 14 Southern cities but only 3 Northern cities is presented in Department of Commerce, *Consumer Use of Selected Goods and Services, by Income Classes,* Market Research Series, No. 5 (1935-1937).

The mean income, on the other hand, seems to be significantly higher in Northern than in Southern cities, since the frequency of very high incomes is greater in the North. See, for instance, the estimates in National Resources Committee, *Consumer Incomes in the United States, 1935-1936* (1938), p. 28.

[6] Margaret Loomis Stecker, *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living in March, 1935, 59 Cities* (1937), p. xix.

[7] While the allowances for food may be sufficient, at least for a limited time, they are not as large as the minimum amount for what the Bureau of Home Economics calls a "good" diet, determined by what families in actual practice had been found able to purchase. Only a few adequate dwelling units which can be rented for the amount intended for housing in this budget are available in American cities.[b]

[8] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-88.

[9] For example, the median income for *nonrelief* Negro families in Atlanta, consisting of husband, wife and 0, 1, 2, and 3 to 4 children under 16, was $710, $685, $675 and $655, respectively. This was so in spite of the fact that the proportion of low income families receiving public assistance—who were not included in these figures—

[a] U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Southeast Region,* Miscellaneous Publication No. 375, Part 1, *Family Income* (1941), p. 14.

[b] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 86 and 316.

was positively correlated with the number of children in the family, which means that the sample of larger families had fewer poor cases. (*Ibid.*, p. 82.)

[10] Alva Myrdal, *Nation and Family* (1941), pp. 61-76.

[11] Large families do not benefit from subsidized housing in proportion to their greater sufferings from bad housing conditions. (See Chapter 15, Section 6.) The whole program is designated primarily for low income families; family size, at best, is given secondary consideration only. The new social welfare system includes a special program for broken families (Aid to Dependent Children); but there are no corresponding special provisions for large families. While urban relief authorities generally give assistance to a greater proportion of the large than of the small families, it has sometimes happened that welfare agencies in the farm areas of the South have failed to consider the special plight of the large families, particularly in the case of Negroes. (See data from the Consumer Purchases Study cited in Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 81.)

[12] In 1930, 59 per cent of all Negro children under 21 years of age in private families belonged to households which had at least four children, whereas the corresponding proportion for native white families was 44 per cent. (See Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 49.) The figures would be still higher if one added families having four or more children, of which some were over 21 or had already left home.

[13] The Consumer Purchases Study shows that, for instance, in Atlanta, white husbands, 50 to 59 years of age, in "normal" nonrelief families, earned over one-half more than did husbands 20 to 29 years of age. The corresponding difference for Negro families was only about one-third. The absolute amount of difference was over $700 for white families and $190 for Negro families. (*Ibid.*, p. 83. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Series, Family Income in the Southeastern Region 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 1, *Family Income* [1939], Tabular Summary, Section B, Tables 8 and 18.)

[14] In Atlanta, Mobile, and Columbia, for instance, there were about twice as many supplementary earners in "normal" nonrelief Negro households as there were in corresponding white families. But each one of them did not earn more than one-fourth or one-third as much as did the supplementary earners in white families, and their total earnings per family, therefore, were only one-half or two-thirds of those of the fewer white supplementary earners. Even so, their contributions made up a larger percentage of the total family income than was the case in white families. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 57 and 77-79.)

[15] In the urban North, where 40 to 50 per cent of the Negro families were on relief at that time, and in addition, a great number were broken families, the study represented less than half the Negro population. Groups covered by the study were, on the average, better off than those excluded. The exclusions were somewhat less important in the urban South; still they were considerable. In the rural farm South, the exclusion of relief families meant comparatively little; but in view of the exclusion of wage laborers, and of farmers and tenants who had stayed less than one year on the farm, and of broken families, this rural sample was, at least, just as much too "high" as was that for the urban North.

[16] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 93. Basic data available in U.S. Department of

Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Series, Family Expenditure in Chicago, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 642, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1939); *Family Income and Expenditure in New York City, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 643, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1939); *Family Expenditure in Nine Cities of the East Central Region*, Bulletin No. 644, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1941); *Family Expenditure in Three Southeastern Cities, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 2, *Family Expenditure* (1940); and *Urban Technical Series, Family Expenditure in Selected Cities, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 8, *Changes in Assets and Liabilities* (1941), Tabular Summary, Tables 2 and 3; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 396, Part 2, *Family Expenditure* (1940), pp. 182-189; *Farm Series, Family Income and Expenditure, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 465, Part 2, *Family Expenditure* (1941), p. 113.

[17] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 31 and 94-165.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 163 and 165.

[20] The general data on value of housing are not quite reliable since they have to be estimated for families residing in their own homes or in houses owned by their employers. In the case of rent-paying families in Atlanta, Georgia; Mobile, Alabama; Columbia, South Carolina; Albany, Georgia; and Columbus, Ohio, however, it can be ascertained unequivocally that Negro tenants usually pay lower rents than do white families with the same income; but in New York it is the other way around. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Technical Series, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 1, *Housing* [1941], pp. 20 and 26; and Bulletin No. 647, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 104, and *Family Income in Nine Cities of the East Central Region, 1935-36*, Bulletin No. 644, Vol. 1, *Family Income* [1939], p. 88.)

[21] It should be remembered that it is particularly difficult to get complete reports on Negro food consumption, since Negro domestic servants, as well as hotel and restaurant workers, often eat the food of their employers. The fact that the expenditures for housing are sometimes lower, in relation to income, in Negro than they are in white families may be due to the greater insecurity in Negro income. The phenomenon is also characteristic of groups of lower social status generally. Wage earners often pay lower rents than do business, professional and clerical workers in the same income classes. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin, No. 644, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 90.)

[22] Atlanta Negro families, in the average Negro income group $500-$999, had an average of $241 to spend for clothing, personal care, medical care, recreation, and all other items, after food, housing, household operation and furnishings had been paid for. Negro sharecroppers with an income of less than $500 spend, on the average, $73 on the same "extra" items (clothing, medical care and so on). (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 96 and 97.)

[23] In the "average white" income class $1,500-$1,999, for instance, clothing expenditures in Negro and white families were $206 and $180, respectively. Yet such a difference is of little practical significance, as the number of Negro families in this economic group is exceedingly small.

[24] In Negro families with less than $500 in income, $9 worth of clothing was bought for the husband, an equal amount was spent on the wife, and $6 was left over for children and other family members; when there were more than four persons in the family, husband and wife could each spend but $5 on themselves. In the income group $500-$999, the husband's share in the clothing budget was $24, the wife's share was $27 and that of children and other family members was $21. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 140.) The following description gives some idea about what such sums meant in concrete terms:

"The figures for the husbands in low-income families were far below the annual clothing requirements suggested in the WPA budget for an emergency standard of living. [Margaret Loomis Stecker, *Quantity Budgets for Basic Maintenance and Emergency Standards of Living*, Research Bulletin, Series I, No. 21 (1936), p. 15.] For example, while an annual replacement of one cotton work shirt and one other shirt with attached collar and purchase of a wool work shirt every other year is suggested, it appears that one-third of the Negro men at the lowest income level and almost one-fifth of the white and Negro men at the next level bought no shirts at all during the year. Likewise, in contrast to the annual purchase of two pairs of work shoes and one pair of oxfords suggested in the emergency budget, work shoes were purchased barely every other year, on the average; two-thirds of the Negro men in families with incomes below $500 bought no street shoes, and approximately one-third of the white and Negro men at the next income level failed to purchase any during the year of the study." (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141.)

[25] Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities, *Proceedings of the National Health Conference, July, 1938*, "Report of the Technical Committee on Medical Care" (1938), p. 57. Quoted in Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[26] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, Appendix Table 32.

[27] Negro sharecroppers with incomes under $500 spent, for the entire family, an annual average of $1 for reading matter, less than 50¢ for movies and other admissions, $1 for games and sports equipment, $1 for other recreation, and $12 for tobacco. Atlanta Negroes in the income group $500-999 spent for these same items $9, $5, $1, $7 and $17. The corresponding figures for white Atlanta families in the income bracket $1,500-$2,249 were $17, $22, $5, $22 and $44. (*Ibid.*, pp. 154-159 and Appendix Table 36.)

[28] In cities, villages, and farm areas of the South, Negroes consumed larger quantities of fish and other seafoods, but smaller quantities of milk, eggs, potatoes, other vegetables, and fruits, than did white families of similar means. In order to cut down on their expenditures they bought less baked goods, but more flour and cereals than was usual in white households. Largely for the same reason, they consumed less processed foods than did white families of the same economic classes. These are among the most usual differences, but there were others which appeared more or less consistently; some of them were mainly "cultural."[a]

[a] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Technical Series, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 2, *Food* (1940), Tabular Summary, Table 5; U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of

[29] Exactly how great this difference is we cannot say, since the low income groups were greatly under-represented in the expenditure sample of the Consumer Purchases Study (which, of course, must affect the data for Negroes much more than it does those for whites). Yet the records, despite this fact, show a considerable discrepancy in regard to several important items. Negro *farmers and tenants* consumed even less than did white sharecroppers of pork, poultry, eggs, fats, potatoes, vegetables, fruits, sugar, and particularly milk. Of fish and other seafoods they consumed somewhat larger quantities, of beef and grain products about the same amount as white sharecroppers. Compared with owners and more independent tenants among the whites, their inferior position was even more pronounced. In Southern *villages* whites consumed four times as much milk, three times as many eggs and fruits, twice as many potatoes and other vegetables as did Negroes. Although Negroes, in villages as in other community groups, were greater consumers of fish and seafood, the combined consumption of meats, pork and fish was one-and-a-half times as high in white as it was in Negro households. Even of fats and sugar, whites bought larger quantities than did Negroes.[a] Concerning the situation in Southern *cities* we may quote the analysis of Sterner and Epstein:

"Whites reported the consumption of nearly six times as much whole fresh milk and twice as much canned milk as Negroes. On the average, white families used more than twice as many eggs, over three times as many tomatoes, five times as many oranges, and over twice as many pounds of white potatoes as Negro families. Negroes used somewhat less butter and other table fats but more lard products. Beef was used in considerably larger quantities by whites than by Negroes. . . . While [Negroes used] more fresh pork and salt-side, they consumed less bacon, ham, and poultry than white families. On the other hand, Negroes used twice as much fresh fish as whites."[b]

[30] U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Study of Consumer Purchases, Urban Technical Series, Family Expenditures in Selected Cities*, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 2, *Food* (1940), Tabular Summary, Table 4.

[31] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, Appendix Table 27.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

[33] Almost half the Negro families sampled in small cities, villages, and farm areas of the Southeast had a food-value per week and per food-expenditure-unit of less than $1.38. The same was true of over one-fourth of the Negro families sampled in Atlanta, Columbia and Mobile. White families, on the other hand, usually had relatively few representatives in this economic group (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 [1941], p. 188; and *Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 [1941], p. 328.)

Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 (1941), Tables 30 to 34; and *Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 (1941), Tables 48 to 52.

[a] U. S. Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405, *op. cit.*, Tables 48-52; and No. 452, *op. cit.*, Tables 30-34.

[b] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

34

PERCENTAGE OF NEGRO AND WHITE FAMILIES IN THE SOUTHEAST WITH DIETS FURNISHING LESS THAN OPTIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF SPECIFIED NUTRIENTS: 1936-1937[a]

Families by Weekly Food Value per Food-expenditure-unit	No. of Families in Sample	Energy Value	Protein	Phosphorus	Calcium	Iron	Vitamin	Thiamin	Ascorbic Acid	Riboflavin
	No.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
$0.69 - $1.37										
Village families, Negro	84	48	70	66	93	58	67	68	96	94
Farm families, Negro[b]	109	50	57	24	60	22	52	47	96	79
$1.38 - $2.07										
City families, Negro[c]	54	16	41	45	33	21	24	44	67	91
Village families, Negro	53	17	26	25	15	24	63	43	73	79
Village families, White	69	22	49	30	73	39	68	61	69	74
Farm Families, Negro[b]	89	7	14	9	34	9	23	30	81	48
Farm families, White[d]	133	16	4	2	23	4	44	17	79	38

Sources: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Farm Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 405 (1941), pp. 52-61 and 103; and *Urban and Village Series, Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452 (1941), pp. 209-229.

[a] The following requirements were used for this tabulation: energy value 3,000 calories, protein 67 grams, phosphorus 1.32 grams, calcium 0.68 gram, iron 12 milligrams, vitamin A 6,000 International Units, thiamin 1.5 milligrams, ascorbic acid 75 milligrams, and riboflavin 1.8 milligrams. These requirements refer to the daily needs of a moderately active full-grown man. Needs of women and younger persons may be different from these—often lower but sometimes higher. This complication is taken care of by computing the consumption per nutrition unit, whereby the needs of a full-grown man are used as a unit. The number of food expenditure units are computed in a similar way (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Miscellaneous Publication No. 452, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-252).

Groups having less than 50 representatives in the sample are excluded from the table.

[b] Owners, tenants and croppers.

[c] Atlanta, Georgia; Mobile, Alabama; Columbia, South Carolina.

[d] Owners and tenants, except croppers.

[35] To be sure, these observations are based on rather small samples. For this reason, we cannot draw many detailed conclusions. It is extremely unlikely, however, that the data would give us an exaggerated general impression regarding the frequency of dietary deficiencies in the Negro population. Rather, it is not unlikely that they minimize the occurrence of such deficiencies. For we must keep in mind that large groups at the very bottom of the income ladder, such as relief families, broken families, agricultural wage laborers, farmers and tenants who have moved within the year, are completely excluded from the sample.

[36] To be sure, statistical correlation does not prove anything about causation. Sick people may live in slums because their sickness has kept them so poor that they cannot afford adequate housing. Prostitutes may not get housing accommodation in decent neighborhoods, and so are forced to live in slums. Poor slum families may get tuberculosis because their diet is bad. Nevertheless, any common sense evaluation will tell us that the causation, in part, goes *from* poor housing *to* bad moral, mental and physical health.

[37] The material in more than one-half of the Southern farm houses in 1934 was unpainted wood. This was true about less than one-tenth of the farm houses in Northern states east of the Mississippi River. About one-third of the Southern farm houses had foundations in poor condition. The corresponding proportions for other areas varied between 7 and 28 per cent. There were about the same differences in

regard to the condition of other parts of the house, such as exterior walls, roofs, floors and so on. In regard to almost every equipment item, for which data are available, conditions were worse in the South than they were in other regions. This was true even in regard to such conveniences and necessities as are particularly needed in the Southern climate. Only a minority of the farm families in the country have bathrooms in their homes, but in the South bathrooms were scarcer than they were anywhere else. From one-third to one-half of the Southern farm houses were without screens in 1934, whereas the corresponding proportions for other regions varied between 4 and 14 per cent. One-fourth of the farm houses in the country were equipped with ice boxes or other refrigeration; in New England two-thirds of the farm houses had refrigeration of some kind. But in the South the proportion was below the national average. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 168.)

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.

[39] The average number of occupants per farm house ranged in the South from 4.6 in the West South Central division to 5.2 in the South Atlantic division. In Northern states east of the Mississippi it was about 4.4. The number of rooms per house ranged in the South from 4.2 in the West South Central area to 5.2 in the South Atlantic area, whereas the average for the four Northeastern divisions ranged from 6.0 to 8.9. (*Ibid.*, p. 177.)

[40] The Consumer Purchases Study, based on a sample which omits the poorest families, gives proportions of crowded large families, in farm areas of the South, as shown in the following table:

LARGE FAMILIES LIVING IN HOMES WITH MORE THAN 1.5 PERSONS PER ROOM AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL LARGE FARM FAMILIES, BY COLOR AND TENURE: IN 1935-1936

Area	Owners and Tenants Except Croppers		Croppers	
	Negro	White	Negro	White
North Carolina and South Carolina	59.4	27.1	63.6	46.4
Georgia and Mississippi	68.3	35.0	60.4	45.7

Source: Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share* (1943), p. 180. Data based on U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban, Village, and Farm Series, Family Housing and Facilities, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 399 (1940), Table 36. Concerning the definition of large family, see footnote (a) of Table 3 in this chapter.

[41] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 181 and 179.

[42] One-third of the dwelling units in the urban Southeast (including the South Atlantic states, the East South Central states and Louisiana) and one-fourth of those in the Southwest were without any private indoor flush toilets in 1934-1936, whereas the corresponding proportion for the country as a whole was 15 per cent. There were similar differences in regard to other equipment items. Almost one-fourth of the dwelling units in the Southeast and close to one-fifth of those in the Southwest were characterized as either in need of major repairs or unfit for use. The national figure—excluding New York City—was 16 per cent. The median dwelling unit was one of four rooms in the South; in other regions it was one of five rooms. The proportion of "doubled-up" families and of crowded households was higher in the South than any-

where else. (Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 186. Data based on Peyton Stapp, *Urban Housing; A Summary of Real Property Inventories Conducted as Work Projects, 1934-36*, Works Progress Administration [1938], *passim.*)

[43] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183. Data based on U.S. Public Health Service, *The National Health Survey, 1935-36*, Sickness and Medical Care Series, Bulletin No. 5 (1939), *passim.*

[44] The proportion of families having living quarters equipped with running hot and cold water, inside flush toilet, and electric lights, for Atlanta Negro families in the income group $1,000-$1,249 was only 23 per cent. For white families in the same income class it was 58 per cent. The corresponding figure for white families having an income of $750-$999 was 51 per cent; not until one comes to the lowest income group listed for the white population ($500-$749) does one find a figure (24 per cent) on about the same level as that quoted for Negro families in the income group $1,000-$1,249. By the same token, one has to go as high up on the Negro income scale as to the class $1,750-$1,999 in order to find a percentage (57 per cent) about as high as that for white families in the income group $1,000-$1,249. (U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 75.)

[45] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, Table 79.

[46] In Augusta, Georgia, 8 per cent of the Negro and 3 per cent of the white households were living in dwelling units where there were *more* than two persons per room. These crowded households included 15 and 6 per cent, respectively, of the population. In all probability they included an even larger proportion of all minor children. (*Ibid.*, p. 194.)

The statement that children are more crowded than are adults is based on the fact that they, to a greater extent, belong to large families. It is corroborated by Swedish experiences. (Myrdal, *op. cit.*, p. 246.) The Real Property Inventories, however, do not contain any data on the number of children in crowded households. The important point about children as the main sufferers of poor housing conditions seems to have been overlooked in American housing statistics.

[47] U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin No. 648, Vol. 1, *op. cit.*, p. 26; U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Home Economics, *Consumer Purchases Study, Urban and Village Series, Family Expenditures for Housing and Household Operation, Five Regions*, Miscellaneous Publication No. 432 (1941), p. 86.

[48] Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

Chapter 17. *The Mechanics of Economic Discrimination as a Practical Problem*

[1] The following experiences of the author may serve as illustrations:

A Negro lad in Minneapolis, Minnesota, had successfully prepared himself in the excellent vocational school of this Midwestern city to become an electrician. As he had been told before he started to take these courses, he encountered difficulties in getting apprenticeship training and employment, in spite of the best personal recommendations and in spite of assistance from the local Urban League. Most of the contractors declared that they themselves had nothing against engaging him. They were not prejudiced, they

explained, but they had to abstain on account of occasional customers who were prejudiced.

I made some inquiries and found that most housewives I questioned did not mind. A few stated that they felt that they rather wanted to have white workers around in the house when something was to be repaired. They did not realize how their slight and unmotivated bias had the cumulated effect of closing employment opportunities to great numbers of Negro youths. They were actually shocked when informed of what they were doing. One young lady announced that she was immediately going to take up the matter in the church club.

The incident from Minneapolis could be duplicated in any similar Northern city. In Minneapolis at the time of my visit (Christmas, 1939) the majority of Negro workers was unemployed. The total Negro population was estimated to be only four or five thousand in a total population of half a million. The local Urban League worked hard to find employment outlets but with scant success. The white people I met were all well informed about the criminality and viciousness in the Negro slum quarters but, on the whole, totally ignorant about Negro unemployment. They had given practically no thought to the possible causal relations between economic distress and morals.

The following example, drawn from a different line of work, also illustrates the ignorance of white people. A Negro clerk told Sterner that he had been unable to convince a white friend about the fact that a Negro (before the recent change in policy) was unable to enlist for ordinary combat service in the Navy. He had to take his white friend to a naval recruiting office and try to enlist in order to make the friend believe that his statement was correct.

[2] Cited by Earl Brown, "American Negroes and the War," *Harper's Magazine* (April, 1942) p. 551.

[3] The technique of introducing Negro labor has often been discussed during this war emergency. See, for instance, "The Negro's War," *Fortune* (June, 1942), p. 157; and "Found: A Million Manpower," *Modern Industry* (May 14, 1942), p. 31.

[4] Comparatively little good research work seems to have been made on employers' and workers' opinions regarding Negro labor. Some of the most noteworthy studies of employers' attitudes have been summarized by Charles S. Johnson (*The Negro in American Civilization* [1930], pp. 68-86). Usually it was found that the bulk of the employers considered Negroes to be about as good workers as whites. There was a significant proportion of them, however, who believed Negroes to be inferior to whites, but also a large number who held that they were superior to their white competitors. Indeed, according to some of the most significant studies, the number of those believing Negroes to be better than were whites was actually larger than the number of those who held the opposite view. These judgments referred to general efficiency at the place of work. In regard to regularity, punctuality, and so forth, the results were somewhat less encouraging; the opinion that Negroes in this respect were less dependable than were whites, according to certain studies, was more frequently voiced by employers than was the opposite contention that whites were less dependable.

A recent inquiry made by the National Industrial Conference Board (William Barnes O'Connor, "The Use of Colored Persons in Skilled Occupations," *The Conference Board Management Record* [December, 1941], pp. 156-158. Quoted by permission of the National Industrial Conference Board) gives, in part, similar results. The overwhelming majority, among over 100 employers and company officials ques-

tioned, thought that Negroes were about as good as whites on comparable skilled and semi-skilled work; but there was a large minority who thought they were poorer than whites, and only a few who believed them to be superior to their white competitors. The judgments were particularly favorable to the Negro in regard to actual performance in production; 85 employers thought they were equal to whites, 12 that they were poorer, and 5 that they were better than whites. A minority of over 30 employers thought that Negroes were poorer than whites in regard to ability, skill and regularity in attendance. Least favorable were the judgments on general intelligence; 49 informants believed Negroes to be inferior to whites, and about the same number believed them to be equal to whites. It is interesting to find, however, that many employers characterized the problem as "distinctly individual rather than group."

Such studies, of course, indicate merely employers' opinions—not the actual performance record of the Negro worker, and still less his potentialities. It can be taken for granted that many informants voice preconceived ideas rather than findings based on actual measurements of the workers' performance; for some of the "experiences" quoted (Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 78, and O'Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 158) are just familiar stereotypes about Negroes being particularly good at hot, greasy, dirty or other disagreeable work. It is a well-known fact that most managers and foremen are likely to make mistakes about their workers' actual ability unless they use some kind of numerical measurement as a basis for their judgment. Such measurements are often made, of course, but it is questionable how often they are used for the purpose of finding out how the range of Negro performance records compares with that for white workers. The fact that Negroes are often segregated in special occupations increases the difficulty of making sound comparisons of this type.

It seems that additional research work, where these complications were given due consideration, would be extremely valuable. It would be of great interest, for instance, to find out how the opinions of those employers who have organized systematic tests of the abilities of Negro and white workers may differ from those of other employers. The results could be highly significant, even though they, of course, would not measure the real potentialities of the Negro worker.

It would be profitable, as well, to make some intensive studies of the attitudes of white workers. The opinion poll technique should make such inquiries fairly easy to organize. The emphasis should be put on how the attitudes may differ among various groups of white workers. Classifications according to region, sex, employment condition (whether unemployed or not), occupational status (unskilled, skilled, clerical worker, and so on), union and nonunion, craft or industrial union, and so forth would often give strategically significant results. It might be corroborated, for instance, that white women are more biased than are white men, as has already been suggested by certain experiences and findings (O'Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 157). It could be ascertained to what extent the rank-and-file membership in the new industrial unions agrees with its leaders on the policy of treating Negro workers as equals. Still more important would be to find out about the difference in attitude among workers with various kinds of experiences of collaboration with Negroes (those in all-white plants; those in establishments where Negroes are segregated; those who compete with Negroes on equal terms). It would be necessary, of course, to ask not only whether the informant *in general* is prepared to let Negroes compete with white workers on equal terms; but also whether he would accept such competition *in his own occupation and in his own workplace.*

[5] Johnson, *op cit.*, pp. 78-79.

[6] See O'Connor, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-158.

[7] Actually, there have been only few examples—and those mainly during the period 1915 to 1930—when employers have made serious attempts to make white workers accept Negroes as fellow workers. The instances when white-dominated labor unions have attempted to educate the employers to hire Negro workers have been even less significant.

Chapter 18. *Pre-War Labor Market Controls and Their Consequences for the Negro*

[1] Most data on legal provisions in this section are based on Richard A. Lester, *Economics of Labor* (1940). (Mimeographed; now printed.)

[2] Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* (1942), p. 114.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[4] In 1930, a few years before the introduction of these minimum wage regulations, the average hourly wage for Negro male workers in Virginia manufacturing industries was 28 cents, as against 39 cents for white workers. The corresponding figures for Negro and white manufacturing workers in the female group were 16 and 21 cents, respectively. None of the specific industry groups which had more than a handful of Negro women paid as much as 25 cents an hour to Negro females. (Department of Labor and Industry, State of Virginia, *Forty-Third Annual Report*, Calendar Year 1939, Industrial Statistics [1941]; *Thirty-fourth Annual Report*, Calendar Year 1931, Industrial Statistics, [1932], pp. 24-26). Yet Negroes certainly had higher earnings in Virginia than in most other Southern states. This confirms the impression that Negroes, albeit the law's coverage is particularly limited as far as they are concerned, ought to be much more affected by it than the whites.

We quoted these Virginia figures because they seem to be the only data with breakdown by race covering a whole state. (By and large, there is a greater paucity of information by race in the Deep South than in the Upper South in official state reports on labor conditions, public welfare and so on. Actually, the more federal or private investigations indicate the occurrence of discrimination against the Negroes, and the greater the proportion of Negroes in the population, the more are the Negroes forgotten in official state reports. There are exceptions to this rule, but the general trend is unmistakable.) A complete series of such wage data, by race, would be extremely valuable for the purpose of checking up on the enforcement of the Wages and Hours Law. Unfortunately, the breakdown by race in the Virginia wage statistics has been discontinued during recent years. Certain over-all wage data suggest, however, that by 1939 the total averages for both races combined in virtually all specific industries were at least up to, or in the neighborhood of, the 30-cent limit. This seems to be true even about certain industries where Negro women predominate and where the wage level previously had been extremely low (such as where there prevailed an average rate of only 12 cents per hour for Negro female workers in 1930).

One of these industries was peanut shelling and cleaning. Despite the substantial increase in wages, there was no tendency to displace the Negro women in this line of work. The candy industry, on the other hand, which started from an equally low

wage-level, had but a small minority of white workers in 1930, but in 1939 about half the workers were white, most of them women.

The total number of Negro workers in all manufacturing industries did not decrease but showed a rather substantial increase, at least in the male group. Yet this has to be seen against the background of the tremendous expansion in Virginia manufacturing industries, which occurred between 1930 and 1939. The rates of increase for all four color-sex groups of wage earners and the proportions of workers who were colored were:

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN NUMBER OF WAGE EARNERS IN VIRGINIA MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES: 1930-1939, AND PERCENTAGE OF NONWHITE WAGE EARNERS: 1930-1939.

	Nonwhite	*White*	*1930*	*1939*
Male	23%	39%	28.3%	26.0%
Female	4	32	34.5	28.6

Sources: Department of Labor and Industry, State of Virginia, *Forty-third Annual Report*, Calendar Year 1939, Industrial Statistics (1941); *Thirty-fourth Annual Report*, Calendar Year 1930, Industrial Statistics (1932), pp. 24–26.

The facts that whites profited much more from the expansion than did Negroes, and that the proportion of Negro workers declined, particularly among women, was probably not all due to the improved working conditions and the increased competition brought about by the unemployment among whites. But, unless we are much mistaken, those circumstances must have been operating as important contributing factors.

[5] Such a program has been developed in Cincinnati. One of the main "selling points" was that employers should hire local labor rather than allow unemployed workers with legal residence in the community to become public charges. (Information from Dr. Lorin A. Thompson, who formerly was connected with this program.)

[6] The National Labor Union of the 1860's represented the first noteworthy endeavor to unite all organized labor on a national basis. The leadership showed a liberal attitude toward Negroes, but, in order not to alienate monopolistically inclined groups of white workers, it tolerated separate unions for Negroes and whites, probably even outright exclusion of Negroes. Negroes sometimes met in separate state and national conventions. The union's interest in organizing a political labor party interested Negroes even less than whites; this interest eventually contributed to the union's downfall after a few years. The Industrial Congress of 1873, on the other hand, foreshadowed the principle of "trade unionism pure and simple" of the American Federation of Labor, but it was soon destroyed by the big depression which started the same year. Negroes were hardly at all represented in these efforts.

The Knights of Labor originally started as a secret order in 1869, but did not grow into importance until the 1880's. It again manifested a liberal attitude toward Negroes, and soon met enthusiastic response from them. It was the goal of the Knights to organize and develop a general working class solidarity of all workers. Those who did not belong to trade unions were organized in local assemblies. Several of these local assemblies were segregated, however, and the Knights had little power to combat the tendency of ordinary trade unions, composed mainly of skilled workers, to organize Negroes into separate unions.[a]

[a] The historical notes are based mainly on Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker* (1931), particularly pp. 23-47.

The craft unions, mainly composed of the labor aristocracy of skilled workers, became increasingly dissatisfied with the all-inclusive objectives of the Knights. Already in 1881, before the Knights had reached their peak, the craft unions had organized a special federation of their own, which in 1886 withdrew from the Knights and adopted the name "American Federation of Labor" (A.F. of L.). After this, the Knights of Labor disintegrated. The development toward craft unionism naturally hit the Negroes more than the whites, not only on account of their race, but also because they were mainly unskilled workers. The A.F. of L. was not left completely unchallenged during the whole period before the institution of the C.I.O. There were some attempts to organize workers on the basis of a common, nonracial and nondiscriminatory, working class solidarity. The most noteworthy example is the syndicalist group, International Workers of the World (I.W.W.), which was started in 1905 and lasted until the early 'twenties. It meant something for Negroes in lumber and longshore work in certain areas of the South. With such exceptions, however, it was the American Federation of Labor and the independent Railroad Brotherhoods which governed organized labor during the long period from the early 1890's until the middle of the 1930's.

The A.F. of L. was never an association of craft unions only. Some unions were organized on an industrial basis, at least in name, but in some cases also in fact. In the latter group we find those few unions—for instance, the United Mine Workers' Union and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union—which during the entire period of their existence have recognized the necessity of including the Negro on the basis of equality, and also, in spite of certain unavoidable racial frictions and with some limitations, have succeeded in giving the Negro a square deal. It must also be recognized that part of the failure of the Federation to organize a more substantial proportion of all wage earners was due to the energetic anti-union work of the employers. During the decade before the First World War there was a series of vicious intimidations. It was during this time that one of the presidents of the National Association of Manufacturers expressed the belief that "the American Federation of Labor is engaged in an open warfare against Jesus Christ and His cause."[a] The 'twenties brought a new attack from the employers in the form of labor espionage, blacklisting, strike-breaking, violence. This was also the heyday of the company unions, which by 1928 had about 1,500,000 members.[b]

These circumstances, however, should not be allowed to overshadow the fact that the Federation, by and large, has been governed by the craft spirit, and that its main purpose has been to regulate the monopolistic competitive interests of the crafts. Its principal business was not to fight for labor in general. It was to draw the jurisdictional borderlines among its various member groups by means of the "charter." This explains why mass production industries, like steel and automobiles, were practically unorganized until the C.I.O. was instituted in 1935. The policy of the Federation was that the mass production workers were to be divided among the crafts. But this could be done only if they were first organized on an industrial basis, and then there was the danger that they would like to stay organized that way. This was exactly what finally happened, and the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.)[c] grew out of the resistance

[a] Richard A. Lester, *op. cit.*, p. 310.

[b] *Ibid.*, p. 313.

[c] In 1938, the name of the Committee for Industrial Organization was changed to Congress of Industrial Organizations.

of the newly organized industrial workers against the attempts of the crafts to take them over.[8]

[7] On this matter we may quote Paul H. Norgren:

"From its very beginning, the Federation has professed adherence to the principle of racial equality. Time and again it has 'resolved,' and its leaders have reaffirmed that it knows no color bar, and that 'the workers must unite and organize' irrespective of race or creed.

"For a few years immediately after its formation, the leaders of the Federation apparently made an attempt to enforce this principle. Thus the Executive Council, in an early publication, states that 'a union that [draws the color line] cannot be admitted into affiliation with this body.' (Quoted by Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, p. 88.) However, the dictates of expediency and the desire for increased membership soon gained the upper hand, with the result that in 1895 the International Association of Machinists, a strictly Negro-excluding body, was admitted as a full-fledged affiliate.

". . . there is no way of knowing whether the Federation will in the future attempt . . . to bring an end to racial discrimination by its constituent unions. The present writer, for one, is extremely skeptical as to the possibilities. There was some hope in this direction in earlier years, when several large industrial unions, including the United Mine Workers, and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, were still affiliated with the Federation. But after the expulsion of these unions in 1937, the craft union leaders came into virtually complete control of the Federation. . . .

"It is, in fact, abundantly clear even to the casual student of the labor movement in this country, that one of the principal functions of the American Federation of Labor, as it exists today, is to provide a centralized source of pious propaganda through which the craft unions which control it can issue frequent public reassurances of their firm adherence to the principles of democracy, equality, and unity among the laboring masses, while at the same time they continue with impunity to practice exclusionism and restriction of job opportunities in their own particular fields. . . . The 'control make-up' of the Federation is well adapted to this Jekyll-Hyde role. The Executive Council—which makes all the important decisions concerning policy—is made up principally of the heads of the craft unions which, in one way or another, practice racial discrimination." (Paul H. Norgren and Associates, "Negro Labor and Its Problems," unpublished manuscript, prepared for this study [1940], pp. 303-308, *passim.*)

Making a survey of the Negro-excluding unions within and without the Federation, Norgren says:

"No less than twenty American trade unions explicitly exclude Negroes from membership, either by constitutional provision or in their rituals. Only eleven of these, however, are of any appreciable importance from the standpoint of barring Negroes from jobs. . . . The eleven larger unions include the Boilermakers, the Machinists, the Commercial Telegraphers, the Railroad Telegraphers, the Railway Mail Clerks, the Railway Clerks and Freight Handlers, the Switchmen, the Firemen and Enginemen, the Trainmen, the Conductors, and the Locomotive Engineers. . . . In addition, five unions—the Electricians, the Plumbers and Steamfitters, the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers, the Granite Cutters, and the Flint Glass Workers—exclude Negroes by tacit agreement." (*Ibid.*, pp. 300-301.)

[8] See, for instance, J. Raymond Walsh, *C.I.O. Industrial Unionism in Action* (1937), pp. 28-47.

It should be noted that almost all the Negro-excluding unions are either A.F. of L. affiliates or independent railroad brotherhoods. (See Florence Murray [editor], *The Negro Handbook* [1942], pp. 134-135.)

These are the cases of complete exclusion. But most other craft unions show more or less partial discrimination:

"Most of the other national craft unions, while they do not bar Negroes from their ranks, either curtail their rights and privileges within the union, or allow their local components to do so. Thus the national rules of the Motion Picture Operators, the Blacksmiths and Drop Forgers, the Sheet Metal Workers, and the Maintenance-of-Way Employees (an unskilled craft union) permit the organization of colored workers in 'auxiliary' locals, but prohibit them from having any voice in union affairs. And if they are subjected to unfair or arbitrary treatment by the employers, their only means of obtaining redress is to request the officials of the 'regular' (white) local to present their grievances for them. . . .

"The Carpenters and the Painters do not have any constitutional provisions or other explicitly stated rules in their national set-up providing for the exclusion or segregation of colored workers. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of discrimination against Negroes among the locals of both these unions which, while not openly sanctioned, is always tacitly condoned by the central organizations. The national leadership of the Bricklayers' Union, on the other hand, has on a number of occasions attempted to enforce racial equality in the constituent bodies. As far as the writer has been able to learn, however, these attempts have been sporadic, and not very vigorous; and there are still a number of local bricklayers' organizations which openly practice discrimination." (Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 302.)

More recently (September, 1942) Northrup has classified the unions according to degree of discrimination and nondiscrimination as follows:

"Unions excluding Negroes by ritual—(1.) International Association of Machinists (A.F.L.)

"Unions excluding Negroes by constitution,—(1) Masters, Mates, and Pilots; (2) Commercial Telegraphers; (3) Railroad Telegraphers; (4) Railway Mail Association; (5) Switchmen's Union; (6) Airline Pilots; (7) Sleeping Car Conductors; (8) Wire Weavers; (all A.F.L.); (9) American Federation of Railroad Workers; (10) Locomotive Engineers; (11) Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen; (12) Railroad Trainmen; (13) Railway Conductors; (14) Train Dispatchers; (15) Railroad Yardmasters of America; (16) Railroad Yardmasters of North America; (all independents).

"Unions which generally refuse admittance to Negroes by tacit consent:—(1) Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; (2) Journeymen Plumbers and Steamfitters; (3) Asbestos Workers, Heat and Frost Insulators; (4) Granite Cutters; (5) Flint Glass Workers; (all A.F.L.).

"Unions which provide Negroes with Jim Crow auxiliary status which gives them the privilege of paying dues but no say in the organization—(1) Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Welders and Helpers; (2) Blacksmiths, Drop Forgers, and Helpers; (3) Railway Carmen; (4) Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees; (5) Maintenance of Way Employees; (6) Federation of Rural Letter Carriers; (all A.F.L.) (7) Rural Letter Carriers' Association (Independent)." (Herbert R. Northrup, unpublished memorandum made available by the courtesy of the

author [September, 1942]; this memorandum is to be incorporated in a forthcoming article.)

[8] The C.I.O. has, however, demanded that the A.F. of L. take positive steps to eliminate racial discrimination before any alliance between the two organizations can be reached.

[9] Richard A. Lester, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

[10] See the reports by the La Follette Committee: *Violations of Free Speech and Assembly and Interference with Rights of Labor.* Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor. United States Senate, Second Session on S. Res. 266, Washington, 1936, *passim*; *Oppressive Labor Practices Act.* Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, Seventy-sixth Congress, first session on S. 1970, Washington, 1939, *passim.*

[11] Concerning the widespread use of violence as a weapon in labor strikes in the South, Virginius Dabney writes:

"It is interesting to note, on the basis of material gathered by Dr. Arthur Raper of Atlanta, that far more strikers and labor organizers were killed in the South in the period immediately preceding the birth of the C.I.O. than subsequently. In 1929 and 1930, when Gastonia and Marion were in the headlines and the first great textile strike was on, seven strikers and one police chief were slain. In 1934 and 1935, no fewer than forty-two Southern laborers and organizers were killed in strikes. In 1936 and 1937, with the coming of the C.I.O., only five workers and organizers were killed in Southern labor disorders; the total for 1938 and 1939 was 14, while the figure for 1940 and 1941 is six. But while slayings have become less numerous, beatings have increased, and organizers are all too frequently set upon by company deputies, sometimes accompanied by irate citizens, or by non-union workers who have been persuaded, whether rightly or wrongly, that unionization will bankrupt their employers." (Dabney, *op. cit.*, p. 131.)

[12] "How Democratic are Labor Unions?" *Harper's Magazine* (May, 1942), pp. 655-662.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 662.

[14] Herbert R. Northrup, "Negro Labor and Union Policy," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University (1942), pp. 408-409.

Norgren describes two of the state laws against race discrimination:

"The Pennsylvania Labor Relations Act of 1937 contains a clause stipulating that unions which exclude workers from membership because of their color shall be denied the protection of the State Labor Relations Board. (Correspondence with Reginald A. Johnson of the Urban League of Pittsburgh, July, 1940.) In January, 1940, the New York state legislature passed a law expressly forbidding unions to 'deny a person or persons membership . . . by reason of race, color or creed.' A union which violates this statute is subject to court action, and the aggrieved person may recover up to $500 for the injury. In addition, union officers or members found guilty of violating the law are subject to fine or imprisonment. . . . According to the above-mentioned correspondent, the Pennsylvania anti-discrimination clause has up to now been almost completely ineffective, owing largely to the difficulty of finding 'a dispute under a clear cut circumstance where the racial clause of the Act can be put into effect.' The New York Act is still too new to permit of appraising its effectiveness or otherwise." (Norgren and Associates, *op. cit.*, p. 307.)

Chapter 19. *The War Boom—and Thereafter*

[1] A study made by the Work Projects Administration indicates unequivocally that, at least until the latter half of 1941, Negroes were grossly under-represented among the in-migrants to certain large cities including many primary war production areas. (See table in this footnote.) This was true in the North as well as in the South. In most cases there were not even half as many Negroes among those moving to the cities as among those already in the cities. This means that the war boom had reversed an earlier migration trend. While the Negro population until 1940 had been increasing faster than the white population in urban areas, both in the North and in the South, during this early stage of the defense boom, it was the white population that showed the most rapid growth. This pattern was, of course, wholly different from that during the First World War.

Conditions may have changed somewhat since the fall of 1941. The Bureau of Employment Security reports in September, 1942, that:

"These developments [the federal government's stand on discrimination and cooperation by some industries] have resulted in some slight increases in Negro employment from 3.5 percent in May to 4.7 percent in July of employment in the major war manufacturing establishments. . . . It is reported [however] that many employers in war production industries plan to continue their discriminatory policy until other available sources of labor are exhausted. This appears to be true especially of the aircraft, ordnance, rubber

PERCENTAGE OF NONWHITES IN THE TOTAL POPULATION, 1940, AND AMONG RECENT IN-MIGRANTS ACCORDING TO SURVEYS MADE DURING THE LATTER HALF OF 1941, IN SELECTED CITIES[a]

City	Percentage of Nonwhite Persons		City	Percentage of Nonwhite Persons	
	In Total Population	Among recent In-migrants		In Total Population	Among recent In-migrants
North and West			*North and West* (cont.)		
Bridgeport	3	1	San Diego	3	1
Philadelphia	13	6	Los Angeles	6	3
Pittsburgh	9	8	Oakland	5	3
Dayton	10	5			
Indianapolis	13	4			
South Bend	4	2	*South*		
Detroit	9	4	Baltimore	19	11
Des Moines	4	(b)	Washington, D.C.	29	7
Wichita	5	2	Norfolk	32	14
Seattle	4	(b)	Atlanta	35	16
San Francisco	5	(b)	Nashville	28	8
Long Beach	0	1	Oklahoma City	10	1
			Houston	22	7
			St. Louis	13	3

Source: Migration figures furnished by courtesy of Work Projects Adminstration, Division of Research; Population figures from *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-5, No. 10.

[a] The data on in-migrants are based on rather small samples. The figures for individual cities, therefore, should not be stressed as much as the fact that virtually all data give about the same general impression of Negroes being under-represented among the in-migrants.

[b] Less than 0.5 per cent.

products, electrical machinery, machinery, and textile-mill products industries." (Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Employment Security, *The Labor Market* [September, 1942], p. 13.)

[2] At the close of the First World War about 39,000 Negroes were employed in plants under the jurisdiction of the United States Shipping Board. (George E. Haynes, *The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction* [1921] p. 58. Quoted by Robert C. Weaver in "Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," Part I, *Phylon* [Fourth Quarter, 1941], p. 342.)

[3] The Federal Security Agency, as late as June, 1942, made the following significant statements:

"In April, 1940, Negroes constituted 9.8 per cent of the population, 10.7 per cent of the Nation's labor force, and 12.5 per cent of the unemployed. Since 1940 Negroes have constituted an increasing proportion of the unemployed—during the past year from 15 to 20 per cent—because industry has recruited its war workers almost exclusively from among the white labor force." (*The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 10.) And:

"Over 500,000 Negroes who should be utilized for war production are now idle because of the discriminatory hiring practices of war industries. In addition, several million other Negroes engaged in unskilled occupations are prevented from making a greater contribution to the war effort because employers, with few exceptions, are unwilling to train and promote them to jobs of higher skills. Persistent discrimination is accentuating the shortage of labor in areas where acute problems already exist. Discriminatory hiring practices in these areas result in the recruitment of white in-migrants while Negroes remain unemployed. With the influx of outside workers into these cities housing, transportation, health, educational and sanitation facilities in many localities have become inadequate and local problems have increased." (*Ibid.*, p. 9.)

[4] Lester B. Granger of the National Urban League (interview, August 10, 1942) emphasized particularly the reasons given under (1), (2) and (4). Paul H. Norgren of the War Production Board, Labor Division, stressed especially the declining need for unskilled labor (interview, August 3, 1942).

[5] "During the depression of the 1930's employers could set almost any combination of job specifications and still be assured an ample supply of applicants. As a result, 'native, Protestant, white,' came to be a fairly widespread personal qualification for employment. Maintenance of such qualifications not only contradicts democratic principles but in the present situation also greatly intensifies disruptive recruiting practices and encourages unnecessary migration of unskilled as well as skilled workers. Discrimination by one company has resulted in over 40 per cent of its 34,000 workers coming from outside the State while there yet remains a large number of unemployed Negroes in the local community who could have been trained and hired." (*The Labor Market* [May, 1942], p. 6.)

[6] For a report of alleged Ku Klux Klan activity in the U.A.W. in Detroit, see *PM* (February 13, 1942), p. 14.

[7] Again we may quote the Federal Security Agency:

"Moreover, the bulk of placements of Negroes was concentrated in service and unskilled occupational groups. In the first quarter of 1941 only 51 per cent of all white placements, as against 90 per cent of all Negro placements were made in service and unskilled occupations. In the first quarter of 1942 the corresponding proportions were

53 per cent and 93 per cent. . . . In the first quarter of 1941 16 per cent of all white placements compared to 1.9 per cent of all nonwhite placements were made in either skilled or professional occupations. In the first quarter of 1942 the corresponding proportions were 14.6 per cent of all white placements, and only 1.2 per cent of all nonwhite placements." (*The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 11.)

These figures, however, are not quite representative. It appears that the Employment Service handles a larger part of the turnover in unskilled than in skilled occupations. A comparison with Edwards' classification indicates that there is a much higher proportion of skilled, clerical, and professional workers in the total labor force than in the Employment Service placements. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers in the United States, 1930* [1938], p. 7.) The Employment Service data, furthermore, cannot cover promotions of workers within an establishment.

[8] War Production Board, Statistics Division, "State Distribution of War Supply and Facility Contracts, June 1940 through May 1942" (mimeographed, June 30, 1942).

[9] Robert C. Weaver, "Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," Part II, *Phylon* (First Quarter, 1942), p. 28; Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Employment Security, *Negro Workers and the National Defense Program* (September 16, 1941), p. 5; Robert C. Weaver, "With the Negro's Help," *Atlantic Monthly* (June, 1942), pp. 699-700; interviews with Lester B. Granger, Executive Secretary, National Urban League (August 10, 1942), and Paul H. Norgren, War Production Board, Labor Division (August 3, 1942).

[10] "Throughout the country there was a heavy demand for unskilled labor needed for the construction of airports, military cantonments, barracks. . . . Negro unskilled labor shared substantially in these employment opportunities and benefited by the wage rates paid on these projects, which were generally higher than wages usually earned in unskilled work.

"The extraordinary demand for skilled construction workers, particularly carpenters . . . resulted in many job opportunities particularly for union members. There is evidence, however, that in some localities, in spite of the acute shortage of carpenters, Negroes were not employed. In skilled building trades occupations other than carpenters and cement finishers, and to some extent, bricklayers and masons, there is no evidence that discriminatory practices were being noticeably relaxed." (*Negro Workers and the National Defense Program*, p. 5.)

Weaver ("Racial Employment Trends in National Defense," Part I, pp. 352-356) cites a number of instances where Negro carpenters have been employed on defense projects—and others where they have not been able to get in. As a result of increased employment there was a growth in the number and strength of Negro carpenters' locals.

Some other building crafts, however, have maintained a more consistent exclusionistic policy. The President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice found in 1942 that the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers' Union excluded Negroes from membership; that the Union for several years had had a written agreement with the Plumbing Contractors' Association of Chicago, according to which the contractors were to accept as workers on certain defense projects (Great Lakes Naval Training Station and the Cabrini Housing Project) only plumbers who were members of the union; and that Negroes, for this reason, had been unable to work as plumbers on those projects. The Committee directed that these practices be abolished. ("Summary of Hearings on Complaints of

Negro Plumbers against the Chicago Journeymen Plumbers' Union Local 130 held in Chicago, Illinois, April 4, 1942, before the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, with Findings and Directions" [mimeographed, 1942].) It goes without saying that this is just one example of barriers instituted by some of the unions in the building trades.

[11] In the female group only six-tenths of 1 per cent of all placements in defense industries made by the Employment Service, during the period October, 1940, through March, 1941, were nonwhite. On the other hand, for all male and female defense and nondefense placements taken together, the Negro's share amounted to about 20 per cent. It should be considered, however, that only a part of the newly hired workers were recruited through the Employment Service. (*Negro Workers and the National Defense Program*, p. 10.)

[12] Only 19 per cent of all the hiring that was planned for the period September, 1941, to February, 1942, was to occur in plants where Negroes were represented in the labor force. Even in the South more than two-thirds of the anticipated expansion referred to establishments which barred the Negro entirely. To be sure, several employers indicated their willingness to start hiring Negroes, but it is evident that a great number of them were just paying lip-service to government regulations. What makes their statements particularly suspect is the fact that the expressed readiness to change policies was particularly pronounced in the case of professional, managerial and skilled workers. (Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Employment Security, "Survey of Employment Prospects for Negroes," undated mimeographed release.)

[13] White placements through the Employment Service in 18 selected war industries tripled from the last quarter of 1940 to the beginning of 1942, whereas Negro placements in the same industries increased by only 80 per cent. (*The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 11.) These data give strong support to the theory that the proportion of Negro workers in the war industries has actually declined. However, since it is uncertain what relation there is between Employment Service placements and total placements, the evidence is not quite conclusive. It is possible, for instance, that there has been a greater increase in the utilization of the Employment Service for white workers than there has been for Negro workers.

[14] "Not always, however, are the employment practices of shipyards the obstacle to maximum utilization of local labor supplies. A city ordinance in Miami, Florida, for example, prohibits Negroes from working in skilled and semiskilled occupations in sections of the city other than Negro and has consequently affected shipbuilding expansion in the area. Negro boatbuilder and joiner trainees, needed in the local yards, cannot be hired because of this ordinance." (*The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 14. See also: *ibid.*, p. 10; Weaver, "With the Negro's Help," pp. 700-791; and the National Urban League, "The Integration of Negroes into Defense Training and Employment. The Barriers faced, the Progress made," typescript [February 17, 1942]. This source indicates, for instance, that the number of Negro workers at the Charleston Navy Yard increased during 1941 from 453, or 9.5 per cent of the total, to 1,302, or 17.7 per cent. The number of Negro workers at the Norfolk Navy Yard in Portsmouth, Virginia, had, by November, 1941, increased to about 6,000, or 23 per cent. Supplementary information from Mr. Lester B. Granger of the National Urban League, interview [August 10, 1942].)

[15] The Bureau of Employment Security observes, with respect to the ordnance industry:

"Hiring of Negroes is not commensurate with rapidly expanding job opportunities, and it is doubtful that there will be a general acceptance of Negro workers in the near future. Jobs filled by Negroes at present are chiefly in the custodial services and in the unskilled categories, with few instances of upgrading reported. Virtually every important employer has indicated that hiring of nonwhites will begin 'when necessary,' that is when the supply of white workers is exhausted. Employment prospects for Negroes in southern war plants, even as unskilled workers, are limited, due to the availability of a large pool of whites. Almost without exception, job opportunities for Negroes are negligible in the large ordnance plants of the Great Lakes and Middle Atlantic States." (*The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 15. See also other sources cited in the preceding footnote.)

[16] There are certain instructions issued, after conferences with unions and employers, by the Office of Production Management (September 17, 1941) and jointly by the War Manpower Commission and the War Production Board (June 18, 1942), regulating the seniority rights of workers moved from one production line to another, or from one establishment to another within the industry.

[17] Interview with Lloyd H. Bailer of the War Production Board, Labor Division (August 2-3, 1942). See also Lester B. Granger, "Negroes in War Production," *Survey Graphic* (November, 1942), p. 544.

[18] *The Labor Market* (June, 1942), p. 10; and Weaver, "With the Negro's Help," p. 701.

[19] The Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, for instance, carried a series of articles on the subject during the winter of 1940-1941. Among the most noteworthy pamphlets are: Council for Democracy, *The Negro and Defense* (1941); Frank R. Crosswaith and Alfred Baker Lewis, "Discrimination, Incorporated," *Social Action* (January 15, 1942); Earl Brown and George R. Leighton, *The Negro and the War*, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 71 (1942); The National Urban League, "Report of Progress in the War Employment of Negro Labor" (mimeographed, July, 1942). Prominent magazine articles are: "The Negro's War," *Fortune* (June, 1942), pp. 77-80, 157-164; "Found: A Million Manpower," *Modern Industry* (May 15, 1942), pp. 28-31; Earl Brown, "American Negroes and the War," *Harper's Magazine* (April, 1942), pp. 545-572; Stanley High, "How the Negro Fights for Freedom," *Readers Digest* (July, 1942), pp. 113-118. Walter White, "It's Our Country, Too," *The Saturday Evening Post* (December 14, 1940), pp. 27 and 61-68. See, also, other sources cited in this and the preceding Section.

[20] The National Defense Advisory Commission instituted a special Department of Negro Affairs in its Labor Division in July, 1942. In August, the N.D.A.C. made a statement to the effect that defense workers should not be discriminated against because of age, sex or race. This declaration was backed up by the President in September and by Congress in October, 1940. A few days later the N.D.A.C. reached an agreement with the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the American Federation of Labor to the effect that all trade union barriers against the Negro should be removed. In November, 1940, the U. S. Commissioner of Education urged those in charge of public defense training programs to consider the nondiscrimination clause in existing defense training legislation. In April, 1941, a Negro Employment and Training Branch was

instituted in the Office of Production Management, later the War Production Board. During 1942 it was moved to the War Manpower Commission. (President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, Negro Employment and Training Branch, Labor Division, O.P.M., Minority Groups Branch, Labor Division, O.P.M., "Minorities in Defense" [1941], pp. 10-12.)

[21] Brown, "American Negroes and the War," pp. 548-550.

[22] The President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice was originally set up as a division within the Office of Production Management. Later it became independent. In 1942, it was moved over to the War Manpower Commission.

[23] Lester Granger points out that allowing the Committee to fine employers who discriminate would give them an effective method of control. ("Negroes in War Production, p. 470.)

[24] Brown and Leighton, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.

[25] On September 6, 1941, the President issued a second, and much stronger, condemnation of discrimination, but this one applied to federal government agencies only.

Mr. Roosevelt's new letter "to heads of all departments and independent establishments" read:

"It has come to my attention that there is in the Federal establishment a lack of uniformity and possibly some lack of sympathetic attitude toward the problems of minority groups, particularly those relating to the employment and assignment of Negroes in the Federal civil service.

"With a view to improving the situation, it is my desire that all departments and independent establishments in the Federal Government make a thorough examination of their personnel policies and practices to the end that they may be able to assure me that in the Federal service the doors of employment are open to all loyal and qualified workers regardless of creed, race or national origin.

"It is imperative that we deal with this problem speedily and effectively. I shall look for immediate steps to be taken by all departments and independent establishments of the government to facilitate and put into effect this policy of non-discrimination in Federal employment."

[26] Brown and Leighton, *op. cit.*, p. 27. During the winter of 1941 it happened that about 200 Negro stenographers and typists hired by the War Department had to spend their time in enforced idleness since most office heads refused to use their services. (*Ibid.*, p. 19.)

It seems that many hiring officials in federal offices have recourse to various tricks when they find out that they have employed a Negro. There are numerous stories told by Negroes about how, when they report for work, they are told that "some mistake must have been made," and a technical excuse is found for dismissing them. Hiring officials have even been accused of asking the Negro for the letter of employment—and then keeping it, leaving the employee without proof of his employment. According to one white informant who has collected material on practices in various federal offices, one of the most usual tricks is based on the fact that job descriptions are often oral. They can simply be changed when the hired persons turns out to be a Negro. (For instance, a secretary who is good at typing, but less well trained in taking dictation, is told that dictation is the main part of the job.) The use of detailed, written job descriptions is the only answer in such cases. The same informant believed that it would not be impossible even to overcome the discriminations in dismissals made possible by the stipula-

tion of a probationary period. "When you fire a veteran, you have to show cause. When you fire a Negro, you don't have to." (Interview, August 3, 1942.) See also, Granger, "Negroes in War Production," pp. 471 and 543.

[27] In addition there were the so-called supplementary courses, where Negroes, during the same period, constituted but 1.7 per cent of the total. (*Negro Workers and the National Defense Program*, pp. 17-18; *The Labor Market* [June, 1942], p. 11.) It is a well-known fact that Negroes are under-represented on most in-plant training programs organized by employers. The Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration, on the other hand, have, to a comparatively large extent, included them in their war work training programs. (High, *op. cit.*, p. 115.)

[28] For the whole South the percentages of nonwhites among those referred to such courses and projects was only 7.5 per cent, although 26.2 per cent of the total Southern labor force in 1940 was nonwhite. The corresponding figures for the rest of the nation were 2.9 and 4.8 per cent, respectively, indicating a much smaller discrepancy. (Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Employment Security, "Vocational Training Activities of Public Employment Offices, January, 1942," mimeographed; *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Releases, Series P-4, No. 4, and P-4a, Nos. 14 to 16.)

Workers are referred to these training courses by the Employment Service. The latest instructions issued by the Bureau of Employment Security to local offices have the following rather unfortunate formulation:

". . . it is the policy of the United States Employment Service . . . to fill requisitions for trainees without regard to race, color, creed or national origin, except in those States where separate educational facilities for whites and Negroes are required by law, namely . . ." [Eighteen Southern and Border states enumerated.] (Federal Security Agency, Social Security Board, Bureau of Employment Security, "U.S.E.S. Operations Bulletin No. C-45" [July 1, 1942], p. 2.)

The intention, of course, is just to acknowledge the segregation in the Southern educational system. The formulation, however, leaves the door open for almost any kind of discrimination.

[29] *Journal and Guide*, Norfolk, Virginia (February 28, 1942).

[30] Information from Lester B. Granger, National Urban League (August 10, 1942). According to Mr. Granger all Southern states, except Georgia, have Negro Employment Service offices.

[31] "U.S.E.S. Operations Bulletin, No. C-45," pp. 2-3.

[32] The recommendations and requirements sent out by the U.S.E.S. to its local offices included the following injunctions:

". . . it is the policy of the United States Employment Service: . . .

(2) To make definite effort to persuade employers to eliminate specifications which prevent the consideration of local qualified workers because of their race, color, creed, or national origin . . .

"(3) To omit discretionary specifications from advertising sponsored or approved by the United States Employment Service:

"(4) To report to the Director of the United States Employment Service for appropriate disposition each instance in which an employer refuses to relax discriminatory specifications;

"(5) To refuse to make referrals on employer orders which include discriminatory

specifications in those states where such specifications are contrary to State law; . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 2.)

[33] The war housing work, for a long time, was extremely uncoordinated, particularly from a local viewpoint. This was due, largely, to the fact that the local Housing Authorities were kept from leadership since they worked under the auspices of the United States Housing Authority which happened to be rather unpopular in Congress. Most of these organizational difficulties, however, have been overcome since the integration of all public housing programs under the National Housing Agency in 1942.

[34] The following description of the conditions in the Negro section of Norfolk, Virginia, in the spring of 1942 is pertinent in this context:

"Three recent field trips to the area have convinced the writer that there is an immediate demand for dormitory accommodations. All rooming houses are overcrowded. Such community agencies as the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations have canvassed the city for spare rooms that residents would be willing to rent out to new-comers. All available sleeping space has been utilized: porches have been closed in, two and three double beds have been placed in rooms, couches have been placed in halls, and as many as 35 men a night can be found sleeping in chairs or on the floor of the recreation room of the Y.M.C.A. It is difficult to find single accommodations. A man has to share his bed with a second occupant. The 'hot bed' practice of sleeping men in shifts without a change of linen has been reported . . ." (Lyonel C. Florant, Population Study, Virginia State Planning Board, "Memorandum re: Negro Housing in Norfolk, Virginia," typescript [June 3, 1942], p. 3.)

[35] Information from Miss Corienne K. Robinson, National Housing Agency, Federal Public Housing Administration (letter, [August 28, 1942]).

[36] See, for instance, Emmett J. Scott, *The American Negro in the World War* (1919), pp. 77-78.

[37] Monroe N. Work (editor), *Negro Year Book, 1931-32* (1931), pp. 327-334. Negro soldiers were used on both sides in the Revolutionary War—often in unsegregated outfits. There were almost 180,000 Negro troops on the Union side in the Civil War; some fought on the Confederate side. During the First World War there were 380,000 Negroes in the Army. About 200,000 Negro soldiers were sent to France. Most of these were in labor battalions and service units; only 42,000 were combat troops, and Negroes had to fight for the right to be represented at all among the line soldiers. About 1,400 Negroes were commissioned as officers in the Army of the First World War, although it took some time before the Army leadership could be induced to make provisions for giving officer's training to any Negro soldiers.

[38] Scott, *op. cit.*, particularly, pp. 82-91, 315-327 and 442-443.

[39] Brown and Leighton, *op. cit.*, p. 7; "The Negro's War," p. 164; "The Negro in the Army Today," typewritten statement issued by Judge William Hastie, Special Assistant, War Department; White, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

[40] "The Negro in the Army Today."

[41] See, for example, White, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[42] High, *op. cit.*, p. 114; Brown and Leighton, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

[43] The Negro pilot school at Tuskegee at present (August, 1942) accepts only some 20-odd Negro pupils every five weeks. At the present time (September, 1942), however, there are plans for a considerable expansion in the Negro aviation cadet training program.

[44] During the First World War, for instance, there was a serious riot in Houston, Texas, in 1917, which ended in the execution of thirteen Negro soldiers. Another large riot in Spartanburg, South Carolina, was barely avoided. A Negro soldier had been beaten up while buying a newspaper in a hotel; the next night a group of soldiers started marching from their camp to the city in order to "shoot it up," but were stopped by a white officer. There were numerous other clashes. Special investigations revealed widespread discrimination against Negroes in certain camps, such as Camp Lee, Virginia, where the military police was accused of treating Negroes unfairly. Passes were said to be issued more freely to white than to Negro soldiers. Officers sometimes inflicted bodily punishment on Negroes. When selecting Negro soldiers for promotion to the rank of noncommissioned officers, they often showed a tendency to prefer illiterate "funny fellows" to men of greater ability. The chief of the only Negro combat division stationed in the North caused a general resentment among Negroes when he issued a bulletin urging Negro officers and men to refrain from their legal right to visit theaters and other places "where their presence will be resented," giving as a reason the argument that "white men made the Division, and they can break it just as easily if it becomes a trouble maker." (Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-110.)

[45] *N.A.A.C.P. Annual Report for 1941*, pp. 7-9; Brown and Leighton, *op. cit.*, p. 7. It goes without saying that these are only a sample of the incidents which have occurred.

[46] To be sure, the merchant marine may, in large part, have to be rebuilt after the War, and this may, for a time, minimize the decline in shipbuilding. It is possible, as well, that the government, for the purpose of meeting another future emergency, will subsidize ship production in order to maintain some part of the present shipbuilding capacity. Even so, there must be a substantial decline. At present, facilities are being geared to the purpose of replacing ships that have been sunk; to the transportation of military supplies and troops; to provide for the increase in need due to the tremendous slowing up of transportation.

[47] See, for instance, George B. Galloway, *Postwar Planning in the United States* (1942).

Chapter 20. *Underlying Factors*

[1] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), pp. 368-370.

[2] Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* (1910), p. 284.

[3] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 282-284, and Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), pp. 371-374. The five New England states mentioned had, in 1860, a total Negro population of 16,084, constituting 4.5 per cent of the total free Negro population outside the 11 secession states; New York had, in addition, 49,005 Negroes of which, however, probably the great majority were disfranchised under the limitation.

"The Constitution of Tennessee of 1834 provided that no person should be disqualified from voting in any election who was then by the laws of the State a competent witness in a court of justice against a white person."[a] It is impossible to tell, however, how many Negroes were thus qualified to vote.

The Wisconsin Constitution (1848) limited voting to whites, but the Supreme

[a] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

Court of the State held in 1866 that suffrage had been extended to Negroes by a referendum at the general election on November 6, 1849; since the result of the election was in dispute from 1849 until 1866, it is probable that no Negroes voted during that period.[a]

[4] Marian D. Irish, "The Southern One-Party System and National Politics," *The Journal of Politics* (February, 1942), p. 80.

[5] To quote two representative liberal Southern authors; Willis D. Weatherford:

"Who among us has not seen how the presence of the Negro has moulded our political history since emancipation? We have been slow to pass laws for compulsory school attendance, lest we tie ourselves to the task of classical education of the Negro. We are slow enough about extending the suffrage, lest the colored man should become too influential. No major political issue has faced the South in the last hundred years that has not been decided largely in the light of the presence of the Negro."[b]

T. J. Woofter, Jr.:

"It is . . . apparent that in excluding the Negro the South is, in a way, politically dominated by the Negro question. Before all others it looms as the bulwark of the one-party system. It was a determining factor in the prohibition vote. It affected the South's stand on woman suffrage and it ramifies into hundreds of questions of public policy, it influences the South's position on child labor, it is a stumbling block in the administration of compulsory school laws, standing as an ever-present shadow across the door of political councils."[c]

The conservative Southerner is not so likely to write books on the Negro problem as is his liberal compatriot. The present writer recalls, however, from his talks with many Southerners of conservative leanings that they too usually complained about how the Negro problem has entered into all public questions of the region and hindered their consideration upon their own merits. But they consider this situation without remedy or, rather, hold that even a gradual enfranchisement of the Negro could only accentuate this "plight of the South."

[6] Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization* (1927), pp. 298-306.

[7] Donald Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932), p. 212; compare *ibid.*, pp. 201 ff. especially p. 207.

[8] Some Northern states—Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Maine, Delaware, Wyoming, California—actually have literacy requirements for registration in their constitutions or election laws.[d] In addition, in some Northern states, paupers are disfranchised; some criminals are prohibited from voting. In Utah, anyone who advocates polygamy, or belongs to an organization that advocates it, may not vote.[e]

When these requirements are enforced, they are done so regardless of race or national origin; Northern states that have literacy requirements also provide adult education schools to teach illiterates how to read and write.

[9] Frank U. Quillin, *The Color Line in Ohio* (1913), p. 9.

[a] *Idem.*

[b] Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 298.

[c] *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), p. 166.

[d] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-302; and Osmond K. Fraenkel, "Restrictions on Voting in the United States," in *The National Lawyers' Guild Quarterly* (March, 1938), pp. 135-143.

[e] Fraenkel, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

[10] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-287, and W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), p. 341.

[11] As late as 1831 the Virginia legislature considered a plan for the gradual emancipation of the slaves; the plan, inspired by Thomas Jefferson, and introduced into the legislature by his grandson, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, was debated for months and finally defeated by a single vote.[a]

[12] William Sumner Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South* (1935).

[13] From the judgment in the text, we do not make exceptions of modern fascism and nazism. Those ideologies, however, fall outside our classification: they are no more like conservatism than radicalism but could, perhaps, best be characterized as a peculiar blend of reactionism and radicalism.

[14] The reluctance of modern conservatism to build up closed systems of compendent logical propositions varies, of course, considerably. Catholic conservatism, for instance, tends more toward a closed system of principles. Hegelianism was also, in some respects, a conservative philosophy and was developed into a system, though not a static one.

[15] George Fitzhugh, *Sociology for the South* (1854), Chapter 2.

[16] Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 295. See also Chapter 10 of this book.

[17] Fitzhugh, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 248.

[19] Speech in the Senate, March 2, 1859, quoted in Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

[20] *Congressional Globe*, 35th Congress, 1st Session, App. p. 71 (March 4, 1858); quoted from Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

[21] Judge Upshur, quoted by Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

[22] Quoted from: W. F. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941), p. 80.

[23] A few quotations on the last point from this remarkable book should be given:

"Notwithstanding the fact that the white non-slaveholders of the South are in the majority, as five to one, they have never yet had any part or lot in framing the laws under which they live. There is no legislation except for the benefit of slavery, and slaveholders. As a general rule, poor white persons are regarded with less esteem and attention than negroes, and though the condition of the latter is wretched beyond description, vast numbers of the former are infinitely worse off. A cunningly devised mockery of freedom is guaranteed to them, and that is all. To all intents and purposes they are disfranchised, and outlawed, and the only privilege extended to them is a shallow and circumscribed participation in the political movements that usher slaveholders into office."[b]

"The lords of the lash are not only absolute masters of the blacks, who are bought and sold, and driven about like so many cattle, but they are also the oracles and arbiters of all non-slaveholding whites, whose freedom is merely nominal, and whose unparalleled illiteracy and degradation is purposely and fiendishly perpetuated. How little the 'poor white trash,' the great majority of the Southern people, know of the real condition of the country is, indeed, sadly astonishing. The truth is, they know nothing of public measures, and little of private affairs, except what their imperious masters, the slave-drivers, condescend to tell, and that is but precious little, and even the little, always garbled and one-sided, is never told except in public harangues; for the haughty

[a] See William E. Dodd, *Statesmen of the Old South* (1911), p. 80.

[b] Hinton R. Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857), p. 42.

cavaliers of shackles and handcuffs will not degrade themselves by holding private converse with those who have neither dimes nor hereditary rights in human flesh."[a]

"It is expected that the stupid and sequacious masses, the white victims of slavery, will believe, and as a general thing, they do believe, whatever the slaveholders tell them; and thus it is that they are cajoled into the notion that they are the freest, happiest and most intelligent people in the world, and are taught to look with prejudice and disapprobation upon every new principle or progressive movement. Thus it is that the South, woefully inert and inventionless, has lagged behind the North, and is now weltering in the cesspool of ignorance and degradation."[b]

[24] "The most tangible reform that he [Tillman] could suggest was that the Fifteenth —and sometimes the Fourteenth—Amendment be repealed . . . [but] . . . he did not arouse [Northern] public opinion to effect the repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment."[c]

[25] "Less than 5 per cent of all cases involving the Fourteenth Amendment have dealt with Negro rights and most of those have been lost."[d]

"Since 1868 some 575 cases involving the 14th amendment have come before the supreme court for adjudication. Only 27, or less than 5% of these have dealt with the negro. By far the greater portion of the litigation under this act has been concerned with the federal regulation of industrial combinations. Organized capital rather than the negro race has invoked the protection of the 14th amendment against state interference. Of the 27 cases concerned with the negro, 20 were decided adversely to the race for whose benefit the act was framed. The six decisions favouring federal intervention in modified forms are concerned for the most part with the refusal to admit negroes to jury service in the state courts."[e]

[26] For example, two leading Southern Restoration statesmen, L. Q. C. Lamar and Wade Hampton, in a symposium in 1879, stood by the post-war Amendments. In presenting his opinion, Lamar first states the two propositions for the symposium:

"1. That the disfranchisement of the negro is a political impossibility under any circumstances short of revolution.

"2. That the ballot in the hands of the negro, however its exercise may have been embarrassed and diminished by what he considers, erroneously, a general southern policy, has been to that race a means of defense and an element of progress.

"I agree to both propositions. In all my experience of southern opinion I know no southern man of influence or consideration who believes that the disfranchisement of the negro on account of race, color, or former condition of servitude is a political possibility. I am not now discussing the propriety or wisdom of universal suffrage, or whether, in the interests of wise, safe, and orderly government, all suffrage ought not to be qualified. What I mean to say is that universal suffrage being given as the condition of our political life, the negro once made a citizen can not be placed under any other condition. And in this connection it may surprise some of the readers of this discussion

[a] *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

[b] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

[c] Butler Simkins, "Ben Tillman's View of the Negro," in *The Journal of Southern History* (May, 1937), pp. 170-173. See also Paul Lewinson, *Race, Class and Party* (1932), p. 84. footnote.

[d] Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro in American Civilization* (1930), p. 337.

[e] John Moffat Mecklin, *Democracy and Race Friction* (1914), pp. 231-232.

to learn that in 1869 the white people of Mississippi unanimously voted at the polls in favor of ratifying the enfranchising amendment. . . ."[a]

"Whatever may have been the policy of conferring the right of voting upon the negro, ignorant and incompetent as he was to comprehend the high responsibility thrust upon him, and whatever may have been the reasons which dictated this dangerous experiment, the deed has been done and is irrevocable. It is now the part of true statesmanship to give it as far as possible that direction which will be most beneficial or least hurtful to the body politic."[b]

[27] The editor of *The News and Courier* of Charleston, South Carolina, is such an exception:

"Again let it be said and clearly understood that were The News and Courier a democratic newspaper, if it believed in democracy as President Roosevelt believes in it, as he described it in his North Carolina speech last week, it would demand that every white man and woman and every black man and woman in the South be protected in the right to vote. It would demand the abolition of all 'Jim Crow' cars, of all drawing of the color line by law. That is democracy. But The News and Courier is not a democrat. It fears and hates democratic government. The News and Courier believes in Democratic government—Democratic with a big 'D' and that is another word for a measure of aristocratic government that ought to be more aristocratic than it is."[c]

"In South Carolina, the Democratic party, has been, so far as the negro vote is concerned, a Fascist party, and that is why The News and Courier 'cooperates' with it. In the North the Democratic party has become so democratic that it turns Southern stomachs."[d]

A prominent white lawyer in a letter observed:

"We have a newspaper in Charleston, S.C., which fills its editorial column with daily blasts against the Negro. It is, so far as I know, the last surviving representative of a school of journalism which was at one time quite common in the state. Its own influence is rapidly dwindling."[e]

[28] The "grandfather clause" no longer belongs to this list since it was declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court in 1915.

[29] The author of the disfranchisement amendments of the Virginia Constitution (1902), Carter Glass, later U. S. senator, replied to a question whether the elimination of the Negro vote would not be accomplished by "fraud and discrimination":

"By fraud, no; by discrimination, yes. But it will be discrimination within the letter of the law. . . . Discrimination! Why, that is precisely what we propose. That, exactly, is what this convention was elected for—to discriminate to the very extremity of per-

[a] L. Q. C. Lamar, "Ought the Negro to be Disfranchised?—Ought He to Have Been Enfranchised?" in *The North American Review* (March, 1879), p. 231.

[b] Wade Hampton, "Ought the Negro to be Disfranchised?—Ought He to Have Been Enfranchised?" in *The North American Review* (March, 1879), p. 240.

For similar expressions of opinion from other leading Southerners, see the "Symposium: Ought the Negro to be Disfranchised?—Ought He to Have Been Enfranchised?" in *The North American Review* (March, 1879), pp. 225-281, from which the above statements are taken.

[c] August 26, 1937. Quoted from Rayford W. Logan (editor), *The Attitude of the Southern White Press toward Negro Suffrage, 1932-1940* (1940), p. 69.

[d] July 20, 1938. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

[e] July 2, 1940.

missible action under the limitations of the Federal Constitution, with a view to the elimination of every Negro voter who can be gotten rid of, legally, without materially impairing the numerical strength of the white electorate. . . . It is a fine discrimination, indeed, that we have practiced in the fabrication of this plan."[a]

Moffat states:

"There can be no reasonable doubt that the *intent* of the delegates to these various conventions [Mississippi, South Carolina, Louisiana, North Carolina, Maryland, Alabama, and Virginia] was to frame their constitutions in such wise as to stand the test of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution and at the same time withhold the ballot from the great mass of negro voters in their respective states."[b]

Moffat backs his statement with many pages of quotes from the legislators who participated in the conventions.[c]

James Weldon Johnson makes the following statements:

"Not long ago, in a widely circulated weekly magazine, Senator George, formerly a member of the Supreme Court of Georgia, was quoted as saying in the course of an interview:

" 'Why apologize or evade? We have been very careful to obey the letter of the Federal Constitution—but we have been very diligent and astute in violating the spirit of such amendments and such statutes as would lead the Negro to believe himself the equal of a white man. And we shall continue to conduct ourselves in that way.'

"Senator Glass was quoted by the same interviewer as saying:

" 'The people of the original thirteen Southern States curse and spit upon the Fifteenth Amendment—and have no intention of letting the Negro vote. We obey the letter of the amendments and the Federal Statutes, but we frankly evade the spirit thereof—and purpose to continue doing so. White supremacy is too precious a thing to surrender for the sake of a theoretical justice that would let a brutish African deem himself the equal of white men and women in Dixie.' "[d]

[80] Bertram Schrieke reflects likewise:

"National history strongly believes in the *fait accompli*. If a revolution is successful, its promoters are heroes, their opponents tyrants; if a revolution is unsuccessful, the promoters are dishonest agitators or at least impractical but dangerous idealists. Since the revolution that undid reconstruction, no new revolution in the South has occurred; therefore no need has been felt for a new evaluation. The slogans of the struggle of the southern Democrats—'Negro domination,' 'carpet-bagger governments,' 'corruption, frauds, and maladministration because of Negro participation in politics,' and so on—have now become 'historical verities.' As a matter of fact, there had never been a Negro majority in the reconstruction governments, whereas Southerners of standing had prominently participated in them. As for political corruption and 'spending,' these had not been much worse than in the North, especially in New York, during the same

[a] *Virginia Debates: 1901-02*. Vol. 2. Quoted from Lewinson, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[b] R. Burnham Moffat, "The Disfranchisement of the Negro from a Lawyer's Standpoint," *The Journal of the American Social Science Association* (September, 1904), p. 33.

[c] *Ibid.*, pp. 34-62. See also James A. Hamilton, *Negro Suffrage and Congressional Representation* (1910).

[d] "A Negro Looks at Politics," *The American Mercury* (September, 1929), p. 92. See also, *The Journal of the American Social Science Association* (December, 1899), p. 67, a statement by Mr. Woods of Marion, South Carolina in a discussion of a paper by W. H. Baldwin; and Edward M. Sait, *American Parties and Elections* (1939; first edition, 1927), pp. 53-54.

period. However, not facts but opinions about facts determine national history. . . . The whole attitude of the North towards the South was changed, softened. The desire to forget the regrettable misunderstanding between the states for the sake of the unity of the nation made it necessary to adopt the southern version of the history, at least in part. The *fait accompli* of the undoing of reconstruction stamped reconstruction as a failure and established the southern evaluation of reconstruction governments as historical truth."[a]

[31] Josephus Daniels, *Tar-Heel Editor* (1939), pp. 281-282. Some of them had consistently favored the Union cause throughout the Civil War when it was extremely unpopular to do so.

[32] A few white historians—Louis Hacker, for example—have given a history of the Reconstruction that corresponds with the facts. But these are far from dominant among writers of history. Two great historians, J. W. Burgess and W. A. Dunning, set the pattern for the dominant historical interpretation of the Reconstruction period.[b]

Negro writers have had a contrary need for rationalization which is equally understandable. W. E. B. Du Bois' *Black Reconstruction* (1935) is expressly written to counterbalance the common bias in favor of the unreconstructed white Southerners. Carter Woodson and other Negro historians have the same purpose in their books.[c] The Negro authors concede that the Reconstruction governments were guilty of extravagance, theft, and incompetence in many cases, but insist that the charges have been grossly exaggerated. They point to the very difficult conditions in the war-ridden, poverty-stricken Southern regions, where the former ruling aristocracy and a large portion of the entire white population were openly hostile and obstructive and wished Negroes to fail. They also emphasize that political corruption was widespread and common in the whole country in this period and point particularly to the Tweed machine in New York. They observe that the historians they criticize have not given the Reconstruction governments their due credit for their remarkable initiative in establishing a public school system in the South and beginning social legislation. They stress finally that there was nowhere "black domination," but that the Negroes were usually in a minority among the electors, and that whites always held the great majority of the higher, policy-making offices. There are also quixotic attempts made from the side of some Negro writers on the period to picture the Negro legislators as great reformers and statesmen who introduced the democratic institutions to the South.

The English observer of the South during Reconstruction, Sir George Campbell, gives first-hand evidence that the Negroes' position is justified, that the South was no worse off nor more corrupt during Reconstruction than was the rest of the country.[d]

Ralph J. Bunche is one Negro author who has probably struck a balanced picture of the Reconstruction period.[e] He points out that there was no "black domination" but

[a] *Alien Americans* (1936), pp. 112-113.

[b] For a discussion of historians of the Reconstruction by a Negro, see A. A. Taylor, "Historians of the Reconstruction," *The Journal of Negro History* (January, 1938), pp. 18-24.

[c] See, for example, Kelly Miller, *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), pp. 116-117; Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), pp. 128-130.

[d] *White and Black in the United States* (1879), pp. 176-180.

[e] "The Political Status of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 1, pp. 220-240.

rather that there were Negro carpetbagger and scalawag governments operating, in the presence of federal troops, under the dominance of Congress. The North had a variety of conflicting interests, some selfish, some altruistic, with respect to the South and considered that its victory gave it the right to satisfy these interests. The bulk of the Negroes, he concludes, were ignorant peasants who played only a feeble role in the political drama of the period.

In surveying the literature on Reconstruction, the present author has gained the impression that in explanation of the imperfections of the Reconstruction regime—besides the factors of physical war, destruction, and general poverty in the South; the wave of political corruption in the whole nation which reached a culmination in this period; and the psychology of defeat among the Southern people—the lack of political education generally in the South has been given too little weight. Successful democracy has never been established anywhere in the world except by considerable exertions of the masses themselves, masses who have been fairly well educated and who are public spirited from the start, and who, in addition, during the struggle for representation and power, have acquired political experience and built up organized civic movements of their own. What happened in Reconstruction was, on the contrary, that, without their asking for it, almost a million Negro men, most of whom had not only been kept in total ignorance, but who in the protected slave existence had lacked any opportunity to live a self-directed life, were suddenly enfranchised. "Rights which the agricultural laborers of England did not obtain until 1885 were . . . thrust upon these children of nature . . ." reflected James Bryce.[a] At the same time, one hundred thousand men of the not much larger white population were disfranchised and, in addition, another hundred thousand white men were not only disfranchised but were disqualified for office because they had taken up arms against the Union. The disfranchised and disqualified group contained a great over-representation of the educated and politically alert and experienced classes of the South. Under the guard and direction of the Union army and federal agencies, the political power in the Southern states was thus conferred on the masses of totally uneducated Negroes and the nearly as ignorant white masses, both abruptly freed from the controls of the politically experienced upper strata under which they had been held in the *ante-bellum* South.

Even the staunchest believer in democracy must feel anxious and skeptical when contemplating this situation. One must be surprised that the actual outcome was not worse. The agents for the federal government, the "carpetbaggers"—operating without much of a rational plan and often lacking support from Washington—must have been, on the average, considerably better than their reputation, as transmitted through the historical mythology. One also feels that the freedmen—led by the carpetbaggers and the scalawags and also by some educated free Negroes from the North—if not a success as responsible citizens, were less of a complete failure than could have been reasonably expected.

A basic flaw of the Reconstruction regime was thus, according to the present author's view, the almost total lack of general education of the black and white masses in the South. It is true that "the ballot is a school-master." It is true also that the Reconstruction governments took immediate and courageous measures to establish a public school system in the South, and that the Negroes especially went in enthusiastically for educa-

[a] *The American Commonwealth* (1900; first edition, 1893), Vol. 2, p. 495.

tion. But education, not least political education, takes time. And the Negroes were not given time.

[33] See William J. Robertson, *The Changing South* (1927), p. 144; Bessie L. Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History in the United States* (1926), pp. 136-169; Marie E. Carpenter, *The Treatment of the Negro in American History School Textbooks* (1941), especially pp. 43-48; and Lawrence D. Reddick, "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks of the South," in *The Journal of Negro History* (July, 1934), pp. 225-265.

[34] Thomas P. Bailey testified:

"I found that the younger white voters were bent on causing trouble at the polls during a municipal election. I inquired whether they feared that the negroes might carry the election. The reply was in the negative. The 'audacity' and 'impertinence' of the negroes in 'daring' or 'presuming' to vote was the trouble."[a] The same attitude is frequently displayed today.

[35] "Patterns of Race Conflict," in *Race Relations and the Race Problem*, Edgar T. Thompson (editor) (1939), p. 138.

[36] Paul H. Buck, *The Road to Reunion—1865-1900* (1937), pp. 284-285.

[37] Edgar G. Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendancy* (1910), p. 39.

[38] "The South accustomed itself to denying this essential condition of democratic government [freedom of speech] during the days of slavery."[b]

[39] *Human Geography of the South* (1932), pp. 75-76.

[40] *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

Chapter 21. *Southern Conservatism and Liberalism*

[1] Because there were several occasions on which the South split politically, as we note in the text, Lewinson claims that the South is not generally "solid."[c] On another ground, Ray Stannard Baker prefers not to consider the South as "solid," although he does use the term:

"In the South to-day there are, as inevitably as human nature, two parties and two political points of view. The one is aristocratic and the other is democratic."[d]

Nevertheless, one party is completely dominant in the South today, despite freak elections such as in 1928 and despite splits within the party. There is a "Solid South" and it has a one-party system.

[2] John D. Hicks, *The Populist Revolt* (1931), p. 391. For a brief history of the Populist party in the Southern states see Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 69, 75 and 164.

[3] The principal idea of this movement to disfranchise the Negro by "constitutional" means was to invent statutory formulations which discriminated against "Negro characteristics" rather than against the Negro race. Poll tax requirements and property, literacy, "understanding" and "good character" clauses were the main devices used. (See Chapter 22.) Some of these techniques for disfranchising the Negroes were

[a] *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), p. 38.

[b] William E. Dodd in a communication to the editor of *Nation* (April 25, 1907), p. 383. See also William E. Dodd, *The Cotton Kingdom* (1919), pp. 23, 69-70, and 146.

[c] Paul Lewinson, *Race, Class and Party* (1932), p. 101.

[d] *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 242.

already on the law books of some Southern states. The task was now to build them into a unified and efficient system.

The educated upper classes in the South faced a dilemma. On the one hand, it must have seemed to be both advisable on general grounds and constitutionally more correct to allow these clauses to disfranchise also the poor white people in the South. It is obvious that, in addition, such a course also favored the political interests of those classes to keep the political power firmly in their own hands. On the other hand, the white supremacy doctrine asserted a principle of democracy among all white people and established a gulf between them and all Negroes. More important was the fact that the lower classes had tasted political power and were most suspicious of anything that might disfranchise them; their suspicion had only been accentuated during the agrarian revolt.

The question of disfranchising the Negroes was, for this reason and in spite of the great unanimity in the main purpose, the cause of heated campaigns. The debates in the constitutional assemblies were long and extremely controversial. Indeed, the controversy has lasted until this day; it now concerns principally the poll tax. In principle the upper classes had to give up; the compromises reached were everywhere openly announced as aiming at disfranchising the largest possible number of Negroes without depriving any white man of his vote. Devices such as permanent registration, the "grandfather clause," or the exception of war veterans were intentionally framed in order to enable all the white voters to evade the force of the clauses aimed at disfranchising the Negroes; in addition, a sufficient discretionary power was reserved for the registrars to give effect to the promise of a "right-minded" administration of the election statutes. The upper classes felt a certain satisfaction in the reflection that some of the corrective devices were bound to have decreasing importance as time passed. In practice, particularly the poll tax requirement has turned out to be a barrier to great masses of lower class white people.

The dilemma of the "best people" in the upper strata and their interpretation of the result is interestingly revealed by Edgar G. Murphy, who himself had taken an active part in the struggle about the new constitution (1901) in his home state, Alabama, and who is distinguished as one of the most sincere friends of the Negro among the conservative-minded old Southerners and the author of two books on the Negro problem. In *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904) he writes:

"Had the negro masses presented the only illiterate elements, that method (namely to require literacy for voting) might have been pursued. But there were two defective classes—the unqualified negroes of voting age and the unqualified white men. Both could not be dropped at once. A working constitution is not an *a priori* theoretic creation; it must pass the people. The unqualified white men of voting age might be first included in the partnership of reorganization. Such a decision was a political necessity. . . . Moreover . . . no amended Constitution, *no suffrage reform*, no legal status for a saner and purer political administration, *was possible without their votes*. . . .

"Terms were given them. Under skillfully drawn provisions the mass of illiterate negro voters were deprived of suffrage and the *then voting* white population—with certain variously defined exceptions—was permitted to retain the ballot. Care was taken, however, that *all the rising generation and all future generations of white workers* should be constrained to accept the suffrage test, a test applicable, therefore, after a brief fixed period, to white and black alike. Such is the law."[a]

[a] Pp. 192-193; italics ours.

The ultimate goal to be reached as new generations of white Southerners rose to voting age was what he called "the supremacy of intelligence and property."[a] Murphy did not want to disfranchise the Negroes entirely:

"Take out of his life all incentive to the franchise and you will partly destroy his interest in the acquisition of knowledge and of property, because no people will, in the long run, accept as a working principle of life the theory of taxation without representation."[b]

He understood that the reaching of his goal presumed honest administration of the provisions decided upon:

"If these boards of registrars—the essential and distinctive provision in the suffrage system of the South—be administered arbitrarily and unfairly, if they perpetuate the moral confusion and the debasing traditions which they were intended to supplant, then the South will stand condemned both to the world and to herself. She will have defeated the purpose of her own deepest political and moral forces."[c]

In *The Basis of Ascendancy*, published in 1909, Murphy already thought that his policy had proven successful:

"The clouds of conflict have rolled away. Within less than ten years thousands of the worthier black men, under our amended constitutions, have been admitted to the ballot; and in Alabama alone, in the first presidential election after the readjustment of the suffrage, more than half of our adult *white* men did not qualify and vote. Despite all the frank assertions of discrimination on the part of the South, despite all the imputations of discrimination from the side of the North, the thing which the Southern majority declared should happen and which the Northern majority denounced as having happened has not happened at all. Many negroes have been admitted. Many white men have been excluded."[d]

As to the disfranchisement of white men, Murphy was correct as we shall see in Chapter 22. But otherwise this last quotation and the next to the last one indicate wishful thinking.

[4] Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-199. See also, Marian D. Irish, "The Southern One-Party System and National Politics," *The Journal of Politics* (February, 1942), pp. 80-94, and George E. Stoney, "Suffrage in the South. Part II: The One Party System," *Survey Graphic* (March, 1940), pp. 163-167 and 204-205.

[5] Ralph Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. I, p. 36.

[6] Henry W. Grady, *The New South* (1890), pp. 242-243.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 240-241.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

[9] Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* (1942), pp. 112-113.

[10] "The Negro Citizen" in Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro in American Civilization* (1930), pp. 467-468.

[11] Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture, United States Summary, Second Series, Table 26.

[12] William Archer, *Through Afro-America* (1910), p. 146.

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 199.
[b] *Ibid.*, p. 195.
[c] *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.
[d] P. 4.

[18] Dabney, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-244.

[14] Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[15] For a general description of intolerance in the South, see Dabney, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-256.

[16] *The Mind of the South* (1941).

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

[18] W. J. Cash, who stressed these factors, concludes that:

"If the yoke of law and government weighed but lightly, so also did that of class. Prior to the last ten or fifteen years before Secession, the Old South may be said, in truth, to have been nearly innocent of the notion of class in any rigid and complete sense."[a]

On the other hand, there was the myth among the Southern aristocrats that they were descended from Cavalier Norman stock, whereas the lower classes in the South were of Roundhead Saxon stock. As we said, they kept these ideas to themselves.

[19] For a discussion of the effect of the last War on the South, see Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* (1924), pp. 13-20.

[20] Quoted from memory.

[21] One Southern liberal has given us the following lyrical picture of the South:

"In particular here was a large segment of "America's Tragedy" with its harvest of later conflict and confusion, born of undesigned and unbalanced programs of reconstruction. So came an American epoch that was the South. Old golden pages of history, shining parchment records of culture, then yellow and faded, scorched and seared with years of embattled conflict, and epic struggle. . . . Gallant figures on black horses and white . . . and crude, simple folk, sore with the footfall of time, passing across an epoch which was to be destroyed by physical and cultural conflagration and to rise up again in another American epoch strangely different and vivid and powerful. Cultures in the making, social processes at work, portraiture descriptive of how civilizations grow. All the South's yesterdays, with their brilliant episodes and with their sordid pictures receding, giving way to the South's tomorrows, through a sweeping American development reminiscent of universal culture. Thus, there are many Souths yet *the* South. It is pre-eminently national in backgrounds, yet provincial in its processes. There are remnants of European culture framed in intolerant Americanism. There are romance, beauty, glamor, gaiety, comedy, gentleness, and there are sordidness, ugliness, dullness, sorrow, tragedy, cruelty. There are wealth, culture, education, generosity, chivalry, manners, courage, nobility, and there are poverty, crudeness, ignorance, narrowness, brutality, cowardice, depravity. The South is American and un-American, Christian and barbaric. It is strong and weak, white and black, rich and poor. There are great white mansions on hilltops among the trees, and there are unpainted houses perched on pillars along hillside gullies or lowland marshes. Yet, here is reflected a composite region-in-the-making, descriptive of American reality, rich in power, range, and contrast, shaped and proportioned by strong backgrounds whose unfolding episodes were vivid with the quiver of life. Here are epic and romantic materials of history and literature alongside measurable elements for the scientific study of human society. Here are illuminating materials for the better understanding of American life through the study of regional situations and folk society. Their consistency is often in their contradictions, their unity in their diversity, like some masterpiece of orchestral harmony. Or, like some unfold-

[a] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

ing evolution of social culture or some masterpiece of narrative, charm and power are revealed only through dramatic unfolding, episode upon episode, year upon year. Here is a civilization slowly gathering together its processes and patterns until the magnitude of the whole has been fashioned, nevertheless, whose power and brilliance are cumulative, residing unescapably in separate units, yet also, and more, in the high potentiality of the final unity."[a]

A milder example may be taken from a more recent book of an outstanding Southern liberal:

"Not content with such flagrant misrepresentations as the foregoing, certain professional Northerners delight in reading lectures to all Southerners for their 'narrow-mindedness,' their 'provincialism,' and their general lack of decency and intelligence. Such criticisms of the South are heard most often with respect to its handling of the race problem. Fantastic statements in Northern magazines and newspapers, by self-constituted authorities who know little or nothing about the subject, naturally contribute only slightly to intersectional goodwill. For example, the following pontification appeared not long ago in the editorial columns of the Lowell, Massachusetts, *Sun:* 'Any Negro in the South who dares go near a polling booth on election day invites a bullet through his brain. That is fact, not fiction.' A Virginia editor promptly pointed out that many thousands of Negroes vote every election day in the South, without any such retribution as the Lowell paper declared to be universal, and three Northern-born residents of Virginia protested the *Sun's* extravagant assertion. The Massachusetts daily promptly modified its charge with respect to Negro voting, but was equally absurd in its comment upon one of the above mentioned letters. The author of the letter, a native New Englander, had declared, on the basis of residence in both Florida and Virginia, that 'the lot of the Southern Negro is no worse than that of the average Northern laborer.' This declaration, it is true, was distinctly vulnerable, but the *Sun's* editor went to the extreme length of saying, in rebuttal, that 'no Northern laborer would for one moment tolerate conditions under which the Southern Negro lives.' He should have read the series of newspaper articles by Harry Ashmore, a young South Carolina newspaperman, lovingly describing the unspeakably foul slums of various Northern cities—a series which was published with gusto in 1938 by more than a score of Southern dailies grown weary of excursions by Northern journalists into the cabins and back alleys of the cotton belt."[b]

[22] The present author was traveling in the South in the fall of 1938 when the outburst of anti-Semitism in Germany disheartened and infuriated liberals all over the world. The Southern liberal newspapers—and many of the conservative ones—were outraged and denounced in no uncertain terms the barbarous actions taken by the German Nazis against the Jews: the cheating and beating, the arbitrary justice, the discriminations against the Jews by attempts at residential segregation and Jim-Crowing in streetcars, and beaches, in the labor market, in business. But the intellectual association to the conditions of Negroes in America was skillfully and completely avoided. One liberal editor with whom I discussed this point told me that such an association, if expressed, would "altogether spoil the educational effect." It had to be left to "the deeper forces in the Southern soul" to make this comparison.

[a] Howard W. Odum, *An American Epoch* (1930), pp. 329-330, adapted in Howard W. Odum and Harry E. Moore, *American Regionalism* (1938), pp. 521 and 523.

[b] Dabney, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

Chapter 22. *Political Practices Today*

[1] *The World Almanac: 1942*, p. 813. These percentages should not be taken as an exact measure of the South's adherence to the Democratic party, since, if the Republican party were to get enough votes to challenge it, the Democratic party in time would get more persons to vote.

[2] "The one-party system of the South expresses itself through the local political machines. These are the courthouse gangs, the county cliques, which are the main props of the southern political structure as it exists today. The real venality of southern politics is revealed in the operation of the courthouse gangs. Though they are technically subject to the controls of the county and state Democratic party committees, in their own domain they are supreme. Here offices are bought and sold, and there is found an almost complete anarchy of political thought and law. By and large, they tend to make their own rules, and are rarely ever well-informed upon the laws of the state that they are sworn to uphold. In the courthouse gangs will be found the probate judges, the ordinaries, the county clerks, the registrars or the members of the county registration committees or boards, the sheriffs, the beat committeemen, the members of the election committees and the county Democratic party officers.

"The political power of these local machines is so great that it is virtually impossible to make any generalizations concerning the pattern of any particular aspects of southern politics. For example, if we are to consider the qualifications for registration required of Negroes in Georgia and Alabama, it is not enough to study the state laws on the subject. The local registrars take the law into their own hands and there are almost as many variations of the laws as there are counties. Even within the white population, the laws are not administered uniformly. The county officials are often known to grant favors with respect to the application of the laws, to friends or political partisans." (Ralph J. Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 1, pp. 35-36.)

[3] *The World Almanac: 1942*, p. 813, and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 6, Table 3.

[4] For detailed evidence of the general corruption in Southern elections see: (1) Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," especially Vols. 1 and 2; (2) George C. Stoney, "Suffrage in the South. Part II: The One Party System," *Survey Graphic* (March, 1940), pp. 163-167 and 204-205. For other excellent surveys of the Southern political scene, see (3) Paul Lewinson, *Race, Class and Party* (1932); and (4) Marian D. Irish, "The Southern One-Party System and National Politics," *The Journal of Politics* (February, 1942), pp. 80-94.

[5] It is by no means certain that it is the poor whites who stay away from the polls in greatest proportion, even though it is certain that they get least out of politics. Rosenstein found that, for a single Mississippi county, the poorest white farm operators were registered in greater proportion than white farm operators of middle income. (Joseph Rosenstein, "Government and Social Structure in a Deep South Community," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago [1941], pp. 17-18.)

[6] A detailed county-for-county description of election practices in the South is available in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vols. 1 and 2.

[7] "The *Citizen-Georgian* of Macon County, Georgia, in an editorial of November

5, 1936, attacks the absence of a secret ballot in Georgia and the need for an Australian Ballot, stating, in part: '. . . the present method can hardly be called a secret ballot because friends, relatives, supporters, and sometimes even the candidates themselves, literally stand over the voting booths, making it impossible for a person to mark his ticket without several persons knowing for whom the vote has been cast.' " (*Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 194.)

"The numbers on the ballot are used to check up on how people vote in almost every precinct. Almost every election after the official burning of the ballots, lists of names of those who voted and how they voted on major offices are 'for sale.' " (Interview with a member of the Alabama Legislature, February, 1940, cited in *ibid.*, p. 125.)

[8] V. O. Key, Jr., *Political Parties and Pressure Groups* (1942), pp. 402-407.

[9] Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 5, p. 1180.

[10] Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 110 and 170.

[11] For a history of the movement, see *ibid.*, pp. 166 ff.

[12] This is a tradition from Reconstruction. Many Southerners find a partial motivation for the disfranchisement of the Negroes in the fact that Negroes voted *against* the whites. Many stories are told to illustrate this tendency. The best one is Booker T. Washington's about an old Negro in Reconstruction time who relates:

"We watches de white man, and we keeps watching de white man till we finds out which way de white man's gwine to vote; an' when we finds out which way de white man's gwine to vote, den we votes 'xactly de other way. Den we knows we's right." (Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* [1915; first edition, 1900], p. 111.)

[13] See Section 4 of this chapter. Wendell Willkie, the defeated Republican candidate for President in 1940, has recently made a number of speeches condemning race prejudice and discrimination against Negroes. He even delivered the keynote speech at the 1942 convention of the N.A.A.C.P. If he should again become the Republican candidate for President, which does not seem likely at the present time, it is probable that he would get many Negroes to vote for him who had voted for Roosevelt in 1936 and 1940. The same would happen if any other Republican candidate should demonstrate friendliness toward the Negro, or if the Democratic candidate should be a Southerner.

[14] Theoretically, anyone not qualified by the grandfather clause (i.e., Negroes) could still register if he paid taxes and met a battery of other restrictions. Another theoretical weakness of the grandfather clause arose from the fact that many Negroes had white fathers and grandfathers who had voted before 1861 or who had served in a military capacity; such white ancestors could not be formally claimed by Negroes, however.

[15] *Guinn* v. *United States*, 238 U. S. 347 (1915).

[16] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4, p. 982.

[17] *Nixon* v. *Herndon*, 273 U. S. 536 (March, 1927). In this brief résumé of the legal status of the white primary, we shall not present the decisions reached by state courts or lower federal courts, but only those of the United States Supreme Court.

[18] *Nixon* v. *Condon*, 286 U. S. 73 (1932).

[19] *Grovey* v. *Townsend*, 295 U. S. 45 (1935).

[20] *United States* v. *Patrick B. Classic et al.*, No. 618 (October Term, 1940). See Ralph J. Bunche, "The Negro in the Political Life of the United States," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1941), p. 574.

[21] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 371.

[22] A few Northern states still have a compulsory poll tax for everyone. In such a form it has no effect on voting. The compulsory poll tax is so different from the voluntary poll tax that modern experts give it a new name, "capitation tax." The compulsory poll tax, or capitation tax, is compulsory in that if one does not pay it, he is subject to criminal prosecution, just as for nonpayment of other taxes. The voluntary poll tax, which is found only in the South, does not carry any penalty for nonpayment other than inability to vote.

[23] In a few Southern states the payment of poll taxes by landowners is compulsory.

[24] Mississippi is perhaps the most restrictive state: the payment of *all* state taxes is made a prerequisite to voting in the general election, but only the poll tax of two dollars per year for two years is necessary for voting in the primary. Alabama and Georgia, while they charge only $1.50 and $1.00 per year respectively, make this hard on older persons by requiring all back taxes (back to the time the individual became twenty-one years of age) before registration. South Carolina requires payment of a poll tax of $1.00 for voting in the general election, but no poll tax need be paid to vote in the primary. Virginia has a three-year cumulative tax. Tennessee, Texas, and Arkansas are relatively lenient with a small tax ($1.00 in Tennessee and Arkansas, $1.50 in Texas with an additional $0.25 optional to the county), without the cumulative features and without any distinction between primary and general election. (Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 3.)

[25] *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 630.

[26] There also has been an attempt recently to abolish the poll tax by federal law. In 1938, a bill to this effect was introduced in Congress by Representative Lee E. Geyer, California Democrat. The Southern-dominated House Judiciary Committee stifled the bill for four years (as did a Senate Committee for the bill introduced by Senator Pepper of Florida), but in 1942 the bill was forced to the floor of the House by sentiment created by the disfranchisement of soldiers. As this is being written (October, 1942), the House has passed the bill, and it is now up before the Senate. Liberals throughout the South are fighting the poll tax, but many would much prefer that the individual states abolish it, rather than see it killed by the United States Congress or by the federal courts. (See Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* [1942], Chapter 4.)

[27] While Louisiana no longer requires the payment of the poll tax, it does require the possession of a "poll tax certificate," which is available without cost. This is confusing to many voters.

[28] Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 3, and Lewinson, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

[29] *The World Almanac: 1942*, p. 813; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 6, Table 3.

[30] For cases of this and other kinds of discrimination in the application of requirements for voting, see Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 3, esp. p. 774, and Vols. 4 and 5.

[31] *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 839, and Vol. 7, pp. 1563-1565.

[32] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 316, 330 and 436-506 *passim*. The South generally has more rigid residence requirements for voting than the North, but whether there is any special discrimination against Negroes in this respect in the South is not known. (See: Leo Alilunas, "Legal Restrictions on the Negro in Politics," *The Journal of Negro History* [April, 1940], p. 158.)

[33] For documented cases of each of these types of violence and intimidation, see the unpublished monographs prepared for this study (1940): Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," especially Vols. 2 and 4, and Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures." See also Lewinson, *op. cit.*, Chapter 6.

[34] I have talked to a great number of registration officers in various Southern states, and they have usually been very outspoken on this point. They have also been astonishingly frank in describing the methods they used. A tax collector in Georgia, for example, referred to the Supreme Court jurisdiction clause of the State Constitution and said:

"I can keep the President of the United States from registering, if I want to. God, Himself, couldn't understand that sentence. I, myself, am the judge. It must be written to my satisfaction." (Interview by Myrdal, November 3, 1939.)

[35] Interview by Wilhelmina Jackson, December, 1939, in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4, p. 941.

[36] Interview by Wilhelmina Jackson, December, 1939, in *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 940.

[37] Sometimes a vague excuse may accompany a refusal to permit a Negro to register or vote, such as that "there is no provision in the law for registering Negroes," or that the "quota" of Negro voters had been filled. (See Lewinson, *op. cit.*, p. 118.)

[38] *Idem.*

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 119.

[40] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-291.

[41] The causes of local variations are discussed in Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-124, 132-138.

[42] A candidate who does this is sometimes a "reform" candidate. For a description of several "reform" campaigns leading up to general elections, see Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 148 ff. When the 1928 campaign split the South, there were contests in the general elections for a few years afterwards where pro-Hoover Democrats joined the Republicans to battle the regular Democratic candidates. (See *ibid.*, pp. 159 ff.)

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 147.

[44] In one case at least the commission form of government is known to have hurt Negroes politically: In Chattanooga before 1920 the city had an aldermanic government, and there were Negro aldermen from Negro sections of the city. In 1920 a nonpartisan commission form of government was instituted and—since elections became city-wide—Negroes were outvoted. From that time on, according to a local labor leader, Negroes received less consideration in politics. (Interview by George Stoney, January, 1940, in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4, p. 973.)

[45] Here again we rely on Bunche's estimates.

[46] See Chapter 12, Section 5. Corruption is absent only in the sense that Negroes are not intimidated at the polls. There have been reports of white plantation owners bringing their Negro croppers to the polling place and "voting" them. Too, the voting is not secret, so that white plantation owners know their tenants' vote. On the other hand, some Southern whites feel that the A.A.A. elections are bad because they are giving Negroes the idea that they can vote. Other whites satisfy themselves by believing that the Negroes do not know what they are voting for anyway or by telling Negroes how to vote. While Negroes vote in the main A.A.A. referenda, they are often not permitted to vote for the committeemen who administer the program locally. In some cases they are permitted to vote, but only for white nominees. In all Alabama, for example, there was only one county which had Negro committeemen in the A.A.A. program. (Hale

County, which had three Negro committeemen in 1940, representing three separate communities.) See Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 5, p. 1066.

[47] Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 107 ff; Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4. Bunche quotes a number of these statements from his interviews, including some by Southern senators. They represent one of the traditional stereotypes. Stone says:

"The Negro masses in fact do not have to be excluded. They will disfranchise themselves if left to their own devices." (A. H. Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem* [1908], p. 374.)

Occasionally a Negro author will agree to the white rationalization. Bertram W. Doyle writes:

". . . the Negro masses are, in general, not interested. The situation serves as an illustration to draw the distinction between the controls established by laws and formal regulation and those fixed in custom and habit. The Negro masses look on the white man as chosen to rule and on the ballot as a means to that end. They feel out of place participating in such. They accept their status as nonvoters and expect to be guided thereby. They would much prefer that "quality" white people govern them; but, even in other instances, they exhibit a lack of interest. From this standpoint the battle for and against Negro suffrage, on principle, or on a platform of the enforcement of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments of the Constitution, is hampered by the underlying sentiments and habits of the Negroes themselves. Voting and participation in governmental affairs seem not to be in the mores of the Negro group." (*The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* [1937], pp. 139-140.)

[48] Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), p. 487.

[49] For general traits of nonvoters, see Charles E. Merriam and Harold F. Gossnell, *Non-Voting* (1924), and Herbert Tingsten, *Political Behavior* (1937).

[50] The political boss of a large city in the Deep South, who openly conceded to the author that he bought votes, gave a sort of democratic motivation for vote-buying which might be recorded because of the light it throws on the psychology of corrupt politics. "Why," he said, "shouldn't the poor devil, who doesn't own more than his shirt, have the right to expect a couple of dollars for his vote, when the big shots get so much more out of politics. . . . If you were a local business man," he continued, "wouldn't you expect favors from me, if you helped me into office? Well, what about the common citizen? Should he be entirely forgotten in this big game?"

[51] In Detroit in 1940, for example, Negroes constituted 9.2 per cent of the total population but 11.0 per cent of the population 21 years of age and over.

[52] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), p. 373.

[53] There are many forms of gerrymandering: in addition to cutting up a minority group, it may also take the form of concentrating a group in one election district when that group could control several districts if otherwise distributed. Since the modification of the boundaries of an election district always affects the influence of the vote in that district, the only test for the presence of gerrymandering is to equate the total votes of all groups over several election districts with the total influence of these groups in electing candidates.

Gerrymandering is possible because Negroes are segregated in certain areas of the city and because the multi-district system is used instead of proportional representation or other systems without districts. If Negroes were distributed throughout a city or if a

district's boundaries meant nothing (as under a proportional representation system), there would be no gerrymandering. But there would also be much less chance of electing Negroes to office (except under a proportional representation system). When Negroes are scattered throughout a city, they cannot exert much influence in any district. Segregation usually gives them control of at least one district, and also makes apparent to politicians how they vote in city-wide elections. Voting on a city-wide basis takes away the advantage of being a majority in a single district. In Detroit and Chattanooga, the Negroes have little political influence, partly because of the city-wide election system for local office. But if the city-wide system is combined with proportional representation it gives greater weight to the votes of those Negroes living in non-Negro areas. Between 1930 and 1938 the New York City Council, operating under the single-member-district plan, had a Negro alderman. When proportional representation was put into effect in 1938, the Negro alderman was lost. But in 1941, Negroes managed to concentrate their votes, and with the help of some white votes, sent a representative to the Council again.

[54] In 1933 the victorious Democrats of St. Louis redistricted the city for the election of state legislators. A large number of the Negroes formerly concentrated in the Twelfth District were shifted into the huge Eleventh District and their vote in both districts was completely overwhelmed. Previous to 1933, one or two Negro legislators were always elected from St. Louis; after that year no Negro has ever been elected. Negro leaders have been working to stop this gerrymander. (Memorandum by David M. Grant in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, p. 1316.) The re-apportionment of 1931 in Detroit also served to prevent Negroes from electing a congressman. The Negro majority in the First District was wiped out by putting some of its Negro constituents in the predominantly white Thirteenth and Fifteenth Districts. Both of these cases of gerrymandering were perpetuated by the Democratic party, apparently not because it was making a racial discrimination against Negroes but because Negroes were tied to the Republican party before 1933. A more exhaustive study needs to be made to determine whether Negro areas have ever been gerrymandered in the North on account of race prejudice.

[55] Recently a congressman was successful in forcing the New York Legislature to promise to make the long overdue adjustments.

[56] Since there are no registration or voting statistics in the North which differentiate Negroes from whites, all quantitative studies of Negro voting and nonvoting are based on differences between areas inhabited mainly by Negroes and areas inhabited mainly by whites.

[57] Edward H. Litchfield, "A Case Study of Negro Political Behavior in Detroit," *Public Opinion Quarterly* (June, 1941), pp. 267-274. Litchfield found that this greater political apathy among Negroes existed even when economic status is held constant. In the absence of figures on income, measures of economic status used to compare Negroes and whites may be called into question. Rents, for example, are not comparable when Negroes are segregated and crowded. Such weaknesses of economic indices do not apply, however, to differences *within* the Negro group.

[58] Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians* (1935), p. 17. In Cleveland, too, it has been claimed that Negroes vote more than whites, although statistics have not been compiled to prove this. See memorandum prepared for this study by Harry E. Davis, cited in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, p. 1279.

[59] One student reports that, while Negroes *vote* much less than whites in Detroit, they *register* for voting almost to the same extent. This is because some Negro men hope to get jobs in the Ford factories by registering and forming Republican clubs. (My interviews.) See also: T. R. Solomon, "Participation of Negroes in Detroit Elections," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan (1939), pp. 101-102. Quoted in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, p. 1308.

[60] Tingsten, *op. cit.*, Chapter 3, has a complete summary of all these studies. Although Gosnell, Arneson, and others have made such studies for two or three such communities in America, it is difficult to do this, since voting statistics are not broken down by race, and it is difficult to find suitable economic indices. (See: Harold F. Gosnell, *Getting Out the Vote* (1927); Harold F. Gosnell and Norman N. Gill, "An Analysis of the 1932 Presidential Vote in Chicago," *The American Political Science Review* (December, 1935), pp. 967-984; Ben A. Arneson, "Non-Voting in a Typical Ohio Community," *The American Political Science Review* (November, 1925), pp. 816-822; W. Donaldson, "Compulsory Voting," *National Municipal Review* (July, 1915), pp. 460-465. There is, however, a simple substitute for voting statistics in America and that is the already collected public opinion polls made by Gallup, *Fortune* magazine and others. Many of these polls give information as to whether the informant voted or not in the previous election, and they have a rough estimate of the informant's economic status. A retabulation of several such polls ought to provide a reasonable estimate of the extent of nonvoting in different income groups.

[61] Tammany sought the Negro vote in New York City as early as 1886 when they got John A. Nail, a saloon-keeper and leading Negro citizen, to set up a Negro Democratic club. After 1900 Ferdinand Q. Morton took over leadership of Negro Democrats. He was skillfully supported after 1920 by Mrs. Bessye Bearden. The Garvey movement helped the Democratic party in New York to a large extent. (Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, pp. 1335-1356.) For a detailed description of Negroes in recent New York politics, see Claude McKay, *Harlem* (1940), pp. 124-131.

[62] Henderson, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[63] Litchfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 271, 273.

[64] Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*, p. 36.

[65] In St. Louis, for example, Negroes were given only three upper-bracket political jobs by the Republicans. The incoming Democrats, despite a general curtailment due to the depression, opened up eleven more jobs to Negroes and built one hospital and three community centers for them. (Democratic Campaign Booklet, prepared by Negro Division of the Democratic Campaign Headquarters of St. Louis. Quoted by Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, pp. 1315-1316, 1320.)

[66] New York was something of an exception, since the nominal Republican, La Guardia, was the mayor during the depression after beating Tammany candidates. La Guardia supported Roosevelt nationally, however. Chicago, too, was something of an exception since the pre-depression Republican mayor, Thompson, was very pro-Negro. After Thompson's defeat in 1931, however, he was rapidly forgotten, and the Negro vote shifted to the Democratic party after a few years.

[67] The figures for 1932 and 1936 are from Henderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21. The figure for 1940 is from H. F. Gosnell, "The Negro Vote in Northern Cities," *National Municipal Review* (May, 1941), p. 267. Since Gosnell used a slightly different basis for calculation than Henderson, the 1936 and 1940 figures may not be exactly com-

parable. Henderson showed a Negro vote of 59.5 per cent for the Democratic candidate for Mayor in 1939.

[68] Litchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 271. The percentage Democratic among Detroit Negroes in 1930 was 19.5.

[69] In addition to the factors mentioned as causing the shift in the Negro vote toward the Democratic party, Gosnell observes that there was one other factor that influenced the local elections if not the national ones. As Northern city administrations fell into the hands of Democrats after 1930, the Negro underworld was forced to back them.

"This year one syndicate had 1,500 policy writers on the streets canvassing for the Democratic ticket. One of the leaders of this syndicate recently made a settlement with the federal government of $500,000 for his back income taxes in 1938. A rival syndicate that sponsored a Willkie meeting was raided and practically closed down. The police have this element of the Negro community well under control." (Gosnell, "The Negro Vote in Northern Cities," *National Municipal Review*, p. 267.)

[70] Litchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[71] Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*, p. 352.

[72] Davis, in Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, pp. 1289-1290.

[73] Litchfield, *op. cit.*, p. 272. Negroes, by economic class, had about the same proportions Democratic as the city as a whole. This comparison, however, has methodological weaknesses. Henderson found a similar class differential in voting among Chicago Negroes. Henderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.

[74] The estimate that there are as many Negroes voting today in the United States as there are Southern whites voting in seven Deep Southern states was made in the following manner: to get the approximate number of Negro voters in all Northern and Western states and in the Border states of Delaware, West Virginia, and Maryland, the proportion of all voters for President in 1940 to the total population in 1940, for each state, was applied to the Negro population of the respective state. That is, it was assumed that Negroes voted in the same proportion in these states as did whites. The only empirical evidence we have on this point is Gosnell's finding that in Chicago Negroes voted more than did whites and Litchfield's finding that in Detroit Negroes voted less than did whites. (See Section 4 of this chapter.) If Negroes voted less than did eligible whites in the entire North, we feel that this is compensated for by the fact that many of the foreign-born whites are not citizens and so cannot vote. A similar procedure was used to estimate the number of Negroes voting in the Border states of Missouri and Kentucky except that the percentage was arbitrarily reduced by 10 per cent before being applied to the Negro population, in order to compensate for the minor restrictions on Negro voting in some areas of those states. Our estimates showed that over 1,263,000 Negroes voted for President in 1940 in the North and West, and that over 348,000 Negroes voted in the five Border states. For the 12 states of the Upper and Lower South we used Bunche's estimate of 250,000 Negro votes. The total number of Negro votes in the United States was thus about 1,861,000.

To determine how many Southern states had this many whites voting, we subtracted the estimated Negro vote from the total vote for each state, and added these white votes together (beginning with the states that disfranchised the Negroes most) until our total was close to 1,861,000. The total white vote for the six Deep Southern states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, South Carolina, Arkansas and Georgia was 1,430,000.

By adding Florida, the total was brought up to 1,905,000, which is close to the total number of Negro votes.

[75] Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*, pp. 364-367; Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 6, p. 1272 *passim*.

[76] Lewinson, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

[77] See Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 27 ff.

[78] Editorial in the Montgomery *Advertiser* (April 23, 1940). Cited in Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[80] According to a Negro political leader in an interview in November, 1939. See Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4, p. 923.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 994.

[82] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[83] Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4, pp. 866-867.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 911.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 985.

[86] *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 1490, and Lewinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

[87] Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," Vol. 4, p. 906.

[88] *Idem.*

[89] *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 782.

[90] Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*, p. 373.

[91] Gosnell describes the political loyalty of the Negroes in the following terms:

"The greatest contribution which the rank and file of the Negro group had to offer to the white political leaders was personal loyalty. The politician who won their confidence could count on their support even in the most adverse of circumstance. It was common belief among certain white politicians that the Negro vote was influenced primarily by large expenditures of money. It is true that colored party workers demand compensation for their services on behalf of given candidates. Other things being equal, the colored voters, like the white voters in many parts of the United States, support the candidates who spend the most money. However, these candidates had to measure up to given standards of acceptability if the money spent was to yield the best returns. In other words, money, jobs, and other rewards might not influence the Negro voters to support a candidate who was regarded as hostile to the interests of the race in preference to one who had a reputation of fair dealing in race matters. This is not to say that the favored candidate, if he wanted a large vote, could neglect to spend the money that was commonly put into districts of the same economic status. Another evidence of the loyalty of the colored voters was their behavior when the political fortunes of their favorite candidates were sinking. The Negroes, like other minority groups, do not enjoy supporting losing causes, but when their friends are going down they stick with them to the last." (*Negro Politicians*, pp. 365-366.)

[92] Henderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

[93] Gosnell, *Negro Politicians*, p. 367.

[94] Negro political leaders have sometimes claimed that Negroes control the "balance of power" in as many as 17 states. This estimate is based on the dubious assumptions that all Negroes of voting age do vote, that the Negro vote is perfectly organized and flexible, that white voters are always divided as closely as they were in 1940, and that white voters would be uninfluenced if an organized Negro movement were afoot.

[95] The tradition of a "Black Cabinet" dates further back. (See James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* [1934], p. 239.)

[96] Archie C. Edwards, quoted by Laurence J. W. Hayes, *The Negro Federal Government Worker*, Howard University Studies in the Social Sciences (1941), pp. 73, 153. According to Kiplinger, at the end of 1941 there were more than 150,000 Negroes in the federal civil service, and they were increasing as the war boom continued. (W. M. Kiplinger, *Washington Is Like That* [1942], p. 148.)

Chapter 23. *Trends and Possibilities*

[1] We are not overlooking the watchdog service on behalf of the Negro interests carried on primarily by the national office of the N.A.A.C.P. (see Chapter 39). W. E. B. Du Bois, a former leader of the organization, gives in his autobiography an inside view of how political strategy appeared to Negro leadership up until recently:

"We had calculated that increased independence in the Negro vote would bring a bid for the Negro vote from opposing parties; but it did not until many years later. Indeed, it was not until the re-election of the second Roosevelt in 1936 that the Negro vote in the North came to be eagerly contended for by the two major parties. In 1914 we tried to make congressional candidates declare themselves as to our demands, but were only partially successful. The Sixty-fourth Congress saw eleven bills introduced advocating color caste and the state legislatures continued to be bombarded by similar legislation. Thus, in 1916, we found ourselves politically helpless. We had no choice. We could vote for Wilson who had segregated us or for Hughes who, despite all our requests, remained doggedly dumb on our problems."[a]

[2] I have observed in the big cities a certain amount of anti-Semitism among Negroes, which is rather natural as Jews in the role of businessmen and real estate owners are frequently the ones among the whites who are in closest contact with the Negro and are thus likely to be identified as the exploiters of the Negro people. Rarely, however, does an anti-Semitic tone creep into the Negro press. This is not only due to the fact that Jewish merchants usually contribute so large a part of the tiny local advertising for every Negro paper, but more fundamentally to a clear knowledge by almost everybody writing or talking in the Negro group that as a people they cannot afford any negative racialism but have to stick to racial equalitarianism.

[3] Robert E. Park points to one important aspect of this general "law" at the end of the following statement:

"The freedman was not able at once to enter into the spirit and tradition of a free competition and industrial society. He had no conception, for example, of the secret terror that haunts the free laborer; the fear, namely, of losing his job and of being out of work. On the contrary, his first conception of freedom was that of a condition in which he would be permanently out of work. So far, therefore, from being possessed by that mania for owning things which is the characteristic, as the communists tell us, of a capitalistic society, his first impulse and aim were to get as deeply in debt as possible. If, therefore, the agents of the 'Third International' find that such Negroes

[a] *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 237.

are as yet not ripe for communism, it is undoubtedly because they have not had as yet the opportunity to realize the evils of a free and competitive society."[a]

[4] The Communists have tried to circumvent this difficulty. The church is often the only meeting place.[b] But the great majority of Negro preachers will not only keep them out of their churches, but use all their influence to stamp out Communism as a "Godless," anti-religious creed.

[5] *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), p. 11.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 68. Compare James Weldon Johnson, *Along this Way* (1934), p. 411.

[7] James Weldon Johnson, *Negro Americans, What Now?*, p. 9.

[8] The following figures taken from a survey made by *Fortune* magazine show to what a great extent Negroes support the New Deal:

	Per cent in Favor
"Do you approve:	
"in general of F.D.R.?	84.7
"of his economic objectives?	87.3
"of Wages and Hours Legislation?	91.3
"of F.D.R.'s attitude toward Business?	85.2
"of F.D.R.'s Advisors and Associates?	73.6"

These figures are quoted by courtesy of *Fortune* magazine. "The Fortune Quarterly Survey: XIII," *Fortune* (July, 1938), pp. 36-37 and 74-80.

[9] The most comprehensive and penetrating study of the subject is still, after half a century, James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (1893).

[10] W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Negro Citizen" in Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro in American Civilization* (1930), p. 466.

[11] Du Bois, "The Negro Citizen," *op. cit.*, pp. 465-466.

"I do not for a moment argue that political power will immediately abolish color caste, make ignorant men intelligent or bad men good. We have caste and discrimination in the North with the vote, and social progress in some parts of the South without it. But there is this vast difference: in states like New York, where we are beginning to learn the meaning and use of the ballot, we are building a firm and unshakeable basis of permanent freedom, while every advance in the South, unprotected by political power, is based on chance and changing personalities. I maintain that political power is the beginning of all permanent reform and the only hope for maintaining gains.

"There are today a surprisingly large number of intelligent and sincere people, both white and black, who really believe that the Negro problem in the United States can ultimately be solved without our being compelled to face and settle the question of the Negro vote.

"Nearly all of our social studies apparently come to this conclusion, either openly or by assumption, and do not say, as they ought to say, that granted impulse by philanthropy, help by enlightened public opinion and the aid of time, no permanent improvement in the economic and social condition of Negroes is going to be made, so long as they are deprived of political power to support and defend it.

"Nowhere else in the world is there any suggestion that a modern laboring class can

[a] Introduction to Charles S. Johnson's *Shadow of the Plantation* (1934), p. xxii.

[b] See J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 409.

permanently better itself without political power. It may be a question, it certainly is a question, as to just how labor is going to use this power ultimately so as to raise its economic and social status. But there is no question but that such power must be had."[a]

[12] See, for instance, Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1899), pp. 141, 156 and 212.

[13] "The more I consider the subject, the more strongly I am convinced that the most harmful effect of the practice to which the people in certain sections of the South have felt themselves compelled to resort, in order to get rid of the force of the Negroes' ballot, is not wholly in the wrong done to the Negro, but in the permanent injury to the morals of the white man. The wrong to the Negro is temporary, but to the morals of the white man the injury is permanent. I have noted time and time again that when an individual perjures himself in order to break the force of the black man's ballot, he soon learns to practise dishonesty in other relations of life, not only where the Negro is concerned, but equally so where a white man is concerned. The white man who begins by cheating a Negro usually ends up cheating a white man. The white man who begins to break the law by lynching a Negro soon yields to the temptation to lynch a white man. All this, it seems to me, makes it important that the whole Nation lend a hand in trying to lift the burden of ignorance from the South."[b]

"These disfranchisement measures, harsh and severe as they are in many features, meet with little or no opposition from the nation at large. Although the clear and unmistakable intent of the Federal Constitution is set at naught, yet the nation suffereth it to be so. There is no moral force in the nation at present that will lead to their undoing, and no political exigency seems to demand it. That they violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the Federal Constitution is notorious. Every fourteen year old child in America is fully aware of this fact, and yet the nation winks at the violation of its own fundamental law. Men of the highest patriotic and personal probity ignore their oath to execute the law, and condone its annulment. If there is a growing disrespect for law in the attitude of the American mind, the cause is not far to seek nor hard to find. If one portion of the organic law may be violated with impunity, why not another if it seems to conflict with our interests or with our prejudices?"[c]

[14] "I am not saying a word against all legitimate efforts to purge the ballot of ignorance, pauperism, and crime. But few have pretended that the present movement for disfranchisement in the South is for such a purpose; it has been plainly and frankly declared in nearly every case that the object of the disfranchising laws is the elimination of the black man from politics."[d]

"More and more I am convinced that the final solution of the political end of our race problem will be for each state that finds it necessary to change the law bearing upon the franchise to make the law apply with absolute honesty, and without opportunity for double dealing or evasion, to both races alike. Any other course my daily observation in the South convinces me, will be unjust to the Negro, unjust to the white man, and unfair to the rest of the states in the Union, and will be, like slavery, a sin that at some time we shall have to pay for."[e]

[a] *Ibid.*, pp. 464-465.

[b] Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (1901; first edition, 1900), pp. 165-166.

[c] Kelly Miller, *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), p. 130.

[d] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), p. 175.

[e] Washington, *Up from Slavery*, pp. 86-87.

[15] "There is a growing school of thought in the South which holds that any man, no matter what his race, who is qualified to vote ought to be permitted to vote, and that it is wholly unjust for election officials to disqualify thousands of Negroes arbitrarily while permitting other thousands of white illiterates to troop to the polls. It is the view of the element that an educated and respectable Negro is a greater asset to the community and more deserving of the franchise than an unlettered white swineherd from the pine barrens. It cannot be said that this view is held by anything remotely approaching a majority of the Southern whites, but it undoubtedly is gaining in favor. As reconstruction and its atrocities recede further and further into the background, more and more white Southerners are coming to feel that the cry of 'white supremacy,' raised so often in the past, is in the twentieth century a mere rawhead and bloodybones without substance or meaning."[a]

[16] The relevant section of the Fourteenth Amendment reads: ". . . when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State."

There was some discussion about applying the penalty to the South demanded by this section of the Constitution after the disfranchising laws were adopted by the South. In 1904, the so-called Crumpacker Resolution was before Congress demanding that the representation of the disfranchising states be reduced after a careful investigation. In 1904 the Republican Party platform carried the same demand. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century discussion on this point was dead.

There was some question as to the constitutionality of such a resolution. Some held that the Fifteenth Amendment superseded the Fourteenth, and that a disfranchising state's representation should not be reduced but the disfranchising stopped. James G. Blaine, the great statesman of the last decades of the nineteenth century, for example said:

"Before the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment, if a State should exclude the negro from suffrage the next step would be for Congress to exclude the negro from the basis of apportionment. After the adoption of the Fifteenth Amendment, if a State should exclude the negro from suffrage, the next step would be for the Supreme Court to declare the act unconstitutional and therefore null and void."[b]

The relevant section of the Fifteenth Amendment reads: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

[17] Compare Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), pp. 388 ff. J. W. Johnson comments from the Negro side: "More than once he took his case to the Supreme Court of the United States, but the Court pointed out that he had failed to show that the *state* had abridged or denied his right to vote or that persons who prevented him from voting had done so because of his *race, color or previous condition of servitude.* So, unable to prove that the committee which had met him at

[a] Virginius Dabney, *Liberalism in the South* (1932), pp. 253-254.

[b] *Twenty Years of Congress* (1886), Vol. 2, pp. 418-419.

the polls with shotguns was actuated by any such base and unconstitutional motives, he found his case thrown out. In the last analysis, he lost his vote because of the attitude of the Supreme Court."[a]

[18] Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), pp. 60-61.

[19] Marian D. Irish, "The Southern One-Party System and National Politics," *The Journal of Politics* (February, 1942), p. 82.

[20] "A Minority of Our Own," New York *Times* (April 3, 1942).

[21] "For the nation, therefore, the fair position would seem to be that the South is entitled to work out this extremely important and extremely delicate question in the way in which they have begun, without further disastrous interference such as occurred during the reconstruction period."[b]

[22] "For the dominant political party in a third of the United States to rule that in 1942 only qualified 'white voters' shall be allowed to participate in the selection of the officials of our democratic government would be an anachronism too dangerous to democratic principles and Christian ideals to be preserved for the sake of old days and old ways."[c]

[23] Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

Chapter 24. *Inequality of Justice*

[1] "In many a small town and city [of the South], the mayor and councilmen offer for election with a complete list of police and other public officers."[d]

[2] Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 61.

[3] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), p. 176. Italics ours.

[4] As early as 1904, Murphy recognized the "morbid and exaggerated solidarity" among Negroes against the white agencies of justice as the "blind moving of the instinct of self-protection."[e] Weatherford observes how the reaction breaks down " . . . one of the most powerful deterrents of crime; namely, the loss of status among those who are of the same class as the possible criminal."[f]

The Negro spokesmen generally do not deny the charges against their people of being inclined to shield criminals of their own race. But they unanimously point to the defects in the working of justice as the explanation:

"The Negro feels that he cannot expect justice from Southern courts where white and black are involved. In his mind accusation is equivalent to condemnation. . . . The very spirit in which, he feels, the law is administered makes it difficult for the colored

[a] *Negro Americans, What Now?* pp. 56-57.

[b] T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), p. 167.

[c] Statement by Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, in Jessie Daniel Ames, *The Changing Character of Lynching*, published by Commission on Interracial Cooperation (July, 1942), p. 70. See also Dabney, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-254.

[d] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 14.

[e] Edgar Gardner Murphy, *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904), p. 174.

[f] Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

citizen to exercise cheerful co-operation and acquiescence."[a] Robert R. Moton, a most conservative Negro educator and leader, writes in the same vein:

"In the light of these facts [the attitudes and activities against the Negro in the First World War] it ought not be difficult to understand why the reproach is so often hurled at the Negro that he does not cooperate with officers of the law in apprehending criminals and those accused of crime. To the Negro the law where these practices obtain appears not as an instrument of justice, but as an instrument of persecution; government is simply white society organized to keep the Negro down; and the officers of the law are its agents authorized to wreak upon the helpless offender the contempt, the indignation, and the vengeance that outraged law and order feels when stimulated by prejudice. There is no such hue and cry over crime when the victim is a Negro and the perpetrator either white or black as when the victim is white and the suspect is black or supposed to be black."[b]

and:

"The Negro knows, perhaps better than he knows anything else, that his chances of securing justice in the courts in those sections of the country where discrimination is in other things legal and common are so slim that in most instances he has nothing to gain by resorting to the courts even for litigation with members of his own race; while it is accepted by most as a foregone conclusion that no court anywhere will render a judgment against a white man in favour of a Negro plaintiff. A Negro defendant may occasionally get a favourable judgment as against a white plaintiff, but the reverse is a far more frequent possibility, so much so that a Negro very rarely brings suit against a white man for any cause in those states where relations between the two races are more or less strained. It is figured that to do so will involve a man in fruitless litigation, with the original loss augmented by the cost of the action. In spite of all the injustices and abuses from which Negroes suffer, one seldom hears of a court action brought by Negroes against any white person in our Southern states."[c]

A recent investigator of a Southern community, Hortense Powdermaker, testifies concerning the attitudes among the Negroes:

". . . many of the Negroes have long since concluded that their best course is to keep clear of legal complications wherever possible. To go to court for any cause would be to solicit more trouble than the matter at issue might be worth. Since no Negro can expect to find justice by due process of law, it is better in the long run to suffer one's loss—or to adjust it oneself. From this angle, the 'lawlessness' sometimes ascribed to the Negro may be viewed as being rather his private and individual 'law enforcement' *faute de mieux*. The feeling against going to court has in it an element of race-solidarity. Some Negroes will criticize one of the race who takes legal action against another Negro. Such criticism is part of a definite counter-current against the still prevalent tendency to take one's troubles to a white man."[d]

On this point the Southern white liberals—who, in this region, have to defend the principle of legality, since conservatism there is married to the tradition of illegality—agree without reservation with the Negro leaders. Baker reported this more than thirty years ago. One of the Southern liberals told him frankly:

"We complain that the Negroes will not help to bring the criminals of their race

[a] Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment* (1908), p. 79.
[b] *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), pp. 154-155.
[c] Moton, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.
[d] *After Freedom* (1939), p. 126.

to justice. One reason for this is that the Negro has too little confidence in our courts. We must give him that, above all things."[a]

Woofter eloquently expresses the view of Southern liberalism today when he says:

"In the successful adjustment of the legal relationships of the two races democracy is vitally involved. The right to a fair trial by an impartial jury of peers is one of the bed-rocks upon which freedom rests, and if it cannot be preserved when the courts serve two races, then democracy itself rests on quicksand. The problem of legal justice is, therefore, fully as important to the white race as to the Negro race. Any tendency to weaken the feeling that the court system is entirely impartial, unaffected by passion or prejudice, and meticulously just, or any tendency to strengthen the feeling that the court can be biased or made the instrument of a particular class, is a tendency which may wreck society."[b]

[5] For example, Robert A. Warner describes the situation in New Haven, Connecticut, in these terms:

"Only occasionally are justice betrayed and the colored people robbed of the protection of the law, when the judges of the city court suspect acts of violence in which Negroes are involved are simple assaults. One such case was appealed to Criminal Superior Court successfully. A white man, drunk, was surprised in the act of stealing the car of a reputable Negro couple. When they chased and overtook him, he slashed the woman so severely that a blood transfusion was necessary to save her life. The city court disposed of the case with a cursory $25 fine and costs for breach of the peace, and suspended judgments or penalties for the motor vehicle violations involved. The higher court gave the miscreant a deserved year in jail." (*New Haven Negroes* [1940], p. 224.)

[6] The classic case study on this subject is the survey undertaken by The Chicago Commission on Race Relations. (*The Negro in Chicago* [1922].)

[7] In Detroit a federal housing project, the Sojourner Truth Homes, was the scene of a riot between whites and Negroes. The project was designed for Negro defense workers. On the day set for occupancy, February 28, whites who lived nearby picketed the project. Moving vans containing the furniture of prospective Negro tenants were stopped. When one van tried to pass the line, the white men climbed all over the truck; a stone was thrown, hitting a Negro driver. Then mounted police charged in. *Life* magazine reports: "Cops charged down on Negro sympathizers of excluded tenants. Police devoted most attention to Negroes, made no effort to open picket lines for vans. Said one inspector: 'It would be suicide if we used our sticks on any of them [the whites].'" (*Life* [March 16, 1942], pp. 40-41.)

[8] Henry Hill Collins, Jr., *America's Own Refugees* (1941), p. 156. See also, David W. Anthony, "The Cranbury Terror Case," *The Crisis* (October, 1939), pp. 295-296.

[9] Of 1,247 Negro lawyers, judges, and justices reported in the United States in 1930, only 436 were from the whole South, where over three-fourths of the Negro population were concentrated. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 9 and 293.)

[a] Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 49. The statement was made by a Mr. Hopkins, leader of the Civic League of Atlanta, composed of the foremost white citizens of that city.

[b] T. J. Woofter, Jr., *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), p. 125.

[10] Statements in this paragraph are the conclusions the present author has reached after having interviewed a great number of white and Negro lawyers in Northern cities.

[11] E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), pp. 34-35 and 169.

[12] Hinton Rowan Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1860; first edition, 1857), p. 140.

[13] "Notes on Virginia: 1781-1782," in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, H. A. Washington (editor) (1859), Vol. 8, pp. 403-404. In two paragraphs Cash, in his *Mind of the South*, gives the common sense of the long-drawn-out discussion about whether slavery was cruel or not:

"Wholly apart from the strict question of right and wrong, it is plain that slavery was inescapably brutal and ugly. Granted the existence, in the higher levels, of genuine humanity of feeling toward the bondsman; granted that, in the case of the house-servants at least, there was sometimes real affection between master and man; granted even that, at its best, the relationship here got to be gentler than it has ever been elsewhere, the stark fact remains: It rested on force. The black man occupied the position of a mere domestic animal, without will or right of his own. The lash lurked always in the background. Its open crackle could often be heard where field hands were quartered. Into the gentlest houses drifted now and then the sound of dragging chains and shackles, the bay of hounds, the report of pistols on the trail of the runaway. And, as the advertisements of the time incontestably prove, mutilation and the mark of the branding iron were pretty common.

"Just as plain was the fact that the institution was brutalizing—to white men. Virtually unlimited power acted inevitably to call up, in the coarser sort of master, that sadism which lies concealed in the depths of universal human nature—bred angry impatience and a taste for cruelty for its own sake, with a strength that neither the kindliness I have so often referred to (it continued frequently to exist unimpaired side by side, and in the same man, with this other) nor notions of honor could effectually restrain. And in the common whites it bred a savage and ignoble hate for the Negro, which required only opportunity to break forth in relentless ferocity; for all their rage against the 'white-trash' epithet concentrated itself on him rather than on the planters." (Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* [1941], pp. 82-83.)

[14] John Codman Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States* (1858-1862), Vol. 1, pp. 222-309; Vol. 2, pp. 2-218.

[15] See: William Goodell, *The American Slave Code in Theory and Practice* (1853); John Codman Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States* (1858-1862); and George M. Stroud, *A Sketch of the Laws Relating to Slavery in the Several States of the United States of America* (1856).

[16] Compare William Sumner Jenkins, *Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old South* (1935), pp. 153-154.

[17] Goodell, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-127, 201-224; Stroud, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-28, 67-75; Hurd, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 79-80 and 96.

[18] For a summary of these insurrections and their effects on the whites, see Harvey Wish, "American Slave Insurrections before 1861," *The Journal of Negro History* (July, 1937), pp. 299-320. See also Chapter 35, Section 1, of this book.

[19] Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* (1910), pp. 36 ff.

[20] B. Schrieke, *Alien Americans* (1936), pp. 135-136.

[21] See Frank Shay, *Judge Lynch* (1938).

[22] Guy B. Johnson, "Patterns of Race Conflict," in *Race Relations and the Race Problem*, Edgar T. Thompson (editor) (1939), pp. 131 ff.

[23] It has become customary in sociological literature to refer to the slavery system and the ante-bellum South as a social order in balance and equilibrium. "There was no serious race problem under slavery. The problem arose with the sudden and complete destruction of the old social arrangement, and the necessity for making a new racial adjustment under the irreversible conditions of a tremendous Negro population growth, economic interdependence, and the partial acculturation of the Negro group." (Charles S. Johnson in Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 543. Compare William Graham Sumner, *Folkways* [1906], pp. 77 and 90; Robert E. Park, "The Bases of Race Prejudice," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [November, 1928], pp. 13-15; Bertram W. Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* [1937], pp. 7 ff.) This view is considerably exaggerated, to say the least.

[24] There are, however, advantages to be gained by holding the Negro in a subordinate position. "Three gains are seen as accruing to the middle-class white group; they are the economic, sexual, and prestige gains. The white middle class is so placed that it makes all of these gains from the Negroes and some of them from the lower-class whites." (John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* [1937], p. 99.)

Chapter 25. *The Police and Other Public Contacts*

[1] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 20.

[2] A great many of these arrests occur on streetcars and buses. A Negro may be arrested for demanding the right change from the conductor or for refusing to give up his seat in the colored section of the car to a white person.[a] He may be arrested for being in the white section of town after dark.[b] Raper cites the following case.

". . . Mrs. Edna Lewis, prominent Negro Baptist from Akron, Ohio, . . . was attending the Baptist World Alliance in Atlanta in August, 1939. When driving downtown she had asked a policeman how to reach Fort Street. Instead of directing her, he said, 'All you darkies want to go to darkeytown.' 'Well,' replied Mrs. Lewis, 'I happen not to be any more darkey than you are.' The policeman, indignant and amazed stammered out, 'Why—why—I'll have you put in jail for that.' Whereupon, he arrested her, called a nearby patrol wagon and sent her off to the police station on a charge of 'disturbing the peace.' At the sergeant's desk she was told she could post a bond of $12 or remain in jail until Monday."[c]

In July, 1942, in Rome, Georgia, Mrs. Roland Hayes, wife of the famous tenor, went with her daughter into a shoe store where she had dealt for three years. It was a hot day, and they sat under the fan. A clerk asked them to move back into the section reserved for Negroes. Mrs. Hayes refused, saying it was hot, and that she preferred to remain under the fan. Words were exchanged, and Mrs. Hayes told the clerk he was behaving like Hitler.

[a] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.
[b] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.
[c] *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

When Mr. Hayes later went into the store to rectify the matter, a policeman caught him by the belt as he started to leave. When he stated that his wife did not curse (as the clerk contended that she had), an un-uniformed man hit him in the mouth. The policeman handcuffed Mr. Hayes and took him and his wife and daughter to the police station. In the car, Mr. Hayes was struck again. Mr. Hayes and his wife were put in a cell, later released on $50 bond.[a]

In both Mrs. Lewis' and Mr. Hayes' cases, further action did not follow because of the ensuing publicity, but the ordinary Negro in similar circumstances would have been fined or imprisoned.

[3] Guy B. Johnson observes:

". . . for the most part each plantation or household was a little realm in which the slaveowner was lord and master and had jurisdiction over the punishment of his slaves for all except those serious offenses which were recognized as crimes against the state. This fact is of great significance for the understanding of racial conflict, for it means that white people during the long period of slavery became accustomed to the idea of 'regulating' Negro insolence and insubordination by force with the consent and approval of the law."[b]

[4] "In the rural areas the punishment of Negroes is largely in the hands of white planters. They whip Negroes both for infractions of the caste rules and for minor crimes, such as fighting or theft. Furthermore, the planter for whom the Negro works either participates in the punishment himself or gives his permission. Some planters assert that they are solely responsible for their own Negroes and that no one else has any right to punish them."[c]

[5] Compare John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 122 ff. and Chapter 8, and Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56, 336 ff., *passim.* See also Chapter 27, Section 1.

[6] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 6. "The conductors in charge of trains operated in these [Jim Crow] states are in practically every instance given police powers to enforce the regulation."[d] Some street car conductors in Southern cities carry guns and use them to threaten Negroes.

[7] Raper, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 6-10 and 35-63.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 13-18 and appendices 1, 6, and 9.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[11] "When a department goes on civil service, the more flagrant abuses of 'log rolling' are eliminated, but the department even then is not immune to political bias. Civil service commissions sometimes reflect factionalism. Even if the commissioners achieve absolute impartiality, there is still plenty of opportunity to leave off the person with a high civil service ranking and appoint others with lower ratings, for the common practice is to make a selection from the three highest ranking applicants, which means the third highest may secure the appointment. The other two would then remain on the list, to be called back along with a new third, and again the first and second ranking applicants can be

[a] See *Time* (July 27, 1942), p. 17.

[b] "Patterns of Race Conflict" in *Race Relations and the Race Problem*, Edgar T. Thompson (editor) (1939), p. 130.

[c] Allison Davis, B. B. Gardner, and M. R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), pp. 55-56.

[d] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 183.

ignored. And so on until the desired number of appointments have been made. The only circumstances under which the highest ranking applicant would necessarily be appointed is for all eligible persons on the list to be appointed."[a] It is understood that Negroes cannot apply for police positions.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 14. "Where the police department is directly under the city administration, that is, 'in politics,' each political faction has its own list of prospective officers, who work in the campaign on promise of a job if successful at the polls. But this does not mean that the particular person who becomes a policeman took an interest in the election; he may have been sponsored by a politically potent father, uncle, lodge buddy, or perhaps a former employer. Under such a system, victory for the contesting political party may mean the dismissal of half or more of the force."[b]

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 19 and 20.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

"The fact that Negroes are used unofficially by the police force seems to contribute to the high homicide rate among Negroes, simply because the lives of the Negro informers, spotters, and stool pigeons are cheap to the Negroes who are wanted by the police and who are being reported, often as not, by fellow criminals trying to protect their own skins. The law is white. So too are the officials who administer it. The Negro who works with the police becomes a party to the 'crime' of subjecting a member of his group to an unfriendly court. He is by definition of the hunted man, a traitor to his own race—and his life may be the price."[c]

[19] The hardships of the white policeman should not be forgotten when accounting for his intense race prejudice. When he patrols the Negro sections of Southern cities, he is in considerable danger of personal violence and knows it. Dr. Raper describes the daily routine as follows:

"Police service to Negro communities is limited largely to radio cruising cars. A map of their routes through Atlanta's Negro sections, however, shows that they do not go through the areas where most Negro homicides occur, but rather stay on the main thoroughfares which are given over largely to business purposes. Too often the police go into the Negro community only when called, as it were, to umpire Negro brawls, or even more often to pick up members of the 'enemy' faction. When poolroom operators or restaurant keepers are unsympathetic with boisterousness, the whole group may be taken off together in 'Black Maria.' Managements do not, as a rule, follow such a practice, however, for to do so would be to go out of business shortly.

"The real function served by the police in many Southern Negro communities seems to be limited to rounding up vagrants, loiterers, crap shooters, non-cooperating prostitutes, and drunks. These occasional arresting excursions serve several purposes: they keep the Negroes intimidated, they maintain arrest quotas, they earn money for the police court, and sometimes they help preserve order. For, as pointed out by more than one police official, most of the Negro killings grow out of these social gatherings.

[a] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
[b] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[c] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

Though nearly all responsible Negro people want better police services in their communities, they do not commonly agree that the picking up of people for trivial offenses is desirable. They expect the police officers to be quite discriminating and perhaps to use more insight than they have, for from the white policeman's point of view, Negro gangs must be broken up upon sight or there is likelihood that banter will be challenged by heavy threats, and somebody fatally wounded with a razor, ice pick, or pistol."[a]

[20] "It is a common belief of many whites that Negroes will respond only to violent methods. In accordance with their theory of the 'animal-like' nature of the Negro, they believe that the formal punishments of fines and imprisonment fail to act as deterrents to crime."[b]

"Much of the beating of Negroes by the police is based on the general belief that formal punishments by fine or jail sentence fail to act as deterrents to Negro criminals. This belief is combined with the feeling that legal technicalities frequently prevent Negro lawbreakers from being punished through the courts. Thus, the police tend to revert to direct action and to administer punishment themselves. They claim that their action is justified because it reduces crime."[c]

[21] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[22] In the North, there is much killing of Negroes by the police, but it seems to be more a part of the regular warfare against criminals than it is an expression of race prejudice. It is the present writer's impression that brutality other than killing is much less common in the North than in the South. It is to be regretted that no quantitative information is available on police brutality other than killing.

[23] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53. Compare *ibid.*, p. 35.

[24] For substantiation, see *ibid.*, pp. 41-52.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

W. E. B. Du Bois sums up the situation thus:

"These districts are not usually protected by the police—rather victimized and tyrannized over by them. No one who does not know can realize what tyranny a low-grade white policeman can exercise in a colored neighborhood. In court his unsupported word cannot be disputed and the only defense against him is often mayhem and assassination by black criminals, with resultant hue and cry."[d]

[26] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 322-324; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, Table 13. The census figures for the South do not include Negro women officers who are, however, few in number.

[27] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

"The Universities of North Carolina, Virginia, Alabama and perhaps other states sponsor institutes for police officers." (*Ibid.*, p. 18.)

[29] I have been made aware that this recommendation seems utopian. Even most Northern police systems are far from reaching this standard. But considering both the very large proportion of all young men who go through college and the high crime rate which makes the police so particularly important in America, it seems to the foreign

[a] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

[b] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

[c] *Ibid.*, p. 502.

[d] *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), pp. 182-183.

observer that it is an irrational practice to keep the policemen's professional standard so unusually low.

[30] For discussions on the problem of improving the police standards, see August Vollmer, *The Police and Modern Society* (1936), especially pp. 216-234; and the National Resources Committee, *Urban Government* (1939), pp. 276-291.

[31] "After several years' experience in rural Black Belt communities, the writer is thoroughly convinced that the local whites would be thrown into a panic if they knew the contents of the letters regularly going in and out of the Negro community. No matter how poor and illiterate the small town Negro family may be, and how cowed by the potential mob, regular inquiry will be made at the general delivery window.

"Most sharecropper families have at least one member who can read and write, and all have mail boxes by the roadside. The R.F.D., however, may not be considered dependable in times of strife, and especially important, or should we say delicate, letters are carried personally to the post office.

"Sometimes the local post office may not be considered safe, and letters may be posted in the nearest city. This is particularly true when people are under surveillance, for whatever reason, and wish to conceal the destination of their letters. The files of Washington officials, as well as the Commission on Interracial Affairs and the N. A. A. C. P., bear eloquent testimony to the sense of security that Negroes and poorer whites feel even in the local postal service in the rural South."[a]

[32] Raper testifies that they sometimes start out by approximating federal standards but sooner or later become appreciative of local practices, and continues:

"On the basis of wide personal observation, the writer knows of only one instance in the South where absolute equality between the races was practiced by a local administrator. This was in Atlanta, for a few months shortly after the emergence of the New Deal, when Miss Louisa deB. Fitzsimmons was in active charge of relief administration."[b]

[33] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

Chapter 26. *Courts, Sentences and Prisons*

[1] *Through Afro-America* (1910), pp. 97-98.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 96 and 97.

[3] Virginius Dabney, *Liberalism in the South* (1932), p. 256.

[4] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 64 ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

[6] Letter, April 15, 1940.

[7] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 343.

[8] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 67. Compare *ibid.*, pp. 156 ff.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

[10] Mangum, *op. cit.*, Chapter 12.

[11] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 79 and 80.

[12] "In most courts where Negro jurors will not be used or will be used only under

[a] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

[b] *Ibid.*, p. 8, footnote 1.

the sternest instructions from the judge, a Negro lawyer would be a real handicap to a client. The general white populace, including the jurors, would feel that such a Negro client was uppity—if not actually trying to insult the community." (*Ibid.*, p. 91.)

[13] A Northern Negro lawyer complains:

". . . many of them [Negroes] who have the means prefer white lawyers in the same manner that a person prefers to buy at a big, well-equipped store. My office is not so well equipped and manned as to indicate that I could handle very important and intricate cases . . ." (Letter, March 20, 1940.)

[14] A white lawyer from the Upper South writes in a letter:

"When the cases involve no such issues [on the race question] but are merely cases, I have noted that cases between Negro and Negro are handled somewhat differently than cases between white and white. I mean a spirit of levity, an expectation of something 'comical' appears to exist. The seriousness in the white vs. Negro case is decidedly lacking. As you know it is a rare case indeed in which a Negro who has murdered a Negro receives the extreme penalty, either death or life imprisonment here, regardless of the facts. Only the other day in a local case a Negro who murdered another with robbery as motive, a charge that would have been as between white and white, or Negro and white victim, good for the electric chair, was disposed of by a jury with a 15 year sentence. The punishment as between Negro and Negro, as distinguished from white vs. white, or Negro vs. white victim, is decidedly different and clearly shows the racial approach to the question. In short the court-room feeling is that the Negro is entirely inferior, with punishment for crimes by him against his own kind punished with less punishment than when the white man is involved." (Letter of June 19, 1940.)

[15] The author can personally testify to a few cases of a white upper class person securing leniency for a Negro accused of a crime against another Negro.

[16] Edgar G. Murphy, for example, wrote:

"Petty crimes are often forgiven him, and in countless instances the small offences for which white men are quickly apprehended are, in the negro, habitually ignored. The world hears broadly and repeatedly of the cases of injustice, it hears little of those more frequent instances in which the weaknesses of a child-race are accorded only an amused indifference or a patient tolerance by their stronger neighbors." (*Problems of the Present South* [1909; first edition, 1904], p. 176.)

[17] A generation ago Baker observed:

"One thing impressed me especially, not only in this court but in all others I have visited: a Negro brought in for drunkenness, for example, was punished much more severely than a white man arrested for the same offence. The injustice which the weak everywhere suffer—North and South—is in the South visited upon the Negro. The white man sometimes escaped with a reprimand, he was sometimes fined three dollars and costs, but the Negro, especially if he had no white man to intercede for him, was usually punished with a ten or fifteen dollar fine, which often meant that he must go to the chain-gang." (Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 49.) See also Allison Davis, B. B. Gardner, and M. R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), p. 504.

[18] See Chapter 10, Section 4. The Southern legal codes contain a number of laws making it possible for the employers in rural districts to utilize the legal machinery for their own economic purposes. Among them the vagrancy laws:

". . . they afford a legal means for recruiting temporary peons. The device is simple:

Employers let it be known that they need additional laborers. If such an announcement brings out a sufficient number of workers, there is no excuse for invoking the vagrancy laws; but if a sufficient number is not forthcoming, any person without visible and obvious means of support is subjected to choosing between accepting the local labor opportunity or being drawn into court, where he may readily be fined or imprisoned. If fined, however, he may still be forced to accept local employment, for an employer may arrange with court officials to pay his fine and let him work it out. Such prisoners are ready victims of peonage, they are court wards and their employers exercise close surveillance over their movements, having virtual license to keep them in debt at the commissary. The worker has little choice, for the prison sentence hangs over his head should he not work out the fine satisfactorily.

"The inclusiveness of the vagrancy charge may be seen from the Florida statute which defines persons subject to arrest for vagrancy as 'rogues, vagabonds, idle or dissolute persons, common pipers and fiddlers . . . persons who neglect their calling, or are without reasonably continuous employment or regular income, and who have not sufficient property to sustain them.' Under such a law a dozen potential workers can be picked up at a crap game or just around the corner, for being unoccupied. And should they not readily submit, they can be picked up for disorderly conduct or resisting arrest." (Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188.) In April, 1942, the United States Department of Justice began investigating such a case in Georgia.

[19] Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 137-141.

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 189-195.

[22] Mangum, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

[23] On February 18, 1936, at Raleigh, North Carolina, a white man was executed for killing a Negro. This datum was so important because it was recorded in the press to be the first time that such a thing had ever occurred in the South. (See Raper, *op. cit.*, p. 166.)

[24] Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment* (1908), p. 80.

[25] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1939*, p. 29. In 1938, the proportion was 45.0; in 1937 it was 44.5.

[26] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 1.

[27] Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-168.

[28] Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* (1924), Chapter 3; Raper, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-172; George Washington Cable, *The Silent South* (1885); Robert E. Burns, *I Am a Fugitive From a Georgia Chain Gang* (1932); Jesse F. Steiner and Roy M. Brown, *The North Carolina Chain Gang* (1927); John L. Spivak, *Georgia Nigger* (1932).

[29] See Raper, *op. cit.*, Appendix 10, "Women Criminals in Atlanta, August 1939."

[30] See: *The Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, "Legal Aid," Vol. 9, pp. 319-324; Reginald Heber Smith, *Justice and the Poor* (1919). *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (March 1926) are entirely devoted to a discussion of legal aid societies in the United States. For a discussion of the relative lack of these societies in the South, see *ibid.*, pp. 20-26.

[31] Reports from several Negro lawyers, even in the Deep South, suggest that the mere presence of a large, interested, and well-behaved Negro audience in court has

a beneficial influence upon the impartiality of the legal procedures. It also stimulates the Negro lawyer. One of them, from a small city in the Lower South, writes:

"I have found that a courtroom of Negro spectators gives the Negro lawyer a feeling of support. He has potential clients, and certainly he will override any fears which may reside in his heart and soul to win more clients. So, he becomes more effective at the bar. Then too, the Negro spectators convey an interest which is compelling to the judge, in deciding cases which are affected with a public interest." (Letter, April 14, 1940.)

Chapter 27. *Violence and Intimidation*

[1] The patterns of extra-legal violence and intimidation have been felt by poor whites, to a certain extent, as well as by Negroes—in spite of the fact that, in recent years, poor whites have come to employ violence against Negroes more than do upper class whites. Even during slavery white aggression turned against other white people who did not conform or who were obnoxious for one reason or another. The class angle became more important when, in the later decades of the nineteenth century, small white farmers were pressed down into tenancy, or, as industry developed, became a white proletarian class of industrial workers. Southern white sharecroppers and textile workers could certainly not be dealt with as Negro labor, but part of the sanctions against the lower caste were transferred and applied to the lower class. Nearly one-half of the fatalities in labor struggles for each year between 1934 and 1940 occurred in the South which had scarcely one-fourth of the nation's population and less than one-fourth of its industrial workers. Nearly one-half of the Southern labor fatalities have been Negroes, though they constitute only one-fifth of the Southern industrial population. (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940]; and *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, Table 18 and State Table 11.)

[2] The custom of dueling when one's "honor" was challenged was quite common among the upper classes of the South in the nineteenth century. This was part of the Southern pattern of taking the law into individual hands, but it is one type of extra-legal violence which has been completely done away with. Dueling never had any significance for Negroes or poor whites.

[3] Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," pp. 278-295.

[4] To the average Northerner, who has little contact with poor white Southerners but some contact with Southern Negroes, the carrying of knives and other weapons is a "Negro custom." Actually, of course, it is a Southern custom.

"Most men, Negro and White, carry guns, and many of them also have knives. The most common type, familiarly called a 'crab-apple switch,' is a rather long pocket knife with a sharp four-inch blade." (Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], pp. 169-170.)

[5] Amendment II of the United States Constitution reads in part "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

[6] Excellent studies of lynching include: The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States: 1889-1918* (1919); Frank Shay, *Judge Lynch* (1938); Walter White, *Rope and Faggot* (1929);

Arthur Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching* (1933); John Weldon Hoot, "Lynch Law, the Practice of Illegal Popular Coercion," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania (1935).

[7] Compare Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932), pp. 254 ff., and, by the same author, *Research Memorandum on Minority Peoples in the Depression* (1937), pp. 172 ff.

[8] White, *op. cit.*, pp. 19 ff.

[9] Earle F. Young, "The Relation of Lynching to the Size of Political Areas," *Sociology and Social Research* (March-April, 1928), pp. 348-353; and National Resources Committee, *Our Cities* (1937), p. 16.

[10] Commission on Interracial Cooperation, *The Mob Still Rides* (1935), pp. 15-16, and Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 29-30.

[11] Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, p. 36.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

[13] William Archer, *Through Afro-America* (1910), pp. 216-217; Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), p. 44; Sir Harry H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World* (1910), p. 462. Similar statements have been made by E. G. Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendancy* (1909), p. 52, and more recently by Frank Tannenbaum, *Darker Phases of the South* (1924), pp. 32-33; Walter White, *Rope and Faggot* (1929), pp. 62 ff.; John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 163-164; Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), p. 52; E. Franklin Frazier, "The Pathology of Race Prejudice," *The Forum* (May, 1927), pp. 856-862; W. F. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941), pp. 114-117.

[14] White, *op. cit.*, pp. 57 ff.; Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 34 ff.

[15] Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town*, pp. 321-326 and 338; White, *op. cit.*, Chapter 4.

[16] Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 16-19 and 32-33, *passim.*

[17] Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 275. Also see Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 13-14.

[18] Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 10 ff. *passim.*

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13; White, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 26 and 38.

[21] Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 8 ff. and 44 ff.; White, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-18 and 54-81; Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, 25-26.

[22] Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 57; White, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-105 *passim.*

[23] Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 57; White, *op. cit.*, p. 111; Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

[24] T. J. Woofter, Jr., in Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 30-31; C. I. Hovland and R. R. Sears, "Minor Studies of Aggression: VI. Correlation of Lynchings with Economic Indices," reported in John Dollard *et al.*, *Frustration and Aggression* (1939), p. 31; and Buell G. Gallagher, *American Caste and the Negro College* (1938), pp. 381 ff.

[25] *Op. cit.*, p. 11. Compare p. 12. Ray Stannard Baker (*Following the Color Line* [1908]) earlier made a similar statement: ". . . a community will rise to mob Negroes or to drive them out of the country . . because the Negro is becoming educated,

acquiring property and 'getting out of his place'" (*ibid.*, p. 81), and he talks about their "fear" of the Negro. (*Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.)

[26] Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

[27] White, *op. cit.*, pp. 111 ff.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 40 ff.

[29] William J. Robertson, *The Changing South* (1927), p. 99. The phenomenon was observed also by André Siegfried, who pointed out that the Klan movement was inspired by the Protestant clergy; see *America Comes of Age* (1927) pp. 132-135.

[30] Raper, *The Tragedy of Lynching*, pp. 2, 21 *passim*.

[31] "Village life is dull everywhere, but in the South the situation is in many respects worse than in any other part of the country. The single crop so characteristic of the South has its influence in denying the rural population varied interests. The single crop, with its reduction of the farmer to the status of a city worker, who has to depend upon a money economy for nearly all of his needs, with its greater emphasis upon a money crop for sale rather than a varied crop for use, with its tendency to neglect the other subsidiary activities that are the very foundation of diversified farming, with its large tenancy, its frequent change of place, its intermittent periods of idleness, its monotonous food, its indebtedness, lack of interest in the farm, in its appearance, and the too frequent absence of numerous cattle and their almost human appeal to tenderness and care—the single crop has made the rural community in the South much more a burden spiritually and has meant much greater need for external excitement, partly expressed in intense religious emotions and protracted meetings." (Tannenbaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.)

[32] White, *op. cit.*, pp. 9 ff.

[33] For a general consideration of the nature of the lynching mob, see Richard T. LaPiere, *Collective Behavior* (1939), pp. 538-542.

[34] Charles S. Johnson describes the effects on the Negro community:

"During and shortly after a lynching the Negro community lives in terror. Negroes remain at home and out of sight. When the white community quiets down, the Negroes go back to their usual occupations. The incident is not forgotten, but the routine of the plantation goes on. The lynching, in fact, is part of the routine. . . . The effect on children is profound and permanent. After a time the Negro community returns to 'normal.' Life goes on, but Negro youth 'let white folks tend to their business.' Contacts with whites are avoided as far as possible. The youth may work for white people but intimacy is avoided. The Negro servant or laborer continues friendly to his employers. The employers may even be liked and regarded as 'good white folks,' but ultimate trust is held in abeyance." (*Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], pp. 317-318.)

[35] Murphy wrote:

"It has become increasingly obvious, however, that whatever the practise of lynching may or may not be, it is not a remedy. It does not prevent crime. Through the morbid interests which it arouses, and through the publicity which it creates, it inflames to the utmost the power of criminal suggestion and aggravates all the conditions of racial suspicion and antagonism. The so-called 'remedy' has always been followed by new outbreaks of the disease, the most atrocious crimes coming at short intervals after the previous exercise of the mob's philosophy of 'prevention.'" (Edgar G. Murphy, *Problems of the Present South* [1909; first edition, 1904], p. 178.)

Miller observed:

"In the first place it causes the whites to hate the Negro, as it is a part of human nature to hate those whom we have injured. In the second place it causes the Negro to hate the whites. It is universally conceded that lynching has no deterrent effect upon the class of crimes alleged to excite its vengeance. On the contrary, it probably has the opposite effect. The criminals and outlaws of the Negro race, who care nothing for life or death, may be thus hardened into resolves of revenge, and lie waiting to strike the hated race where the blow will be most keenly felt." (Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment* [1908], p. 69.)

Similarly Stone:

"But the point I would urge is that the illegal execution of Negroes by lynching, even when torture is added, has an inciting rather than a deterring influence upon the large number of potential criminals." (Alfred H. Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem* [1908], p. 465.)

[36] Moorfield Storey, *Problems of Today* (1920), pp. 128 ff.; Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 437 ff.

[37] James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* (1934), pp. 361-374.

[38] Donald Young points to the conflict of "interests" as a basic cause of lynching and suggests that the decrease in Negro lynchings in the South "may be ascribed not so much to a recognition of the evils of lynching, *per se*, as to decreasing clashes of interests between black and white in the South." (*American Minority Peoples*, p. 256.) He follows out the thought by stating:

"This suggests the futility of anti-lynching laws, of interracial commissions, and of educational programs in warring against mob action. Laws taking the prosecution of mob members out of the local courts into the federal would be only a well meant gesture, for even federal judges are human, reflect local sentiment, and must depend on the cooperation of local witnesses who are convinced that lynching is justified to preserve group welfare. It is for this reason that local legal authorities are usually without either the power or the will to prevent or prosecute such offenses. To impose a heavy fine on the county in which lynchings take place, a suggestion based on the theory that the substantial property owners of the community would be spurred to prevent them in order to save their pocketbooks, could have but little effect, for the stronger belief would still persist that such coercion was necessary to protection.

"Interracial commissions and other educational programs are valuable to the extent that the clash of group interests is fictitious, and can be shown to be so. Usually such programs reach only the more substantial elements in a community, people who as a rule are neither leaders of nor participants in mob action. Why should they be? They have achieved personal security, and are not directly in conflict with the minorities who are the object of lynchings. Their interest is a secondary one, derived from the masses directly in conflict with Negroes, Chinese, strikers, or other competing groups. This is the fundamental explanation of the fact that mobs, with few exceptions, are composed of the handicapped social classes who cannot be reached by appeals to justice and humanity." (*Ibid.*, pp. 256-257.)

This reasoning—which, incidentally, is also adhered to by many among the young Negro intellectuals under Marxist influence—is not convincing to us. Collective "interests" do not exist as solid and unchangeable social entities. The "interests," as they are felt, depend upon the actual bonds of identification; a "redefinition of the situation"

will change the "interest." Such a redefinition can be accomplished by education and propaganda, and also by laws and the administration of laws. (See Chapter 38, Section 6.)

[39] See Chapter 25, Section 3. Allison Davis and John Dollard mention five incidents in New Orleans between 1936 and 1938:

"Three of these men [five colored men killed by white policemen] were killed in city jails while awaiting trial. The other two were shot while in custody. All were accused of having attacked white men or women. By means of detailed accounts in the newspapers, these symbolic 'legal lynchings' were made known to the colored population and served as a means of further intimidation." (*Children of Bondage* [1940], p. 248.)

[40] ". . . lynchings often happen. They are different to what they used to be though. They used to be big mobs hunting for a nigger, but now you just hear about some nigger found hanging off a bridge." (Interview in Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 5.) Also see Jessie Daniel Ames, *The Changing Character of Lynching* (1942), pp. 8-9.

The following quotation suggests that secret vigilante lynching has become quite significant. It is from a pamphlet entitled *Lynching Goes Underground* ([January, 1940], pp. 7-8), sponsored by Senators Wagner and Capper and by Representatives Gavagan and Fish. The title page reads: "The author of this report, who must remain anonymous, is a native white Southerner who has lived all his life in the South and still lives there. He has made a number of investigations of lynchings."

"With regard to the whole problem of lynching your investigator desires to make the following statement. It is his considered judgment that, for various reasons, lynching is entering a new and altogether dangerous phase. Lynchings in the past have been characterized by the mob, the faggot, the rope. Hundreds of people, often thousands, poured out to participate or witness the lynching of a man or woman accused of some crime, often of the most trivial nature and often without any real charge at all. Pictures of the mobbed and mobbers have been taken and widely circulated. Souvenirs of the lynched man or woman, in the form of fingers, toes and other parts of the body, have been brazenly displayed by members of the mob.

"Public opinion is beginning to turn against this sort of mob activity. Sentiment is growing against lynching. Agitation for Federal and state anti-lynching laws gives pause to the lynching crowd. Lynching, they say, must go on, but it must be done quietly so as not to attract attention, draw publicity. Thus those who must rule by terror and intimidation turn to new methods. The old mob is disappearing but the work of the mob goes on. A Negro is accused of some crime, real or alleged. A few white men gather, formulate their plans, seize their victim. In some lonely swamp a small body of men do the job formerly done by a vast, howling, bloodthirsty mob composed of men, women and children. The word is then passed that the matter has been handled to the satisfaction of those in charge of such matters.

"Your investigator has probed numerous lynchings. His acquaintance with lynchers and the lynched extends over a lifetime. It is his judgment that countless Negroes are lynched yearly, but their disappearance is shrouded in mystery, for they are dispatched quietly and without general knowledge. . . .

"Your investigator was informed by competent observers that since the notorious double blow torch lynching which occurred at Duck Hill, Mississippi, in 1937, word

has been passed that in the future all difficulties between Negroes and whites will be handled by a small group of white men already appointed for that purpose. He was similarly advised that in the vicinity of Cleveland, Mississippi, at least four Negroes had been lynched within the past four or five months."

[41] "'Let the law take its course,' under mob surveillance, is doubtful gain, for in such a situation the courts are virtually prostituted to mob demands." (Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," p. 277.) See also Chapter 26, Section 2, of this book.

[42] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 264.

[43] The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago* (1922), p. 1. There were 17 other persons injured whose race was not recorded, bringing the total of injured up to 537.

[44] Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, p. 264.

[45] The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[46] Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, p. 252.

[47] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[48] The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Chapter 28. *The Basis of Social Inequality*

[1] James Bryce, *The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Mankind* (1902), p. 43.

[2] This assertion has also been expressed in the literature; see, for instance, E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1927), p. 388.

[3] James Weldon Johnson, in his autobiography, discusses the Jim Crow arrangement in railway traveling and gives the following exemplification of the point in the text:

"It was the usual 'Jim Crow' arrangement: one-half of a baggage coach, unkempt, unclean, and ill smelling, with one toilet for both sexes. Two of the seats were taken up by the pile of books and magazines and the baskets of fruit and chewing gum of the 'news-butcher.' There were a half-dozen or more Negroes in the car and two white men. White men in a 'Jim Crow' car were not an unusual sight. It was—and in many parts still is—the custom for white men to go into that car whenever they felt like doing things that would not be allowed in the 'white' car. They went there to smoke, to drink, and often to gamble. At times the object was to pick an acquaintance with some likely-looking Negro girl." (*Along This Way* [1934], pp. 86-87.)

[4] "The practice depends upon the individual white man. Negroes and whites occasionally shake hands under a variety of conditions: when a salesman is trying to sell goods, when a former employer meets a respected Negro who has worked for him, when whites are attending public programs or meetings of Negroes, and occasionally on the streets. The white man makes the first approach." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], p. 277.)

[5] See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 259; James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way*, pp. 298, 299; R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (1921), pp. 250-251; Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, prepared for this study (1934), p. 6.

[6] The one-sidedness of the segregation system is so entrenched that it also dominates the interracial work. Particularly in the South and when more than one individual

from each group is involved, this activity can ordinarily be observed to take the form of white people coming to the Negroes—attending their church meetings, concerts, lecture programs, or arranging an interracial conference of leaders or students in a Negro college. Negroes are not supposed to take the initiative. James Weldon Johnson observes:

"There, interracial intercourse, when it does take place, is more often than not a one-sided arrangement. In such instances, the whites come into our midst, but, no matter how sincerely they desire the closer relationship, they fear to offend public sentiment by having us go into their midst. Few there are who dare defy that sentiment. The situation of those who genuinely wish to defy it and dare not is near to pathetic. The cultivation of social and intellectual intercourse between members of the two races in the South cannot progress very far until the whites are as free to act as we are." (*Negro Americans, What Now?* [1934], p. 83.)

The greater freedom of the Negro of which Johnson speaks is the freedom to receive white people without being ostracized by his own group.

[7] This sudden change of attitude has, as is well known, its exact counterpart on the white side. It has been repeatedly pointed out by Negro authors that a dark-looking man who speaks Spanish, French, or some other foreign language and appears as a South American (or Italian, or Indian) will be excepted from the ordinary Jim Crow practices against American Negroes. This story from Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* may illustrate the point:

"I happened to find myself in a town in which so much excitement and indignation were being expressed that it seemed likely for a time that there would be a lynching. The occasion of the trouble was that a dark-skinned man had stopped at the local hotel. Investigation, however, developed the fact that this individual was a citizen of Morocco, and that while travelling in this country he spoke the English language. As soon as it was learned that he was not an American Negro, all the signs of indignation disappeared. The man, who was the innocent cause of the excitement, though, found it prudent after that not to speak English." ([1929; first edition, 1900] p. 103.)

[8] Booker T. Washington tells us about his early childhood:

". . . the plantation upon which I was born, in Franklin County, Va., had, as I remember, only six slaves. My master and his sons all worked together side by side with his slaves. In this way we all grew up together, very much like members of one big family. There was no overseer, and we got to know our master and he to know us." (*The Story of the Negro* [1909], Vol. I, p. 149.)

[9] 18 Stat. L. 335, Chap. 114.

[10] Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* (1910), p. 10; Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), p. 28.

[11] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 115 ff.; Mangum, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[13] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 171 ff.

[14] See W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), especially pp. 674 ff.

[15] For an up-to-date account of the Jim Crow legislation, see Mangum, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 181-222.

[16] "The two races have not yet made new mores. Vain attempts have been made to control the new order by legislation. The only result is the proof that legislation cannot make mores." (William Graham Sumner, *Folkways* [1906], p. 77.)

[17] "No small part of the motive back of the South's legal separation of the races in transportation and education is the fact that services for the two races can be made unequal only when administered to them separately. The phrase 'separate and equal' symbolizes the whole system, fair words to gain unfair ends." (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 3.)

[18] Henry W. Grady, *The New South* (1890), pp. 244-246; italics ours. In this context Grady furnishes his audience the following illustrative information:

"The Negroes of Georgia pay but one-fortieth of the taxes, and yet they take forty-nine per cent of the school fund. Railroads in Georgia provide separate but equal cars for whites and blacks, and a white man is not permitted to occupy a colored car." (*Ibid.*, p. 246.)

This information is, of course, inaccurate even today and was still more so in Grady's time.

[19] Referring to the Jim Crow arrangement in the railway system, William Archer remarks:

"Remember that the question is complicated by the American's resolute adherence to the constitutional fiction of equality. As there are no 'classes' in the great American people, so there must be no first, second, or third class on the American railways. Of course, the theory remains a fiction on the railroad no less than in life. Everyone travels first class; but those who can pay for it may travel in classes higher than first, called parlour-cars, drawing-room cars, and so forth. The only real validity of the fiction, it seems to me, lies in the unfortunate situation it creates with regard to the negro. If our three classes (or even two) were provided on every train, the mass of the negro population would, from sheer economic necessity, travel third. It might or might not be necessary to provide separate cars on that level; but if it were, the discrimination would not be greatly felt by the grade of black folks it would affect. In the higher-class cars there would be no reasonable need for discrimination, for the number of negroes using them would be few in comparison, and personally unobjectionable. The essential elbow-room would seldom be lacking; conditions in the first and second class would be very much the same as they are at present in the North." (*Through Afro-America* [1910], pp. 72-73.)

[20] *Idem.* "But elbow-room is just what the conditions of railway traveling preclude; wherefore I hold the system of separate cars a legitimate measure of defense against constant discomfort. Had it not been adopted, the South would have been a nation of saints, not of men. It is in the methods of its enforcement that they sometimes show themselves not only human but inhuman." (*Ibid.*, p. 72.)

[21] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), p. 205.

[22] Cited in Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, p. 207.

[23] Quoted from *ibid.*, pp. 195-196. Similar remarks are: "We have always had caste in the world"; "I imagine the average [Negro] is probably happiest when he is waiting on white folks and wearing their old clothes." (See *idem.*)

[24] William M. Brown, *The Crucial Race Question* (1907), p. 118.

[25] Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, p. 195.

[26] The full gamut of interest motives is suggested by John Dollard (*Caste and Class in a Southern Town* [1937], pp. 98-187) in his theory of gains. It should be noted that Dollard considers these gains—which he classifies as economic, sexual, and prestige—as a means of interpreting and ordering the facts of Negro-white relations in the South.

He does not mean that the gains theory is held consciously and unqualifiedly by the majority of Southern whites who receive these gains from Negro subordination.

[27] *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), p. 48.

[28] The popular theory usually does not reach the level of articles and books any more; even the recent scientific literature on the Negro problem is likely to avoid this central notion. Thomas P. Bailey, a Mississippi professor writing just before the First World War, gives perhaps the clearest pronouncement in print of the prevalent view:

"Some representatives of the humanitarian group feel it difficult to understand why an illiterate and even vicious white man should object to dining with a highly cultured negro gentleman. To them the attitude of the 'low' white man seems essentially illogical and absurd; but it is not so to the men who know the 'low-grade' white man from the *inside*. The whole picture changes when one knows 'what it is about.' *Social attitudes at bottom are concerned with marriage*, and all it stands for. Now, race conscience may prevent the enlightened humanitarian from encouraging in any way the interbreeding of the two races. Race-pride will deter the average man who is willing to acknowledge the excellence of certain individual negroes. *But may it not require race enmity to prevent the amalgamation* of the 'lower' grades of the higher race with the higher grades of the lower race?" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 11-12; second and third italics ours.)

[29] Thomas N. Page, *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* (1904), p. 292. See also Chapter 3, Section 3, and Chapter 4. Under the influence of modern research this doctrine is in process of disappearing from the literature but it lives on in the conviction of white people. It has even today the gist exemplified by the quotation in the text.

[30] Again the prevalent sentiment is best exemplified by a citation of old literature. The rhetorical intensity of the following paragraphs from Henry W. Grady gives something of the emotional tone of even present-day popular views:

"But the supremacy of the white race of the South must be maintained forever, and the domination of the negro race resisted at all points and at all hazards, because the white race is the superior race. This is the declaration of no new truth; it has abided forever in the marrow of our bones and shall run forever with the blood that feeds Anglo-Saxon hearts." (*Op. cit.*, p. 104.)

"Standing in the presence of this multitude, sobered with the responsibility of the message I deliver to the young men of the South, I declare that the truth above all others to be worn unsullied and sacred in your hearts, to be surrendered to no force, sold for no price, compromised in no necessity, but cherished and defended as the convenant of your prosperity, and the pledge of peace to your children, is, that the white race must dominate forever in the South, because it is the white race, and superior to that race with which its supremacy is threatened." (*Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.)

[31] See Chapter 3, Section 2. James Weldon Johnson observes that in the South ". . . a white gentleman may not eat with a colored person without the danger of serious loss of social prestige; yet he may sleep with a colored person without incurring the risk of any appreciable damage to his reputation," and concludes, "Social equality signifies a series of far-flung barriers against amalgamation of the two races; except so far as it may come about by white men with colored women." (*Along This Way*, pp. 312-313.)

[32] "The intelligent Negro may understand what social equality truly means, but to the ignorant and brutal young Negro, it signifies but one thing: the opportunity to enjoy, equally with white men, the privilege of cohabiting with white women. This the whites of the South understand; and if it were understood abroad, it would serve

to explain some things which have not been understood hitherto. It will explain, in part, the universal and furious hostility of the South to even the least suggestion of social equality." (Page, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113.)

[33] "Even the most liberal Whites in the community claim that the equality for which the Negroes ask is not possible without the 'social equality'—the intermingling and intermarriage—they so deeply fear. They also hint that the Negroes 'unconsciously' do desire this sort of social equality." (Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], p. 350.)

[34] Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[35] *The Basis of Racial Adjustment* (1925), pp. 240-241. Woofter distinguishes between contacts which are "helpful" and those which are "harmful." In the latter category he places "social intermingling" along with "vice" and "crime," "violence, economic exploitation, unfair competition, and demagogic or exploitative political contacts." (*Ibid.*, p. 215.)

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 235 ff.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 239.

[38] *Liberalism in the South* (1932), p. 254. Dabney continues:

"The argument runs that such laws were desirable twenty or thirty years ago when the great majority of blacks were unclean in person and slovenly in attire, and when the ubiquitous saloon and its readily purchased fire water were conducive to clashes between the lower orders of both races. It is contended that these reasons for separating the races in public gatherings and on public conveyances do not now obtain to anything like the same extent, and that the Negroes should no longer be humiliated in this manner."

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 255.

[40] "Here, as elsewhere, however, it has been rather the social inequality of the races, than any approach to equality, which has been responsible for the mixture, in so far as such has occurred. It was the social inequality of the plantation days that began the process of mixture. . . . If race-amalgamation is indeed to be viewed as always an evil, the best way to counteract the growth of that evil must everywhere be the cultivation of racial self-respect and not of racial degradation." (Josiah Royce, *Race Questions, Provincialism and Other American Problems* [1908], pp. 21-22.)

[41] See Chapter 27, Section 3. W. F. Cash, in his *The Mind of the South* (1941), gives, with much insight and understanding, the story of how in the Old South the sex relations of white men with Negro women tended to inflate white womanhood (pp. 84 ff). The Negro woman, torn from her tribal restraints and taught an easy complaisance, was to be had for the taking:

"Boys on and about the plantation inevitably learned to use her, and having acquired the habit, often continued it into manhood and even after marriage. For she was natural, and could give herself up to passion in a way impossible to wives inhibited by Puritanical training. And efforts to build up a taboo against miscegenation made little real progress." (*Ibid.*, p. 84.)

The white women were naturally disturbed by what they could not help knowing about. The Yankees were not slow to discover the opening in the Southern armor:

"And the only really satisfactory escape here, as in so many other instances, would be fiction. On the one hand, the convention must be set up that the thing simply did not exist, and enforced under penalty of being shot; and on the other, the woman must be

compensated, the revolting suspicion in the male that he might be slipping into bestiality got rid of, by glorifying her; the Yankee must be answered by proclaiming from the housetops that Southern Virtue, so far from being inferior, was superior, not alone to the North's but to any on earth, and adducing Southern Womanhood in proof." (*Ibid.*, p. 86.)

After the War this led to "the Southern rape complex." (*Ibid.*, pp. 116 ff.) Every attempt to rise socially on the part of the Negro became an insult to the white woman:

"What Southerners felt, therefore, was that any assertion of any kind on the part of the Negro constituted in a perfectly real manner an attack on the Southern woman. What they saw, more or less consciously, in the conditions of Reconstruction was a passage toward a condition for her as degrading, in their view, as rape itself. And a condition, moreover, which, logic or no logic, they infallibly thought of as being as absolutely forced upon her as rape, and hence a condition for which the term 'rape' stood as truly as for the *de facto* deed." (*Ibid.*, p. 116.)

". . . the increased centrality of woman, added up with the fact that miscegenation, though more terrifying than it had been even in the Old South, showed little tendency to fall off despite efforts to build up standards against it, served to intensify the old interest in gyneolatry, and to produce yet more florid notions about Southern Womanhood and Southern Virtue, and so to foster yet more precious notions of modesty and decorous behavior for the Southern female to live up to." (*Ibid.*, p. 128.)

[42] The "woman on the pedestal" pattern is found outside the American South, of course. It is a general trait in Western civilization and had extreme expression among the feudal nobility of the Middle Ages and the court nobility of France after Louis XIV. It was given added impetus by the loss of the economic function of middle class women at the end of the 18th century. But nowhere did it appear in such extreme, sentimental, and humorless form and so far down in the social status scale as in the American South. (For a general description of the Romantic "pure woman" ideology, see Ernest W. Burgess, "The Romantic Impulse and Family Disorganization," *The Survey* [December 1, 1926], pp. 290-294.)

[43] All the moral conflicts involved in preserving the institution of color caste in a democracy, but quite particularly the association of the caste theory with sex and social status, explain the fear complex upon which most investigators of the race problem in the South have commented. Thomas P. Bailey was early outspoken on this point:

"But the worst has not been told. The veriest slavery of the spirit is to be found in the deep-seated anxiety of the South. Southerners are afraid for the safety of their wives and daughters and sisters; Southern parents are afraid for the purity of their boys; Southern publicists are afraid that a time will come when large numbers of negroes will try to vote, and thus precipitate race war. Southern religionists are afraid that our youth will grow up to despise large numbers of their fellow-men. Southern business men are afraid that agitation of the negro question will interfere with business or demoralize the labor market. Southern officials are afraid of race riots, lynchings, savage atrocities, paying not only for negro fiendishness but also for the anxiety caused by fear of what might be." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 346-347.)

[44] Thomas Carlyle, *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question* (1853; first printed in *Fraser's Magazine* [December, 1849]), p. 28.

[45] Quite ordinarily this attitude is directly associated with cherished memories from slavery. The pattern was set early after the Civil War. Again Henry W. Grady can be

used to illustrate the consolidation of white thinking on race relations after Reconstruction. He talked touchingly of the relations that "did exist in the days of slavery":

". . . how the negro stood in slavery days, open-hearted and sympathetic, full of gossip and comradeship, the companion of the hunt, frolic, furrow and home, contented in the kindly dependence that has been a habit of his blood, and never lifting his eyes beyond the narrow horizon that shut him in with his neighbors and friends. But this relation did exist in the days of slavery. It was the rule of that *regime*. It has survived war, and strife, and political campaigns in which the drum-beat inspired and Federal bayonets fortified. It will never die until the last slaveholder and slave have been gathered to rest. It is the glory of our past in the South. It is the answer to abuse and slander. It is the hope of our future." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 152-153; compare Page, *op. cit.*, pp. 80, 164 *passim.*)

[46] "For those still living in the county there is, it would appear, one unfailing rule of life. If they would get along with least difficulty, they should get for themselves a protecting white family. 'We have mighty good white folks friends, and ef you have white folks for your friends, dey can't do you no harm.'" (Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation* [1934], p. 27.)

[47] Woofter remarks:

"The liberality with which these colored beggars are treated is often more of a liability than an asset to racial adjustment, because such emotional but unscientific giving often leaves the givers with a paternalistic feeling toward the whole race and a belief that by giving small alms they have discharged their full civic duty toward their colored neighbors." (*Op. cit.*, p. 199.)

[48] Dollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 389-432.

[49] It was part of Washington's tactics to exaggerate this point. An interesting comparison can be made between his first book, published in 1899, and his later writings. In the former, *The Future of the American Negro*, he painted the cruelties of slavery in glaring terms; in the latter he rather elaborated on the lighter sides of the institution. This was part of his attempt to gain the assistance or at least the tolerance of the Southern whites, and he had found out that this appealed to the Northern philanthropist also. In his last book, *The Story of the Negro* (1909), he wrote, for instance, in explaining why "a mob in the South . . . does not seek to visit its punishment upon the innocent as well as upon the guilty":

"In the South every Negro, no matter how worthless he may be as an individual, knows one white man in the town whose friendship and protection he can always count upon; perhaps he has gained the friendship of this white man by reason of the fact that some member of the white man's family owned him or some of his relatives, or it may be that he has lived upon this white man's plantation, or that some member of his family works for him, or that he has performed some act of kindness for this white man which has brought them into sympathetic relations with each other. It is generally true, as I have said before, that in the South every white man, no matter how bitter he may seem to be toward the Negro as a race, knows some one Negro in whom he has complete confidence, whom he will trust with all that he has. It is the individual touch which holds the two races together in the South, and it is this individual touch between the races which is lacking, in a large degree, in the North." (Vol. 1, p. 189.)

This was a gross overstatement even when Washington wrote, and is still less accurate today. (See Chapter 27, Section 2.)

[50] Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment—Essays on the Negro in America* (1908), p. 92.

[51] "Vardaman, declaiming violently against Negro colleges, has actually, in specific instances, given them help and encouragement. I told how he had cut off an $8,000 appropriation from Alcorn College because he did not believe in Negro education: but he turned around and gave Alcorn College $14,000 for a new lighting system, because *he had come in personal contact with the Negro president of Alcorn College, and liked him.*" (Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 250.)

[52] *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1927; first edition, 1912), p. 79.

[53] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 27.

[54] "The very existence of a lazy, shiftless, incompetent, irresponsible mass of laborers that require the closest supervision all the time necessarily lowers the economic energy and standards of the white people. Many a white man excuses his easy, sauntering way of transacting business by speaking of the ridiculous rush and hurry-scurry of the North. But much of our Southern lassitude is caught from the ways of the negro rather than the wiles of the hookworm. . . . In a thousand ways negro economic inefficiency retards the development of the South. And this constant doing of less than our best, this easy-going lack of regard for time, this willingness to put up with inefficient service and to overlook small pilfering because one 'expects that from a negro'—what is all this but an insidious form of psychological economic unfreedom?" (Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 342.)

[55] George W. Cable, *The Negro Question* (1903; first edition, 1890), p. 23.

[56] *The Basis of Ascendancy* (1909), p. 233.

[57] *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904), pp. 274-275. Murphy continued:

"It has fixed its barriers—in no enmity of temper but in the interest of itself and its civilization, and not without regard to the ultimate welfare of the negro. It cannot base its social distinctions on an assertion of universal 'inferiority'—for in that case every gifted or truly educated negro might shake the structure of social usage. It bases its distinctions partly upon the far-reaching consideration that the racial stock of the two families of men is so unlike that nothing is to be gained and much is to be lost from the interblending of such divergent types; partly upon the broad consideration of practical expediency, in that the attempt to unite them actually brings unhappiness; partly upon the inevitable persistence of the odium of slavery; partly upon a complex indefinable, but assertive social instinct." (*Ibid.*, pp. 275-276.)

[58] Willis D. Weatherford, *Negro Life in the South* (1915), p. 173.

[59] Page, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

[60] *Negro Americans, What Now?* p. 84.

[61] John Dollard reports from his study of a community in the Deep South that it is rather the white middle class that shows the most bitter resentment against the Negroes (*op. cit.*, p. 77). But Dollard reports that there were very few lower class whites in this community, and he did not study them intensively (*ibid.*, p. 99). Davis, Gardner, and Gardner also report from their community study that "it is the lower-middle-class whites who take it upon themselves to control the urban Negroes and to keep them in hand." (Allison Davis, B. B. Gardner, and M. R. Gardner, *Deep South* [1941], pp. 56-57.)

[62] "In many instances it was noticed that lower-class whites living in Negro neighborhoods treated their Negro neighbors in much the same way as they did their white neighbors. There were the usual gossiping, exchange of services, and even visiting." (Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 50.)

[63] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 284.

[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 283-284.

[65] Frank U. Quillin, *The Color Line in Ohio* (1913), pp. 97-104.

[66] *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 8 ff. Du Bois tells about when he entered high school ". . . there came some rather puzzling distinctions which I can see now were social and racial; but the racial angle was more clearly defined against the Irish than against me. It was a matter of income and ancestry more than color." (*Ibid.*, p. 14.) Another description of the status of Negroes in a small New England city may be found in Robert A. Warner's *New Haven Negroes* (1940).

[67] According to some observers, there was a noticeable decrease of friendliness toward Negroes in the North even before the Great Migration. Ray Stannard Baker, for example, expresses this opinion in *Following the Color Line* (pp. 188 ff.). It may have been due to the passing of the Abolitionist fervor or to the beginning of the Negro migration from the South (partly for the purpose of breaking strikes) or to the "new immigrants" from Southern and Eastern Europe. Counterbalancing factors were the improved educational and economic status of Northern Negroes and the practical absence of forced residential segregation. If there was such a trend, it was not important, and the increase of anti-Negro sentiment in the North may—for all practical purposes—be said to have begun with the Great Migration.

Chapter 29. *Patterns of Social Segregation and Discrimination*

[1] The actual patterns of segregation and discrimination—even if not their motivation—are facts subject to simple observation and, consequently, to quantitative measurement and analysis. When the attitudes and popular theories of white persons with respect to Negro persons are manifested in such concrete acts as passing laws, signing restrictive covenants, and demanding certain signs of deference, these actions can be counted and classified, and differences noted in them relative to type, region, time periods, social class, sex, age and so on. Residential segregation is visible in the layout of the community, and some of its concomitants—such as a differential in the proportion of Negroes seen on various streets or in various stores—can be made graphic by simple enumeration. Studies have been made—using census data—of the proportions of Negroes residing in the different sections of cities. (See, for example, T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities* [1928]; and United States Federal Housing Administration, Homer Hoyt, *The Structure and Growth of Residential Neighborhoods in American Cities* [1939].) There has not been, however, a systematic effort to relate the facts of residential distribution to differentials in patterns of ways of limiting contacts with Negroes and treating them as inferiors. The provision of such things as separate public toilets, drinking fountains, and railroad station entrances for Negroes is visible in signs and posters or in the structure of buildings. Prohibitions against intermarriage and against the use of the same schools or the same railway cars are easily detectible in laws and court decisions, as well as in collected statistics and by direct observation. The extent of separation of Negroes and whites in business and in professional and friendly associations can be discerned by scanning membership lists or by brief interviews with secretaries. For the measurement of segregation and discrimination in interpersonal relations, the investigator could obtain short-period diaries of Negroes, and perhaps whites, living in

different areas and of different statuses and with different personal characteristics. This source would provide exact information on such things as the use of the term "nigger" and the refusal to let Negroes enter by the front door and sit in the presence of whites. It is especially important to get precise information about interpersonal relations between Negroes and whites since these probably form the most sensitive index of the condition of and trends in the Negro problem as a whole. Only quantitative data could really indicate how segregation and discrimination curtail the number and scope of personal contacts over the color line, and how they change the character of those contacts which remain. Only quantitative data—along with other information—could permit an empirical analysis of the causation of those patterns.

Since no systematic quantitative study has been made, we shall be forced to give the same sort of impressionistic survey which we have just criticized. We have the advantage, however, of Charles S. Johnson's summary of general patterns of segregation and discrimination in thirteen communities (*Patterns of Negro Segregation* [1943]; this study was carried out as part of our inquiry), as well as a diverse variety of local studies and of published and unpublished statements. For the etiquette of race relations, there is the study by Bertram Wilbur Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* (1937).

[2] Mississippi has ". . . a criminal statute punishing anyone for publishing, printing, or circulating any literature in favor of or urging interracial marriage or social equality." (Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* [1940], p. 237.)

[3] Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer, "The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation," in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published, manuscript page 160.

The Supreme Court has never directly passed upon the constitutionality of the laws against intermarriage. It is, however, commonly upheld on the ground that the proscription is not discrimination but applies to both the Negro and the white partner. (Compare Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 288 ff.)

[4] The existing statistical knowledge about recent intermarriage is limited to three areas. Wirth and Goldhamer have complied in detail statistics for Boston and for New York State outside of New York City. (*Op. cit.*, manuscript pages 37-71.) Panunzio has calculated summary figures for Los Angeles County. (Constantine Panunzio, "Intermarriage in Los Angeles, 1924-1933," *The American Journal of Sociology* [March, 1942], p. 699.) Of all marriages involving Negroes in Boston in 1934-1938, 3.7 per cent were with whites. For New York State exclusive of New York City, the corresponding figure in 1934-1936 was 1.7 per cent. For Los Angeles County in the period 1924-1933, there were only four cases, although there were 51 cases of intermarriage with Asiatics and Indians. California has had a law prohibiting Negro-white intermarriage since 1850, but there were three cases of Negro males born outside the United States and one case of a white female born outside the United States, who were allowed to marry into the other group. If the number of intermarriages be considered, not as relative to the total number of marriages involving Negroes but as relative to the total number of marriages involving whites, the percentage drops to an insignificant fraction. Thus even the relative numerical significance of intermarriage is much greater for Negroes than for whites. The data show intermarriage higher in urban than in rural areas, but this is only among marriages between Negro males and white females, and not between white males and Negro females. The former type of intermarriage is much more common, and the light female finds she can get a better man among her own

people—especially from the ranks of dark superior Negroes, while the light male can also marry "upward" by seeking a white wife, from whom he does not expect economic advantage anyway. It may also be that the white woman has more sexual attraction for the Negro male than the white man has for the Negro female, since sex contact between the former pair is more forbidden, even in prostitution. In socio-economic status, the Negro male who intermarries is high, while the white male, the white female, and the Negro female are low. The white females, by marrying into the lower caste, go upward in class, but the white male usually cannot get such an advantage because the better class Negro female finds it to her advantage to marry the darker Negro of high socio-economic status. Whites who intermarry are not predominantly foreign-born as is sometimes thought. Among white males who marry Negroes, there are about as many native-born of native parentage as there are foreign-born, relative to their respective population. Among white females who marry Negroes in Boston and New York State (outside of New York City) the relative proportion of native-born of native parentage is actually higher than that of foreign-born. Among both males and females, the native-born of foreign parentage have the least amount of intermarriage, which fact perhaps reflects the general ambitiousness of this element of the population. Finally, it should be mentioned that those who intermarry tend, to an unusual extent, to be marrying for a second or third time. Over 30 per cent of Wirth's sample of Negro and white brides were previously married. The proportion was almost as high for Negro grooms though much smaller for white grooms.

It is possible to get trends in intermarriage for Boston only. In that city, between 1900 and 1904, 13.6 per cent of all marriages involving Negroes were interracial. (Alfred Holt Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem* [1908], p. 62.) Between 1914 and 1918, this percentage had dropped to 5.2, and between 1919 and 1923 to 3.1. In 1934-1938, it had risen slightly to 3.7. (Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, Table IV, manuscript page 41.) Needless to say, Boston is not typical of the entire United States, and it experienced accretions to its Negro population since 1900.

Holmes cites a study by Hoffman which indicates that intermarriage was declining already in the last few decades of the nineteenth century in four Northern states. (S. J. Holmes, *The Negro's Struggle for Survival* [1937], p. 174.)

[5] According to W. J. Cash (*The Mind of the South* [1941], p. 313), when the red light districts of Southern cities were suppressed, prostitution took to hotels, where Negro bellboys took on the economic and sexual functions of pimps. There are also isolated cases recorded of more permanent relations between Negro men and white women. (See, for example, Walter White, *Rope and Faggot* [1929], pp. 71 ff., and Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* [1941], pp. 33-37.)

[6] The toleration in the South is abetted by prohibiting Negro men from protecting their women against the white man's advances. In the city studied by Allison Davis and John Dollard (*Children of Bondage* [1940], pp. 245-246), a Negro minister who protested in his pulpit against interracial liaisons was warned by a group of white businessmen.

[7] John Dollard, *Class and Caste in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 141-142; Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), pp. 181 ff.

[8] For an excellent description of the scope and rigorousness of this etiquette, see Doyle, *op. cit.* This book interprets the etiquette as a means of accommodating what

was previously, and might again become, a conflict relation between Negroes and whites. This interpretation, in our opinion, is quite in error since only a small proportion of Negroes feel accommodated when performing self-abasing actions demanded by the etiquette. Actually, the majority of Negroes are at bottom embittered by the performance of these actions and keep it up only to avoid violence and greater humiliation. Not only are Negroes resentful, but they are also in constant fear—despite the etiquette and perhaps because of the etiquette. It is easy to slip and to violate a complex etiquette or to have one's actions misinterpreted as a violation of the etiquette. Such a situation creates a fear in the Southern Negro which is not known to the Northern Negro. In one sense, therefore, the Northern Negro without the etiquette and with police and court protection is better "accommodated" than the Southern Negro with his etiquette. Even whites cannot be said to be "accommodated" to Negroes by the existence of the etiquette, since they are—for the most part—acutely aware of the deference accorded them and are constantly on their guard lest it be neglected—indicating that the Negroes are attempting to leave their lowly place. On neither side is there accommodation in the sense that the course of race contacts runs so smoothly—oiled by the performance of the etiquette—as to pass unnoticed. Rather, the course of race contacts is the result of an oblique and repressed but continuous struggle—for most Southern Negroes and whites—with the performance of the etiquette being one of the tributes demanded by the whites for being on top in the struggle.

[9] Edgar Gardner Murphy, *Problems of the Present South* (1909; first edition, 1904), p. 278. Italics ours.

[10] Violence did occur, however, in the upper middle class area of Kenwood in Chicago, in December, 1940, when a white family had a party where Negroes were present. Lower class persons in a neighboring block learned of the event while it was in progress and formed a mob outside the home. After windows were broken, police protection had to be sought to evacuate the members of the party. When the white owner returned to his home the next day, he was shot at. He moved to a new residence under police protection. This incident is, of course, far from typical and it was complicated by the fact that the Kenwood area was being threatened by Negro residential invasion and by the fact that the white person in question was known to be a Jewish radical.

In Princeton, New Jersey, a white woman who proposed to have a dinner to which Negroes would be invited was visited by a delegation of leading white women of the town and was told that such things were just not done.

[11] Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, pp. 145-146.

[12] In America the modern usage of one common set of titles (outside the caste sphere) has developed out of an earlier system of differentiated titles, where the ones now used referred to upper class status:

"Class lines in New England were also indicated by the forms of address in vogue. Some of the titles denoting good repute were: 'esquire' or 'gentleman' for wealthy landowners and merchants who had belonged to the English upper middle class; 'master' for clergymen who possessed the degree of master of arts; 'mister' for professional people and substantial landowners and merchants (about one man in fourteen was addressed as Mr.); and 'goodman' for ordinary yeoman farmers. Such military titles as captain and ensign also signified an honorable station. Indentured servants, tenants, and wage-earners were unceremoniously called by their family or given names. Church pews were assigned on the basis of social status, while the names on the student register

at Harvard College were listed, not alphabetically, but according to family rank." (Curtis P. Nettels, *The Roots of American Civilization* [1938], p. 327.)

[13] John Dollard describes typical Negro behavior in relation to whites in Southerntown as "white-folks manner":

"There is a continual flow of agreement by the Negro while a white man is talking, such as 'Yes, boss,' 'Sho nuff,' 'Well, I declare,' and the like. The Negro must maintain a position of continuous affirmation of the white man's wishes and ideas, showing thereby his lack of contrary intent, independence, aggressiveness, and individuality. A 'good nigger' from the white man's point of view is one who has mastered this technique." (*Op. cit.*, p. 180.)

When whites tell jokes about Negroes a main point is to "give an image of a high-toned, pleading voice, full of uncertainty, begging for favor. Evidently this whining, cajoling tone is one of the badges of inferiority which Negroes accept and cultivate. The whites imitate it with an evident hostile relish. It establishes at once by its difference from ordinary white speech the inferior position of the Negro as a suppliant." (*Ibid.*, p. 257.)

[14] *Idem.*

[15] Gustavus Myers, *America Strikes Back* (1935). It is interesting to note that the South has similarly been accustomed to accusing the Northern Yankees of "materialism."

[16] To illustrate the extent to which the etiquette has broken down—or never existed—we may cite Charles S. Johnson's summary of the etiquette in eight counties of the rural South. (*Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], pp. 277-280.)

"Where taboos are rigid:

1. Negroes may never marry whites in any of the counties studied.
2. Negroes may never dance with whites in any of the counties studied.
3. Negroes may never eat with whites in any of the counties except Bolivar and Coahoma (Mississippi) and Davidson (Tennessee).
4. Negroes may never play games with whites in any counties except Bolivar, Davidson, and Madison (Alabama).
5. Negroes must always use 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' when addressing whites in all counties.
6. Whites never use 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' when addressing Negroes in Bolivar, Coahoma, Johnston (North Carolina), Macon (Alabama) and Shelby (Tennessee).
7. Negroes never drink with whites in Madison and Shelby counties except occasionally among the lower classes.
8. Negroes never enter white people's houses by the front door in Coahoma and Johnston.
9. Negroes must give whites the right-of-way on the sidewalks in Bolivar and Madison.
10. Negro men must take off their hats in banks, stores, and so forth, where whites need not, in Madison.
11. Negroes cannot touch a white man without his resenting it in Bolivar and Madison.
12. Negroes must always say 'Yes, sir,' and 'Yes, ma'am,' when addressing whites in all counties except Davidson and Johnston."

"Where the etiquette is relaxed:

1. Negroes drink with whites sometimes in Bolivar, Coahoma, Davidson, Greene, Johnston, and Macon.

2. Negroes and whites shake hands sometimes in all counties.

3. Negroes enter white people's houses by the front door sometimes in Bolivar, Davidson, Greene, Madison, and Shelby.

4. Whites use 'Mr.' and 'Mrs.' sometimes in Davidson, Greene, and Madison when addressing Negroes.

5. Whites and Negroes play games together sometimes in Bolivar, Davidson, and Madison.

6. Negroes must use 'Yes, sir,' and 'Yes, ma'am,' sometimes in Davidson and Johnston.

7. Negroes may touch a white man without causing resentment in Davidson, Johnston, Macon, and Shelby."

"Where the etiquette is confused:

1. Negroes attend theaters patronized by whites in all counties but Madison.

2. Negroes can try on hats in all stores in all counties but Shelby.

3. Negroes can try on gloves in all stores in Bolivar, Davidson, Johnston, and Macon, and in no stores in Greene.

4. Negroes must occupy a separate section while being waited on in all stores in Coahoma, Macon, and Madison; in some stores in Davidson, Greene, Johnston, and Shelby; and in no stores in Bolivar.

5. Negroes may sit in all public parks in Bolivar, Coahoma, Greene, and Macon; in some parks in Davidson and Shelby; and in none in Johnston and Madison.

6. Negroes use hotels with whites in none of the counties.

7. Negroes use some restaurants with whites in Coahoma, Davidson, Madison, and Shelby only, and these are separated by partition.

8. Negroes serve on juries sometimes in Coahoma, Greene, and Shelby, never in Bolivar, Johnston, and Madison.

9. Negro lawyers may try cases in all counties except Madison.

10. Negroes are segregated in all courts except in Coahoma.

11. Whites work *for* Negroes sometimes in Bolivar, Davidson, Greene, Johnston, and Madison; never in Coahoma, Macon, and Shelby.

12. Whites work *with* Negroes usually in Coahoma and Greene; sometimes in Davidson, Johnston, and Madison; seldom if ever in Shelby.

13. Whites are served by Negro doctors in Davidson, Greene, Johnston, Madison, and Shelby; not in Bolivar, Coahoma, and Macon.

14. Negroes usually vote in Coahoma, Davidson, Johnston, Macon, and Shelby; sometimes in Greene and Madison.

15. Negroes and whites worship together sometimes in Coahoma, Davidson, Greene, Macon, and Madison; never in Bolivar, Johnston, and Shelby.

16. Negroes drink with whites in drug and liquor stores in Coahoma; at beer 'joints' in Bolivar; when each party is about half drunk from whisky in Greene; and among the lower classes occasionally in all counties."

[17] C. V. Roman, *American Civilization and the Negro* (1921; first edition, 1916), p. 58.

[18] Interview by Charles S. Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, pp. 52-53. Other cases of this sort are cited by Johnson (*ibid.*); by R. R. Moton (*What the Negro Thinks* [1929], p. 181); and by John A. Kenney ("The Inter-Racial Committee of Montclair, New Jersey," *Journal of the National Medical Association* [July-September, 1931], pp. 102-103).

[19] U.S. Federal Housing Administration, *op. cit.*, p. 63. These cities do not constitute a representative sample of American cities, as Hoyt is well aware. They do not include the seven most important cities in the country from the standpoint of total numbers of Negroes. They are especially biased for the North: although 40 of the 64 cities were in the North, they included only 3 of 28 Northern cities containing the largest numbers of Negroes. New York, Chicago, or Philadelphia alone—none of which was included in the sample—had more Negroes than all the included 40 Northern cities put together. Of the 32 cities in the study containing the smallest proportions of nonwhites, all were in the North except two in the Border states; of the 16 cities containing the largest proportions of nonwhites all but one were in the South. For these reasons we shall not draw the conclusion that Hoyt does, that ". . . the degree of nonwhite concentration in any city increases directly with the number and proportion of nonwhite persons in the population." (*Ibid.*, p. 68.) On the basis of our own impressionistic observations of cities not in Hoyt's sample, we are inclined to believe that the correlation between concentration and proportion of Negroes is not large, and whatever correlation there is would be due to the relation between number and proportion. In other words, we should guess that the concentration of Negroes in a city is far more related to their number than to their proportion in a city. We should also guess that any generalization of this sort would have to be qualified for differences between South and North.

[20] Using an even less refined technique, one based on wards rather than blocks, Burgess reported that Negroes showed the greatest concentration of any ethnic group in a group of major cities—except for Philadelphia where the Italians were more concentrated than the Negroes. (Ernest W. Burgess, "Residential Segregation in American Cities," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [November, 1928], pp. 108-109.) For Chicago alone, there is a study of residential concentration of Negroes by Mary Elaine Ogden, "The Chicago Negro Community—A Statistical Description" (mimeographed), Chicago: W.P.A. District 3 (1939). This study was done under the direction of Horace Cayton and W. Lloyd Warner.

[21] See Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

[22] For a discussion of these movements and the forces behind them, see Lyonel C. Florant in Chapter 2 of Samuel A. Stouffer and Associates, "Negro Population and Negro Population Movements, 1860-1940," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940).

[23] Woofter has adopted a four-fold classification of cities based on the patterns of residential segregation found in them. This is better than our two-fold classification in many respects and deserves to be quoted here:

"The first group is typified by New York and Chicago, where the concentration of Negroes is great and yet where it affects only a small part of the whole city area. In Chicago this pattern seems to be changing as the Negroes spread more southward. . .

"The second group is typified by Richmond, and includes most of the large southern cities where Negroes are highly concentrated in several rather large parts of the city and lightly scattered in others, thus leaving a large proportion of the white people in areas from 10 to 90 per cent. Negro . . .

"The third group is typified by Charleston, and is limited to the older southern

cities and towns which have a heavy percentage of Negroes in their total population, and consequently a heavy scattering of Negroes throughout the city. . .

"Group four is composed of cities with light colored infusion, where the diffusion of Negroes affects only a very small area of the city and is somewhat scattered within this area . . ." (T. J. Woofter, Jr., and Associates, *Negro Problems in Cities* [1928], p. 38.)

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[25] Woofter's maps show this concentration of Negroes outside the central business districts of cities to be typical. (*Ibid.*, pp. 40-67.) See also Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

[26] "'Segregation' in Harlem?" *Column Review* (December, 1941), p. 5. While McKay is incorrect in saying that there is no segregation of Negroes in New York, he is correct in pointing out that Harlem is not a self-sufficing community in the sense that New York's Chinatown is. Chinatown has not only segregation, but also an alien culture and its own internal government. Negro communities are, on the other hand, more of an integral part of American life than even Greek and Italian communities. (Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 110.)

Harlem is, in one sense, less integrated into New York than the Black Belt is into Chicago: Harlem's cultural and commercial center is near its geographical center at 135th Street and 7th Avenue and zones of decreasing concentration of Negroes and Negro activities encircle it. The Chicago community, on the other hand, is a long thin strip, with poor Negroes at one end near poor white areas and wealthy Negroes at the other end near wealthy white areas. (See E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in Chicago* [1932], and "Negro Harlem: An Ecological Study," *American Journal of Sociology* [July, 1937], pp. 72-88.)

[27] Document in possession of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago. ("History of Grand Boulevard," document number 7.)

[28] See Charles S. Johnson, *Negro Housing* (1932), pp. 35-37.

[29] This was the famous case of *Buchanan* v. *Warley*. 245, U.S. 60, 38 S.Ct. 16, Nov. 5, 1917. For a discussion of the laws and court cases, see Richard Sterner and Associates, *The Negro's Share*, prepared for this study (1943), pp. 205-209.

[30] "Iron Ring in Housing," *The Crisis* (July, 1940), p. 205. This and other descriptions of the extent and legal status of restrictive covenants may be found in Sterner and Associates, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-208.

[31] Some have mistakenly thought that the Supreme Court's decision in the recent (1940) case of *Hansberry* v. *Lee* made restrictive covenants illegal. Actually nothing was decided except that Negroes could move into the West Woodlawn area of Chicago. The case was so decided because 95 per cent of the white property owners of that area had not signed the restrictive covenant, which—by its own terms—called for 95 per cent of the signatures.

[32] From document in possession of the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago.

[33] Woofter brings out the nature of the surroundings to a Negro neighborhood in his maps in *Negro Problems of Cities*. Burgess adds corroborating facts (*op. cit.*, p. 108).

[34] See Chapter 28, Section 4. Mangum describes these laws thus:

"These states are California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin. The statutes are more or less

specific concerning places which are meant to be regulated. Some of them contain long lists of places of public resort, while others mention only a few or none at all. The statutes differ in the type or types of remedy to be employed in seeking redress. Thus seven states provide for a criminal prosecution only, one makes a provision for a civil action alone, seven allow both a criminal action and either a suit for a penalty or a civil action for damages, while the remaining three permit both types of redress but state that success in an action of either kind shall bar all other proceedings." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.)

[35] For example, in May, 1942, New York State added prohibitions against discrimination by public golf courses and by sports promoters in state-wide contests.

[36] The partial futility of the civil rights law in New Jersey is indicated by the following comment made by a city official in Atlantic City:

" 'I think the southerners handle them better because they don't assert their rights. They are not permitted in the bars, etc. This equalization law is not a benefit for the man who runs the place. In New Jersey they have a state law that they are to be admitted to restaurants and theaters, but the courts wouldn't recognize it here. It is seldom a sensible colored man will thrust himself in where he is not wanted. In New York they have hired lawyers and prosecute such cases to the bitter end; they do not succeed in getting very far, not for the present time. I was in a restaurant in Philadelphia one time and a colored couple came in. The manager told them all the tables were reserved. They walked out. That's what overcomes the law. I kept a hotel for thirty years. They knew I didn't care for their trade, and they never came. I told them, "You know it is not fair to make me lose my trade." You can't throw them out, but the majority are satisfied to keep to themselves. They understand in the moving pictures that they are to sit on the left side. Our colored people are a nice class.' " (Quoted in Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, pp. 200-201.)

[37] For example, Princeton University, in New Jersey—a state with a civil rights law —permits no Negro to enroll as a student.

The American Red Cross refuses to permit Negro women to assist in its civilian first-aid training program unless they can form their own segregated units on their own initiative. It has also refused to accept Negro blood donors. After protests it now accepts Negro blood but segregates it to be used exclusively for Negro soldiers. This is true at a time when the United States is at war, and the Red Cross has a semi-official status.

The United Service Organizations—a body created to give civilian aid in the present war effort—refuses to let Negroes participate in many of its activities in several Northern states. For that matter, so does the Office of Civilian Defense—a government agency which has refused to permit Negroes to serve as volunteer airplane spotters in at least one Northern state.

[38] Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, p. 7.

[39] *Idem.*

[40] *Idem.*

[41] While the teachers and principals of Negro schools in the South are uniformly Negro, the controlling and supervising officials are white. In 1940, Wilkerson found Negroes on the school boards only in Washington, D. C., West Virginia, Oklahoma and Missouri among all Southern states. He was able to find only 18 Negroes holding state administrative or supervisory positions. (Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro in American

Education," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 1, pp. 163-174.)

[42] In another important case (*Donald Murray* v. *the University of Maryland*, 1936), the Maryland Circuit Court of Appeals decided that Negroes must be admitted to the law school of the University of Maryland, and several Negroes have taken advantage of the ruling.

[43] Mangum, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82.

[45] Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 209-212. Concerning the illegal situation in the southern half of New Jersey, see Marion M. T. Wright, *The Education of Negroes in New Jersey* (1941), pp. 183-193.

[46] In May, 1942, a Negro minister of New York City was named to the board of Union Theological Seminary. This was apparently the first time since Reconstruction that a Negro attained such a position in a predominantly white educational institution.

[47] Only two Southern states make legal provision for the extension of public library service to Negroes.

"In West Virginia, a state law requires all libraries receiving public funds to give service to Negroes, and in Texas the law requires commissioners' courts to make proper provision for library service to Negroes through branches of the county free library." (Tommie Dora Barker, *Libraries of the South* [1936], pp. 51-52.) As a result, over one-third of the public libraries serving Negroes in 13 Southern states in 1935 were in West Virginia and Texas.

[48] Referring to what happened to the proposed training school for delinquent Negro girls in Georgia, Dabney reports:

"Talmadge even vetoed an appropriation voted almost unanimously by the Georgia Legislature in 1941 for the operation of a training school for delinquent Negro girls. The building had been paid for with the nickels and dimes of Georgia's Negro women, and had been presented by them to the state four years before. It had never been opened, for lack of funds—and doubtless won't be, as long as Georgia sends Talmadges to the gubernatorial mansion, although Georgia has a training school for delinquent Negro boys. So has every other Southern state except Mississippi, which has practically as many Negroes as whites, but no training school for either delinquent colored boys or delinquent colored girls." (Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* [1942], p. 214.)

[49] *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

[50] Many authors have observed that the coming of the cheap automobile has meant for Southern Negroes, who can afford one, a partial emancipation from Jim Crowism.

"Race is most completely ignored on the public highway; there a Negro in a moving automobile has not only a legal right to half the road, but in practice is accorded it. The mechanics of the situation ensures that only the person careless of his own life will dare claim more than his share. Some [white] people, observing this equality, fear it is a bad precedent. Effective equality seems to come at about twenty-five miles an hour or above. As soon as the car is stopped by the side of the road, to pick wild flowers or fix a puncture, the color of the occupants places them in their traditional racial roles." (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 9.)

[51] Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-182.

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 182 and 203-204.

[53] Johnson, *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, p. 47.

[54] In Atlanta formerly, Negroes not only had to sit in separate sections of the car, but also had to enter by a different door. With the adoption of the one-man car this practice was abandoned. According to Johnson (*ibid.*, p. 50), the one-man car has reduced friction since there is no confusion as to where to enter and conductors do not fuss with the seating.

[55] Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-65.

[56] Only in New York and New Jersey do the Civil Rights Acts prohibit racial segregation in cemeteries. (*Ibid.*, p. 156.)

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 175.

[58] See Mangum, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-68, *passim.*

[59] See, for example, Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, p. 463.

[60] There are exceptions: In the first half of 1942, there was a fight to get Negroes and Orientals into the American educators' national honor fraternity, Phi Delta Kappa. After numerous debates, threats of secession, and temporary compromises the fight was won. Previously, however, even the local chapters could not admit Negroes.

Chapter 30. *Effects of Social Inequality*

[1] Gilbert T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law* (1910), pp. 20 ff.; Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *The Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), pp. 18 ff.

[2] Stephenson, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[3] Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington* (1916), pp. 108 ff.; see particularly Washington's correspondence with Edgar Gardner Murphy, *idem.*

[4] *The New Republic* (December 4, 1915), pp. 113-114.

[5] "He [the Negro] feels that it is a libel against his race to say that segregation and discrimination are necessary to protect the white man's civilization, the sanctity of his home, or the integrity of his race. He feels that it is an unwarranted insult both to his person and to his character to establish that there is any place to which the public is admitted that will be defiled by the mere presence of a black man in the enjoyment of equal privileges with others. He maintains that prejudices of individuals that make for discrimination against his race should be properly regarded as purely private and personal without any title whatsoever to recognition and support by public authority." (Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* [1929], pp. 238-239.)

[6] William Archer, *Through Afro-America* (1910), p. 212.

[7] *Democracy and Race Friction* (1914), pp. 184-185.

"Any one acquainted with southern conditions in the 'black belt' today will realise that this is no mere possibility, but is to a very large extent a reality. There exist in the minds of both blacks and whites two conceptions of conduct, recognised as valid in two different spheres and with little in common. This explains the paradoxical fact that a moral lapse of a negro often does not make him lose social standing with the negroes nor with the whites, while the condemnation of a white by his fellows for committing the same offence will often be shared by the negroes also. Each is judged by the social standards of his group and the other group accepts those judgments as valid for the

individual and the case concerned; there is little free immediate functioning of social sanctions independent of race distinctions." (*Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.)

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

[9] See the series on present Negro youth problems prepared for the American Youth Commission: Ira DeA. Reid, *In a Minor Key* (1940); Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* (1940); W. Lloyd Warner, Buford H. Junker, and Walter A. Adams, *Color and Human Nature* (1941); E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940); Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (1941); Ira D. Walker, Vincent J. Davis, Donald W. Wyatt, and J. Howell Atwood, *Thus Be Their Destiny* (1941); and Robert L. Sutherland, *Color, Class, and Personality* (1942). These studies have confirmed and given definiteness to the observation of Booker T. Washington:

"The Negro boy has obstacles, discouragements, and temptations to battle with that are little known to those not situated as he is. When a white boy undertakes a task, it is taken for granted that he will succeed. On the other hand, people are usually surprised if the Negro boy does not fail. In a word, the Negro youth starts out with the presumption against him." (*Up from Slavery* [1929; first edition, 1900], p. 36.)

[10] James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1927; first edition, 1912), pp. 79-80.

"Beyond that there is a type of Negro already referred to, whom the majority of whites never see and consequently do not know. They own their own homes, so the white landlord does not see them; they carry insurance with a Negro insurance company, so no white collector comes to the door; their groceryman is a coloured man; they travel by auto rather than by street car or train; as a rule they live in the segregated residence districts; their physician, lawyer, dentist, and often their banker is a Negro. As a result of all this, there is a constantly diminishing contact between the corresponding classes of the two races, which for the whites as a whole is fast approaching the zero point." (Moton, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.)

[11] Ray Stannard Baker observed long ago:

" Here is a strange thing. I don't know how many Southern men have prefaced their talks with me with words something like this:

" 'You can't expect to know the Negro after a short visit. You must live down here like we do. Now, I know the Negroes like a book. I was brought up with them. I know what they'll do and what they won't do. I have had Negroes in my house all my life.'

"But curiously enough I found that these men rarely knew anything about the better class of Negroes—those who were in business, or in independent occupations, those who owned their own homes. They did come into contact with the servant Negro, the field hand, the common laborer, who make up, of course, the great mass of the race. On the other hand, the best class of Negroes did not know the higher class of white people, and based their suspicion and hatred upon the acts of the poorer sort of whites with whom they naturally came into contact. The best elements of the two races are as far apart as though they lived in different continents; and that is one of the chief causes of the growing danger of the Southern situation." (*Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 44.)

[12] Edgar G. Murphy may again be used to express the views of the enlightened and responsible Southerner:

"Of the destructive factors in negro life the white community hears to the uttermost, hears through the press and police courts; of the constructive factors of negro

progress—the negro school, the saner negro church, the negro home—the white community is in ignorance. Until it does know this aspect of our negro problem it may know more or less accurately many things about the negro; but it cannot know the negro. . . . Seeing the negro loafer on the street, the negro man or woman in domestic service, the negro laborer in the fields, is not seeing the negro. . . . And at the point where this lower contact ceases, at the point where the negro's real efficiency begins, and he passes out of domestic service or unskilled employment into a larger world, the white community loses its personal and definite information; the negro passes into the unknown. As the negro attains progress, he, by the very fact of progress, removes the tangible evidence of progress from the immediate observation of the white community. Thus the composite idea, the social conception of the negro which is beginning to obtain among us, is determined more largely by the evidences of negro retrogression or negro stagnation than by the evidence, the real and increasing evidence, of negro advancement." (*Problems of the Present South* [1909; first edition, 1904], pp. 167-168.)

[13] Du Bois may be quoted to illustrate the Negro point of view:

"And here is a land where, in the higher walks of life, in all the higher striving for the good and noble and true, the color-line comes to separate natural friends and co-workers; while at the bottom of the social group in the saloon, the gambling-hall, and the brothel, that same line wavers and disappears." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], p. 186.)

[14] W. E. B. Du Bois gives the Negro angle to the situation when he writes of the "best elements" of the two groups:

". . . it is usually true that the very representatives of the two races, who for mutual benefit and the welfare of the land ought to be in complete understanding and sympathy, are so far strangers that one side thinks all whites are narrow and prejudiced, and the other thinks educated Negroes dangerous and insolent. Moreover, in a land where the tyranny of public opinion and the intolerance of criticism is for obvious historical reasons so strong as in the South, such a situation is extremely difficult to correct. The white man, as well as the Negro, is bound and barred by the color-line, and many a scheme of friendliness and philanthropy, of broad-minded sympathy and generous fellowship between the two has dropped still-born because some busybody has forced the color-question to the front and brought the tremendous force of unwritten law against the innovators." (*The Souls of Black Folk*, p. 184.)

[15] Moton, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

[16] The series of investigations on Negro youth recently prepared for the American Youth Commission (see footnote 9 in this chapter) present a large amount of interview material in which this view is confirmed.

Charles S. Johnson, whose study concerned the rural Deep South and who has most explicitly analyzed his findings as to the attitudes of Negro youth toward the dominant caste controls, concludes:

"Among the youth of all areas, social classes, and individual temperaments, two characteristics were observed which were fairly common: (a) they were race conscious to the extent of recognizing themselves as different and apart from the rest of the community; and (b) they entertained a conviction that Negroes, as a race, were treated unfairly and were suppressed economically." (*Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], p. 285.)

The Southern caste order makes the expression of antagonism inadvisable and even

dangerous. "Outward submissiveness and respect may thus be, as often as not, a mask behind which these youth conceal their true attitudes." (*Ibid.*, p. 296.) In this situation voluntary withdrawal becomes the natural solution. Johnson observes that: "In most cases the youth expressed themselves as preferring not to associate with whites, and viewed their segregation with indifference." (*Ibid.*, p. 288.)

Davis and Dollard, who studied two small cities in the Deep South, give much the same picture, except that the urban youth seem to invest more explicit dislike and even hatred in their attitude of withdrawal:

"This finding runs counter to the widespread social dogma which states that the southern Negro does not experience his caste restrictions as punishments. The dogma, popular as it may be, is not borne out by the thousands of pages of interviews which have been recorded for Negroes of all social classes in Old City and its rural background, in Natchez, and in New Orleans. Within their conversation groups these Negroes in the Deep South were often found detailing the instances in which they had been threatened or humiliated by white people and expressing great hostility and resentment toward the local white group. In fact, the antagonism voiced by the local white people toward Negroes, although it was certainly violent, and fully supported by group approval, was scarcely more violent than that which Negroes, including the youngest adolescents, expressed to the white group as a whole.

". . . indeed it becomes clear that only a vested societal interest in caste can account for the established dogma that most Negroes are completely 'accommodated' to their caste status and that they are simple-natured, childlike beings with childish needs. It is necessary for the society to inculcate strong defensive teachings of this kind to prevent general human recognition of the basic deprivations and frustrations which life in a lower caste involves. But it is certain that the sting of caste is deep and sharp for most Negroes." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 244-245.)

[17] Arthur F. Raper, *Preface to Peasantry* (1936), p. 276.

[18] *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), pp. 70-71.

[19] Some communities—notably in Texas, the Far West and New England—exclude Negroes entirely.

[20] "Across the Tracks is a life but little known to the Whites, who rarely go there. Everything that happens on the white side, however, is known to the Negroes, who have constant access to white homes and business places. This disparity of information is both a natural and a significant factor in the relations of the two groups." (Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], pp. 11-12.)

[21] "Almost every white woman feels that she knows all about her cook's personality and life, but she seldom does. The servant is quite a different person Across the Tracks and is not as a rule communicative about the life she leads there. She, on the other hand, has ample opportunity to know intimate details concerning her mistress's life and family. Under her mild 'Yes, Ma'am,' and 'No, Ma'am,' there is often a comprehension which is unsuspected and far from mutual." (*Ibid.*, p. 119.)

[22] This is somewhat less true in the coal and steel industry in the South and, generally, in the North. See Appendix 6.

[23] There are some quantitative studies which bear out this point. The Chicago Commission on Race Relations made a study of all articles dealing with Negroes in three leading Chicago newspapers during 1916-1917. Of the 1,338 articles, 606 dealt with crime and vice, riots and clashes. In 1918, the same three newspapers published

275 articles "favorable" to Negroes and 165 "unfavorable." (The Chicago Commission on Race Relations, *The Negro in Chicago* [1922], pp. 524, 532.)

In a study of 28 Texas newspapers, Ira B. Bryant, Jr., classified news about Negroes as social, anti-social and neutral. The "anti-social" news was practically all about crime. In the 16 urban newspapers, 84.4 per cent of all Negro items were anti-social, 12.8 per cent were social and 6.6 per cent were neutral. In the 12 rural newspapers, 59.8 per cent of all Negro items were anti-social, 24.5 per cent were social, and 15.7 per cent were neutral. ("News Items about Negroes in White Urban and Rural Newspapers," *Journal of Negro Education* [April, 1935], pp. 169-178.)

On the other hand, Robert A. Warner reports that the newspapers of New Haven, Connecticut, are uniformly friendly to Negroes and do not report any undue selection of crime news to the exclusion of other types of news. (*New Haven Negroes* [1940], p. 275.)

In a study of 60 issues of 17 white newspapers from various sections of the United States, from July 15, 1928, to March 21, 1929, Gist found that 46.9 per cent of all news space devoted to Negroes was "anti-social." Gist felt that this was unusually low since at that time newspapers were giving an unusual amount of space to Negro voting in the election of 1928. (Noel P. Gist, "The Negro in the Daily Press," *Social Forces* [March, 1932], pp. 405-411.)

In a study of 4 Philadelphia newspapers for the years 1908, 1913, 1918, 1923, 1928, and 1932, Simpson found that the percentages of Negro crime news in all Negro news space ranged from 51.1 per cent to 73.6 per cent. He further found that the total amount of news space devoted to Negroes was progressively declining over this 25-year period: the number of Negro news inches per 10,000 Philadelphia Negroes fell from 159 in 1908 to 32 in 1932. (George E. Simpson, *The Negro in the Philadelphia Press* [1936], pp. 115-116.)

[24] *Time* (September 8, 1941), p. 13.

[25] James Bryce, *The Relations of the Advanced and the Backward Races of Mankind* (1902), pp. 31-32.

[26] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), p. 52.

[27] Concerning the Southerner who says he knows the Negro, Moton observes:

"When one of these says he 'knows the Negro' it means that he has had them under his control for very practical purposes and has come to a pretty wide and thorough knowledge of the habits, mannerisms, foibles, weaknesses, defects, deficiencies, virtues, and excellencies of this particular type of the race. It means, too, that he is thoroughly familiar with the ethical, social, and moral code that obtains among white men of his class in dealing with Negroes of this class and under the conditions obtaining in these fields. In such a declaration he means to say that he knows how to get the required amount of work from any given group of such Negroes, that he knows the conditions under which they will work best, the amount of pressure they will stand, what abuse they will submit to, what they will resent, under what conditions they will remain cheerful, when they will become sullen, what and when to pay them, what food to provide, what housing to furnish, what holidays to recognize, and what indulgences to grant. Such a man knows, too, to what extent public opinion in his own race will support him in his relations with his men. He is familiar with all the local prejudices and practices involved in race adjustments; he is adept according to these in 'keeping

the Negro in his place'; and above all else he can be counted on to be firm and resolute in all his dealings with black folk of every type and class. . . .

"Thus a great part of 'knowing the Negro' is a thorough understanding of the operations of this type of interracial sentiment and of how to employ it in managing the Negro and 'keeping him in his place.' Where firmness is required rather than sympathy, where ruthlessness is the order of the day rather than consideration, a white man who 'knows the Negro' is the most effective agent procurable. What he *doesn't* know about the Negro is the factor that produces the race problem." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 6-7 and 8.)

"Perhaps no single phrase has been more frequently used in discussing the race problem in America than the familiar declaration, 'I know the Negro . . .'

"Negroes have always met this remark with a certain faint, knowing smile. Their common experience has taught them that as a matter of fact there are vast reaches of Negro life and thought of which white people know nothing whatever, even after long contact with them, sometimes on the most intimate terms." (*Ibid.*, p. 1.)

[28] Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39. As early as 1899, ex-Governor Northen of Georgia, in a speech at Boston, noted that the two races were drifting apart in the South. ("The Negro at the South," p. 7, quoted by Walter F. Willcox, "Negro Criminality," *Journal of Social Science* [*December*, 1899], pp. 87-88.)

[29] For an example of how laughter is a part of the interracial etiquette, see Jonathan Daniels, *A Southerner Discovers the South* (1938), pp. 255-259.

[30] P. 67.

[31] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[32] Kelly Miller, *Race Adjustment, Essays on the Negro in America* (1908), p. 92.

[33] I have the impression that Southern radio stations make less use of national networks than do Northern radio stations. If this were found to be a fact, an analysis of the reasons for it would be suggestive.

[34] Scott and Stowe, *op. cit.*, pp. 115 ff., and Alfred Holt Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem* (1908), pp. 242 ff.

[35] "The Bases of Race Prejudice," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1928), p. 13.

[36] Quoted from John Temple Graves, "The Southern Negro and the War Crisis," *The Virginia Quarterly Review* (Autumn, 1942), pp. 504-505. This article, too, is an example of the recent tendency toward increased unfriendliness toward the Negro on the part of Southern liberals.

Chapter 31. *Caste and Class*

[1] ". . . the Negro group has gradually ceased to exhibit the characteristics of a caste and has assumed rather the character of a racial or national minority." (Robert E. Park, "Introduction" to Bertram Wilbur Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* [1937], p. xxii.) See Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932) and, by the same author, *Research Memorandum on Minority Peoples in the Depression* (1937).

[2] Many Negro social scientists, and some white ones, are reluctant to use the term "caste" because of its connotations of invariability and accommodation. They point out, with good reason, that the use of the term "caste" has sometimes blinded social

scientists to many important facts about the relations between Negroes and whites and has sometimes been used as an excuse for conditions which are undesirable from the Negroes' point of view. Charles S. Johnson, for example, ably presents the case against the concept of "caste" (*Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], pp. 325-327). He points out that there is much tension and friction between Negroes and whites, and some social scientists seem to presume that a caste system is so "accommodated" that there is little or no tension or friction. The Negro in the South occupies a subordinate position, but "he is struggling against this status rather than accepting it." There is constant change, contrary to the beliefs of many who use the term "caste": ". . . the attitudes of the white group are constantly changing, and at many points in the relationship between the two races there is a blurring of caste distinctions." Thus, he says, the term "caste" is inapplicable since: "A caste system is not only a separated system, it is a stable system in which changes are socially impossible; the fact that change cannot occur is accepted by all, or practically all, participants."

We are in agreement with Charles Johnson's description of the facts, and we respect his right to choose any definition of caste he desires, but we do not agree with his definition; we do not believe that such a caste system as he has defined ever existed, and we point out that he is forced to use some other word to mean what we mean by caste. Johnson uses the older terms "race" and "race system" in exactly the same way as we use "caste" and "caste system." While the former terms now enjoy a peculiar popularity in Negro circles (for example, certain militant Negroes use the term "race man" to refer to any Negro), partly in reaction to white prejudice, we believe the term "caste"—with its socially static connotation—is less dangerous and inaccurate than the term "race"—with its biologically static connotation.

[8] To this censoring attitude corresponds, as a reaction, an exaggerated interest in European nobility. A Scandinavian, conditioned for a long time to look upon nobility with complete unconcernedness—sensing only a slight, pleasant and favorable association to the old history—will invariably be much astonished the first time he sees his democratic American friend make so much fuss over a prince or a count who happens to be around. The author has observed that European governments, public agencies, and business concerns have not been slow to adapt themselves to this American peculiarity by attempting, whenever practical, to include nobility as political or business representatives to this country. All wavering from the principle of merit and efficiency must, however, in the long run, be expensive to those countries, particularly as it tends to preserve the American misconception of the role played by nobility in Europe.

The point has, however, a much closer bearing to the problem under study in this book. To the author it has become apparent that the Northern romanticism for the "Old South" has the same basic psychology. It is, likewise, only the other side of Yankee equalitarianism. The North has so few vestiges of feudalism and aristocracy of its own that, even though it dislikes them fundamentally and is happy not to have them, Yankees are thrilled by them. Northerners apparently cherish the idea of having had an aristocracy and of still having a real class society—in the South. So it manufactures the myth of the "Old South" or has it manufactured by Southern writers working for the Northern market. Henry W. Grady, Southern spokesman to the North, describes the *ante-bellum* South in dithyrambs:

"That was a peculiar society. Almost feudal in its splendor, it was almost patriarchal in its simplicity. Leisure and wealth gave it exquisite culture. Its wives and mothers, exempt from drudgery, and almost from care, gave to their sons, through patient and

constant training, something of their own grace and gentleness, and to their homes beauty and light. Its people, homogeneous by necessity, held straight and simple faith, and were religious to a marked degree along the old lines of Christian belief. This same homogeneity bred a hospitality that was as kinsmen to kinsmen, and that wasted at the threshold of every home what the more frugal people of the North conserved and invested in public charities. The code duello furnished the highest appeal in dispute. An affront to a lad was answered at the pistol's mouth. The sense of quick responsibility tempered the tongues of even the most violent, and the newspapers of South Carolina for eight years, it is said, did not contain one abusive word. The ownership of slaves, even more than of realty held families steadfast on their estates, and everywhere prevailed the sociability of established neighborhoods. Money counted least in making the social status, and constantly ambitious and brilliant youngsters from no estate married into the families of planter princes. Meanwhile the one character utterly condemned and ostracized was the man who was mean to his slaves. Even the coward was pitied and might have been liked. For the cruel master there was no toleration. . . .

"In its engaging grace—in the chivalry that tempered even Quixotism with dignity—in the piety that saved master and slave alike—in the charity that boasted not—in the honor, held above estate—in the hospitality that neither condescended nor cringed—in frankness and heartiness and wholesome comradeship—in the reverence paid to womanhood and the inviolable respect in which woman's name was held—the civilization of the old slave *regime* in the South has not been surpassed, and perhaps will not be equaled, among men." (*The New South* [1890], pp. 153-159 *passim.*)

It would be interesting to investigate in further detail the role of this projected Yankee class romanticism in the original creation and the tenacious upholding of the myth of the "Old South" and the whole "*pauvres honteux*" mentality of the region. As in the case of the Europeans, it is only natural that the Southerners, when they found out that they could sell their region with all their troubles, sorrows, and unsolved problems as "glorious," to the Yankees, availed themselves of this easy escape. And, both in the defensive position before the Civil War and the poverty and drudgery afterward, they had, of course, also reason of their own to indulge in mythological romanticism. But it is likewise natural that it has been Southerners who themselves have found that this easy way of appealing to the North is too expensive in the long run and hinders both progress at home and a real understanding on a deeper level with the powerful Yankees.

[4] When the *Fortune* survey asked the question, "If you had to describe the class to which you belong with one of these three words [upper, middle, lower], which would you pick?" they obtained the following results:

	"People who are actually—				
"Answered that they are:	Prosperous	Upper Middle	Lower Middle	Poor	Negro
Upper Class	23.6%	7.9%	4.6%	4.5%	16.1%
Middle Class	74.7	89.0	89.4	70.3	35.7
Lower Class	0.3	0.6	3.1	19.1	26.2
Don't Know	1.4	2.5	2.9	6.1	22.0"

Fortune commented: ". . . every class and occupation, including even the unemployed and the lowly farm hand, decisively considered itself middle class . . ." (These figures are reprinted through the courtesy of *Fortune* magazine and are from "Fortune Survey: XXVII," *Fortune* [February, 1940], p. 20.) For a further discussion, see George Gallup and Saul Forbes Rae, *The Pulse of Democracy* (1940), pp. 169-170.

[5] The leading users of the concepts of caste and class have been a group of investigators centered around Professor W. Lloyd Warner of the University of Chicago: John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937) (This book was only slightly influenced by Warner and used the concepts of caste and class in a less doctrinal way than the following books); Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* (1940); W. Lloyd Warner, Buford H. Junker, and Walter A. Adams, *Color and Human Nature* (1941); Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941); W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (1941).

In addition there are a few sociologists outside the Warner group who stress problems of class stratification—notably Louis Wirth and Robert S. Lynd. Many writers have employed the concept of caste as central to a study of some aspect of the Negro problem. Few have done this with such insight as Buell G. Gallagher (*American Caste and the Negro College* [1938].)

[6] There has been some attempt to consider "social classes" in America before Warner, however. Those interested in philanthropy did so early. William G. Sumner had a class stratification scheme borrowed from Galton, based on biological ability (*Folkways* [1913; first edition, 1906], pp. 39-53) and he wrote an essay on "What Social Classes Owe to Each Other" (1883). Far more realistic was Thorstein Veblen in his *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899). In recent years, much influence in the direction of thinking in terms of class stratification emanated from the work of Alba M. Edwards of the United States Census Bureau (*Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers in the United States: 1930* [1938].)

[7] Speech at New Haven, March 6, 1860, in the *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, John G. Nicolay and John Hay (editors) (1905; first edition, 1894), Vol. V, pp. 360-361.

[8] Young, *American Minority Peoples*, p. 417.

[9] Davis and Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 13. Compare the other works cited in footnote 5 of this chapter. Davis and Dollard continue:

"A class is composed of families and of social cliques. The interrelationships between these families and cliques, in such informal activities as visiting, dances, receptions, teas, and larger informal affairs, constitute the structure of a social class.

"The forms of participation of the social clique and class are of an intimate type which implies that the individuals included have *equal status in the sense that they may visit one another, have interfamily rituals such as meals or tea together, and may intermarry*. Other types of cliques and larger groups which are organized upon a different basis, such as by common occupation, or recreation (card-playing, golfing, etc.) or church membership, or lodge membership, are not necessarily class-typed. Social participation of this kind, therefore, may not be used by the observer as a reliable index of class position." (*Idem.*)

From a scientific point of view this definition of class has the advantage that: "Social

classes may be determined objectively by using records of intimate social participation between the inhabitants [of a community]." (*Idem.*)

Social classes, but not castes, are supposed to overlap somewhat in their membership. "Participation lines are not rigidly drawn. In this respect, social classes are to be contrasted with the color castes, of Negroes and whites, which are mutually exclusive in their social life." (*Idem.*)

Warner himself is not so explicit about how one class can be distinguished from another, although he is quite clear as to the criteria of status.

"Great wealth did not guarantee the highest social position. Something more was necessary.

"In our efforts to find out what this 'something more' was, we finally developed a class hypothesis which withstood the later test of a vast collection of data and of subsequent rigorous analysis. By class is meant two or more orders of people who are believed to be, and are accordingly ranked by the members of the community, in socially superior and inferior positions. Members of a class tend to marry within their own order, but the values of the society permit marriage up and down. A class system also provides that children are born into the same status as their parents. A class society distributes rights and privileges, duties and obligations, unequally among its inferior and superior grades." (Warner and Lunt, *op. cit.*, p. 82.)

"We eventually became convinced that the cliques were next in importance to the family in placing people socially. . . . As we define it, the clique is an intimate nonkin group, membership in which may vary in numbers from two to thirty or more people. As such it is a phenomenon characteristic of our own society. When it approaches the latter figure in size, it ordinarily breaks up into several smaller cliques. The clique is an informal association because it has no explicit rules of entrance, of membership, or of exit. It ordinarily possesses no regular place or time of meeting. It has no elected officers nor any formally recognized hierarchy of leaders. It lacks specifically stated purposes, and its functions are less explicit than those of the family. the association, or the institution. The clique may or may not include biologically related persons; but all its members know each other intimately and participate in frequent face-to-face relations." (*Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.)

[10] In Davis, Gardner, and Gardner we find a statement which suggests that class consciousness is a basic criterion of class: "Members of any one class thus think of themselves as a group and have a certain unity of outlook." (*Op. cit.*, p. 71.) In general, however, members of the Warner group do not emphasize class consciousness.

[11] "In both Yankee City and Old City, individuals recognize their class members by characteristic traits, ranging from dress and speech to education and family connections. Class distinctions are always made on the basis of possible social intimacy, as in the following typical expressions: 'They go around with our friends.' 'We don't go around with those people. They don't fit in with our group.' 'I know I can't class with the big shots.' 'They are ignorant people, and we don't have anything to do with them.' Social classes are thus operating in our society as groups between which there is not intimate participation." (Davis and Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 259.)

[12] "In the study of human motivation in our society, the analysis of the social class pressures and rewards is of major importance. A child is trained principally by his family, his family's social clique, and his own social clique; the goals and sanctions of

both the family and the intimate social clique are determined principally by the class-ways, that is, by the criteria of status in *their part of the society*." (*Ibid.*, p. 16.)

"For it is the members of the child's and his family's cliques who actually constitute that 'social environment' of which we have talked so loosely, and which, we have said, reinforces the child's habits. Through the demands and pressures of the family and of the clique, class learning is instilled and maintained." (*Ibid.*, p. 262.)

[13] Actually, of course, there is a strong correlation between "social class" in Warner's sense, on the one hand, and income and occupation, on the other hand. One student has taken the population of Yankee City, grouped by Warner into classes on the basis of his information, and reclassified it according to Alba Edwards' socio-economic census groupings. He found a high correlation between the two classifications. (Robert Dubin, "Factors in the Variation of Urban Occupational Structure," unpublished M.A. thesis, The University of Chicago [1940].)

[14] R. M. MacIver, *Society: Its Structure and Changes* (1931), p. 89.

[15] William Archer, *Through Afro-America* (1910), pp. 234 ff.

[16] *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1927; first edition, 1912), pp. 75-76. Johnson continues:

"It is a struggle; for though the black man fights passively, he nevertheless fights; and his passive resistance is more effective at present than active resistance could possibly be. He bears the fury of the storm as does the willow-tree.

"It is a struggle; for though the white man of the South may be too proud to admit it, he is, nevertheless, using in the contest his best energies; he is devoting to it the greater part of his thought and much of his endeavour. The South today stands panting and almost breathless from its exertions."

[17] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 8.

[18] As this is being written the Negro press is still vibrating over the first lynching for the year 1942, which occurred in Sikeston, Missouri, January 25.

The N.A.A.C.P. reports that: "White citizens in Sikeston will not testify against each other in any prosecution for guilt in the lynching . . . and they use the threat of a race riot to prevent further investigation and publicity. . . .

"The make-up of the mob was described as being 'just folks' . . . The investigators said: 'We were given the definite impression that the lynchers would not be ostracized by the community; on the other hand those who might *testify against* the lynchers would be ostracized. . . .

" 'Young Prosecuting Attorney Blanton will hardly sacrifice both his career and personal friends, by prosecuting those friends who elected him to office. Even the most liberal of the planters said he would "not be inclined to testify." ' " (N.A.A.C.P. Press Release [February 13, 1942], pp. 1-2.)

Although Governor Forrest C. Donnell of Missouri ordered an immediate investigation, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation sent their investigators into Sikeston, no indictments were ever brought.

The way in which this solidarity on the white side elicits a corresponding solidarity on the Negro side is beautifully illustrated in this case. Negro columnists are complementing the American war slogan: "Remember Pearl Harbor" with the Negro slogan: "Remember Sikeston."

[19] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

[20] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), pp. 130-131.

[21] *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 11.

[22] Claude McKay, *A Long Way from Home* (1937), p. 227.

[23] (1934), p. 7.

[24] *Negro Americans, What Now?*, p. 6.

[25] Archer observes:

"Once let a dozen white men be killed by armed negroes in any city of the South, and a flame would burst out all over the land which would work untold devastation before either authority or humanity could check it. The incident would be taken as a declaration of racial war; everywhere the white mob would insist on searching for arms in the negro quarters; the negroes would inevitably attempt some panic-stricken defensive organization; and the more effective it proved, the more terrible would be the calamity to their race. Not even in the wildest frenzy, of course, could the race, or a tenth part of the race, be violently wiped out; but they might be so dismayed and terrorized as to lose that natural buoyancy of spirit which has hitherto sustained them, and enabled them to increase and multiply. The prophets of extinction already read hopelessness and a prescience of doom in the negro tone of mind; but, so far, I think the wish is father to the thought. The race, as a whole, is confident, in its happy-go-lucky way. But would their spirit survive a great massacre, followed by an open and chronic *Negerhetze*? I doubt it . . ." (*Op cit.*, pp. 206-207.)

[26] The only white passers the author has personally observed were two cases of white women married to Negro men, who found it convenient to call themselves Negroes. Donald Young informs us: ". . . occasionally persons of unmixed white ancestry have deliberately passed themselves off as Negroes, presumably in the main because of a preference for Negro associations and for employment opportunities, as in a colored orchestra." (*Research Memorandum on Minority Peoples in the Depression*, p. 28.) Sometimes white orphans have been brought up in Negro households and voluntarily retain the caste status of their foster parents. See a special investigation by Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer, "The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation," in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published, manuscript page 75.

[27] See *ibid.*, manuscript pages 97-98 and quoted sources.

[28] *Ibid.*, manuscript pages 83-84.

[29] *Ibid.*, manuscript page 89.

[30] A Negro's comment cited by Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

[31] Charles S. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

Chapter 32. *The Negro Class Structure*

[1] The resentment against the rising Negro takes concrete forms: ". . . 'even the reasonable Southerner,' " William Archer quotes a Southerner as saying, " 'feels a certain bitterness on the subject of education when he sees the black child marching off to a school provided by Northern philanthropy, while the child of the "poor white" goes into the cotton-factory.' " (*Through Afro-America* [1910], p. 17.) The fact that this is an exception, that white children on the average are much better provided for, and that employment in the cotton industry is one of the best protected caste monopolies in

breadwinning, does not meet the white wish that *all* Negroes should be below *all* whites, and no exception allowed.

[2] Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), pp. 5-6.

[3] See Wilbert E. Moore and Robin M. Williams, "Stratification in the Ante-Bellum South," *American Sociological Review* (June, 1942), pp. 350-351.

[4] E. Franklin Frazier, *The Free Negro Family* (1932).

[5] "The Bases of Race Prejudice," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (November, 1928), p. 20. (Italics ours.) Park is, of course, not the first one to have pointed out the presence of caste and class structures in Southern society, nor to indicate the trend toward parallelism in class structures.

[6] W. Lloyd Warner, "Introduction," to *Deep South* by Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner (1941), pp. 10 ff.

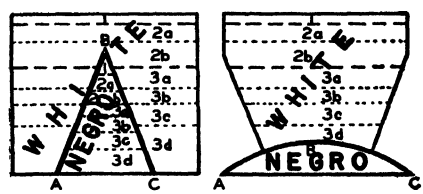
[7] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 183.

[8] Buell G. Gallagher has also suggested diagrams to describe caste and class in the South in recent years. He presents two diagrams: (1) "Economic," which is much like our second, or percentage, diagram. (2) "Social," which shows all Negroes below all whites.

"Two caste patterns prevail, each governing etiquette and fixing status in its sphere. In economic status (1), the Negro caste is integrated (as an encysted group, not assimilated); but in all other respects (2) every Negro is judged inferior to all whites in status." (*American Caste and the Negro College* [1938], p. 87.)

CASTE AND CLASS IN THE AMERICAN SOUTH OF THE 1930's

(1) ECONOMIC (2) SOCIAL



Legend: A, B, C = Caste Line.
1, 2, 3, a, b, c, d = Classes.

Since Gallagher separates these two things, instead of integrating them into "status" —as do Park and Warner—he is considering something a little different than we are at this point: he is considering Southern white theory as well as practice, and neglecting factors other than "economic" and "social" that might go to make up status (such as status in court). Gallagher's presentation may be the most useful for many purposes, and it brings out the fact that a person may have one status in one situation and another status in another situation.

Another caste-class diagram is suggested by Wilbert E. Moore and Robin M. Williams, but since it refers only to the pre-Civil War period and not to present conditions, we may neglect it here. (*Op. cit.*, p. 349.)

[9] John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 98 ff. and 173 ff.

[10] There were, of course, also other relations than that of servant-master to the better class of whites which molded this personality type.

Ralph Bunche pays his tribute to a passing generation in the following words:

"The fine old gentlemen of the earlier days, with all of their old-fogeyism, tolerance and patience, worshipped a different god. They were under the spell of the aristocratic whites of their day; they took as their model the best educated and most cultured men of their period, and they attempted to acquire and did acquire many of the graces and talents of this group without, through lack of riches, being able to cultivate their more costly vices.

"It does seem that the current generations of Negroes have lost something valuable in the transition, and this not merely in poise, dignity and the graces, but also to a damaging degree in the qualities of honor, principle, integrity and intellectual honesty." ("Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript, prepared for this study [1940], p. 111.)

[11] Marcus Wilson Jernegan, *Laboring and Dependent Classes in Colonial America, 1607-1783* (1931), p. 9. See also Chapter 5, Sections 4 and 5; and Louis Wirth and Herbert Goldhamer, "The Hybrid and the Problem of Miscegenation" in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study; to be published, manuscript pages 208 and 138-139.

[12] Wirth and Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, manuscript page 134 and sources cited by them.

[13] "Along with the advantageous social position of the mulatto there has been a pronounced disadvantage for blacks in the ideological heritage of society generally. The concept of blackness has held, in the popular mind, an unfavorable connotation. 'Black is evil,' 'black as sin,' 'black as the devil,' are phrases which suggest the emotional and aesthetic implications of this association. The evil and ugliness of blackness have long been contrasted in popular thinking with the goodness and purity of whiteness. Whether with respect to men or things this color association has been deeply meaningful; it is an inescapable element of the cultural heritage." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], p. 257.)

"The interviews revealed results similar to those of the tests. Some of the reactions to blackness were as follows: 'Black is too black,' 'Black is ugly,' 'Black people are mean,' 'Black isn't like flesh,' 'Black is bad because people make fun, and I don't think it looks good either,' 'Black people can't use make-up,' 'Black people are evil,' 'White looks better than black,' 'No black people hold good jobs,' 'Black people can't look nice in their clothes,' 'You can't get along with black people,' 'Black looks dirty,' 'Black people have to go to the kitchen and scrub,' 'Even in college they don't want to take in black students.' Black youth are called by such derisive names as 'Snow,' 'Gold Dust Boys,' 'Blue Gums,' 'Midnight,' 'Shadow,' 'Haint,' 'Dusty,' 'Polish,' and 'Shine.' . . .

"In the second place, the belief that 'black people are mean' can easily make such people 'mean' if the behavior toward them is habitually based on such an assumption In the end the reaction of such dark persons reinforces the stereotype." (*Ibid.*, pp. 259-262.)

[14] Donald R. Young observes rightly: "The common preference for the 'mammy' type of servant or the 'darkey' type of gardener, butler, odd-job man, and flunkey is not in opposition to this statement, for the very preference of these types helps keep them in the dead-end employments just mentioned, certainly not employments which lead to advancement." (*American Minority Peoples* [1932], p. 397.)

[15] Davis, Gardner, and Gardner tell us about the supreme importance of the complexion for class status in a Southern city. "Other qualifications being nearly equal.

colored persons having light skin and 'white' types of hair will be accorded the highest station within the lower caste. This fact does not prevent the expression of strong antagonisms to light-skinned persons by the rest of the group. Such antagonism is an expression of the envy and humiliation of the darker individuals.

"Since the system of classes operates within a caste system, the physical traits of the white caste must be accorded highest value; the darker individuals cannot but be conditioned to the all-important symbols of the upper caste, and so give them highest rank. The upper class, on the other hand, thinks of the lower class as black and woolly-haired, thus mentally associating the lowest social rank with the 'lowest' physical traits." (*Op. cit.*, p. 235.)

"The high social value placed upon light skin color and white hair-form is even more clearly related to the operation of caste sanctions. While it is not true that these physical traits alone assure a colored person an upper-class status, it is certain that, in most of even the older colored communities, social mobility proceeds at a faster pace for persons with these physical traits. It is commonly said by colored men of the upper and upper-middle classes today that they marry women for their 'looks,' while white men of parallel status marry for family status, money, and education." (*Ibid.*, p. 244.)

[16] "It was observed in the testing program and in the direct interviews with the youth that they consistently rated their own complexions a shade or more lighter than they appeared to be. This prompted the study to attempt a more careful measurement of a tendency which seemed to have some significance. It suggested a type of unconscious response to the color evaluations which they gave in other situations. They could escape, in their own minds at least, some of the unfavorable association, by appraising themselves as lighter than they were." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 265.)

[17] *Following the Color Line* (1908), pp. 157 ff.; *Through Afro-America* (1910), pp. 225 ff.

[18] This "peculiar inconsistency" on the color question has been observed and discussed by every author on the Negro problem during recent decades. Recently much new material has been made available by the studies on Negro youth, prepared for the American Youth Commission (see footnote 9 to Chapter 30), all of which have attached great importance to the color factor in the personality development of Negro youth. One of the studies—*Color and Human Nature* (1941) by W. Lloyd Warner, Buford Junker, and W. A. Adams—was mainly directed on this problem. This new material rather tends to confer the impression that color and color preference in the Negro community is even more important than was earlier assumed in the general literature on the Negro problem.

[19] "It often happens that darker children in families feel that their parents give preference to the children of lighter complexion. Even such inadvertent and casual comparisons as 'better hair,' 'nicer complexion,' 'prettier skin,' 'nicer shade' affect the more sensitive young people and contribute to their feelings of inferiority. Children may apply color values unfavorably to one or the other of the parents and find themselves apologizing for the dark complexion of a parent. They may even harbor resentment against the parent who was biologically responsible for their own undesirable appearance. By far the most frequent instances of color sensitivity, however, occur outside the home as the child attempts to make adjustment to new groups." (Charles S.

Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 267. Compare Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* [1940], p. 254 *passim*.)

For a discussion of how the color problem enters in the school see, Davis and Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 253; E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), pp. 96 ff.; and Anonymous, "The Revolt of the Evil Fairies," *The New Republic* (April 6, 1942), pp. 458-459.

[20] The few attempts made to tabulate and correlate color of Negro husbands and wives confirm this observation. See: M. J. Herskovits, *The American Negro* (1928), p. 64; E. B. Reuter, *Race Mixture* (1931), pp. 158-159; E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939), pp. 572 ff.

[21] Wirth and Goldhamer have surveyed the various studies bearing on the problem; *op. cit.*, pp. 142-147.

[22] ". . . dark color is widely looked down upon in the Chicago Negro community. Instead of being regarded as a proud racial distinction, it is taken as a reminder of traditional servitude and as a badge of lowly status. The distribution of our cases in each social class according to color also suggests . . . that dark-skin persons in the higher ranks of Negro society find themselves a minority in competition with individuals of lighter color. These higher positions call for personalities strong enough to cope with potential conflicts over appearance in relation to social acceptability." (Warner, Junker, and Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 31.)

"Our results indicate that there is little correlation between class and color in the southern rural area. Differences in complexion and hair create problems of adjustment, but do not mark class lines within the rural Negro group." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 272.)

[23] Before Emancipation and, in the mulatto societies, for a considerable time afterward, it was a point of pride to have a white (illegitimate) father, particularly if he belonged to the aristocratic classes. This is not true any more. The studies of Dollard, Powdermaker, and others show that even in the South it is rather a disgrace. Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, for example, say: "Whereas in Old County of a generation ago an individual's status was increased by his kinship to white persons of the middle or upper classes, today both miscegenation and illegitimacy are rather heavily tabooed in the colored upper and upper-middle classes." (*Op. cit.*, p. 247.)

[24] "Although mulattoes on the whole appear to be proud of their lighter complexions, they are at a disadvantage when the question of paternity is raised by their darker associates. Such derisive terms as 'Yellow Pumpkin,' 'Yellow Bastard,' are used in this connection. The youth commenting on this shade of complexion made such statements as these: 'Yellow people are not honest' (meaning that they are probably illegitimate), 'Yellow is the worst color because it shows mixture with whites,' 'Yellow is too conspicuous' (like black), 'Yellow people don't look right,' 'Real yellow people ain't got no father,' 'Yellow don't have no race, they can't be white and they ain't black either,' 'Anything that is too light looks dirty,' 'Yellow is mixed bad blood,' 'Light people get old too quickly,' 'Yellow don't hold looks so long,' 'White colored people is all bastards.' " (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 262-263.)

[25] See E. B. Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States* (1918), especially pp. 19, 102-104, and Everett V. Stonequist, *The Marginal Man* (1937), especially Chapter 6.

[26] Robert E. Park in the "Introduction" to Stonequist, *op. cit.*, p. xv.

[27] Stonequist writes about the mulatto that he is ". . . not the dejected, spiritless

outcast; neither is he the inhibited conformist. He is more likely to be restless and race-conscious, aggressive and radical, ambitious and creative. The lower status to which he is assigned naturally creates discontented and rebellious feelings. From an earlier, spontaneous identification with the white man, he has, under the rebuffs of a categorical race prejudice, turned about and identified himself with the Negro race. In the process of so doing, he suffers a profound inner conflict.

"After all, does not the blood of the white man flow in his veins? Does he not share the higher culture in common with the white American? Is he not legally and morally an American citizen? And yet he finds himself condemned to a lower caste in the American system! So the mulatto is likely to think to himself. Living in two such social worlds, between which there is antagonism and prejudice, he experiences in himself the same conflict. In his own consciousness the play and the strife of the two group attitudes take place, and the manner in which he responds forms one of the most interesting chapters in the history of the Negro." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.) Stonequist makes similar statements about the unhappiness of mulattoes as over against dark Negroes, on pages 24-27, 110-113, 144-145 and 184-189 of *The Marginal Man.*

[28] The theory of the "marginal man" was originally developed for Jews and other white immigrants in America, and for them it probably has validity and a strong empirical basis. It was transferred uncritically to the Negro situation where its validity it questionable. Stonequist uses two types of evidence to support his theory that the mulatto has greater personality difficulties than the full-blooded Negro.

(1) He quotes autobiographical statements by mulattoes who complain bitterly about being colored. Du Bois' famous statement is quoted, for example:

"It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." (*The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], p. 3. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 145.)

In practically all these quotations (many of them are from Du Bois), however, the mulatto is not complaining because he wants to be associated with the white world over against the black world. He is complaining because of the treatment accorded him as a Negro. When Du Bois speaks about his "double consciousness"—having loyalties and feelings of both Negroes and Americans—he means Negroes and Americans, not—as Stonequist makes out—Negroes and whites. It is the antithesis between the American Creed and the Negro's actual status to which Du Bois calls attention, not the mulatto's character as a marginal man. It may justly be said that the American Negro is a marginal man, but it cannot be claimed, from these quotations, that the mulatto is any more "marginal" than is the black man.

(2) Stonequist reports the results of a questionnaire study. He finds, for example, that the 45 Negroes who could possibly pass for white or Indian or Mexican in a sample of 192 Negro college students had greater "psychological difficulties with which to contend" than the darker Negro students. This sample, however, cannot be regarded as representative of the entire Negro population. (*Op. cit.*, pp. 189-190.)

It should be noted that there is some pragmatic truth in the theory that the mulatto has more *Weltschmerz*. In so far as there is still a correlation between color and class status, this is true, because upper class Negroes are more articulate and more sensitive to

the discriminations directed against all Negroes. But as far as his color is concerned, the mulatto has less of a personality problem than does the dark Negro, and he certainly has no loyalty to his white ancestors.

[29] *Op. cit.*, p. 135.

[30] Dollard, *op. cit.*; Powdermaker, *op. cit.*; and Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.* Also the studies of Negro youth prepared for the American Youth Commission, cited in footnote 9 of Chapter 30, have been framed with a main view on the Negro class system.

[31] Many earlier studies of the Negro, which could not be described as "community studies," also divided the Negro population into three classes.

[32] If we add together all the following occupational groups of male Negroes, we arrive at a figure of 80 per cent of all male Negro gainful workers in 1930: owners of less than 20 acres of land used for agriculture, agricultural cash tenants having less than 50 acres, agricultural share tenants having less than 50 acres, all agricultural share-croppers and wage laborers, and all nonagricultural gainful workers in the unskilled and semi-skilled groups in Edwards' social-economic classification. For purposes of general description, this would seem to be a most useful description of the Negro lower classes defined in purely occupational terms. One of the major weaknesses of the definition is that it includes all servant employees, and in the Negro world some of these have middle or even upper class status. On the other hand, some skilled workers with restricted employment opportunities—especially in building construction—will have lower class status in the Negro community. (Sources: (1) United States Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, pp. 602-605. (2) United States Bureau of the Census, Alba M. Edwards, *Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States, 1930* [1938], pp. 58-59.)

For the Southern rural population Charles S. Johnson estimates—". . . on the basis of occupation, income, education, family organization, relationship to property, and general community recognition of standing"—that the lower class amounts to 82 per cent, while the middle class takes 12 per cent and the upper class only 6 per cent (*Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 77). Johnson's criteria could, of course, be varied according to the needs of the investigator and different percentages would result, but no one has ever said that the bulk of Southern rural Negroes are not lower class. Frazier informs us that in urban communities in the Border cities like St. Louis and Washington, the lower class comprises "about two-thirds of the Negro population." (Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways*, p. 263.) Warner, Junker, and Adams tell us that the "great masses of Chicago Negroes belong to the lower class." (*Op. cit.*, p. 22.) Davis, Gardner, and Gardner state that "the overwhelming majority of colored persons are considered lower class, *according to the colored group's own standards.*" And that "in most American colored societies the middle and upper classes together . . . do not include more than one-fourth of the population." (*Op. cit.*, p. 222.) These estimates are not very exact and they are apparently not made on similar criteria. In this context our only point is that all authors include the majority of the Negro population in the lower class.

[33] "The critical fact is that a much larger proportion of all Negroes are lower class than is the case with whites. This is where caste comes to bear. It puts the overwhelming majority of Negroes in the lowest class group and keeps them there." (Davis and Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 65.)

[34] Thomas Nelson Page's vision was ". . . a vast sluggish mass of uncooled lava

over a large section of the country, burying some portions and affecting the whole. It is apparently harmless, but beneath its surface smoulder fires which may at any time burst forth unexpectedly and spread desolation all around." (*The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* [1904], p. 64.)

[35] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 75 ff., 98, 280 *passim*. Compare Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation* (1934), p. 6.

"Within the lower classes a distinction should be made between the 'folk Negro' and the rest of the population. This distinction is important and more cultural than economic; it refers to the family habits and values evolved by the Negro culture under the institution of slavery. Many of the naive traits and customs of the 'folk Negro' are out of line with the practices of the larger society, but were at times in the past essential to group survival in cultural isolation. Stripped of their basic African culture by the exigencies of life in America, they evolved a social life and a culture of their own which was adequate for survival in their peculiar status in America. The customs, beliefs, and values developed have been a response to their limited roles within the American social order, even when many of the traits of the group have been borrowed from early American settlers and crude pioneers in the cotton country. In a sense, they have been repositories of certain folkways now outgrown by those groups which were more rapidly absorbed into the larger currents of American life. The patterns of life, social codes and social attitudes, set in an early period, have because of the cultural as well as geographical isolation continued to be effective social controls. In the social consciousness of the group and in its social life, there has been a considerable degree of organization and internal cohesion.

"The 'folk Negro' organization of life and of values has been essential to survival and to the most satisfying functioning of the members of the group in their setting. Many things for which the larger dominant society has one set of values, meanings, and acceptable behavior patterns—marriage, divorce, extra-marital relations, illegitimacy, religion, love, death, and so forth—may in this group have quite another set. This helps to explain types of personalities developed under the peculiar circumstances of life of the 'folk Negro' and makes their behavior more intelligible. The increase of means of communication and the introduction of some education is breaking down the cultural isolation of this group." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 75-76.)

[36] "The upper class of the Negro population is that group possessing in general a family social heritage known and respected by the community, a substantial amount of education, an occupational level which is achieved by special formal preparation, a comfortable income, ownership of property, stability of residence, superior cultural standards, a measure of personal security through influential connections, or the ability to exert economic or other pressure in the maintenance of this security, or *any combination of most of these characteristics*. Further, this group is conceived by itself as a class and is so recognized by others; it is recognized by similar groups in other areas; and is regarded, whether with approval or disapproval, by other classes as a different and an exclusive society. In this classification are usually the Negro doctor's families, some teachers and school principals, successful landowners, and even families without large possessions but with superior education and a significant family history. The distinction may be clarified by the observation that the typical rural preacher, although a 'professional,' does not normally belong in the class. The physician almost always does. Most of the preachers, especially in the Southern rural areas, are about as unlettered as their

congregations. Further, the economic and social limitations of their calling restrict their entree to this class." (*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.)

[37] Hortense Powdermaker speaks of a "lag" in a process of acculturation. "The upper class enforces strict Puritanical standards formed after the white model. The morals they enforce, however, correspond to those of a generation ago more closely than those of today. While they observe and inculcate in their children the Puritanical code of which their ancestors were deemed incapable, the descendants of the whites from whom they learned these ideals of behavior are tending to greater laxity." (*Op. cit.*, p. 355.)

[38] See Chapter 39, Section 6. Hortense Powdermaker sees an interesting parallel which emphasizes the paradoxical situation of the Negro upper class in the caste conflict:

"There is a further analogy between the position of the Negro upper class and that of the Poor Whites, one at the top, the other at the botton of the social ladder within its group. Each serves as agent for its race toward the other, taking actions and expressing sentiments to which the group as a whole is not ready to commit itself. The Poor White, in his occasional violent expressions of race antagonism, acts for those Whites who tacitly condone and overtly deplore such behavior. He is rewarded by his fellows chiefly in resentment, since he embodies, in addition to traits of his own which they dislike, their own least worthy impulses. The Negro upper class acts out for its race the denial that Negroes are inferior; it demonstrates that they too can be educated, moral, industrious, thrifty. This class also reaps a share of resentment from other members of its race, but here resentment is far less keen and less conscious, and is offset by substantial advantages, among which is to be numbered a very gratifying prestige. Each of these two classes is set apart from the rest of its race, experiencing different conflicts and holding different attitudes; and each awakens in the other race a special hostility strongly tinged with fear." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 334-335.)

[39] Writing of the upper class in 1899—when he could still speak of it as "the germ of a great middle class"—Du Bois observed:

". . . in general its members are curiously hampered by the fact that, being shut off from the world about them, they are the aristocracy of their own people, with all the responsibilities of an aristocracy, and yet they, on the one hand, are not prepared for this role, and their own masses are not used to looking to them for leadership. As a class they feel strongly the centrifugal forces of class repulsion among their own people, and, indeed, are compelled to feel it in sheer self-defense. They do not relish being mistaken for servants; they shrink from the free and easy worship of most of the Negro churches, and they shrink from all such display and publicity as will expose them to the veiled insult and depreciation which the masses suffer. Consequently this class, which ought to lead, refuses to head any race movement on the plea that thus they draw the very color line against which they protest." (*The Philadelphia Negro*, p. 177.)

[40] *Dusk of Dawn*, p. 185.

[41] Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways*, p. 28.

Chapter 33. *The American Pattern of Individual Leadership and Mass Passivity*

[1] *The American Commonwealth* (1910, first edition, 1893), Vol. 2, p. 373.

[2] The contrary tendency in American history and social science in recent decades is evidently a reaction to this popular attitude. It goes, as reactions usually do, to the

opposite extreme; and so American social speculation, on the scientific level, is dominated by a rather doctrinal stress on trends and mechanical forces and by an underestimation of, not only the personal accidents in history, but also the importance of ideas and ideals. Charles and Mary Beard's *The Rise of American Civilization* (1927) is visibly marked by a materialistic conception of history as dominated by economic interests. They do this even though they are good Americans, and as authors have enough feeling for their audience to populate their pages with outstanding personalities, to paint them a little in the fashion of angels and devils, and often to forget their philosophical intention to show up individuals as marionettes in the power of deeper forces. A sociologist such as William Ogburn is even more typical of this scientific reaction toward a mechanical view of social change. The reaction has influenced a small group of intellectuals around the great universities and the periodicals devoted to social criticism and reform, but has as yet not disturbed the ordinary American's ways of thinking. And even the little crowd of intellectuals themselves are influenced only on a rather abstract plane of their thinking. In their daily affairs they usually think and act according to the popular attitude, and, indeed, they have to do so if they do not want to doom themselves to isolation.

[3] *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. II, p. 37; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*, Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 1.

[4] See the classic study by A. A. Berle and Gardiner C. Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (1932), especially pp. 277-287.

It is not surprising that big business in America, organized as it is, has been unusually reluctant to share its control over labor conditions with trade unions or to allow government interference in the public interest.

Chapter 34. *Accommodating Leadership*

[1] An interesting parallel, which cannot be followed up here, would be with similar problems and tendencies in the relations between the wider society and other distinct minority groups such as the other color castes—Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Mexicans—and immigrant groups—Jewish, Czech, Polish, Italian.

[2] This pattern has sunk deep into the entire class structure of the Negro community. It is commonly known that Negro domestics often consider it a degradation of their social status to work in a Negro family. An upper class Negro friend of mine testifies:

"I know of a good many instances, especially in Washington, and one or two of them are personal, where Negro domestics flatly refuse to work for Negroes, for fear that they will lose caste by doing so. My wife, who happens to fall in the category of the 'voluntary' or 'sociological' Negro, once hired a domestic at a wage admittedly higher than this girl had ever gotten before, when I chanced into the room. The young lady, a dark brown skin, promptly arose, exclaimed: 'Oh, I didn't know you were *colored*—I don't work for colored,' and left without further ado. On another occasion we had employed a nice, inefficient but highly religious old lady in the same capacity. She had to attend church each Sunday morning, and would cook the dinner early and depart. After a few Sundays, she explained to us the reason for the generous portions of our larder with which she sallied out these Sunday mornings. She had a long tram ride to her home, she

said, and on her car she would always encounter a number of her friends who were employed as domestics in white families. These friends were always well laden with tidbits, it seems, and she solemnly declared that this was the first time she had ever worked for colored; none of her friends ever had, though they knew she was so engaged, and that she wanted to show her friends that 'colored folks are just as good to work for as white folk.' Thus we sacrificed half of each Sunday dinner to maintain the prestige of the race."

[3] It should be noted that Negro leadership does not *per se* raise an individual's status in the eyes of white people in general. Only a few white people know about the leadership function he performs; to others he is just another Negro. His class status, on the other hand—which might be a function of his leadership—is easier to observe from his dress, manners, occupation, and so on, and may more generally command white respect. (See Chapter 30, Section 2, and Chapter 32, Section 4.) Whites will, however, regularly show respect if they come to know about an individual Negro's accomplishments or even if they come to know quite *in abstracto* that he is a "distinguished Negro."

[4] In this analysis of the relation between social class and leadership, color will be left out of account. It is true that most Negro leaders, particularly on the national plane, have been mulattoes and sometimes near-white or passable. (Compare E. B. Reuter, *The Mulatto in the United States* [1918].) This fact is, however, the less astonishing when we remember (1) how greatly mixed the entire Negro population is (Chapter 5), and (2) how color is an important factor in determining social class in the Negro community (Chapter 32). It is plausible that a light color is often an asset to a Negro leader in his dealings with both whites and Negroes, but it is also certain that a dark color is sometimes advantageous for a Negro leader. The two tendencies do not cancel each other since they occur in different types of leadership.

But color, independent of its relevance for class, is probably a minor factor for Negro leadership. Reuter's assertion that the mulatto is "the most vital point" in the race problem (*ibid.*, p. 87, *passim*) seems, for the reasons given, much exaggerated. An analysis directed to this particular relationship could only be warranted in a study which proceeded to distinguish between *all* the different factors determining leadership in the Negro community, that is, besides color: education, occupation, wealth, family background, and so forth. This we cannot undertake in the present abstract overview.

A story related to us by E. Franklin Frazier (conversation, July 11, 1942) might be repeated, however, to illustrate that dark color is sometimes an asset for a Negro leader. At a convention called to elect a bishop of one of the major Negro denominations, two candidates presented their qualifications. The first was very dark in color, and his keynote speech was that a dark man should lead the Negro people. The electors were predominantly dark and their applause indicated that his election was practically clinched. The other candidate, a light man, met a hostile audience. He agreed that dark Negroes needed dark leaders, but said that sometimes admiration for dark skin was more important than dark skin itself. He then pointed to his opponent's wife and to his own wife in the audience. The opponent's wife had light skin, but his own wife had dark skin. He won the election.

Marcus Garvey's dark skin was an asset, but so may be Walter White's extremely light skin, since there may be a feeling that this man who could pass is making a personal sacrifice by being a "voluntary" Negro.

[5] A field interview by Ralph Bunche and myself with a local Negro leader of the

type characterized in the text, and with some other people in the Southeastern coast city where he lives, is presented in excerpts in: Ralph Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 94-111.

[6] A word might also be said about the "shady" upper class—the big-time gamblers and lords of vice and crime. In spite of the fact that they have, in a sense, upper class status and may be personally popular, they cannot be used as regular leaders because they do not fit the American idea of what a leader should be. They do act as "behind the scenes" political leaders, especially in the North.

[7] J. G. St. Claire Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 402; and Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), pp. 236-239. This theme appears in literature, too. See Walter White, *The Fire in the Flint* (1924).

[8] *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* (1904), p. 64.

[9] The best published study of Northern Negro political leaders is Harold F. Gosnell's *Negro Politicians* (1935).

Chapter 35. *The Negro Protest*

[1] See Melville J. Herskovits (*The Myth of the Negro Past*, prepared for this study [1941], pp. 91 ff.) for a short survey of the slave revolts and for references to the literature.

[2] *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (1941), p. 243.

[3] Quoted from W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), pp. 14-15.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 122.

[5] Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1902; first edition, 1899), p. 132.

[6] *Race Adjustment, Essays on the Negro in America* (1908), pp. 17-18.

[7] *Patterns of Negro Segregation*, prepared for this study (1943), p. 263.

[8] From a perspective of almost 40 years after he first opened attack on the "Tuskegee Machine," Du Bois comments upon it as follows:

"It arose first quite naturally. Not only did presidents of the United States consult Booker Washington, but governors and congressmen: philanthropists conferred with him, scholars wrote to him. Tuskegee became a vast information bureau and center of advice. It was not merely passive in these matters but, guided by a young unobtrusive minor official who was also intelligent, suave and far-seeing, active efforts were made to concentrate influence at Tuskegee. After a time almost no Negro institution could collect funds without the recommendation or acquiescence of Mr. Washington. Few political appointments were made anywhere in the United States without his consent. Even the careers of rising young colored men were very often determined by his advice and certainly his opposition was fatal. How much Mr. Washington knew of this work of the Tuskegee Machine and was directly responsible, one cannot say, but of its general activity and scope he must have been aware. . . . The control was to be drastic. The Negro intelligentsia was to be suppressed and hammered into conformity. The process involved some cruelty and disappointment, but that was inevitable. This was the real force back of the Tuskegee Machine. It had money and it had opportunity, and it

found in Tuskegee tools to do its bidding. . . . Things came to such a pass that when any Negro complained or advocated a course of action, he was silenced with the remark that Mr. Washington did not agree with this. Naturally the bumptious irritated, young black intelligentsia of the day declared, 'I don't care a damn what Booker Washington thinks. This is what I think, and *I have a right to think.*' " (W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* [1940], pp. 73-75).

[9] Du Bois testifies: "The *Guardian* was bitter, satirical, and personal; but it was well-edited, it was earnest, and it published facts. It attracted wide attention among colored people: it circulated among them all over the country: it was quoted and discussed. I did not wholly agree with the *Guardian*, and indeed only a few Negroes did, but nearly all read it and were influenced by it." (*Ibid.*, p. 73.)

[10] Du Bois was then professor at Atlanta University. He had there started what has been called "the first real sociological research in the South" (Guy B. Johnson, "Negro Racial Movements and Leadership in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* [July, 1937], p. 65.) When he did not get the support he hoped for to fulfill his plan to study the Negro problem—because Booker T. Washington and his group did not endorse it, or so he believed— and later, when the N.A.A.C.P. was founded, he left the University entirely. Another reason why he left was that he thought that his connection with the University increased its difficulties in getting foundation support. (See Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 68-95 *passim.*)

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[12] James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way* (1934), p. 313.

[13] *Following the Color Line*, p. 219.

[14] For the history of the Niagara Movement, see Ralph J. Bunche, "The Programs, Ideologies, Tactics, and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. I, pp. 15 ff., and W. E. B. Du Bois' autobiography, *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 88-95.

[15] Emmett J. Scott, *The American Negro in the World War* (1919), pp. 92-104 and 426-457; Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 245-256; James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way*, pp. 318-319.

[16] James Weldon Johnson describes "the spirit of defiance born of desperation" after the First World War and attributes to it the new racial radicalism of the period:

"With the close of the war went most of the illusions and high hopes American Negroes had felt would be realized when it was seen that they were doing to the utmost their bit at home and in the field. Eight months after the armistice, with black men back fresh from the front, there broke the Red Summer of 1919, and the mingled emotions of the race were bitterness, despair, and anger. There developed an attitude of cynicism that was a characteristic foreign to the Negro. There developed also a spirit of defiance born of desperation. These sentiments and reactions found varying degrees of expression in the Negro publications throughout the country; but Harlem became the centre where they were formulated and voiced to the Negroes of America and the world. Radicalism in Harlem, which had declined as the war approached, burst out anew. But it was something different from the formal radicalism of pre-war days; it was a radicalism motivated by a fierce race consciousness." (*Black Manhattan* [1930], p. 246.)

[17] For the history of the Garvey movement and a bibliography, see Bunche, *op. cit.*,

Vol. 2, pp. 393 ff. The descriptive facts about the movement in this section are taken from Bunche.

[18] Quoted from Amy Jacques Garvey (editor), *Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey* (1923), pp. 8-9.

[19] Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 77.

[20] Quoted from *ibid.*, p. 5.

[21] *Op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 412.

[22] *Dusk of Dawn*, p. 277.

[23] *Black Manhattan*, p. 256.

[24] James S. Allen, *The Negro Question in the United States* (1936), especially pp. 177-194.

[25] First edition 1845. In its final form, after many additions through the decades until Douglass' death in 1895, it is called *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass.*

[26] An example of pseudo-history, fantastically glorifying the achievements of Negroes is: James Morris Webb, *The Black Man the Father of Civilization; Proven by Biblical History* (1910).

[27] The combination of scholarly and protest motives in the work of the Association is seen in its statement of purposes and achievements (taken from the inside cover of *The Journal of Negro History* for January, 1942):

"Its purposes:

1. To collect sociological and historical data.
2. To publish books on Negro life and history.
3. To promote the study of the Negro through clubs and schools.
4. To bring about harmony between the races by interpreting the one to the other. . . .

"Its achievements:

1. It has directed the attention of investigators to this neglected field.
2. It has extended the circulation of *The Journal of Negro History* and *The Negro History Bulletin* into South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.
3. It has published twenty-seven volumes of articles and documents giving facts which are generally unknown.
4. It has produced twenty-nine monographs on Negro Life and History.
5. It has organized and stimulated the studies of local clubs and classes, which have done much to change the attitude of communities toward the Negro.
6. It has collected thousands of valuable manuscripts on the Negro which have been made accessible to the public in the Library of Congress.
7. It has had thirteen young men and women trained for research in social science and for instruction in colleges and universities."

The protest purpose of the Association is more revealed in its annual meetings and in its other activities than in the *Journal.*

[28] Lawrence Reddick, "A New Interpretation for Negro History," *The Journal of Negro History* (January, 1937), p. 17.

[29] The Association is connected with *The Associated Publishers*, a publishing firm also headed by Dr. Woodson. This firm publishes many scholarly and popular books on the Negro—some at the direction of the Association—and has agents to increase their sale in Negro communities all over the country.

[80] This occurs in the week which includes Lincoln's birthday, February 12. It has been going on since 1926 and seems to be growing rapidly in popularity.

[81] E. B. Reuter, *The American Race Problem* (1927), p. 300.

[82] Herskovits, *op. cit.*, p. 32. In reviewing this book, Alain Locke has pointed out that Herskovits' type of propaganda might come to increase race prejudice rather than to decrease it, in that if white people come to believe that Negroes have a strong African heritage they would think that Negroes were unassimilable. (Alain Locke, "Who and What Is a Negro?" *Opportunity* [March, 1942], p. 84.) Frazier further criticizes the practicality of Herskovits' propaganda by asserting that if whites came to believe that the Negro's social behavior was rooted in African culture, they would lose whatever sense of guilt they had for keeping the Negro down. Negro crime, for example, could be explained away as an "Africanism" rather than as due to inadequate police and court protection and to inadequate education. (E. Franklin Frazier, speech to the West Harlem Council of Social Agencies, New York City [December 5, 1941].) There is, perhaps, a measure of truth both in the claims of Herskovits and in those of his critics, but both make certain assumptions about the causes of race prejudice which are not only unproved but are not stated explicitly.

[83] "In the South the prestige of the Negro group suffers from persistently unfavorable judgments on the part of the white community; of equal significance is the fact that Negro youth do not as a rule take pride in the qualities for which Negroes are most appreciated by the whites. Only a few of them, for example, recognize loyalty, uncomplaining industry, and patience as having racial prestige value comparable to the importance given these traits by the white group when they wish to speak favorably of Negroes. It is a convenience in the biracial situation to be regarded as loyal, tractable, happy and hard working; few of the interviews with these youth revealed, however, that they were proud of these racial virtues. Indeed, few of the comments assumed these virtues to be racial, or the qualities to be virtues." (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 242.)

Chapter 36. *The Protest Motive and Negro Personality*

[1] James Weldon Johnson, *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), p. 103. This formula has many variations. Booker T. Washington retells from a conversation he once had with Frederick Douglass:

"At one time Mr. Douglass was traveling in the State of Pennsylvania, and was forced, on account of his colour, to ride in the baggage-car, in spite of the fact that he had paid the same price for his passage that the other passengers had paid. When some of the white passengers went into the baggage-car to console Mr. Douglass, and one of them said to him: 'I am sorry, Mr. Douglass, that you have been degraded in this manner,' Mr. Douglass straightened himself up on the box upon which he was sitting, and replied: 'They cannot degrade Frederick Douglass. The soul that is within me no man can degrade. I am not the one that is being degraded on account of this treatment, but those who are inflicting it upon me.'" (Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* [1901; first edition, 1900], pp. 99-100.)

[2] Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1902; first edition, 1899), p. 26.

[8] Our discussion of Negro sensitiveness does not assume that light-colored Negroes, because of their color, are any more sensitive or emotionally unbalanced on the average than dark Negroes. (See Chapter 32, Section 3, for a criticism of this theory.) It may be, however, that upper class Negroes are more sensitive because of their status and education, and since upper class Negroes tend to be of lighter color, there is an apparent—but no directly causal—connection between color and sensitiveness.

[4] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (1941), p. 312.

[5] *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 27.

[6] E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), pp. 44-51.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 56. "Coat-tail" is the Negro word for flatter, and a "peckerwood" is a lower class white man.

[9] Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* (1940), pp. 87-88.

[10] "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 161.

[11] See John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), pp. 250 and 286 ff.

[12] Dollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 267 ff.

[13] ". . . since the hostility of Negroes against whites is violently and effectively suppressed, we have a boiling of aggressive effect within the Negro group." (Dollard, *op. cit.*, p. 269.) Dollard goes even further and suggests a purpose on the side of the whites: "One cannot help wondering if it does not serve the ends of the white caste to have a high level of violence in the Negro group, since disunity in the Negro caste tends to make it less resistant to the white domination. If this should be a correct observation, it need not follow that the tolerance of violence is a matter of conscious policy on the part of the white group; instead it would seem to be pragmatic, unformalized, and intuitive, but nonetheless effective." (*Ibid.*, p. 280; compare p. 285.)

[14] This phenomenon is often commented upon in the Negro world:

"It is common for educated and upper class Negroes to develop an aloofness, a social exclusiveness and snobbishness, which is at times even more sharp than in the white society, because the Negro finds in it both a means of defense against inferiority feeling and a form of escape. Negroes who hold good jobs, as for instance, teachers, are notoriously passive and comformist. Their jobs give them economic and social status which they are determined to hold even at the expense of surrendering their intellectual independence. The Negro radicals, few as they are, have rarely been recruited from among Negroes holding good jobs." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, p. 174.)

[15] Just as lower class Negroes manifest their frustrated antagonism against whites by showing antagonism against upper class Negroes, so upper class Negroes do the same against lower class Negroes. They sometimes even go so far as to blame the whole caste system on the low standards of behavior of lower class Negroes. Charles S. Johnson quotes an illustrative statement by a senior postal clerk in Indianapolis:

"We have a very low class of Negroes in Indianapolis. That is one reason why it is difficult for us to insist on all of our rights. We can't go to the white people and ask that certain Negroes be admitted to places and others refused. I can't blame white people, though, for drawing a line." (*Patterns of Negro Segregation*, prepared for this study [1943], p. 283.)

[16] "It is interesting to notice here that the chief device employed by upper-class

colored speakers for dissolving the antagonism of a lower-class audience was to emphasize the *solidarity of the caste*, to invoke the ideals, that is, of 'race pride' and 'race loyalty.' " (Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* [1941], p. 236.)

Chapter 37. *Compromise Leadership*

[1] "In many respects the Negro is a model prisoner—the best in this country. He accepts the situation—generally speaking—bears no malice, cherishes no ill will or resentment, and is cheerful under conditions to which the white man refuses to reconcile himself.

"This adaptability of the Negro has an immediate bearing on the question before us. It explains why the Negro masses in the Southern states are content with their situation, or at least not disturbing themselves sufficiently over it to attempt to upset the existing order. In the main, the millions in the South live at peace with their white neighbours." (Alfred Holt Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem* [1908], p. 235.)

[2] For another statement in the same direction, see Booker T. Washington, *The Story of the Negro* (1909), Vol. 1, pp. 190-191.

[3] Thus Joe Louis enables many lower class youths (in fact, many Negro youths and adults in all classes) to inflict vicariously the aggressions which they would like to carry out against whites for the discriminations and insults which they have suffered. A 19-year-old Washington youth, a high school graduate, said:

" 'I've tried to follow in Louis' footsteps, but I'm not big enough. I've heard all of his fights and seen him several times here in Washington. I've thrilled at every damned "peck" he knocked over and helped raise hell in the U street celebrations after each one. When he lost, I felt pretty bad, though I'll ever feel something was wrong—crooked. He sure proved something was wrong the way he beat up Schmeling the second time!' " (E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], p. 179.)

"Likewise, a ten year old son of a laborer would rather be Joe Louis than any other Negro in the country because he 'would get a lot of fun going in the ring and beating up somebody.' He added, 'Joe Louis has done a lot to make the colored race recognized.' " (*Ibid.*, p. 180.)

An upper class lad—a 17-year-old and college freshman—spoke of Joe Louis' fight with Schmeling as follows:

" 'I was hitting every blow with him and taking with him those he got. And when he lost, I really felt sick. Somehow I didn't even want to go on the street the next day. One thing he's done, he's certainly made the so-called white fighters have a wholesome respect for his fists. I suppose symbolically that's the only way white people can be made to respect Negroes in other walks of life.' " (*Ibid.*, p. 190.)

Charles S. Johnson observes:

"In a few areas of the South, the disposition of Negro youth to celebrate too jubilantly the fistic triumphs of Joe Louis has been brusquely and sometimes violently discouraged, indicating that the symbolism was as significant for the white as for Negro youth." (*Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], p. 246.)

[4] Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 54-55.

[5] Ralph Bunche also observes that "It is common for Negroes to have one set of ideas which they express before Negroes and a totally different set for use when in the presence of whites," and tells the following story:

"I once heard a Negro black-face comedian on the stage of the Howard Theatre in Washington enact this phenomenon most humorously. He was mimicking a 'big Negro leader' in an address to a Negro audience. After citing the grievances of the Negro people, the speaker, first looking about very cautiously to make sure there were no white eaves-droppers present, proclaimed (loudly at first, stentorian in the middle, and then dwindling to a bare stage whisper at his climax): 'What we cullud folks has to do is to RISE UP AND STRIKE DOWN these, hyah, *damned* white folks!' (last two words written in very small type.)" ("Memorandum on the Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 97.)

[6] Ralph J. Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 34-35.

[7] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 81.

[8] *Idem.*

[9] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 82.

[10] "The stories of the demeanor of Negro college presidents and the administrators of other Negro institutions, when they appear before white legislators, governors, educational officials of the state and philanthropic foundations, are legion, and these would be extremely revealing sources of information on how the Negro leader can 'go into an act' when he wants something from responsible white men. . . . Just recently a prominent Negro Republican politician demonstrated to the Committee how Negroes can 'strut' as a means of winning their favor—and he got it. The strategic personal adjustment to the attitudes of the dominant group made by the individual Negro leaders afford a wide vista and a very challenging subject for research." (*Ibid.*, p. 35.)

[11] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 125.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 11. See also Chapter 22, Section 5, of this book.

[14] "As an example, note the frantic scramble for the Negro bishoprics and the leadership contests within the lodges." (Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," p. 10.)

[15] *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), pp. 85-86.

[16] Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," p. 10 (italics ours). See also, Chapter 36, Section 5, of this book.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Chapter 38. *Negro Popular Theories*

[1] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), p. 703.

[2] Ralph J. Bunche, "Memorandum on Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 23.

[3] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), p. 202.

[4] "Programs, Ideologies, Tactics, and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Inter-

racial Organizations," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 1, p. 13.

[5] Bunche, "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," p. 98.

[6] Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1899), pp. 86-87.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 85, 93, 176, 177 *passim.*

[8] There were some Negro leaders (Isaac Myers, Josiah Weirs, Peter H. Clark, John M. Langston, Sella Martin) even during the Reconstruction period who advocated labor solidarity and trade unionism as a vital concern for the Negro people. Du Bois says: "The Negroes, especially the Northern artisans, tried to keep in touch with the white labor movement." (Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 360.) The Negro unions sent delegates to the National Labor Union Convention in New York in 1869, and Isaac Myers, their leader, appealed for solidarity between the white and Negro laborers. The white labor movement responded rather coolly and in December of 1869 the Negroes held their own convention (The National Negro Labor Convention) in Washington at which 159 delegates were present. (*Ibid.*, p. 362.)

There was even some interest in the international labor movement. In 1870 Sella Martin was sent as a delegate of the colored workers to the World Labor Congress in Paris, but international labor was as uninterested in Negro labor as was the American movement, and interest in international labor soon died among American Negro labor unionists. (*Ibid.*, pp. 360-361.) For a complete account of the Negro labor movement during Reconstruction, see *ibid.*, pp. 354-367; see also, Guion G. Johnson, "History of Racial Ideologies in the United States with Reference to the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 2, pp. 239-244, especially p. 239.

[9] Harris, in discussing the young intellectuals, says: "To have confined their propaganda to the Negro bourgeoisie would have caused the Negro radicals to compromise with the theories to which they were committed. Their acceptance of the theory of the class struggle and their application of it to the race question caused them to champion labor solidarity between white and black workers." (Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker* [1931], p. 391.)

[10] "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," pp. 131-133.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[12] "Programs, Ideologies, Tactics and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," Vol. 1, pp. 147-148.

[13] In passing it should be observed that the academic radicalism of Negro intellectuals, exemplified by the citation from Bunche, can easily come to good terms with the type of liberal but skeptical *laissez-faire* (do nothing) opinion so prevalent among white social scientists writing on the Negro problem. Both groups are critical of the fight for suffrage and civil rights. (See Chapter 39, Section 9.) Both assume that the economic factor is basic. And—since neither party is very active in trying either to induce or to prevent an economic revolution—it does not make much difference if the Negro radicals look forward to an economic revolution and the white sociologists do not. (See Appendix 2.)

[14] Gunnar Myrdal, *Population: A Problem for Democracy* (1940), pp. 87-88.

[15] "Programs, Ideologies, Tactics and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," Vol. 4, p. 778.

[16] *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), pp. 66-67.

[17] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 309.

[18] Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington* (1916), p. 40.

[19] Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 309-310.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 306.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[22] James Weldon Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[23] Examples are: E. B. Reuter, in the last chapter of *The Mulatto in the United States* (1918), and Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* (1932), pp. 578-593 *passim*.

[24] Quoted in Scott and Stowe, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

[25] Cited in Bunche, "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," p. 121.

[26] *The Negro in the New World* (1910), pp. xi-xii.

[27] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 38.

[28] "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," pp. 113-114.

[29] *Dusk of Dawn*, pp. 173-220 *passim*.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 321.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

[32] James Weldon Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

[34] "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," pp. 122-124.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[36] Ernest Sutherland Bates, *American Faith* (1940), p. 438.

[37] Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyonel C. Florant, "Negro Population and Negro Population Movements, 1860 to 1940, in Relation to Social and Economic Factors," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 44-50 (revised by Lyonel C. Florant under the title, "Negro Migration—1860-1940" [1942]). See also, Bunche, "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," pp. 51-55.

[38] Du Bois observes that "there is no likelihood just now of [the Negroes] being forcibly expelled" but continues:

"So far as that is concerned, there was no likelihood ten years ago of the Jews being expelled from Germany. The cases are far from parallel. There is a good deal more profit in cheap Negro labor than in Jewish fellow citizens, which brings together strange bed-fellows for the protection of the Negro. On the other hand one must remember that this is a day of astonishing change, injustice and cruelty; and that many Americans of stature have favored the transportation of Negroes and they were not all of the mental caliber of the present junior senator from Mississippi. As the Negro develops from an easily exploitable, profit-furnishing laborer to an intelligent independent self-supporting citizen, the possibility of his being pushed out of his American fatherland may easily be increased rather than diminished. We may be expelled from the United States as the Jew is being expelled from Germany." (*Dusk of Dawn*, p. 306.)

Unlike Du Bois, I am inclined to believe that it is less the economic rise of American Negroes to economic independence and more their submergence into unemployment and public relief which will spell the danger. If I am right, the security for the American Negro will be, first, an economic policy which will avert more unemployment, and second, a continued fortification of the American Creed.

[39] Malcolm Hailey, *An African Survey* (1938).

[40] *Dusk of Dawn*, p. 199.

[41] Ralph J. Bunche, "A Brief and Tentative Analysis of Negro Leadership," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), p. 29.

[42] Bunche, "Conceptions and Ideologies of the Negro Problem," pp. 140-141.

[43] James Weldon Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[44] Trevor Bowen, *Divine White Right* (1934), pp. vi-vii.

[45] Bertram Schrieke, *Alien Americans* (1936), p. 151.

[46] Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, p. 2.

Chapter 39. *Negro Improvement and Protest Organizations*

[1] Reform groups have occasionally become political parties in the United States. In a sense the Republican party began as a rather radical reform group. All but one or two of the small "third parties" in the history of the United States have been radical, and many of them had a nucleus in a reform group. The reforms sought have been specific —as in the case of the Prohibition party—or general—as in the case of the Socialist party. The third parties have been both short- and long-lived. Their death has not always meant failure to attain the reforms sought: in some cases one or the other of the major parties has incorporated some of the third party's aims into its own program and has succeeded in bringing it into law.

[2] Ralph Bunche, "The Programs, Ideologies, Tactics and Achievements of Negro Betterment and Interracial Organizations," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 2, pp. 419-423.

[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 423.

[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, pp. 425 ff.

[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, pp. 427-428.

[6] *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, pp. 428 ff.

[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 434.

[8] "49th State," *Compass* (March, 1936), p. 17. Cited in Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 439.

[9] The highest proportion of Negroes, of all Negroes interviewed, who have admitted pro-Japanese inclinations, in a confidential poll conducted by Negro interviewers, is 18 per cent. But in a similar poll of Southern white industrialists, asked to choose between complete Negro equality and German victory, they chose the latter by a heavy majority.

[10] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 301.

[11] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 307.

[12] Affiliated is *The Housewife's League*, working for the promotion of race business. According to a pamphlet published by The Housewife's League: "A belief in the future of Negro Business and a desire to assist in every way by patronizing and encouraging the same, is all that is necessary to become a member." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 305.)

[13] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 314.

[14] Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), p. 280.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 281.

[16] See Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 380 ff., for a critical account of the latter organization.

[17] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 306; Vol. 4, pp. 672 ff.

[18] *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 668 ff.

[19] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 319 ff.

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 323 ff.

[21] *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 355 ff.

[22] The Congress had gotten into debt to the Communist party. Davis, who as secretary had carried the chief responsibility for its work, had apparently become skeptical about the possibility of carrying on the Congress according to the original plans. (See Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 369-371. See also Lester B. Granger, "The Negro Congress—Its Future," *Opportunity* [June, 1940], pp. 164-166.)

The third Congress was much affected by the international situation. This was the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact, which opened the Second World War, and the American Communists agitated violently against American participation in the "imperialist" war, against Roosevelt's aggressive policy toward Germany, his rearmament program for America, and the aid to Great Britain. The Communists staged the Congress excellently for their purposes. According to Bunche:

"The Negro rank and file did not know what it was all about except when perfervid speeches were made demanding anti-lynching legislation, the franchise, and full democracy for the Negro. The more subtle aspects of the line that was being followed were over the heads of most of the rank and file, but the Congress was well organized and the speeches were all of a pattern." (*Op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 360.)

John L. Lewis, though not a Communist himself, gave the tone of the meeting in his keynote speech. He came out violently against the President's foreign policy and wanted the Congress to join forces with Labor's Non-Partisan League. President A. Philip Randolph spoke after Lewis and gave a carefully prepared address, later printed under the title *The World Crisis and the Negro People Today*. He pointed out that the Soviet Union was a totalitarian country pursuing power politics, and that the Communist party depended on Russian orders. He warned the Congress to stick to its principle and remain nonpartisan. Only if the Congress abstained from any political alignment and retained a minimum program of action was there hope that it could establish an effective national Negro pressure group on the basis of all Negro organizations.

"The procedure, conduct and policies of the Negro Congress, as set up in this third national meeting, will make its influence in the affairs of the American Negroes, short lived. The American Negroes will not long follow any organization which accepts dictation and control from the Communist Party. The American Negro will not long follow any organization which accepts dictation and control from any white organization." (*The World Crisis and the Negro People Today* [1940], p. 25.)

During Randolph's speech the Communists arranged a demonstration and walked out, leaving only a third of the audience when he finished talking. Thereafter nearly all speeches followed the "party line," and the Negro protest was skillfully draped in Communist slogans.

[23] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 372 ff.

[24] *The Southern Frontier* (June, 1942).

[25] Like the National Negro Congress, with which it has strong relations, it has partly been under Communist influences.

[26] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 378-379.

[27] Cited in *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 27.

[28] James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 140 ff.

[29] *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 29.

[30] *The Acid Test of Democracy*, Leaflet (1940); cited in *ibid.*, p. 44.

[31] In the following states and regions the branches have formed conferences which hold periodic state or regional conventions: Virginia, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, South Carolina, Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Texas; and Southern, Northwest and New England regions. (Information from Roy Wilkins, memorandum [August 11, 1942].)

[32] A branch is ". . . a constituent and subordinate unit of the Association, subject to the general authority and jurisdiction of the Board of Directors of the Association. Its objects shall be to promote the economic, political, civic and social betterment of colored people and their harmonious cooperation with other peoples." (Quoted in Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 36.)

[33] Information from Roy Wilkins, memorandum (August 11, 1942).

[34] The local Youth Councils are an intrinsic part of the structure of the Association. "This is an attempt by the Association to canalize . . . the current tendencies of restless youth to organize and to attract young Negroes to the organization. . . . The Youth Councils devote themselves to the broad program of the Association, with special attention to the problems of youth and employ similar tactics." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 42.)

[35] Information from Roy Wilkins, memorandum (August 11, 1942).

Concerning the last point, Wilkins comments: "Offhand, I do not believe we receive contributions from more than five foundations, and the largest gift from any of them is less than 1/80 of our total budget."

[36] *The Negro College Graduate* (1938), p. 349.

[37] Greene found that only 10 out of 367 Negro "leaders" were not college or professional school graduates. His complete figures are as follows:

Academic Preparation of Negro Leaders as Determined by the Number of Degrees they Received "In Course"

Degree	*Number*
Bachelor's	127
Master's	104
Doctoral	33
Professional	87
No degree indicated	10
No report	6

(Harry W. Greene, *Negro Leaders* [1936], p. 12.)

Some of the persons in Greene's sample were selected because they were outstanding in academic fields. Still, the high educational level of nearly everyone on Greene's list is nothing less than phenomenal and is probably not paralleled among white leaders.

[38] The Detroit branch has secured 12,000 new members in a recent membership campaign and other branches have doubled, and in some cases, trebled their membership. (Letter from Walter White [July 29, 1942].) A great proportion of the members in some branches as in Norfolk, Virginia, and Mobile, Alabama, are workers. (Roy Wilkins in memorandum [August 11, 1942].)

[39] One of the officers of the National Office is Branch Director, one is Field Secretary, one Branch Coordinator, and one, Youth Director. The National Secretary and the other national officers frequently visit the branches.

[40] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 45-47.

[41] *Program Book for N.A.A.C.P. Branches* (1939), p. 1. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 45.

A main tactic, for the branches as well as for the National Office, is legal redress. The great majority of the cases handled by the Association originate in the branches. The branches are advised to carry the financial and legal responsibility for local cases themselves as far as possible. When they cannot be so handled, the branches appeal to the National Office and its Legal Committee for assistance. If the National Office enters a case, it works in collaboration with the branches. (See *ibid.*, p. 38.) It is held that neither the National Office nor the branches should function, or could function, as a legal aid society:

"It [the Association] only handles cases where it seems great injustice has been or is about to be done because of race or color prejudice, or cases where its entry will clearly establish a precedent affecting the rights of colored people in general." (E. Frederic Morrow, *An Outline of Branch Functions*; cited in *ibid.*, p. 39.)

Thus, even if the individual sufferings cannot be disregarded as a motive for action, the main consideration must be its importance as a test case. Bunch summarizes:

"In the selection of the issues on which fights are to be waged, the branches are told to select 'live issues,' in which discriminations are glaring, 'where the correction of the injustices will benefit a large number of Negroes,' and where there is a chance to win. Publicizing the fight is regarded as an important element in the struggle, and the branches are advised never to 'start on a big campaign without telling the folks that count . . . what it is the branch is about to do,' and enlisting their support. The aid of the other organizations, such as interracial, civic, religious, and labor union groups, is also to be solicited in the campaigns, in efforts to bring maximum pressure to bear on officials, and to mold a favorable public opinion." (*Ibid.*, pp. 49-59.)

Publicity should be a vital part of the work of the branches, they are told. They are advised to build up a "contact list" of prominent people of both races, "who could assist in sending telegrams and letters of protest to officials when impending legislation is detrimental to the best interest of the group, or letters and telegrams urging enactment of impending legislation that will protect or enhance the best interests of colored people." (E. Frederic Morrow, *An Outline of Branch Functions*, p. 1; cited in *ibid.*, pp. 49-50.)

[42] The Association has been unable, for financial reasons, to carry out its old plan to employ regional secretaries to supervise and stimulate the activity of the branches. (Information from Roy Wilkins in memorandum [March 12, 1941].)

[43] An account of the observations made of N.A.A.C.P. branches by interviewers for this study is given in Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 108 ff. See also White's and Wilkins' critiques. The present writer himself visited, in the years 1938-1940, a great many N.A.A.C.P. branches in all parts of the country.

[44] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 117.

[45] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 118.

[46] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 128-129.

[47] For a survey of the independent local organizations, see *ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 587-667.

[48] *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 116-117; compare *ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 598 ff.

[49] Interview (November, 1939); quoted in *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 130.

[50] *N.A.A.C.P. Press Service*, Series No. 22; cited in *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 40. (See also *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 100.)

[51] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 100 ff.

[52] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 105.

[53] *Program Book for N.A.A.C.P. Branches*, p. 6; cited in *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 50.

[54] For a summary of N.A.A.C.P.'s achievements in the legal field, see *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 55 ff.; and the critical memoranda by Walter White and Roy Wilkins.

[55] See Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 69 ff.

[56] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 63 ff.

[57] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 78 ff.

[58] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 98 ff.

[59] See *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 79 ff.

[60] See *ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 83 ff.

[61] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 83-100.

[62] ". . . instead of waiting until cases arose out of fundamental legal and cultural patterns which were viciously anti-Negro, we began as far as our means would permit to attack the fundamental evils." (Letter from Walter White [March 15, 1941].)

This change is usually not seen or understood by the few social scientists, Negro or white, who have given some attention to the Association. Guy B. Johnson, for example, writes:

"While the organization has carried on a great deal of educational work along the line of stimulating race consciousness and race pride and has taken the offensive in a few legislative ventures, it has for the most part found itself carrying on a defensive legalistic program. That is, it has largely been concerned with specific cases involving disfranchisement, segregation, discriminatory legislation, injustice in the courts, lynching, peonage, etc." ("Negro Racial Movements and Leadership in the United States," in the *American Journal of Sociology* [July, 1937], p. 66.)

[63] E. Frederic Morrow, *An Outline of Branch Functions*, p. 1; cited by Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[64] *Program Book for N.A.A.C.P. Branches*, p. 6; cited in *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 50.

[65] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 51.

[66] ". . . the possible influence of reform organizations as well as of individual reformers in the field of race relations is definitely limited to the correction of particular instances of injustice—especially those which are so outrageous as to exceed the limits of popular prejudiced approval—and to campaigns of public enlightenment concerning the basic community of interests among all people in the United States.

"This is our reason for omitting discussion of the hundreds of organizations and movements for the improvement of race relations and the securing of justice for minorities in our country. What have such organizations as the National Urban League, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, the Commission on Interracial Cooperation accomplished to justify their existence? The answer is: Much in the way of fighting particular instances of atrocious injustice, a little in the way of the dissemination of interracial facts, and nothing so far as any general change in racial attitudes is concerned. Shortly after the World War, lynchings of Negroes declined rapidly, and a good share of the credit for this decline was claimed by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. Seven Negroes were reported to have been lynched in 1929, counting only those who were killed by mobs and not those who were otherwise mistreated, and twenty in 1930. If the Commission was responsible for declines in lynchings, is its negligence also

responsible for this increase? Actually, of course, lynchings fluctuate in practical independence of the efforts of such organizations, which have no means of attacking the fundamental causes of lynching. All praise should go to the efforts of the interracial pioneers who are sacrificing much for their ideals and who have fought valiantly for the adjustment of interracial relations. Nothing, however, is to be gained by carrying our confidence in them to the extent of believing that they may do more than battle the symptoms of race prejudice, as a fever may be reduced by the application of ice, affording some relief to the patient but not curing the disease." (Donald Young, *American Minority Peoples* [1932], pp. 589-590; compare *ibid.*, *passim.*)

Young's proof against the claims of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation of a good share in the credit for the decline in lynching is not entirely convincing. No one denies that other factors than the fight of the organizations have influence on the yearly *fluctuations*—and even the trend—of lynchings. But this does not exclude the fact that the organizations also have an influence, primarily on the *trend*, but also on the fluctuations. (See footnote [a] on p. 423.)

[67] "Now, while this legalistic approach has been successful in the sense that it has sometimes served as a goal to the South and that it has won numerous important legal cases—some of the United States Supreme Court decisions involving new precedents—it is doubtful whether it has brought the Negro any nearer his goal. The N.A.A.C.P. has been, from the standpoint of the southern white man, in the same class with abolitionists and carpetbaggers, an outside agency which has tried to impose its ideas upon him. Sociologically the weakness of the movement is inevitable and incurable; it attempts to undo the folkways and mores of the southern caste system by attacking the results and symptoms of the system. Paradoxically, if it leaves the attitudes and folkways of the white man out of its picture, it is doomed to fail; and if it takes those attitudes and folkways into account, it is either forced back to the gradualistic and conciliatory position of Booker Washington or forced forward into revolutionary tactics. One wonders then, whether its chief function, *aside from its value in actually obtaining racial rights* [n.b.], has not been to serve as a catharsis for those discontented, impatient souls who, while they see no hope of normal participation in American life, feel that they must never give in and admit that they are beaten down spiritually." (Guy B. Johnson, "Negro Racial Movements and Leadership in the United States," *op. cit.*; p. 67 [italics ours].) The obtaining of "racial rights" is, of course, the main purpose of the N.A.A.C.P.

[68] ". . . it can scarcely be claimed that these victories [won by resort to court] have materially altered any of the fundamental conditions determining the relations between the races in the country." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 141; compare *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 143-144; see also Chapter 38, Section 5, of this book.)

[69] *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), p. 39.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[71] Bertram W. Doyle, *The Etiquette of Race Relations in the South* (1937), p. 162.

[72] "The interracial make-up of the N.A.A.C.P. is also an undoubted source of organizational weakness. There can be no doubt that the Negro leaders in the organization have always kept a weather eye on the reactions of their prominent and influential white sponsors to any innovation in the program of the organization. These white sympathizers are, in the main, either cautious liberals or mawkish, missionary-minded sentimentalists on the race question. Their interest in the Negro problem is

motivated either by a sense of 'fair play' and a desire to see the ideals of the Constitution lived up to, or an 'I love your people' attitude. Both attitudes are far from touching the realities of the problem. But the evident concern for the opinions of the white supporters of the organization, especially on the part of the National Office, has been a powerful factor in keeping the Association thoroughly 'respectable' and has certainly been an influence in the very evident desire of the Association to keep its skirts free of the grimy bitterness and strife encountered in the economic arena. This has also been a responsibility of the Negro members of the Board, who, by and large, have never been distinguished for the advanced nature of their social thinking. At best they have been cautious, racially minded liberals, and not infrequently, forthright reactionaries. In general they have suffered from an intellectual myopia toward all but narrowly racial problems. The liberal, white or black, northern or southern, recoils from the shock of class conflict. Yet the twitchings of liberalism within him seek release; lacking the courage and conviction to face the harsher realities, he seeks to find release and solace in counterfeit substitutes, in political and social *ersatz*. He recognizes and revolts against injustices, but seeks to correct them with palliatives rather than solutions; for the solutions are harsh and forbidding, and are not conducive to optimism and spiritual uplift.

"The N.A.A.C.P. is an interracial organization, and, though to lesser degree than the less militant interracial groups, still leans heavily upon interracial good-will and understanding. Such reliance is a basic weakness in any organization designed to work on behalf of an economically and politically oppressed group, and where 'good-will' and inter-group 'understanding' are only will-o'-the-wisps which confuse the problem and mislead thinking on it." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 147-148.)

[73] "It has not been able to become a solid political factor . . . through taking a strong hand for or against a particular party, because of the conflicting political interests of its membership. Thus, its politics is 'Negro' politics; its political interests are measured solely in terms of the attitude of a candidate or a party toward measures directly concerned with Negro welfare." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 54.)

[74] Winning a greater membership is also important in order to give the Association a solid financial basis. On the other hand, a main impediment to the organization in attempting to recruit a larger membership is its lack of financial resources.

It is, of course, a vital necessity to the Association to keep independent as far as possible from outside support in order to maintain freedom of action. It is a public secret that one of the foundations working in the Negro field, that had earlier contributed to the Association, has tried to convince the N.A.A.C.P. that it should merge, first with the Urban League and, at a later occasion, with both the Urban League and the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. The N.A.A.C.P. refused as it was not greatly dependent on support from foundations and Community Chests and felt that a merger would hamstring the program of the Association and infringe upon its freedom to challenge the interracial *status quo*. As a result, it lost its earlier support from the foundation.

[75] See Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 218 ff.; and Paul E. Baker, *Negro-White Adjustment* (1934), pp. 21 ff.

[76] Information from Lester B. Granger (letter, August 7, 1942). Some of the contributions have the form of membership dues.

[77] Bunche, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 265.

[78] *Idem.* "It tries to make the most out of the condition of racial separatism and

appeals to the conscience and good will of the white community, especially the employing class. That the Urban League has rendered valuable services for Urban League populations throughout the country is not disputed, but it is equally true that its policy operates within the genteel framework of conciliation and interracial good will. Its efforts have had to be directed at winning the sympathies of white employers, professionals, and intellectual groups, and the top ranks of the hierarchy of organized labor. With its interracial basis, it must rely upon the good will of responsible whites." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 265-266.)

"As an interracial, dependent organization it can never develop a program which will spur the Negro masses and win their confidence. It has not exerted, nor can it, any great influence upon the thinking of Negroes nor upon their course of action. It operates strictly on the periphery of the Negro problem and never comes to grips with the fundamentals in American racial conflict." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 271-272.)

[79] Letter from Eugene Kinckle Jones (August 8, 1940).

[80] Memorandum by Eugene Kinckle Jones (June 17, 1941).

[81] Annual Conference of the Urban League in 1919, held in Detroit, Michigan.

[82] Spero and Harris quote several cases of strike-breaking. (Sterling D. Spero and Abram L. Harris, *The Black Worker* [1931], pp. 140-141.) See also, Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 268-269.

Eugene Kinckle Jones states: "No local League has ever openly engaged in strike-breaking activities. The only case in our records . . . was . . . on a job where we had furnished Negro workers on a project where the racial element was involved and not the question of wages and hours." (Memorandum, June 17, 1941.)

For a complete evaluation of this question, see Horace R. Cayton and George S. Mitchell, *Black Workers and the New Unions* (1939), pp. 398-412.

[83] Bunche writes: "The labor policy of the Urban League has been spotty. The organization's interest in increased economic opportunity for the black worker has led it to exert effort toward the lifting of trade union barriers against the Negro worker, but these efforts to get the Negro into the labor unions have been, for the most part, confined to negotiations with prominent trade union officials. No effective program for carrying the message of organized labor to the rank and file of white and black workers has yet been devised by the League. Moreover, it is doubtful that if a program revolving about labor organization and white and black labor unity were instigated by the Urban League it could be executed through the branches as they are now constituted." (Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 267.

". . . basically the policy of the Urban League is not a policy of labor organization or of working class unity. It is a policy thoroughly middle class in its orientation and perspective, which is interested only in getting jobs for Negroes. The interracial and business class structure of the directing boards of the Urban League locals have often made it impossible for the work of the League to be as soundly liberal as the local executive secretaries might often wish it to be." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 270.)

"It [the League] apparently has never convinced itself that one Negro worker in a labor union may, in terms of ultimate benefits to the Negro group, weigh more heavily than ten Negroes placed in temporary jobs as marginal workers." (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 271.)

To this Jones replies: "Doctor Bunche evidently has in his mind the type of organization he would form to correct the problems as he sees them, and he judges the National Urban League on the basis of this conception while the National Urban League has

never announced a plan to solve all of the labor problems of the Negro. . . . It has never announced that its programs is to *organize* Negro labor. It has sense enough to know that it could not be successful in this if it tried any more so than any other group, outside of the workers themselves." (Letter, August 8, 1940.)

And: "Such a program [of securing employment for Negroes] demands not only that Negroes be induced to prepare formally for jobs which the League helps to open for them, but also that labor unions be induced to welcome Negroes to membership and Negroes be educated to the value of collective bargaining as a necessary development in progressive society. . . . I think that any student of social problems must confess that the real job of workers' education belongs to the workers themselves and is a part of the program of most well organized labor movements." (Memorandum, June 17, 1941.)

The League also points to its Workers' Councils which have been organized during recent years to educate the Negro workers in the principles of collective bargaining. "The work of these Councils was not simply theoretical education. They actually organized Negroes and got them into unions where union membership was a requisite for obtaining jobs. . . . It was estimated that at least 1,000 Negro workers moved into union ranks within a space of two years as a result of the Workers' Councils' leadership." (Lester B. Granger, letter of August 7, 1942.)

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

"The League has given a good deal of attention to war housing of Negroes in such key cities as Buffalo, Detroit, Baltimore, Kansas City, New Orleans, and Atlanta. Work with local housing authorities has been accompanied by work with the National Housing Agency to insure a fair proportion of war housing for Negro workers. Local Urban Leagues have been active in the Civilian Defense program, recruiting and helping to train volunteer workers, assisting in the sale of defense and war bonds, disseminating information for consumers, and carrying on similar activities." (Letter of August 7, 1942.)

[85] Emily H. Clay observes on this point:

"For the past couple of years the Southern Region of the Y.M.C.A., which occupies space on the same floor with us, has had in its office a Negro Student Secretary. Also, for about two years (1924-1926) Mr. David O. Jones served as our General Field Secretary, resigning in 1926 to become president of Bennett College. During that period he spent part time in an office provided for him at our headquarters and part time, for convenience, in an office provided on one of the local campuses [in a Negro university].

Although it has been discussed from time to time, we have not had a Negro on our headquarters staff since 1926." (Letter, August 24, 1942.)

[86] *The Negro: The Southerner's Problem* (1904), p. 16.

[87] Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington* (1916), p. 26.

[88] Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 20.

[89] "A week after the Armistice one might have observed a subtle but ominous change. Distrust was awakened. What would be the attitude of the Negro troops when they returned from France? Rumors filled the air, and by the time the soldiers began to return suspicion and fear had taken deep hold upon both races. Mob violence, which had greatly declined during the war, burst out afresh. In city after city race riots flamed up, with casualties on both sides. The tension tightened everywhere, and with dread suspense the Nation awaited the outcome." (*The Interracial Commission Comes of Age*, leaflet [February, 1942].)

[90] *A Practical Approach to the Race Problem*, leaflet published by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (October, 1939).

[91] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 449 ff.

[92] Jessie Daniel Ames, *Democratic Processes at Work in the South, Report of Commission on Interracial Cooperation 1939-1941* (October, 1941). On the activity of the state and local committees as of 1939-1940, see Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 461 ff.

[93] "We now have active State Committees in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. . . the ground work is now being laid for the reorganization of active committees in Arkansas and Florida. . . . We have the following active local or county committees: Alabama—Jefferson County; Florida—Ocala; Georgia—Fulton-DeKalb County, Griffin, Macon Area (17 counties), and Savannah; South Carolina—Charleston, Florence, Greenwood County, and Sumter County; Texas—Austin, Dallas, and Houston; Tennessee—Memphis. There are also local committees in North Carolina and Virginia, but I cannot give you a current list of these just now.

"Although the actual membership of our committees is not large, it is representative of a great many organizations through which we are able to extend our program." (Letter from Emily H. Clay, [August 24, 1942].)

The field staff now includes two full-time workers in addition to the white Director of Field Work in the Atlanta Office; of the two field workers, one is a Negro.

[94] *The Interracial Commission Comes of Age*, leaflet (February, 1942).

[95] ". . . the Commission has refused to bind either itself or the state committees, with rigid rules and regulations. It still refuses to dictate a program to any state or community. It does, however, assist in setting up state and local committees and, if they request help, will cooperate in the development of a program upon which the community agrees." (*Ibid.*)

[96] The figure is an average from 1922 to 1942. (Information from Emily H. Clay, letter, August 24, 1942.)

[97] Information from Emily H. Clay, letter, August 27, 1942.

[98] Quoted in Paul E. Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

[99] R. B. Eleazer in comment at the Seminar on American Racialism held by the American Missionary Association Division, New York City, January 16, 1942.

[100] Sections 7, 15, and 716 of the Penal Code of Georgia. (See Chapter 11, Section 9.)

[101] Emily H. Clay, memorandum, August, 1942.

[102] "A Practical Approach to the Race Problem," *op. cit.*

[103] Letter, August 13, 1942.

[104] Bunche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 4, p. 551.

[105] *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 557 ff.

[106] Questionnaire returned by Arthur Raper, formerly Research Secretary of the Commission, February 26, 1940; cited in *ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 460.

[107] "Six of the eight State Committees . . . have dues paying memberships, as follows: Alabama—61, $2.00; Georgia—191, $2.00; Kentucky—155, $1.00; Texas—135, $5.00; Mississippi—120, $2.00; South Carolina—137, $1.00. Some of the local or county committees also have dues, among these the Fulton-DeKalb and Macon Area Committees, to which the members pay fifty cents annually." (Emily H. Clay, letter, August 24, 1942.)

[108] *The Crisis* (July, 1918), p. 111. (Italics ours.)

[109] *N.A.A.C.P. Press Release* (December 12, 1941).

[110] The story is told by Earl Brown, "American Negroes and the War," *Harper's Magazine* (April, 1942), pp. 545-552.

[111] A. Philip Randolph, National Director, March-on-Washington movement, Madison Square Garden, June 16, 1942, pp. 13-14.

[112] This demand is not only raised by critical Negro intellectuals (see Chapter 38, Section 5), but also by many conciliatory white friends of the Negro cause. Guy B. Johnson, for instance, in a commencement address at a Virginia Negro college (published in the *Virginia State College Gazette* [December, 1939]) pointed out:

"The . . . great need in the strategy of the Negro group is an effective organization. Now I realize that there are many organizations, but there is not one which has the confidence of anything like a majority of the Negro population . . .

"An organization such as I have in mind should be race-wide, drawing support from all segments of the Negro population. It should be militant but not so militant as to scare off the majority of Negroes who have to earn their bread and butter in the South. It should combine the idealism of the N.A.A.C.P. with the patience and opportunism of the Southern Commission on Interracial Cooperation. It should be realistic in its tactics." (*Ibid.*, p. 12.)

And Johnson adds:

"I am aware that all this sounds like the rankest sort of opportunism. That is exactly what it is, and, in my humble opinion, that is exactly what it takes to form a good strategy for a minority group organization. But whether you agree with me or not on this point, I believe you will agree that the Negro's bargaining power would be much stronger if he could consolidate his forces into one organization which would command the respect and the support of many thousands of Negroes in all walks of life." (*Ibid.*, p. 14; compare the discussion in *The Crisis* [July, 1939], p. 209 and [September, 1939] pp. 271-272.)

[113] *Race Adjustment* (1908), p. 24.

[114] *Negro Americans, What Now?* pp. 81 and 87.

[115] *The World Crisis and the Negro People Today*, p. 14.

[116] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Chapter 40. *The Negro Church*

[1] A few had been slaves in Portugal. Most of these were probably Christians, as were a few who had been converted in Africa and the West Indies. Some others had been converted to Islam in Africa. (Melville J. Herskovits, "Social History of the Negro" in Carl Murchison [editor], *A Handbook of Social Psychology* [1935], pp. 234-240.)

[2] *White and Black* (1879), p. 132.

[3] See Allison Davis, "The Negro Church and Associations in the Lower South," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 36-37.

[4] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* (1941), pp. 135-136.

[5] For an imperfect but reasonable substantiation of these statements, see the manuscripts prepared for this study, already referred to, by J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago" (1940); Allison Davis, "The Negro Church and Associations in the Lower South" (1940); and Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, "The Church and the Race Problem in the United States" (1940). Also see: Benjamin E. Mays and J. W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (1933); and U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies, 1936* (1941), Vol. 1.

[6] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies, 1936*, Vol. 1, pp. 86 and 851. The total reported church membership was 55,807,366. The figure for white churches was calculated by subtracting the Negroes from the total, thus ignoring Orientals and Indians.

[7] Population is taken as of 1940. Sources: *Religious Bodies, 1936*, pp. 86 and 851; and *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population*. Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 1.

[8] Guy B. Johnson, "Some Factors in the Development of Negro Social Institutions in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* (November, 1934), pp. 329-337. Also see Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 292; Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), pp. 245-246; and Drake, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-255. The Johnsons point out that ". . . almost every Negro religious body listed in the census has its white counterpart in doctrine and policy, except for minor variations." (*Op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 292.)

[9] Drake, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

[10] "The majority of Negro youth of all classes believe that God is white. To lower-class youth, He resembles a kindly paternalistic, upper-class white man. They believe that because of His goodness and justice, colored people will not suffer discrimination in the other world." (E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], p. 133.)

[11] Drake, *op. cit.*, pp. 426 ff.

[12] Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 135.

[13] James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 165-166. For further discussion of this point, see Chapter 43, Section 3, of this book.

[14] The Roman Catholic Church, though not state-supported, often gets persons from all social classes in the same congregation. It is my belief that, for this reason, there is a relatively greater feeling of equality among Catholic laymen.

[15] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown America* (1933; first edition, 1931), pp. 208-209.

[16] Thomas P. Bailey, *Race Orthodoxy in the South* (1914), pp. 343-345.

[17] Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 253.

[18] For a discussion of Southern church attitudes, see Virginius Dabney, *Liberalism in the South* (1932), pp. 287-308, and Wilbur J. Cash, *The Mind of the South* (1941), pp. 333-337.

[19] Baker quoted a Southern clergyman's description of the situation up to 1900:

"The Rev. H. S. Bradley, for a long time one of the leading clergymen of Atlanta, now of St. Louis, said in a sermon published in the Atlanta *Constitution*:

" '. . . We have not been wholly lacking in our effort to help. There are a few schools and churches supported by Southern whites for the Negroes. Here and there a man like George Williams Walker, of the aristocracy of South Carolina, and a woman like Miss Belle H. Bennett, of the blue blood of Kentucky, goes as teacher to the Negro youth, and seeks in a Christly spirit of fraternity to bring them to a higher plane of civil and moral manhood, but the number like them can almost be counted on fingers of both hands.

" 'Our Southern churches have spent probably a hundred times as much money since the Civil War in an effort to evangelize the people of China, Japan, India, South America Africa, Mexico, and Cuba, as they have spent to give the Gospel to the Negroes at our doors. It is often true that opportunity is overlooked because it lies at our feet.' " (Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* [1908], p. 56.)

Weatherford pointed out in 1912 that: "The Southern Baptist Convention has only been asking from its large membership $15,000 annually, or less than one cent per member . . ." (W. D. Weatherford, *Present Forces in Negro Progress* [1912], pp. 164-165.)

[20] Quoted in Ray Stannard Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

[21] Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 212-213.

[22] A study of 64 ministers in Chicago (pastors of churches either owning or buying their buildings) revealed that:

" '. . . four-fifths of the ministers of the regular sample condemned racial division, the accompanying attitudes or both. Yet only one-third of the regular sample were unwilling to grant that the religious needs of Negroes are best served by separate racial churches. Stated differently, all but one-fifth condemned racial division, but only one-third took the position that the separate Negro church does not serve the religious needs of colored people best . . .' " (Jesse H. Atwood, "The Attitudes of Negro Ministers of the Major Denominations Toward Racial Division in Protestantism," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago [1930], p. 78. Quoted in Drake, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.)

[23] According to the 1936 census of Religious Bodies, the proportion in 1936 was only 3.8 per cent in New Jersey, 1.4 per cent in New York, 2.1 per cent in Illinois, and 2.7 per cent in Pennsylvania. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies, 1936*, Vol. 1, pp. 878, 888, and 892.) These proportions do not include a significant number of Negroes who attend mixed Catholic churches, and the census, as we have pointed out, under-enumerates the Negro Catholics. The highest reported proportion of Negro Catholics, irrespective of whether they attended Negro or mixed churches, was 7.4 per cent for Harlem in 1930. (The Greater New York Federation of Churches, *The Negro Churches in Manhattan* [1930], pp. 11-18.)

[24] See Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 198-200.

[25] There is one type of contact between Negro and white churches that usually causes unfriendliness. As Negro districts have expanded in Northern cities, white congregations have felt forced to sell their church edifices to Negro congregations. Not

only this, but the attendant financial difficulties promote ill-will. The whites usually do not realize that their church buildings have deteriorated in value since the time they were built, and the Negroes are often unwise in assuming obligations which they cannot meet. (See Mays and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 181 ff.)

[26] "The Churches have either had nothing to say on the subjects of low wages and long hours in the mills, or have distracted attention from economic wrongs by stressing the calamities of individual sinfulness." (Broadus Mitchell and George S. Mitchell, *The Industrial Revolution in the South* [1930], p. 144.)

[27] Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (1899), p. 170.

[28] There are plenty of Negro preachers. In 1930, Negroes constituted 9.7 per cent of the total population, but about 16.8 per cent of all clergymen. The actual figure is probably higher than this, since some Negro preachers have other occupations, and the latter may be the ones reported to the census-taker. (*Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 32-33.) Many of these preachers—the so-called "jack leg" preachers—have no congregation.

[29] See Mays and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 10 *passim.*

[30] On the basis of their sample study of 185 rural Negro churches and 609 urban Negro churches in 1930, Mays and Nicholson (*ibid.*, pp. 171 and 261) report the following percentage distribution of church expenditures:

	185 Rural Churches	*609 Urban Churches*
Salaries	69.9	43.2
Interest and Reduction of Church Debt	2.0	22.9
Benevolence and Miscellaneous Items (including insurance, rent, heat, light)	15.8	21.0
Education, Missions, etc.	5.9	6.6
Repairs and Upkeep	6.4	6.3
	100.0	100.0

Of the urban churches, 71.3 per cent reported that their buildings were under a mortgage.

[31] Fry's analysis of the 1926 Census of Religious Bodies indicates that the following percentages of Protestant clergymen reported that they graduated either from college or seminary:

	Negro	*White*
Urban	38	80
Rural	17	47

(C. Luther Fry, *The United States Looks at Its Churches* [1930], pp. 64-66.) These figures are inflated by exaggeration in reporting and by overlooking some of the smaller churches. Mays and Nicholson (*op. cit.*, p. 302) questioned 590 urban Negro ministers and found that only 27.7 per cent claimed to have graduated from college or seminary. They also reported that 57.5 per cent of 134 rural Negro ministers had only a grammar school education or less. (*Ibid.*, p. 238.)

In a study of 1,200 Negro ministers, Woodson found that 70 per cent had no college

degree. He also found that those with a degree—either in theology or in liberal arts, or both—were mostly from unaccredited colleges. (Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro Professional Man and the Community* [1934], p. 64.) When we speak of the college-trained Negro clergymen, we must keep in mind that the standards of their colleges and seminaries in the South are pitifully poor in most cases.

[32] In 1930, clergymen still constituted 18.4 per cent of all professionals among Negroes and only 3.4 per cent among native whites. (*Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, pp. 32-33.)

[33] Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-125. Also see Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 497; and the recent studies of The American Youth Commission, especially E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), p. 133.

[34] Charles S. Johnson supports, and has some evidence to prove, the position that rural Negro youth are more dissatisfied with the church than urban Negro youth. (*Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 145-164.)

[35] We may cite again Woodson's finding that only seven-tenths of 1 per cent of a sample of high school graduates expressed the intention of entering the ministry. (Woodson, *op. cit.*, p. 80.)

[36] On the basis of a sample study of 5,512 Negro college graduates, who were not quite representative of the total population of Negro college graduates, Charles S. Johnson reports the following percentage distribution suggesting the degree of adherence to the church on the part of this group:

Not a member	5.3
Inactive member	15.1
Active member	48.1
Officer	12.5
Preacher	3.1
Not given	15.9
	100.0

(Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro College Graduate* [1938], p. 347.)

[37] *Op. cit.*, pp. 102 and 139.

Chapter 41. *The Negro School*

[1] Caroline F. Ware, *Greenwich Village* (1935), pp. 455-461.

[2] Cited by Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908) p. 247.

[3] John Dewey, "The Determination of Ultimate Values or Aims through Antecedent or A Priori Speculation or through Pragmatic or Empirical Inquiry," in *The Scientific Movement in Education, the Thirty-Seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Part 2 (1938), pp. 475-476.

[4] Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery* (1901; first edition, 1900), pp. 29-30.

[5] Sir George Campbell, *White and Black* (1879), p. 259.

[6] James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (1910; first edition, 1893), Vol. 2, p. 520.

[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

[8] Bryce, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 320.

[9] The Southern pro-slavery theory was expounded upon the principle of equality among the whites just as much as of their superiority over the Negroes (see Chapters 20 and 31). One of the glaring contradictions between philosophy and life in the Old South was, therefore, its aristocratic educational system which left the masses of poor whites altogether uneducated. This was seen by some of the pro-slavery advocates. George Fitzhugh, for instance, wrote:

"We need never have white slaves in the South, because we have black ones. Our citizens, like those of Rome and Athens, are a privileged class. We should train and educate them to deserve the privileges and to perform the duties which society confers on them. Instead, by a low demagoguism depressing their self-respect by discourses on the equality of man, we had better excite their pride by reminding them that they do not fulfill the menial offices which white men do in other countries. Society does not feel the burden of providing for the few helpless paupers in the South. And we should recollect that here we have but half the people to educate, for half are Negroes; whilst at the North they profess to educate all. It is in our power to spike this last gun of the abolitionists. We should educate all the poor." (*Sociology for the South* [1854], p. 93; compare pp. 144, 147 ff., 255 ff., *passim.*)

[10] Before the Civil War many of the Northern states had separate schools for Negroes, but these were not very inferior to those for whites. Most colleges—with the notable exceptions of Oneida Institute, New York Central College, and Oberlin College (whose President was Horace Mann, the greatest leader of public education in the United States)—refused to accept Negroes, but three Negro colleges—Avery College (Pennsylvania, 1849), Ashmun Institute (now Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, 1854), Wilberforce University (Ohio, 1856)—were established there. (See Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro in American Education," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], Vol. 1, p. 91.)

[11] Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934), p. 21. See also Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), pp. 350-351. South Carolina and Georgia had such laws in the eighteenth century.

[12] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (1935), p. 638. The Census of 1870 reports that 18.6 per cent of all Negroes 10 years old and over were literate. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes In the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 231.) This figure includes the *ante-bellum* free Negro population (who could go to school in the North), and it probably includes many Negroes whose literacy consisted in nothing more than ability to write one's name. Too, it refers to a date five years after the end of the Civil War.

[13] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 123.

[14] They have been very differently judged. A Southern white liberal in the previous generation, Thomas Nelson Page, wrote:

"But the teachers, at first, devoted as many of them were, by their unwisdom alienated the good-will of the whites and frustrated much of the good which they might have accomplished. They might have been regarded with distrust in any case, for no people look with favor on the missionaries who come to instruct them as to matters of which they feel they know much more than the missionaries, and the South regarded jealously any teaching of the Negroes which looked toward equality. The new missionaries went counter to the deepest prejudice of the Southern people. They lived with the

Negroes, consorting with them, and appearing with them on terms of apparent intimacy, and were believed to teach social equality, a doctrine which was the surest of all to arouse enmity then as now." (*The Negro: the Southerner's Problem* [1904], pp. 38-39.)
Modern Southern liberals are much more appreciative. T. J. Woofter, Jr., for instance, writes:

"For some time after the Civil War these boards gave considerable more than money. They sent some of the choicest spirits in their ranks as missionary teachers. Facing discouragement, ostracism, and many other difficulties, these white teachers preserved the link of connection between the white race and the training of Negroes in the higher schools. They have left their indelible imprints upon such institutions as Fisk, Howard, Atlanta, Tougaloo, Talladega, Lincoln, Straight, Hampton, Clark, and Meharry Medical College, as well as upon a number of smaller denominational high schools. The character and devotion of many of the well-trained Negroes of today is due largely to the efforts of these missionaries, and the South and the Negro race owe them much gratitude." (*Basis of Racial Adjustment* [1925], p. 194.)

Negroes have been almost consistently appreciative of the "Yankee teachers." Booker T. Washington said:

"Whenever it is written—and I hope it will be—the part that the Yankee teachers played in the education of the Negroes immediately after the war will make one of the most thrilling parts of the history of this country. The time is not far distant when the whole South will appreciate this service in a way that it has not yet been able to do." (*Op. cit.*, p. 62.)

Du Bois amplifies the praise even more:

". . . which once saintly souls brought to their favored children in the crusade of the sixties, that finest thing in American history, and one of the few things untainted by sordid greed and cheap vainglory. The teachers in these institutions came not to keep the Negroes in their place, but to raise them out of the defilement of the places where slavery had wallowed them. The colleges they founded were social settlements; homes where the best of the sons of the freedmen came in close and sympathetic touch with the best traditions of New England. They lived and ate together, studied and worked, hoped and harkened in the dawning light. In actual formal content their curriculum was doubtless old-fashioned, but in educational power it was supreme, for it was the contact of living souls." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], p. 100.)

[15] Paul H. Buck, *The Road to Reunion 1865-1900* (1937), p. 166.

[16] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 667.

[17] *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

[18] The difference in opinion existed before the Civil War. Free Negroes in the South had hoped the whites there would let them have schools if they were of the "industrial" type. In 1853, Frederick Douglass expressed himself as in favor of "an industrial school" when Harriet Beecher Stowe offered some money either for this or for an "educational institution pure and simple." He wished established ". . . a series of workshops, where colored people could learn some of the handicrafts, learn to work in iron, wood, and leather, and where a plain English education could also be taught." His opinion was ". . . that *want* of money was the root of all evil to the colored people. They were shut out from all lucrative employments and compelled to be merely barbers, waiters, coachmen and the like at wages so low that they could buy up little or nothing."

(See Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* [1941; first edition, 1893], p. 315.)

[19] Armstrong was one of the few "carpetbaggers" who did not come from New England; rather, he had been a missionary to the natives in Hawaii. This may explain the differences between him and the other leading carpetbaggers with respect to their attitudes toward Negro education. General O. O. Howard, for example, the head of the Freedmen's Bureau, established Howard University in Washington, D. C., as a liberal arts college. Similarly, General Swayne established the liberal arts Talladega College; and E. M. Cravath left the Federal Army to build up Fisk—a liberal arts college.

[20] Most of the facts about the work of the foundations in the educational field have been taken from Weatherford and Johnson (*op. cit.*, pp. 363-364); from a pamphlet by Robert M. Lester, Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, "Corporation Grants for Education of the Negro" (November, 1941); and from Bond (*op. cit.*, pp. 130-144).

[21] The Peabody Fund was discontinued in 1914 and divided its money between the Slater Fund and the George Peabody College for Teachers, at Nashville. Although only whites are taught at this college, they are given some understanding of Negro needs and abilities.

[22] While everyone agrees that the Jeanes teachers have made a great improvement in Southern Negro education, they have been criticized as overworked, disorganized, and inclined to bow too much to Southern folkways. Regarding the latter point, one white school superintendent in Louisiana stated:

"Somehow they see only the best things in the colored schools in their parish. That's what they talk about—the rosy things. They forget about all the bad things, they just ignore them—never talk about them. Why, I've been to their meetings, and to hear them talk every one of them comes from the best parish in the state. They just see the world through rose-colored glasses. You see, that has the effect of leaving people who *might* do something about colored schools in ignorance." (Interview in Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," *Louisiana Educational Survey*, Section 8 [1942], p. 40.)

When judging the Jeanes teachers and their work—as so much else in Negro education—it should be remembered, however, that they are nothing else than heroic attempts to mitigate in a small way what is actually the result both of the extreme poverty and cultural backwardness in the Southern rural Negro community, and the outright discrimination against the Negro schools, which keeps them on an often incredibly low standard in regard to both equipment and training of teachers. When the Jeanes teacher is viewed in this setting, she becomes a remarkable and pathetic figure in the history of Negro education.

[23] Schrieke describes the activities and problems of the General Education Board supervisors:

"For the most part it was the work of the state agents for the Negro schools, who emphasized the needs and grasped the opportunities. Nobody who has not actually seen them in their work can realize the difficulties they must face almost daily. Although nominally officers of the state departments of education, their salaries are paid by the philanthropic foundations; they are supervisors of Negro education but have no authority whatever. For their success must depend entirely upon the goodwill they manage to create and upon their personal prestige. They live and work in the South with its

prejudices. Of course they are Southerners themselves and know how far they can go, but they are restrained in their efforts by the milieu. They have to be extremely careful not to arouse sentiments that would impede the progress of their work. For their success they must depend upon the traditional paternalistic attitude towards the Negro who keeps in his place. They have a definite task, but they are subordinate to the state superintendent of education, who may be an educator and an organizer, but who may also be a politician, playing partisan politics." (B. Schrieke, *Alien Americans* [1936], pp. 163-164.)

The present writer has been equally impressed by the activity of the state agents for Negro education. To Schrieke's evaluation I should like to add a few observations. The independence of the agents, since they drew their salaries not from state funds but from an outside agency which could keep a control over their selection, has given this group of public servants a rare spirit of zeal and devotion which is now upheld as a great tradition. To the outsider, it is striking that this group contains individuals who are extraordinary in their surroundings on account of freedom from prejudice and thorough knowledge and understanding not only of the Negro school but of the whole setting of social and economic problems in which it is enclosed. Their policy could be called "progressive opportunism."

[24] Between 1913 and 1932, some 5,357 Negro school buildings in 15 Southern states were constructed with Rosenwald aid. "The total cost of these buildings was $28,408,520 of which $18,104,155 (64%) came from tax funds, $1,211,975 (4%) from personal contributions of white friends, $4,366,519 (15%) from the Julius Rosenwald Fund . . . and $4,725,871 (17%) in a flood of small contributions from Negroes themselves—striking evidence of the desire of members of this race for schooling for their children." (Edwin R. Embree, *Julius Rosenwald Fund: Review of Two Decades, 1917-1936* [1936], p. 23.)

Doxey Wilkerson makes the following comparison:

"When the number of 'Rosenwald buildings' constructed during this 20-year period is compared with the total number of Negro schools in 12 States for which information is available, it will be seen that the number of buildings constructed with Rosenwald aid is equivalent to about one-fifth (20 per cent) of the total number of Negro school buildings in 1935-36. More than one-fourth of the Negro school buildings in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Maryland, and nearly one-third in North Carolina and Tennessee were constructed with Rosenwald aid. Similarly, in the 10 States for which information is at hand, the amount of money invested in 'Rosenwald buildings' is equivalent to nearly one-third (32 per cent) of the total value of Negro school property in 1935-36. In South Carolina the corresponding proportion is more than one-half, in Arkansas nearly three-fourths, and in Mississippi nearly nine-tenths." (Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* [1939], pp. 32-33; Wilkerson's sources are David T. Blose and Ambrose Caliver, *Statistics of the Education of Negroes: 1933-34 and 1935-36*, U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 13 [1938], p. 22, and *Negro Year Book: 1937-38* [1937], p. 185.) See also, U.S. Office of Education, *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1934-36*, Bulletin No. 2 (1938), Vol. 1, pp. 80-89.

[25] For a recent, good impressionistic survey of both white and Negro colleges and universities in the South, see Virginius Dabney, *Below the Potomac* (1942), pp. 139-176 and 226-233.

[26] Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation* (1934), p. 129.

[27] Page, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-297.

[28] Kelly Miller, *Out of the House of Bondage* (1914), pp. 151-152.

[29] The last point, and the entire caste issue, is illustrated by the following quotation from Thomas Nelson Page:

"At this point, the question arises: How shall they [the Negroes] be improved? One element says, Improve them, but only as laborers, for which alone they are fitted; another, with a large charity, says, Enlarge this and give them a chance to become good mechanics, as they have shown themselves capable of improvement in the industrial field; a third class goes further yet, and says, Give them a yet further chance—a chance to develop themselves; enlighten them and teach them the duties of citizenship and they will become measurably good citizens. Yet another says, Give him the opportunity and push him till he is stuffed full of the ideas and the learning that have made the white race what it is.

"The last of these theories appears to the writer as unsound as the first, which is certainly unsound. Keep them ignorant, and the clever and the enterprising will go off and leave to the South the dull, the stupid, and the degraded.

"The question is no longer a choice between the old-time Negro and the 'new issue', but between the 'new issue', made into a fairly good laborer and a fairly enlightened citizen, who in time will learn his proper place, whatever it may be, or the 'new issue', dull, ignorant, brutish, liable to be worked on by the most crafty of those who would use him; a noisome, human hot-bed, in which every form of viciousness will germinate." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.)

[30] "Student labor is two-fold in its object, instruction and production, knowledge and support. . . . To destroy the industrial system would . . . destroy its best results, and place it beyond the reach of the most needy and deserving class of pupils." (*Report of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute* [1875], pp. 6-7.)

[31] Winfield H. Collins, *The Truth about Lynching and the Negro in the South* (1918), pp. 154-155.

[32] Within the same city, public schools for whites offer different vocational training than do public schools for Negroes:

"In Little Rock, for example, the white schools offer printing, aviation, automobile retail selling, and cosmetology; the Negro schools offer bricklaying, carpentry, automobile mechanics, and sewing. In Pine Bluff four vocations were offered in the white and Negro high schools—carpentry and automobile mechanics in both of them—with bookkeeping and typing making up the third and fourth for the whites and cooking and sewing for the Negroes; in Anniston, Alabama, five for whites and none for Negroes; Phoenix City, two for whites, one for Negroes; Selma, similar number. In a few instances the Negroes had more courses, but in general they had fewer courses and more of the most menial ones." (Arthur Raper, "Race and Class Pressures," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], p. 230.) Raper bases his information on a questionnaire returned by 88 Negro high school principals of the South.

[33] Charles S. Mangum, Jr., *Legal Status of the Negro* (1940), pp. 132-133.

[34] A vigorous and detailed plea for giving the Negro special training to meet special problems may be found in Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (1933).

James Weldon Johnson gives a good account of these ideas as they have become common among Negro intellectuals today:

"The old pattern was designed to give us a sound general education, an education to fit us to take our places as intelligent American citizens. That idea of education is fundamental and right; for whatever may be the opinions and attitudes on the matter, the solid fact remains that we are, for good or ill, a part of American civilization. We may be segregated and Jim-Crowed, but there is no way to subtract or extract us from American life; so we must be prepared to keep adjusted to it, to keep pace with it. And that means that our institutions must give Negro youth as good, as broad, and as high an education as is correspondingly given to white youth.

"But we need not only an education that will enable us to meet the general situation as American citizens, we need also an education that will enable us to meet our peculiar situation as Negro Americans.

". . . the teaching of history to Negro youth should not confine itself to the experiences of the race in America, but should explore the achievements that lie in the African background. A study of the African cultural background will give our youth a new and higher sense of racial self-respect, and will disprove entirely the theory of innate race inferiority. . . .

"What I have said about the teaching of American history is to be said also about the teaching of economics, political science, sociology, literature, and other of the arts. It is something pretty close to a waste of time for Negro students to study the laws of economics without being given an interpretation of the effects of those laws on the economic and industrial plight of Negro Americans. In teaching the science of government, what is purely academic should be supplemented by inferences drawn from government as it is constituted, maintained, and enforced in the United States and the various states, and from its operation on Negro Americans as a group. I do not in the least advocate that our colleges become any part of political machinery or touched by partisan politics, but I firmly believe that special political education of Negro youth is a proper and necessary function for them. The political history of the race should be reviewed; independent political thinking should be inculcated; political rights and responsibilities should be explained, and preparation for exercising those rights and assuming those responsibilities should be given." (*Negro Americans, What Now?* [1934], pp. 48-49.)

[35] "The stimulation of race pride demands that colored pupils be taught more of the history and achievements of their own race. The growing body of literature by colored writers should be studied and the accomplishments of colored men of mark held up as inspiring examples." (Woofter, *op. cit.*, p. 183.)

[36] See Part VII. It is remarkable that segregation is upheld even in the institutions for higher learning and even in the graduate schools. This is, of course, related to the fact that colleges in America generally stress the social side of life so much (the so-called extra-curricular activities) and the scholarly side less. In the South this stress is even more apparent. Even the graduate schools in the South do not have much of the spirit of the age-old ideal of the "academic republic" where abstract truth-seeking is supreme and where age, nationality, language, and other individual characteristics are ignored. It is probable, however, that segregation will first break down, if ever, in the graduate institutions.

Wilkerson polled 838 students in a white land-grant college in the Deep South on the issue of mixed education and reports the following reaction.

Questions and Choices Presented Students	Percentage of Total Students (N = 838)
"I. If a few Negroes are admitted by order of court or legislature: *'Should the other students leave in protest?'*	
(a) Certainly should not	23
(b) Probably should not	17
(c) Can't say; not sure	9
(d) Probably should	16
(e) Certainly should	34
"II. If a student plans to enter, but learns a few Negroes might be enrolled: *'Should he enter the institution anyway?'*	
(a) Certainly should	21
(b) Probably should	15
(c) Can't say; not sure	7
(d) Probably should not	19
(e) Certainly should not	37
"III. If a few Negroes are admitted by order of court or legislature: *'How should the other students treat them?'*	
(a) Go out of the way to be friendly to them	0.4
(b) Make no advances but accept their presence in good grace	46
(c) Can't say; not sure	7
(d) Deliberately ignore them so they'll feel they are not wanted	27
(e) Organize to make life miserable for them; try to force them to leave	20
"IV. If court or legislature orders admission of Negroes: *'Out of a class of 100, how many might be Negroes before their presence would create a serious problem?'*	
0-1	49
2-5	19
6-11	17
16 and over	15"

(Wilkerson, "The Negro in American Education," pp. 183-184.)

[37] See, for instance, Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* (1929), p. 114.

[38] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Does the Negro Need Separate Schools?," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1935), p. 335.

Booker T. Washington, in reply to an inquiry from whites on how to accomplish segregation in the North, said:

"As a rule, colored people in the Northern States are very much opposed to any plans for separate schools, and I think their feelings in the matter deserve consideration. The real objection to separate schools, from their point of view, is that they do not like to

feel that they are compelled to go to one school rather than the other. It seems as if it was taking away part of their freedom. This feeling is likely to be all the stronger where the matter is made a subject of public agitation. On the other hand, my experience is that if this matter is left to the discretion of the school officials it usually settles itself. As the colored people usually live pretty closely together, there will naturally be schools in which colored students are in the majority. In that case, the process of separation takes place naturally and without the necessity of changing the constitution. If you make it a constitutional question, the colored people are going to be opposed to it. If you leave it simply an administrative question, which it really is, the matter will very likely settle itself." (Quoted in Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington* [1916], pp. 42-43.) For another similar situation, see Moton, *op. cit.*, pp. 112 ff.

[39] Schrieke, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-167.

[40] The latter type may be exemplified by the following quotation from Schrieke:

". . . the same curriculum is taught in the Negro schools as in the white, and the same books are supposed to be used. The children are grouped in grades, but, as a matter of fact, these grades have only a theoretical value which does not correspond with that which the white schools attach to it. I found pupils in an eighth grade studying commercial geography without maps, and in another place I found them studying the state history. In both cases they understood almost nothing of the subjects, with the result that the geography and history classes simply developed into very poor reading classes—poor because the worst kind of training in reading is the reciting of words and sentences which have no meaning for the reader. I have seen textbooks on literature used when the pupils did not understand one word of what they read. The English was far too difficult. I found seventh- and eighth-grade pupils unable to spell 'April' or 'cotton.' " (*Op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.)

[41] The theory behind it may be exemplified by the following quotation from Willis D. Weatherford:

"Perhaps the weakest point in the Negro school is its maladjusted course of study. Most of the Negro children are located in the rural districts. These children, like the white rural children, are being taught from books made almost entirely by city teachers and adapted to city children. They talk about problems and situations arising in urban communities. The city is glorified and the country neglected. This has a tendency to make the rural child dissatisfied with the rural surrounding, and desirous of getting away to the city . . . but if nine-tenths of the material in their readers and histories relates to things that do not concern their daily life, how can we expect their school work to give them any appreciation of their surroundings? . . . There is a great need that we have two sets of text books, one for the rural children and one for the urban . . . the body of the text for the rural child will deal with the materials at hand. It will teach him the beauty of nature, and it will help him observe the birds and bees, the flowers and plants and trees; it will help him see new beauty in the growing crops and the fallow fields. Who would dare say there was not as much real culture in studying the life about him as in studying the life offered by the city zoo? . . . What the rural child needs—and especially is this true of the Negro child—is a new ability to interpret the life that surrounds him." (Weatherford and Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 360-361.)

Chapter 42. *The Negro Press*

[1] Willis D. Weatherford and Charles S. Johnson, *Race Relations* (1934), p. 485.

[2] Frederick G. Detweiler, *The Negro Press in the United States* (1922), p. 79.

[3] "The Negro Press—Today and Tomorrow," *Opportunity* (July, 1939), p. 205.

[4] Florence Murray (editor), *The Negro Handbook* (1942), p. 201. (The figures are taken from a U.S. Bureau of the Census report for 1940.)

[5] *The Negro Handbook*, p. 201.

[6] The U.S. Bureau of the Census reported that there were 210 Negro newspapers in 1940, but only 155 reported their circulation figures. These 155 newspapers reported a combined circulation per issue of 1,276,600. (Cited in *The Negro Handbook*, p. 201.) The eminent Negro journalist, George S. Schuyler, estimates that the total circulation of the weekly Negro newspapers is around 1,600,000 (Pittsburgh *Courier*, May 9, 1942). We feel conservative in speaking of the circulation as around one and a half millions. The Pittsburgh *Courier* has the largest circulation of all Negro newspapers; it sells about 141,500 copies weekly. The Chicago *Defender* is second, with a weekly circulation of about 83,500. (*Ayer's Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals* [1942], pp. 845, 217.)

[7] Estimate based on the assumption that there are one and a half million Negro newspapers sold per week. (See text footnote in this chapter.) Johns estimates that a third of Negro adults in Chicago "regularly read" Negro newspapers. (Elizabeth D. Johns, "The Role of the Negro Newspaper in the Negro Community," unpublished manuscript made available through the courtesy of the author [1940].)

[8] Detweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

[9] In an unpublished study of certain localities in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana, Charles S. Johnson found that more Northern newspapers were read than local ones. Cited by Detweiler, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

[10] The following historical notes are based mainly on G. James Fleming, "The Negro Press," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940); and Detweiler, *op. cit.*

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

[12] James Weldon Johnson, *Black Manhattan* (1930), p. 15.

[13] Irvine Garland Penn, *Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (1891), pp. 112-114.

[14] Fleming, *op. cit.*, pp. II: 4-5.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. III: 12.

[16] In February, 1919, the town of Somerville, Tennessee, decreed that no "colored newspapers" might be circulated in that town, but that every "darkey" must read a newspaper edited by a Confederate veteran. (Detweiler, *op. cit.*, p. 1.) In February, 1921, an agent for the Philadelphia *American* was lynched in Athens, Georgia. Whites claimed that he had murdered a white woman; Negroes claimed that his only crime was to have tried to build up a Northern Negro newspaper's circulation. (*Ibid.*, p. 20; see also pp. 19-22.)

[17] *PM*, although a daily, does not have complete coverage of the news, and it has a higher price than usual. Its attention to national Negro issues and protests, however, is said to have given it a large circulation among Negroes in New York and Washington, especially those in the upper classes. *PM* does not, however, give the Negro society,

religious and organizational news. It does not, therefore, attempt to substitute for a Negro newspaper. Nevertheless, and in spite of *PM's* pronounced pro-Negro attitude, a New York Negro newspaper was disturbed by the competition and admonished Negroes to stick to the Negro press. Something like *PM* is the Chicago *Sun*, which is a newspaper also owned by Marshall Field.

[18] Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. VII: 11. In a footnote on the same page, Fleming draws the following parallels:

"In New York the Hearst *Evening Journal* (now the *Journal-American*) and the *Amsterdam News* (Negro); in Chicago Hearst's *Herald Examiner* and his *American* (now merged as the *Herald-American*) and the Chicago *Defender* (Negro); in Pittsburgh the Hearst's *Sun-Telegraph* and the Pittsburgh *Courier* (Negro)."

[19] "Gist of numerous interviews with editors and publishers." *Ibid.*, p. VIII: 3.

[20] See Johns, *op. cit.*, pp. 79 ff.

[21] Fleming, *op. cit.*, p. IV: 36.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. IV: 43.

[23] E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* (1940), p. 289.

[24] Park, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[25] See Fleming, *op. cit.*, Chapter VI.

[26] Ralph J. Bunche, "The Political Status of the Negro," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 6, p. 1303. Also see *ibid.*, pp. 1251-1252, for a concrete example of attempted corruption of the Negro press.

[27] White neighborhood businesses might, however, have an interest that a Negro newspaper should not preach the advantages of Negro business too much. The duty to favor Negro business is, however, such an important part of the dominant Negro ideology that no Negro newspaper would dare to come out against it. But it is worth noticing that many Negro newspapers have kept cool or critical toward local movements with the slogan "Don't buy where you can't work." For such an attitude there are perfectly honest reasons (see Chapter 38, Section 6), but an additional reason might be the advertising from white businesses in Negro neighborhoods, which is usually much more substantial than the advertising from Negro businesses.

In two cases I have been told by Negro editors that Jewish merchants in Negro neighborhoods have made representations as advertisers against an occasional story with an anti-Semitic tendency. In both cases the editors explained that there was no conflict, as they, themselves, were against any anti-Semitism among Negroes, and that the stories had been slips.

[28] This whole problem of the economy of Negro newspapers and the outside financial controls deserves study. In general terms the problem is often touched upon in Negro public discussion. P. B. Young, the editor of the Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, writes thus:

"How to *advocate* our cause without suffering the prohibitions which modern business places upon *agitation* is a question which every Negro publisher has to answer in defining a business policy that will blend with the ideals for which the Negro press must contend." ("The Negro Press—Today and Tomorrow," p. 205.)

[29] See Fleming, *op. cit.*, Chapter X.

[30] The A.N.P. asks for a small weekly fee. It is frequently accused of acting more as a publicity agent for some institutions and groups than as an impartial news service. The director "... denies that ANP ever 'sells out' its news service to any party, although

he makes no secret of the fact that subjects of pictures are generally asked to underwrite the cost of cuts and mats." (*Ibid.*, p. X: 4.)

[31] Edwin Mims, *The Advancing South* (1926), p. 268.

Chapter 43. *Institutions*

[1] "Should the Negro Care Who Wins the War?" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (September, 1942), p. 84.

[2] The reader interested in the controversy may wish to compare the two points of view as expressed in two pieces of research: E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939); Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (1941). See also these authors' reviews of each other's books: Herskovits' review of Frazier: *Nation* (January 27, 1940), pp. 104-105; Frazier's review of Herskovits: *Nation* (February 14, 1942), pp. 195-196.

Herskovits earlier took just the opposite stand from the one he now takes. In 1925, he was even more extreme than Frazier in denying an African tradition: "What there is today in Harlem distinct from the white culture which surrounds it is as far as I am able to see, merely a remnant from the peasant days in the South. Of the African culture, not a trace. Even the spirituals are an expression of the emotion of the Negro playing through the typical religious patterns of white America." ("The Negro's Americanism" in Alain Locke (editor), *The New Negro* [1925], p. 359.)

[3] "In the small upper class, where it [licensed marriage] has been accepted in form and in meaning, it is altered chiefly by the emphasis and symbolism it has acquired. For this class marriage is bound up with the moral and religious ideas of sin and virtue. It carries the stern obligation of continence and fidelity, and is regarded as a solemn contract upon which rest the stability and ultimately the meaning of the family. Since marriage is expected to be permanent and binding, it is entered into with deliberation and formality. To this group the courtship is highly important. Its form resembles that in analogous white circles today, but the emphasis and the somewhat ceremonial flavor are reminiscent of earlier white patterns. . . .

"In such courtships the idea of sexual relations before marriage would be scandalous. It is considered essential that the girl be a virgin when she is married, and that the marriage be legal, usually with a church ceremony. No member of this class in Cottonville has had a divorce or separation. Their code requires that a marriage be maintained even if it is not sexually or temperamentally satisfactory. For them divorce carries the stigma it had in most white communities a generation ago, and which it still carries in certain rural white communities today.

"Toward adultery also, this small group maintains an attitude more general among whites of a generation ago, regarding it as an unforgivable sin." (Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* [1939], pp. 149-150.)

[4] We may present some samples of what is available in the way of legal divorce and desertion statistics: In Mississippi, in 1934, the divorce rate for Negroes was 4.4 per 100 marriages, while for whites it was 12.6 per 100 marriages (Frazier, *op. cit.*, p. 379). In Chicago, in 1921, the Court of Domestic Relations reported that official recognition of desertion was given to 414 couples in which the husband was Negro. This was 15.6 per cent of all desertions recognized, and it is to be compared with the

fact that Negroes constituted only 4.1 per cent of Chicago's population in 1920. (Figures on desertion from Ernest R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* [1939], p. 95. Population figures are from the *Fourteenth Census of the United States: 1920, Population*, Vol. III, Table 13.)

[5] Some of the doubling up is due to the presence of collateral relatives in the household. In a study of 612 rural Negro families in Macon County, Alabama, 30 per cent of the families were found to contain 1 to 6 relatives. (Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation* [1934], p. 29.)

[6] Charles S. Johnson, "Negro Personality Changes in a Southern Community," in E. B. Reuter (editor), *Race and Culture Contacts* (1934), p. 216. Most of the facts in this paragraph are taken from Charles S. Johnson and from E. Franklin Frazier.

[7] Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), p. 123.

[8] As noted in Chapter 40, Section 3, we have calculated this figure simply by taking the total number of members reported by Negro churches (as reported in the census of *Religious Bodies: 1936*) and dividing it by the total Negro population in 1940. The resulting figure is much too low as a measure of the proportion of Negro church members because: (1) the Negro population grew between 1936 and 1940; (2) some of the smaller Negro churches are overlooked in the Census; (3) children are usually not included in the church figures but are included in the population figures. It is also to be noted that the figure cited in the text does not include Negroes who were members of "mixed" churches.

[9] Richard Wright, *12 Million Black Voices* (1941), p. 131.

[10] B. E. Mays and J. W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (1933), p. 11.

[11] J. G. St. Clair Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 388-395.

[12] For a discussion of the lower class Negro preacher, see Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," pp. 366-371.

[13] "The Methodists and Baptists look down upon the Sanctified, considering their noise and dancing somewhat heathenish." (Powdermaker, *op. cit.*, p. 234.)

[14] Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," p. 434.

[15] *Op. cit.*, pp. 102, 139, 253.

[16] Guion G. Johnson and Guy B. Johnson, "The Church and the Race Problem in the United States," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), Vol. 2, pp. 217 ff.

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 296-298.

[18] *Idem.*

[19] ". . . Negroes regularly attend church whether Christians or sinners. They have not yet accumulated wealth adequate to the construction of clubhouses, amusement parks and theaters, although dance halls have attracted many. Whether they derive any particular joy therefrom or not, the Negroes must go to church, to see their friends, as they are barred from social centers open to whites. They must attend church, moreover, to find out what is going on; for the race has not sufficient interests to maintain in every locality a newspaper of its own, and the white dailies generally mention Negroes only when they happen to commit crimes against white persons. The young Negro must go to church to meet his sweetheart, to impress her with his worth and woo her in marriage, the Negro farmer to find out the developments in the business world,

the Negro mechanic to learn the needs of his community and how he may supply them." (Carter G. Woodson, *The History of the Negro Church* [1921], pp. 267-268.)

[20]

ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF 609 URBAN CHURCHES

Organizations and Activities	Number of Churches	Per Cent Frequency
Preaching	609	100.0
Union services and interchurch cooperation	609	100.0
Missionary societies	609	100.0
Clubs (Social, Educational, Financial)	609	100.0
Sunday church school	608	99.8
Poor relief	590	96.9
Revivals	561	92.1
Choirs	503	82.6
Young People's work	398	65.4
Prayer Meetings	388	63.7
Recreational work	191	31.4
Pastors' aid boards	77	12.6
Gymnasium classes	30	4.9
Church papers	22	3.6
Extension work in missions	21	3.4
Feeding the unemployed	18	3.0
Junior churches	13	2.1
Daily vacation Bible school	10	1.6
Benevolent societies	6	1.0
Clinic (free)	5	0.8
Motion pictures	5	0.8
Cooperate Y. W. and Y. M. C. A.	5	0.8
Girl Scouts	5	0.8
Boy Scouts	5	0.8
Kindergarten	4	0.7
Nurseries (day)	3	0.5

Source: Benjamin E. Mays and Joseph W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (1933), pp. 122-123.

[21] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), p. 190.

[22] Allison Davis, "The Negro Church and Associations in the Lower South," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 63-64.

[23] Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," pp. 273-274.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 274-277.

[25] The information for this paragraph on the relation of church to politics is taken from *ibid.*, pp. 231-235, and from Harold F. Gosnell, *Negro Politicians* (1935), pp. 94-100.

[26] Gosnell, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-100. We have noted, in Chapter 22, Section 4, that the Northern Negro manifests unusual interest in politics.

[27] Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 85; and Powdermaker, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

[28] The facts in the remainder of this paragraph are taken from Mays and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-197.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

[30] This can be inferred from Table 4 since practically all Northern Negroes are

urban. It is also directly corroborated by Doxey A. Wilkerson, *Special Problems of Negro Education* (1939), p. 7.

[31] David T. Blose and Ambrose Caliver, *Statistics of the Education of Negroes: 1933-1934 and 1935-1936*, U. S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 13, (1938), p. 2. Also see other statistics in that study.

[32] *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Population.* Preliminary Release, Series P-10, No. 8.

[33] Charles S. Johnson, "The Negro Public Schools," *Louisiana Educational Survey*, Section 8 (1942), p. 66.

[34] Wilkerson records some of the other conclusions of such scholastic achievement tests:

"They have demonstrated such facts as these: (1) that the extent of racial differences in scholastic achievement varies markedly among different school systems; (2) that such differences are greater in segregated than in nonsegregated schools; (3) that there is close correspondence between the extent of racial differences in scholastic achievement and racial differences in school environment; (4) that differences between the achievements of white and Negro pupils in Northern school systems are attributable almost entirely to scholastic deficiencies on the part of Negro migrants from impoverished school systems in the South; and (5) that Negro graduates of Northern high schools maintain better scholastic records in Southern Negro colleges than do graduates of Southern Negro high schools." (Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 153.)

One of the best of these investigations was the Rosenwald Survey of 10,023 children in the third and sixth grades in 16 Southern counties. This is reported in Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (1934), pp. 339-349. Other studies are listed by Wilkerson (*op. cit.*, p. 153):

"Doxey A. Wilkerson, 'Racial Differences in Scholastic Achievement,' Journal of Negro Education III (1934), pp. 453-77, and 'A Racial Index Number of Relative Educational Efficiency for Virginia County and City Systems of Schools,' Virginia Teachers Bulletin IX (1932), pp. 1-5, 8-12; Charles H. Thompson, 'A Study of the Reading Accomplishments of Colored and White Children,' unpublished master's thesis, The University of Chicago, 1920, and 'The Educational Achievements of Negro Children,' Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, CXL (1928), pp. 193-208; J. H. Johnston, 'Graduates of Northern High Schools as Students at a Southern Negro College,' Journal of Negro Education, II, (1933), pp. 484-6; T. E. Davis, 'A Study of Fisk University Freshmen from 1928 to 1930,' Journal of Negro Education, II (1933), pp. 477-83; and Forrester B. Washington, 'The Negro in Detroit' (Detroit: Bureau of Government Research, 1926)."

[35] Ambrose Caliver, *Vocational Education and Guidance of Negroes*, U.S. Office of Education, Bulletin No. 38 (1938), p. 12.

[36] In Nashville, Tennessee, for example, the President of the Board of Education admitted in court (February 23, 1942) that there is a larger percentage of Negro teachers with college degrees in the schools of Nashville, than there is of whites. (N.A.A.C.P. news release [February 27, 1942]).

[37] Negro teachers in the city schools sometimes manifest their upper class status to the detriment of the lower classes of Negroes. Frazier (E. Franklin Frazier, *Negro Youth at the Crossways* [1940], p. 282) records that they sometimes use their teaching positions to advance their own status and cites the case of a school principal who did

not wish to have the correct number of under-nourished pupils reported because she did not want to be known as the principal of a "poorhouse." Frazier and others report that light-skinned upper class Negro teachers sometimes make it hard for dark-skinned lower class pupils. (*Ibid.*, pp. 96-99.) Davis and Dollard, for example, say about the dark-skinned pupil:

"He finds that he is not granted these privileges; instead he is stigmatized by teachers and their favored students on grounds of the 'ignorance' of his parents, the dialect which he speaks, the appearance of his clothes, and, very likely, the darkness of his skin. It does not take him long to discover that something is wrong and that the teacher's 'pets' of high status are the only ones who can make the prestige goal responses. If there is no reward for learning, in terms of privilege and anxiety-reduction, there is no motive for work. The lower-class child soon becomes a 'dummy'. Frequently he is openly aggressive toward the teacher; if not, he plays hookey, and he displaces his aggression from the powerful teacher to the more vulnerable upper-class and upper-middle-class pupils. He becomes like his parents, 'bad' and 'ignorant.'" (Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage* [1940], p. 285.)

[38] Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 40. "From another point of view, though Negroes constitute about 24 percent of the total rural population in these 18 States, they had only 7 percent of the rural high schools in 1933-34 and formed 4 percent of the rural high school enrollment. By contrast, whereas Negroes constitute about 21 percent of the urban population, they had 30 percent of the 1933-34 urban high schools and 14 percent of the urban high school enrollment. It is in rural areas, primarily, that Negroes fail to share the benefits of public secondary education." (*Ibid.*, p. 41.)

[40] There were 70 public junior colleges in these states for whites, enrolling 17,695 students. (*Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.)

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

[42] Fred McCuistion, *Graduate Instruction for Negroes in the United States* (1939), p. 39. The five Negro institutions offering graduate work before 1937 are: Howard, Fisk, Hampton, Atlanta and Xavier. By 1939 nine Southern states had no provision for the education of Negroes on the graduate and professional level. Two other states claimed to offer graduate instruction in their public colleges (Texas and Virginia) but the quality of such instruction was very poor, and its range very limited. The remaining six states and Virginia, offered to Negro students scholarships which could be used either in the private universities within the state or in out-of-state universities. These scholarships, however, are not granted freely. The District of Columbia has Howard University.

[43] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1900; translated by Henry Reeve; first edition, 1835), pp. 114-118; James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (1910; first edition, 1893), p. 294; Max Weber, "Geschäftsbericht," *Verhandlungen des Ersten Deutschen Soziologentages vom 19-22 Oktober, 1910 in Frankfort a.M.* (1911), translated for private use by E. C. Hughes (1940), pp. 52-60.

[44] Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," p. 438.

[45] Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

[46] Herbert Goldhamer, "Voluntary Associations," unpublished manuscript (1937), pp. 107-112.

[47] J. G. St. Clair Drake, "Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community," W.P.A. District 3, Chicago: project under the supervision of Horace R. Cayton (December, 1940), p. 185.

[48] *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

[49] Drake, "Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community," pp. 207 and 282. (The latter page has statistical substantiation of the fact that lower class Negroes join fewer associations than do upper class Negroes.)

[50] *Finding a Way Out* (1920), p. 170.

[51] Out of 22 local Urban League secretaries responding to a questionnaire sent out for our study, all but one reported that lodges and fraternal orders were decreasing among Negroes in their respective cities, and that Negro youth were showing less and less interest in them. (T. Arnold Hill, "Churches and Lodges: Digest and Analysis of Questionnaires Submitted by Urban League Secretaries for 'The Negro in America,'" unpublished manuscript prepared for this study [1940], pp. 14-15.) Also see Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," p. 500; and Harry J. Walker, "Negro Benevolent Societies in New Orleans," unpublished manuscript available at Fisk University (Nashville, Tennessee) (1936), p. 305.

[52] Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 13. According to Drake, it was mainly the lower class Negroes who left the lodges within the past ten years, since they were primarily interested in the death benefits given by lodges until the latter became financially unstable during the 1930's. ("The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," pp. 500-502.)

[53] Criticism of the waste of money by Negro lodges and clubs is made by many Negro leaders. See, for example, James Weldon Johnson, *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), pp. 32-34.

[54] As late as the 1930's, there were between 300 and 600 benevolent and mutual aid organizations among Negroes in New Orleans. This was much more than among whites in that city. (See Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 18. This is, by far, the best study of Negro lodges that has come to our attention.)

[55] E. Nelson Palmer, "A Note on the Development of Negro Lodges in the United States," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study, under the direction of Guy B. Johnson (1940), p. 12. Palmer bases this statement on two sources: Howard W. Odum, *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro* (1910), p. 99; and Carter G. Woodson, "Insurance Business among Negroes," *The Journal of Negro History* (April, 1929), pp. 203-204.

[56] W. E. B. Du Bois (editor), *Some Efforts of American Negroes for Their Own Social Betterment* (1898), p. 17.

[57] *The Story of the Negro* (1909), Vol. 2, pp. 168-169. Both the Du Bois and the Washington evaluations are quoted in Palmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

[58] Also see Abram L. Harris, *The Negro as Capitalist* (1936), p. 178.

[59] Cited in Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 16. In a few communities in the Deep South, lodges have a few judicial functions.

"On St. Helena Island, for example, a man rarely goes to court before first laying the case before his local lodge, 'praise house,' or church. Few cases even reach the courts, for most of them are settled satisfactorily by these lodge and church 'courts', including some rather serious offenses, such as theft and assault." (T. J. Woofter, Jr., *Black Yeomanry* [1930], pp. 238-242, summarized by Guy B. Johnson, "Some

Factors in the Development of Negro Social Institutions in the United States," *The American Journal of Sociology* [November, 1934], p. 336.)

[60] Drake, "The Negro Church and Associations in Chicago," p. 440.

Chapter 44. *Non-institutional Aspects of the Negro Community*

[1] Negro spokesmen have glorified the Negro's ability to enjoy life and have found in it a means of group survival. James Weldon Johnson long ago said:

"These people talked and laughed without restraint. In fact, they talked straight from their lungs and laughed from the pits of their stomachs. And this hearty laughter was often justified by the droll humour of some remark. I paused long enough to hear one man say to another: 'W'at's de mattah wid you an' yo' fr'en' Sam?' and the other came back like a flash: 'Ma fr'en'? He ma fr'en'? Man! I'd go to his funeral jes' de same as I'd go to a minstrel show.' I have since learned that this ability to laugh heartily is, in part, the salvation of the American Negro; it does much to keep him from going the way of the Indian." (*The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* [1927; first edition, 1912], p. 56.)

More recently, W. E. B. Du Bois has claimed:

"This race has the greatest of the gifts of God, laughter. It dances and sings: it is humble; it longs to learn; it loves men; it loves women. It is frankly, baldly, deliciously human in an artificial and hypocritical land. If you will hear men laugh, go to Guinea, 'Black Bottom,' 'Niggertown,' Harlem. If you want to feel humor too exquisite and subtle for translation, sit invisibly among a gang of Negro workers. The white world has its gibes and cruel caricatures; it has its loud guffaws; but to the black world alone belongs the delicious chuckle. . . . We are the supermen who sit idly by and laugh and look at civilization. We, who frankly want the bodies of our mates and conjure no blush to our bronze cheeks when we own it. We, who exalt the Lynched above the Lyncher, and the Worker above the Owner, and the Crucified above Imperial Rome." (*Dusk of Dawn* [1940], pp. 148-149.)

[2] "The death of Denmark Vesey and Nat Turner proved long since to the Negro the present hopelessness of physical defense. Political defense is becoming less and less available, and economic defense is still only partly effective. But there is a patent defense at hand,—the defense of deception and flattery, of cajoling and lying. It is the same defense which the Jews of the Middle Age used and which left its stamp on their character for centuries. To-day the young Negro of the South who would succeed cannot be frank and outspoken, honest and self-assertive, but rather he is daily tempted to be silent and wary, politic and sly; he must flatter and be pleasant, endure petty insults with a smile, shut his eyes to wrong; in too many cases he sees positive personal advantage in deception and lying. His real thoughts, his real aspirations must be guarded in whispers; he must not criticize, he must not complain. Patience, humility, and adroitness must, in these growing black youth, replace impulse, manliness, and courage. With this sacrifice there is an economic opening, and perhaps peace and some prosperity. Without this there is riot, migration, or crime. Nor is this situation peculiar to the southern United States,—is it not rather the only method by which undeveloped races have gained the right to share modern culture? The price of culture is a Lie." (W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* [1903], pp. 204-205.)

[8] See, for example, B. Schrieke, *Alien Americans* (1936), pp. 150-151, and James Weldon Johnson, *Negro Americans, What Now?* (1934), pp. 85-86 *passim*. Negro intellectuals, as the group which is rising most rapidly, are especially jealous of each other. That is one reason why they are so critical of Negro leaders. A Negro friend of the author's, shortly after he confided that, in his opinion, certain Negro leaders accomplished absolutely nothing for the race, received an excellent position in a white institution due to the efforts of one of the leaders he so severely criticized.

[4] Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, and Mary R. Gardner, *Deep South* (1941), p. 244.

[5] "In spite of emancipation Negroes still feel it necessary to conceal their thoughts from white people. In speech and in manner they may convey the impression of concurrence and contentment when at heart they feel quite otherwise. In these recent days the psychologists have come to call this a 'defense mechanism,' and some are sure that it is the only thing that enables the Negro to survive in his contact with the white man. Negroes are sometimes warned, even now, that they dare not manifest any resentment toward mistreatment; that the safest policy to pursue is to acquiesce in the judgment of those white people who have manifested a friendly attitude toward them and appeal to their consciences for the redressing of wrongs and correction of abuses. Small wonder that the Negro is so generally secretive." (Robert R. Moton, *What the Negro Thinks* [1929], pp. 12-13.)

[6] Hortense Powdermaker, *After Freedom* (1939), p. 286.

[7] See Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men* (1935), pp. 229-287, and Newbell N. Puckett, *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro* (1926).

[8] In 1930, 58.3 per cent of all Negroes living in the North and West were Southern-born, counting Missouri in the North. With continuing migration, a low birth rate, and a recalculation putting Missouri in the South, the proportion today would no doubt be higher. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Negroes in the United States: 1920-1932*, p. 22.)

[9] For an analysis of Negro words that refer to personality types, see Samuel M. Strong, "The Social Type Method: Social Types in the Negro Community of Chicago," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago (1940).

[10] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Eleventh Census of the United States: 1890*, "Crime, Pauperism, and Benevolence," Vol. 1, p. 126.

[11] See Guy B. Johnson and Louise K. Kiser, "The Negro and Crime," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 65 and 291 ff.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 95. A similar criticism of Negro crime statistics is given by one of the nation's leading students of crime:

"Conclusions have been reached that the Negro is responsible for a 'larger proportionate share of crime'; and that 'the Negro has committed more crime than any other racial group'; and that 'the Negro crime rate as measured by all comparative records is greater than that of the white.' . . . The data hitherto compiled from the sources discussed, permit only one conclusion, namely, that the Negro appears to be arrested, convicted and committed to penal institutions more frequently than the white. Any other conclusion would be based on the assumption that the proportionate number of arrests, convictions or commitments to the total number of offenses actually committed is the same in both groups. This assumption is untenable, for there are specific factors which seriously distort the arrest, conviction and commitment rates for Negroes without affecting these

·ates for whites in a similar manner. No measurement has as yet been devised for the ·valuation of these factors." (Thorsten Sellin, "The Negro and the Problem of Law Observance and Administration in the Light of Social Research," in Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro in American Civilization* [1930], p. 447.)

[13] "Negro Criminality," *Journal of Social Science* (December, 1899), pp. 78-98.

[14] Edwin H. Sutherland, "White-Collar Criminality," *American Sociological Review* (February, 1940), pp. 1-12.

[15] Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, p. 347. There are other ways in which white criminals divert suspicion from themselves to Negroes; see *ibid.*, pp. 345-348.

[16] After making a special analysis of some statistics on homicides in the South collected for this study by George K. Brown, A. J. Jaffe concludes: "It appears statistically significant that a Negro who murders a white man receives a much stiffer penalty than if he murders a Negro. On the other hand, a white man can murder another white man with about the same (or perhaps even more) impunity as one Negro can murder another. Also a white can murder a Negro with relative freedom from punishment." (Unpublished memorandum prepared for this study [August 19, 1940].) Brown's data are in Appendix B of Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.* Johnson and Kiser also present some data which further corroborate this point; see *ibid.*, pp. 358-362 and Appendix D. Independently, Powdermaker has presented some similar data for Mississippi (*op. cit.*, pp. 395-396).

With respect to parole and probation, the U. S. Bureau of the Census reported: "It is quite apparent . . . that Negroes remain in the institutions to the expiration of their sentence in much greater proportions than do whites." (*Prisoners in State and Federal Prisons and Reformatories: 1939* [1941], p. 43.) With respect to length of prison term, it reported: ". . . among the State prisoners, the Negroes generally served longer periods of time than did the whites. . . . It is quite apparent that whites served less time than Negroes in the Southern States, for murder, manslaughter, burglary, forgery, rape, and other sex offenses. The whites serve a little longer for aggravated assault, and for larceny . . . [and] for auto theft." (*Ibid.*, p. 70.)

The Detroit survey reported similar findings:

"The Detroit survey disclosed that of the number of whites convicted of felonies 13.5 per cent were given the alternative of a fine or a prison sentence while only 7.1 per cent of the Negro felons were so favored. Over 12 per cent of the white defendants were placed on probation as compared with 7.2 per cent Negroes. Similar disproportions were revealed in the number of suspended sentences. The Detroit Survey is typical of situations throughout our state jurisdictions." (Nathaniel Cantor, "Crime and the Negro," *The Journal of Negro History* [January, 1931], p. 63.)

[17] E. Franklin Frazier, "The Pathology of Race Prejudice," *The Forum* (June, 1927), p. 860.

[18] Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, 411-412.

[19] Interview (November 18, 1942).

[20] Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-263.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 212.

[22] For examples of false accusations of rape for which Negroes have been arrested and punished, see *The Negro Year Book: 1931-1932* (1931), pp. 291-292. Also see Ray Stannard Baker, *Following the Color Line* (1908), pp. 8-9.

[23] R. M. Lightfoot, Jr., *Negro Crime in a Small Urban Community* (1934), pp. 30

and 62; see, also, pp. 24-28. For similar evidence of the high proportion of minor offenses among Negro arrests, see Maurine Boie, "An Analysis of Negro Crime Statistics for Minneapolis for 1923, 1924 and 1925," *Opportunity* (June, 1928), p. 173; H. P. Brinton, "Negroes Who Run Afoul the Law," *Social Forces* (October, 1932), pp. 98-99; B. P. Chamberlain, *The Negro and Crime in Virginia* (1936), p. 107; Ira DeA. Reid, *Social Conditions of the Negro in the Hill District of Pittsburgh* (1930), pp. 59-60; Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, *The Negro in Detroit* (1926), Section 9, p. 8; and H. L. Andrews, "Racial Distinctions in the Courts of North Carolina," unpublished M.A. thesis, Duke University (1933), p. 50. This footnote and the quotation to which it refers is taken from Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

[24] The Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem, "The Negro in Harlem: A Report on Social and Economic Conditions Responsible for the Outbreak of March 19, 1935," typescript (1936), pp. 97-99.

[25] The study was made by New York City's Welfare Council. It is summarized in the *Report of the Sub-Committee on Crime and Delinquency of the City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem* (1942), p. 5.

[26] Johnson and Kiser, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

[27] "Many colored tenants do not regard the taking of small amounts of stock or cotton from their landlords as stealing but rather as a just compensation for the money stolen from them by their landlords in the reckoning of accounts or for the beatings administered to them by their landlords. Under the systems of economic control and intimidation exercised by the landlord, the colored tenant often justifies his thefts on the grounds that his only means of securing his fair share of the proceeds from his crop is by the use of stealth." (Davis, Gardner, and Gardner, *op. cit.*, pp. 395-396.)

"One of my earliest recollections is that of my mother cooking a chicken late at night, and awakening her children for the purpose of feeding them. How or where she got it I do not know. I presume, however, it was procured from our owner's farm. Some people may call this theft. If such a thing were to happen now, I should condemn it as theft myself. But taking place at the time it did, for the reason that it did, no one could ever make me believe that my mother was guilty of thieving. She was simply a victim of the system of slavery." (Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery* [1901; first edition, 1900], pp. 4-5.)

[28] "This system has many bad results. It encourages the Negro in crime. He knows that unless he does something pretty bad, he will not be prosecuted because the landlord doesn't want to lose the work of a single hand; he knows that if he *is* prosecuted the white man will, if possible, 'pay him out.' It disorganises justice and confuses the ignorant Negro mind as to what is a crime and what is not. A Negro will often do things that he would not do if he thought he were really to be punished. He comes to the belief that if the white man wants him arrested, he will be arrested, and if he protects him, he won't suffer, no matter what he does. Thousands of Negroes, ignorant, weak, indolent, to-day work under this system." (Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 97.)

[29] Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay, *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas* (1942).

[30] Some have claimed that Negroes had less mental disease before Emancipation than afterward, supposedly because they received better care under slavery and did not have to worry about the struggle for existence. See: (1) J. W. Babcock, "The Colored Insane," *Alienist and Neurologist* (1895), pp. 423-447; (2) A. H. Witmer, "Insanity

in the Colored Race in the United States," *Alienist and Neurologist* (January, 1891), pp. 19-30.

[31] The facts in this paragraph have been taken from (1) Benjamin Malzberg, "Mental Disease among American Negroes: A Statistical Analysis," in Otto Klineberg (editor), *Characteristics of the American Negro*, prepared for this study, to be published, manuscript pages 5-6; (2) Solomon P. Rosenthal, "Racial Differences in the Incidence of Mental Disease," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1934), pp. 484-493.

[32] Malzberg, *op. cit.*, manuscript pages 7 ff.

[33] Rates standardized to hold age constant: New York City (1929-1931): Negroes—233; Whites—104. (*Ibid.*, manuscript page 21.)

[34] *Ibid.*, manuscript pages 8 ff.

[35] Their poverty and younger average age, in addition to their concentration in cities, would help explain why Negroes have more dementia praecox. (See Rosenthal, *op. cit.*, p. 490.)

[36] "Psychotic Symptoms and Social Backgrounds" in M. Bentley and E. V. Cowdry (editors), *The Problem of Mental Disorder* (1934), pp. 339-345.

[37] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports, Mortality Summary for U. S. Registration States: Suicide* (September 19, 1942), Table E.

[38] Frank Tannenbaum describes the lack of recreational patterns in the rural South, with special reference to the whites:

"Studies of rural social life in single-crop areas have shown that there are few parties, few picnics, few dances, and fewer public meetings. In one locality over 70 per cent of the people had not attended a party during the year, over 90 per cent had not been to a dance, over 80 per cent had neither participated in nor attended an athletic exhibition, and over 70 per cent had not been to a public meeting.

"And in one county only one family had seen a moving picture show during the year. . . . The weekly visit to the nearest town is the only break in the monotony of life. This monotony is so great that a public hanging has been known to attract mothers with children in their arms, who have come trooping for miles to get some contact with other people." (*Darker Phases of the South* [1924], pp. 139-140.)

[39] "Rural life has its period of intense work and its period of dull and uneventful calm. When the soil is being broken and prepared for crops, all hands strong enough for the plow are engaged from early sunrise to sundown. Again when the crop matures and particularly when the cotton is ready for picking, idleness and leisure are costly. Between seasons the most common answer to the question about how and where the children play is likely to be 'We don't do nothing, mostly just sit and talk.' " (Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt* [1941], p. 170.)

[40] There seem to be few caste restrictions on hunting and fishing, partly because they supplement the food supply of meagerly fed plantation tenants, partly because there is an element of "sportsmanship" and "fair play" in hunting and fishing traditions. Negroes sometimes hunt and fish with whites; they are seldom deprived of their game; they are usually left undisturbed in the spots they have chosen to hunt and fish; and there are few segregated fishing and hunting places. (See Arthur Raper, *Preface to Peasantry* [1936], pp. 396-397.)

[41] See Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 184-185 and 228; for an excellent picture of this sort of amusement, see Richard Wright's story, "Big Boy

Leaves Home," in *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), and Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), especially pp. 98-109 and 200-202.

[42] James Weldon Johnson tells of this recreation in a small Southern town: "We always went to the railroad station on Saturdays to see the four trains come in and go out. . . . I never saw anybody that I knew getting off, but there was a faint excitement in watching the traffic. At any rate, I got an understanding of why country people love to meet passing trains." (*Along This Way* [1934], p. 114.)

[43] Much of all the recreational life in the rural community is carried on in and around the church, which is the natural meeting place in the community (see Chapter 43, Section 3); in some areas the church tries to provide healthful organized recreation for the young people in the form of social and athletic clubs (see Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 175 ff.).

[44] In Charles S. Johnson's study of 916 families in the rural Deep South, only 17.4 per cent of the families had radios (*ibid.*, p. 55). Some of the younger children had never heard a radio (*ibid.*, p. 183). The census figures indicate that only .003 per cent of the Negro families in the rural Deep South had radios as compared to 11.9 per cent of the white families. (*Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. VI, State Tables 16 and 4.)

[45] In Charles S. Johnson's study 27.6 per cent of the homes had victrolas (*Growing Up in the Black Belt*, p. 56). Unfortunately, certain companies producing records have issued a special series for Negroes, "race records," many of which are vicious and obscene, and these were widely sold in the rural areas. (Donald R. Young, *American Minority Peoples* [1932], pp. 306-307, and Forrester B. Washington, "Recreational Facilities for Negroes," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* [November, 1928], p. 279.)

[46] For a discussion of how rural patterns of recreation are considered normal in the county and delinquent in the city, see Charles S. Johnson, *Growing Up in the Black Belt*, pp. 186-187.

[47] *Black Manhattan* (1930), pp. 162-163.

[48] For a discussion of amateur theatricals among Negroes, see Sterling A. Brown, "The Negro in American Culture: Section D—The Negro on the Stage," unpublished manuscript prepared for this study (1940), pp. 148 ff.

[49] In the past all-day excursions, especially where facilities were available along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and along the sea coast, were popular with rural Negroes; they even developed their own excursion steamers. (Washington, *op. cit.*, p. 279.) This form of recreation seems to have disappeared.

[50] Young, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

[51] "In a recent survey of the Negroes of Richmond, Virginia, 698 men and 889 women were asked what they did for amusement. 'Going to church' was placed first by 198 men and 331 women; 'movies and theaters' by 134 men and 254 women; 91 men and 176 women 'played with their children' or 'enjoyed their homes and friends.' Reading was reported by 101 men and 88 women. And 91 men and 93 women had no amusements or recreations whatever. 'Smoking, hunting and fishing' were extremely popular with men. Society or lodge meetings, sewing and fancy work, were favorites of the women. Music, singing, and playing of musical instruments were named repeatedly by both men and women. Almost everything in life was mentioned by a sprinkling of both as an amusement: 'walking,' 'drinking,' 'eating,' 'sleeping,'

'praying,' 'resting,' 'working,' 'gardening,' 'traveling,' 'sitting around,' 'using snuff,' 'helping to make others happy,' 'policy playing,' 'automobile riding,' etc." (*Ibid.*, pp. 269-270.)

[52] Charles S. Johnson, *The Negro College Graduate* (1938), p. 339.

[53] Alain Locke, *Negro Art: Past and Present* (1936), pp. 34-42 and 93-117.

[54] *Time* (May 11, 1942), p. 53.

[55] *Black Manhattan*, p. 87.

[56] Brown, "The Negro in American Culture: Section D—The Negro on the Stage," p. 16.

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 7 and 12.

[58] James Weldon Johnson gives the following evaluation of the minstrel shows:

"Minstrelsy was, on the whole, a caricature of Negro life, and it fixed a stage tradition which has not yet been entirely broken. It fixed the tradition of the Negro as only an irresponsible, happy-go-lucky, wide-grinning, loud-laughing, shuffling, banjo-playing, singing, dancing sort of being. Nevertheless, these companies did provide stage training and theatrical experience for a large number of coloured. men. They provided an essential training and theatrical experience which, at the time, could not have been acquired from any other source. Many of these men, as the vogue of minstrelsy waned, passed on into the second phase, or middle period, of the Negro on the theatrical stage in America; and it was mainly upon the training they had gained that this second phase rested." (*Black Manhattan*, p. 93.)

[59] Alain Locke, *The Negro and His Music* (1936), pp. 57 and 70.

[60] See Vernon Winslow, "Negro Art and the Depression," *Opportunity* (February, 1941), pp. 42 and 62.

[61] Sterling A. Brown, "The Negro in American Culture: Section G—Music," pp. 208-212.

[62] Locke, *The Negro and His Music*, pp. 18-27.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[64] "Part of the 'coon-songs' popularity comes from the vicarious enjoyment by white audiences of things forbidden. Goldberg says that 'what the whites were thinking in the gilded Nineties, the blacks were singing.' (Isaac Goldberg, *Tin Pan Alley* [1930], p. 156.) The franker side of sex, the 'gold-digging,' fighting for one's man or one's woman, the various degrees of sexual proficiency, could be mentioned if the actors involved were Negro. But to approach the borderline between the genteel and the gross, to venture into the risqué, to mention the unmentionable, was 'not damaging to one's social or business reputation,' if the songs were about Negroes. Negro life was the fantastic Cockaigne, beckoning to the inhibited, offering escape no less attractive for being droll. Today Hollywood stars, such as Mae West and Marlene Dietrich, in the roles of sirens of the 'nineties, sing as throatily as they are able, the hot numbers of Negro honkytonks as their mating-calls." (Brown, "The Negro in American Culture: Section G—Music," p. 90.)

[65] See, for example, Nick Aaron Ford, *The Contemporary Negro Novel* (1936), *passim*, especially pp. 94-102.

[66] *Time* (August 28, 1933), p. 32.

[67] "The Negro-Art Hokum," *Nation* (June 16, 1926), p. 662.

Chapter 45. *America Again at the Crossroads in the Negro Problem*

[1] A parallel analysis of the relationship between war and improvement in the status of Negroes may be found in Guion G. Johnson, "The Impact of War Upon the Negro," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1941), pp. 596-611.

[2] Horace R. Cayton, "The Morale of the Negro in the Defense Crisis," unpublished manuscript of paper read to the 20th Annual Institute of the Society for Social Research, The University of Chicago (August 15, 1941), p. 11.

Cayton reflected pessimistically:

"It is not that any of these men or groups are really interested in changing in any fundamental way, the position of the Negro in the United States. This would prove, in most instances, just as embarrassing to them as it would to those leaders who are interested in an immediate declaration of war. But the Negro presents a 'pat' argument for those who want to say that democracy should be built at home. Nevertheless, the Negro was thrilled to at last have national figures speak about this plight on the radio, from the platform and in the newspapers. Neglected, for the most part, by the pro-war groups, the anti-war crowd has made a deep impression on the Negro public." (*Idem.*)

[3] There is a question whether Negroes have identified themselves with other colored peoples as much as Southern whites have identified American Negroes with Japan. A confidential public opinion poll taken before Pearl Harbor showed that the South, with no Japanese population, was more anti-Japanese than Americans on the West Coast, who had a definite Japanese problem. Also symbolic is the following AP dispatch from Atlanta, Georgia (from the New York *Herald Tribune* [April 5, 1942], p. 3).

"Atlanta children were heard reciting this wartime rhyme:

'Eenie, meenie, minie, moe,
Catch the emperor by the toe,
If he hollers make him say:
"I surrender to the U.S.A."' "

This, of course, is a paraphrase of the doggerel containing an anti-Negro sentiment, known to every American child (in two versions):

"Eenie, meenie, minie, moe,
Catch a nigger by the toe
If he hollers, let him go
Eenie, meenie, minie, moe."

"Eenie, meenie, minie, moe,
Catch a nigger by the toe
If he hollers, make him pay
Fifty dollars every day."

[4] Raleigh *News and Observer* (May 3, 1942).

[5] Earl Brown, "American Negroes and the War," in *Harper's Magazine* (April, 1942), p. 546.

[6] Horace R. Cayton, "Fighting for White Folks?," *Nation* (September 26, 1942), p. 268.

[7] "The Negro in the Political Life of the United States," *Journal of Negro Education* (July, 1941), p. 583.

[8] Cayton, "The Morale of the Negro in the Defense Crisis," p. 14.

[9] "Shadows of the Slave Tradition," *Survey Graphic* (November, 1942), p. 467

[10] New York *Times*, April 3, 1942.

[11] Cited in New York *Times*, July 20, 1942.

[12] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Darkwater* (1920), p. 236.

[13] Guion G. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 609-610.

[14] Letter (August 13, 1942).

[15] Cited from *PM* (August 16, 1942), p. 17.

[16] *Along This Way* (1934), p. 411.

[17] *American Unity and Asia* (1942), p. 29.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[19] *Contemporary China. A Reference Digest*, published by Chinese News Service, Inc. (August 10, 1942).

[20] *The Negro Question* (1890), p. 48.

[21] *Following the Color Line* (1908), p. 305.

INDEX

Abbott, Grace, on public relief, 354
Abbott, Robert S., 914
Ability to pay, 213, 334
Abolitionist movement, 86, 87, 447, 736n.; and Negro church, 860; Negroes in, 737-738; and woman suffrage, 1075, 1076n.
Abortion, 176, 177, 1207, 1225-1126
Absentee ownership, 244
Abyssinian Baptist Church, 863n.
Accommodating leadership, 507-508, 683, 720, 735, 739-740, 742-743, 861, 910; and class, 727-733; factors decreasing importance of, 722n.; in the North, 722-723, 733; personalities, 734-735
Accommodation (*see also* Compromise between accommodation and protest), 592, 682, 1050, 1055n.; in merging into class protest, 793; of Negro press, 913; and Negro schools, 880; nonpolitical agencies for, 858-859; under protest, 760; of upper class Negroes, 764-766
Achievements: of N.A.A.C.P., 832-833; Negro, books glorifying, 1393; Negro, personal, 734-735, 753, 960, 986-994, 1428
Actors, Negro; *see* Theater, Negroes in, *and* Movies, Negroes in
Adams, James Truslow: cited, 1188-89; on the American dream, 5-6; on Negro background, 44
Adaptability, Negro, 1396
Administration: low standards of (*see also* Law, lack of respect for, in America), 404, 432-433, 434-435, 558; modernization of, 436-437, 544; weakness of, 716n., 1009
Adult education, 343, 388, 886, 906-907, 713
"Advancing" on credit basis, 247
Advertising in Negro press, 922, 1424
Advisors, Negro, in government bureaus (*see also* Officeholders, Negro *and* Federal Council 503-504)
Advisory Committee on Education, 1272-1273
Africa: Garvey's "Empire" of, 747-748; post-war plans for 806-807
African ancestry, 117-120, 1200, 1201
African culture, 747-748, 752-753, 928
African heritage, 698, 930
African Orthodox Church, 862n., 864n.
African theme in art, 990
Age: and class structure, 1131; of Negro domestic workers, 1086
Age structure of Negro population; *see* Population, Negro, age structure of
Aggressiveness, Negro, 763-764, 957-958
Agricultural Adjustment Administration, 197, 212, 254, 558, 1183, 1252-1253; and cotton economy, 255-256; evaluation of, 265-270; influence of, toward mechanization, 260; local administration of, 258-259; and the Negro, 256-258; referenda, 488-489, 490, 1325; segregation in, 1247-1248
Agricultural Extension Service, 272, 343, 347, 1253
Agricultural labor; *see* Agriculture, Negroes in
Agricultural policy: constructive measures toward, 270-273; dilemma of, 264-265
Agricultural reform; *see* Land reform
Agriculture: Department of, 272, 343, 347; Negroes in, 225, 231-250, 1001, 1386; over-population in, 950; problem of, 230-231; trends in, 251-253, 463; types of, 235-237
Aid to the Blind, 358n., 359
Aid to Dependent Children, 358n., 359-360, 1286
Air Force, Negroes in, 421, 1308
Aircraft production, Negroes in, 413-414, 415, 424
Alabama: birth control program in, 1226; death penalty in, 554n.; educational requirements for voting in, 484; fines in,

549n.; Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax in, 1324; terror organization in, 449; transportation, Jim Crow in, 635; voting in, 488n.; white primary in, 486
Alabama Women's Democratic Club, 812n.
Alabama Women's League for White Supremacy, 812n.
Alcohol, use of, by Negroes, 980-981
Alexander, W. W., 467, 843, 844, 847, 849
Allen, James S., cited, 750
Allen, William G., 737
All-Negro communities, 480n., 488n., 621
All-Negro political movements, 490, 500n., 817-819, 851-852
Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, 1118
Amalgamated Clothing Workers, 1110
Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, 1123
Amalgamation (*see also* Miscegenation), 105-106, 113, 728, 808, 927; beliefs fostered to discourage, 108; denial of, to Negroes, *see* Anti-amalgamation doctrine; fear of, 586-587, 589, 590-591; feeling against, in the North, 57-58, 603; of foreign-born, 50, 51-53; Negro attitudes toward, 56-57, 1187
Ambivalence of attitude: emotional and intellectual, 39-40; of Negro leaders, 772-773, 774, 775; of Negro upper class, 794-797; of whites, 957, 959, 1189
American Association of University Women, 469
American Civil Liberties Union, 812n., 855n.
American Colonization Society, 805-806
American Creed, xlvi-xlvii, 209, 581, 717n.; acceptance of, in South, 461-462, 690, 888, 893, 895, 896; as basis for Negro struggle for equality, 799; belief of Negroes in, 4, 510, 808-809, 880, 900, 946; changing, 574; conflict of, with caste system, 812, 899; and democracy, 783; departure of South from, 87; development of new consciousness of, 568; economic phase of, 212, 214; and education, 709, 879, 882, 893, 1182; and equality, 213, 429, 671-672, 1189; formative stage of, 23-24; and freedom of mobility, 198; gradual realization of, 1021-1024; influence of, 80, 88-89, 110, 383, 460, 585, 591, 662, 792, 1010, 1020; and living conditions, 169; as national conscience, 23; and national unity, 7-8, 13; not lived up to, 13-14, 21, 52, 376; an obstacle to elimination of Negro population, 170; restraining influence of, 800; revitalization of, 409, 439; rooted in Christianity, 9-12, 757; rooted in English law, 12; rooted in philosophy of Enlightenment, 8-9, 1181-1182; substantiation of, by science and education, 92-93, 96-97, 110; as system of ideals, 3-5; as value premises for this book, 23-25, 526, 573, 852-853, 927
American Federation of Labor, 402, 403, 405n., 406, 855, 1096, 1102; discrimination in, 1298-1299, 1300; founding of, 1297; principle of nondiscrimination in, 792
American Federation of Musicians, 330
American Institute of Public Opinion, 893n.
American League for Peace and Democracy, 812n.
American Medical Association, 179
American Red Cross, segregation policy of, 631, 1367
American Revolution, 710, 997; Negro soldiers in, 1308
American society and the Negro problem, relationship between, lii-lv
American Youth Commission, 649, 699n., 893n., 1272
Americanization: and class etiquette, 614; of immigrants, 927-928; and race prejudice, 603; of the South, 1011
Ames, Jessie Daniel, 846; cited, 1335; on Interracial Commission, 844, 845
Anarchism: philosophical, 434; tendency toward, 16
Ancestry: African, 117-120, 698, 1200, 1201; Indian, 113n.; pride of, 747, 901; qualification for voting, 480
Anderson, Marian, 734, 735, 988, 991n.
"Anglo-Saxon race"; *see* "Nordic race"
Anthony, Susan B., 1075
Anti-amalgamation doctrine 52n., 53-58, 586-587, 589-591, 928, 1354; bolstered by inferiority theory, 102; Negro attitude toward, 62-65; psychological nature of, 59-60
Anti-democratic movement, 433
Anti-lynching legislation, 502, 517, 565, 829, 1350
Anti-Semitism, 53, 852, 1186, 1190, 1321, 1331, 1424
Anti-Slavery Convention, 1076n.
Anti-social tendencies, factors fostering, 331-332
Anti-strike policy, 425
Apathy: on Negro problem in the North, 516; political, 476, 483, 490, 493
Apollo Theater, 329
Appointive offices, Negroes in, 501-502, 503-504, 535
Archer, William, 676, 697; cited, 562, 676; on anomalous position of Negro,

641-642; on courts and justice, 547; on Jim Crow in railway system, 582, 1353; on Negro body odor, 1213; on prohibition, 457; on racial war, 1380; on Southern resentment against Negroes, 582, 1380
Arizona: expenditures for education in, 1271; school segregation in, 633
Arkansas: no Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax in, 1324; riots in, 567, 568n.; terror organization in, 449; voting in, 483, 488n.; white primary in, 486
Armament industries; *see* War production
Armed forces; *see* Army *and* Navy, Negroes in
Armstrong, Henry, 734, 903n., 988
Armstrong, Louis, 988
Armstrong, Orland K., cited, 1090n.
Armstrong, S. C., 889, 898, 1417
Army: discrimination and segregation in, 744, 850, 1005; Negroes in, 419-423, 1308-1309; Negroes in, and white Southerners, 563, 663
Art: African theme in, 990; Negro, white patronage of, 990-991
Artisan tradition, 280, 887, 889, 898, 1254-1255
Artists, Negro, 329-330, 654, 989, 991
Ashby, William M., cited, 1276
Associated Negro Press, 923, 1424
Associated Publishers, 1393
Assimilation; *see* Amalgamation
Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, 565, 846
Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 751-752; purposes and achievements of, 1393
Associations: in American life, 712, 810, 811; Negro, *see* Organizations, Negro, *also* Business and professional organizations, Improvement organizations, *and* Voluntary associations
Atlanta *Daily World*, 908n.-909n.
Atlanta riot of 1906, 567, 680
Atlanta University, 326, 888, 889, 892, 1416, 1429
Atlantic Charter, 806
"Attitude," loose usage of term, 1138; reason for not using term, 1031
Attitudes, race: inconsistencies of, 1140-1141; quantitative studies of, 1136-1143, 1186
Atwood, Jesse H., on separation of white and Negro churches, 1412
Author's Preface, ix-xx
Automobile industry: Negroes in, 413, 1119-1122; unionization of, 1121-1122; wages in, 1121
Australian ballot, *see* Secret ballot, not used in parts of South

Back-to-Africa movement, 185-186, 698, 746-749, 805-807
Bahai Church, 871n.
Bailer, Lloyd H., cited, 1121-1122
Bailey, Thomas P.: cited, 562; on cheating of Negroes, 516; on race prejudice, 43, 590n., 1142n.; on religion, 869, on social attitudes and amalgamation, 587, 1354; on Southern elections, 1317; on Southern fear complex, 1356; on Southern lassitude, 1358
Baker, Paul E., cited, 872n.
Baker, Ray Stannard, 697; cited, 248, 567, 1359; quoted, 38, 743, 843, 870, 1022, 1140n.; on Atlanta riot, 680; on attitude of Negroes to law, 1336-1337; on debt peonage, 1236-1237; on "fear" of Negro, 1347-1348; on individualism in Negro-white relations, 1358; on legal injustice, 1344, 1434; on Negro education, 884; on Negro secretiveness, 658; on Negro sensitivity, 761-762; on Negroes in unions, 1256-1257; on racial isolation, 1370; on two parties in the South, 1317; on white prejudice, 43; on white support of Negro churches, 1412
Balanced personality, struggle for, 759-760, 766
Baldwin, William H., 837
Baltimore *Afro-American*, 918n.
Bancroft, George, on national pride, 5
Bancroft, H. H., 1190
Banking, Negroes in, 314-315
Baptism, 930n.
Barbers, Negro, 1088, 1255
Bargaining power, political, of the Negro, 498-500, 505-508, 835, 855
Barker, Tommie Dora, on Southern libraries for Negroes, 1368
Barnett, Claude A., 503-504
Barthé, Richmond, 989
"Basic factor," in Negro problem, 72, 77-78, 790, 791, 794, 834, 1069
Basie, Count, 988
Bates, Ernest S., on colonization scheme, 805
Bathing beaches, segregation on, 634
Bean, Robert B., exposé of, 91n.
Beard, Charles, cited, 7
Beard, Charles and Mary, 1389; cited, 432-433
Bearden, Bessye, 1328
Beauty industries, Negroes in, 310, 311, 1088-1089
Beecher, Henry Ward, 1075
Beef production, 1245

Behavior: affected by new inventions, 1052; at club meetings, 953n.; diversity of, 956-957; and idealism, disparity between, 21; influenced by social and cultural factors, 149; of middle and upper class Negro group, 647; molding of, by caste system, 98; of Negro leaders, 770-771, 772-773; of Northern Negroes, 491-492, 530; pattern of violence in, 532; political, of Negroes, 495-497; a result of compromise of valuations, 1028; voting, 491-492, 500
Beliefs, 1027, 1030-1031, 1062; conflict of, *see* Valuations, conflict of; emperical study of, 1137-1139; Negro, *see* Popular theories, Negro
Bell, F., Franklin, 422n.
Bellingers, father and son, 488n., 500n.
Benedict, Ruth, on race conflict, 110
Benevolent societies; *see* Voluntary associations *and* Lodges
Berglund, A., *et al.*, cited, 1092
Berlin, Irving, 987
Berquist, F. E., cited, 1113n.
Bethune, Mary McLeod, 503, 751n., 816, 987
Betterment organizations; *see* Improvement organizations
Bias (*see also* Samples, research, bias in): in research on Negro problem, 137-138, 149, 1035-1041; ways of mitigating, 1041-1045
Bilbo, Theodore G., 806, 813
Biology doctrine: as basis for inferiority theory, 57-60, 97; and conservatism, 91, 1190; and equalitarianism, 84, 87-88, 89; rationalized, 97-101, 102-106
Bi-racial organizations, 691
Birkenhead, Lord, quoted, 468
Birth control, 164, 165, 166, 170, 175-178, 1205, 1206-1207, 1226-1229; clinics, 178-180, 1226, 1228-1229; facilities for Negroes, 178-181; objections to, 1227
Birth control movement in the South, 179
Birth rate: effect of ill health on, 174-175; of foreign-born, 157n.; Negro and white, 161-165; Negro, 1220, 1222
Births, registration of, 159, 1220
Black, Hugo, 467
"Black baby" myth, 114, 1208-1209
Black Belts, 621, 650, 1127
"Black Cabinet," *see* Federal Council
Black Codes, 228, 250, 281, 447, 558, 1101, 1236
"Black Hand" society, 527
"Black Puritans," 931
Black Shirt movement, 847
Blaine, James G., 226n.; on Negro suffrage, 1334
Bledsoe, Albert T., on treatment of women, 1074
Blind, aid to, 359
Blose, D. T., and Caliver, A., cited, 339, 944, 947n., 950n.
"Blue Laws," 458
Boas, Franz, 90, 122, 150, 1202-1203, 1216, 1217; on mental make-up, 146
Bodily action, etiquette of, 612-614
Body odor, Negro, belief in, 107, 140, 1213
Bogardus, Emory S., 1136, 1186
Boll weevil, 193, 234-235, 238, 1238
Bolton, Euri Relle, 1137, 1186
Bond, Horace Mann: cited, 320, 341, 887, 928, 948n., 1271; on indirect taxes, 1270
Bond and bail system, 548
Border states: definition of, 1072; educational facilities in, 895; institutional segregation and discrimination in, 631-632; prejudice of police and courts in, 528; primaries in, 487; two-party system in, 474n.
Boston *Guardian*, 913-914, 1392
Bowen, Trevor, on Negro opinion, 809
Boycott movement against discriminating establishments, 313-314, 803, 816, 839
Brearley, H. C., on Negro-white killings, 542n.
Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union, 1102
Briggs Manufacturing Corporation, 1119
Brigham, Carl C., 96, 1190, 1191; quoted, 148n.
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, 1105
Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, 1105
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, 1106
Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paper-hangers, 1103-1104
Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, 1106
Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1107
Brotherhood of Timber Workers, 1095
Brown, Anne, 1184
Brown, Earl: cited, 385, 414, 851; on Negroes and the war, 1006
Brown, Earl, and Leighton, George R., cited, 415, 416, 420, 421, 1306
Brown Sterling, 989; cited, 989, 991; on stereotypes in literature, 1196; on white appreciation of Negro songs, 1437

Brown, William M., cited, 584
Brown, W. O., on rationalization of prejudice, 1188
Bryant, Carolyn, on contraception, 1206
Bryant, Ira B., Jr., cited, 1373
Bryce, James, 712, 1039n., 1332; on American characteristics, 10, 21, 1182; on definition of race, 113; on enfranchisement of Negroes, 1316; on leadership, 710; on legislation, 1183; on Negro discontent, 657; on Negro education, 884; on repetition for emphasis, lvii; on social relations, 574
Buck, Paul H.: cited, 887-888; on manipulation of elections, 450
Buck, Pearl, 414, 735; on treatment of Negroes in America, 1016-1017
Budget: "emergency," 366; family, 367-370, 964; items in, 370-371, 1287; public, 333-334
Building and loan associations, Negro-managed, 315-316
Building trades: Negroes in, 282-283, 286, 294, 311-312, 412, 1099-1105, 1303; public housing projects, 1104; unionization in, 1102-1104
Bunche, Ralph, 474n., 1315; cited, 475, 478, 480, 483, 484, 488n., 498, 499-500, 812n., 922, 1324, 1325-1326; on accommodation to organized labor, 793; on American freedom, 4; on avoidance of political issues, 453; on class consciousness, 789; on colonization schemes, 805; on Communist party and National Negro Congress, 1401; on evasiveness, American, 784; on fight for democracy, 1007; on Garvey movement, 748; on Interracial Commission, 844, 848; on modeling of Negro behavior on Southern gentlemen, 1382; on N.A.A.C.P., 820-830, 833n., 835n.-836n., 1402, 1403, 1405-1406; on Negro aggression, 763; on Negro Business League, 815-816; on Negro businessmen and business ideology, 802, 804; on Negro double role, 772, 1397; on Negro leadership, 773-775, 1397; on Negro organizations, 813-819; on Negro provincialism, 785; on Negro thinking, 808; on Negro upper class aloofness, 1395; on passivity of masses, 786; on political corruption, 1322; on race relations, 848n.; on redemption of Negro masses, 790; on Southern Negro Youth Congress, 818-819; on strategy of Negro representation, 779; on suspicion of Negro leaders, 774; on Urban League, 840, 1406-1407; on white defense mechanism, 962n.
Bureaucracy, need for, 432-437
Burgess, Ernest W., cited, 620, 1181, 1365
Burgess, J. W., 1315
Burial business; *see* Undertakers, Negro
Business: control of, 719; control of labor conditions by, 1389; and the law, 18-19; legal punishment as, 548-549, 551; Negroes in, 304-332, 769, 795, 800-803, 1261-1263; Northern, in the South, 453; resistance of, to organized labor, 389, 404, 1095n.-1096n., 1123, 1297; small, decline of, 715
Business cycles, effect of, on Negroes, 206-207
Business and professional organizations, Negro, 639, 800, 815-817
Buttrick, Wallace, 891
Buxton, Thomas F., cited, 1202
Bynum, C. H., on approaching race problems, 845n.-846n.
Byrd, Harry F., 274

Cable, George Washington, 460; quoted, 1022; on domestic service, 595
Caldwell, Erskine, 468
California, Negro migration to, 200; Negro population of, 1232; old age benefits in, 1281
Caliver, Ambrose, cited, 950
Calloway, Cab, 988
Campbell, George, 1315; cited, 1234; on Freedmen's Savings Bank, 315; on migration from plantation to plantation, 1241; on Negro education, 884; on Negro landownership, 237; on religious activity, 860-861
Canady, H. G., cited, 150
Candy industry, Negroes in, 1295-1296
Cantor, Nathaniel, on Detroit Survey, 1433
Capital punishment, 554n.
Capital Savings Bank, 315
Carey, Henry C., cited, 118
Carlson, Glen E., cited, 1120n.
Carlyle, Thomas, on Negro status, 593
Carnegie, Andrew, vi, 891
Carnegie Corporation of New York, v-viii, ix, xvii, 891
"Carpetbaggers," 447, 1316
Carter, Elmer A., 987; on birth control, 1207; on inconsistency between American ideals and practices, 1008
Cartwright, S. A., on disease among slaves, 1215
Carver, George Washington, 656, 734, 903n., 1184
Casey, Albert E., cited, 1264
Cash, W. J., 468; on class in the Old South, 1320; on frontier civilization, 451; on

interracial sex relations, 1355-1356; on mechanization, 1249; on prostitution, 1361, on slavery, 1338; on the South, 1071
Cash tenants, 237, 245
Caste line, 668-669, 677-678; character of, 691-693; crossing, *see* Passing; function of, 677; from Negro point of view, 679-683
Caste struggle, 676-683
Caste system (*see also* Discrimination), 29, 54, 58-60, 69-70, 71, 75, 208, 459, 576, 577, 645; breakdown of, 678-679, 682, 1002-1004, 1009; and class, 675, 689-695, 727, 1129-1132, 1381; and color, 695-700; concept of, 667-669, 1374-1375, 1377; conflict of, with American Creed, 812; derived from slavery, 88, 221-224; a deterrent to Negro scientists, 93-94; education and, 894-896; effect of, on Negro thinking, 783; an extension of the law, 535-536; a factor in molding Negro behavior, 98; interest motivation for, 585-586; intermediary, 696, 698; "meaning" of, 674-676; Negro humor an outgrowth of, 960-961; and Negro leadership, 720, 1133; Negro provincialism rooted in, 785; Negro reaction to, 975-976; in the North, 46; rationalization of, 102-106, 145, 583, 586, 784, 928; responsibility of, for Negro failures, 759, 775; social costs of, 1009; vested interests of Negroes in 629-630, 795, 797, 798n.; 870, 921, 940; white man's theory of, 57-60
Catholic Church; *see* Roman Catholic Church
Catt, C. C., and Shuler, N. R., cited, 1075, 1076n.
Caucasoid-Negroid mixtures, 119, 123
"Causes," in America, 712, 810
Cayton, Horace, 863n.; cited, 1004, 1006-1007; on anti-war propaganda and the Negro, 1438; on Negro morale in the war, 1008
Cayton, H. R., and Mitchell, G. S., cited, 1118, 1122-1123
Cemeteries, segregated, 635, 636
Centralization of government, 437, 464-465, 717; Negro support of, 809
Ceremonial distance, 621, 657
Chambers, M. M., on objectives of N.Y.A., 1283
Chambliss, Rollin, on racial beliefs and segregation, 1192-1195
Character requirement for voting, 446, 483, 484
Character witnesses, 551, 552, 592
Charleston: Negro business in, 1260; Charleston *News and Courier*, 1313
Chauvinism, 749, 785, 803-805, 808, 814-815, 853
Cheating of Negroes by whites, 246-247, 341, 516, 559, 949n., 969, 1242, 1333
Checks and balances, system of, 718
Chicago: Negro vote in, 492n., 493, 494-495, 754-755, 1329; Negro population in, 1126-1127; riot of 1919 in, 567; Chicago *Defender*, 914, 918n., 1423, 1424; Chicago *Sun*, 1424
Children: dependent, aid to, 358n., 359-360, 1286; the main sufferers in crowded homes, 1292; Negro attitude toward, 935; white and Negro, association of, 610, 648, 1193
China: industrialization of, 1017; nationalism in, 1018; post-war role of, 807
Chinese in America: background of, 54; restaurants and stores of, 310; segregation of, 620
Chotzinoff, Samuel, 989
Christianity: American belief in, 384; conversion of Negroes to, after Civil War, 860; and equality, 584; moral problem of, 868-870; and Negro protest, 757; radicalism of, 744-745; as a root of the American Creed, 9-12; and slaves, 859
Chrysler Corporation, 1120
Church, Negro: and American pattern of religion, 863-868; and business, 317, 1264; as center of Abolitionism, 860; as community center, 867, 935-942, 1426-1427, 1436; criticism of, 876, 877; future of, 876-878; independence of, in North, 862-863; as medium of escape, 861, 873, 877; membership of, 863-864, 865, 866n.-867n., 871n., 874, 1426; and mortician business, 317; partly supported by contributions of whites, 769, 770, 1412; a power institution, 873; and protest, 744-745, 757, 816; recreational activity of, 983, 1427; segregation of, 635, 859-860, 868-872, 1412; social work programs of, 878; in "underground railroad," 860; and unions, 793; value of, 321n.; weakness of, 872-876, 877
Church, white: avoidance of practical problems by, 1413; Negro membership in, 869-870, 871n.; reactionism in, 10, 11
Church of God, 938
Cigarette manufacturing, 1108
Cities: American Creed in, 895; caste in, 693; education conditions in, 950; employment rates in, 1258-1259; growth of, in South, 289; interracial sex relations in, 126; migration to, 74, 188-190, 191-196,

279-280, 302; Negro residences in, 1125-1128; Northern, segregation in, 626; political machines in, 439; racial etiquette in, 615; small, Negroes in, 386-387, 601; unemployment in, 302
City planning, 351-352, 626-627
Citizens' Fact Finding Movement, 812n.
Citizenship, education for, 778, 949
Civil liberties, fight for, 790, 794
Civil Liberties Union; *see* American Civil Liberties Union
Civil rights laws, 418n., 528, 533, 579, 580, 601n., 1367
Civil service: discrimination in, 327-329, 416, 839; Negroes in, 497, 502, 504, 778, 1331; police systems and, 539, 544; reform of, 436
Civil War, 431, 997; class differences not strengthened by, 460; economic interpretation of, 222; increased violence in period following, 533; lingering resentment in South over, 45; Negro troops in, 738, 1308; Northern attitude toward, 45, 47; slavery issue in, 431, 443
Civilian Conservation Corps, 361-362, 426n., 503, 1283
Class: in American society, 6, 50-51; and caste, 58, 675, 693-695, 727, 1129-1132, 1381; in church, 868; concept of, 667-669, 1130, 1377-1378; in early New England, 1362-1363; as escape from caste, 792; factors accentuating, 213, 671; factors hindering rigid system of, 670-671; Marxian theory of, 68, 73; "meaning" of, 670-674; the result of restricted competition, 673-674; as social continuum, 675-676, 700; solidarity of, *see* Labor solidarity
Class attitudes in South, on social inequality, 592-599
Class Consciousness, 674
Class discrimination in Europe, 670
"Class problem," 75
Class stratification, Negro, 580, 593, 662, 700-705, 764-765, 1386-1388; in caste system, 689-693; and education, 875, 879; importance of relationship to white society in, 695; and leadership, 727-733, 1390; in underworld, 704-705
"Class struggle," 673
"Classical" versus "vocational" education, 888-889, 896-900, 906
Clay, C. C., on economic life in the South, 230
Clay, Emily H., on Interracial Commission, 844, 846, 1408-1409, 1410
Clergymen; *see* Ministers, Negro
Cleveland, Negro vote in, 1327
Closed shop, 405n.
Closed union, 405n.
Clothing, Negro, 962-963; expenditures for, 370, 1287-1288
Club activity, 952-953
Cobb, W. Montague: cited, 1214; on racial strength, 169
Collective bargaining, political, of Negroes, 498-500, 505-508; need for agency for, 835, 855
Collective consumption, 333
Colleges: discrimination in, 633; Negro, 632, 732-733, 765, 881, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 901, 904-905, 945, 951, 1415, 1429; poll of, on mixed education, 1421; segregation in, 1420
Collins, Henry Hill, on Cranbury Terror Case, 528
Collins, Winfield H.: on "vocational" education, 898-899; on Negro laborers, 284
Colonization schemes, 185-186, 698, 746-749, 805-807
Color, 1382-1384; and caste, 695-700; consciousness of, in children, 1429; and leadership, 1390; question of, in World War II, 915, 1004, 1006, 1016
Color bar; *see* Discrimination *and* Segregation
Color caste; *see* Caste system
Color line; *see* Caste line
Colored Clerks' Circle, 816, 1261
Colored Merchants' Association, 815
Commercial establishments, discrimination and segregation in, 636-638
Commissary system, 247, 1090, 1095
Commission form of government, 487, 1325
Commission on Interracial Cooperation; *see* Interracial Commission
Committee on Africa, the War, and Peace Aims, 807
Committee on Discrimination in Employment, 418n.
Committee on Economic and Racial Justice, 812n.
Committee for Improving the Industrial Conditions of Negroes in New York City, 837
Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes, 837
Common-law marriage; *see* Marriage, common-law
Common welfare, 1046-1047
Communism: experiments in, 712; influence of, on Negro intellectuals, 510; Marx's idea of, 1051n.; Negro attitudes toward, 508-510, 754, 807, 1332
Communist party, 812n.; appeal of, to Negroes, 750; in National Negro Congress,

818, 1401; on Negro organizations, 833; Negroes in, 495; and social equality for Negroes, 508
Community, Negro: caste and class in, 1129-1132; church in, 867, 935-942, 1426-1427, 1436; as pathological form of American community, 927-930, 1268; protective, *see* Protective community
Community leaders, 711-712
Company town, 404
Company unions, 1123, 1297
Competition: freedom of, 672; between Negro and white workers, 69, 193, 195, 221, 262, 281, 291-293, 388, 397, 597, 599, 894, 1098; of Negro newspapers, 909-910; of Negro ministers, 874; restricted, 674, 675; of white and Negro press, 915-916
Compromise between accommodation and protest, 768-780, 782, 786, 843
Compromise of the 1870's, 88, 226, 431, 447, 504, 739
Comstock, Anthony, 1226
Comstock Law, 1228
Congress: Negro members of, 447, 497, 501, 502; Southern members of disproportionate influence of, 464, 476-477; Southern members of, not representative of region, 516, 1329-1330
Congress of Industrial Organizations, 402, 410, 855, 1096, 1099, 1110, 1111, 1121; anti-strike policy of, 425; founding of, 1297-1298; principle of nondiscrimination in, 792; 793, 1300
Conservative party in America, 511
Conservatism: American, 12-13; Catholic, 1311; Negro, 508-509, 963; of Negro press, 921
Conservatism, Southern, 455-458, 464, 466, 474, 517, 519; disregard of, for law and order, 440-441, 445, 533; and Negro problem, 456-457, 471-472; rooted in pro-slavery philosophy, 441-445
Conspicuous consumption; *see* Consumption, conspicuous
Constitution of the United States (*see also* Reconstruction Amendments), 828, 1334, 1346; as basis of Negro struggle, 799, 834; circumvention of, 336, 448, 480-486, 533, 548; and democracy, 73; on equality, 526, 690, 1269; and issue of slavery, 86; Negro faith in, 510, 1007; on right to vote, 479; silent on education, 882n.; and woman suffrage, 1075-1076; worship of, 12-13
Constitutional Guards, 449
Construction industry; *see* Building trades
Consumer Purchases Study, 257, 355, 356, 364, 365, 368, 376, 377, 379, 1084, 1262, 1284, 1286, 1291
Consumption: collective, 333; conspicuous, 367-368, 703, 921, 962, 963; education in, 367; food, 371-375
Consumption industries, 411, 424, 425
Contraception (*see also* Birth Control), 128, 133, 176, 180-181, 1205, 1206-1207, 1226-1229
Conversation, interracial, etiquette of, 610-612, 1363
Conversion to war production, 413
Convict camps, Southern, 554-555
Cook, Will Marion, 989
Cooley, C. H., 91, 1031n.; cited, 1216
Cooper, M. R., on cotton production, 252
Cooperatives, Negro, 455, 713, 718, 748, 798, 802, 815, 816
Copeland, Lewis C., quoted, 1192
Corn production, 1238
Cornish, Samuel E., 737, 912
Corruption: in court, 523; in longshore industry, 1098; of Negro leadership, 774-775, 778; of Negro press, 913n.; police, 977; political, 434-435, 475, 476, 497, 498, 733, 811, 857, 1315, 1322-1323, 1325, 1326
Cotton economy, 1244, 1246
"Cotton mill campaigns," 1111
Cotton picker, mechanical, 1249-1250
Cotton production, 232-234, 1238; and the A.A.A., 255-256; deterioration of, 189, 193, 199; effect of depression on, 251-252; effect of improvement in, 86; mechanization of, 1248-1250; Negro role in, 205
Cotton Stamp Plan, 256
Council of Safety, 449
County Agricultural Conservation Committees, 258
County Farm Demonstration Agents, 258, 546, 1253
Courts, Southern, 547-550; cost of, 549n.; discrimination in, 527, 548, 550-553; protection of, 498-499; reform of, 555-557
Craft unions, 294, 406, 412, 1297, 1299
Craftsmen, Negroes as, 280, 887, 889, 898, 1254-1255
Crane, Albert L., on Negro characteristics, 145
Crap-shooting, 964n.
Cravath, E. M., 1417
Credit agencies, 1253-1254
Credit cooperatives, 273
Credit system, 232-234, 247, 314, 1242; agricultural, 260; for Negro businessmen, 308; reform of, 260, 272-273, 348
Crime, Negro, 655-656, 966-979, 1432-

1433; causes of, 974-979; distortion of, 967-970; Negroes as victims of, 656; types of, 972-974
Crime, and social conditions, 557
Crime news, 655-656, 918
Crime prevention, 544-545, 555-557
Crime statistics, 330n., 542n., 553-554; criticism of, 967-970, 972
Crisis, 820, 821, 909, 914
"Crisis" theory of social change, 1050n., 1061n.
Crop diversification, 253, 1238
Crop restriction program, 488, 558, 1183
Crossbreeding; see Amalgamation
Crumpacker Resolution, 1334
Cullen, Countee, 989
Cultural diversity, 3-5, 17
Cultural lag, 930, 962, 1388
Cultural level, raised, 592, 645-647
Cultural similarity of Negroes and Southern whites, 70n.
Cultural unity, xlviii, 1029
Culture, African, 747-748, 752-753, 928
Culture, American: absorption of, by Negroes, 38, 657, 811, 879, 928-929; and education, 882-886; fragmentation of, 713, 714; influence of Negroes on, 38; traits of, 709-716, 810-812, 882-886
Culture, Negro, characteristics of, 689-705, 750-754, 915-920, 930-942, 952-955, 956-965
Culture, political, 853, 856
Culture, Western, 1356
Cumulation, principle of; *see* Vicious circle, theory of
Cuney, N. W., 478
Custom and economic discrimination, 215-216
Cynicism, Negro, 959

Dabney, Virginius, 468, 1013; cited, 398, 454, 457, 1324; on criticism of the South, 1321; on equal suffrage, 1334; on Jim Crow laws, 589; on justice for Negroes, 547; on poll tax, 483n.; on segregation, 1355; on training school for delinquents, 1368; on women's rights in *ante-bellum* South, 1074-1075
Dairy farming in the South, 235, 252
Dancing: interracial, 608, 610; Negro professional, 988; as recreation, 985
Daniel Hand Fund, 891n.
Daniels, Jonathan, 468
Daniels, Josephus: cited, 447; quoted, 226 227
Davenport, C. B., and Love, A. G., cited, 137
Davis, Allison: cited, 495, 691, 861, 870n.-871n., 872n., 875, 940, 941, 954n.; on emotionalism, 936n.-937n.
Davis Allison, and Dollard, John: cited, 1361; on class concept, 673, 1377-1379; on color of school children, 1429; on "legal" lynching, 1350; on Negro attitudes toward caste, 1372; on Negro lower class, 1386
Davis, Allison, Gardner, B. B., and Gardner, M. R.: cited, 241, 245, 247, 489, 700, 732, 935, 963, 1238, 1361; on cheating of Negroes, 1242; on class consciousness, 1378; on color, 1382-1383; on justification of petty theft, 1434; on Negro attitude toward color, 1192; on Negro lower classes, 1386; on Negro-white tension, 677-678; on police attitudes toward Negroes, 1342; on punishment of Negroes, 1340; on race pride, 1396; on relations between Negroes and lower class whites, 1358; on social classes, 1130 n.; on taboo of miscegenation and illegitimacy, 1384; on tenancy, 1242-1243
Davis, Jackson, 890, 891
Davis, Jefferson, on slavery, 442-443
Davis, John P., 817, 1401
Davis, Michael M., on public health policy, 1274
Dawson, William, 501n.
Day, Caroline Bond, cited, 129, 1205, 1207
Dayton trial, 458, 660
Death penalty, 554, 566n.
Death rate, Negro, 122, 316, 344, 1215, 1221-1223, 1224, 1225; control of, 171-175; decline in, 141; future, 134; of slaves, 121, 1201-1202; and white, 141-142, 161-165
Deaths, registration of, 159, 1218, 1221-1222
Debt peonage, 228-229, 247-248, 1090, 1236-1237, 1242, 1345
Decentralization of politics in the South, 474
Declaration of Independence, 6-7, 8
Defeatism: economic, 1001; intellectual, 19-21, 831; Negro struggle against, 758-759, 786; political, 812
Defense plants; *see* War production
Defense reactions (*see also* Rationalization): Negro, 56-57, 62, 1432; white, 30-32, 88, 104-105, 283-284, 441-445, 460, 962n.
Delany, Martin, 737
Delaware: death penalty in, 554; Negro police in, 543n.; transportation Jim Crow optional in, 635
Democracy: America's contribution to society, 5; and American Creed, 25, 783; building of, 6-7; to combat ignorance,

384; and education, 674; the free recognition of ability, 672; importance of, to Negroes, 656; issue of, in World War II, 517, 1004, 1007, 1012; Jeffersonian, 433-434; and justice, 523-526; maintained through electoral controls, 717, 718; and moral education, 1029; Negroes and 745, 850; postulates of, 8; post-war, 1021-1024; in public institutions, 582; reaction against, 433; and religion, 9, 867-868, 1411; revival of, 432-437, 716, 745, 755; and slavery, inconsistency between, 85; in the South, 440-441, 460-461; theory of, 78-80; in trade unions, 406, 407, 718
Democratic party: Negro support of, 479n., 492n., 494-495, 497; in the South, 452-455, 463, 464, 465, 474, 475, 477, 480, 487, 511n.
Demonstration projects, birth control, 1228-1229
Dempsey, Jack, 991n.
Denominations, Negro religious, 936, 939
Dentists, Negro, 172, 325, 638, 1224
Deportation; *see* Back-to-Africa movement
Depression; *see* Great Depression
Detroit: clashes between Negroes and police in, 527, 528, 529n.; housing project riot in, 568, 678, 1337; Ku Klux Klan influence in, 410; Negro population in, 1326; Negro vote in, 494, 1328, 1329; racial friction in, 662; restriction of Negroes in, 527; Southern-born policemen in, 529n.
Detweiler, Frederick G.: cited, 909, 912, 922n., 1423; on Negro press as race organ, 908
Dewey, John, 1031n., 1183; on the American Creed, 23; on educational philosophy, 882-883; on moral nature of the social problem, xlvii; on political organization, 717n.
Dickerson, Earl, 987
Dickinson, R. L., and Morris, W. E., on contraception, 1228
Diet, Negro, 374, 375, 1290
Differentials: age, within class structure, 1131; in employment rates, 297-298; fertility, 134n., 1212; in food consumption, 1289; in illegitimacy, 933; income, 164-165, 215, 319-320, 1094-1095, 1096, 1099, 1112-1113, 1116-1117, 1124, 1232-1233; in punishment, 1433; in relief treatment, 199; in treatment by insurance companies, 316; in school expenditures, 337, 338-341; in susceptibility to disease, 1214-1215; in treatment by F.S.A., 274-275; in treatment of witnesses, 526-527; in vocational training, 1419
Differential reproductivity, 131-132, 134-135
Dillard, James H., 891
Disciples of Christ, 938
Discontent, Negro (*see also* Protest, Negro), 26, 459, 525, 645, 744-745, 749; fostered by education, 879
Discrimination, 29, 58, 214-215, 928, 1063, 1141; in armed forces, 744, 850, 1005, 1308-1309; in availability of medical facilities, 172; beginning of, in slavery, 577-578; class, in Europe, 670; in commercial establishments, 637, 638; economic, 61, 65, 67, 106-107, 199, 208, 215, 312-313, 327-328, 380-396, 588; in education, 61, 65, 107, 337-344, 632-633, 888, 893, 1367; effect of, on health, 344; effect of, on whites, 643-644; factors bolstering, 382; facts and beliefs regarding, 605-606; and federal aid to education, 905; future, 904; in housing, 107, 196, 348-353, 527; "indirect," 277, 358; in interpersonal relations, 606-618; against Jews, 28; in justice, 523-534, 588, 967, 968-969, 974, 999, 1335-1337; legislation against, 418, 1367; in longshore work, 1098; against minority groups, 52, 53; motivation for, 335-336; in the North, 66-67, 599-604, 609, 610, 612-613, 614, 617-618, 722, 999, 1010-1011, 1367; one-sidedness of, 799; by police and courts, 527, 534, 550-553; political (*see also* Disfranchisement, Negro), 107, 274, 429, 459, 588; President's Order abolishing, in defense jobs, 412, 414-417, 851; in prisons, 555; protest against, *see* Protest, Negro; in public places, 61, 65, 628, 662; in public services, 169, 170, 334-337, 588, 1000-1001; rank order of, 60-67, 587-588, 608n., 1142; rationalization of, 88, 102-106, 145, 208, 215-219, 283-284, 392, 591, 660, 784, 897, 928, 1077; in recreational facilities, 346-348; in relief, 356, 588; by semi-public organizations, 631, 1367; sensitiveness of Negroes to, 761-763, 958; social, 573, 574, 587, 588, 599-604, 999; trend away from, 65-66, 924, 998, 1010-1011; unemployment a result of, 998; in unions, 408, 1103, 1296-1300; "vocational" education a rationalization for, 897; wage, 319-320, 1094-1095, 1096, 1099, 1112-1113, 1116-1117, 1124; in war plants, 415-418, 851, 1005, 1301-1302; in the West, 200
Discussion of Negro problem, etiquette of, 36-40

Disease: biological susceptibility to, 107, 140-141, 1214; control of, 171-175; environmental factors in, 344; Negro-white differentials in, 174n.; prevention of, 163, 171, 174
Disfranchisement, Negro, 61, 65, 107, 429-430, 435-437, 440-445, 452-453, 475, 478, 512-513, 523, 580, 642, 798, 812, 829, 999-1000, 1313-1314; extra-legal techniques for, 484-486, 489, 514, 515, 1325; illegal, effect of, on whites, 1333; legal, techniques of, 479-484, 489, 1317-1319; motivation for, 1323; need for abolishing, 518-519; in the North, 438; weakening of legal foundation for, 514, 515, 518
Disfranchisement, white, 476, 482, 1319
Displacement of labor: by A.A.A., 267; by mechanization, 206, 297, 1107, 1108, 1248-1250
Distribution: according to need, 334; of A.A.A. benefits, 268-270; of agricultural products, 265; of arrests, 971, 973; of church membership, 865; geographical, *see* Geographical distribution of Negroes; of Negro policemen, 543n.; of Negro religious denominations, 865; of Negro residences in cities, 1125-1128; of Negroes in industry, 1081; of public services, 336-337; work, rotation system, 1099
District of Columbia; *see* Washington, D. C.
Divorce, 933, 935, 1425
Dixon, Dean, 989
Doctors; *see* Medicine, Negroes in
Dodd, William E.: cited, 1311; on denial of freedom of speech, 1317
Dollard, John: cited, 128, 562, 593, 607, 693, 700, 763-764, 1207, 1358; on defensive beliefs, 1197; gains theory of, 1353-1354; on middle class gains from Negro subordination, 1339; on Negro hostility to whites, 1395; on Negro schools, 340n.; on race etiquette, 612, 1363; on slavery, 222
Domestic service, 284, 291, 293, 411, 652-653; 1082-1087; age of workers in, 1086; hours of work in, 1086; for Negro employers, 1389-1390; training of workers in, 1087; wages for, 1085-1086
Donnell, Forrest C., 1379
Do-nothing policy, 19, 91, 394, 831, 1031, 1036n., 1047, 1048, 1050, 1052, 1053-1054, 1055, 1056, 1398; in agriculture, 249-250
Dorn, Harold F.: cited, 142, 162, 172, 175, 177, 345n., 1218, 1225, 1273; on Negro life expectancy, 1221; on Southern hospitals, 323
Double role of Negroes, 1432
Double standard: of conduct, 760, 772-773, 1369-1370; in favor of Southerners, 70n.; of justice, 551; moral, 246-247, 590; for Negro achievement, 754, 779
Douglas, Aaron, 989
Douglass, Frederick, 491, 695n., 726, 913, 987, 992, 1075, 1076n., 1187; characterized by Kelly Miller, 740; on "industrial" education, 1416; on inferiority doctrine, 1190-1191; Negro protest voiced by, 737-738; on Negro unemployment, 291-292
Doyle, Bertram W.: on Negro education, 1056; on noninterest of Negroes in voting, 1326; on resistance to compromise, 832
Drake, J. G. St. Clair: cited, 732, 862n., 866, 872n., 936, 937, 940, 952, 954n., 955, 1332, 1430; on Negro club meetings, 953n.
Dred Scott decision, 429
Dressmakers, Negro, 1088
Dubin, Robert, cited, 1379
Dublin, Louis I.: cited, 119; on slave trade, 118-119
Dublin, L. I., and Lotka, A. J., cited, 1221
Du Bois, W. E. B., 601, 726, 750, 820, 827, 889, 890, 901, 913n., 940, 987, 1005, 1132; cited, 69, 201, 222, 224, 429, 439, 567, 576, 579, 745, 954n., 1229-1230, 1392; on amalgamation, 1187; on Booker T. Washington and the Tuskegee Machine, 1391-1932; on cooperatives, 802, 816; on disfranchisement, 512-513, 1333; on dualism of being a Negro American, 809; on education, 887, 888, 902; on effect of Emancipation, 738; on emigration, 807; on environment, 96; on extravagance of Negro lodges, 955; on Freedmen's Bank, 1261; on Garvey, 749; on *Guardian*, 1392; on hospitals, 796; on intermarriage, 64; on labor movement in the South, 1187; on law and justice, 525-526; on mulattoes, 1385; on N.A.A.C.P., 796-797; on Negro class structure, 691; on Negro defense by deception, 1431; on Negro enjoyment of life, 1431; on Negro feeling of caste, 680; on Negro grievances in World War I, 850; on "Negro problem," 785; on Negro thinking, 781, 1235; on Negroes in early labor movement, 1398; on police tyranny, 1342; on political power and permanent improvement, 1331-1333; on possible expulsion of Negroes from America, 1399; on prejudice of

Negroes toward other Negroes, 1143n.; as protest leader, 742-744; on racial beliefs, 103; on racial equality, 169; on racial isolation, 1371; on racial status in Northern cities, 601, 1359; on rape of Negro women by whites, 1187; on restaurant industry, 311; on segregation, 649n.; on self-segregation, 797-798; on upper class Negroes, 703, 1388; on voting behavior, 491; on white and Negro incomes, 693n.; on white prejudice, 42; on white primary, 455; on whites' ignoring of Negro suffering, 658; on World War I, 1012; on "Yankee teachers," 1416
Dueling, 1346
Duggan, I. W., cited, 1243-1244
Duke Endowment Fund, 323
Duke family, and Negro education, 891n.
Dunbar, Paul Lawrence, 989, 992
Duncan, Todd, 988
Dunham, Katherine, 988
Dunning, W. A., 1315
Du Pont family, and Negro education, 891n.
Durkheim, Emile, 1056n.
Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill, 565

East, Edward M., on offspring of Negro-white parents, 1208-1209
East St. Louis, riots in, 567
Eating, interracial, 608-609
Economic determinism, 77-78, 1069
Economic discrimination; *see* Discrimination, economic
Economic liberalism, 672; changed conception of, 209-212
Economic revolution, 1069n.
Economics, 1047-1048; as "basic" factor in caste system, 72, 834, 1069
Education (*see also* Vocational training): adult, 343, 388, 713, 886, 906-907; and American Creed, 709, 879, 882, 893, 1182; in American thought and life, 882-886; in the Army and Navy 419; on birth control, 180; in citizenship, 778, 949; for the consumer, 367; discrimination in, *see* Discrimination, in education; emphasized by New Deal, 465-466; of employers, 401; and employment risk, 303; expenditures for, 1270-1273; 337, 338-341, federal aid to, 343-344, 892-893, 905, 1272-1273; improvement in, 213, 466, 715; inferiority of, in the South, 45; interventionism by, 211; toward migration policy, 387; passive, 886; in period of Enlightenment, 1182; philosophy of, 882-883; of policemen, 538-539, 544-545; private endowments for, 869, 883, 890-893; on race relations, 49, 383-384, 385; segregation in, 319, 335, 341-342, 581, 587, 628, 632-633, 647, 795, 880-882, 894, 901-902, 904, 945-946, 1420; and social mobility, 674; and social reform, 1049; of Southern farmers, 275; "spoon feeding," 886n.; of voters, 519; for women, 1076n., 1077; of workers, in labor movement, 406
Education, Negro, 942-952, 1415-1422; and churches, 862; as concerted action, 879-882; development of, in South, 887-893; equipment for, 904, 946-947, 1418; future of, 902-907; Interracial Commission activities in, 846; and life situations, conflict of, 879-880, 884, 900, 946, 1260, 1292-1293; of ministers, 321, 875, 1413-1414; need for, 109-110; Negro attitudes toward type of, 900-902; in the North, 879; post-Civil War, 690; prestige of, 694, 704, 709, 729, 883-884, 913; rising level of, 199, 342, 514, 525, 556, 565, 728, 745, 760, 776, 877, 879, 881, 895, 943-944, 952, 1000, 1005; of slaves, 887; and social status, 702, 875, 879, 883; state agents for 1417-1418; of teachers, 319n., 891; "vocational" versus "classical," 896-900; whites' attitude toward, 893-896
Educational requirement for voting, 483-484
Edwards, Alba M., cited, 297, 310, 312n., 314, 318, 1377
Edwards, Archie C., cited, 504
Eighteenth Amendment, 457
Eleazer, R. B.: cited, 846; on interracial work, 845
Elections: constitutionality of laws regulating, 516n.-517n.; of court and police officials, 523, 524; direct, 433-436; general, 487-488; initiative and referendum, 487; manipulation of, 450-451; of Negroes, 502-503; nonpartisan, 487-488, 500; participation in, 713, 717, 718; and personalities, 453, 454, 474, 716n.; presidential, of 1928, 477; primary, 454, 474, 475, 486-487, 489, 833; in the South, 475-476, 1322-1323, 1325.
Elks, Negro, 954n.
Ellington, Duke, 734, 988, 989
Emancipation: of slaves, effect of, 222-223, 281, 578-579, 738, 1234-1235; of women, fight for, 1075
Emancipation Proclamation, 431, 738
Embree, Edwin R., 649n.; cited, 142, 1215; on church segregation, 868; on hospitals for Negroes, 1224; on inconsistent beliefs, 283; on patronizing of Negroes, 29; on plantation system, 1243; on race defini-

tion, 115; on Rosenwald schools, 1418; on Southern white attitudes, 582-583; on vicious circle, 1069n.
Emigration, Negro, from America, 186
Emotionalism: religious, 563, 565, 861, 865, 936-938, 941, 959; around segregation and discrimination, 591
Employers: anti-union work of, 389, 404, 1095n.-1096n., 1123, 1297; attitudes of, to Negro workers, 1293-1294; education of, 401; and workers, interrelation of attitudes of, 393-394, 1295
Employment: discrimination in, *see* Discrimination, economic; planned, 386-388
Employment booms, secondary, 411, 1007
Enlightenment, philosophy of, 8-9, 83-84, 89, 1181-1182
Entertainment field, Negroes in, 329-330, 654, 734, 750, 753, 959-960, 987-992
Environment: a factor in susceptibility to disease, 142, 144; effect of, on disease incidence, 344; influence of, on intelligence performance, 147, 151; in Negro life, li
Environmentalism, 91, 92; trend toward, 882, 1003, 1036, 1189-1190
Equalitarianism, xlviii, 8-9, 62-65; and caste interest, conflict between, 899; in churches, 871; in C.I.O., 792, 793; and economic discrimination, 215-218, 885; and education, 893; growth of, 662; influence of American Creed toward, 110, 573, 574, 581, 670-672, 1189; moral, and biology, 83-84, 87-88, 89; in the North, 383, 384, 526-529; reaction against, 87, 97; Revolutionary, 614; reflections of, in science, 89-93; in Southern ideology, 670
Equality: of endowment, 759; on hospital staffs, 323; issue of, in World War II, 1012; necessity for assertion of, 758; of opportunity, 213-215, 884, 893
Equilibrium concepts, 1065
Erosion; *see* Soil erosion
Escape reactions, 30-36, 75; in the North, 47; role of ignorance in, 40-41
Ethnic attachment, 619, 620
Ethos, American; *see* American Creed
Ethridge, Mark, 468, 1013; on social segregation in the South, 663
Etiquette of racial behavior, 471, 573, 587, 606-618, 761, 964, 1351, 1361-1364; gradual breakdown of, 615-616, 651, 1363-1364; and institutional segregation, 628; and isolation, 653
Eugenics, use of, in slave-breeding, 121-122
Europe, class discrimination in, 670
Europe, James Reese, 989
Ever-Normal Granary Plan, 256
Executive Order abolishing discrimination in defense jobs, 412, 414-417, 851, 1005
Expenditures: for education, 337, 338-341, 1270-1273; funeral, 1262; for household help, 1084; on Negro churches, 1413; on Negro schools, 1418
Experimentalism of leaders, 710
Exploitation: of Africa, 806; economic (*see also* Slavery), 208, 220-221, 443; of immigrants, 50, 292; of Negro farmer, 364; of Negro and immigrant voters, 439, 490; of racial hostility, 789, 790, 1095n., 1096n., 1123; sexual, 56-57, 59, 62, 63, 578, 607, 1204; of whites' pretenses of superiority, 762, 960, 1431; of workers, 397, 1090
Extension Service, Department of Agriculture, 272, 343, 347, 1253
Extradition, fight against, 828

Fact Finding Committee of Georgia, 469
Factories, segregation in, 636, 642, 653
Fair Employment Practice Committee, 414, 415-417, 851, 1005, 1303, 1306
Fair Labor Standards Act; *see* Wages and Hours Law
Family, Negro, 930-935; breaking up of, 931, 933-934; budget of, 367-370, 964, 1287; income of, 1270, 1283-1285, 1288; size of, 1286
Family background, Negro upper class attitude toward, 695, 697, 702
Farm classification, 233n., 235, 239-240
Farm Credit Administration, 1253-1254
Farm and home demonstration work, 271-272
Farm lease, flexible, 278
Farm mortgage loans, 272
Farm Security Administration, 212, 273-278, 343, 347, 426n., 755, 847, 1232, 1250; discrimination in, 546; educational function of, 275, 465; hostility toward, 274; mistakes committed by, 276; Negro officials in, 326; rehabilitation program of, 276-277
Farmers' cooperatives, 455
Farmers' Union, 262
Farming; *see* Agriculture
Fascism, 6, 1004, 1311; and leadership concept, 709; no Negro tendency toward, 508; unlikelihood of, in South, 458-462
Father Divine Peace Mission, 865n., 866, 871n.
Faulkner, William, 468
Fear complex of the South, 1356
Federal budget; *see* Budget, public
Federal Council, 503

Federal Emergency Relief Administration, 276, 1277
Federal Home Loan Banks, 273, 316, 348
Federal Housing Administration, 348-350, 503, 1276; segregation policy of, 349-350, 625, 627
Federal jobs, Negroes in; *see* Government, Negroes employed by
Federal Land Banks, 1253
Federal Public Housing Authority; *see* United States Housing Authority
Federal Theater, 991
Federal Writers' Project, 991
Fee system for court officials, 548
Ferebee, Dorothy Boulding, cited, 180, 1227
Ferguson, G. O., 1217; cited, 145; on Negro inferiority, 145
Fertility, Negro, 134, 1212, 1222
Fertility differentials, 134n.
Fertilizer industry: Negro employment in, 287-288, 1096-1097; wages in, 1096-1097
Fiction, stereotyped opinions about Negroes in, 101
Fifteenth Amendment, 438, 445, 480, 1075, 1334
Fifth column activity, 814, 1400
Finance, Negro, 314-318
Fines, incomes from, 549n.
First World War; *see* World War I
Fisher, Constance, on contraception, 1206
Fisk University, 888, 889, 892, 1416, 1417, 1429
Fisk Jubilee Singers, 992
Fitzgerald, Ella, 903n.
Fitzhugh, George: on education for poor whites, 1415; on pro-slavery philosophy, 442; on slavery, 1073-1074, 1188
Fleming, G. James: on Negro press, 913, 914, 922, 923; on Negro society news, 918-919; on sensationalism, 917, 1424
Flint-Goodridge Hospital, 323
Florant, Lyonel C., on war housing conditions, 1308
Florida: Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax repealed in, 482; voting in, 488n., white primary in, 486
Folk music, 753, 754, 929, 992-993
Folklore concerning Negroes, 55
Folkways; *see* Mores
Folsom, J. C., and Baker, O. E., cited, 238
Food consumption, Negro, 371-375, 963-964, 1287, 1288-1290; bad habits of, 373
Food-expenditure unit, 373n., 374, 1289
Food manufacturing, Negroes in, 289-291
Food stamp plan, 211, 265, 363
Forbes, George, 742
Ford, Henry, 424, 1121; hiring policy of, 394
Ford Motor Company, Negroes in, 394, 1119, 1120-1121; training school of, 1121
Foreign-born groups; *see* Minorities
Foreign-born Negroes; *see* Immigration, Negro
Foreign-language newspapers, 912
Fourierists, 712
Forty-hour week, 398
"Forty-Ninth State," 807, 814
Foster, Stephen, 987, 993
"Four Freedoms," 9, 850, 1019
Fourteenth Amendment, 438, 445, 515, 828, 1075, 1269, 1334
Fraenkel, Osmond K., cited, 1310
Franchise; *see* Suffrage *and* Disfranchisement
Frazier, E. Franklin, 930, 974; cited, 124, 332, 528, 690, 902n., 1210, 1366, 1390, 1425; on behavior of Negro children, 648; on contraception, 1207; criticism of Herskovits by, 1394; on interracial sex relations, 1205; on Joe Louis' symbolism for Negroes, 1396; on Louisville Negro underworld, 1266; on mulattoes, 1210-1211; on Negro conception of God, 1411; on Negro lower class, 1386; on Negro press, 921; on Negro recreational needs, 1274-1275; on Negro upper class, 703; on pathology of Negro community, 1268; on status of Negro teachers, 1428-1429; on techniques for "getting by," 762; on Urban League, 841n.; on whites as menace to Negro homes, 969
Frederick Douglass's Paper, 913
Freedmen's Bureau, 224, 227, 314, 887
Freedmen's Savings Bank and Trust Company, 314-315, 1261
Freedom: of competition, 672, 674; individual, with regard to intermarriage, 63, 64; of mobility, 198; from want, 209-210, 464
Freedom's Journal, 912
"Friendliness," scale of: to the Negro, 1036-1037; to the South, 1037-1038
Frissell, H. B., 795n.
Frontier civilization: pattern of, in South, 451, 458, 459, 532; significance of, in American history, 433n.; and tradition of illegality, 17
Fruit and vegetable production, 252
Frustration, 688, 699-700, 1260; political, 810-811; and religion, 859, 938; sublimated into emotionalism, 861
Fry, C. Luther, cited, 1413
Fugitive slave laws, 16
Fundamentalism in Southern religion, 563, 565, 660, 869

Funeral expenditures, 1262

Gabriel, Ralph H., on democracy and moral law, 10, 15, 23
Gaines Case, 830, 833
Gallagher, Buell G., 1377; cited, 563; caste and class diagrams by, 1381
Gambling, 330-331, 940, 983-984, 985, 1266, 1267, 1269; laws against, 17
Garner, John N., 459-460, 494, 754
Garnet, Henry Highland, 737
Garrison, William Lloyd, 806, 1075
Garvey, Marcus, 746-749, 836n., 1390
Garvey movement 698, 746-749, 806, 1328
Gaudiness, Negro love of, 962-963
Gebhard, John C., cited, 1262
Geddes, Anne E., cited, 354
General Education Board, 891, 893
General Motors Corporation, 1119
Genetic composition of Negro people, 121-122, 124, 131-132, 590, 1199-1200; present and future trends, 132-136
Geographic conditions, effect of, on man, 116
Geographical distribution of Negroes, 183-185, 189, 190-191, 205-206; effect of, on reproduction rate, 161; of Negro policemen, 543n.
Georgia: incomes from fines in, 549n.; liberal influence in, 468, 469; Negro police in, 543n.; riot in, 567; voting in, 488n.; voting requirements in, 484, 1324; white primary in, 486
Gerrymandering, 430n., 437n., 450, 492, 633, 901, 1326-1327; "natural," 493
Gibson, Truman, 422n.
Gillard, John Thomas, cited, 864n.-865n., 870n., 871n.
Gist, Noel P., cited, 1373
Glasgow, Ellen, 468
Glass, Carter, on discrimination, 1313-1314
"Glass plate," 680, 724-727
Gleason, Eliza Atkins, cited, 1275
God, Negro youth's conception of, 1411
Goldberg, Isaac, on white enjoyment of Negro songs, 1437
Goldhamer, Herbert, cited, 952
Good Shepherd Church, 863n.
Goodell, William, cited, 531-532
Goodrich, Carter, cited, 232
Gosnell, Harold F.: cited, 493, 494, 495, 498, 502, 941; on Negro benefits from government, 501; on Negro political loyalty, 1330; on Negro prostitution, 1268; on Negro underworld and election, 1329; on Negro underworld leaders, 1267
Gould, Howard D., 1123n.
Government: Jeffersonian distrust of, 16; increasing power of labor in, 788; Negroes employed by, 327-328, 416, 788, 1265-1266; non-criticism of, 1251-1252; reform of, 511-512
Government jobs, discrimination in, 1306-1307
Gradualism, 787-788, 845, 1119
Grady, Henry W., 230; on *ante-bellum* South, 1375-1376; on employment opportunities for Negroes, 292; on racial separation, 581, 1353; on slaves, 1357; on white solidarity, 453-454; on white supremacy, 1354
Graft; *see* Corruption
Graham, Frank P., 467
Granger, Lester B., 837, 987; cited, 417, 1302, 1306, 1307; on Urban League, 1408
Grandfather clauses, 480, 829, 833, 1313, 1318, 1323
Grant, Madison, on racial definition, 114
Grant, Ulysses S., on hope of freedmen for land, 1234
Grants-in-aid system, 343, 892-893, 1225
Graves, John Temple, 1013
Great Depression, 348, 394, 1243-1244; effect of, on migration, 196; effect of, on Negroes, 206-207, 295, 296, 315, 393, 754-755; in the North 295; in the South, 197, 289, 463
Great Migration (*see also* Migration), 46, 183, 189, 191-196, 295, 329-330, 527, 568, 599, 602, 652, 999, 1229-1232
Great Revival of 1800, 938
Greeley, Horace, 1075
Green, H. M., cited, 172
Green, Paul, 468
Green, William, 718
Greene, Harry W., on education of Negro leaders, 1402
Greene, Lorenzo J., and Woodson, Carter G., on opposition of unions to Negroes, 1102n.
Grimke, Angelina and Sarah, 1075
Gross reproduction rate, 161-162, 1221
Guardian, Boston, 913-914, 1392
Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, 892n.

Hacker, Louis, 1315
Hailey, Malcolm, cited, 807
Hairdressers, Negro, 1088
Haiti, immigration to, 186
Hamilton, Horace C., on mechanization in the South, 1249
Hammon, Jupiter, 992
Hammond, J. H., on slavery, 443
Hampton, Wade, on Reconstruction Amendments, 1313

Hampton Institute, 888, 889, 892, 898, 899, 1416, 1429
Handy, W. C., 989
Harlem, 621n., 622, 1125-1126, 1366; business in, 1261; vice in, 1266
Harlem Hospital, 323
Harlem Riot of 1935, 568
Harmon Foundation, 892n.
Harper, William, on slavery, 87
Harris, Joel Chandler, 987
Harrison, Carter, 492n.
Hart, Albert Bushnell, 1190
Hart, Hornell, cited, 1207-1208
Harvard University, 1264
Hastie, William H., 422n., 503
Haynes, George, 817; cited, 1302
Hayes, Laurence J. W., cited, 327, 1265
Hayes, Roland, 734, 988, 1340
Hayes, Mrs. Roland, 1339-1340
Health: affected by discrimination, 172; effect of, on birth rate, 174-175
Health needs, Negro, 371
Health services, 212, 323, 324, 546; federal aid to, 1273-1274; segregation in, 325
Health standard, minimum, 366-367
Hearst press, 916, 1424
Helper, Hinton Rowan, 230, 1235; cited, 444; on poor whites, 1311-1312; on slaveholders, 531
Henderson, Elmer W., cited, 494, 501n., 502, 1329
Henderson, Fletcher, 988
Henry, Patrick, on slavery, 22
Herbert, Hilary A., cited, 1234
Heredity, role of, in intelligence and personality, 151-152
Herskovits, Melville J., 137, 753, 930, 1206; cited, 118, 119n., 124, 132-133, 1205, 1210, 1211-1212, 1411; on absence of African culture traits, 1425; on ancestral cultures of Africa, 753; on slave trade, 1201-1202
Heyward, Du Bose, 468, 987
Hicks, John D., cited, 452
High, Stanley, cited, 420, 1307
High schools, Negro, 950-951, 1429
Hill, Lister, 467
Hill, T. Arnold, cited, 953, 1430
Himes, Norman, on clinic attendance, 1206
Hinckley, E. D., 1136
Hinrichs, A. F., 1092n.
Historians, Negro, 751-752, 1315
History: of American idealism, 6-8; of Negroes in America, lii, 750-754; personification of, by Americans, 710; teaching of, to Negroes, 1420; of this study, ix-xx, lv-lviii
Hobbes, Thomas, cited, 79
Hodge, Charles, on treatment of women and minors, 1074
Hoffman, Frederick L., on tuberculosis among Negroes, 142
Hoffsommer, Harold, on public relief for Southern tenants, 1279
Holiness Church, 864n., 871n., 938
Holley, W. C., Winston, E., and Woofter, T. J., Jr.: cited, 254, 257, 259-260, 269, 1247, 1254; on interest rates, 247
Holmes, S. J.: cited, 1361; on birth control, 1206
Home Economics, Bureau of, 374
Home Owners' Loan Corporation, 348
Homicide, 174, 540, 542, 553, 554n.
Hooton, Earnest A.: cited, 140; on offspring of white and Negro parents, 1208
Hoover, Herbert, 478, 494, 1218
Horne, Roman L., and McKibben, E. G., on mechanization, 1249-1250
Horowitz, Eugene L., 1136
Horst, Paul, on environment, 152
Hoshor, John, cited, 871n.
Hospital Construction Bill, 345
Hospitalization, 344-345
Hospitals: federal aid to, 345; for the insane, 979; Negro, 1224, 1273; Negro and white, 323-324; segregation in, 635-636, 795-796
Hotels: discrimination in, 628; segregated, 528, 588, 635, 795
Housewife's League, 1400
Housing: bad, effect of, 1290; conditions in, 375-379, 619, 1290-1292, 1308; defense, 418-419, 1308; discrimination in, 107, 196, 348-353, 527; for lumber workers, 1095; Negro management in, 326; nonsegregated units, 1276; reform in, 626; Sojourner Truth project, 568, 678, 1337; subsidies for, 352n.
Housing program, 211, 348-353; and family size, 1286; Negro work on, 1104-1105
Housing segregation, 107, 308, 377, 379, 567, 601, 1366; and government agencies, 625-626; in the North, 618-622; sanctions for, 622-627
Houston, riots of 1917 in, 567, 1309
Hovland, C. I., and Sears, R. R., cited, 563
Howard, O. O., 1417
Howard, Perry, 478
Howard University, 324, 326, 343, 888, 892, 1206, 1264, 1416, 1417, 1429
Hoyt Homer, cited, 619, 1365
Hrdlička, Aleš, 114n., 138, 1212; cited, 1210
Hughes, Langston, 734, 989, 1184

Human inclinations, etiquette in cases involving, 616-617
Humanitarianism, 6-7; of American Creed, 598; in Reconstruction period, 739, 741
Humor, Negro, 959-961, 1431; function of, in race question, 38-39; simulated, 960
Hurd, John C., cited, 531-532
Hurston, Zora Neale, cited, 965
Huxley, Julian S.; on adaptation to environment, 1199; on miscegenation, 1209
Huxley, J. S., and Haddon, A. C., on genetic racial differences, 146

Idealism, American, xlvi, xlviii, 712, 810; and behavior, disparity between, 21-23; 745, 755-756, 1008; history of, 6-8; inscribed in laws, 14
Ideals: conflict of, 209; lip-service to, 21-23; unity of, 3-5
Ideology: business, 800-803; defense, 30-32, 56-57, 62, 88, 104-105, 283-284, 441-445, 460, 962n., 1432; equalitarianism, *see* Equalitarianism; national, *see* American Creed; Negro, *see* Popular theories, Negro; Northern, 603, 1375-1376; "pure woman," 1356; Southern (*see also* Liberalism, Southern), 441-445, 670; working class, 407; of World War II, 517, 745, 755, 790n., 915, 1004, 1006, 1007, 1012, 1016
Ignorance, mutual, of Negroes and whites, 762, 956, 957
Ignorance, Negro, 961, 970; simulated, 961; of whites, 659
Ignorance about social affairs, 1034
Ignorance, white, about Negroes (*see also* Misinformation about Negroes), 40-42, 279, 339n., 382, 600, 647, 1010, 1143n., 1293, 1370-1371, 1373-1374; convenience of, 40-42, 48; as a factor in social inequality, 656-659; in the North, 383-386, 606, 644; in the South, 394-395
Illegality: pattern of, 558-560, 1346; tradition of (*see also* Law, lack of respect for, in America), 405, 435, 440, 441, 448-451, 525, 526, 536
Illegitimacy, 177-178, 932, 933, 935
Illinois: death penalty in, 554n.; lynching in, 561; riots in, 567; school segregation in, 633
Immigrants: competition of, with Negroes, 603; exploitation of, 50, 292; inferior schools for, 338; newspapers for, 911, 912; physical changes in, 122, 1202-1203; voting among, 491; voting rights of, 438
Immigration, 17, 50-52, 157-159, 166, 196, 713, 714, 927; decline of, 715; legislation on, 92, 196, 198; of Mexicans and Canadians, 159; Negro, 120, 135, 165, 166; restricted, 998, 1190
Imperialism, American, 1020
Improvement organizations, 744, 800, 812-852, 877
Income: farm, 255, 1283-1285; Southern white, 45n., 297n.
Income, Negro (*see also* Salaries *and* Wages), 307, 364-366, 1270, 1283-1285, 1288; of artists 329 330; differential in, 164-165; of doctors, 324-325; and family size, 366-367; of teachers and ministers, 319-320, 321
Inconsistency: between American ideals and practices 21-23, 745, 755-756, 1008; of attitudes in America, xlv, xlviii, 1140-1141; of beliefs, 111, 283-284, 446; intellectual and moral, 39-40; of Negro clergymen, 940; in social orientation, 52-53; of valuations, *see* Valuations, conflicts of
Independent Labor League of America, 812n.
India, potential revolt in, 1006
Indians, American, assimilability of, 53
Indiana: lynching in, 561; school segregation in, 633
"Indifferent equilibrium": in the North, 392-394; in the South, 394-396
Individual enterprise, decreased sanctity of, 213
Individualism, 709, 710; of immigrants, 714; Negro, 961; Southern, 458-459
Inequality; *see* Discrimination *and* "No social equality," doctrine of
Industrial Congress of 1873, 1296
"Industrial" education; *see* "Vocational" education
Industrial Revolution, effect of, on Negroes and women, 1077
Industrialization: future, of "backward" countries, 1017-1018; impact of, on Negroes, 645; in the South, 44, 199, 263, 398, 463, 515
Industry: Negroes in, 198, 199, 279-303, 380, 424, 1079-1124, 1256-1259, 1295-1296, 1386; exclusion of Negroes from, 389-390; history of Negroes in, 393-394
Infant mortality, 162, 171, 174, 1223, 1224
Inferiority doctrine, 54-55, 97-101, 577-578, 583, 642, 751; applied to women, 1077; deliberate fostering of, 101-106; disproving of, 76; Negro attitude toward, 62-65, 208, 758-759, 760; un-

dermining of, by research and education, 592
Infiltration into Negro jobs; *see* White infiltration into Negro jobs
Inflation, 399, 514
Initiative and referendum, 434, 487, 500; A.A.A. referenda, 488-489, 490
Injustice, legal (*see also* Justice, inequality in), 1344-1345
Insecurity, Negro sense of, 964
Institutional segregation: general character of, 618, 627-632; in specific institutions, 632-639
"Institutional structures, influence of, 80
Institutions, Negro, 928-955
"Instrumental norm," 1062-1063
Insurance: discrimination in, 316, 1262; a feature of Negro lodges, 955; Negroes in, 314, 316-317, 1262-1263
Insurrections, slave, 567
Integrity, scientific, scale of, 1040
Intellectuals, Negro, 94-96, 749-750, 782, 784, 788, 789-790, 821, 831, 833-834, 840, 848, 889, 1432; and back-to-Africa movement, 806; fatalistic tendency of, 19; and labor solidarity, 1398; radicalism of, 1398
Intelligence, white and Negro, 147
"Intelligence profile," 1218
Intelligence tests, 147, 150-151, 1217-1218
Interests, harmony of, 1046-1047, 1061n.
Intermarriage (*see also* Amalgamation), 55, 60, 1187, 1207; ban on, 63, 125, 606-607, 617, 646, 668, 1142; Negro attitude toward, 62, 63-64; Negro-Indian, 1203; statistics on, 1360-1361
International aspects of Negro problem, 1015-1018
International Hod Carriers', Building and Common Laborers' Union, 1104
International Labor Defense, 812n.
International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 402, 1297
International Longshoremen's Association, 1098-1099
International Timber Workers' Union, 1095-1096
International Wood Workers of America, 1096
International Workers of the World, 1297
Internationalism, America's role in, 6, 24
"Interpretation" requirement for voting, 484, 489
Interracial Commission, xiv, 556, 565, 646, 842-850, 854, 999, 1409-1410; criticism of, 847-848, 1404-1405; purpose of, 843-844, 845, 846-847; tactics of, 845
Interracial contacts: casual, 650-652, 656; criminal, 655-656; economic, 652-655, 656; professional, 656
Interracial cooperation of churches, low degree of, 868, 871-872, 874
Interracial meetings, 41-42
Interracial Review, 909n.
Interracial sex relations; *see* Sex relations, interracial
"Interracial Sunday," 872n.
Interracial work: condemnation of those engaged in, 646, 679; increasing respectability of, 646, 661, 847, 849
Intimidation: of labor, by employers, 404, 1297; of Negroes by whites, 485, 486, 528, 530, 566, 628, 1346, 1347-1351
Irish, Marian D.: on Southern politics, 430; on unproportional representation in Congress, 516
Iron and steel industry: Negroes in, 1115-1119; unionization of, 1117-1118; wages in, 1116-1117
"Islamic" cults, 862n.
Isolation: cultural breaking down of, 565; of Negro upper class, 730, 764-765; between Negro and white groups, 339n., 395, 615, 640, 644-650, 659, 663, 703, 724-727, 745, 760, 763, 797, 879, 956, 957, 999, 1012, 1370-1371; between scholars and political agencies, 1042; of Southern region, 444; and suspicion, 723; of white and Negro religious institutions, 868
Isolation-integration, scale of, 1039
Isolationism, American: end of, 1016, 1018, 1020; in World War II, 1004
Ivy, James W., on education and social reform, 1049

Jackson, Andrew, 433
Jackson, L. P., cited, 123
Jackson, Wilhelmina, cited, 485
Jacksonian movement, 6
Jaffe, A. J.: cited, 161, 163; on differentials in punishment, 1433
Janitors, Negro, 1089
Japan, 1006; industrialization of, 1017
Japanese in America: background of, 54; restaurants and stores of, 310; segregation of, 620
Japanese propaganda, 1016, 1438; to Negroes, 814, 814n.-815n.
Jeanes, Anna T., 890
Jeanes Fund, 890, 891, 906
Jeanes teachers, 1417
Jefferson, Thomas, 433, 717n., 805, 1182, 1311; cited, 13; on moral danger of slavery, 531; on Negro-white friction, 90; on slavery, 85

Jenkins, William Sumner, cited, 441
Jenks, Albert E., cited, 607n.
Jernegan, Marcus W., cited, 125, 695-696
Jews and Negroes, difference between problems of, 28-29
Jim Crow; *see* Segregation
Jim Crow laws; *see* Legislation, Jim Crow
Job discrimination; *see* Discrimination, economic
Job monopolies, Negro, 193, 197, 305, 321, 395, 397, 406, 645, 652, 685, 686, 690, 693-694, 1079n.; breaking of (*see also* white infiltration into Negro jobs), 286
Job monopolies, women's, 1077
Job segregation, 106-107, 312-313, 327, 1098
Jobs, Negro: general characteristics of, 1079-1082; outside agriculture, *see* Industry, Negroes in
Johns, Elizabeth D., cited, 912n., 917, 1423
Johnson, Charles S., 750, 903n., 987; cited, 321, 324, 501n., 576, 610, 610n., 623-624; 635, 702, 821, 935, 946-947, 948n., 949n., 1105-1106, 1107, 1273, 1369, 1414, 1423, 1426; analysis of Negro humor by, 960n.; on cases involving 14th Amendment, 1312; on cheating of Negroes, 247; on color, 1382, 1383, 1384; on concept of caste, 1375; on Denmark Vesey, 736-737; on discrimination in justice, 524-525; on dynamic character of race relations, 1129; on effect of lynching on Negroes, 1348; on "folk Negroes" and Negro upper class, 1387-1388; on futility of civil rights law in New Jersey, 1367; on industrial status of Negroes, 393; on lynching, 1350; on Negro behavior, 958n.-959n.; on Negro church, 861-862, 867; on Negro education, 894; on Negro lower class, 1386, 1395; on Negro sensitivity, 761; on Negro youth attitudes, 1371-1372, 1394; on Negro's place in the South, 584; on race etiquette, 1351, 1363-1364; on race pride, 687; on segregation, 631-632, 741; on slavery and the race problem, 1339; on Southern rural life, 1435; on symbolism of Joe Louis, 1396; on white protection of Negroes, 1357; on white supremacy and poor whites, 598
Johnson, C. S., Embree, E. R., and Alexander, W. W.: on farm organization and reform, 267; on share-cropping, 208; on tenancy, 1236
Johnson, Claudius O., cited, 492n.
Johnson, Guion G.: cited, 88; on interracial cooperation, 1012-1013; on natural rights of man, 10
Johnson, Guion G., and Johnson, Guy B., cited, 870, 871, 938
Johnson, Guy B.: cited, 532, 866, 1392; criticism of N.A.A.C.P. by, 1404, 1405; on discipline by force, 1340; on need for unified Negro movement, 1410; on Reconstruction, 449-450
Johnson, Guy B., and Kiser, Louise K.: cited, 968, 969, 970, 972; on crime statistics, 967; on unpremeditated crime, 974
Johnson, Jack, 988
Johnson, James Weldon, 726, 929, 987, 989; cited, 201, 565, 576, 745, 820, 1128, 1256; on ambivalence of Negro leaders' attitudes, 775; on boycotting, 803; on caste struggle, 676, 1397; and communism, 509; on disfranchisement policy of Senators George and Glass, 1314; on Du Bois, 828n.; on early Negro entertainment, 989; on effect of discrimination, 30; on Garvey, 749; on Harlem, 1125-1126; on importance of South in Negro problem, 1014; on inferiority doctrine, 101-102; on interracial friendship, 856; on interracial sex relations, 1354; on Jim Crow in transportation, 1351; on mental attitude of whites, 1185; on minstrel shows, 1437; on N.A.A.C.P., 832; on Negro church, 867; on Negro enjoyment of life, 1431; on Negro periodicals, 913; on Negro reactions after World War I, 1392; on Negro servant class, 593; on Negro solidarity and physical force, 681; on one-sidedness of interracial intercourse, 1352; on organized labor, 794; on preserving human dignity, 758; program of Negro education by, 1420; on race pride and business, 803; on racial isolation, 645-646, 808; on rural life, 1436; on San Francisco, 187; on self-segregation, 799; on sex in white periodicals, 918n.; on stereotypes, 1195; on "strolling," 984; on Supreme Court attitude to Negro disfranchisement cases, 1334-1335; on "uplifters," 596-597; on Washington and Du Bois groups, 743; on white prejudice, 43-44
Johnson, Mordecai, 872-873
Johnson, Rosamund, 989
Johnston, Harry: cited, 562; on color question in America, 114; on making money, 801; on rape statistics before 1870, 561n.
Joint Committee on National Recovery, 817
Jokes, an expression of stereotypes, 101

Jolson, Al, 987
Jones, Eugene Kinckle, 837; on Urban League, 840, 1407-1408
Journal of Negro History, 751, 752, 909n., 1393
Judges, personality of, 552
Judicial order in America, 17-19
Judicial system, Southern, illegality around, 536
Jury system: Negroes barred from, 499, 524, 549, 828, 1343-1344; Negroes permitted in, in North, 528; partiality in, 552-553
Just, Ernest E., 734, 1184
Justice (*see also* Courts, Southern): and democracy, 523-526; discrimination in, 523-524, 967, 968-969, 974, 999, 1335-1337; double standard of, 551; legal, *see* Legal justice *and* Legal injustice; relative equality of, in North, 526-529; Southern heritage of, 529-534
Juvenile delinquency, Negro, 345n., 376, 968, 969, 977n.-978n.

Kansas: lynching in, 561; Negro population of, 1230; prohibition in, 457; school segregation in, 633
Kelly, Abby, 1075
Kentucky: Negro high schools in, 950n.; primaries in, 487; transportation segregation in, 635; voting in, 488n.
Key, V. O., cited, 477
"Kick-backs," 1098
Kiplinger, W. M., cited, 1331
Kirk, Dudley, cited, 161, 161n.-162n., 1221
Kirkland, Chancellor, quoted, 644n.
Kiser, Clyde V., cited, 120, 165
Klineberg, Otto, cited, 147, 148n., 150, 1213
Knights of Labor, 1296, 1297
Knights of the Rising Sun, 449
Knights of the White Camellia, 449
Knowledge, distortion of, 40-42, 1184-1185
Ku Klux Klan, 410, 449, 455, 458, 466, 478, 486, 499, 527, 560, 563, 568, 678, 812n., 847

Labor: abundance of, 558; displacement of, 260-261, 267, 270, 297; forced and convict, after Civil War, 228; scarcity of, 411, 424; strengthening of bargaining power of, 400; unskilled, 296-297, 395, 410, 788, 1257, 1303
Labor agents, 194, 248-249, 1090; police as, 228-229
Labor camps, 277, 1232
Labor enticement laws, 558
Labor force, Negro: outside agriculture, 279-303; size of, 297-301
Labor market: discrimination in, 385, 386, 391; in the North, 388-390; outside the unions, 404; public control of, 385, 402; tendency toward government control of, 426
Labor movement (*see also* Unionization); democracy in, 330, 718, 792, 1005; growing strength of, 403-408; history of, 214, 713, 1296-1300; power of Negroes in, 726; resistance to, 389, 404, 1095n.-1096n., 1123; solidarity with Negroes a necessity in, 426, 792, 835, 855; in the South, 463; split in 855; tactics of, 405
Labor organizations (*see also* Trade unions), 261-264
Labor politics, 714
Labor relations, planning of, 1010
Labor solidarity, 598-599, 647, 750, 788-794, 804
Labor spies, 404
LaFollette-Bulwinkle Act, 1225
LaGuardia, Fiorello H., 502, 1328
Laissez-faire attitude (*See also* Do-nothing policy) 19-21, 457, 559, 580n., 831, 1031, 1036n., 1047, 1048, 1050, 1052, 1053-1054, 1055, 1056, 1398
Lamar, L. Q. C., on Reconstruction Amendments, 1312-1313
Land, distribution of, 224-225
Land problem, 224-227
Land reform, 230
Landlord-tenant relations, 227-229
Landownership, Negro, 227, 237-240, 690, 702, 769, 898, 1001, 1239; historical background of, 240-242
Landownership, white, 253, 1245-1246
Lange, Gunnar, 255n.: cited, 251-252; on A.A.A. program, 269, 1247-1248; on boll weevil, 1238; on cotton production, 251, 1244; on Southern land resources, 232; on tenancy reduction, 258
Langsford, E. L., and Thibodeaux, B. H., cited, 247, 1249
Langston, John M., 737, 738
Laundry work, 311, 1087-1088
Law: English, as a root of American Creed, 12; growing respect for, in South, 229, 514, 518, 533-534; lack of respect for, in America, 13-18, 20, 435, 440-441, 445, 451, 475, 558, 1009, 1182-1183; laxity in administration of, 20, 404, 432-433, 434-435, 558; "natural," 15-17, 1054, 1182-1183
Law courts, discrimination in, 61, 527, 548, 550-553

Law enforcement in the South, 529-534; historical background of, 530-533
Lawlessness in the South, 525, 526, 530-533, 558
Lawyers, Negro, 305, 325-326, 528, 550, 638, 802, 1344
Leaders, Negro: as champions of their race, 28-29; dilemma of, 507-508; double role of, 772-773, 774; education of, 694; isolation of, from whites, 726; Northern and national, 722-724, 733, 777-779; preachers as, 861, 875, 876, 940; Southern white and Negro interest in, 720-722; and suffrage question, 513; underworld, 1267-1268
Leadership: American, in post-war world, 1019, 1021-1024; in American thought, 709-711, 715-719; and caste, 720; and class, 727-733; community, 711-712; control of public opinion by, 1033; and fascism and nazism, 709; personalities, 734-735; and social mobility, 714; training for, 719n.; white, 724-726
Leadership, Negro: "accommodating," 507-508, 683, 722-723, 726-729, 733, 739-740, 742-743, 861, 910; and anti-amalgamation doctrine, 62-65; and class, 703, 1390; compromise, 768-780; corrupt, 857; function of, 1133; high performance in field of, 987; moral aspect of, 774-775, 857; motives of, 769-771; national, 779-780; in the North, 777-779; prestige of, 1390; protest, 640-641, 726, 736-738, 742-743, 771-772, 841, 1005-1006; qualifications for, 775-776; research on, 1133-1135; rivalry in, 507, 775, 778, 1397; selection of, 770-771, 1133-1134; in the South, 776-777; symbolic, of Joe Louis, 1396; techniques of, 773-774, 798, 1397; vulnerability of, 769; withdrawal of upper class from, 1388
League for Industrial Democracy, 812n.
League for Protection of Colored Women, 837
League of Women Voters, 469
Lee, Canada, 988
Leeuw, Hendrik de, on Negro prostitution, 1268
Legal aid agencies, need for, 556, 855
Legal injustice, 628, 828, 1344-1345
Legal justice for Negroes, 497, 498
"Legal lynchings," 566, 1350
Legal order: as part of caste system, 525; Southern, movement to normalize, 229, 514, 518, 533-534
Legalistic formalism in America, 18-19
Legislation: anti-discrimination, 408, 418n., 1367; anti-lynching, 502, 517, 565, 829, 1350; anti-trust, 19; to continue white control over freedmen, 558; favoring landlords, 275; favoring planters, 227-228, 558; immigration, 92, 196, 198; income tax, 1183; on intermarriage, 125, 607n.; and Interracial Commission, 846; Jim Crow, 191, 242, 283, 335, 578-582, 601, 628-629, 630, 635, 728, 742, 1009, 1366-1367; a late product in Western democracy, 15; and mores, 1054n.; protecting unions, 713; for protection of domestics, 1087; for protection of slaves, 531-532; on racial definition, 113; Reconstruction, 19; remedial, N.A.A.C.P. fight for, 826, 828, 829; social, 18, 19, 207, 211, 384, 397, 436, 457; tax, 334
Leniency in cases of Negro crimes against Negroes, 551, 592, 764, 969, 976, 978, 1344
Lester, Richard A., cited, 404, 1297
Lester, Robert M., cited, 343
Lewinson, Paul, 603; cited, 453, 475n., 478, 485-486, 487, 489, 498, 1317
Lewis, Edna, 1339
Lewis, John Henry, 988
Lewis, John L., 718, 855, 1401
Lewis, Julian H.: cited, 144n.; on reactions to disease, 1214
Leyburn, James C., cited, 1203
Liberal party in America, 511
Liberalism: American, 434, 517; economic, 209-212, 672, 1069n.; of the Enlightenment, 83-84; European, 434
Liberalism, Southern, 440, 441, 454, 456, 460-461, 466-473, 513, 519n., 596, 775, 794, 999 ,1000, 1012-1013, 1037, 1320-1321, 1336-1337; achievements of 472; and harmony doctrine, 1047; influence of, 556, 565, 903; Interracial Commission the organization for, 844, 849; lack of mass support for, 473; and the New Deal, 467, 471, 472; not a radical movement, 469; opportunism of, 471; a political minority, 470; and principle of legality, 533
Liberia, immigration to, 186, 805, 813
Liberty: concept of, 573-574; and equality, conflict of, 9, 672; fight for, backed by religion, 10; rights to, 8, 9
Libraries: for Negroes, 1275-1276, 1368; restrictions on, 347; segregation and discrimination in, 628, 634
Lien laws, 228, 246, 558, 1235, 1236
Life insurance; *see* Insurance
Lightfoot, R. M., Jr., on petty character of Negro crimes, 974

Lily-white movement, 478-479, 494
Lincoln, Abraham, 431, 805; cited, 87; on equal opportunity, 672; on Negroes in Civil War, 738n.
Lindbergh, Charles, 735
Litchfield, Edward H., cited, 493, 494, 495, 1327
Literacy test, 446, 514
Literature: interracial relations in field of, 656; Negro, 93-97, 751, 989, 990, 991, 992, 1315; "proletarian" branch of, 929n.; of Southern writers, 70n.
Living conditions of Negroes, 169, 375-379, 1290-1292, 1308; and mental disease rate, 980; in the North, 619, 375-379
Living standard: minimum 214; Negro, 216n., 217-218, 1066, 1067; post-Civil War, 223; rising, 565, 728
Lobbying by N.A.A.C.P., 826, 827-828
Locke, Alain, 750; cited, 987-988, 990, 992; on Herskovits' propaganda, 1394; on Negro craftsmen, 993n.
Locke, John, 1182; cited, 83
Lodges, Negro, 953, 955, 1430
Logan, Rayford W., quoted, 1313
Long, Huey, 453, 499, 903n.
Longshore works: discrimination and segregation in, 1098; Negroes in, 287, 294, 1097-1099; "shape-up" system in, 1098; union tradition in, 1097, 1098-1099; wages in, 1099
Louis, Joe, 734, 903n., 988, 1184, 1396
Louisiana: educational requirement for voting in, 484; mixed schools in, 579; Negro policemen in, 543n.; Negro schools in, 1271; poll tax certificate in, 1324; poll tax repealed in, 482; riots in, 568n.; school term in, 948n.; terror organization in, 449; voting in, 483, 488n.; white primary in, 486
Louisiana Educational Survey, 903n.
Louisville, Negro political power in, 499
Louisville segregation Case, 829
Love, A. G., and Davenport, C. B., cited, 143
Lower class, Negro, 593, 700-702, 1386-1387; increased control of Negro press by, 921; leaders of, 731-732; protest motive in, 762; resentment of, for upper class, 729-730, 731, 766-767, 1388, 1395
Lower class, white, 582, 597-598, 689, 1189, 1388
Lower classes interracial, relationship of (*see also* Labor solidarity), 67-73, 124-125, 193, 195, 221, 262, 281, 291-293, 388, 397, 597, 599, 653-654, 673, 894, 1098, 1204
Loyalty, Negro, 1007; to America, 1016; political, 1330; of worker to his boss, 1120
Loyola University, 1264
Lumber industry: Negroes in, 1090-1096; unionization of, 1095-1096; wages in, 1091, 1092-1095
Lunceford, Jimmie, 988
Lynching, 191, 451, 517, 530, 532, 553, 559, 560-562, 1040, 1379, 1404-1405; campaign against, 384; decline of, 565, 755, 846, 847; as a disciplinary device, 561; effects of, 564, 1348, 1349; increased opposition to, 1350; interracial commissions and, 1349; "legal," 566, 1350; post-World War I, 745; psychopathology of, 563-564; publicity on, 656, 918; studies of, 1346-1347; substitutes for, 566; a symbol for system of suppression measures, 35-36; white solidarity and, 677
Lynd, Robert S., 1045n.

McCarroll, E. Mae, cited, 178
McCuistion, Fred, cited, 951, 951n.
McDaniels, Hattie, 988
McDougall, William, 1190
McGuire, George A., 746n.
Machine politics, 331, 439, 453, 476, 486, 488n., 490, 499, 733, 810, 1322
MacIver, Robert M., 1031n.; on Marxian concept of "class struggle," 676
McKay, Claude, 989; cited, 330; on Harlem, 622; on Negroes' enjoyment of life, 959n.; poem by, on "fighting back," 681
Magazines, Negro, 909
Mahoney Amendment, 418n.
Mall, Franklin P., 91n.
Malnutrition, Negro, 375
Malzberg, Benjamin, cited, 143, 980, 1216
Mangum, Charles S.: cited, 342, 430, 481, 579, 633, 635, 636, 1262; on asylums for Negroes, 634; on authority of transportation operators, 1340; on Black Codes, 228; on court-appointed lawyers, 548; on excluding Negroes from jury duty, 549; on inequality in education, 1271-1272; on Jim Crow laws, 1366-1367; on Mississippi criminal statute, 1360; on mob violence, 553; on tenant-stealing, 1243; on white attitude toward Negro education, 899-900
Manifoldness of Negro problem, 73-75
Manufacturing, Negroes in, 294, 312
"March-on-Washington Movement," 414, 818, 851-852, 853, 1005
"Marginal man," 688, 699-700, 1385

Marginal workers, 397-399
Marriage: common law, 704, 931, 934-935; selection in, 697-698, 1212; upper class Negro attitudes toward, 1425
Martin, Sella, 1398
Martineau, Harriet, cited, 1075
Marx, Karl, 469n., 673, 676, 793, 1051n.
Marxism, 68, 1069n.; "class struggle" basis of, 673, 676; liberalistic character of, 1051n.
Maryland: lynching in, 561; Negro police in, 543n.; transportation segregation in, 635
Mass movements: absence of, in America, 671, 712-716, 811, 821, 835-836, 853, 886; growth of, 214, 511; Negro, 746-749, 852; in the South, 455, 456, 465; weakness of, 406
Master-servant relationship, 647, 680, 652-653, 658, 701, 960, 1357; in slave days, 531
Maternal mortality, 174, 1224
Maverick, Maury, 467
Maynor, Dorothy, 988
Mayor's Commission on Conditions in Harlem: cited, 974; quoted, 972n.
Mays, B. E., on Negro church patterns, 873n.
Mays, B. E., and Nicholson, J. W.: cited, 866n.-867n., 873, 874, 874n., 878, 937, 939n., 941, 1412-1413; on the "call" to the ministry, 936
Mead, Margaret, cited, 1217
Meat-packing industry; *see* Slaughtering and meat-packing industry.
Meat production, 253
Mechanization: cheap labor a hindrance to, 397; displacement of labor by, 206, 297, 1107, 1108, 1248-1250; effect of, on Negroes, 206, 282-283, 395, 998; factors tending to speed, 399; increasing, 424; in lumber industry, 1091-1092; in mining industry, 1113; and social change, 1052; in Southern agriculture, 259-261, 1248-1250
Mecklin, John M.: on cases involving 14th Amendment, 1312; on double standard of conduct, 643, 1369-1370; on Negro press, 911n.-912n.
Medical care, expenses for, 370-371
Medical facilities for Negroes, 171-174
Medical schools, Negro, 324, 1264, 1416
Medicine: Negroes in, 172, 306, 322-325, 636, 638, 796, 802, 1224; organized, do-nothing policy of, 91; socialized, Negro doctors opposed to, 324, 704
Meharry Medical College, 324, 1416
Men of Justice, 449
Mencken, H. L., on lynching, 564
Mental disease among Negroes, 143, 979-982, 1435
Merriam, Charles E., on democracy, 8
Mexicans in the labor market, 393
Miami: Ku Klux Klan influence in, 486, 488n.; Negro defiance of Ku Klux Klan in, 490, 499; Negro voting in, 482, 488n., 499
Middle class: Negro, 645-647, 690, 693, 704; white, 596-598
Middle States Association, 951n.
Migrant labor, camps for, 277, 1232
Migration, Negro: a cause for rioting, 568; causes for, 1231; to cities, 74, 188-190, 191-196, 279-280, 302; effect of, on artists, 329-330; effect of, on birth and death rates, 163-164; effect of, on educational level, 342; factors retarding, 195-196; future, 197-201; general observations on, 182-191; influence of, 602, 652, 999; intra-regional, 244, 386n.; literature on, 1230; and mental disease rate, 980; to the North, 46, 183, 189, 191-197, 295, 329-330, 527, 568, 599, 602, 652, 999; policy of, 198-199, 386-388; a protest movement 914; single-cause theory of, 1231; social effects of, 463; statistics on, 1229-1230; to war production centers, 409, 412; westward, 6, 86, 200
Military record, Negro, 419-420, 421, 745, 751, 1308; minimized, 419-420
Milk production, 1244-1245
Miller, Kelly: cited, 661, 748n.; on amalgamation, 64; comparison of Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass by, 740; on disfranchisement in the South, 1333; on effect of lynching, 1349; on equality, 23; on Frederick Douglass, 1187; on historical distinction, 94-95; on "industrial" education, 897; on miscegenation, 1197; on mulattoes, 1206; on murder of Negroes, 553; on Negro solidarity, 1335; on race tolerance, 856; on slavery and the Constitution, 86; on Southerners, 593
Miller, Robert K., on wages in lumber industry, 1093n.
Mims, Edwin, on power of Negro press, 924
Mining industry: mechanization in, 1113; Negro workers in, 287, 294, 1112-1115; unionization of, 1113, 1114; wages in, 1112-1113
Ministers, Negro: 306, 321-322, 770, 795, 859, 939; accommodation of, 940; and business, 940; education of, 875, 1413-

1414; influence of, on Negro vote, 940; as leaders, 731-732, 861, 875, 876, 940; in the North, 778, 862-863; in politics, 458, 498; rivalry of, 874; salaries of, 1413; in slavery period, 860
Ministers, white, and the Ku Klux Klan, 563
Minorities, 50-53; "Americanization" of, 54; Negro group differentiated from, 28-29, 53, 67, 310, 620, 667; similarities of, to Negro group, 1389; voting rights of, 438
Minstrel show, 989-990, 1437
Miscegenation (*see also* Amalgamation), 105-106, 113, 586-587, 607, 696, 698, 1197, 1203-1212; of African stocks, 123-124; *ante-bellum*, 125-127; decreasing, 133; early, 123-125; with Indians and whites, 124; within Negro group, 135; Negro-Indian, 1203; recent, 127-129; social and biological selection in, 130-132
Misinformation about Negroes, 40-42, 76, 339n.; deliberate use of, 101-106; need for correcting, 109
Mississippi: education requirements for voting in, 484; expenditures for education in, 1271; fines in, 549; law against advocating social equality in, 1360; Negro associations in, 952; Negro divorce rate in, 1425; Negro high schools in, 950n.; Negro policemen in, 543n.; profit of, from penitentiaries, 548; prohibition in, 457, 457n.-458n.; school term in, 948n.; terror organizations in, 449; voting in, 474, 488n.; voting requirements in, 484, 1324; white primary in, 486
Missouri: expenditures on education in, 1271; railway segregation in, 635; voting in, 488n.
Missouri Agricultural Workers Council, 263
Mitchell, Broadus and George S., on avoidance of practical issues by churches, 1413
Mitchell, H. L., cited, 263
Mob violence (*see also* Lynching and Riots), 553, 564
Mobility (*see also* Migration, Negro): occupational, 213; social, 210-211, 674, 714, 919
Moffat, R. Burnham, on legal disfranchisement, 1314
Monopolies: economic, 193, 197, 305, 321, 395, 397, 406, 630, 645, 652, 685, 686, 690, 693-694, 974-795, 921, 940, 1077, 1079n.; social, 765, 921
Moore, W. E., and Williams, R. M., cited, 689
Moral dilemma (*see also* Valuations, conflicts of): of South, on education, 888; of Southern ministers, 868-869
Moral issue, Negro problem, as, xlv-vlvii
Moral standards, Negro, 931-933, 935, 939, 940, 976, 1425; false beliefs concerning, 108; upper class, 1388
Moral statistics, lviii
Moral taboos, 799, 800
Morale, Negro, in wartime, 850
Moralism, American, xlvi, lviii, 22, 810, 1024
Morals of whites, effect of illegal disfranchisement of Negroes on, 1333
Mores, 20, 33, 451, 462, 525, 580n., 831, 1048, 1049; changing of, 1053; flexibility of 1053n.-1054n.; sex, 122; sex, after the Civil War, 127; theoretical critique of concept, 1031-1032
Mormons, 712
Morrow, E. Frederic, on work of N.A.A.C.P., 830, 1403
Mortality; *see* Death rate
Mortgage loans, 272, 1276
Morticians, *see* Undertakers, Negro
Morton, Ferdinand Q., 1328
Moskowitz, Henry, 819
Moton, Robert R., 726, 647, 677, 743; cited, 953; on amalgamation, 62; and appeal for equality, 641; on conversational etiquette, 612n.; on eliminating Negroes from jobs, 327; on intermarriage legislation, 63, 64; in "knowing the Negro," 1373-1374; on Negro attitude toward law, 1336; on Negro knowledge of white man, 594; on Negro psychology, 43; on Negro seclusiveness, 658; on Negro sensitivity, 1369; on Negroes in business, 801; on racial isolation, 1370; on religious isolation, 869; on segregation, 37; on white "race integrity," 56
Motorization: effect of, on Negroes in industry, 288, 1080; and escape from Jim Crow, 1368
Mott, Lucretia, 1075
Mound Bayou, Miss., 480n.
Mountin, J. W., Pennell, E. H., and Flook, E., cited, 1273
Movies: Negroes in 330, 988; treatment of Negroes in, 988n.
Mowrer, Ernest R., cited, 1425-1426
Mulattoes (*see also* Passing), 105-106, 125, 688, 696-699, 1187, 1204-1206, 1209-1212, 1384-1386; beliefs concerning, 107-108; favored sexually, 125, 131; in South Africa, 696n.
Murphy, Edgar G.: on criticism of the South, 45; on interracial eating, 609; on

lynching, 1348; on Negro petty offenses, 1344; on Negro solidarity, 1335; on Negro's right to work, 1257; parallel civilizations, theory of, 578-582, 595, 741, 754, 1358; on pattern of illegality, 450; on possibilities within color caste, 595; on problem of disfranchisement, 1318-1319; on race prejudice in the North, 292; on white ignorance about Negroes, 1370-1371
Murray, Florence, cited, 864n.-865n., 908, 909, 1107, 1299
Musicians, Negro, 329, 330, 654, 734, 735, 988-990, 992-993
Mutations, 122
Myers, Gustavus, cited, 614
Myers, Isaac, 1398
Myrdal, Alva: cited, 178, 180-181, 366, 1078; on old age pensions, 358
Myrdal, Gunnar, quoted, on group interests, 791
Mysticism in inferiority doctrine, 100-101

Nail, John A., 1328
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, xiv, 320, 342, 459, 508, 556, 565, 581, 629, 684n., 703, 726, 744, 776-777, 790, 793, 795, 803, 817, 819-822, 843, 851, 854, 855, 903, 914, 923, 999; achievements of, 832-833; branches of 822-826, 1402-1403; cited, 418n.; compromise policy of, 796-797; critique of, 831-836, 1405-1406; membership of, 821, 836, 851, 1402, 1406; National Office of, 820, 821, 822, 826-830; not a mass movement, 821, 835-836; objectives of, 820, 822-823, 828-830, 1403; strategy of, 830-831; weakness of, 1405-1406; and World War II, 836; Youth Councils of, 821, 1402
N.A.A.C.P. Bulletin, 821
National Association for the Preservation of the White Race, 812n.
National Bar Association, 816
National Benefit Life Insurance Company, 1263
"National Compromise," *see* Compromise of the 1870's
National Council of Negro Women, 816
National debt, after the Civil War, 226
National Defense Advisory Commission, 1305
National Health Bill, 345
National Health Survey, 355, 356, 365, 377, 378, 1259
National Housing Agency, 350n., 353, 1308
National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, 398n., 399
National Labor Relations Act of 1935, 399
National Labor Union, 1296
National League on Urban Conditions Among Negroes; *see* Urban League
National Medical Association, 816
National Movement for the Establishment of the Forty-Ninth State, 814
National Negro Bankers Association, 315, 816
National Negro Business League, 307, 800, 815
National Negro Congress, 800, 817-818, 855, 1401
National Negro Insurance Association, 816
National Resources Planning Board, 209-210, 627n.
National Teachers' Association, 816
National Union for People of African Descent, 814
National Youth Administration, 326, 343, 347, 361, 362, 465, 503, 991, 1283, 1307
Nationalism, American, 5-6, 13
Nationalist movements Negro, 812-815
Natural law, 15-17, 1054
Natural resources, public control of, 211
Navy: discrimination in, 1005; Negroes in, 419-423
Nazism, 6, 1004, 1311; and leadership concept, 709
"Negro," American definition of, 113-117, 586, 589-590, 668, 1198-1199
Negro Co-operative Guild, 816
Negro Family in the United States, 930-931, 1181
Negro History movement, 751-752
"Negro History Week," 752, 901, 1394
Negro History Bulletin, 752
Negro press, 194, 305, 647, 727, 744, 827, 1005, 1423-1424; advertising in, 1424; characteristics of, 915-920; circulation of, 909, 1423; controls of, 920-923; economy of, 922, 1424; and equalitarianism, 63; future of, 923-924; growth of, 912-915; importance of, 923; an organ for protest, 332, 525, 537, 858, 908-912, 917; political publicity in, 508; radicalism in, 510; supported by politics, 498
Negro problem: manifoldness of, 73-75; as moral issues, xlv-xlvii; Negro approach to, 27-30, 31-32, 38, 786; unity of, 73-75; a white man's problem, 669
Negro vote; *see* Voting, Negro
Negro World, 748
Net reproduction rate, 160-161, 1219-1220, 1222, 1229
Nettels, Curtis P., an early New England title of address, 1362-1363

New Deal, 9, 93, 556, 1183; decreased discrimination under, 335, 463-464, 494, 504, 546, 600; educational benefits of, 343, 465-466; effect of, on administrative standards, 437; and federal jobs for Negroes, 328; importance of, to Negroes, 74, 479n., 1000-1001; a liberal reform party, 511; and Negro social workers, 326; Negro support of, 510, 511, 1332; as popular movement, 465; and social reform, 545; and Southern liberals, 467, 471, 472; and youth assistance, 361
New England, Negro population in, 1309
New Jersey: riots in, 568n.; school segregation in, 633
New Mexico, school segregation in, 633
New Negro Alliance, 816
New Negro movement, 599, 750, 753, 754, 990
New York *Age*, 918n.
New York *Amsterdam News*, 918n.
New York City: Negro Democratic vote in, 492n., 494, 495; Negro population of, 1125-1126
New York State: anti-discrimination legislation in, 408, 418n., 1367; Negro population in, 1309
New York State Employment Service, 418n.
Newbold, N. C., 891
News agencies, Negro, 923
Newspapers; *see* Negro press *and* Press
Niagara movement, 742-744, 913n.
"No social equality" doctrine, 58, 395, 449, 457, 537, 550, 573, 575, 586-589, 628, 646, 669, 998, 1142; beliefs supporting, 582-586; critical evaluation of, 589-592; gradual breakdown of, 660-663; in the North, 603
Nobility, European, 1375
Nonpartisan elections, 487-488, 500
Nonpolitical Negro institutions; *see* Church, Negro, Schools, Negro, *and* Negro press
Nonsegregation: in housing, 1276; of Negro criminals and insane, 968-969
"Nordic race," 114n.
Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, 917
Norgren, Paul H.: cited, 1090-1091, 1092, 1095-1096, 1096-1097, 1100-1102, 1104, 1111-1112, 1112-1113, 1119-1120, 1122, 1123, 1302; on abolition of racial discrimination in promotion, 1118; on A.F.L. and color line, 1298; on coal mining, 1112; on laws against discrimination, 1300; on Negro jobs, 1080-1082; on Negro-white social intercourse, 1114-1115; on turpentine production, 1089; on union discrimination, 1299; on whites and Negroes in auto industry 1119
Norgren, P. H., and Bailer, L. H., on Negro occupations in auto industry, 1120
North: accommodating leadership in, 722-723, 733; attitude in, toward amalgamation, 57-58, 603; attitude in, toward Civil War, 45, 47; caste system in, 46, 693; color line broken in, 678; compared with the South, 44-49; crime rate in, 969, 971, 977; definition of, 1071; depression in, 295; discrimination in, 66-67, 199, 599-604, 609, 610, 612-613, 614, 617-618, 626, 722, 999, 1010-1011, 1367; disfranchisement in, 438; economic opportunities in, 191, 196; educational segregation in, 633, 901, 945-946; equalitarianism in, 383, 384, 526-529, 1014-1015; housing segregation in, 352, 618-622, 623, 624, 626; housing shortage in, 196; ignorance about Negroes in, 383-386, 606, 644, 658-659; interracial sex relations in, 126; literacy requirements for voting in, 1310; measures against discrimination in, 418, 1367; mental situation in, on race problem, 44-49; migration to, 46, 183, 189, 191-197, 295, 329-330, 527, 568, 599, 602, 652, 999; mixed churches in, 869-870; Negro behavior in, 491-492; 530; Negro church in, 860, 862-863, 872; Negro education in, 879, 1421-1422; Negro employment in, 291-296; Negro leaders in, 722-724, 733, 777-779; Negro ministers in, 862-863; Negro police in, 543n; Negro press in, 910; Negro protest in, 777-779; Negro suffrage in, 437-440, 725, 733; Negro voting in, 200, 491-497, 754-755, 1328, 1329; Negroes in politics in, 491-497; "no social equality" theory in, 603; participation in elections in, 475; poll tax in, 1324; prisons in, 555; racial isolation in, 649-650; race prejudice in, 1142-1143; relative judicial equality in, 526-529; segregation in, 626, 722; social segregation and discrimination in, 577, 599-604, 636, 999; and Southern suffrage problem, 515-518; standards of social welfare in, 355; white and Negro newspapers in, 916
North Central Association, 951n.
North Carolina: birth control program in, 1226; death penalty in, 554n.; education requirement for voting in, 484; liberalism in, 467-468; Negro jurors in, 550; Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax repealed in, 482; primaries in, 486; recre-

ational facilities in, 1275; riots in, 568n.; terror organizations in, 449; voting in, 483, 488n.
North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, 1263
North Dakota, expenditures for education in, 1271
North Star, 913
Northrup, Herbert R.: cited, 408, 1097, 1099, 1101, 1102, 1103-1104, 1106, 1108-1110, 1113, 1118, 1119n.; on discrimination in unions, 1299-1300
Nourse, E. G., Davis, J. S., and Black, J. D., cited, 257
Number of Negroes in America; *see* Quantitative goal for Negro population policy
Numbers game, 330-331, 940, 985, 1267, 1269
Nurses, Negro, 172, 325, 638, 796, 1224

Oberlin College, 1076n., 1415
Occupational mobility, 213
Occupational status of Southern whites, 297
O'Connor, W. B., cited, 393
Odum, Howard W., 96, 844; on criticism of Interracial Commission, 847; description of South by, 1320-1321
Office of Civilian Defense, discrimination in, 1367
Officeholders: Negro, 497, 501-504, 535, 542-543, 723-724, 755; power of, 435, 716, 717n.; publicity afforded, 718
Offord, Carl, cited, 1085
Ogburn, William, 1389; on institutional changes, 1051; on materials of social planning, 1052
Ohio: lynching in, 561; school segregation in, 633
Oklahoma: expenditures for education in, 1271; prohibition in, 457; transportation segregation in, 635; voting in, 483, 488
Old age benefit system, 357, 358, 359, 400, 1280-1281; occupations not covered by, 358, 1280-1281
Old Age and Survivors' Benefit System, 357n.
"Old Americans," 47, 114n., 138
Oliver, King, 988
Olmsted, Frederick, on slave-breeding, 1202
One-party system in the South, 452-455, 474, 475, 519, 1322
Oneida Community, 712
Operative Plasterers' and Cement Finishers' International Association, 1102
Opinion correlation, system of, 72-73
Opinion research; *see* Public opinion polls
Opinions, "personal" and "political," 1139-1141
Opportunism, 208, 471, 600, 774, 796, 830, 834n., 840, 843, 848, 854, 893, 1010, 1139, 1270, 1410
Opportunistic beliefs; *see* Stereotypes about Negroes
Opportunity, equality of, 573, 671-672, 884, 893
Opportunity, 837, 839, 909
Optimism-pessimism, scale of, 1038-1039
Order of Railway Conductors, 1105
Ordnance industry, Negroes in, 413
Organization (*see also* Trade Unions and Unionization): of Negroes to resist attack, 681n.; of plantation tenants, 250, 262, 263, 1250
Organizations: anti-Negro, 812n.; duplication of, 825, 854; left-wing, 812n.; Negro, 812-852, 952-955
Organizers, labor: importance of, 713, 714; terrorization of, 1300
Orientals; *see* Chinese *and* Japanese
Out-patient services, 346
Over-crowding in Negro homes, 376, 377, 378-379, 977, 978, 1127, 1291, 1308, 1426
Over-population in rural South, 205, 231-232, 253, 264, 265, 424
Over-production of cotton, 251
Overtime, payment for, 398
Ovington, Mary White, 819
Owen, Chandler, 749
Owenites, 712
Owens, Jesse, 734
Owens, John R., cited, 1099

Packing House Workers' Industrial Union, 1123
Page, Thomas Nelson, 732; characterization of Negro masses by, 1386-1387; on fight for race purity, 586, 1354-1355; on interracial friendship, 741n.; on interracial work, 843; on Negro education, 888, 896, 1419; on Northern teachers for Southern Negroes, 1415-1416; on retrogression of Negro workmen, 283; on Southern industrial labor, 280-281
Page, Walter Hines, 460
Paige, "Hot Lips," 645n.
Pale Faces, 449
Palmer, Edward Nelson, cited, 871n., 955, 1086
Panunzio, Constantine, cited, 1360
"Parallel civilizations," 578-582, 595, 741, 754, 1358
Parent-Teacher Associations, 948-949, 954n.
Park, Robert E., 1049-1050; on accommodation, 1050; on advertisements in Negro press, 922; on bi-racial organization,

690-691; on freedmen and competitive society, 1331-1332; on the "marginal man," 699; on Negroes as national minority, 1374; on race prejudice, 662
Park, R. E., and Burgess, E. W., cited, 576
Parrington, Vernon L.: on American leadership, 7-8; on humanitarianism, 6-7
Participation: in associations, etc., 674; general, in politics, 436, 513, 716-717; low degree of, in politics, 18, 453, 455, 456, 475, 476 782, 810, 886; of Negroes in politics, 435-436, 489-490, 503-504, 529, 725-726; national, in Negro problem, 26-27
Party allegiance, of Negroes, 508-512
Party system, 507, 716n., 778, 811; changes in, 511
Passing, 129-130, 133-134, 675, 683-688, 699n., 808, 1207-1208; professional, 685; by whites, 1380
Passivity of masses, 406, 712-716, 719, 732, 886
Paternalism, 404 442, 443, 459, 577, 592-595, 702, 729, 730n., 848, 960, 1077, 1078, 1357; decreasing, 525; of Negro leaders, 732; toward South, 70n.
Patronage, white, of Negro art, 750
Patten, Simon, 1057
Patterson, F. D., 503-504
Peabody Fund, 890, 1417
Peace Movement of Ethiopia, 813-814
Peace plans, 425, 425n.-426n., 806-807, 1018-1021, 1023
Peanut industry, 252; Negro women in, 1295
Pearl, Raymond, cited, 174, 1207
Peirce, Paul S., cited, 224
Pellagra, 174
Penal Institutions; *see* Prisons
Penn, Irvine Garland, cited, 913
Pennell, Elliot H., cited, 1273
Pennsylvania, school segregation in, 633
Peonage; *see* Debt peonage
Pepper, Claude, 467
"Personal" opinions, 1139-1141
Personality: of leader, 710, 719, 734-735; in leadership, reaction against, 1388-1389; of Negro editors, 913; Negro characteristics of, 956-965; in politics, 453, 454, 474, 716n.; struggle for balance of, 759-760, 766
Personality problems, 688, 699-700, 1384-1385
Personalization, Negro, of national problems, 784-785
Peterkin, Julia, 468
Phelps-Stokes Fund, 891
Philanthrophy, Northern, to Southern education, 869, 890-892, 893; demoralizing influence of, 905
Phillips, Ulrich B., on "breaking in" slaves, 1203
Phillips, Wendell, 1075
Phillips County, Ark., riot of 1919 in, 567
Photographs on job applications, 327, 328, 416
Phylon, The Atlanta University Review of Race and Culture, 909n.
Physical force; *see* Violence
Physical traits, Negro, 137-140; changes in, 120-123, 1203
Pickens, William, 748n.
Picketing of white stores, 803
Pinchback, P. B., 738
Pinchbeck, Raymond B., cited, 1108
Pittsburgh *Courier*, 1423, 1424
Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 179, 180, 1224
Planning: city, 351-352, 626-627; of employment, 386-388; of labor relations, 1010; migration, 386-388; national, 1015; post-war, 425, 425n.-426n., 806-807, 1018-1021, 1023; of race relations, 649; of social change, 1044, 1052, 1059
Plantation system, 224, 225, 230-250, 444, 1239-1241
PM, 1423-1424
Pneumonia-influenza rate for Negroes, 142-143, 174
Poindexter, H. A., cited, 177
Points of view of this book, 1057-1064
Police protection to Negroes, 497-499, 501; denial of, 530, 559, 764
Police system: changes in, 544-545; federal and state, 544, 565; and interracial relations, 544
Policemen, Negro, 542-543; authority of, 543n.; need for, 544n., 545
Policemen, Southern white, 535-537, 538-540, 1339-1343; brutality of, 527, 541-542; education of, 538-539; in Negro neighborhood, 535, 540-543; Negroes killed by, 527, 542, 543n., 566, 1342; plantation owners as, 536; prejudices of, 541; training of, 544-545, 1342; transportation operators as, 1340; as upholders of caste system, 532, 535-536, 538, 542, 577, 618
Policy game; *see* Numbers game
Political benefits to Negroes, 497-504, 1328
Political discrimination (*see also* Disfranchisement, Negro), 61, 65, 107, 274, 429, 459, 588
"Political" opinions, 1139-1141
Political system: in America, 810-811; and small parties, 505; in the South, 474-479, 514-520, 999-1000, 1322-1323

Politics: clergy in, 458; growth of bureaucracy in, 432-437; honest, 511-512; labor and farmer, 714; leadership in, 716-719; machine, 331, 439, 453, 476, 486, 488n., 490, 499, 733, 810, 1322; Negro bargaining power in, 498-500, 505-508, 835, 855; Negro church in, 940-941; Negro power in, 777, 778; and Negro problem, 475-476; Negroes in, 429-432, 475-476, 478, 491-497, 725-726, 733, 852, 987, 1000, 1328, 1330; police systems subject to, 539
Poll tax, 446, 450, 476, 481-483, 489, 514; abolition of, 463, 482, 1000; arguments for, 482; compulsory 1324; fight to abolish, 471, 515, 516-517, 791, 833, 1318, 1324; in the North, 1324
Pollock, H. M., cited, 143
Poor whites, 597-598, 689, 1189, 1388; effect of Negro discrimination and segregation on, 644; legal rights of, 525; social inferiority of, 582
Popular beliefs; *see* Stereotypes about Negroes
Popular movements; *see* Mass movements
Popular theories, Negro, 781-809, 1030-1031; on colonization schemes, 805-807; derived from white aristocrats, 786-788; instability of, 781-783; on labor solidarity, 788-794; on Negro business, 800-805; on the Negro problem, 27-30, 31-32, 38, 786; provincialism in, 783-785; on segregation, 797-800; upper class, 794-797
Population, Negro: age structure of, 162-163; in Chicago, 1126-1127; growth of, 157-161, 165-166; in New York City, 1125-1126; policy of, 167-171; registration of, 1218-1219; rural, decline of, 279; in Southern cities, 1127-1128; trends in, 1219
Population, white, decreased expansion rate of, 1017
Populist movement, 452, 455
Porter, K. W., cited, 1203
Postal service: Negro trust in, 1343; Negroes employed in, 327, 545
Post-war plans, 425, 425n.-426n., 806-807, 1018-1021, 1023
Post-war world, 408; housing in, 627; Negroes in, 423-426; unemployment in, 401, 408, 409, 424, 425, 1010-1011
Pound, Roscoe: on law-making, 20; on natural law, 1182-1183
Poverty, Negro, 205-207, 304; of consumer, 804; and crime, 976, 977; and drinking, 980-981; and education, 946, 948; and health, 344; and housing conditions, 375-379, 619; and judicial discrimination, 534, 548, 550; and non-voting, correlation between, 493
Poverty, white, a background factor in lynching, 563
Powdermaker, Hortense: cited, 607, 689, 700, 1207; on age differentials within class, 1131; on disparity of information between races, 1372; on emotionalism in Negro church, 1426; on Negro attitude to law, 1336; on Negro middle class, 704n.; on Negro upper class and poor whites, 1388; on social equality and amalgamation, 1355; on Southern custom of carrying arms, 1346; on superstition, 965; on upper class Negro marriage, 1425
Powell, A. Clayton, 863n., 987
Power: of American President, 717n.; of officeholder, 716; overlapping, 718
Power relations, li, lii, 724-726, 858, 859
Pragmatism, 882
Preachers, Negro; *see* Ministers, Negro
Prejudice: of Negroes against Negroes, xlviii; race, *see* Race prejudice
Premises; *see* Value premises
President's Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities, 345
Press, Negro; *see* Negro press
Press, white: anti-lynching position of, 565; and disfranchisement policy, 486; growing anxiety of, around Negro problem, 517; influence of, toward reform, 556; liberal, in the South, 472, 646, 661, 726, 915; "minority," 911, 912; Southern, support of one-party system by, 454-455; treatment of Negro news by, 37, 48, 104, 422, 600, 656, 661, 916, 924, 957, 1184, 1372-1373
Pressure groups, 811, 851-852
Primary elections, Southern (*see also* White primary), 454, 474, 475
Princeton University, Negro students not enrolled in, 633, 1367
Prisons, 554-555; profit from, 548; reform of, 555-557; segregation in, 555, 634; self-segregation in, 648; in the South, 554-555, 977n.
Production credit associations, 273
Production techniques, changes in (*see also* Mechanization), 424
Professional monopolies, 685, 686, 690, 693
Professional organizations, Negro; *see* Business and professional organizations, Negro
Professionals, Negro, 172, 305, 306, 318-

326, 329-330, 638, 645, 647, 654, 727, 734-735, 750, 753, 769, 795, 802, 878, 959-960, 987-993; as leaders, 731-732; and Negro protest, 804-805
Profits from penitentiaries, 548-549
Programs, building of, 1061
Prohibition, 17, 19, 455, 457
Promotion, racial discrimination in, 1118, 1122
Propaganda, 782; Japanese, 814, 814n.-815n.; and treatment of Negroes, 1016
Property interests in the South, 454
Property requirement for voting, 446, 483-484, 514
Property rights, 671
Property values, and Negroes, 623
Proportional representation, 1327
Prosser, Gabriel, 736
Prostitution: Negro, 329, 655, 838-839, 974, 976, 977, 1268, 1361; white, 607
Protection; *see* Police protection to Negroes
Protectionism: economic, 386, 395; social, 279
"Protective community," 525, 680-683, 688, 703, 763, 964, 976
"Protective" leagues, 449
Protest, Negro (*see also* Compromise between accommodation and protest), 720, 723; Abolitionist and Reconstruction leaders of, 737-739; accommodation under, 760; under cover, 757, 763-764, 768, 771, 772-773; during depression and in World War II, 754-756; against discrimination, 640-641, 851; and education, 879, 881, 900; expressed in arts and literature, 993; Garvey movement, 746-749; and intellectuals, 749-750; leaders of, 726, 730, 736-738, 742-743, 746-749, 771-772, 1005-1006; in Negro history and culture, 750-754; and Negro personality, 757-767; Negro press an organ for, 908-912; Niagara movement, 742-744; nonpolitical agencies for, 858-859; in the North, 777-779; organizations of, 776-777, 812-815, 817-842, 851-852, 854, 877; position of upper class in, 794-797; at present, 744-745; and religion, 757; rising, 663, 759, 783, 876, 877, 880, 1003-1004; slave revolts, 736-737; as spiritual basis for self-segregation, 797; and segregation policy, 795-796; Tuskegee compromise, 739-742; in World War I, 745; in World War II, 755, 818
Protestantism, 864-865
Provincialism: Negro, 783-785; of Southern liberals, 471-473
Psychic traits: Negro, 144-149; research into, 150
Public contacts, Negro and white, 535-538, 545-546, 1001
Public facilities, discrimination and segregation in use of, 61, 65, 628, 634, 795
Public health programs, 212, 323, 324, 344-346; segregation in, 325
Public institutions, democracy in, 582
Public opinion: and attitude against intermarriage, 617; changes in, 1032-1033; control of courts by, 523, 524, 547, 562; control of, by leaders, 712, 1033; dependence of judges and police on, 524, 526; influence of, 556, 678, 718, 810; instability of, 782; and lynching, 566; on mean and dishonest whites, 559; and Negro protest, 726; and race etiquette, 618
Public opinion polls, 626n., 815n., 893n.-894n., 1137-1139, 1186, 1294, 1328, 1332, 1376-1377, 1400, 1421, 1430
Public service, 333; careers in, 437; discrimination in, 169, 170, 334-337, 588, 1000-1001; distribution of, 334; Negroes in, 327-329, 542-543
Public Works Administration, 343, 345, 347, 350, 400, 1104, 1273
Public works program, 627n., 904
Publicity: to discrimination in war plants, 414, 415; focused on officeholders, 718; N.A.A.C.P., 827; to Negro affairs, by white press, 646; to Negro crime news, 655-656, 918; in Negro press, 525; to Negro problem, need for, 48, 109, 339n., 383-384, 418n., 600; personal, 918-920
Puckett, Newbell N., cited, 965
"Pullman class"; *see* Upper class, white
Punishment, leniency in, for Negro crimes against Negroes, 551, 592, 764, 969, 976, 978, 1344
Purchasing power, Negro, 654, 804, 805
Puritanism, 591, 931, 939, 940; and American arts, 993; and natural law, 15-17; Negro, 1388, 1425; "sex-appeal" a backwash of, 918n.
Purity, racial, 114n., 115
Purvis, Robert, 737

Qualitative goal for Negro population policy, 169
Quantitative goal for Negro population policy, 167-169
Quillin, Frank U., cited, 438, 599

Race: definition of, 113-117, 586, 589-590, 668, 1198-1199; occasional impossibility of determining, 683n.-684n.
Race attitudes: existing studies of, 1136-1137; quantitative studies of, 1136-1143
Race dogma; *see* Inferiority concept

Race etiquette, 471, 537, 573, 587, 606-618, 761, 964, 1351, 1361-1364; breakdown of, 615-616, 651, 1363-1364; effect of casual contact on, 651; and isolation, 653; and institutional segregation, 628
Race prejudice (*see also* Discrimination *and* Segregation), 52n., 140, 322, 746, 760, 928, 1018, 1050, 1067, 1068, 1086, 1188; and assimilation, 53; decreasing, 78-80; development of, 603; "function" of, 590n.; increase in, 662; and job discrimination, 381; Negro, 1143; in the North, 88; a perversion of equalitarianism, 89; practical study of, 1141-1143; in the South, 88, 1142-1143; types of, 1141-1142; of white worker, 293
Race pride, 56-57, 62-64, 134, 169, 525, 606, 647, 686, 687, 723, 758, 771, 783, 797, 802, 901, 916, 928, 999, 1018, 1396, 1420; dependence of Negro business on, 802, 803, 804
"Race purity," 58, 114n., 115
Race relations: planning of, 649; "realistic" theory of, 736, 739-742, 760, 787-788
Race riots; *see* Riots
Racial beliefs (*see also* Beliefs, Popular Theories, Negro, *and* Valuations), studies of, 111, 1197
Racial characteristics, concepts of: in 18th century, 90; revolution in, 91, 92
Racial traits: Negro, 1213-1214; white and Negro, compared, 137-153
Racial inequality, 76, 94-95, 592
Racketeers, Negro, 330-331, 501, 940, 972, 1267-1268; Negro respect for, 771-772
Radicalism: growth of, 510; interracial contacts in field of, 656; not found in Southern liberal thinking, 469-470; in the press, 913-914; as root of labor solidarity theory, 793; of Negro intellectuals, 749-750, 1398; of Negro press, 922; Negro, following World War I, 749-750, 1392
Radicalism-conservatism, scale of, 1038
Railroad brotherhoods, 287, 1105-1106, 1107, 1297, 1299
Railroad services, reduction of Negro workers in, 287
Railroads: Negro workers on, 1100, 1105-1107; unions in, 1105-1106, 1107; wage scale in, 1106, 1107
Ramspeck, Robert, 467
Randolph, A. Philip, 414, 504, 749, 817, 818, 987, 1005, 1107; on Communists and National Negro Congress, 1401; on need for all-Negro movement, 851-852; on segregation, 649n.; on struggle for freedom and justice, 857
Randolph, Thomas Jefferson, 1311
Randolph, Virginia, 890
Rape: accusations of, 561-562; distorted statistics on, 972-973; of Negro women, 1187
Rape complex, Southern, 1356
Raper, Arthur, 534n.; cited, 246, 247, 486, 498, 499, 547-548, 552, 554, 555, 560, 561, 563, 771, 849, 1236, 1243, 1345; on civil service, 1340-1341; on cotton restriction program, 267; on death penalty, 554n.; description of Southern general store by, 647-648; on equality in motoring, 1368; on farm tenant unions, 262; on fining system, 548; on illegal treatment of Negroes by public officials, 537; on incomes from fines, 549n.; on injustice in courts, 552; on labor agents, 1090; on legal separation of races, 1353; on lynchings, 561, 561n., 562; on Negro homicide, 1341; on Negro jurors, 549-550; on Negro landownership, 241-242, 1239-1240; on Negro lawyers, 1343-1344; on Negro policemen, 543, 543n., 544n.; on Negro-police killings, 542n.; on police department and politics, 539, 1341; on police education, 538n.; on police persecution, 1339-1340; on policeman's role in interracial relations, 542; on postal service, 1343; on relief administration, 546, 1343; on Southern elections, 1335; on Southern policemen, 535, 539n., 540-541, 542, 1341-1342; on tenant organization, 1250; on training of police, 539n., 544, 1342; on vagrancy laws, 1344-1345; on violence in South, 1346, 1351; on vocational training for Negroes and whites, 1419
Rappites, 712
Rationalism: American, xlvi, 22, 1024; in Western culture, 1046
Rationalization (*see also* Defense reactions): biological, 84, 87-88, 89, 97-101, 102-106, 578; of caste system, 88, 102-106, 145, 208, 784, 928, 1077; of deviation from caste interest, 895-896; of discrimination, 215-219, 392, 660, 897; mechanism of, 1027-1031; of Negro problem in general, 30-32; of prejudice, 1188; of position of women, 1077; of racial inferiority, 583, 603; of Reconstruction, 447, 738-739, 1314-1315; of salary differentials, 320; by scientists, 1035; of segregation, 283-284, 605-606, 660; of slavery, 88, 443, 1188; of social discrimination and segregation, 591; of Southern

franchise policy, 489; specific needs for, 106-108
Ray, Charles Bennet, 737
Reaction, post-Revolution, 86-87, 97
Reactionism of the South, 441, 444, 455-458
Real Property Inventories, 378
"Realistic" theory; *see* Race relations, realistic theory of
Reconstruction period, 88, 224-226, 439, 558, 579; and absence of political education, 1316; effect of failure of, 19; historians of, 448, 1315-1316; memories of, 446-448; Negro labor movement in, 1398; Negro politicians in, 738-739; preacher-leaders in, 861; rationalization of, 447, 738-739, 1314-1315; revolt against, 449; school system in, 888; after World War II, 425
Reconstruction Amendments, 430, 438, 445-446, 480, 515, 533, 580-581, 599, 601, 629, 828, 1075-1076, 1269, 1334
Recreation, Negro, 982-986, 1435-1437
Recreation facilities for Negroes, 1274-1275; segregation and discrimination in, 346-348
Reddick, Lawrence, on Negro history, 751n., 752
Redding, J. Saunders, cited, 330
Redistricting, neglect of, 430n., 437n., 492-493
Referendum; *see* Initiative and referendum
Reform: city, 498; civil service, 436; credit, 260, 272-273, 348; government, 511-512; housing, 626; judicial, 555-557; of labor movement, 408; land, 224-227; police, 544-545; social, 456-457, 464; third parties and, 1400
Regional terms, meaning of, 1071-1072
Regionalism of Southern liberals, 471-473
Rehabilitation program, 276-277
Reid, Ira DeA.: cited, 307-308, 313, 321, 322, 325-326, 330, 343; on discrimination against Negro physicians, 323-324; on store locations, 308
Relief, public, 206, 211, 362-363; discrimination in, 356, 588; for Negroes, 197, 199, 301, 335, 337n., 353-356, 755, 1256, 1277-1280, 1282; in the North, 295; under the New Deal, 399-401; politics in administration of, 1278-1279; of rural population, 267-268; in the South, 326; work, 360-361
Religion (*see also* Church, Negro): American pattern of, and Negro church, 863-868; anti-white sects, 862n.; and democracy, 9; emotionalism in, 563, 565, 861; force of, in race relations, 862; as front for Negro protest, 757; historical notes on, 859-863; importance of, to Negroes, 509, 931, 935-942; influence of, in South, 458, 460; inhibiting character of, 167; Negro denominations, 865, 866, 868, 936, 939; potency of, in America, 10-11, 862; statistics on affiliation, 864n.-865n.; used to support inferiority doctrine, 584
Remond, Charles Lenox, 737
Rents paid by Negroes, 379, 1287
Repatriation bill, 806, 813
Representation: disproportionate, of South in Congress, 476-477; proportional, 1327
Reproduction differences; *see* Differential reproductivity
Reproduction rate: gross, 161-162, 1221; net, 160-161, 1219-1220, 1222
Republican party: Negro papers as organs for, 913; and Negroes, after Civil War, 431; Negro support of, in North, 491-492, 493-494; in the North after the Civil War, 447-448; in post-Civil War South, 439; Southern, 453n., 477-479
Republican National Committee, and principle of nondiscrimination, 1005
Research: on beliefs, 111, 1197-1198; on caste and class in Negro community, 1129-1132; "ecological," 627; historical, on Negroes, 751-752; on Negro leadership, 1133-1135; on Negro problem, biases in, 137-138, 149, 1035-1041, 1043; on Negro problem, by Interracial Commission, 846, 847; opinion, *see* Public opinion polls; on opinions of Negro labor, 1293-1294; in physical anthropology, 149-153; social science, theoretical and practical, 1059
Resettlement Administration, 276
Resorts, Negro, 985-986
Respectability of interracial work, 646, 661, 847, 849
Restaurants: Chinese and Japanese, 310; discrimination in, 528, 628, 662, 795; Negro, 310-311; segregated, 588, 635
Restoration period, 449, 579, 580, 738, 861; deterioration of Negro education in, 888
Restrictive covenants, 527, 623, 624, 832, 1366
Retail trade, Negro, 307-308
Retirement age, Negro, 299
Retirement fund for policemen, 539
Reuter, Edward B., 1206; cited, 106, 699, 1390; on adaptation, 1051; on history taught Negro children, 752; on miscegenation, 127, 1204; on physical and cultural identification, 98; on talent among mulattoes, 131
Revival meetings, 937-938
Revolution, American, 8, 432-433; equal-

itarian doctrine of, 85, 86; and natural law, 15; reaction following, 86-87, 97
Revolutions, foreign, America's approval of, 5
Rice, John Andrew, on Southerner's changed attitude, 1001n.
Rice production, 252, 1238
Richards, Henry I., cited, 257
Richmond, Va., Negro business in, 1260
Riots, 566-569, 680, 819; *ante-bellum*, 291, 567; in Army camps, 421-422, 568; causation for, 568-569; in Detroit, 527, 568, 678, 1337; between Negro soldiers and whites, 1005; Reconstruction a long example of, 449-450; during and after World War I, 745, 1309, 1409
Rivers, W. H. R., cited, 1217
Robeson, Paul, 734, 735, 988, 1184; on Negro individualism, 994
Robertson, William J., cited, 563
Robinson, Bill "Bojangles," 734, 988
Robinson, Corienne K., cited, 350, 418-419
Robinson Family, 449
Rochester (Eddie Anderson), 988
Rockefeller, John D., 891
Rogers, J. A., 1184
Rogers, Will, quoted, 458n.
Roman, C. V., 1191; on strength of race prejudice, 616
Roman Catholic Church, 870; Negroes in, 1411, 1412; opposition of, to birth control movement, 178; in the South, 870n.-871n., 872n.
Romanticism, American, 710, 1375-1376
Roosevelt, Eleanor, 414, 851
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 464, 662, 851; on discrimination in federal employment, 1306; and Negro appointees, 503; Negro vote for, 494-495, 496; support of, by Negroes, 754-755, 1332
Roosevelt, Theodore, 18-19, 662
Roosevelt administration (*see also* New Deal), 718
Rose, Florence, cited, 179, 180
Rosenstein, Joseph, cited, 1322
Rosenwald, Julius, 891
Rosenwald Fund, 340, 891, 1224, 1276, 1418
Rotation in office, 433
Roussève, Charles B., on Negro exclusion from jobs, 282
Royce, Josiah: on American idealism, 23; on social inequality, 1355
Ruggles, David, 737
Rural Electrification program, 271
Russia: industrialization of, 1017; peace role of, 807; racial tolerance in, 1018
Russwurm, John B., 912
St. Louis, prejudice against Negroes in, 528
Salaries (*see also* Income and Wages): of Negro actors, 330; of Negro ministers, 321, 874; of Negro teachers, 215, 319-320, 632, 880, 885, 1232-1233, 1271; of policemen, 539; of trade union officials, 714n.
Samples, research, bias in, 137-138, 149, 1200, 1201, 1211-1212, 1217, 1283, 1284, 1289
Savage, Augusta, 989, 1184
Savannah, Ga., Negro business in, 1260
"Scalawags," 447
Schanck, R. L., 1139n.
Schmidt, Carl T.: cited, 255-256, 260, 267-268, 269-270, 274, 276, 278; on mechanization in cotton culture, 1248; on tenancy reduction, 1247
School lunch program, 211, 265, 363
Schools: discrimination in, *see* Discrimination, in education; mixed, during Reconstruction, 579; Negro teachers in, 318-320; segregated, *see* Segregation, in education
Schools, Negro, 879-907; 942-952; accommodating pattern of, 880; *ante-bellum*, 1415; attendance, 942-943, 948n.; conditions in, 902n.-903n.; 946-947; consolidation of, 947; equipment for, 1418; high schools, 950-951; needs of, 904; over-crowding of, 945, 947; shifting control of, 892-893; value of, 947n.
Schrieke, Bertram: on "classical" education, 1422; on General Education Board supervisors, 1417-1418; on lynch law, 532; on Negro education, 902; on Negroes and democracy, 4; on new American peasantry, 1251; on rationalizing Reconstruction, 1314-1315
Schurz, Carl, 1235
Schuyler, George S.: cited, 1198, 1423; on birth control, 1206-1207, 1223-1224; on Negro art, 994; on treatment of Negroes in white press, 1184
Schwartzwald Amendment, 418n.
Science: do-nothing policy of, 91-92; interracial relations in field of, 656; and Negro problem, 89-93; social, *see* Social science
Scientific research on Negro, 109-110
Scope and direction of this study, lv-lviii
Scott, Emmet J., 746n.; cited, 420, 422n., 745; on discrimination in Army, 1309
Scott, E. J., and Stowe, L. B., cited, 640-641, 662
Scottsboro decision, 549

Seamstresses, Negro, 1088
Seating, segregation in, 612-613
Second World War; *see* World War II
Secret ballot not used in parts of South, 476, 1323
Secretariat, 837
Secretiveness, Negro, 1432
Sects, Negro, 938
Security, economic, 464
Segregation (*see also* Legislation, Jim Crow *and* Discrimination), 29, 39, 58, 65, 100, 191, 242, 283, 335, 928; acceptance of, by N.A.A.C.P., 830-831; in A.A.A., 1247-1248; in armed forces, 419, 744; basis of, in North, 617-618; becoming fortified in America, 797; beginning of, in slavery, 577-578; in cafeterias, 328; in churches, 587, 859-860, 868-872; condoning of, 797-800; in education, 319, 335, 341-342, 581, 587, 628, 632-633, 647, 795, 880-882, 894, 901-902, 904, 945-946, 1420; effects of, on whites, 643-644, 645; an excuse for discrimination, 581; facts and beliefs regarding, 605-606; in federal jobs, 327; housing, 196, 242, 308, 349-350, 377, 379, 391, 567, 601, 618-622, 625-626, 1366; increasing, 134, 525; institutional, 618, 627-639; in interpersonal relations, 606-618; lack of, in Northern schools, 306; in longshore work, 1098; of middle and upper class Negroes, 104; in "mill villages," 1095; Negro vested interest in, 629-630, 795, 797, 798n., 870, 921, 940; in North, 46, 577, 599-604, 618-622, 626, 636, 722, 901, 945-946, 999; one-sidedness of, 575-577, 1351-1352; in places of work, 390, 391-392; protest against, 640-641; in public health services, 325; in public places, 588, 610; in public thought, 37; in recreational facilities, 346-348; research on, 1359-1360; sanctions for, 622-627, 628; in seating, 612-613; self, *see* Voluntary withdrawal; in semi-public organizations, 631, 1367; sensitiveness of Negroes to, 761; sexual, 606-607; social, 573, 599-604; in the South, 41, 901, 998; in transportation, 576, 581, 795, 1351, 1353, 1369; in unions, 1103, 1110; upper class Negro attitude toward, 629-630, 794-795; utilization of, 798; vocational, 106-107, 312-313
Seibels, Robert E., on objection to birth control, 1227
Selection: of Negro leaders, 770-771, 1133-1134; marriage, 697-698, 1212; sexual, 696; in slave trade, 121-122, 1201-1202; social and biological, 130-132; of teachers, 948
Self-criticism, Southern, 460
"Self-made man," 674, 886n.
Self-segregation; *see* Voluntary withdrawal
Self-sufficiency farming, 265
Seligman, Edwin R. A., 837
Sellin, Thorsten, on distortion of Negro crime statistics, 1432-1433
Semi-public associations, discrimination in, 631, 1367
Seniority in Congress, effect of, 477
Seniority rights, 1305
Sensationalism in Negro papers, 917-918
Sensitivity, Negro, 958, 1369, 1395; to color, 1383; to discrimination, 761-763
Sentences, prison, 553-555
Service occupations (*see also* Domestic service), Negroes in, 291, 293, 309, 310, 652-653, 695, 1087-1089, 1256, 1386; in auto industry 1120; railroad, 1107
Seventy-Six Association, 449
Sex: a factor in lynching, 562; main defense for segregation, 587, 591, 592; not played up in Negro press, 918n.; relation of race etiquette to, 608, 610; South's preoccupation with, 591
Sex offenses, Negro, low rate of, 972-973
Sex relations, interracial, 55-56, 59-60, 125, 1204, 586, 589, 590, 1194, 1354; exploitative; 56-57, 59, 62, 63, 125-126, 578, 607; sanctioning of, 55-56; and Southern womanhood, 1355-1356
Shakers, 712
Shaking hands, etiquette of, 613, 1351
"Shape-up" system of hiring, 1098
Share tenant agreement, 245n.
Sharecropping, 224, 237, 245-250, 253-255, 257-258
Shaw, Anna Howard, on equality of women, 1076n.
Shaw Artie, 654n.
Shaw, C. R., and McKay, H. D., cited, 977
Shaw, George Bernard, quoted, 101n.
Shay, Frank, cited, 532
Sherman, Mandel and Irene C., cited, 981
Shipbuilding: Negroes employed in, 412-413, 424, 1304; post-war decline in, 1309
Shufeldt, Robert W., 90
Siegfried, André, cited, 1348
Silhouette, 909n.
Simkins, Butler, on Ben Tillman, 1312
Simms, W. Gilmore, on women's rights, 1074
Simpson, George E., cited, 1373
Single crop system, 1348
Slater Fund, 890, 891
Slaughtering and meat-packing industry,

1122-1124; unionization of, 1123; wages in, 1124
Slave biographies, 751
Slave-breeding, 121-122, 1202, 1234
Slave shows, 989
Slavery, 84-88, 1201-1202; abolition of, 533; brutalizing effect of, on whites, 1338; and caste, 221-224; effects of, on lower class Negro behavior, 701; entertainment during, 989; in Europe, 123; history of, in America, 441-443; issue of, in Civil War, 431, 443; and the law, 530-532; as model for economic discrimination, 219; moral burden of, 220; Negro education during, 887; Negro families under, 931; Negro humor a survival of, 960-961; in the North, 530n.; number of slaves imported, 118-119; origin of violence, pattern in, 558; paternalism and, 592-593; and present Southern ideology, 441-445; religion during, 859-860; revolts during, 736-737; root of discrimination and segregation in, 577-578; selectivity in, 121; and women's rights, 1074-1075
Slum clearance program, 351, 378n.
Smith, Adam, 1055
Smith, Alfred E., 477, 852
Smith, Hoke, 680
Smith, Samuel Denny, cited, 447n.
Smith, James McCune, 737
Social causation, in common man's thinking, 98, 1191-1192
Social changes, planning of, 1059
Social continuum, class system as, 675-676, 700
Social Darwinism, 1048n.
Social definition of "Negro," 113-117
Social discrimination, 60, 65, 67, 573, 574, 587, 588, 599-604, 999; effect of, 641-642; incidence of 640-644; in the North, 577, 599-604, 636, 662, 999; protest against, 640-641
Social distance, 713
Social engineering, 77, 1044, 1059; increased demand for, 1022-1023
Social equality: denial of, in South, *see* "No social equality" doctrine; importance of, in South, 662; as intention of Civil Rights Bill of 1875, 579; offered Negroes by Communist party, 508
Social improvement, desire for, 194-195, 200
Social inequality, incidence of, 640-644
Social history of America, factors in, 406-407
Social insurance systems; *see* Social security program
Social legislation; *see* Legislation, social
Social life: Negro, 952-954, 959, 984; rural, 1435
Social mobility, 210-211, 714, 919; and education, 674
"Social neutrality," 269
Social order, American, 51-52
Social organizations, 952-955
Social purpose behind racial beliefs, 101-106
Social reform, 456-457; blocking of, by Southern politicians, 464; increased interest in, 93
Social science in America, 1023; American leaders in, 1048-1052; avoided in Southern Negro schools, 949; biases in, 1035-1041; development of, 91, 92-93; hidden valuations in, 1045-1057; mitigating biases in, 1041-1045; Negroes in, 1037; "regional approach" in, 70n.; in the South, 473; specialization in, 1042; theoretical and practical research in, 1059
Social Science Research Council, quoted, 152
Social Security program, 165, 211, 353-356, 357-358, 399-401, 436, 1277, 1280-1281
Social segregation, 573, 599-604; vested interests of some Negroes in, 690, 693
Social stratification, Negro (*see also* Class stratification, Negro), 71-72; leadership pattern in, 716-719, 727-733, 1390
Social trends, 212, 998-1002
Social welfare policy; see Welfare policy
Social workers: hampered by politicians, 1279; Negro, 326
Socialism, 442, 788, 812n.; scientific, 1051n.
Socialized medicine, opposition of Negro doctors to, 324, 704
Society news, Negro, 918-920
Society of the White Rose, 449
Soil erosion, 232, 1237
Sojourner Truth housing project, 568, 678, 1337
"Solid South," 452-455, 473, 475, 1317
Solidarity: labor, 402, 407, 598-599, 647, 673, 676, 750, 787, 788-794, 804, 1398; of lower classes, low degree of, 68-69, 713
Solidarity, Negro, 506, 680-683, 688, 730, 747, 763, 771, 786, 921, 940, 1335-1336, 1379; behind church, 877; factors making for, 71-72; fostered by church, 862; "function" of, 766-767; importance of, to Negro businessmen, 305; lack of, in Negro group, 71; against law and police, 525; spread by Negro press, 911; upper class, 650, 703n.
Solidarity, white, 242, 248, 443, 444, 453-

454, 475-476, 537, 550, 598, 677, 1379
Sons of Washington 449
South: American Creed in, 87, 461-462, 690, 888, 893, 895, 896; Americanization of, 1011; attitude of, toward N.A.A.C.P., 824, 825; birth control movement in, 179; Catholic Church in, 870n.-871n., 872n.; changes in, 462-466; compared with North, 44-49; Congressmen from, 464, 476-477, 516; conservatism of, 73, 440, 455-458, 464, 466, 474, 517, 519; convict camps in, 554-555; decreasing discrimination and segregation in, 998-1000; definition of, 1071-1072; democracy in, 440-441, 460-461; Democratic party in, 452-455, 463, 464, 465, 474, 475, 477, 480, 487, 511n.; depression in, 197, 289, 463; economic life of, 221-229; education inferior in 45; elections in, 475-476, 1322-1323, 1325; emphasis of, on sex, 562, 591; fascism unlikely in, 458-462; feeling of, about Civil War, 45; frontier type of civilization in, 451, 458, 459, 532; ideology of (*see also* Liberalism, Southern), 441-445, 670; individualism in, 458-459; industrialization of, 44, 199, 263, 398, 463, 515; inequality of justice in, 529-534, 968-969; influence of religion in, 458, 460; interest of, in Negro leadership, 720-722; isolation of, 444; issue of Negro Suffrage in, 440-446, 512-514; jobs outside agriculture in, 280-284; labor movement in, 463; legal order in, 229, 514, 518, 533-534; moral dilemma of, 868-869, 888; necessity for accommodation in, 768; Negro education in, 880-882, 887-893, 946-952; Negro entertainers in, 991-992; Negro leadership in, 776-777; Negro and white culture in, 70n.; Northern business in, 453; one-party system in, 452-455, 474, 475, 519, 1322; participation in elections in, 475; political divergences of, from rest of nation, 474-475, 476; politics decentralized in, 474; prisons in, 554-555, 977n.; probable changes in, 514-515; a problem in itself, 45, 70, 723, 1015; race prejudice in, 88, 1142-1143; Republican party in, 439, 453n., 477-479; rising racial tension in, 568, 662-663, 677-678, 1011-1015; rural structure of, 451; segregation in, 41, 901, 998; trends in, during the '30's, 288-291; urbanization of, 284, 289, 463; whites' attitudes toward Negro education in, 893-896
South America, Negroes in, 186
South Carolina: birth control program in, 1226; death penalty in, 554; education requirement for voting in, 484; mixed schools in, 579; Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax in, 1324; school term in, 948n.; terror organization in, 449; violence in elections, 486; voting in, 474, 475, 488n.; white primary in, 486
South Dakota, expenditures for education in, 1271
Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 951n.
Southern Committee for Peoples' Rights, 812n.
Southern Conference on Human Welfare, 469, 812n.
Southern Education Foundation, 890-891
Southern Negro Youth Congress, 818-819
Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, 262, 263, 1250
Soybean production, 252-253
Spaulding, C. C., 1184, 1263
Specialization: need for, in Negro organizations, 855-856; in social science, 1042
Speech, Negro characteristics of, 960, 963, 965-966
Spencer, Herbert, 1048n.
Spero, S., and Harris, A. L.: cited, 1097-1098, 1104, 1114, 1117, 1296; on labor solidarity, 1398
Spingarn, Arthur B. and Joel E., 820
Spirituals, 753, 754, 929, 992
Spoils, political, for Negroes, 498
Spoils system, 433
Sports: Negroes in, 655, 734, 753, 771, 988; mixed, taboo against, 610; restrictions on Negroes in, 991n.
Sports columns, 920
Springfield, Ill., riot of 1908 in, 567, 819
Standard Life Insurance Company, 1263
Standard of living; *see* Living standard
Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, 1075
States' rights, 343, 517, 565n., 809
Stateways, 1053n.-1054n.
Stecker, Margaret Loomis: cited, 366; on clothing expenditures, 1288
Steel mills, Negro workers in (*see also* Iron and steel industry), 287
Steel Workers Organizing Committee, 1117, 1118
Stephens, Oren, cited, 261, 1250
Stephenson, Gilbert T.: cited, 429-430; 439, 532, 579, 1310; on "defamation," 640; on equal accommodations for Negroes and whites, 579; on voting in Tennessee and Wisconsin, 1309-1310
Stereotypes about Negroes: xlix, 30-31, 38-39, 55, 70n., 101, 107-108, 131, 139-140, 165, 195, 208, 215-219, 292, 301,

339n., 386, 392, 493, 575, 583, 603, 648-649, 653, 654, 655, 657, 753, 754, 783, 956, 959, 967, 1120, 1294, 1326, 1382; in American literature, 1195-1197; deliberate use of, 101-106; disproved, 115, 116; function of, 111; in the South, 41, 42; study of, 110-112
Sterility, 174-175
Sterilization, 176
Sterilization laws, 1225
Sterner, Richard, and Associates: cited, 196, 238, 243, 257, 274-275, 277, 299, 344, 349, 355-356, 359-363, 364-365, 366, 368-370, 371, 373, 376, 377, 378, 379, 1241, 1245-1246, 1250, 1264, 1265, 1273, 1276, 1277-1278, 1279-1280, 1282-1283, 1285, 1286, 1287, 1288, 1290-1292; on decline of tenancy, 254; on Negro workers, 1257; on white and Negro food consumption, 373
Stevens, Thaddeus, 224, 448
Still, William Grant, 737, 989
Stillbirth rate, 175
Stoddard, Lothrop, on Negro primitivism, 99
Stokes, Anson Phelps, 807
Stone, Alfred H.: cited, 662, 1361; on effect of lynching, 1349; on Negro adaptability, 1396
Stonequist, Everett V.: cited, 699; on mulattoes, 1384-1385
Storey, Moorfield, 820; cited, 564
Stouffer, S. A., and Florant, L. C., cited, 186, 188-190, 806, 1231
Stouffer, S. A., and Wyant, R., cited, 188-189
Strategy, Negro, 852-857
Stribling, Thomas S., 468
Strikes, "wild-cat," 413
"Strolling," 984
Strong, Edward K., cited, 98
Stroud, George M., cited, 531-532
Student aid program, 343
Sub-Committee on Crime and Delinquency of the City-Wide Citizens' Committee on Harlem, quoted, 978n.
Subsidies, housing, 352n.
"Subversive propaganda," 459
Success: tradition of, 754n.; worship of, 710-711
Suffrage, Negro, 1333-1335; extra-legal methods of exclusion from, 484-486; history of, 429-431; as an issue in the South, 512-514; in North, 437-440, 529; Reconstruction Amendments, 445-448; requirements for, 446, 480-484; 489, 514, 1324, 1325; in the South, 440-446; in the South, actual voting, 486-490; in the South, principles governing, 479-480
Suffrage, woman, 1077; and Abolitionism, 1075, 1076n.
Sugar cane production, 252, 1238
Suicide, Negro, 982
Sumner, Charles, 224
Sumner, William Graham, 83n., 91, 1031, 1032n., 1377; on legislation and mores, 1054n., 1352; on maintaining *status quo*, 1048-1049; on race relations in South, 1054
Superiority doctrine (*see also* White supremacy, theory of), 454, 460, 586; of Southern over Northern whites, 1188-1189; voting a symbol of, 449
Superstition, Negro, 964-965
Supreme Court, attitude of, on denial of vote to Negroes, 1334-1335
Supreme Court decisions: on Civil Rights Bill of 1875, 601, 628, 630; on grandfather clauses, 480; on legal violations by courts, 555; on National Labor Relations Act, 1110; on Negroes' entrance into state universities, 633; on prohibiting migration of indigents, 1231-1232; and Reconstruction Amendments, 515-516; on right to boycott, 313; on right to organize, 399; on salary differentials, 320; in Scottsboro case, 549; on white primary, 481, 516; on zoning ordinances, 624
Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company, 1263
Surplus commodities plan, 211, 362-363
Surplus population; *see* Over-population
Suspicion: bred by isolation, 723; of leaders, 774; of N.A.A.C.P., 824, 825; of Negro businessmen, 801-802
Sutherland, Edwin H., cited, 968
Sutherland, Robert L., on frustration, 1260
Sweatshop workers, 391
Swimming, Negro-white, taboo against, 608, 610
Syphilis, 143, 174, 980, 1225, 1273
Syphilis campaign, 346n.

Taeuber, Conrad and Irene B., on Negro fertility, 1222
Taft, William Howard, 478
Talladega College, 892, 1416, 1417
Talmadge, Eugene, 468, 1368
Tammany Hall, 495; and Negro vote, 1328
Tannenbaum, Frank: cited, 30, 554, 562, 563; on cotton economy, 233; on fear of Negro, 563; on lack of rural social life, 1435; on Negro migration, 1232; on Southern village life, 1348
Tanner, Henry O., 989

Tarkington, Booth, quoted, 1196-1197
Taxation: becoming "progressive," 334; direct, 333, 381; income, 1183; indirect, 333, 334, 336, 514, 1269-1270; poll tax, *see* Poll tax; on real property, 1276; regressive, 334, 336, 1269; for social policy, 213
Teachers, Negro, 215, 306, 318-320, 497, 632, 769, 770, 795, 802, 880-881, 885; education of, 891, 1428; need for higher standards for, 904-905; in the North, 778; relative independence of, 880, 881, 893; salaries of, 215, 319-320, 632, 880, 885, 1232-1233, 1271; selection of, 948-949, 950; training of, 904-905
Teachers, Northern, for Southern Negroes, 887, 1415-1416
Technology: *see* Mechanization
Tenancy, 227-229, 232-234, 236-237, 242-244, 245-250, 253-255, 257-258, 1240-1242, 1242-1243
Tenant selection, 352-353
Tennessee: Negro high schools in, 950n.; Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax in, 1324; poll tax abolished in, 482n.; primaries in, 486; terror organization in, 499; voting in, 488n.; voting qualifications in, 1309
Tennessee Valley Authority, 271
Terror organizations, 449
Texas: library facilities in, 1368; Negro high schools in, 950n.; Negro police in, 543n.; Negro vote in, 475n.; poll tax in, 1324; primaries in, 486; race prejudice in, 615n.; riots in, 567; terror organizations in, 449; voting in, 488n.
Textile industry: exclusion of Negroes from, 285-286, 382; Negroes in, 289, 1110-1112; unionization in, 1111
Textile Workers' Union, 1111
Theater, Negroes in, 329, 988, 991
Theories concerning the Negro; *see* Stereotypes about Negroes
Thinking, Negro; *see* Popular theories, Negro
Third degree, 541
Third-party movements, 6; and reform, 1400
Thomas, Norman, 407; on democracy in unions, 408
Thomas, William H., 1190
Thomas, W. I., 91, 1049n., 1050n.; cited, xlix
Thomas, W. I., and Znaniecki, F., 1138n.
Thompson, Charles H., cited, 148, 342
Thompson, Lorin A., 1109n., 1296
Thompson, William H., 494, 498n., 1328
Thoreau, on law, 1183
Thornwell, J. H., on participants in Civil War, 443
Thurstone, L. L., 1136
Tingsten, Herbert, cited, 493
Titles of address in early New England, 1362-1363
Tobacco industry: mechanization in, 1107, 1108; Negroes in, 1107-1110; partial exclusion of Negroes from, 286; unionization of, 1109-1110; wages in, 1109
Tobacco production, 251-252
Tobacco Workers' International Union, 1109-1110
Tobias, C. H., 844
Tocqueville, de, 11, 712; cited, 87
Todd, T. W., cited, 1214
Todd, T. W., and Lindala, Anna, 1212; quoted, 1217
Toilet facilities, 376, 377, 1291; segregation in, 636, 642
Tolnai, B. B., on abortion, 1225-1226
Tong wars, 527
Townsend, Willard, 1184
Trade unions: in America, 713; anti-strike policy of, 425; attitudes toward, 24, 39-40; attitude of Urban League toward, 840-841; in automobile industry, 1121; "auxiliaries," 1106; Booker T. Washington's opposition to, 787; in building industry, 1102-1104; government support of, 399, 407; history of, 214, 403-408, 511, 1296-1300; hostility to, 389, 1095n.-1096n., 1123; increasing control of, over employment, 793; interracial membership in, 262, 263, 286-287, 653, 1103-1104, 1114; iron and steel workers', 1117-1119; labor solidarity in, 598-599, 647; leaders in, 718; in meat industries, 1123; membership in, 713n.; miners' 1113, 1114; need of Negroes in, 792, 836; and the Negro, 401-403; Negro leaders in, 733, 777; Negro equality in, 1111, 1118, 1121; Negro press stand on, 922; Negroes in, 389, 401, 402, 407, 413, 787, 788, 1001-1002, 1256-1257, 1296, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1300, 1398; opposition of, to Negroes, 195, 207, 283, 286, 287, 292 294, 402, 410, 413, 639, 1105-1106, 1298-1299, 1303; in post-war period, 426; principle of nondiscrimination in, 330, 792, 1005; public control of, 407; race issue in fight against, 1095n.-1096n., 1123; in railroad industry, 1105-1106, 1107; in South, 262-263; in textile industry, 1111; in tobacco industry, 1109-1110; transition from craft to industrial, 406

Training: for leadership, 719n.; of policemen, 1342; of teachers, 904-905; vocational, *see* Vocational training
Training courses in war work, Negroes in, 1307
Transportation: discrimination in, 634-635, 1340; of Negro school children, 947, 948; police authority of operators and conductors, 537; segregation in, 537, 576, 581, 588, 628, 634-635, 742, 795, 1351, 1353, 1369
Tross, J. S. Nathaniel, on Negro tension, 1013
Trotter, Monroe, 742
Trowel trades, Negroes in, 286, 412, 1101, 1102
True Inspirationists, 712
Truth, Sojourner, 737
Tuberculosis, incidence of, 142
Tubman, Harriet, 737
Turner, Frederick Jackson, 433n.; on democracy, 5
Turner, Nat, 567, 736, 859
Turpentine farms: Negro workers on, 1089-1090; wages on, 1089-1090
Tuskegee compromise, 739-742, 913n., 1391-1392
Tuskegee Institute, 889, 890, 892, 898, 899, 1308

"Underground railroad," 578, 860
"Understanding" requirement for voting, 446, 484, 489, 514, 1325
Undertakers, Negro, 309-310, 317, 638; and insurance, 1262-1263
Underworld, Negro, 330-332, 655, 733, 1266-1268; class structure of, 704-705; leaders in, 1391; protection for, 498, 499, 501
Unemployment, 211, 301-303, 394, 1256, 1282; of agricultural labor, 252, 264, 266; caused by mechanization, 399; and crime, 1293; post-World War II, 401, 408, 409, 424, 425, 1010-1011; power over, 788
Unemployment, Negro, 206, 207, 299, 301-303, 525, 754, 799, 806, 1001, 1282; in the North, 295; as a result of discrimination, 998; during war boom, 410
Unemployment Check Census of 1937, 1259
Unemployment compensation, 357, 1281
Unemployment risks, 367n.
Union shop, 405, 407
Union Theological Seminary, Negro member of Board of, 1368
Unionization (*see also* Trade unions): effect of, for Negroes, 401-403, 643; and equal opportunity, 384; independent Negro, 1107; law protecting, 399, 713; of longshoremen, 1097, 1098-1099; in lumber industry, 1095-1096; in the South, 463, 515
Unions: *see* Trade unions
United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers' Union, 413
United Automobile Workers' Union, 1121
United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, 1103
United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, 262, 263, 1250
United Mine Workers' Union, 402, 1113, 1114, 1297
United Service Organizations, discrimination policy of, 1367
United States Employment Service, 400-401, 412, 416-418, 1087, 1303, 1304, 1307; policy of, 1307-1308
United States Housing Authority, 350-351, 352-353, 378n., 400, 503, 678, 755, 1104-1105; and segregation, 625-626, 627
United States Steel Corporation, 1118
United Steel Workers of America, 402, 1117
United Transport Workers of America, 1107
Unity: cultural, xlviii, 1029; of ideals, 3-5; of interest, between capital and labor, 222; of mankind, 115-116; of Negro problem, 73-75, 77
Universal Negro Improvement Association, 747, 748, 812-813
Universities, control of, 718-719
Unskilled labor, 296-297, 395, 410, 788, 1257, 1303
Upper class Negro, 645-647, 690, 693, 702-704, 1387-1388; broader basis for, 697; clothing of, 963; criteria for attaining, 694; dilemma of, 794-797, 921; family background and, 695, 697, 702; and family stability, 931-933; growth of, 651; and leadership, 727-728, 730-731, 732, 733, 767, 804-805; and lower classes, friction of, 703, 729-730, 731, 1395; moral standards of, 931-933, 939, 1425; political confusion in, 703-704; reactions of, to discrimination and segregation, 764-766; "shady," 1391; withdrawal of, from leadership, 1388
Upper class, white, 592-597; as allies of Negroes, 786-788; "America's 60 families," 676n.; and leadership, 715; Southern, dilemma of, 1318
Urban League, xiv, 793, 803, 835, 837-842, 843, 854, 1406-1408; effect of World War II on, 1408; functions of,

839; labor policy of, 1407-1408; Workers' Councils in, 1408
Urbanization: Negro, 164, 279-280, 289, 525, 645; of the South, 284, 289, 463
Utah, expenditures for education in, 1271

Vagrancy, Negro, after Civil War, 223-224, 1234
Vagrancy laws, 228, 551, 558, 1344-1345
Valuations, 781n., 1027-1031, 1043, 1058, 1063-1064; American Creed as, 1063; common, xlviii, 1028-1029; conflicts of, xlvii-li, 39-40, 52-53, 84-88, 110-111, 112, 167, 168, 170, 209, 215-219, 893, 1027, 1029-1030, 1032, 1034, 1062, 1063-1064, 1138-1139; dynamics of, 1032-1034; empirical study of, 1137-1139; hidden, in social science, 1045-1057; "irrational," xlix; political, 47
Value premises: method of working with, 1044-1045; in research, 1059-1061; selection of, 1061-1062; of this book, 23-25, 109, 167, 169, 209-215, 334, 429, 518, 526, 573-574, 670, 672, 812, 852-853, 927, 929; use of, lvi
Vance, Rupert B.: cited, 242, 1238; on credit system, 1242; on exploitation of South, 221; on interracial relations, 1188; on mechanization, 1249; on Negro fertility, 1224; on rural structure of South, 451; on share tenancy, 1235
Veblen, Thorstein, 1377
Venereal disease, 143, 174, 177, 346, 980, 1083, 1225, 1273
Vesey, Denmark, 567, 736-737
Vice; *see* Underworld, Negro
Vicious circle, theory of, 75-78, 101, 109, 172, 207-209, 791, 794, 1011, 1065-1070, 1185; and caste system, 669; and discrimination, 381, 382, 391, 392, 583; and Negro business, 308-309; in Negro reasoning on leadership, 774; in politics, 435, 453, 483, 716n.; in residential segregation, 623; and salary differentials, 320; in social discrimination, 643
Vigilantism, 450, 527-528, 564, 1243, 1350-1351
Villard, Oswald Garrison, 819
Violence (*see also* Intimidation), 558-569, 618, 628, 1346, 1347-1351; and disfranchisement, 485, 486; against labor, 1297, 1300; by labor unions, 405; mob (*see also* Lynching *and* Riots), 553; Negro, 763; pattern of, 558-560; post-Civil War, 533, 736-737; in settling labor disputes, 713
Virginia: death penalty in, 554; education requirement for voting in, 484; Negro jurors in, 550; Negro workers in industry in, 1295-1296; no Negro police in, 543n.; poll tax in, 1324; primaries in, 486; recreational facilities in, 1275; and repatriation bill, 814; safety laws in, 1281; voting in, 483
Vital statistics, 159, 1218, 1220
"Vocational" education, 1416; cost of, 890, 898-899; Negro attitudes toward, 900-901; as rationalization for discrimination, 897; versus "classical" education, 888-890, 896-900, 906; white and Negro, 1419
Vocational rehabilitation, 401
Vocational training, 266, 313, 388, 390-391, 632, 739, 839, 949-950, 1087, 1307; for police, 539, 544-545; for war workers, 410, 416
Voluntary associations, 317, 638-639, 952, 955, 984-985, 1430
Voluntary withdrawal, 631, 647-649, 657, 658, 669n., 762, 763, 797, 999, 1371-1372; of upper class Negroes from leadership, 776
Voting, Negro (*see also* Disfranchisement *and* Suffrage, Negro), 474, 475, 482, 483, 488n., 492, 493, 494-495, 499, 754, 755, 1309-1310, 1327, 1328-1329, 1333-1335; increases in, 488; as an issue in the South, 512-514; noninterest in, 1326; in the North, 200, 491-497; relation of, to public services, 435-436
Voting, qualifications for, 446, 480, 483-484, 489, 514, 1324, 1325

WACS, 421
Wage discrimination, 319-320, 1094-1095, 1096, 1099, 1112-1113, 1116-1117, 1124
Wage laborers, 242-244, 254, 1245
Wages, 1295-1296; in auto industry, 1121; of domestic servants, 1085-1086; in fertilizer industry, 1096; in iron and steel industry, 1116-1117; in longshore work, 1099; in lumber industry, 1091, 1092-1095; minimum, 398-399; in mining, 1112-1113; in railroad industry, 1106, 1107; in slaughtering industry, 1124; in tobacco industry, 1109; or turpentine workers, 1089-1090
Wages and Hours Law, 297, 397-399, 456, 1001, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1095, 1096-1097, 1106; effect of, on South, 398; workers excluded from, 398
Wallace, Henry A., on democracy and Christianity, 11
Waller, Fats, 989
Walling, William English, 819

Waltershausen, A. S. von, on resolving racial antipathy, 1098
War Manpower Commission, 416
War production: exclusion of Negroes from, 755, 850, 1005, 1301; few Negroes employed in, 410, 412-414; government policy on Negroes in, 414-419; opportunities for Negroes in, 654; in the South, 410-411
Ward, Lester F., 1057
Ware, Caroline F., cited, 880
Warner, Robert A.: cited, 1373; on legal justice in the North, 1337; on Negro opinions of white morals, 978n.
Warner, W. Lloyd, 670, 674; caste-line diagram of, 691; on class concept, 1378
Warner, W. L., Junker, B., and Adams, W. A.: on color, 1384; on Negro lower class, 1386; on Negro vice as business, 1269
Wartime, Negro protest in, 745, 755, 818, 850
Washburn Amendment, 418n.
Washburne, Carleton, 903n.
Washington, Booker T., 284, 491, 504, 640-641, 644, 662, 695n., 798, 815, 843, 889, 898, 903n., 955, 987; on broader range of Negro education 889n.; on commercial progress of Negro, 292, 787; as conciliatory leader, 640-641, 726-727, 739-741, 742-743, 796; on drive for education, 883; on equal natural endowments, 1191; and equality doctrine, 63; on exception from Jim Crow of dark-skinned non-Negroes, 1352; on incident in Douglass's life, 1394; on inequality of opportunity, 758; on moral effect of disfranchisement, 1333; on Negro judgment on whites, 1323; on obstacles to success for Negroes, 1370; philosophy of, 739-740, 800; on religion, 874; on segregation, 641; on separation of races, 65; on separation of schools in North, 1421-1422; on theft in slave days, 1434; on white prejudice, 43; on white protectionism, 1357; on "Yankee teachers," 1416
Washington, D. C.: disfranchisement in, 474n.; institutional segregation in, 631-632; Negro population in, 1127; police killings in, 543n.; prejudice against Negroes in, 528
Washington, Forrester B., cited, 326, 1436
Washington, George, 1181; on slavery, 85
Washington Park Court Improvement Association, 624
Waters, Ethel, 988
Watson, Tom, 453
WAVES, 420
Wealth, and Negro upper class, 694
Weatherford, W. D.: on contributions from Negro church members, 1412; on education for rural children, 1422; on loss of status, 1335; on Negro papers as race papers, 908; on raising status of Negroes, 596
Weatherford, W. D., and Johnson, C. S.: cited, 563, 564, 1215, 1230; on Negro good humor, 960; on Negroes in building trades, 282-283; on political history and the Negro, 1310
Weaver, Robert C., cited, 411-412, 414, 1104-1105, 1303
Weber, Max, 952
Wector, Dixon, cited, 1181
Weintraub, D., and Magdoff, H., cited, 1083
Welfare policy, 211-212, 355, 1286; development of, 165, 166; specialized, 356-357
Wells, Dorothy P., cited, 1086
Wells-Brown, William, 737
Wertenbaker, Thomas J., on Negro craftsmen, 1254-1255
West: discrimination in, 200; disfranchisement of Negroes in, 438; Negro migration to, 200; Negro police in, 543n.; Negro population of, 200, 1232; no Jim Crow laws in, 1198; participation in election in, 475; school segregation in, 633; vigilantism in, 527
West Virginia: library facilities in, 1368; lynching in, 561; Negro high schools in, 950n.
Westward movement, 86; little Negro participation in, 186-188
White, Walter, 684n., 726, 819n., 821, 826, 987, 1390; cited, 561, 562, 563, 1361; on fight for equality in wartime, 850; on lynching, 563; on N.A.A.C.P., 836n., 1404
White American Society, 812n.
White Brotherhood, 449
White collar workers, Negro, 305, 306, 309, 313, 504; in public service, 327-329
White infiltration: into Negro jobs, 193, 197, 281-283, 395; into plantation tenancy, 244
"White man's burden," 1187-1188
White man's problem, Negro problem as, li-lii, 669; opinions on, 42-44
White primary, 455, 480-481, 486-487, 489, 515, 518, 519, 833
White solidarity, 242, 248, 443, 444, 453-454, 475-476, 537, 550, 598, 677, 1379

White supremacy, theory of, 53-57, 579, 580, 442-443, 444, 454, 460, 643, 928, 1314, 1318; bound up with Negro ignorance, 894-895; policeman's role in, 535
Whitman, Walt, on liberty, 13
Wilcox, O. W., quoted, 264
Wilkerson, Doxey A.: cited, 319-320, 339-340, 343, 633, 882n., 947n., 951, 1415; on Negro high schools, 1429; poll on mixed education by, 1421; on Rosenwald schools, 1418; on scholastic achievement, 1428
Wilkins, Roy, 819n., 987; on N.A.A.C.P., 836n., 1402; on Negro organizations, 834n.; on power of voters, 828n.
Willcox, Walter, 967
Willkie, Wendell, 414, 1323; on American paradoxes, 1009
Williams, Bert, 989
Williams, William H., cited, 226n.
Wills, Harry, 991n.
Wilson, Isabella C., cited, 1218
Wilson, L. R., and Wight, E. A., cited, 1276
Wilson, M. L., 1253
Wirth, Louis, 1057; on *ante-bellum* miscegenation, 126; on Negro judgment of whites, 687; on valuations, 1063-1064
Wirth, Louis, and Goldhamer, Herbert: cited, 606, 685, 687, 695-696, 1207, 1360, 1361; on "marginal man," 700; on miscegenation, 1209
Wisconsin, voting in, 1309-1310
Witnesses (*see also* Character witnesses), differential treatment of, 526-527
Witty, Paul A., and Jenkins, Martin A., cited, 1216-1217
Wood, L. Hollingsworth, 837
Woodson, Carter G., 751, 930; cited, 191-192, 201, 321-322, 324, 325, 329, 1264, 1413-1414; on Negro church as community center, 1426-1427; on the ministry, 874n.; on Negro patients of white doctors, 323
Woofter, T. J., Jr.: cited, 235, 237, 244, 246, 247-248, 258, 273, 563, 1241, 1246, 1252, 1254, 1283; quoted, 227, 231; on A.A.A., 270; classification of cities on basis of residential segregation by, 1365-1366; on democracy and the legal system, 1337; on democracy in public expenditure, 1269-1270; on housing pattern, 622; on interracial contacts, 588-589, 1355; on legal cases and Negro lodges, 1430; on missionary teachers, 1416; on noninterference in the South, 1335; on paternalism, 1357; on political system in South, 518, 519n.; on separation, 588; on slavery, 1188; on social tenant legislation, 1236; on Southern agriculture, 232; on Southern politics and the Negro problem, 1310; on teaching of Negro history, 1420
Woman suffrage, 1077
Women: education for, 1076n., 1077; employment rates for, 1258; fight for emancipation of, 1075; in industry, 283, 396; limiting work of, 398; and Negroes, parallel between status of, 67n., 103, 779, 1073-1078
Women, Negro: in Army and Navy, 420, 421; in defense industries, 1304; discrimination against, in relief, 1282; employment of, 302, 1082, 1258-1259; as leaders, 735; in professions, 318
Women of the Ku Klux Klan, 812n.
Work, Monroe N., cited, 344, 419
Work relief, 360-361, 1282-1283
Workers Alliance of America, 812n.
Workers Defense League, 528
Working conditions, 1086, 1090, 1093
Workmen's compensation, 357, 358
Works Progress Administration, 343, 347, 360-361, 366, 426n., 465, 991, 1087, 1307; discrimination in, 361, 1282-1283
World War I: democracy and, 745; effect of, on Negroes, 193, 745; employment gains for Negroes during, 295, 393, 424, 997, 1302; Negro grievances in, 850; Negroes in, 745, 1308, 1309; rise of lynchings and riots in, 563, 755, 1409
World War II: boom stimulated by, 252-253, 409-414; color issue in, 915, 1006, 1016; decreasing social discrimination in North during, 662; democracy and, 1007, 1012; effect of, on Negro psychology, 744; ideology of, 755-756, 790n., 806, 1004, 1007; influence of, on Negro attitudes, 755; and N.A.A.C.P. 821, 822, 823; Negro employment in, 408, 409, 654, 1301-1302; Negro organizations during, 850-852; and the Negro problem, 997-998; Negroes in, 1004-1008; probable effects of, 199, 466, 514; racial angle to, 517; recurrence of riots in, 567-568; role of Negro press in, 914-915; secondary booms in, 411; unemployment after, 401, 408, 409, 424, 425, 1010-1011; and Urban League, 1408; and whites, 1008-1010
Wright, Richard, 656, 734, 735, 989, 992; on Negro church, 936
Wright, R. R., Sr., 1184
Wyant, Rowena, cited, 188-189
Wyoming, school segregation in, 633

Young, Donald R.: cited, 52n., 438, 1436; on American Indians, 53; on decrease in lynching, 1349; on democracy, 672; on inferiority doctrine, 109; on minority problems, 1186; on Negro organizations for improvement of race relations, 1404-1405; on Negro resorts, 985-986; on preference for "darkey" type of servant, 1382; restatement of Negro problem by, 1185; on special Negro legislation, 47; on white passing, 1380
Young, Earle F., cited, 561
Young, P. B.: on business and Negro press, 1424; on Negro press as race organ, 908
Young Women's Christian Association, 1087
Youth, assistance to, 361-362

Zionist Movement, 851
Zoarites, 712
Zoning ordinances, 623-624, 829
Zoot suit, 962-963